



2018 Florida City Government Week

The week held special meaning after hurricane

Florida City Government Week is set aside as a time to celebrate, showcase and engage citizens regarding all the people and services that make city government special. The 2018 event, held October 22-28, came shortly after Hurricane Michael had a devastating impact across Northwest Florida.

That disaster highlighted the importance of city government in a particular way, as municipalities scrambled to help each other and their residents recover. Government officials and staff were at their finest as they gave a helping hand to citizens.

City officials and staffs make their communities better every day. The summaries that follow recap how cities marked Florida City Government Week.

compiled by Eryn Russell
Florida League of Cities



PLAN NOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2019 FCGW

This year's **Florida City Government Week** will be held October 21-27. If your city would like to participate, you can find additional ideas by going to floridaleagueofcities.com. Under "Resources," select "Florida City Government Week."



ALACHUA



The City of Alachua celebrated Florida City Government Week by presenting a five-part video series on social media detailing what has made Alachua a special place to live since 1905, the year it incorporated. The videos were hosted by a different commissioner each day and featured a look into the city's history, public services, economic prosperity and quality of life, before culminating the week with Mayor Gib Coerper giving viewers a look toward Alachua's future.

ARCADIA

The City of Arcadia established a Citizens' Academy to coincide with Florida City Government Week. Academy members began with a visit to the Utilities Department and Water and Sewer Department. They viewed the water and wastewater plants to learn how they operate and their costs. Next, they visited the airport and golf course to see improvements. Finally, the members toured the Arcadia Police Department and became acquainted with the marshal and lieutenant.



ATLANTIC BEACH

The City of Atlantic Beach began Florida City Government Week with an essay contest for sixth-graders titled "If I Were a Mayor." The city also unveiled a program that will help residents understand their city government. The program will include hosting quarterly "Atlantic Beach Government 101 Overview and Q&A" classes, updating the city website to include a "Government 101" portal and city leaders going into classrooms to educate students. Atlantic Beach was also recognized as a Purple Heart City.



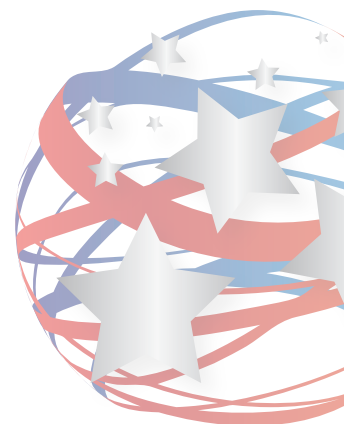
BELLE ISLE



To celebrate Florida City Government Week, the City of Belle Isle posted trivia questions each day at City Hall. If residents answered the questions correctly, they received Florida City Government Week buttons and bumper stickers. Belle Isle also hosted a Halloween event that included an invitation to residents to trick or treat and to tour City Hall to learn about the duties of Belle Isle's employees.

BOCA RATON

At the October 23 City Council meeting, the City of Boca Raton recognized student government bodies from local high schools and colleges/universities. The city also used social media to promote civic engagement. It informed residents through short, interactive videos about how to get involved with the city and how Boca Raton serves its residents.



BRADENTON BEACH

During Florida City Government Week, the City of Bradenton Beach and Mayor John Chappie announced the launch of a new pilot program: Youth in Politics, which is fashioned to introduce young children to local government. Additionally, the city opened its doors to 75 third-graders for one day to become “local politicians.” Since that time, Bradenton Beach has been contacted by multiple local schools, and the city is planning to host even more schools in 2019.



BROOKSVILLE

The City of Brooksville Fire Department held educational field trips and tours during October to incorporate Fire Prevention Week and Florida City Government Week. Fire Chief Ronald Snowberger arranged for groups of elementary schoolchildren to take tours of the station, which included firefighter and firetruck demonstrations.



BUNNELL

For Florida City Government Week, the City of Bunnell held a “Meet ‘n Greet” that gave citizens time to talk with the mayor, vice mayor, commissioners, the new city manager and staff members to gain information about their city and how they can get involved. After the “Meet ‘n Greet,” the regular meeting of the Bunnell City Commission was held.



CAPE CANAVERAL



The City of Cape Canaveral marked Florida City Government Week with three activities that gave local elementary students a behind-the-scenes look at municipal government. Fourth-grade students were treated to a presentation by the Culture & Leisure Services Department. Third-graders participated in a mock city council meeting, where they discussed single-use plastics and their impact on the environment. Cape Canaveral wrapped up the week by hosting a tour of city facilities and departments for fifth-grade students.

COCONUT CREEK

For Florida City Government Week, the City of Coconut Creek filmed and highlighted 17 city employees on social media and the city’s website; posted historical facts about the city on social media; placed Florida City Government Week banners on local streets; and promoted city facts, classes and initiatives on the city’s website. Speakers, including the vice mayor, visited local schools to discuss topics such as safety, engineering and sustainable development.

CORAL GABLES

For Florida City Government Week, the City of Coral Gables held a social media photo contest for residents and visitors to showcase their favorite spots in the city by using the hashtag #PartofGables. Additionally, the second annual poster was launched that celebrates employees and the services that local government provides. Coral Gables closed out the week with an ice cream social for employees.



DADE CITY



The City of Dade City hosted fifth-graders from Pasco Elementary and R.B. Cox Elementary School at City Hall. The students interacted with city staff, members of the Police Department, public works employees and several commissioners. Students also participated in a mock commission meeting, “Touch a Truck” with the street sweeper and a tour of the Police Department.

DAVIE

For Florida City Government Week, the Town of Davie hosted a tour of Town Hall for 98 students and teachers. Students met Mayor Judy Paul, Town Attorney John C. Rayson and Councilwoman Susan Starkey. They also met with town staff members from the Budget and Finance, Human Resources, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Cultural Arts, Fire and Police departments.

DEFUNIAK SPRINGS

During Florida City Government week, 30 students toured the DeFuniak Springs Police Department and were treated to doughnuts during a Q&A meeting with Marshal Mark Weeks. An additional 100 students toured City Hall council chambers, met the mayor and city manager, and heard presentations from the Public Works and Sanitation departments. During a city government “Meet and Greet” public reception, residents met with new City Manager Mell Smigielski and members of the City Council.



ESTERO



During Florida City Government week, Mayor James R. Boesch, Vice-Mayor William F. Ribble and Councilmembers Jim Wilson, Jon McLain, Katy Errington and Nicholas Batos participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the first residential building in Genova. Genova is the first residential community to be approved in Estero’s newly created Village Center.

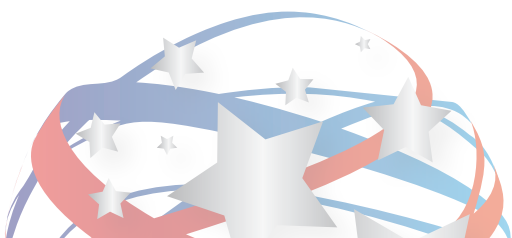
FORT PIERCE

For Florida City Government Week, the City of Fort Pierce hosted a scavenger hunt that led citizens throughout the city. At each stop, city staff gave citizens puzzles to solve before hunters could proceed to the next stop. Each stop showcased an important spot for art, culture or history in Fort Pierce.



GOLDEN BEACH

At Golden Beach’s October Town Council meeting, the town displayed special items from its Police Department, which included a canine unit and a pink Breast Cancer Awareness police cruiser. During Golden Beach’s annual Halloween event, residents interacted with the Police Department and received “My Town, I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It” buttons.



GREENACRES

The City of Greenacres hosted approximately 45 students from the L.C. Swain Middle School pre-law program during Florida City Government Week. They held a mock city council meeting and toured all the city departments. City Attorney Glen J. Torcivia and City Clerk Joanna L. Cunningham talked to them about elections, passports and opportunities in government.



HOLLY HILL



The City of Holly Hill invited local students to City Hall for Florida City Government Week. The mayor and commissioners each selected a student and prepared him or her about how to conduct a city commission meeting. Other students acted as the audience. They could ask questions, share their concerns and vote on items being discussed. Additionally, staff from the Public Works Department showed students the heavy equipment they use, and the Police and Fire departments discussed their work.

LADY LAKE

The Town of Lady Lake celebrated the week with a photo contest that asked residents to enter an image that celebrates “My Town: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It.” The town hosted a meet and greet with the commissioners, town manager and staff members and held an event with the Public Works and Parks and Recreation departments where residents could ask questions and view equipment demonstrations. Residents also met with police officers and asked questions about their work.



LAKE PARK



The Town of Lake Park celebrated Florida City Government Week with 65 fifth-grade students and five teachers from Lake Park Elementary School and Lake Park Baptist School. The students and teachers participated in a mock commission meeting; department skits; a public works’ demonstration; and a tour of Town Hall, the library and the sheriff’s office. Students and teachers were also greeted by the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office Mounted Unit and Motorcycle Unit.

MARCO ISLAND



During Florida City Government Week, the City of Marco Island hosted activities for its residents including a movie in the park, a workshop on local iguanas and a citywide cleanup event. Third- and fifth-graders joined the Parks and Recreation Department staff for the cleanup. Additionally, Marco Island hosted a City Hall open house at which residents were invited to eat and meet with city officials and staff.

MOUNT DORA

For Florida City Government Week, the City of Mount Dora produced videos highlighting city departments. Mount Dora focused on public safety, events, public works and the city’s library programs. The city’s electric crew spoke with students at Head Start and showcased their equipment. On Saturday, the largest event of the year, the Mount Dora Craft Fair, brought thousands of Florida citizens into Mount Dora. Residents interacted with city staff, police officers, firefighters, the mayor and councilmembers.



MULBERRY

For Florida City Government Week, the City of Mulberry hosted an informative week for the city’s young people. City department heads visited Mulberry High School and Mulberry Middle School, while the two local elementary schools visited City Hall. Additionally, the Mulberry Civic Teen Advisory Board was announced as a winner in the Florida League of Cities’ 2018 Video Competition.



NEWBERRY

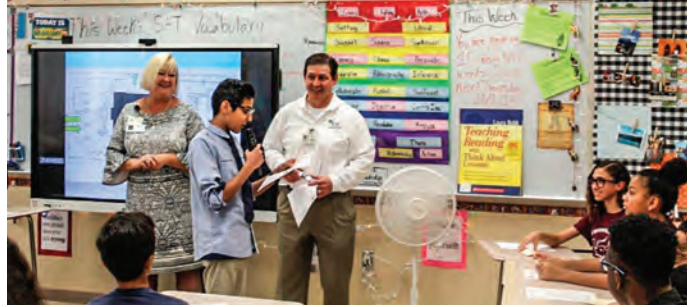


The City of Newberry held a “My City” event at the Newberry Branch Library. The event included activities for all ages that promoted municipal government and the services it provides to Newberry citizens. The city hosted a utility bucket truck and a firetruck on site for participants to explore and interact with staff. The mayor and commissioners were available for questions. The library also hosted Newberry trivia, municipal trivia and a craft for kids.

OCEAN BREEZE

For Florida City Government Week, City of Ocean Breeze Mayor Karen Ostrand spoke about the history of Home Rule at the Town Council meeting. Council Vice President Ann Kagdis distributed “Our Town” buttons and stickers and gave a historical overview of the Town of Ocean Breeze, one of the smallest towns in Florida.

PALM SPRINGS



Village Manager Richard J. Reade and various department directors visited Palm Springs Middle School during the week to engage students in a discussion about city government, including the city’s responsibilities and the services it provides. Seventh-grade students held a mock council meeting to consider a proposed redevelopment project. The students were invited to a Village Council meeting, where they sat with the mayor, council and staff members. Students assisted with running the meeting, presenting staff recommendations and considering agenda items for approval.

PARKLAND

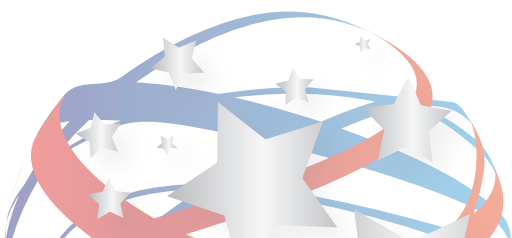
The City of Parkland hosted 600 third-grade students from local elementary schools at City Hall. Students had the opportunity to visit with the mayor to learn about her responsibilities, explore police and fire equipment and trucks, learn the ins and outs of recycling and waste pickup, and participate in an election at the Parkland Library.



PORT ST. LUCIE



For Florida City Government Week, the City of Port St. Lucie hosted a group of fifth-grade students who spent the day immersed in the work of their local government. They participated in a mock city council meeting, were able to see the city’s Swamp Meister in action, see the Police Department’s K-9s at work and learn about how recycling can benefit their neighborhoods.



SANFORD

#FCGWeek in Sanford began when Mayor Jeff Triplett called on city staff and his fellow commissioners for a “family photo” as he read the Florida City Government Week proclamation. Members of the Mayor’s Youth Council and Seminole High School’s Young Men of Excellence Program met at City Hall to learn about local government initiatives and to share peer-to-peer their own ideas about what local government means to them. Additionally, the city held its groundbreaking event for the RiverWalk Phase 3 Seawall.



SURFSIDE



During Florida City Government Week, the Town of Surfside hosted a behind-the-scenes Town Hall tour. Participants met members of town departments and walked through the police facility. After the tour, participants enjoyed an ice cream social with Mayor Daniel Dietch. Additionally, the Town of Surfside held a special edition of its “Coffee with the Cops” with Surfside Police Chief Julio Yero and his officers.

TALLAHASSEE

The City of Tallahassee produced a video highlighting its residents to kick off Florida City Government Week. During the week, the video was shared on the city’s social media platforms and aired on the city’s television channel more than 300 times.



TARPON SPRINGS

Mayor Chris Alahouzos visited with students at Tarpon Springs Middle School to celebrate Florida City Government Week. Alahouzos shared with the students the important role that city government plays in their lives, and students watched the City Government 101 video.



