

CIVIC EDUCATION

# 2016 Florida City Government Week

Cities across the state join in the celebration

compiled by Sharon G. Berrian  
Florida League of Cities

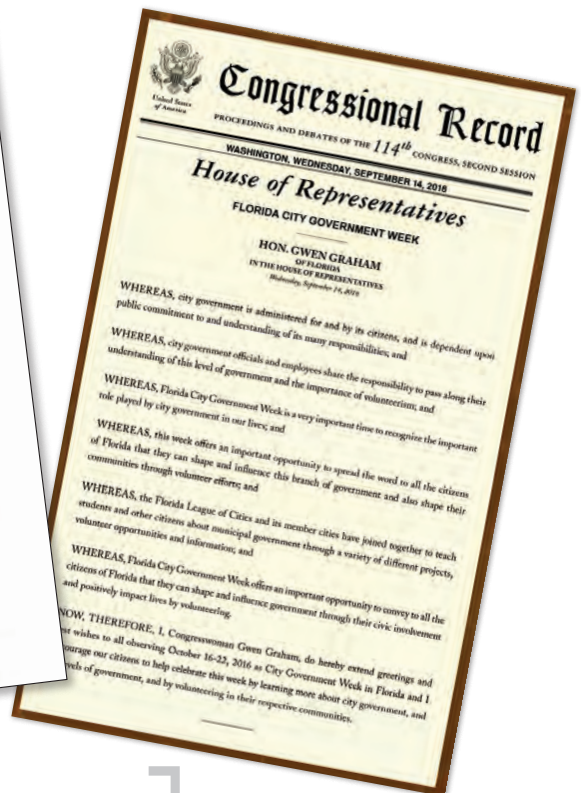


Florida City Government Week is a statewide celebration to raise public awareness about the services that cities provide and to educate the public on how city government works.

For the 2016 event, League members were encouraged to take an active part in promoting their city through civic education. They were also asked to partner with or adopt a special community service project or volunteer opportunity. Volunteering is important to the health of a city, strengthening communities, solving problems and improving lives.

Florida City Government Week is an ongoing program sponsored by the Florida League of Cities.

In addition to the following summaries, this year's recognition included proclamations from Gov. Rick Scott and then-Congresswoman Gwen Graham.



## We Hope to Include You in 2017

It's not too early to start thinking about how your city will celebrate **2017 Florida City Government Week**, which will be held on October 23-29. If your city has never celebrated the week, use the summaries in this article to generate ideas for your event. Planning packets to assist will be available soon. Visit [FLCityWeek.com](http://FLCityWeek.com) for more information. Contact Sharon Berrian at [sberrian@flicities.com](mailto:sberrian@flicities.com) or (850) 222-9684 if you have any questions.

**BELLE GLADE**



The **City of Belle Glade**, in partnership with residents and local businesses, held its first October Fest in association with Florida City Government Week. More than 700 boys and girls enjoyed games, prizes, food, drinks, hayrides, haunted house tours, bounce houses and a candy buffet. This free event provided youngsters of all ages with a safe environment in which to enjoy Halloween activities. City commissioners hope to make October Fest an annual community event.

**BOCA RATON**



**Boca Raton Mayor Susan Haynie**, who also serves as League president, recorded a thank you to city volunteers in honor of Florida City Government Week. The city shared the video on its website and through social media, and hung posters at a Town Hall meeting where volunteer panel members shared the "Boca Raton: Part of It, Proud of It" slogan. The city also designed a Facebook/Twitter banner and a poster. View the video at [facebook.com/BocaRatonCity/](https://facebook.com/BocaRatonCity/).

**BOWLING GREEN**

The **City of Bowling Green** gave "My City, I'm Part of It, I'm Proud of It" bumper stickers to its residents. In addition, the city's Parks and Recreation Committee sponsored a photo contest for local youth, who were challenged to submit a "selfie" taken at a local, recognizable landmark. The city also gave out buttons and stickers to children visiting the 2016 Fall Festival and shared tidbits with them about the City of Bowling Green.

