

Kathleen Beckman
YOUR
Clearwater Vice-Mayor



MOMENTS FOR
REFLECTION AND
APPRECIATION

May is one of the best weather months in Clearwater. It's a

great time to spend time outdoors, making memories with friends and family or connecting with nature at one of our many beautiful parks. It's an ideal month, too, to pause for a moment of reflection before we enter the dog days of summer.

Remembering the Holocaust

I recently had the opportunity and honor to participate in Holocaust Remembrance Day at the Holocaust Museum in St. Pete. On this day, across the world, participants recite the names of the millions of victims of Nazi Germany's genocidal policies. The purpose is education to combat hatred and anti-Semitism.



Honoring
Parents and
Heroes

Mother's Day, on May 8, and Father's Day, on June 19, provide the opportunity to celebrate those who

have loved, protected and supported us. Another opportunity for reflection and reverence occurred on May 13, when the Clearwater Police Department and Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 10, along with elected officials, city employees and residents gathered at Station Square Park to remember and honor four Clearwater Police officers who died in the line of duty: [Patrolman Harry L. Conyers Jr.](#), [Patrolman Peter M. Price](#), [Patrolman John F. Passer](#) and [Patrolman Ronald J. Mahony](#). We are grateful for their service and the ultimate sacrifice they made



PROTECTING
MANATEES

On May 2, Gov. Ron DeSantis

announced that the fiscal year 22/23 budget includes more than \$30 million to enhance and expand manatee rescue and rehabilitation efforts and provide habitat restoration for areas where manatees are highly concentrated. This record investment in manatee care and protection is a more than \$17 million increase over the current year's budget.

This is fantastic news, as our manatee population has struggled for the last few years. The Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) reported last year over 1,000 manatees died due to a lack of sea grasses in the Indian River Lagoon. That was double the normal level. According to FWC, as of April 22 of this year, 527 manatees have perished.

Expanding Care Facilities and the
Work of the Conservation
Commission

The bulk of the state funding – approximately \$20 million – will go toward the expansion of manatee care facilities, providing habitat restoration, expanding rescue efforts, and increasing projects like the supplemental feeding program that supplied lettuce to the manatees last winter.

About \$5 million will go toward expanding the efforts of the FWC. Twelve new employment positions will be created. The remaining monies will go toward increased aerial surveys to track the manatee population. You can read more here: ["Four Threats to Manatees and Mangroves."](#)

How the Public Can Help

Officials say that the public can also do its part to help manatees. Be

for our safety and protection.



Celebrating Memorial Day

Finally, May ends with the observance of Memorial Day, which is

certainly an occasion for reverence and reflection. Clearwater will honor American veterans on Monday, May 30, from 5 – 10 p.m., with a ceremony at Crest Lake Park, hosted by the Tampa Bay Veterans Alliance. On this day, we mourn and honor U.S. military personnel who have died while serving their country. I am fortunate that my family members who served, including my dad, uncles, and cousins, returned home safely.

Many Friday evenings, I help to serve dinner to a number of Clearwater residents. I identify them as residents because they currently reside here – though some may not have four walls. Of the 50-100 people who line up for a hot, home-cooked meal, many are working, more than a few have homes, and all are food insecure. Some are veterans.

Recognizing the Sacrifices of Our Veterans

On Memorial Day, as we honor those who served and lost their lives, I also choose to honor those who served and may have lost something else – sacrificed something other than their lives. Perhaps it's a loss of innocence – the ignorance of what humans are capable of doing to each other. I can't begin to imagine the sacrifice involved in the ravages of war-time experience. That's why I favor generous medical and psychological benefits for veterans, especially the homeless and addicted men and women who have served.

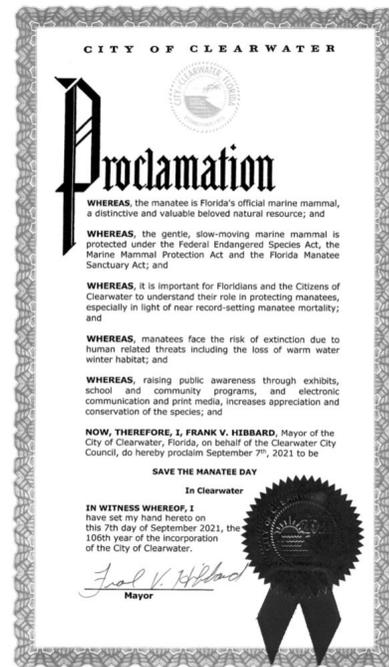
I am thankful every day that we live in this great country. And I am thankful for those who have served in our military and who are serving us now. Here are just a few names of Clearwater residents who have given their lives in military service. A profound thank-you to them and their surviving family members: [William Green](#); [Charles Leslie Halley](#); [William Lowell Curtis](#); [Ian Leroy Brandon, Jr.](#); [John Joseph Avella](#); [Christos Constantine Bogiages, Jr.](#); [Bernard Francis Brezinski](#); [Morris Franklin Dixon, Jr.](#); [Eddie Gilbert Gay](#); [Jan Houston Nelson](#); [Robert Louis Sandner](#); [Terry Curtis Newkirk](#); [Bobby Lee Smith](#) and [Edward Wayne Williams](#).

careful when boating, avoid seagrass, and contact the FWC at 1-888-404-3922 if you see a sick or injured manatee.