TEMPLE TERRACE

The City of Temple Terrace partnered with Florida College for its Second Annual Florida City Government Day program. Eleven college students selected a city director to shadow and learn about the director’s responsibilities. The students then researched how transitioning to a four-day workweek would affect their chosen departments. After spending an hour with their city mentors, the students held a mock city council meeting debating the merits of the hypothetical schedule change. A reception followed where students networked with elected officials and staff.



VENICE

For Florida City Government Week, the City of Venice held poster contests in two elementary schools. Participants drew or painted to the theme, “My City, I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It.” Their works will be installed at City Hall. Seventeen city officials and staff members read aloud to students in kindergarten through second grade at Venice Elementary School. Venice also hosted a “Make a Difference Day” in which more than 440 volunteers turned out to beautify the city’s parks.



WEBSTER



The City of Webster is a designated “Bee City.” During Florida City Government Week, Webster invited residents to City Hall to learn about pollinators and what the city does to help establish plants for pollinators. They also learned how to make bee condos. The Public Works Department taught residents how to read water meters, and staff members spoke about the proper care of grinder pumps. During the week, Congressman Daniel Webster, city councilmen and staff members were available in City Hall to meet and speak with citizens.


WESTON

During Florida City Government Week, the City of Weston kicked off the 17th annual Weston University Program. The program exposes students to local government, giving them firsthand insight into the work that goes into running a city. As customary, the first program day, held during Florida City Government Week, included an overview by City Manager John R. Flint, a session with Mayor Daniel J. Stermer, and ethics and legal perspectives by City Attorney Jamie A. Cole.



PROCLAMATIONS & RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Governor Rick Scott | Golden Beach | Palm Springs |
| Alachua | Greenacres | Port St. Lucie |
| Arcadia | Holly Hill | Sanford |
| Atlantic Beach | Indian Town | Surfside |
| Boca Raton | Jupiter | Tarpon Springs |
| Bradenton Beach | Lake City | Temple Terrace |
| Brooksville | Lake Park | Webster |
| Bunnell | Lakeland | Wellington |
| Coral Gables | Mulberry | Wilton Manors |
| Crestview | Newberry | Winter Haven |
| DeFuniak Springs | Ocean Breeze | |

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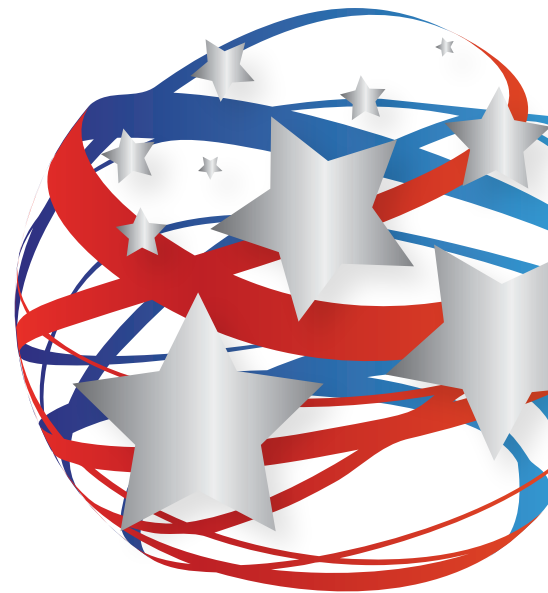
WINTER HAVEN



During Florida City Government Week, the City of Winter Haven’s city commissioners made presentations to over 200 school-aged children at three locations. The city also conducted a bingo night, “Meet with the Mayor” and Police Department tours. Staff from Technology Services and the public library hosted a “Technology Petting Zoo” to offer residents hands-on technology experiences, creating greater engagement and more powerful learning opportunities. The week ended with a fun “Ghouls’ Day Out” Halloween event for hundreds of children.

WINTER PARK

For Florida City Government Week, the City of Winter Park hosted a behind-the-scenes look at the Public Works Department. The session featured how city signs are made, as well as how a traffic control device is wired to alleviate traffic. Winter Park also promoted the Fire Department’s hands-only CPR event to empower its community members to feel confident about stepping in to help save a life.





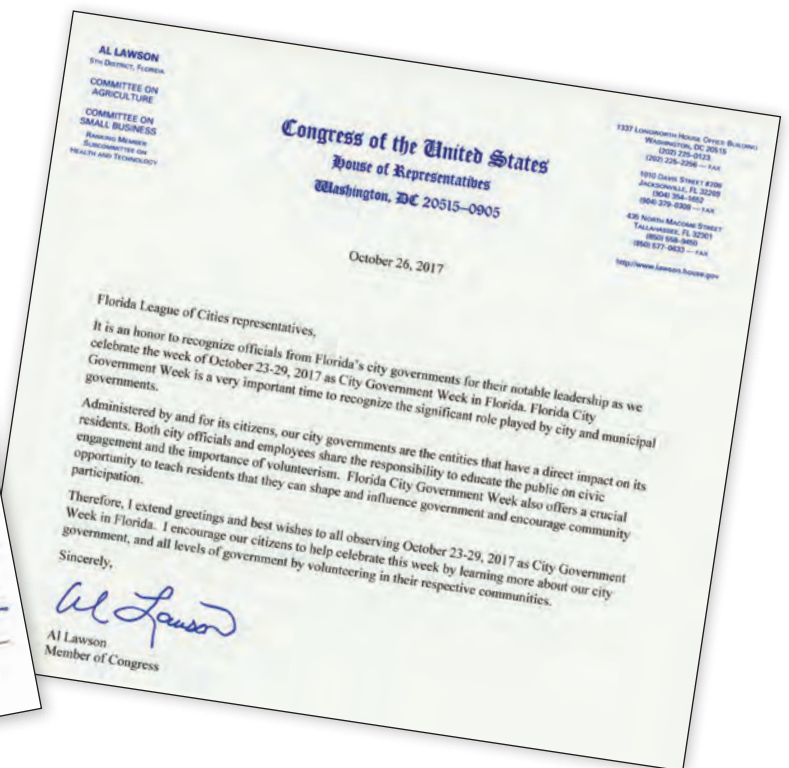
2017 Florida City Government Week

During October 23-29, cities throughout Florida held activities to celebrate and educate

Florida City Government Week is an annual program sponsored by the Florida League of Cities. This weeklong celebration raises awareness about the importance of municipal government and its daily impact on residents. The goal is to educate citizens about how city government runs and give them the opportunity to learn what their city has to offer.

This year, League members were encouraged to spread the word throughout their cities through community service, special events and education. The following summaries highlight special events and projects to celebrate Florida City Government Week, which was also recognized through a proclamation from **Gov. Rick Scott** and a congratulatory letter from **Congressman Al Lawson**.

Compiled by Eryn Russell
Florida League of Cities



We Hope to Include You in 2018

It's not too early to start thinking about how your city will celebrate **2018 Florida City Government Week**, which will be held October 22-28. If your city has never celebrated the week, use the summaries in this article to generate ideas for your event. Visit FLCityWeek.com for more information. Contact Sharon Berrian at sberrian@flcities.com or (850) 222-9684 if you have any questions.

BOWLING GREEN

Bowling Green kicked off its first year participating in Florida City Government Week by inviting residents to see the passing of its resolution and to learn about the importance of cities. During the city's Fall Festival, the mayor and volunteers greeted children with "My City" buttons and bumper stickers. Bowling Green held a photo contest for school-aged children to take a picture with a city landmark. Bowling Green's goal was to promote the city while building a strong community spirit and pride.

BRANFORD



Branford Town Clerk Donna Hardin and Mayor Mickey Dempsey shared city government books with Branford High School's civics teachers. During an assembly at the high school, Hardin and Dempsey explained city government to students. Following the assembly, both officials participated in the homecoming parade and distributed "My Town" buttons and bumper stickers.

CAPE CANAVERAL

Over the course of Florida City Government Week, departments and contracted agencies from the **City of Cape Canaveral** came together to educate approximately 350 students from all grades at Cape View Elementary School and encourage their participation in the city government. All city departments, the Brevard County Sheriff's Office Cape Canaveral Precinct and Canaveral Fire Rescue led the events. Third graders joined Mayor Pro Tem Brendan McMillan and staff for a mock city council meeting.



COCOA



During Florida City Government Week, the residents of **Cocoa** were invited to an open house that featured table-top displays from each city department. Residents spoke with city staff and representatives about services offered and they asked questions about other city issues. Residents also created a mural about why they love Cocoa that will be displayed at City Hall. Along with the open house, Cocoa held an online scavenger hunt to promote city services to residents.

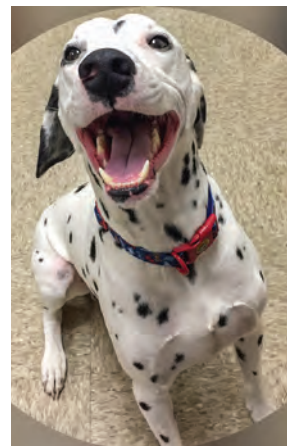
CRESTVIEW

The **City of Crestview's** elected officials and department heads held several events during Florida City Government Week. The week began with an open house on Monday following the city's regular workshop, and ended by serving citizens at a local restaurant on Historic Downtown Main Street.



DAVENPORT

The **City of Davenport** invited its residents to an open house for Florida City Government Week to meet with their city commissioners and staff. Each department set up tables to highlight current projects and displayed equipment and gear, including the city's original traffic signal and two water meters from the 1920s. Residents could register to vote, learn about city recycling and meet with the city's Police and Fire departments. Spot, the Fire Department's mascot, greeted residents at the door.



DAVIE

As part of Florida City Government Week, students from Summit Questa Montessori School were invited to tour **Davie Town Hall**. Students visited the Town Council chambers and observed town staff performing daily tasks in the Budget and Finance, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, Public Works, Utilities Customer Service and Town Clerk's offices. Students then met with Mayor Judy Paul and Councilmember Susan Starkey to ask town- and government-related questions.



DEBARY

The **City of DeBary** celebrated Florida City Government Week by inviting its residents to an activity-filled evening. The evening began with a welcome from the mayor and an Air One fly over. Throughout the evening, residents toured the police and fire stations, watched governance presentations in the council chambers, and watched several competitions between the Police and Fire departments, including a football toss, trike relay race and basketball-shooting competition.

DEFUNIAK SPRINGS

DeFuniak Springs Mayor Bob Campbell wanted to engage residents using the "My City: I'm Part of It, I'm Proud of It" theme. The city hosted activities throughout Florida City Government Week in hopes of reaching all residents. The week kicked off with the presentation of the city's proclamation and continued with presentations from the Public Works Department, Fire Department, Police Department and airport, and a meet and greet with elected officials, city staff and the new city manager.



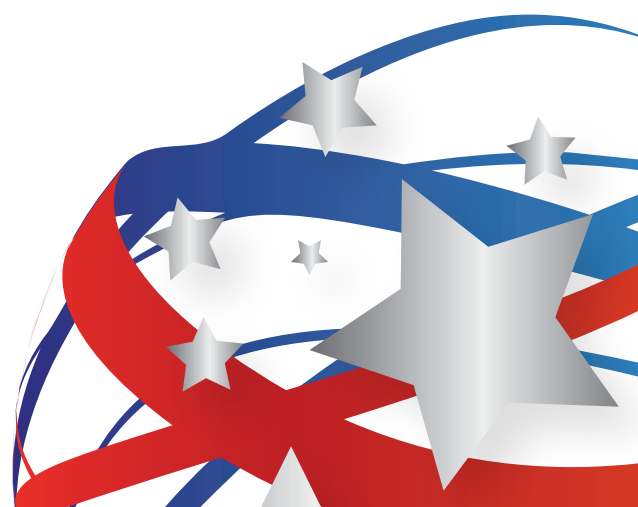
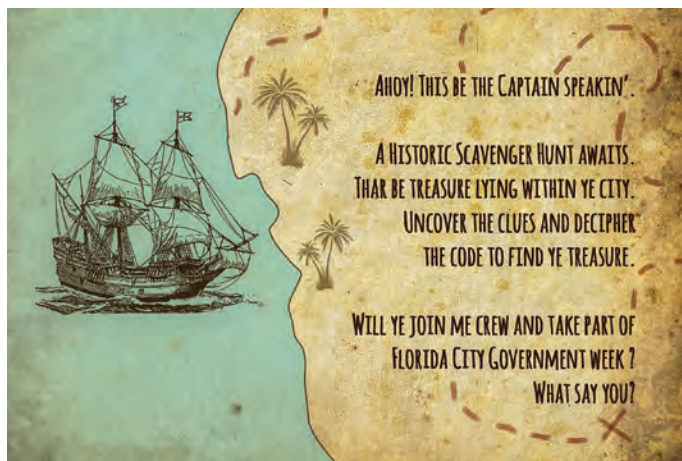
DELRAY BEACH



To launch Florida City Government Week, **Delray Beach** Mayor Cary Glickstein joined two students at Carver Middle School in the reading of the city's new proclamation. Afterward, the mayor spoke to several classes on the importance of city government. Students had the opportunity to ask questions, drawing upon the knowledge they learned in their civics class.

FORT PIERCE

During the week, **Fort Pierce** celebrated what makes the city great, including its rich history. The city hosted a historic scavenger hunt to give residents an opportunity to discover clues that would teach them about Fort Pierce's heritage. At each stop along the way, residents interacted with city employees to help them uncover the hidden message.



FRUITLAND PARK

The **Fruitland Park City Commission** issued a proclamation recognizing students of great achievement. They recognized Sophia Hurtt, who attends the Villages Charter School, and the 2017-2018 Fruitland Park Elementary School National Elementary Honor Society students with academic performance of 3.5 or higher who volunteer in the community.