**#WeAreBowlingGreen**



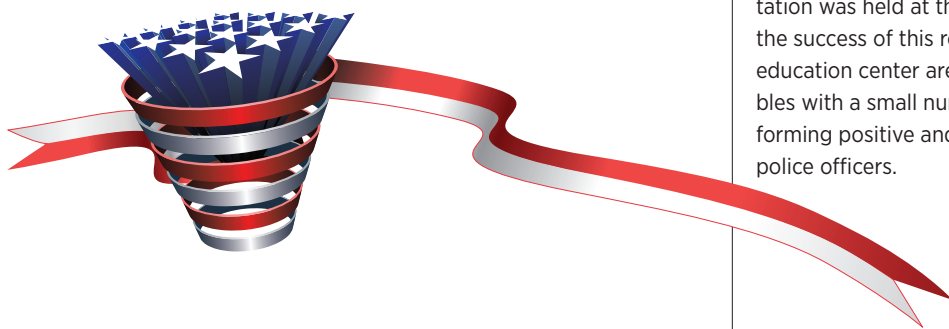
**CAPE CANAVERAL**

Despite a brush with Hurricane Matthew, the **City of Cape Canaveral** and others coordinated a successful Florida City Government Week for approximately 390 students at Cape View Elementary. There were activities for the kindergarten class, tours and demonstrations for first graders, and the second graders viewed equipment demonstrations and toured fire facilities. A mock city council meeting was held for the third graders, fourth graders participated in various sports and physical activities, and fifth graders were provided tours and demonstrations of the wastewater treatment plant, laboratory and city maintenance equipment. Other staff members engaged the sixth graders in a mock city advisory board meeting.



**COCONUT CREEK**

During Florida City Government Week, students from two local high schools heard about public safety, its image and perception by students from the **Coconut Creek Police Department**. The presentation was held at the Dave Thomas Education Center. Because of the success of this robust presentation, the Police Department and education center are discussing holding regular monthly roundtables with a small number of students. The goal of these talks will be forming positive and lasting relationships between the students and police officers.



**DAVENPORT**

The **City of Davenport** held an open house where each department set up a table to highlight its current projects and display items such as pictures, videos, equipment and gear. The Police Department gave the young children goody bags that contained coloring books, candy, and bicycle safety items and rules. Snacks and drinks were provided to everyone. Davenport’s sister city to the south, Haines City, set up and provided the use of a trailer unit that included educational material about stormwater runoff.

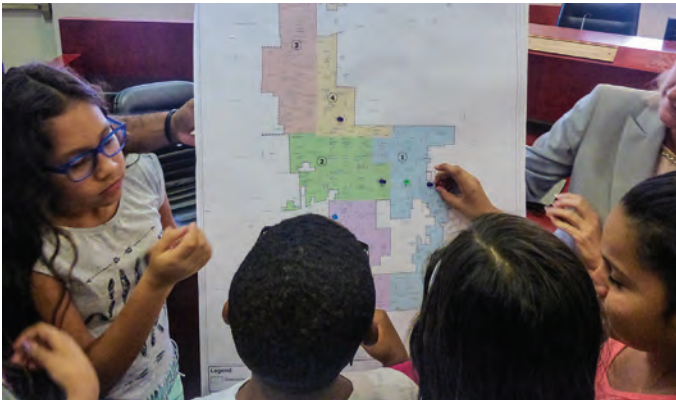
**FRUITLAND PARK**



**Fruitland Park** hosted the following community organizations and leaders for a special night of recognition: Fruitland Park Elementary School’s National Honor Society and its advisor and school principal; the chair of the school board; and a reverend and community leader involved with Operation Bless Fruitland Park – a consortium of local churches, businesses, civic groups and citizens who are involved in local charitable giving. Also during Florida City Government Week, the city hosted the library’s WiPlay, chess and Lego clubs; a “city” pie contest; and the movie “Monster House” was shown on the lawn at City Hall.

**GREENACRES**

In recognition of Florida City Government Week, students shadowed **Greenacres’** mayor, City Council members and city staff. Students representing four high schools worked together to execute a mock city council meeting, and stayed to shadow the mayor and council members as they conducted a regular council meeting. In addition, **Mayor Sam Ferreri**, city employees and employees of the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office gave presentations at L.C. Swain Middle School for pre-law and civics class students, and city department tours were conducted for elementary school students.



**HAINES CITY**



To celebrate Florida City Government Week, **Haines City** hosted several civic engagement and educational events. This included a Town Hall meeting with the mayor, educational tours of city facilities, joint ventures and a multitude of presentations with neighboring cities, and a youth leadership day in collaboration with the Haines City Area Chamber of Commerce.

