

2006 Florida Cities of Excellence Awards Program ▶

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

Name of Municipality Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

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

Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____
Title _____ Department _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

city clerk
Name of Individual Nominated Bonnie J. Vent
Nominated by City of Cape Coral
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Name of Individual Nominated _____
Nominated by _____
(Name of City/Town/Village)

Please print or type.

Name Terry Stewart

Title City Manager

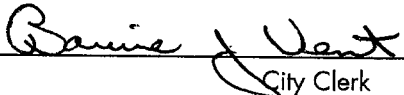
Government City of Cape Coral

Address P.O. Box 150027, Cape Coral, FL 33915

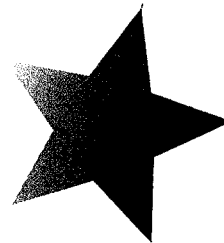
Telephone Number (239) 574-0450 Fax (239) 574-0452

E-mail Address tstewart@capecoral.net

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

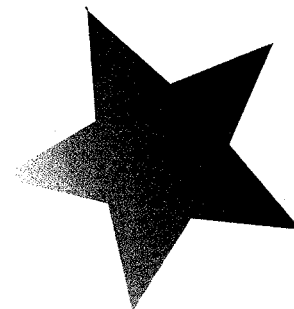
Signed 
City Clerk

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



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.

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 18, 2006:**
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



Nomination:
Bonnie J. Vent, City Clerk
City of Cape Coral, Florida

The City of Cape Coral presents many unique challenges to the City Clerk's office, with the focus being on excellent customer service. For a City that is only thirty-five years old it has been growing at a fast pace and was recently designated as the fifth fastest growing community in the United States. To this end, the task of providing quality service to the citizens and Council has fallen to Bonnie Vent, City Clerk. During her thirty-one years with the City, Bonnie has recognized the importance of providing accurate information and excellent customer service to the citizens as well as to the internal City departments and has developed a Department that is outstanding and a showcase for others to replicate.

Having started in the Clerk's office when the City was only four years old, Bonnie serves as a valuable resource and has great recall of what issues the City has dealt with in the past. Staff often jokes by saying, "Bonnie knows where the bones are buried". Most recently the City was faced with approving a water and sewer assessment for approximately 4,500 citizens who did not want the gravity sewers. Bonnie, using the history she has gathered in her years of service, was able to obtain the needed records and lay out the history of why the City chose gravity sewers. This helped in alleviating many negative feelings and emotions.

During her tenure as City Clerk Bonnie has instituted many innovative programs. One such program is the Citizens Action Center, which is a central call center for citizens with concerns and complaints. The concept was one in which Bonnie drew up the functional plan, got support, and implemented it through her leadership. The Citizens Action Center has been recently upgraded to include GIS mapping by City Council Districts, report capability by department and most recently was revamped to be able to transfer into a call center to handle calls before, during and after an emergency situation.

The Licensing Division was transferred to the City Clerk's office in 2002. Bonnie has initiated many changes to procedures to make it more efficient for our citizens when they apply for an occupational license. After hurricane Charley hit, there were many abuses by contractors who were unlicensed. Bonnie took the initiative and created a plan of action with her investigators that lead to large crackdowns saving the residents time and money from ruthless contractors. Over the past year, under her direction, the Licensing Division Licensing Investigators worked with the Cape Coral Construction Industry to continue to apprehend unlicensed contractors. Recently, again with her support and cooperative planning, the Division participated in a sweep with the Cape Coral Police Department, of construction sites and issued citations to contractors who were working unlicensed.

Bonnie was one of the first in the area to believe in the concept of better control, retention and retrieval of documents and began a computerized system of record keeping several years ago, becoming a pioneer and a model for other municipalities and community entities to follow. During the past year the Records Division within the City Clerk's office installed the new SIRE imaging system. This new system allows the various departments to have access to City Council minutes, ordinances and resolutions. The Division is currently working on having SIRE available on the City's web site so citizens will have access to information. Over the past few months, the Division has worked with the City Council office staff to initiate a paperless agenda program.

Recognizing her outstanding leadership ability and skills, City Manager Terry Stewart assigned Bonnie to oversee the Human Resource Department as Acting Director. Relying on her leadership, organizational and people skills, her six month tenure in Human Resources was one in which the following changes were instituted by Bonnie: revision of the administrative regulation on the recruitment process which had presented problems for the City, coordinated a very successful job fair which brought applicants in desperately needed job categories that resulted in successful hiring.

Since becoming a Certified Municipal Clerk in 1994, Ms. Vent has participated on many Florida Association of City Clerk's committees serving as the Southwest District Representative on the

Board for many years. In 2004, she received the Master Municipal Clerk designation, the most distinguished award in her professional career.

During her thirty one years in the City Clerk profession she has been involved personally and professionally in private and public organizations serving on the International Institute of Municipal Clerks Education Committee. Recognizing her educational achievements (Bonnie holds a Bachelors of Arts degree in Business and a Master of Science degree in Public Administration) she was chosen by the IIMC Board of Directors to participate in three Education Summits. The Summits were similar to Municipal Strategic Planning sessions and were used to institute additional educational requirements to receive the Municipal Clerk Certification. Most recently she has served as Chair of the IIMC Program Certification Review Committee which reviews and approves educational requirements for the City Clerk Institutes around the United States.

Bonnie loves Cape Coral and has always been involved in the Community. She has attended the Chamber of Commerce Leadership and Advanced Leadership Programs and was Chair of the Leadership Alumni organization. Yearly, she coordinates and participates in the City Government Day portion of the Leadership program. She also coordinates the City Government Day for the Junior Leadership Program (which is a program consisting of high school juniors). She is Co-Chair of the Cape Coral Community Foundations Giving Alliance of Women organization which raised over \$70,000 in 2005 to be awarded to various groups in the Community such as the Abuse Counseling Treatment Center. She sits on the Cape Coral Community Foundation Board of Directors as a representative of the Giving Alliance.

In a more personal view of Bonnie's caring and commitment to others, she became involved as the Co-Chair of the Breast Cancer Awareness Walk in Cape Coral when a co-worker's wife was diagnosed with breast cancer. Bonnie is a strong proponent of education not only for her staff but for the students of the community. As President of the Cape Coral Mayor's Scholarship Fund, Bonnie has through her leadership, enabled the organization to award \$37,500 in college scholarships to Cape Coral high school seniors. Bonnie is currently serving as the Chair of the International College School of Business and Public Administration Advisory Board. To further

show her commitment to education and the youth of our community, one night a week you can find Bonnie teaching fourth graders at St. Katharine Drexel Catholic Church in the Community.

Bonnie Vent is well respected in the community, with the City Council, as well as her peers. She is always eager to assist the citizens and goes above and beyond the duties of City Clerk. Her passion for her profession and this community is just an example of her unselfish dedication and professional humility. Bonnie's leadership has become legendary and is an asset in our community. Because of the very positive qualities she possess, the skills and leadership she has shown and her caring for the citizens and the community, she proudly deserves to be nominated.