GREENACRES

During Florida City Government Week, **Greenacres** celebrated by inviting local children to City Hall to learn about the importance of voting and held a mock election. Children learned about the city clerk's position, traveled to the Public Works Department to see mechanics work on a fire truck engine, and visited the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office to learn about safety.



HAINES CITY



The **City of Haines City** invited local children, aged 13-17, to participate in a writing contest themed "What I Love About My City." Three winners were chosen. Inez Cruz, the first-place contest winner, read her essay during the City Commission meeting.

HAVANA

For Florida City Government Week, the **Town of Havana** invited 30 students of various ages to visit the council chambers. Havana also invited seventh grade students to a special program that included a tour of council chambers and town departments, along with lunch on the lawn at Town Hall.



HILLARD

The **Town of Hilliard** invited local fourth graders to participate in an essay contest themed "If I were Mayor for the day." Three winners – Brian Wheat, Emma Dillard and Kaylee Hobbs – were selected. They were invited to a Town Council meeting where the mayor read their essays and presented each winner with a prize.



HOLLY HILL

Seventh grade students in **Holly Hill** conducted a mock city commission meeting with the mayor, city commissioners and city clerk. The mock agenda allowed the students to vote on issues and learn from city staff about their positions on the topics being discussed. Students then toured City Hall and various departments, including the Police Department.



KISSIMMEE

The **City of Kissimmee** celebrated Florida City Government Week by hosting an array of events. These included a poster contest, a showcase by the Public Works Department, a trivia contest and a virtual tour of City Hall and its departments. The celebrations concluded with “Coffee with a Commissioner.”

JUPITER



For Florida City Government Week, the **Town of Jupiter** created a “Get Involved” campaign to encourage its residents to participate in their local government by attending all town public meetings. Jupiter tested its residents about different town departments through “Did You Know” facts that were sent out via social media and email blasts.

LAKE CLARKE SHORES



Lake Clarke Shores President Pro-Tem Robert M. W. Shalhoub visited a local preschool to read “D is for Democracy,” and he passed out coloring books from the Police Department. The town also hosted “Coffee with the Town Administrator & Chief of Police” for residents to learn about town projects, ask questions and share concerns or ideas. The gathering was so successful that the town hopes to continue inviting residents to meetings held every few months.

LAKE PARK

In the **Town of Lake Park**, 72 fifth-grade students and their teachers celebrated Florida City Government Week by participating in a mock commission meeting, city department skits, a public works demonstration, and a tour of Town Hall, the library and sheriff’s office.



LEESBURG

The **City of Leesburg** celebrated Florida City Government Week in a variety of ways. The city hosted an “I Love Leesburg” community appreciation event for all city workers, and created “What Makes Leesburg Great” videos and a webpage to celebrate the week. The city also partnered with the Leesburg Center for the Arts for a photo contest, and handed bumper stickers and buttons to residents visiting City Hall.



LYNN HAVEN

Lynn Haven invited its residents to participate in a variety of activities surrounding Florida City Government Week. The week began with coffee with the mayor and commissioners. Activities included the mayor speaking to seventh grade civics students, and the Lynn Haven Senior Center distributing buttons and bumper stickers. Educational fire safety demonstrations were held, and the Lynn Haven Library invited children to story time.



MARGATE

Twenty-one students from **Margate STEM Magnet Middle School** joined the City Clerk's Office at City Hall for a Student Government Day. The day provided student council members with a hands-on experience of how local government works. Students participated in a mock commission meeting alongside city staff and officials, and toured various departments to increase their understanding of how city government impacts the quality of life for residents.

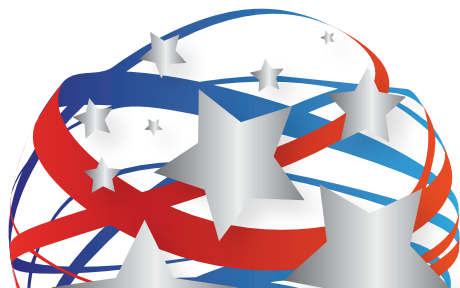
MELBOURNE

Melbourne conducted daily social media posts to highlight the city and its services. The posts included information about water distribution lines, public safety officers, and parks and recreation facilities and programs that are available to residents. In addition, city volunteers were recognized for their combined 1,000 years of service.

MIAMI SPRINGS



During Florida City Government Week, **Miami Springs** invited residents to City Hall for tours and conversations about the city. Residents enjoyed coffee and doughnuts and inquired about various departments and services. Miami Springs also posted an informational video on certain departments (see youtu.be/dywTXsPjZVO).



MIRAMAR

Miramar created a weeklong initiative to get its residents involved in Florida City Government Week. The week was kicked off by a proclamation from Mayor Wayne M. Messam, followed by a state-of-the-city address, a social media contest, shared press release and distribution of "My City: I'm Part of It I'm Proud of It" stickers and buttons.



MOUNT DORA

Florida City Government Week in **Mount Dora** began with an ice cream social for city volunteers as a thank you for their hard work. Mayor Nick Girone invited residents for coffee and doughnuts and an informal chat about the city and events. He also answered questions and addressed resident concerns. In addition, the city held a photo contest for residents to submit pictures that represent their city.



MULBERRY

Mulberry hosted three citywide events to engage its residents in the importance of municipal government. For the first time, city commissioners met with residents over ice cream. The city also held a teen leadership forum, inviting teenagers to learn about the importance of leadership in the workplace and college. The week ended with a Harvest Festival for all residents attended by the mayor, commissioners and city manager.



NEW SMYRNA BEACH

The **City of New Smyrna Beach** conducted a variety of activities for its citizens to experience city government. Residents met with commissioners for coffee, and witnessed the city's proclamation. High school civics students participated in a mock commission meeting, and residents participated in a walk with the city manager.



NORTH BAY VILLAGE

During Florida City Government Week, **North Bay Village** invited Treasure Island Elementary School students to a Village Commission meeting. The students conducted a mock commission meeting on the topic of keeping animals in small cages.

OCEAN BREEZE

For Florida City Government Week, the **Town of Ocean Breeze** invited residents to Town Hall for a civics education lesson. As a developing city with a diverse population, city leaders wanted their residents to learn what a town is and how it operates. At the meeting, "My Town: I'm Part of It, I'm Proud of It" bumper stickers and buttons were given to the 35 residents who attended.



OLDSMAR

Throughout Florida City Government Week, the **City of Oldsmar** posted items on its Facebook page highlighting different aspects of the city government. This included information about the City Council, city clerk, city manager and various departments. Residents were encouraged to share the posts to win a prize.



ORANGE CITY



The **City of Orange City** invited the Orange City Elementary Student Government Association for a day at City Hall. Twenty-seven students learned about what a city is, and the role of the City Council, mayor, city manager, and Police and Fire departments. The students ate lunch with the mayor and toured City Hall, and the Police and Fire departments.

PALM BEACH GARDENS

The **City of Palm Beach Gardens** held multiple events for residents and asked them to engage online with the #FLCityWeek hashtag.



PARKER

For Florida City Government Week, five Parker Elementary School fifth graders took on the roles of council members, mayor, city clerk and fire chief. Students toured the police and fire stations, Public Works Department and City Hall. The city invited its fifth graders to write an essay about how they would spend \$100,000 to make the **City of Parker** better. Students called for additional money for the Police and Fire departments, a park for the disabled and more.



PEMBROKE PINES

Pembroke Pines Mayor Frank Ortis hosted “Coffee with the Mayor” in the lobby of City Hall during Florida City Government Week. During the event, Ortis met with residents to discuss their ideas and concerns. Throughout the week, the city held a trivia game on its Facebook page about the history of Pembroke Pines. The city also put together a video about special events hosted throughout the year (see youtu.be/yZCvFyYATTw).



PORT ORANGE

Florida City Government Week coincided with the **City of Port Orange’s** inaugural citizens academy, Port Orange University, where residents learned about the services the city provides. The Port Orange University class visited the water treatment plant to learn about the city’s field and lab operations. Later in the week, the city hosted a meet-and-greet with the city manager.

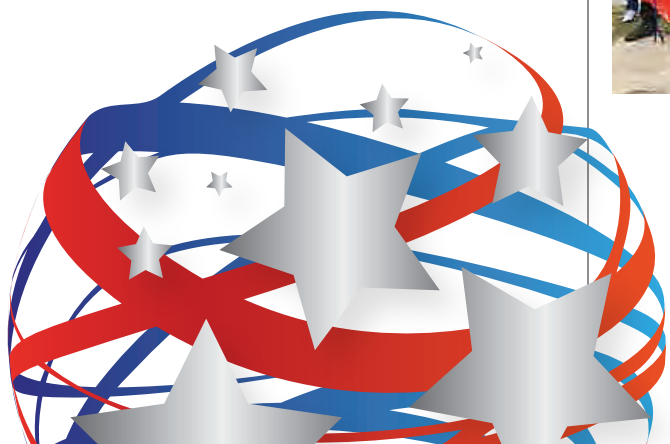


PORT ST. LUCIE

Throughout Florida City Government Week, the **City of Port St. Lucie** hosted a trivia contest on its Facebook page. Residents could log in and respond to a daily trivia question, with the winner receiving a prize.

SANFORD

The **City of Sanford** participated in Florida City Government Week in hopes of educating residents about municipal government. The city promotes government through its Citizens Academy class, in which 31 residents are enrolled. The Mayors’ Youth Council and city staff helped Keeping Sanford Sparkling, a local environmental group, in its great grassroots cleanup effort. The city will be creating a video series that guides viewers through local government procedures.



SEMINOLE

The **City of Seminole** invited more than 60 fourth graders to City Hall to learn about government and participate in an activity-filled day. Mayor Leslie Waters presented “My City: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It,” and began the day with a mock city council meeting. Corporal Dan DiFrancesco, the Pinellas County Sheriff’s public information officer, spoke to the children about the Sheriff’s Office and safety. Fire Chief Heather Burford entertained the children with a question-and-answer session and demonstrated firefighter gear.



ST. AUGUSTINE

St. Augustine city commissioners and first responders met with elementary school students each day of Florida City Government Week, to greet and participate in morning announcements. The Flagler College Student Government Association Executive Board met with Mayor Nancy Shaver and City Manager John Regan to discuss the challenges and rewards of municipal government and their roles in it.



TEMPLE TERRACE

The **City of Temple Terrace** launched a three-part program to celebrate Florida City Government Week. First, the city used social media to introduce city departments, department directors, city leaders and the services the city provides. City staff met with students at Florida College to address concerns and challenges for students about how municipal government works. Then, select students were invited to visit City Hall to shadow department directors and city leaders to experience their roles first hand.

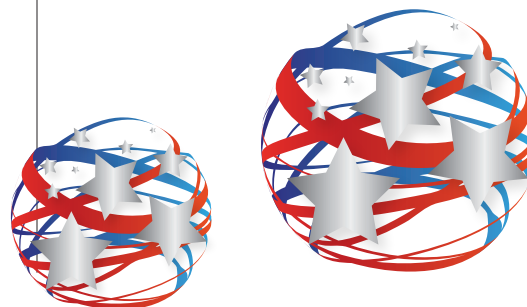
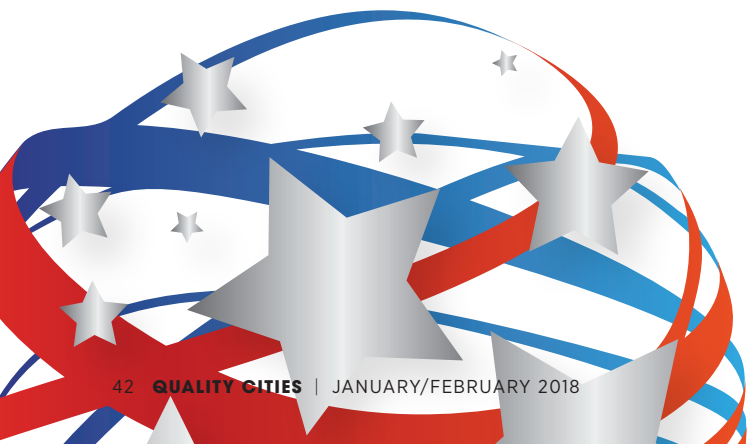
VENICE

To celebrate the “My City: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It” theme, the **City of Venice** held a poster contest for fourth and fifth grade students. The winners won pizza parties for their classmates, and winning posters were framed and hung in Venice City Hall. City officials gave a presentation on the purpose of Florida City Government Week and how municipal government reaches students’ lives.



WEBSTER

For Florida City Government Week, the **City of Webster** and **Sumter County** hosted Congressman Daniel Webster to speak about tax reform currently happening in the nation. Sumter Scenic Heritage Byway advocated for keeping Webster’s heritage alive through fundraising and beautification projects for the community. A Post Office representative displayed the ordinance from the post office’s inception. Throughout the week, Webster promoted its official designation as the only Florida Bee City, which raises awareness and enhances habitats for honey bees.



WELLINGTON

The **Village of Wellington** invited hundreds of high school students to Village Hall to participate in “Civics 101” to learn how their local government is run. Students elected their own council members and conducted a meeting featuring department presentations and resident questions. Throughout the week, social media engaged residents with several city-related topics including volunteerism, staff at work and civic engagement.

WESTON



For Florida City Government Week, the **City of Weston** continued its “I Led the Pledge” program, with students from Gator Run Elementary leading the pledge during commission meetings. Weston also hosted its first “Weston University” session on civic education. Students participated and gained hands-on experiences about municipal government.

WINDERMERE

For the 11th consecutive year, the **Town of Windermere** invited third graders to spend a half day learning about local government. Students were greeted by Mayor Gary Bruhn, who provided a town history and a presentation on town functions and services. Then, staff from **Ocoee’s** Police and Fire departments shared their job functions and showed students equipment, including lifesaving tools from the Fire Department.



