

# 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.

**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** Mayor Del Yonats  
**Nominated by** Town of Brant - Valkaria  
(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)

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(Name of City/Town/Village)

**Name of Individual Nominated** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Nominated by** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of City/Town/Village)

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## 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 Matthew D. Brock  
Title Town Manager  
Government Town of Grant - Valkaria  
Address PO Box 764, Grant, FL 32949  
Telephone Number 321-951-1388 Fax 321-956-5668  
E-mail Address townmanager@grantvalkaria.org

## Nomination Certification

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

Signed Suzanne R. Krueger, MMC  
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.

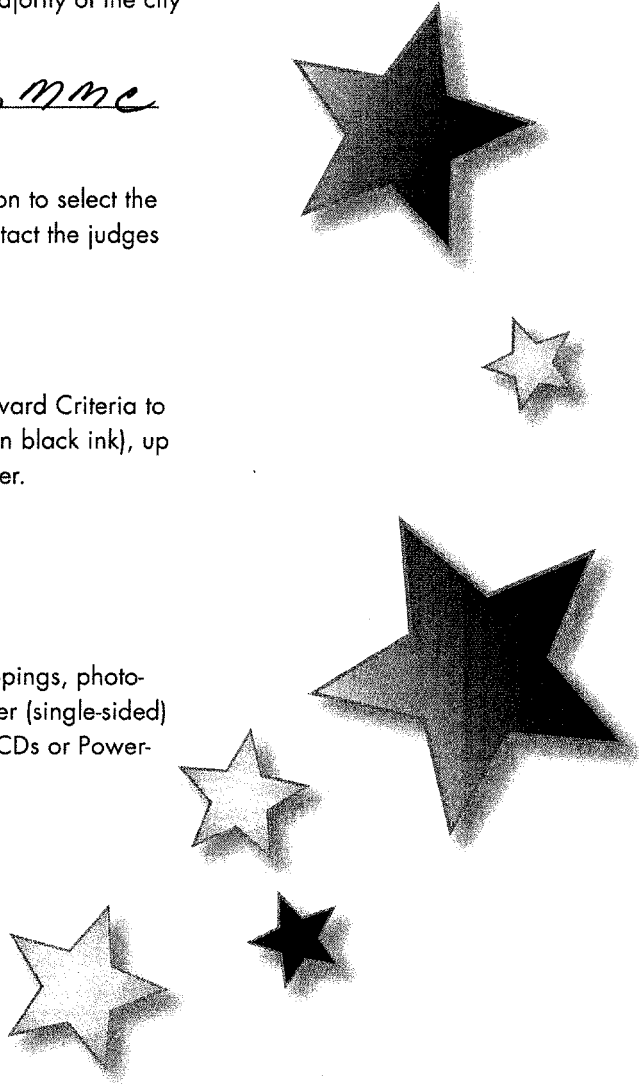
Please include a word count: 1188  
Number of words

## 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



**Nomination of Mayor Del Yonts  
Town of Grant-Valkaria  
For  
Mayor of the Year  
2007 Awards Program Florida Cities of Excellence**

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**Town of Grant-Valkaria**  
**For**  
**Mayor of the Year**  
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**Initiative:** Mayor Yonts was crucial in the creation of the Town of Grant-Valkaria. His contribution to the idea of creating a government and municipality to better control the rural character of the community was instrumental to creation of the Town. Through his initiative and leadership as Mayor an unprecedented number of things have been accomplished, solidifying the two previously unincorporated communities of Grant and Valkaria into one. What is even more remarkable is that the geographic size of this newly created community is more than 30 square miles.

A total list of his initiative in service to the newly created Town of Grant-Valkaria would take pages to accurately describe. However many of his accomplishments are too important to exclude. Through his initiative he spearheaded a method through which residents will determine whether the name of the Town should stay remain Grant-Valkaria, or be changed to a new name. Prior to the hiring of any professional staff many things were done that would normally be done by a staff that through his initiative were accomplished. Some of these things include obtaining the services of a Town Staff, identifying various revenue sources for the Town, coordinating with Brevard County on establishing municipal services, leasing a Town Hall facility, establishing a Town website, establishing Town email accounts, procurement of a volunteer emergency management coordinator, creation of a local planning agency, creation of a code enforcement board, and negotiating for solid waste collection services to replace services previously provided by Brevard County.