**HALLANDALE BEACH**

Every year, the city hosts about 25 kids from the local middle school student government. The students visit different departments in the city and learn about all that **Hallandale Beach** does. After a lunch, the students put together posters, which they present to each other to show what they have learned. The students receive certificates of participation from the mayor and/or city manager.



**HILLIARD**

The **Town of Hilliard** conducted an essay contest for local fourth grade students, asking them to answer the question: "If I was Mayor for a day I would . . ." Each fourth grade class submitted its essays, and the town selected a first, second and third place winner.



**LAKE BUTLER**

The **City of Lake Butler** supported the Union County High School graduating class of 2017 by volunteering its time and resources during Florida City Government Week to support this graduating class's Project Grad efforts.



**LAKE PARK**



The **Town of Lake Park** celebrated with more than 90 fifth graders, teachers and parents from two local elementary schools. **Mayor James DuBois** shared his experience as the mayor. In addition, students participated in a mock commission meeting, performed skits with each town department, took part in a Public Works demonstration, and toured Town Hall and the library. The event is a great benefit to the students as they learned firsthand how local government works in a fun, educational way. At the end, each student received a goodie bag that included a Florida City Government Week button and sticker.

**MARGATE**



The **City of Margate** held a 2016 Student Government Day. Hosted by the City Clerk's Office, the day provided 31 students from Margate STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) Magnet Middle School with an opportunity to learn about the policy-making processes of city government. The students got an inside view of the day-to-day operations of the city, and they took part in a mock city commission meeting alongside the city's elected officials, city manager, city attorney, city clerk and department directors.



**MELBOURNE**



During Florida City Government Week, on October 18, the **City of Melbourne** recognized residents who serve on its volunteer boards for their years of service. They were honored during the annual board reception. In 2016, approximately 131 residents served on 17 standing boards and committees that guide a range of city services, from architectural standards and affordable housing to code enforcement and pension planning. Many of the city’s board members have served for multiple years — even decades. Combined, their years of service totaled more than 1,000. The city’s longest-serving board member was recognized for his 40 years of service on the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

**NEW SMYRNA BEACH**

Students from the Criminal Justice Academy at **New Smyrna Beach High School** conducted a mock commission meeting at City Hall. **Mayor Jim Hathaway; Commissioners Jacob Sachs, Andrew McGuirk and Kirk Jones; City Manager Pam Brangaccio; Assistant City Manager Khalid Resheidat; and Assistant Police Chief Donna Lavellee** attended in support of Florida City Government Week. The event was organized by **City Clerk Johnny Bledsoe**.



**NORTH LAUDERDALE**

Cub Scouts from Den #8 of Pack #208 presented a question to the **North Lauderdale** City Commission about challenges that officials encounter in running the city. During Florida City Government Week, the Cub Scouts attended and observed a North Lauderdale City Commission meeting. They saw the city commissioners, city manager, city clerk and city attorney at work and witnessed the process involved in city government. Their attendance and interaction with city officials allowed the Cub Scouts to fulfill a requirement that enables them to progress to the next rank to become a Boy Scout.



**OCEAN BREEZE**

The **Town of Ocean Breeze** celebrated Florida City Government Week with a special program at a Town Council meeting. **Council President Ann Kagdis** gave residents a general civics lesson and information on the Florida League of Cities so they could understand how local government works. She shared the history of the Town of Ocean Breeze, which was incorporated in 1960. The meeting was packed and each resident received a “My Town, I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It” button to wear and a bumper sticker for their car.



**PALM SPRINGS**



Mayor **Bev Smith** proclaimed October as “**City Government Month in Palm Springs.**” **Village Manager Richard Reade, Police Chief Tom Ceccarelli, Land Development Director Kim Glas-Castro, Village Clerk Susan Caljean, Library Director Suvi Manner, and Parks and Recreation Director Bill Golson** visited classes at Palm Springs Middle School to discuss the role of municipal government in the community. Students held a mock council meeting in class. The students also sat on the dais with members of the Village Council at the November 10 council meeting, where official business of the village was discussed and voted on.

