

2007 Florida Cities of Excellence Awards Program ▶ Nomination Form

Category (Please check one) See Award Criteria for more information. Please print or type. One nomination per page.

FLORIDA CITY OF EXCELLENCE AWARD
Name of Municipality Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY SPIRIT AWARD
Name of Municipality Nominated _____
Nominated Project _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

MAYOR OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated Mr. Craig McNeal
Title Director of Public Works Department Public Works
Nominated by Mayor Gary Bruhn - Town of Windermere
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY MANAGER OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY CLERK OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY FINANCE OFFICIAL (DIRECTOR OR OFFICER) OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

CITY CITIZEN OF THE YEAR
Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Contact Person

The following person will be the main contact if your city's nominee is selected as a finalist.

Please print or type

Name Gary Bruhn

Title Mayor

Government Town of Windermere

Address 108 Forest Street

Telephone Number 407-876-1732 Fax _____

E-mail Address windermere mayor@yahoo.com

Nomination Certification

This nomination has been voted on and approved by a majority of the city council/commission.

Signed *Dorothy Burharts*
City Clerk

The judges will use the narrative and supportive information to select the award winners. Nominators/nominees are asked not to contact the judges directly.

Narrative

In the narrative, please be clear and concise, using the Award Criteria to support the selection of your nominee. Please type (or print in black ink), up to 1,200 words, double-spaced on white 8-1/2" x 11" paper.

Please include a word count: 1053
Number of words

Supportive Information

Up to 10 pages of supportive information (newspaper clippings, photographs, letters from constituents, etc.), on 8-1/2" x 11" paper (single-sided) may be provided. Please do not include videotapes, DVDs, CDs or Power-Point presentations.

Submit nominations by **August 10, 2007**:

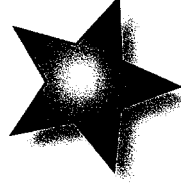
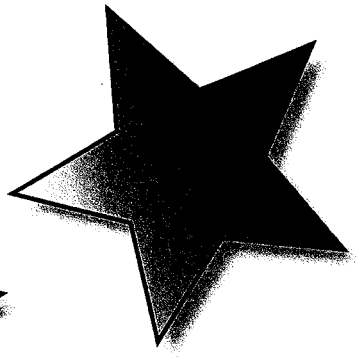
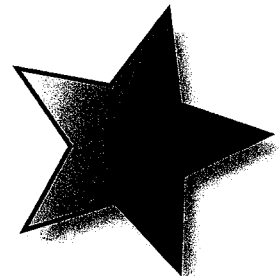
Florida League of Cities, Inc.

Attn: Florida Cities of Excellence

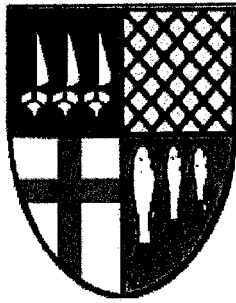
301 S. Bronough Street, Suite 300 (32301)

P.O. Box 1757

Tallahassee, FL 32302-1757



Town of Windermere



**NOMINATION FOR CITY EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR - MR. CRAIG McNEAL
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS - TOWN OF WINDERMERE**

Submitted by Mayor Gary Bruhn – Town of Windermere

Mr. Craig McNeal served for a number of years in the Windermere Public Works Department when the resignation of the Director inspired him to apply for the job. After a series of interviews, he was awarded the position. Mr. McNeal has risen to the challenge of limited budgets, team building and the great expectations of our elected officials to do more with less.

TEAM BUILDING

Mr. McNeal has built a cohesive team dedicated to customer service. And yet, he expects no more of his employees than he does himself. When storms hit our town on Easter Sunday this year, the local news reported that rains washed out many roads in Central Florida. And then a video clip showed Mr. McNeal grading our dirt roads. He drove 20 miles into town to make repairs rather than ask his employees to leave their families during a holiday. He has the respect of his employees and they are committed to customer service. And speaking of customer service.....