**Integrity:** Mayor Yonts' integrity could best be described as above reproach in all areas, both professionally and personally. In the case of question or doubt, he never hesitates to research freedom of information laws and their applicability in each case. His approach to problem solving in this type of case is to first seek the ethical and lawful solution while considering the timely resolution of a problem or issue as secondary. He has not shied away from any delicate or difficult situation but kept his integrity intact in all cases. His integrity continues to sustain him as many complex issues continue to arise in support of the Town and in negotiation with the surrounding County.

**Vision:** The real vision for creation of the Town of Grant-Valkaria was to have it remain rural and be developed in a way that supports a quiet, rural lifestyle for its residents. This is in light of the rapidly growing urban development to the west in the adjacent City of Palm Bay, population 106,000. In addition, Grant and Valkaria residents felt that Brevard County's development decisions would not support the desired rural lifestyle. Mayor Yonts had the foresight and vision to see that in order to keep the uncontrolled growth and incompatible development outside of Grant and Valkaria and stem annexation from the City of Palm Bay, it would be necessary for the two previously unincorporated rural communities to combine into one incorporated community in order to control its destiny. Historically for more than a century the unincorporated communities of Grant and Valkaria had maintained a rural lifestyle and flavor. It was clear to Mayor Yonts that incorporation was the most viable option to successfully preserve the community's character.

Another excellent example of his vision in creation and maintenance of a rural character within the community of Grant-Valkaria is the imposition of a moratorium on growth and development. The moratorium is still in effect in the Town until completion of the comprehensive plan. This demonstrates his ability to take a proactive approach in community planning and development.

**Innovation:** Mayor Yonts clearly has a very highly developed sense of innovation. In creation of the Town of Grant-Valkaria, he envisioned the type of town and government where maintenance of a rural lifestyle was critical. This is unique because of the location of the Town, along the Indian River in Brevard County, population 500,000. Development to the north in the city of Melbourne, population 85,000, and to the west in the City of Palm Bay, 106,000, clearly contrasted with his innovative ideas of creation and maintenance of a rural community and lifestyle.

Not only was his innovation clear at the local level, but at the state level he was vital in the implementing legislation creating the Town. This included interaction with State legislators and Florida League of Cities officials to allow for the Town to receive allowances for newly incorporated communities.

Creation of a municipal charter uniquely tailored for a rural community is another example of his leadership in innovation. The Grant-Valkaria charter was created with a provision to remain rural and protect the natural environment. His innovative approach was critical in preparation of an initial budget that providing for a millage rate that taxed town residents at a lower rate than previously taxed by Brevard County.

He located, negotiated, and executed a lease agreement for rental of a town hall when few facilities were available within the community.

His innovation in the provision of municipal services was truly exceptional. He had the innovative insight and ability to implement municipal services to the newly created Town through the use of an inter local agreement with the surrounding Brevard County government in providing the needed municipal services. The municipal services inter local agreement identified specific services to be provided by the County in the interim period between creation of the town and the period at which the Town actually had its first municipal budget. Amazingly, this was done at no cost to Town residents.

**Leadership:** Mayor Yonts leadership in the creation and implementation of a municipal government and has been remarkable. He has not hesitated to contact all parties necessary in addressing a multitude of issues facing the Town as it goes through the process of incorporation. This includes a multitude of local and State officials. Mayor Yonts leadership style would best be described as driven but patient, and focused but at the same time able to consider the opinions of others on every issue. It is clear that much that has been accomplished since incorporation on July 25, 2006 was accomplished through the leadership and determination of Mayor Yonts.

**Commitment:** His commitment and energy in serving the newly created Town of Grant-Valkaria and its citizens has been truly remarkable. His leadership in setting up the original Steering Committee and the Grant-Valkaria Preservation Committee in creation of the Town demonstrated to all that he was truly committed to the concept of creating a rural municipal government even though virtually surrounded by a town of 106,000. Even after countless meetings until the early morning hours and more that 12 months into the process, his total commitment and dedication to the Town of Grant-Valkaria and his goal of maintaining the rural lifestyle has not waived. He continues to tirelessly lead and represent the Council and community in seeking those alternatives for the community that are in its best long term interest.