WINTER HAVEN



The **City of Winter Haven** used Florida City Government Week as an opportunity to celebrate its 492 city employees and more than 41,134 residents. The city held its annual Fire Department open house, with more than 700 residents participating. The city also launched its first Winter Haven Youth Council. The city promoted the “My City” message through its premier event – Ghoul’s Day Out – along with passing out buttons and bumper stickers in the Services Division lobby.

RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS:

- Governor Rick Scott**
- City of Auburndale**
- City of Bowling Green**
- City of Cooper City**
- City of Crestview**
- City of Dade City**
- City of DeFuniak Springs**
- City of Delray Beach**
- City of Fruitland Park**
- City of Greenacres**
- Town of Hastings**
- Town of Hilliard**
- City of Holly Hill**
- Town of Juno Beach**
- Town of Jupiter**
- Town of Lake Clarke Shores**
- City of Lake Wales**
- City of Leesburg**
- City of Miramar**
- City of New Smyrna Beach**
- City of North Lauderdale**
- Town of Oakland**
- Town of Ocean Breeze**
- City of Okeechobee**
- City of Oldsmar**
- Town of Orange Park**
- City of Palm Beach Gardens**
- City of Palm Coast**
- City of Port Orange**
- City of Sanford**
- City of Seminole**
- City of St. Augustine**
- City of Sunrise**
- City of Tallahassee**



Eryn Russell is an assistant in the Florida League of Cities Membership Relations Department. 

CIVIC EDUCATION

2016 Florida City Government Week

Cities across the state join in the celebration

compiled by Sharon G. Berrian
Florida League of Cities

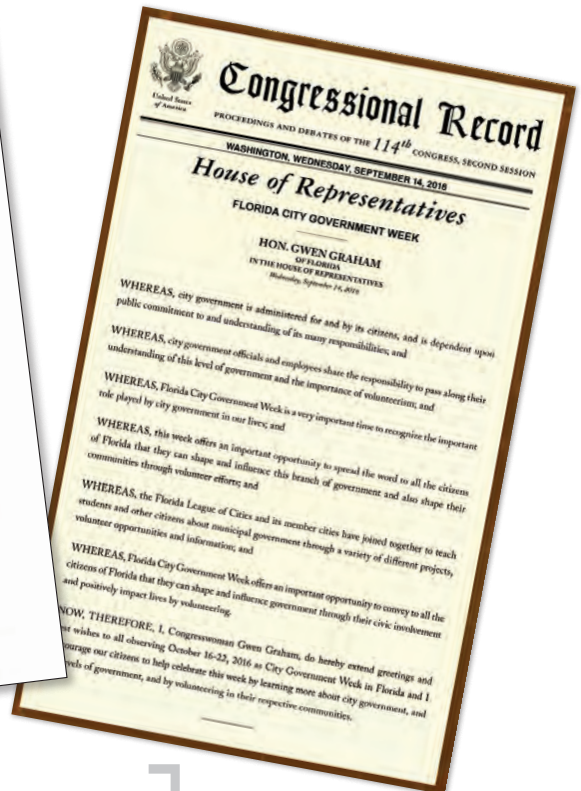


Florida City Government Week is a statewide celebration to raise public awareness about the services that cities provide and to educate the public on how city government works.

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 for more information. Contact Sharon Berrian at 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/.

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**



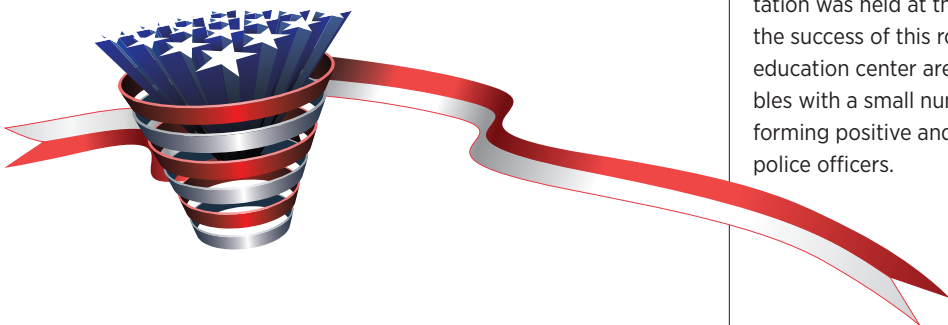
CAPE CANAVERAL

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.

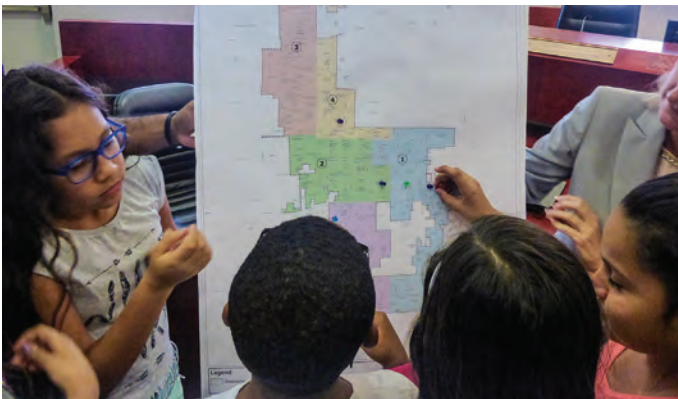
FRUITLAND PARK



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.



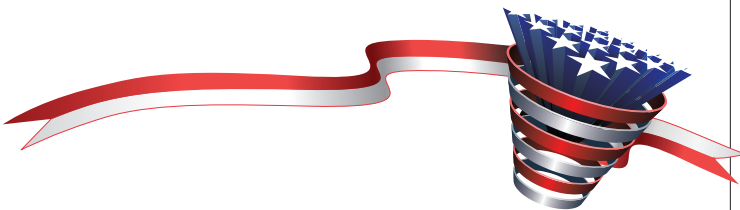
PENSACOLA

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**



CIVIC EDUCATION

Florida City Government Week

An education in city government and civic involvement

by Sharon G. Berrian
Florida League of Cities

In Florida **Gov. Rick Scott's** resolution observing October 18-24, 2015, as **Florida City Government Week**, he reminded citizens that this week “offers an important opportunity to convey to all of the citizens in Florida that they can shape and influence government through their civic involvement.” It is a message cities throughout the state give their constituencies each and every day. City government is the government closest to the people and has the most direct daily impact on its residents. Florida City Government Week provides a great opportunity for citizens to receive more information about how cities operate and the services they provide.



The following are highlights of how some of Florida's cities recognized the week:

ARCADIA



Arcadia officials held a mock city council meeting with the seventh-grade civics classes of DeSoto Middle School. They guided the class through the city council meeting and helped them to make decisions on how to deal with the items on the agenda. The **City of Arcadia** owns a 1926 fire engine that was displayed for the class to view after the meeting.

BELLE GLADE



Area students enhanced their knowledge of city government by touring City Hall and attending commission meetings. During one of the meetings, two students were given the opportunity to fill the seats of two absent city officials. Additionally, local schools participated in a contest to design the **Belle Glade** city flag. Each of the seven area schools selected a flag design to represent their school. Glades Central Community High School won the contest for its design pictured above.

BROOKSVILLE



The **City of Brookville's** Police Department held tours of its facilities. Citizens were given a command briefing, as well as an overview of patrol activities, canine operations and traffic camera enforcement operations, followed by a question-and-answer period. Numerous students and parents took part in the tours, which were enjoyed by both the participants and the police officers. Because of the

overwhelming success of the event, the Police Department plans to hold more tours in the future.

CAPE CANAVERAL



The **City of Cape Canaveral** continued its partnership with Cape View Elementary School. Teachers and volunteers were hosted by each city department, including the Cape Canaveral Volunteer Fire Department, and the Brevard County Sheriff's Office. Almost 400 students participated in activities such as a mock city council meeting, mock code enforcement board meeting, and a tour and demonstrations of Public Works Services. It was an excellent opportunity for the students to see how municipal government works and how it directly impacts their day-to-day lives.

DAVENPORT

The **City of Davenport** hosted an Open House to showcase city operations and some current city projects. Each department displayed tables with informational items, pictures and brochures relating to the department. “My City...I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It” pins and bumper stickers were handed out to each attendee and were also handed out at City Hall.



DELTONA



Photo by Barry Koven

The **City of Deltona** held a photo contest for amateur and professional photographers of all ages. They were invited to enter their best images celebrating “My City: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It.”



FORT WALTON BEACH



The **City of Fort Walton Beach** held an Employee Appreciation Luncheon during which they recognized employees for length of service and presented employee and manager of the year awards.

GAINESVILLE



For the 10th year, the **City of Gainesville** hosted Alachua County’s fifth-grade “Citizens of the Month.” Fifteen students spent a day learning about the role city government plays in the lives of Gainesville’s residents. The students toured City Hall, a recreation center, a fire station and the traffic management center, and they met a K-9 unit. The students also met with Commissioner Craig Carter and participated in a mock commission meeting so they could see first-hand the important decisions commissioners regularly face.

GREENACRES



The **City of Greenacres** Leisure Services Department coordinated five presentations for seventh-grade civics classes at two area middle schools. Mayor Samuel J. Ferreri was treated like a celebrity at LC Swain Middle School, where a banner welcomed him and the band performed. He spoke to more than 175 students about local government and the city’s history, and he answered students’ questions. Department directors coordinated student tours at City Hall; and the afterschool program used the League’s publication, “ABCs of City Government,” and built a mock city with a dream park and new bus, which were displayed at an Open House attended by elected officials and parents.

HAWTHORNE



The **City of Hawthorne** spoke to two middle school civics classes and hosted the Hawthorne Middle/High School Student Government at City Hall. Principal Libby Hartwell and staff asked Mayor Matt Surrency to speak with the middle school students about the importance of local government. He emphasized that the government closest to the people is the most responsive to the people it serves.

HILLIARD



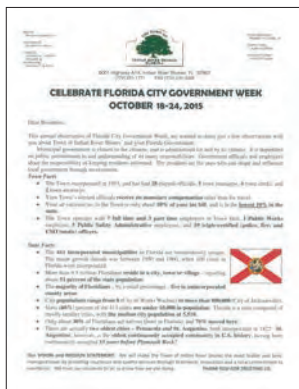
An essay contest was held for fourth-grade students at Hilliard Elementary School. The essays began with "If I was the Mayor of the **Town of Hilliard**, I would....." The winners were: First Place **Kaitlyn Williams** (\$30); Second Place **Rieley Taylor** (\$20); and Third Place **Heath Ray** (\$10) . Supporting the efforts were Mayor David Buchanan and Hilliard Elementary School Principal Lee Ann Jackson.

HOLLYWOOD

The **City of Hollywood** posted the Florida Local Government Coalition video to the city's YouTube site, where it is currently available for viewing.

INDIAN RIVER SHORES

An **Indian River Shores** council meeting was held during the week with a packed chamber. Citizens received a variety of city information. Also, staff took the opportunity to recognize the elected officials, board and committee members who give much with no remuneration, and voiced appreciation for their dedication and service. They echoed back with gratitude for the staff who keep everthing operating smoothly.



KISSIMMEE



The **City of Kissimmee** began its annual six-week School of Government program. The citizen students meet every Thursday night to get a firsthand look at the City of Kissimmee operations and programs through hands-on activities, interactive tours and events. The first class met on October 22 at Lakefront Park for an evening with the Parks and Recreation Department. The director gave a tour of the park and students got a sneak peek into the city's annual Haunted House.

LAKE MARY



Students from Crystal Lake Elementary in **Lake Mary** participated in City Government Day where they saw demonstrations and displays from the city's Fire, Police, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works departments. Included were a police K-9 demonstration, fire and rescue trucks, investigations, SWAT, patrol and more.



LAKE WORTH

Commissioner Andy Amoroso organized a tour of City Hall for students from elementary schools in **Lake Worth** where they met all the employees, including the city manager, and the mayor in the commission chambers. The students had questions for the elected officials and city manager. Most of the questions were related to how an elected official's job can improve the residents' quality of life. Students who participated were given stickers and school supplies.



MARGATE



Hosted by the City Clerk's Office, 34 students from **Margate** STEM Magnet Middle School spent Student Government Day learning about the day-to-day operations of the city, touring city departments and getting an up-close view of police, fire and public works equipment and vehicles. The students ran a mock commission meeting with the help of Mayor Joanne Simone, Vice Mayor Tommy Ruzzano, City Manager Douglas Smith, City Attorney Eugene Steinfeld and City Clerk Joseph Kavanagh.



NEW SMYRNA BEACH



With the bang of a gavel at the mayor's seat on the City Commission dais, an hour-long mock city commission meeting conducted by **New Smyrna Beach** High School students got under way. Nine students filled roles as elected officials, the city clerk, city manager, police chief and city attorney. The remainder of the world history/criminal justice class served as engaged citizens. The students discussed possible enhancements to security at current and future city parks, including lighting and solar security cameras. Since 2012, New Smyrna Beach City Clerk Johnny Bledsoe worked with the students' teacher, Paul Woodard, and city staff to provide a field activity to enhance course learning.

OCEAN BREEZE



The **Town of Ocean Breeze** invited residents to participate in a civic event with refreshments at Town Hall. Council President Ann Kagdis spoke about celebrating the town to bring about awareness of the role of city government.

OKEECHOBEE

2015 marked the **City of Okeechobee's** centennial. One of its celebratory events was a Heritage Festival that coincided with Florida City Government Week. The event featured historical displays and demonstrations representing Okeechobee's rich agricultural history. The Okeechobee Community Theater gave a special performance, "The Spirits of Okeechobee," highlighting several of the very colorful people and events of Okeechobee's history over the past 100 years. The high school marching band performed its award-winning show titled "Postcards from Okeechobee," featuring historical photos and music from the time period when Okeechobee became a city. The mayor encouraged officials and employees to actively promote civic education and awareness throughout the community.