Clearwater Commits to Protection

On Sept. 7, 2021, Mayor Frank Hibbard signed a Protect our Manatees Proclamation, designating that date as Save the Manatee Day. He outlined the manatees' designation as protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act.

The proclamation also emphasizes the importance of education about human-related threats to manatees to increase conservation of these beloved, gentle marine mammals. The proclamation is below.



CLEARWATER IS HOLDING MEETINGS FOR YOUR INPUT ON ARPA FUNDING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING



Please plan to attend one or more of our four Community Outreach

Meetings to share YOUR priorities for

PIER 60 TURNS 60



'Focal Point of Clearwater Beach'

If you had only one way to describe Clearwater's Pier 60, you might say

it's like a beacon; it serves as the focal point to our award-winning Clearwater Beach. Pier 60 features a 1,080-foot fishing pier and recreational park that includes covered pavilions, an incredibly large playground, rest rooms and benches. Pier 60 also has a bait house/souvenir shop completely stocked with everything from fishing gear and rental equipment to T-shirts and snacks.

Pier 60's History

This year marks the 60th anniversary of Pier 60, and Clearwater's own Kelly Kelly wrote an exceptional story about its history. Check it out at [Colorful Clearwater](#).

Kelly is a Clearwater resident, an award-winning journalist, a radio show host, and an active volunteer in our community. Her blog, "Colorful Clearwater," highlights beautiful Clearwater and what makes it so special. You can check it out here: [Colorful Clearwater](#)

CELEBRATING MOTOWN MUSIC AT CLEARWATER'S SHOPPING WITH A VIBE



I know I've promoted "Shopping with a Vibe" nearly every month for the last four months - but I can't "not" promote it this month. This month the theme is MOTOWN! I love Motown music; I think most people do. Plan to stop by Walter C. Campbell Park and celebrate

community, great music, fantastic food and local entrepreneurs.

our City - and to communicate how you believe the City should spend our \$22.5 million in federal funds for Covid Recovery. Because the meetings are scheduled for 90 minutes, it is important that you come informed and prepared to participate. Learn more here about the remaining meetings: [Information on APRA and Strategic Planning](#)

And here is information from the City of Clearwater: [City of Clearwater Announcement on ARPA/Strategic Planning meetings](#)

CLEARWATER MARINE AQUARIUM HAS MUCH TO OFFER



The Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is home to rescued dolphins, sea turtles, river otters, stingrays,

nurse sharks and more. It is an amazing asset and treasure in our community. There are hundreds of volunteers, employees, researchers, an outstanding Board of Directors and management that work together to operate this world class facility that focuses on rescue, rehab., release, and research. Along with life-saving work, they also offer a number of special events. This summer includes "Summer Glow" with extended evening hours; Marine Academy Career Exploration on May 28; and Dolphintopia later this summer. We are forever grateful for the important work the CMA does. You can learn more here: [CMA](#)

CLEARWATER TO RECOGNIZE NATIONAL HOLIDAY JUNETEENTH

On June 17 last year, President



A FUN NEW FEATURE!

I'm happy to announce a new feature in my monthly newsletter: People You Should Know. In my interactions with residents, business owners and members of nonprofit organizations, I meet some pretty amazing people. I'd like to let you know about them. That's me with Jill Elizabeth

Armstrong.

Learn about Some 'Fantastic' People in Our Community

I'm providing a link to my website where I dedicate a page to a Q&A feature. It's generally a short, easy read, and you'll learn more about the fantastic people and services we have in the Clearwater community. The inaugural entries introduce [Sheri Heilman](#), owner of Bob Heilman's Beachcomber and Bobby's Bistro on Clearwater Beach; [Chantala Davis](#), owner of the nonprofit, A Mothers' Arms; and [Jim and Miriam Hill](#), a dynamic duo who are a joy to talk with and who have contributed to our community in multiple ways (I met Jim and Miriam at the Clearwater Police Department's Volunteer Appreciation event).

There's also [Jill Elizabeth Armstrong](#), who educates and empowers some of our most vulnerable residents. Finally, you'll meet two amazing students, 8-year-old [Sara](#) and 17-year-old [Jennifer](#). Both are civically engaged and think deeply about our community.

