

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)

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)

✓ City Citizens

Name of Individual Nominated John Bono

Nominated by City of Margate

(Name of City/Town/Village)

[OVER]

Form

Please print or type.

Name Kery Venezia
Title Public Information Officer
Government City of Margate
Address 5790 Margate Blvd. Margate, FL 33063
Telephone Number 954-935-5330 Fax 954-935-5304
E-mail Address pio@margatefl.com

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

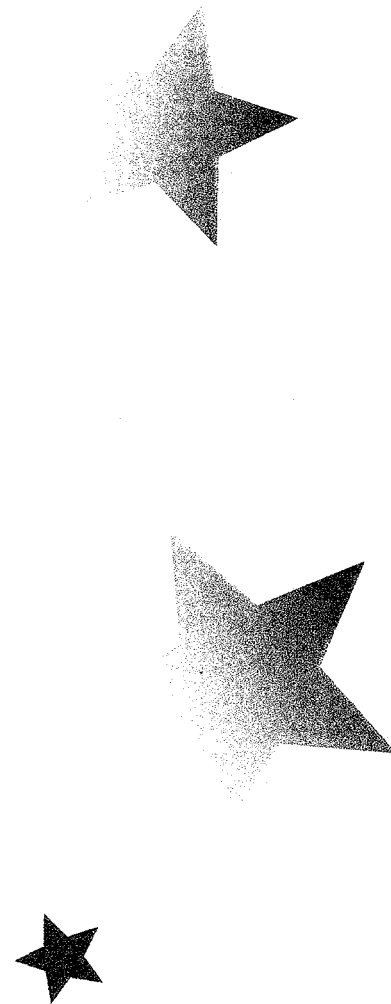
Signed Julia A. Klyore
City Clerk

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



FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES Florida Cities of Excellence Award Program

“Citizen of the Year”

It is with great pride and pleasure that the City of Margate nominate John Bono for Citizen of the Year.

John goes beyond the Commitment, Support, Skills, Leadership, Outreach to Other Citizens and Desire to Make a Positive Impact in the City that is required for this prestigious award.

John and his wife Rosemary moved to Margate in 1992 after John retired from the New York Police Department. They moved into a condominium community restricted to those 55 and older. John jumped right in and became active on the board of directors and later served a number of years as president.

Since moving into his retirement home, he quietly helped citizens with rides to the doctor, helping them arrange their car insurance, fixing minor home repairs for widows and just lending a helping hand to others. In 2000, John got sick and had to have a heart transplant...that would have slowed many of us down, but not John. He felt he had been given another lease on life and has been going full force ever since.

For the last five years, John has served as Chairperson and Chief Examiner of the City's Civil Service Board. Margate's Charter requires that all applicants take a civil service test pertinent to the job and an oral interview. The Civil Service Board oversees the testing

and arranges for the oral board. This position is on a volunteer board with five members. One member is appointed by the City Commission, two City employees are elected by their peers, one citizen is elected by City employees, and the final member is appointed by the members. The board is required to hold one meeting a month and monitor the testing.

Since most members of the board work full time, John offered to help monitor tests, so applicants were not waiting weeks to get tested and employees were not overburdened waiting for new hires. John puts in about 100 hours a month making sure the hiring process is followed through.

John has helped hundreds of citizens, employees, and the City Administration with his leadership, commitment, support and outreach to others. It is not always an enjoyable job because every employee is not always happy and all job applicants cannot get hired, but John does not let it get him down. He always tries to make a bad situation better. Last September, a job applicant was being interviewed and became hostile when he was questioned by his past arrest and employment. The applicant threatened to come back with a gun and shoot John if he didn't get the job. He didn't get the job and no one got hurt because John was able to calm him down and even help him with job interview skills that later landed him a job elsewhere.

As we all know, hurricane season the last couple of years has taken its toll on all of Florida. Last year, we were hit with Hurricane Wilma, which left all of Broward County

without electricity for 10 days. In the condominiums, the elevators did not work and the elderly were confined to apartments with no way to get help. John spent those 10 days standing in line to get ice for his neighbors, cooking food on a grill to feed his neighbors and checking on them throughout the day to make sure they were doing alright. When his neighbors were safe, John moved his attention to the City and his volunteer job. He spent hours contacting the job applicants to re-set appointments and to make sure they all had weathered the storm safely.

Government wheels seem to always move in slow motion, but a few months ago, John came up with a few ideas of streamlining the hiring process. He single-handedly convinced City staff to change the way they went about hiring new employees and then presented the idea to the Commission who backed his proposal.

Getting a job in Margate takes anywhere from three to six months. The job is advertised for a month, candidates are then selected to take a written test, those with scores over 75 percent are then scheduled for an oral interview and the top three applicants have to pass a background check and drug test and then they are hired. We were having problems hiring people because by the time they were notified they received the job they had already started a job some where else.

John proposed cutting out written tests for a majority of the jobs where turnover is high...laborers, clerks and non-skilled jobs. Mr. Bono has established oral boards for each department, so there would be no down time arranging interviews and streamlined

the time it took to complete background checks. Now, we have new employees within 30 days of the closing of applications.

“We are very fortunate to have John Bono giving his time and energy to our city”, said Mayor Frank Talerico. “He turned a part-time volunteer job into a full-time commitment”.

John’s wife Rosemary said, “I saw him more before he retired than I do now...but he loves what he is doing and it keeps him out of my hair”.

John has received numerous letters from employee applicants thanking him for the guidance and support he gave them during the process, but as Human Resource Director George McNeill said, “John has no ego and he doesn’t save the letters...he believes he is just doing what is right”.

As you can see, John Bono is the perfect person for Citizen of the Year because he does go beyond the Commitment, Support, Skills, Leadership, Outreach to Other Citizens and Desire to Make a Positive Impact in the City. He is our Citizen of the Year and we hope you will add his name to your esteemed list of winners.