ORANGE CITY



Orange City Elementary School's Student Government Association visited the Orange City Council Chambers to celebrate city government and were given a lesson on how the city is run. They met and ate lunch with City Council members. After a lesson on local government and the history of Orange City, staff asked the students to participate in a drawing contest. They were asked to draw what Orange City means to them. Students did a great job and also answered trivia questions about Orange City. They then toured City Hall and the Police and Fire departments.

PARKER



Parker officials placed government operations in the hands of elementary school students who took the reins as honorary mayor, police chief, fire chief and public works supervisor for the day. Parker Elementary School fifth graders competed in an essay contest that posed the question, "If you were Mayor of Parker for the day and someone gave you \$100,000, how would you spend it?" The students spent the day learning about the functions of city government, touring the departments, looking down a manhole and seeing a demonstration from K-9 dogs Marlin and Rex. The event is in its third year.

PARKLAND



Hundreds of school children from three elementary schools were greeted and educated at City Hall (government operations), the **Parkland** Library (education) and Emergency Services Complex (Police and Fire departments), and were provided with giveaways. The mayor, commissioners and city manager were on hand to interact with children as was the director of library services and fire-rescue and police personnel, who demonstrated emergency equipment and provided safety tips.

PORT ST. LUCIE

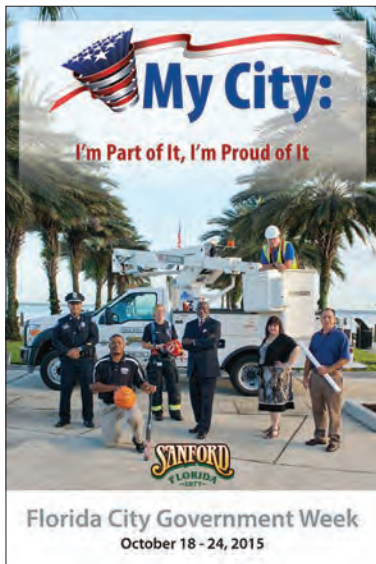


Residents of **Port St. Lucie** attended a series of "mini-talks" about each city department's major responsibilities. They had the opportunity to ask questions to enhance their understanding of each department. A partnership with the school district provided seventh graders with an opportunity to learn from the leaders of the community. City Council members visited several schools and presented their views on public policy, as well as information on their roles as elected officials. This enabled the city to break ground on a new partnership with the schools. This was the first year that Port St. Lucie participated in Florida City Government Week.



SANFORD

Sanford held a "Walk and Learn" with Mayor Jeff Triplett and City Manager Norton Bonaparte, beginning at Veterans Memorial Park. The mayor gave a brief overview of local government, how city parks are an important public service and help to increase the health and wellness of the community, and how the Youth Council is an integral component to the success and future of Sanford. A question-and-answer session was held prior to the leisurely two-mile stroll along the RiverWalk. In addition, Sanford Environmental Coordinator Hope Duncan spoke about "fat free" sewers at a business connections meeting of the Greater Sanford Regional Chamber of Commerce. The mayor, Sanford Police Department and the Mayor's Youth Council were introduced to the community on the 40-yard line at Sanford's Seminole High School home football game.



SEMINOLE



A three-hour class for Eckerd College students was held at **Seminole** City Hall during the spring 2015 term in early recognition of Florida City Government Week. A mock city council meeting was conducted by Mayor Leslie Waters and the students. Presentations by Fire Chief Heather Burford and Community Development Mark Ely were also provided.

STUART



Stuart Middle School students learned about city government and how it operates from Mayor Kelli Glass Leighton, who spoke to a student assembly. Third, fourth and fifth grade students from JD Parker Elementary learned about the importance of healthy relationships when serving in a leadership role from Commissioner Tom Campenni, and Commissioner Eula Clarke engaged students in a mock city government role, where they provided input about issues that matter to them.

WESTON



The **City of Weston** kicks off the Weston University program annually during Florida City Government Week. The program gives a select number of high school students the opportunity to learn about municipal government by participating in a one-day-long session per month for seven months. Now in its 13th year, the program has been highly successful, and is actively pursued by students who wish to participate. The students' activities are promoted to residents through city and other local media, all spotlighting city government operations and services as well as school partnerships.

PROCLAMATIONS:

**Auburndale • Brooksville • Davenport • Fort Pierce • Greenacres • Hastings • Hawthorne
Indian River Shores • Jupiter • Okeechobee • Sanford**

Sharon G. Berrian is associate director of membership development for the Florida League of Cities. **QC**



CITY SHOWCASE

Florida City Government Week

Civic education takes center stage

by Sharon G. Berrian
Florida League of Cities

Florida City Government Week was held October 19-25, 2014. This is an annual event to raise public awareness about how city government works and showcase the services that cities provide.

Cities throughout the state celebrated the week, which was proclaimed by Gov. Rick Scott. A summary of Florida City Government Weeks activities follows.



CITY OF BELLE GLADE

Florida League of Cities President **Lori Moseley** attended the October 20 **Belle Glade** City Commission meeting to hear essays read by students from the city’s Youth Empowerment Center (YEC). The students – YEC President **Kevin Ingle**, First Vice President **John Charles**, Second Vice President **Mardocho Juene** and Ambassador **Jenoute Mytil** – read their essays, titled “My City: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It.”

Moseley also presented the students with a special award for achieving third place in the League’s **Municipal Youth Council Video Competition**. Their award-winning video was shown to attendees and was received with overwhelming applause. Moseley congratulated the students for their outstanding video presentation and for their accomplishments in the community.



CITY OF BUNNELL

The **City of Bunnell** held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of its new Municipal Complex. The three-building complex will house all departments, including the Police Department and a separate facility for conducting city meetings. A municipal park is also planned for the site. Artwork by local artists, along with historical documents and artifacts depicting the early days of the city, was displayed. Also, staff members gave attendees tours of the new facility. The tours concluded in the City Commission Chambers, where guests were treated to a luncheon and music. The mayor and commissioners were joined by local county commissioners, school board members, representatives of the Sheriff’s Department and hundreds of residents.

CITY OF CAPE CANAVERAL

The **City of Cape Canaveral** continued its partnership with Cape View Elementary School. Each grade, from kindergarten through sixth, traveled to a variety of locations throughout the city to learn about how municipal government works and how it directly impacts their lives.



CITY OF DESTIN

The **City of Destin** hosted an open house and luncheon. The event was a huge success with more than 400 attendees. A shred truck was available to residents and businesses for free. City employees and city partners staffed booths with displays highlighting their work in and around the city. Volunteers were recognized and honored by the City Council for their commitment to the city. **Mayor Mel Ponder** spoke on the importance of volunteerism and family, and how the city is progressing in a positive direction.

CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK

Fruitland Park Elementary School Principal **Melissa De Jarlais** and staff members **Ellen Miller** and **Jeanne Villegas** were honored at the October 9 Fruitland Park City Commission meeting. Highlights of the meeting included recognizing the educators for their extensive backgrounds, years of professional experiences and accomplishments. They were commended for their continued dedication to the students, their involvement with city staff and their varied, innovative programs.



CITY OF GREENACRES

The city’s Leisure Services Department Youth Programs Division coordinated civic education activities using “The ABCs of City Government,” “My City: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It,” “Facts on Florida Cities” and “City Government in Florida.” City tours and guest speakers taught students about the services provided by the city, duties of municipal officials and various forms of government. The week ended with an open house hosted by students describing their civic education projects, and a tour of their newly renovated afterschool building.

CITY OF HAWTHORNE

The **City of Hawthorne** hosted its 4th annual City Government Week Kid's Commission. Elementary students visited City Hall, and the mayor and city manager reviewed the "ABCs of City Government" and answered a variety of questions. Students then were selected to serve as the commission, mayor and vice mayor. Once in office and sitting at the dais, the Kid's Commission hired a city manager, who then hired staff for the following offices: city clerk, city attorney, police chief, fire chief, public works director and all supporting staff. Each student became involved with their city government.



TOWN OF HILLIARD

An essay contest that began with "If I was the Mayor of the **Town of Hilliard**, I would . . ." was held for Hilliard Elementary School fourth-grade students. First place winner **Delaney Vennard** received \$25, second place winner **Drew Bunkley** received \$15 and third place winner **Lauren Thompson** received \$10.



CITY OF KISSIMMEE

The **City of Kissimmee** celebrated with a School of Government class at Kissimmee Fire Department, Station 11. More than 25 city residents participated in hands-on activities and learned about the different aspects of the Fire Department.



TOWN OF LANTANA

The mayor and town manager shared the town's history with students at Lantana Elementary School and Lantana Middle School.



TOWN OF LAKE PARK

In the **Town of Lake Park**, each department presented an entertaining and educational skit. Skits involved fifth-grade student actors, complete with costumes and props. Through the interaction and presentations, the functions of each department were clearly received and understood. The Public Works Department presented a fun and educational demonstration of its "big" trucks. Students enjoyed participating in a mock commission meeting and voted overwhelmingly for a community swimming pool.



CITY OF NEWBERRY

Commissioner Tim Marden, City Manager Mike New and City Clerk Judy Rice visited with the fourth graders at Newberry Elementary School and gave a presentation on how local government works.

TOWN OF OCEAN BREEZE

The **Town of Ocean Breeze** handed out “My Town: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It” stickers and pins to residents during the October 2014 Town Council meeting. **Council President Ann Kagdis** arranged the celebration and provided the town with all pertinent information to pass along to the residents and others. Coincidentally, the town had a special visitor that day, **Congressman Patrick Murphy**.



CITY OF ORANGE CITY

Orange City invited the Student Government Association from Orange City Elementary School to the Council Chambers. Students were presented with a brief history of Orange City and a description of each department. They met with the city manager, mayor and other council members for a question-and-answer session, followed by lunch. Then, the students had a lesson on how local ordinances are created. During a mock council meeting, students played the roles of council members and concerned citizens. The program ended with a tour of historic Town Hall and the Fire Department Station 67.



CITY OF PALATKA

Students from Palatka High School learned about local government during the week. They culminated their studies with a visit to City Hall and a **Palatka City Commission** meeting. Prior to their visit, the students elected a mayor and commissioners, who learned how to legislate and conduct business, and they learned about careers in municipal government. The students culminated their visit by opening the Palatka City Commission meeting with a “mock” meeting during which they issued proclamations and made, debated and voted on motions. **Mayor Vernon Myers** presented “Good Government” certificates to participating students.

CITY OF PALM BEACH GARDENS

The **City of Palm Beach Gardens** highlighted what makes the city a special place to live. In addition to hosting community events throughout the week, the city launched a social media campaign aimed at educating the public on the many roles filled by the city. To accomplish this, Palm Beach Gardens chose to shine the spotlight on city employees in a campaign titled “Gardens is . . . Beautiful, Brave, Bold & Blooming.” The concept was to fit city departments and divisions into one of these four categories.

VILLAGE OF PALM SPRINGS

The mayor, Village Council and village department heads participated in the Literacy Foundation reading day, which occurred during Florida City Government Week. The city officials visited five schools to read to students and disseminated “My Village: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It” buttons and bumper stickers to 500 children and their teachers.





CITY OF PARKER

The city continued its partnership with Parker Elementary School by hosting three fifth-grade students who won an essay contest that explained how the students would spend \$100,000 to help Parker. The students and guests toured city departments, saw police dog Marlin sniff out contraband, and ate a “fireman’s” lunch in the fire house. The event concluded with the reading of proclamations. Essay winners were **Jaice Jensen** as mayor, **Janay Harrel** as police chief and **Taylor Jordan** as fire chief.

CITY OF SANFORD

Mayor Jeff Triplett met with two of **Sanford’s** high school principals and the Seminole County School Board chair to talk about developing an ongoing City of Sanford Mayor’s Youth Council, targeted to begin in the 2015-2016 school year. With guidance from the League’s “A Guide for Creating a City Youth Council,” the city is in its planning stages. The School Board has also begun drafting a memorandum of understanding. The city plans to align the youth council’s mission with the Mission and Vision of the City of Sanford, helping to materialize the city’s newly adopted Strategic Plan. It will help guide the students through their own decision making while on the youth council. The goals of the youth council are to spark the students’ interest to take action on real-life issues and make a difference in their city, and for the students to experience how local government works to develop public policies that will affect their generation and generations to come.



CITY OF SEMINOLE

City of Seminole Mayor Leslie Waters, along with **Fire Chief Heather Burford** and **Recreation Director Becky Gunter**, hosted 53 fourth-grade students from Indian Rocks Christian School for a mock council meeting. Students were on the dais serving as student councilors, city attorney and city manager. A student also “staffed” the clerk’s desk. Students came up to the lectern and asked city-related questions that the mayor and councilors discussed and answered. Several students completed “Request to Speak” cards. Topics discussed included building the new Seminole City Centre mall, their wish for more bike paths, and their excitement over a future kayak/canoe launch at Waterfront Park.



CITY OF ST. CLOUD

The **City of St. Cloud** sponsored a Student Government Day at City Hall. St. Cloud officials and staff hosted 19 St. Cloud High School seniors, who experienced firsthand the vital role played by city government in citizens’ lives. City council members and staff briefed the students, who participated in a mock city-council meeting.




CITY OF STUART

Commissioners from the **City of Stuart** met with 12 civics classes at Stuart Middle School to discuss the role of city government and educate students on what their city does. The city clerk judged a pumpkin carving contest at Pine Elementary School. Information on the city and its role was disseminated.



TOWN OF WINDERMERE

Third-grade students from Windermere Elementary School took a walk to the Windermere Town Hall to learn about the town's government, including the Police and Fire departments. They were greeted by **Mayor Gary Bruhn**, who provided them with a history of the town and discussed how the town functions and the services that are provided. They also heard from **Windermere Police Chief David Ogden** and **Ocoee Deputy Fire Chief Tom Smothers**, followed by a presentation from **Windermere Town Manager Robert Smith**. One by one, they explained the job that they do and how their department operates, and then answered the students' many questions. They learned about public safety equipment and were able to hold a police officer's protective vest, sit in the front of a police vehicle, look at the Fire Department's lifesaving tools and learn what a day in the life of a firefighter is like. And after a full morning of learning, the students visited Allen's Creamery for a snack before heading back to school. Also, all four classes of third graders were able to recite the Preamble to the Constitution from memory.