Read all about these amazing community members here: [People You Should Know](#)

Please Contact me with Suggestions

I hope you'll take the time to read their interviews. And, please connect with me if you have suggestions for future "People You Should Know" selections. You can email me at kathleen.beckman@myclearwater.com

JUNE IS GAY PRIDE MONTH

On Wednesday, June 1, at 10 a.m., the public is invited to attend the City



Biden officially designated Juneteenth National Independence Day, a US federal

holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. The day's name is a blending of the words June and nineteenth.

It commemorates June 19, 1865: the day that Union Army Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger rode into Galveston, Texas, and told slaves of their emancipation. That day came more than two years after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863.

Even after Lincoln declared all enslaved people free on paper, that hadn't necessarily been the case in practice.

Clearwater and Community Partners Plan Family-friendly Juneteenth Event

On Saturday June 18th, the City of Clearwater in collaboration with Artz 4 Life, the Clearwater Urban Leadership Coalition, and others, will hold a Juneteenth event to commemorate this holiday. Vendors, children's events, food, speakers, entertainers, and learning opportunities featuring Dr. Joy Moore from St. Petersburg College will be part of this educational and entertaining family-friendly event. You can learn more here: [Clearwater Urban Leadership Coalition](#)



COME ENTER THE WORLD OF THE EVERGLADES

"The World Within" is a new sound exhibit in downtown

Clearwater. It is free, it is outdoors and it is really one of a kind. As you stroll down Gaslight Alley, the tree and plant-lined walkway at 515 Cleveland St., you'll hear recorded sounds captured from Everglades



of Clearwater's flag raising and recognition ceremony in honor of Gay Pride Month. It will take place at the Clearwater Municipal Services Building, 100 S. Myrtle Ave.

Every year, during June, the LGBTQ community celebrates in a number

of ways. Across the globe, events recognize the contributions and influence of LGBTQ people. Last year, Clearwater raised the Gay Pride flag for the month of June. This year, I'm happy that we'll be adding a recognition, as well.



ARTICLE/PODCAST OF THE MONTH

This month's article is '[Cities of Opportunity](#)'

A resource you might want to read is a report, "Cities of Opportunity," from the National League of Cities. The Executive Summary states: "City leaders are uniquely positioned to advance cross-cutting approaches that address underlying factors affecting the health of their residents and the vibrancy of their city. [The National League of Cities](#) (NLC) launched the Cities of Opportunity initiative in October 2018 to strengthen the capacity of city leaders to work in a more holistic way to address social determinants of health."

I found the report interesting because it made me think about how this can be applicable to Clearwater. Here is a link to the report: "Cities of Opportunity."

["Cities of Opportunity"](#)



LA Johnson/NPR

'The Worlds We Create' Podcast

This month's

recommendation for a podcast is from a group of four students at Williams Middle School in Rockwell, Texas. They entered National Public Radio's fourth annual Student

National Park. The time that you visit corresponds to the time the sounds you hear were recorded. So if you walk near dawn, you'll hear sounds captured at dawn. This exhibit runs through June 15. Learn more here: [The World Within](#)

OCEANS OF POSSIBILITIES!



Our Clearwater libraries have so many summer reading programs to offer. From babies and toddlers, to teens and adults, there is something for everyone.

There are challenges, prizes, crafts, discussions, and even a program that focuses on sustainability! More information is available here at ["Oceans of Possibilities."](#)

AND FINALLY THANKS FOR YOUR INTEREST AND SUPPORT

Please Share Your Ideas and Concerns

One of the reasons I send out a newsletter is to receive feedback from you. However, please be aware that any communication with me related to the newsletter is public record.

Learn More about Our City and Council Meetings

Here is a link to [My Clearwater Magazine](#).

And click on the following link to access city meetings, agendas and attached documents: [UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS](#)

Consider Volunteer Opportunities

The City of Clearwater has many volunteer opportunities. Here is a link to our website: [Volunteers needed](#).

Podcast Challenge, and on May 16, they won! With over 2,400 entries from students across the country, this is a significant achievement. Their podcast, "The Worlds We Create," centers on teens and social media and the challenges of communicating digitally. You can check out the story and podcast at: "[The Worlds We Create.](#)"

Local Journalism ... the 'Fourth Pillar of Democracy'

Local journalism is the fourth pillar of our Democracy- Sign up for a subscription here: [Tampa Bay Times Subscriptions.](#)

Find out how you can make a difference.

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SUPPORTING BUSINESS OWNERS OF COLOR



There is a new organization in North Pinellas County called [Business Owners of Color Alliance](#), headed by Dr. [Michael Broom](#). It

is in conjunction with North Pinellas Advocates for Racial Equity. There have been two meetings so far. In May, we discussed how to connect with more North County business owners of color. That's one reason I'm including their information here.

Connect and Become an Advocate

If you are interested in learning more, or being an advocate for minority-owned businesses, please connect with them at BOCA@NPARE.ORG. Future topics of discussion include: the needs of business owners of color; conversations with our political leaders; conversations with our economic development officials; conversations with our local bank representatives; conversations with our chambers of commerce.

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