CUSTOMER SERVICE

As the Mayor for almost 4 years, one of the most common complaints I would receive was about our Public Works Department (PWD). Now, when I receive a call from our residents regarding our maintenance, it is usually to express their gratitude to the PWD for listening to their concerns, their responsiveness and their professionalism. Mr. McNeal and his team have taken a proactive approach to road maintenance by recognizing specific areas that are prone to needing repair and monitoring those areas before they become problems. As the Mayor, I am proud of what Mr. McNeal has achieved and his commitment to providing our residents with outstanding customer service.

SAVING TAXPAYERS MONEY

Mr. McNeal immediately began an effort to improve his department's efficiency and to provide tax payer savings. Among the initiatives he implemented was to replace grader blades at our facility by buying raw steel and welding the blades in the shop. This reduced downtime and saved money. He determined that by buying a vacuum pump to clean out culverts rather than contract someone to do this would not only allow us to buy our own equipment, but save the town thousands of dollars and we could perform the service when it was needed, rather than depend on an outside source and their availability.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Before Mr. McNeal became Director, the maintenance of our police vehicles was usually performed by a dealer or service station. Mr. McNeal realized that not only did this cost us more money, but it took our police vehicles out of service and required manpower to deliver the vehicles or wait for them to be serviced. He instituted a service schedule where his department could service our police vehicles on site and insure that they were out of service for a minimum amount of time, not only saving money, but allowing our vehicles to be ready when needed. And by doing this, he allowed our officers to spend time doing what they were trained to do, serve and protect the residents of Windermere, rather than spend time having their vehicles be serviced.

PROTECTING OUR LAKES

The Town of Windermere is surrounded by the Butler Chain of Lakes, designated by the State Legislature as an outstanding Florida waterway. Additionally, almost all of the roads are dirt roads. Mr. McNeal and his team recognize that the maintenance and actions that they take can have a dramatic impact upon the chain's lake quality. To that end, he and his team take a very aggressive stance on insuring that retention areas and the surrounding areas are maintained to retain storm water and protect the lakes.

A SPIRIT OF COOPERATION

When a need arises, Mr. McNeal is always available to provide support. He works with the Windermere Rotary Club to insure that any facility needs are met for their weekly meetings. He works with our volunteer committees such as Parks and Recreation and the Tree Board to provide any support that he and his staff can provide. And he interfaces when necessary with other governmental entities to provide solutions that benefit every one.

A COMMITMENT TO MAKING LIFE BETTER FOR OTHERS

In addition to serving the Town of Windermere and making a difference for our residents, a personal tragedy inspired Mr. McNeal and his wife to make a difference for others. Before Mr. McNeal joined the Town of Windermere's staff, their 18 year old son, Gary, was diagnosed with cancer. Gary fought to overcome his disease and during this time, the McNeal's faced severe financial hardship. The medical expenses were overwhelming and without insurance they struggled to survive.

The family was determined to stay with him even when this meant sleeping on his hospital room floor. It was through this sacrifice that the concept for Gary's House was born. It became Gary's dream that families would have a place to go when their loved ones were faced with serious injury or life threatening illness that required hospitalization. Gary lost his battle against cancer, yet the dream did not die with him. Over the next years the

McNeal's, and their family and friends worked tirelessly to raise funds to build Gary's House and today it stands as a tribute to a young man and his family who dreamed of making life better for others.

Every year, Mr. McNeal takes vacation and continues his work to raise money for Gary's House, where an annual golf event raises hundreds of thousands of dollars for this cause. He is joined by other supporters such as former Presidents Bill Clinton and George H. W. Bush. President Bush has taken the cause one step further by putting his name on the annual event, now known as the George Bush Cape Arundel Classic and writes, by "providing housing for the families of those who are hospitalized, you are what I like to call a "point of light", showing once again that any definition of a successful life must include service to others."

The Town of Windermere and its elected officials could not agree more and as Mayor, I am proud to nominate Mr. Craig McNeal as the Florida League of Cities Employee of the Year.