Sharon G. Berrian is associate director of membership for the Florida League of Cities. 

Florida City Government Week Proclamations were adopted by:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| City of Auburndale | Town of Lantana |
| City of Coral Springs | City of Okeechobee |
| Village of El Portal | Town of Orange Park |
| City of Fernandina Beach | Village of Palm Springs |
| City of Green Cove Springs | City of St. Cloud <i>(also proclaimed October 21 as Student Government Day)</i> |
| City of Greenacres | City of Stuart |
| City of Hawthorne | |
| Town of Jupiter | |
| City of Lake Wales | |

Visit www.floridaleagueofcities.com/Publications.aspx?CNID=9632 to access League-developed civic education material, such as "The ABCs of City Government" and "My City: I'm Part of It, I'm Proud of It."

CIVIC EDUCATION

Open Houses, Career Days, Mock Council Meetings and More

Florida city officials teach the importance of municipal government



by Sharon G. Berrian
Florida League of Cities

Florida City Government Week was launched by the Florida League of Cities in 1991. It is part of an ongoing effort to raise public awareness about how city government works and the services that cities provide.

In 2013, Florida City Government Week was held October 20-26. Cities throughout the state participated in this annual event, which was proclaimed by the governor. A summary of those civic education activities follows.



BELLE GLADE

The City of Belle Glade presented Certificates of Excellence to local elementary, middle and high school students who earned Level 5 on school FCAT tests. The city's elected officials and staff, school superintendent, education committee, principals and staff from the schools, and parents were present at the awards ceremony. In addition, each city staff member received a "My City: I'm Part of It, I'm Proud of It" button and bumper sticker, and the week was advertised on the city's marquee and banners posted at City Hall.

CAPE CANAVERAL

The City of Cape Canaveral issued a Florida City Government Week proclamation. In addition, the city again partnered with Cape View Elementary School for the week. Each grade (k - 6) traveled to various locations throughout the city to learn how their city government works. Events included a tour/demonstration at the public works department and a mock code enforcement board meeting. The city received thank you notes from the students that were posted on the city's website.



DESTIN

The City of Destin hosted its annual open house on October 23. Nearly 300 people attended the event, which showcased all city departments. City staff met with residents and educated them on the day-to-day operations of the city, as well as on large and small projects. The mayor and council honored city volunteers by presenting them with the new Destin Coin, a symbol of pride and responsibility. A free community shred day was also held during the event.



FORT PIERCE

The City of Fort Pierce hosted an open house, during which the public could visit each department to ask questions and receive information about the various services the city provides. Fort Pierce also offered tours of City Hall to local schools. The two events provided a great learning experience for residents.

FORT WALTON BEACH

The City of Fort Walton Beach adopted a Florida City Government Week proclamation. The city also participated in a municipal shadow program and held a luncheon to honor its employees. Elected officials and the senior leadership team greeted employees as they entered the facility and then served lunch to them. A photo montage of individual employees at work throughout the year was displayed at the luncheon, and the "Manager of the Year" and "Employees of the Year" were recognized.



FREEPORT

The mayor, council members and city planner participated in a career day at the local elementary school so that students could learn more about their city government. The feedback from students was excellent – they wrote thank you notes and some even stated they would like to become involved with city politics. The City of Freeport also established The Heritage Center of Freeport, a museum that houses city artifacts and a library of historical facts dating back to the 1800s.



GAINESVILLE

Each year, a special field trip is offered to the fifth grade "Citizens of the Month" in Alachua County public schools. Approximately 25 students (and a parent chaperone) tour various city facilities, including City Hall, a recreation center, a fire station and the police station. The day ends with the students being recorded for a government channel public-service announcement and meeting with a city commissioner. In addition, the city adopted a Florida City Government Week resolution. This year's events mark the eighth year that the school board has partnered with the city to offer this educational opportunity.



GREENACRES

The City of Greenacres hosted job-shadowing opportunities for high school students. Two of the students were even able to sit in during an employee’s probationary evaluation review. City Hall and facility tours were offered and staff included a cultural awareness/ethnic education day to provide information about the city’s demographics, foods and customs. Information was shared with an afterschool program and to children, ages five to 14, with developmental disabilities.



HALLANDALE BEACH

The City of Hallandale Beach hosted 17 student ambassadors from Gulfstream Middle School during the city’s Fourth Annual Government Day event. The students were divided into groups that spent the morning with one of six different departments, including police, fire, development services, parks and recreation, human services, and public works. Then, the students met at City Hall, where they were greeted by the mayor, commissioners and additional city staff. During a working pizza lunch, the students prepared presentations about what they had learned to share with their fellow classmates. The event ended with the students visiting the city commission chambers, where they received participation certificates.



HAWTHORNE

This was the third year that Chester Shell Elementary School’s fifth-grade class has visited City Hall. The mayor and city manager used the League’s “ABCs of City Government” to teach the class about how their city government works. During a mock election that followed, students ran for a commission seat. Those elected took a seat on the dais and selected a mayor and vice mayor. The “kids commission” appointed a city attorney, city clerk and city manager, who in turn hired various city department heads from the class. This helped the students to understand how many people it takes to run a city.

HILLIARD

The Town of Hilliard passed a resolution recognizing Florida City Government Week and held an essay contest for fourth-grade students at Hilliard Elementary School. The contest theme was “If I was the Mayor of the Town of Hilliard, I would...” Hilliard’s mayor chose three winners, each of whom received a certificate. In addition, the first place winner received \$25, the second place winner received \$15, and the third place winner received \$10. The awards were presented at Hilliard Elementary School.



HOLLYWOOD

Hollywood’s mayor issued a resolution recognizing Florida City Government Week and encouraged all Florida city officials to participate in the activities. The city presented Code Enforcement Officer Thomas Pinder with its Diamond Service Award, which is the highest honor a city employee can receive. The award recognizes employees who consistently render superior service to the public and their

co-workers. Along with Pinder, nine other nominees were recognized. The city also recognized 70 employees who achieved service anniversaries. They total 1,095 years of combined service.



ISLAMORADA

Islamorada invited fifth-grade students to submit an essay titled “What Islamorada Government Means to Me.” Each school chose the top six essays. Then, a local reporter chose one essay from each school for the top prize. Also, an art contest with the theme “When I think of Islamorada government, I think of.....” was held for third-grade students. Each school chose the top six pieces. A local artist selected the top piece, which was displayed at the Administrative Center and Public Safety Headquarters. Winners were recognized at a council meeting. In addition, the village hosted tours of various departments for social studies and civics classes.



LAKE ALFRED

The City of Lake Alfred approved a proclamation recognizing Florida City Government Week and held a mock commission meeting with the leadership team from the local middle school, Discovery Academy. The students were provided a written script, and each was assigned an active speaking part playing the roles of mayor, commissioners and various city staff. The “City Hall Experience” agenda included consideration of a resolution pertaining to “complete streets” and a grant funding request to help implement a bicycle and pedestrian safety program.



LAKE PARK

Lake Park adopted a resolution recognizing Florida City Government Week. Two local schools visited Town Hall to participate in a mock commission meeting, tour various city departments, watch a public works demonstration, and participate in a “recycling” program and an educational skit hosted by the library. Students received “My Town: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It” bumper stickers and wore the “My Town” buttons. The town also hosted a city government tent at its monthly sunset celebration held at the marina, which featured a local government game with prizes. All elected officials were there to meet with guests and answer questions.



LANTANA

The Town of Lantana passed a proclamation recognizing Florida City Government Week. The mayor and town manager also taught local and state history to approximately 160 students at Lantana Elementary School and Lantana Middle School.

MARGATE

The City of Margate hosted a Student Government Day with 19 Margate Middle School students and two teachers touring different city departments. They also held a mock commission meeting. A city commissioner guided the students as they played the roles of elected officials, staff and the public. After the meeting, the students toured the police department, fire department, water plant and public works department. The City Commission also passed a resolution recognizing Florida City Government Week.



NEW SMYRNA BEACH

The New Smyrna Beach City Commission adopted a resolution recognizing Florida City Government Week. The city also partnered with New Smyrna Beach High School and held a mock city commission meeting in the commission chambers. Students took the roles of elected and appointed city officials. During the mock meeting, the student commission considered action regarding existing regulations of tattoos and body piercing. Lunch was served upon adjournment.



ORANGE CITY

Orange City Elementary School's Student Government Association visited the Orange City council chambers to learn about their government and to tour the historic town hall. The students met with the mayor, council members and city manager, and they asked the city officials a variety of question. After a luncheon, the students were given various roles and participated in a mock council meeting, during which they voted on an ordinance.

NICEVILLE

The City of Niceville adopted a resolution for Florida City Government Week. In addition, approximately 100 students, seven teachers and volunteers from Edge Elementary School visited the Niceville city complex for a full day of learning and fun. They toured the fire department, police department and public library, and they met with the mayor. Students learned about their community and the various types of city jobs, along with the skills needed for those jobs. After the tour, the students spent some time at the Niceville children's park, which is part of the city complex.



ORANGE PARK

Orange Park partnered with Oakleaf Village Elementary school and conducted a presentation to two third-grade classes. The mayor talked to the students about his elected role and provided information on the functions and role of city government.



ORMOND BEACH

The Ormond Beach City Commission proclaimed October 23 as Employee Appreciation Day. The city thanked its employees for their service with a picnic lunch, recognition of significant work anniversaries, and honored specific employees for their "Above-and-Beyond" achievements over the year. Also, the fire department visited pre-schools and elementary schools and spoke to more than 200 children.



PALATKA

A group of local students from Crescent City Junior/Senior High School took over for Palatka city commissioners, holding a mock commission meeting during Palatka's city government week activities. BOYZ II MEN, a faith-based mentoring group for young men 10 to 17 years old, spent the afternoon at City Hall before beginning Palatka's regular City Commission meeting with their own "mock" meeting. The group of more than 30 students held an election in preparation of the mock commission meeting. Prior to carrying out their "elected" duties, the students learned about city government and careers from local officials and professionals.



PARKER

The City of Parker hosted local students to take part in a variety of activities. The students worked with fire rescue staff, learned about water meters and the public works department, and served as honorary staff and elected official for the day. The students also held a press conference to discuss their honorary roles and their ideas for improving their city. A proclamation was adopted recognizing the honorary city officials.



PARKLAND

Approximately 350 third-grade students visited the City of Parkland City Hall Complex over the course of two days. The students met with city commissioners, the city manager and city staff, and they participated in a question-and-answer session that taught them about the inner workings of their city government. Students also took a tour of the fire station and police department, along with receiving a “backstage” tour of the city’s library.



PORT ST. LUCIE

Port St. Lucie residents enjoyed several events recognizing Florida City Government Week, beginning with a council resolution about the importance of local government. Then, elected officials, staff, business owners and residents enjoyed a week of memories at events

such as Latin Dance night, and they rediscovered the city’s oldest asset — the St. Lucie River — at a sunset gathering on the boardwalk. They also celebrated a dog park grand opening, gathered for the unveiling of a beautiful new butterfly mosaic in the Botanical Gardens and attended a plant sale.



SANFORD

City of Sanford officials visited area schools and spoke to students about city government. The mayor, city manager and a police captain visited students at four elementary schools and shared information about their roles and how young people can play a part in being good citizens. The students learned about the meaning and importance of public service and the many services provided by the city.



SEMINOLE

The City of Seminole City Council adopted a resolution recognizing Florida City Government Week in the recently built mock-council chambers at the St. Petersburg College Seminole campus. The new, tiered classroom was constructed based upon the city’s actual council chamber at City Hall. Students in the college’s public policy administration degree program attended the council meeting.



ST. AUGUSTINE

The City of Augustine’s mayor and commissioners partnered with local elementary schools. Each of the five commissioners visited a school and led the morning announcements with the Pledge of Allegiance. The commissioners also distributed the “My City” buttons and

bumper stickers to all students and teachers, and they presented a certificate of appreciation to each of the schools for their continuing participation in city government week.



TARPON SPRINGS

The City of Tarpon Springs' mayor and city clerk swore-in student council officers from Tarpon Springs Elementary School. The ceremony was held in the commission chamber at City Hall. Third-, fourth- and fifth-grade "senators" were also sworn-in. Among other things, the mayor encouraged the students to be active on their council and also to participate in the civics programs in their school. The press and public were invited to attend. "My City" buttons and bumper stickers were made available to students and public.



WESTON

The City of Weston issued a proclamation recognizing Florida City Government Week and published an article about the week and the role of government in its weekly online newsletter, *Newsday Tuesday*. The city also initiated Weston University, an annual civic education program teaching select high school students about municipal government and public sector occupations. The program encourages students to realize their potential to shape and influence government as well as the educational partnerships between city government and schools.



WINDERMERE

For the ninth year, the Town of Windermere welcomed Windermere Elementary School's third-grade students to Town Hall. Six classes visited Town Hall over two mornings. They learned about the town's

government from the mayor, and about public safety from Windermere's police chief and Ocoee's fire chief. The town officials and first responders educated the students on what it takes to run a town, protect residents and how tax dollars are spent.

Cities Adopting Resolutions

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Auburndale | Lake Park |
| Bartow | Lake Worth |
| Belleair Beach | Lantana |
| Brooksville | Margate |
| Cape Canaveral | New Smyrna Beach |
| Coconut Creek | Niceville |
| Fernandina Beach | Palatka |
| Fort Pierce | Parker |
| Gainesville | Polk City |
| Hialeah | Port St. Lucie |
| Hilliard | Seminole |
| Hollywood | Sunny Isles Beach |
| Juno Beach | Webster |
| Lake Alfred | Weston |

Civic Education in Florida

Efforts like Florida City Government Week are very important. They help residents understand how city governments contribute to their quality of life, and they raise the civic IQ of those participating.