**PARKER**

Five students from **Parker Elementary School** had the chance to run the city during the 4th annual Mayor for the Day. The city partnered with the school in celebration of Florida City Government Week. Each year, fifth-grade students write a paper on “If you had \$100,000, how would you spend it to make Parker a better community?” The teachers select the top papers. Those students come to City Hall, where they participate in the roles of mayor, police chief, fire chief, public works supervisor and, new this year, city clerk. They tour all departments and hold a mock council meeting.



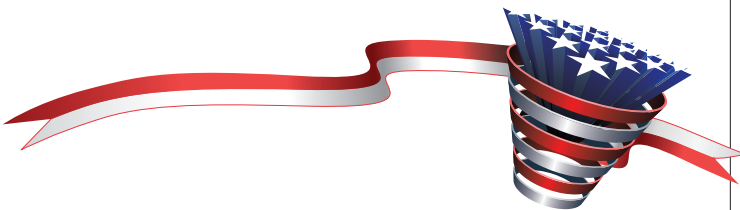
**PENSACOLA**

The **City of Pensacola** celebrated with a Youth in Government Day organized by **City Council Member Jewel Cannada-Wynn**. Students from Escambia and Washington high schools learned about the roles and functions of various government agencies in Pensacola. They were welcomed by **Mayor Ashton Hayward** and **City Council President Charles Bare**. They also met with elected officials from the Clerk of the Court, the State Attorney’s Office, the Public Defender’s Office, the Supervisor of Elections Office and the Escambia County Commission. In addition, they met with representatives from county administrative offices, toured the T. T. Wentworth Jr. Historic Museum and attended a City Council meeting.



**PORT ORANGE**

**Port Orange Pride: Community volunteer Maria Mills-Benat** organized a seven-day “meal train” to feed city employees who were working long hours during the Hurricane Matthew recovery. She not only raised money and meals from residents and businesses, but had enough left over to treat all employees to an appreciation lunch.



**SANFORD**



In support of Florida City Government Week, **City of Sanford Environmental Coordinator Hope Duncan** and **Communications Officer Lisa Holder** visited Sanford's Seminole High School. Duncan spoke to the Environmental Science Advanced Placement (AP) class about the city's highly important procedure for proper grease disposal and its grease recycling program. Holder provided a brief overview about city government week. Visit [youtube.com/watch?v=-VCNPUTGMC4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VCNPUTGMC4) to view the city's cooking oil recycling center video.

**SEMINOLE**

The **City of Seminole** hosted 60 very energetic students from Indian Rocks Christian School. They received educational information from fire and law enforcement professionals, along with a display and demonstration program provided by personnel on two fire trucks. Additionally, city officials conducted a mock council meeting.



**STUART**

**Stuart's East Stuart Youth Initiative** is an afterschool program held at the 10th Street Recreation Center. Currently, it has 145 youth enrolled. As a part of the initiative's "Teens and Tweens" program, the city started a Teen Council to teach city youth about the government process and for them to design their own community involvement plan. Five students were chosen by their peers to serve as officers, and the group is working on the plan. The officers represent the program at community functions, helping to set the rules for the campus and implementing onsite events and field trips.



**TARPON SPRINGS**

The **City of Tarpon Springs** recently started a citizen's academy that educates residents on the operations that keep the city running. A "My City" bumper sticker and a badge were included in each attendee's welcome bag. The city also gave the "My City" badges to students during Florida City Government Week.

**VENICE**

The **City of Venice** sponsored Florida City Government Week poster contests for two local schools, Epiphany Cathedral School and Venice Elementary School. The students created artwork to the theme "My City: I'm Part of It, I'm Proud of It."



The students whose posters were chosen won a pizza party for their classes and received framed certificates signed by **City Manager Ed Lavallee**. Their artwork was also displayed at City Hall.

**WINTER PARK**

This year, the **City of Winter Park** asked citizens to join them in their Florida City Government Week effort and get involved with government at the local level. See **#FLCityWeek #winterparkfla #winterparkflorida**.

**RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS:**

- City of Bowling Green
- City of Fruitland Park
- City of Greenacres
- City of Green Cove Springs
- Town of Hastings
- City of Indian Rocks Beach
- Town of Jupiter
- City of Margate
- City of North Lauderdale
- City of Palatka
- Village of Palm Springs
- City of Pensacola
- City of Port Orange
- City of Okeechobee
- Town of Orange Park
- City of Winter Park



Sharon G. Berrian is director of Membership Relations for the Florida League of Cities. **QC**