As stated in the 2011 Florida Civic Health Index (compiled by the Lou Frey Institute, the National Conference on Citizenship and others):

"In terms of volunteerism, voter turnout and other measures of civic engagement, Florida has consistently ranked near the bottom among the 50 states. The implications of this for the future civic health of the Sunshine State are enormous, given that they soon will be the largest single voting cohort in the nation."

In addition, statistics show that 30 percent of Floridians are natives, while 70 percent moved here from somewhere else. This can greatly affect a Floridian's understanding of state and local government in the Sunshine State.

Municipal officials can play a big part in helping to educate residents about their city government. Florida City Government Week is one way to make that happen. Everyone benefits from an informed public!

Sharon G. Berrian is an associate director of membership development for the Florida League of Cities. **QC**



www.floridaleagueofcities.com/Publications.aspx?CNID=9632
to read more about the League's other civic education projects.



Cities Volunteer Their Time, Showcase Their Services During Florida City Government Week

COMPILED BY SHARON G. BERRIAN
FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES

Cities across Florida celebrated Florida City Government Week, sponsored by the Florida League of Cities, from October 21 to October 27, 2012. They used the week to highlight city accomplishments, volunteer time and educate residents on the services they provide. Florida City Government Week is held each year in October, utilizing the theme coined by the League's executive director emeritus, the late Raymond C. Sittig: "My City: I'm Part of It, I'm Proud of It!"

Programs and activities varied from city to city. However, each city strove to educate its residents about the public services and programs provided to them in their hometown. The following is a compilation of reports received from many of the cities that recognized this special week of municipal accomplishment and public service.

City of Arcadia

Arcadia adopted a proclamation recognizing Florida City Government Week and held an open house. The city also placed an editorial in the local newspaper describing how local government works for residents and invited the public to the open house to meet council members, city volunteers, and board and committee members. Each

of the volunteers, board and committee members were recognized with a Certificate of Appreciation for their dedication to the city.

City of Bartow

The Bartow Mayor's Youth Council conducted a mock city commission meeting with members acting as commissioners, newspaper reporters and city residents. In addition to adopting a proclamation, which was accepted by Commissioner Leo Longworth, the students also considered a proposal regarding the feasibility of a skate park.



City of Belle Glade

Glade View Elementary School student government members toured Belle Glade City Hall and were greeted by the mayor, commissioners, the city manager and department heads. The students also participated in a poster contest, with posters displayed in the City Hall lobby. In November, city commissioners received presentations from winners of the “My City: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It!” essay contest, submitted by students of Glades Central Community High School, Lake Shore Middle School and Crossroads Academy. Awards were presented to the first-, second- and third-place winners from each school. A picture capturing one of these special moments was posted on the home page of the city’s website.

Broward League of Cities

Broward League of Cities President and Fort Lauderdale City Commissioner Bobby DuBose reported that Broward County’s cities are more than halfway to their goal of logging 1 million volunteer service hours by May 31, 2013 – and volunteer efforts made by municipalities during Florida City Government Week helped significantly. The City of Fort Lauderdale is onboard with the Broward League’s campaign and has affirmed its commitment by issuing a “Together We Serve Week” resolution. In addition to the City of Fort Lauderdale, the Broward County School Board, the business community, other cities and the Broward County government have taken steps to help achieve this goal.

Town of Callahan

Callahan hosted ROTC students from West Nassau High School at a mock town-council meeting. The real Town Council sat in the audience while the students sat in their places. ROTC members were given an agenda that contained local issues for them to discuss and share their views. The town also distributed “My City” buttons and bumper stickers and adopted a resolution recognizing the week.

City of Callaway

Callaway hosted a Civic Trade Show for the public to attend and learn helpful tips and interesting facts about their city. Residents learned everything from lessons on how to read their water meter to key city facts and trivia.



City of Cape Canaveral

City of Cape Canaveral

In keeping with tradition, Cape Canaveral celebrates Florida City Government Week each year with local Cape View Elementary School students and teachers. This year’s events were a great success, with lots of positive feedback from all of those involved.

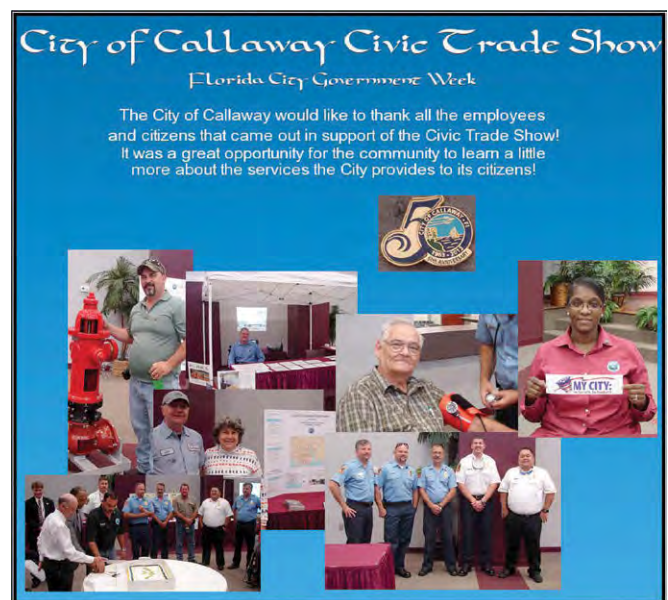
Activities included an educational event and mock elections at the Cape Canaveral library; Leisure Services Bingo; a tour of the post office; and tours and educational activities at the recreation complex, the Brevard County Sheriff’s Office Canaveral Precinct and the Viera Courthouse.

City of Davenport

Davenport held its activities in conjunction with the city’s newly renovated firehouse. Buttons and bumper stickers were distributed to residents, and the city adopted a proclamation recognizing the week.

City of Deerfield Beach

Deerfield Beach issued a proclamation recognizing Florida City Government Week and held Student





City of Deerfield Beach

Government Days on two separate days, inviting fourth- through 12th-graders from local elementary, middle and high schools. Students were greeted at City Hall by Mayor Peggy Noland before boarding two tour buses for a guided tour of the city. The students enjoyed a visit to the International Fishing Pier, where they observed presentations about current pier renovations and ocean rescue operations. They also were taken to the city’s Westside Park, where they observed a live K-9 demonstration and learned what it takes to be a police officer and firefighter/EMT. Students were then able to enjoy lunch while learning about the city’s “All In” recycling program. Finally, they visited the water plant and learned about the water filtration process and how raw water is transformed into clean drinking water.

City of Delray Beach

Delray Beach hosted a number of activities to enable the community to learn about their city and the importance of public involvement. City staff visited with more than 240 third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students from Plumosa School of the Arts and presented information on the responsibilities of a city manager and how to pursue a career in local government. The students were also engaged with various polling questions and a Q&A session. In addition, the city’s fire-rescue department visited with more than 100 students at Carver Middle School and discussed services that the department provides.

Students also assisted in assembling “Vials for Life,” resident health and medication information packets to be kept on file to assist with emergency medical care. Later, the Delray Beach Youth Council attended the October 16 City Commission meeting to present the commission and the community with information on their activities. The students gained valuable leadership skills and public presentation experience and had the opportunity to observe/learn about local government protocol.

City of Destin

On October 24, the city held an open house at the Destin Community Center that showcased Destin’s major accomplishments for the year. As part of the open house,

the city hosted 10 partner organizations that highlighted their services within the city. Staff cooked and served lunch for the public. An estimated 275 people attended the event.

The City of Destin, in coordination with the Okaloosa County League of Cities, also managed the first-ever Municipal Job Shadow Week. Mayors, city

council members and staff in Okaloosa County had an opportunity to job-shadow someone from a fellow city in a similar job, with the goal of learning how to improve governmental processes. The program was a success, with 22 people from 12 municipalities participating. A proclamation was also made by the City of Destin to recognize Municipal Job Shadow Week. The city coordinated with local media, which covered both the open house and Municipal Job Shadow Week.



City of Fort Lauderdale

City of Fort Lauderdale

This year during Florida City Government Week, students from the three Fort Lauderdale high schools experienced firsthand what it’s like to be a participating member of the city.



City of Destin

Over the past two years, Fort Lauderdale has undertaken the task of forming its vision for the next century. The City Commission wants to ensure that every resident's voice is heard during the process. To that end, during Florida City Government Week, city representatives, along with Commissioner Bobby B. DuBose, visited Stranahan and Dillard high schools; meanwhile, Fort Lauderdale High School staged a field trip to City Hall to work on the city's vision. The entire visioning process and the importance of their opinions were explained to the students. Involving students in the city's process proved to be an educational one for teachers and city representatives as well. Ideas about sustainability, traffic, transportation, teen volunteerism, crime and safety, teen clubs (something similar to a Boys and Girls Club) and homelessness were all topics that were discussed, with proposed solutions ultimately given.

The City of Fort Lauderdale has set up a visioning website where all ideas can be logged and residents can view and comment. The website allows for a more global conversation between neighbors from all communities in the city, including the student community. Approximately 200 ideas were logged from students alone.

City of Frostproof

Frostproof held a "Great American Teach-In" for its Florida City Government Week activity. The city hosted seven second-grade classes from Frostproof Elementary School, providing a tour of City Council chambers and the sheriff's office, both located in City Hall. During the tour of the council chambers, City Manager Tenny R. Croley gave a brief history of cities, including the City of Frostproof and how it got its name. She also explained



the governance process and who "runs" City Hall, as well as the services provided by various departments in the council-manager form of government. In addition, Croley also read each class a book. She also visited Ben Hill Griffin Jr. Elementary School and provided the same information to fourth-graders, as well as reading a book.

City of Greenacres

Greenacres adopted a proclamation recognizing Florida City Government Week and held a combined Florida City Government Week/100 Best Communities for Young People event on October 29. The building department executed an interactive puppet show to educate children on fire safety and building permits/codes, and the fire marshal put out a fire with Silly String. The Afterschool Program performed a skit, with The Shining Acres (composed of superheroes, sidekicks and villains) performing some of what they learned on city department tours.

Jordan LaPier, senior director for 100 Best Communities – America's Promise Alliance, presented Mayor Samuel J. Ferreri with the city's fifth 100 Best Communities award. City Council Members Jonathan Pearce, Paula Bousquet and John Tharp, Deputy Mayor Peter Noble, state Reps. Mark Pafford and Lori Berman, and parents of the students were present. The *Palm Beach Post* and the *Greenacres Observer* published articles about Florida City Government Week activities and events.

City of Hawthorne

Hawthorne participated in Florida City Government Week by hosting a “Kids Commission.” Fourth- and fifth-graders from Chester Shell Elementary School went to City Hall, where they were welcomed by Mayor Matthew Surrency and City Manager Ellen Vause. The mayor briefed the class on how a city is operated and how elected officials make decisions affecting the city.

To introduce the students to how city government works, a Kids Commission election was held to elect commissioners from the class. After the student commissioners were elected and seated, the first order of business was to elect a mayor and vice mayor. The new commission sat on the dais and used the gavel to open the meeting. Next, they hired a city manager, city attorney and city clerk, along with support staff in public works. This engaged most of the student body with a job title.

After organizing the commission and staff, the Kids Commission passed a resolution on school uniforms to notify the school that the commission did not support the wearing of such uniforms. The support for this resolution was demonstrated by student voters, who responded to a question on the ballot: “Do you agree with the requirement to wear a school uniform?” Ninety percent of the kids voted against the requirement.

Mayor Surrency has received many letters of appreciation from the students, and the school is planning to start a student government club with the students.

Town of Juno Beach

Juno Beach recognized Florida City Government Week by holding a collection of items in honor of Veterans Day and U.S. troops currently serving in Afghanistan. The town distributed informative flyers that included a list of items most needed by both military veterans and troops. Also, website postings and mass emails were submitted to local residents and local businesses. Two nearby churches also helped in this cause. Thanks to all of these efforts, the town received generous donations that were then delivered to the appropriate organizations.

Town of Jupiter

Jupiter presented a proclamation to Boy Scout Troop 774, which attended the Town Council meeting for citizenship badges. “My City: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It!” buttons and bumper stickers were also at the meeting and in the Town Hall lobby for the Boy Scouts and other residents to pick up.

City of Lake Alfred

Lake Alfred recognized Florida City Government Week with a proclamation. Again this year, the city participated in the Great American Teach-In. Elected officials and staff members from various municipal departments volunteered their time to educate local students in civics education, local politics, fire prevention, and recycling and sanitation. The ultimate goal was to teach the students that they can become active participants within the community and make a difference in the city’s quality of life.

Town of Lake Park

Lake Park adopted a proclamation recognizing Florida City Government Week. In addition, two local schools participated in tours of Lake Park Town Hall and Lake Park Library. They also viewed a PowerPoint presentation, “How Your City Government Works,” as well as a reenactment of the hurricane of 1928 that destroyed the original Kelsey City.

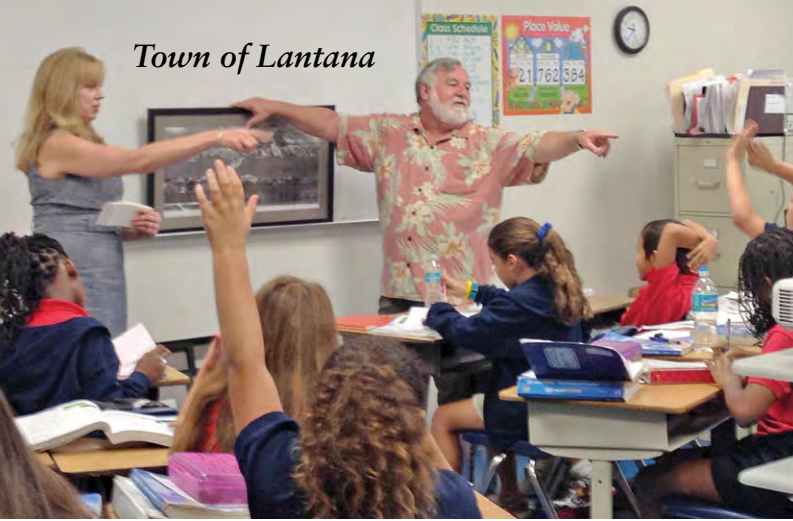
The tour of Town Hall included a visit to each department, with a designated spokesperson giving a brief presentation of the department’s role and responsibilities. Students also participated in demonstrations of public works’ vehicles and were educated on the value of recycling.

All students were provided with pins, bumper stickers and refreshments. They were challenged to consider if and where they might want to work in their local government in the future. Florida City Government Week was advertised on the town’s website, as well as the local-government channel.

Town of Lantana

Lantana adopted a proclamation recognizing Florida City Government Week. Lantana Mayor David Stewart and Town Manager Debbie Manzo gave a city history lesson to fourth-grade students at Palm Beach Maritime Academy and Lantana Middle School. The Lantana Library also made more than 400 historical photos available online. (View and search by category at www.lantanalibrary.org.) The mayor and Marjorie Watts Nelson, honorary curator of the Linehan Collection of Books, pushed the button to begin the show at the Friends of the Library’s Grand Opening of the Mary Linehan Slide Collection of Historic Lantana on the Web.

Town of Lantana



City of Margate

Margate celebrated the week by hosting its annual Student Government Day for Margate Middle School students. Student Government Day began in the City Hall commission chambers with a mock city-commission meeting, followed by tours of city departments including the police department, the Calypso Cove aquatics facility, a fire station and the city's water treatment facility. Students closed out the day at the public works facility.

It was Margate's seventh year hosting Student Government Day with the middle school.

City of Newberry

Newberry adopted a resolution recognizing Florida City Government Week on October 22 and posted information showcasing the week on the city's website and Facebook page, as well as the local government information channel. Pins and bumper stickers were also provided to elected officials, staff and the general public in recognition of Florida City Government Week. In addition, the city partnered with the local elementary school and hosted open-house tours for students to heighten their awareness of city government and its departments.

City of North Lauderdale

North Lauderdale brought Youth Government Day activities and the student city commission meeting back to City Hall this year.

Fifteen ninth-graders from Somerset Preparatory Academy Charter School toured City Hall, a fire station and a Bro-

ward County district sheriff's office in preparation for their student-led commission meeting.

After a long day of touring and rehearsals, the students returned to City Hall to conduct their mock commission meeting. With the help of a sparse script, the student mayor proceeded through the meeting and two youth-related item presentations – an anti-bullying policy and the establishment of an after-school education program for grades 9-12. Student city commission members kept the meeting interesting with insightful questions and dissenting opinions.

City of North Port

Understanding that residents' engagement in local government is paramount, the City of North Port traditionally celebrates Florida City Government Week throughout the entire month of October. This year, North Port kicked off the celebration with a resolution approved by the City Commission on September 24. Many activities took place throughout the month. Informational tables featured city literature at signature events, including "Arts Night at City Hall" and the North Port Area Chamber of Commerce's annual "Hob Nob."

The city's activities also included the annual "Government on Wheels" program. Created five years ago, the program allows for city commissioners and employees

to be featured as guest speakers in local classrooms. In total, the program reached an estimated 1,500 students from five elementary schools, two middle schools and two high schools. Five city commissioners and 16 city employees participated in the program.

Town of Oakland

Oakland owns and operates the Oakland Avenue Charter School, a K-5 facility with about 525 students. Each year, the town hosts a shadowing day, during which the students have opportunities to shadow the town manager and town engineer. Town staff also participate in judging the fifth-grade students' science projects.



City of North Lauderdale



City of North Port

City of Okeechobee

Okeechobee adopted a resolution recognizing the week. The city also participated in the annual Career Day sponsored by Communities in Schools. All ninth- and 11th-graders enrolled at Okeechobee High School, as well as home-schooled students, participated. Each student had to pick at least three careers of interest to them, visit the booths highlighting those careers, and ask specific questions relating to salaries, job titles and duties, and retirement. The city's booth had 178 students stop by and obtain information about a career in local government. All areas were represented, from elected officials and administrators to firefighters, police officers and detectives, and public-works maintenance operators, along with an outdoor display of equipment.

City of Orange City

Orange City recognized Florida City Government Week by inviting the student government association from Orange City Elementary School to council chambers. The students met with council members and the city manager to learn how the city is governed. They listened, asked questions and ate lunch together. These future leaders also participated in a poster contest with the theme "Why I Love Orange City." Three winners were chosen and received gift cards to Walmart. The winning posters were posted on the city's Facebook page. In addition, the students were taken on a tour of City Hall and the fire department to showcase some of the other services Orange City offers to residents.

City of Palatka

Palatka partnered with members of Palatka High School's Student Government Council classes to provide students with real-time government experiences. On October 27, students visited City Hall to learn about local government, as well as to meet with and speak to city officials and department heads about municipal careers, elected offices and volunteer opportunities in municipal government. They also participated in the public portion of that evening's Palatka City Commission meeting.

Prior to the meeting, students held an election and learned about different forms of government. They met with city officials and department heads to learn about how local government affects their lives and the various career opportunities in local government, and spoke with both elected and appointed officials about their respective roles. Students learned how local laws are created, and aided in crafting a proclamation for issuance during a mock meeting.

The experience concluded during that evening's City Commission meeting, during which Mayor Vernon Myers issued a proclamation declaring November 2 as Palatka High School Student Government Day, and then presented Good Citizenship Awards to the



City of Orange City

student government members who participated in the program. Before and during the meeting, “My City: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It!” buttons and bumper stickers were distributed to students and residents.

City of Parkland

Parkland recognized Florida City Government Week by partnering with local third-graders and hosting an open house at City Hall that showcased the City Commission, the city manager, the fire and police departments, and the city library. The students learned about each department and the services they provide. In addition, students were sworn in by Mayor Michael Udine and/or one of the commissioners and were able to experience how a City Commission meeting is held.

At the end of the open house, the city provided goodie bags for each child to take home that included additional information about each city department and the roles they play in making the city “Environmentally Proud.”

City of Pensacola

Mayor Ashton Hayward and the City of Pensacola invited the sixth-grade civics class from Episcopal Day School to City Hall to celebrate Florida City Government Week. Hayward and the students had an hour-long discussion about city government, Pensacola’s new mayor-council form of government, voting, and what it means to be an elected official. The city provided each student with a bumper sticker and a “five flags” lapel pin denoting the five governments that have flown flags over Pensacola during its history.



City of Parkland

City of Safety Harbor

Safety Harbor adopted a proclamation recognizing Florida City Government Week. In addition, Mayor Andy Steingold visited the local elementary school and appeared on its morning show, where he explained the significance of city government and read the proclamation. Also, Commissioner Nancy Besore visited the Mattie Williams Neighborhood Family Center to speak to children about the importance of city government.



City of Safety Harbor



City of Pensacola

City of Sanford

Mayor Jeff Triplett, Commissioner Mark McCarty, Commissioner Velma Williams and City Manager Norton Bonaparte visited four public schools – Seminole High School, Sanford Middle School, Crooms Academy of Information Technology and Millennium Middle School – to talk with students about Sanford and all of the municipal services provided by the city.

Questions asked by the students included ones about Hurricane Sandy, clean water and skateboard parks. One of the visits included a breakfast with U.S. Rep. John



City of Sanford

Mica, a guest speaker from the Orlando Magic, and a wide array of questions from the students. The students of Millennium Middle School sent several letters of appreciation to the city as thanks for their visit and the educational lessons they received.

As a result of the positive outcomes generated during Florida City Government week, the mayor has proposed the creation of a City of Sanford Youth Council in 2013.

City of Seminole

The “Introduction to Urban Politics and Government” course at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg recognized Florida City Government Week on October 24 by organizing a celebration acknowledging the importance of the more than 400 cities in Florida. Professor Leslie Waters, the vice mayor of Seminole, and the students pinned their “My City” buttons on, held up “My City: I’m Part of It, I’m Proud of It!” bumper stickers, and displayed the names of cities in the Tampa Bay area that they are researching, earning internship hours at, or visiting as part of the fall-term class.

City of Sopchoppy

Sopchoppy participated in Florida City Government Week by visiting Medart Elementary School and speaking to the fourth-grade classes about municipal governments. Using information gained from the Florida League of Cities website and from local sources, a booklet was created for the students that included everything from the history of



City of Sopchoppy

design a new downtown park with some property that the city had recently acquired. The teachers and students were enthusiastic about this project, and they have been invited to bring ideas to a future council meeting.

City of Stuart

In celebration of Florida City Government Week, Stuart adopted a proclamation. The city also partnered with the House of Hope of Martin County, a not-for-profit community service agency, and founded a food drive at City Hall and the Public Safety Complex. With the message printed on customers’ utility bills and on the city’s website,



City of Stuart

Sopchoppy to how students could be involved in their city government.

Emphasizing ways that students and their parents can get involved with their local governments, Sopchoppy Mayor Colleen Skipper-Mitchell and City Administrator-Clerk Jackie Lawhon challenged the students to help the council

the city collected non-perishable foods just in time for the holidays for those in need.

City of St. Augustine

Members of the St. Augustine City Commission and the city's fire chief visited area schools as part of Florida City Government Week. Participating schools hosted a local official who led

the Pledge of Allegiance at the start of the school day. Participants included Mayor Joe Boles, Vice Mayor Leanna Freeman, Commissioners Errol Jones and Nancy Sikes-Kline, and Fire Chief Mike Arnold. Together, they visited R.B. Hunt, Ketterlinus and Crookshank elementary schools, the Webster School and Cathedral Parish School during the week.

Visits by city officials to area schools during Florida City Government Week has become a tradition in recent years. The visits provide an opportunity for city leaders and students to meet, creating an opportunity to put a spotlight on the significant role local government has in residents' everyday lives.

City of St. Cloud

The city hosted 16 seniors from St. Cloud High School during Florida City Government Week. The visit highlighted the many facets of city government and its services to the community, as well as ways that everyone can actively participate in their local government. It also reinforced the sense of community enjoyed in St. Cloud. The program included introductions by the City Council, city manager and department directors. There was also a City Hall tour, and students met with assigned city

council members, the city manager, the city attorney and staff in preparation for the mock city-council meeting.

City of Titusville

Titusville set up displays from all departments at City Hall. It also distributed educational material on city operations and programs.

City of Valparaiso

The city adopted a proclamation and focused on a job-shadowing week. Some of the department heads shadowed their peers in other cities, and another city shadowed one of Valparaiso's department heads.

Village of Wellington

Wellington posted daily questions on the village website for residents to provide their feedback. Also, the village hosted an informational booth at Village Hall, where staff was able to interact with residents. Those interested also were able to take a tour of the building.

City of Weston

Weston adopted a proclamation recognizing Florida City Government Week and provided the League's "My



City of Weston

Town of Windermere



City: I'm Part of It, I'm Proud of It!" pins at a City Commission meeting that featured the swearing-in of the new mayor and commissioners. The city also initiated its annual "Weston University" program. Weston University is designed to provide a unique civic education for Weston high school sophomores, juniors and seniors. Each year, the program commences during Florida City Government Week.

Weston University is a program that meets for a day-long session once a month over an eight-month period. Sessions are held on-site at various locations where city services are provided, and include field visits. Through instruction, open conversations, observations, demonstrations and actual experiences, students are exposed to and educated on the details involved in running municipal departments on a day-to-day basis. They are also taught about state and local government by elected officials.

The students learn problem-solving procedures used by city government, recognizing the positions taken by city officials and the reasons behind them. For the last official session of the program, students participate in a mock city commission meeting after having gained the knowledge necessary to present and defend both sides of agenda issues. Upon successful completion of the program, they graduate from Weston University and are honored at a City Commission meeting.

Town of Windermere

In what has become an October tradition, the third-grade students of Windermere Elementary School took a walk to Windermere Town Hall to learn about the town's government, police department and fire department. It took two mornings to accommodate all nine of the classes in half-day sessions where they learned about their community. A project that started out as an experiment in educating students about their government and civics has evolved into an annual event that provides a foundation for students' involvement in government and an opportunity to meet local leaders.

The third-graders were greeted by Windermere Mayor Gary Bruhn, who provided them with a history of the town and discussed how it functions and the services that are provided. Students then heard from Windermere Deputy Police Chief Arthur Mueller and Ocoee Fire Chief Pete McNeil. Both explained the jobs that they do and how their departments operate, and then answered the many questions that the students had.

The classes then were given presentations on the equipment that is used, and they were able to hold a police officer's protective vest, sit in the front of a police vehicle, look at all of the lifesaving tools that their fire department uses, and learn what a day in the life of a firefighter is like. After a full morning of learning, they visited an ice cream shop for a treat before heading back to school.

Municipalities Adopting Florida City Government Week Proclamations:

City of Arcadia
City of Auburndale
City of Bartow
City of Brooksville
Town of Callahan
City of Coconut Creek
City of Davenport
Town of Davie
City of Deerfield Beach
City of Destin
Town of Dundee
City of Fort Myers
City of Greenacres
Town of Hastings
Town of Jupiter
Town of Lantana
City of Newberry
City of North Lauderdale
City of Okeechobee
City of Pinellas Park
City of Punta Gorda
City of Safety Harbor
City of Stuart
City of Tarpon Springs
City of Valparaiso
City of Weston

Sharon G. Berrian is an associate director of membership development for the Florida League of Cities. ■