



KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### ***2017 AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR OUTSTANDING EFFORTS IN KEEPING MANATEE COUNTY BEAUTIFUL***

MANATEE COUNTY— More than 20 nomination categories will be awarded and include schools, neighborhood communities, individuals, youth organizations, media, businesses, governments and law enforcement agencies. At the Awards Celebration re-scheduled to be on September 26, 2017 at IMG Academy Golf Club, awards will be presented for public service, recycling, landscaping image, green schools and outstanding volunteerism. During the recognition ceremony, the keynote speaker, Mayor Shirley Groover Bryant shares her “Passion for Palmetto”. The 2017 Award recipients for outstanding efforts in keeping Manatee County beautiful are described below.

#### **OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER GROUP AWARDS:**

These volunteers surpassed the norm in doing quarterly cleanups and longevity of adoption and marking storm drains to prevent stormwater pollution.

##### Adopt-A-Highway Program:

- Meehan Family & Friends have been doing litter pickups and landscape maintenance on 4.5 miles of S.R. 64 W. Palma Sola Scenic Highway since 2016, before formally adopting 2 miles of it in 2017.

##### Adopt-A-Road Program:

- Sarasota-Manatee Bicycle Club has been doing quarterly cleanups on 2.9 miles of Whitfield Ave. from N. Lockwood Ridge Rd. to University Pkwy. since 2013. They recently taught children how to be safe on their bikes during a Youth Bike Safety Program where each child who went through the program received a free bicycle helmet.

##### Adopt-A-Shore Program:

- Bradenton Riverwalkers have been doing litter pickups downtown Bradenton along Riverwalk, Wares Creek, Village of the Arts & 14th Street West since 2014, before formally adopting 1 mile of Riverwalk in 2017. They continue to do litter pickups informally at the other locations in downtown Bradenton.

##### Storm Drain Marking:

Volunteers and local governments mark storm drains in Manatee County with the message “Dump No Waste – Protect Your Water”. Through this educational program, they are helping protect our waters from stormwater pollution by informing citizens that only rain should go down the stormwater drain.

- Manatee Co. Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention Unit – most storm drains marked during the year at 78.

MORE

ADD 1  
KEEP MANATEE BEAUTIFUL AWARDS

**GREEN SCHOOLS AWARDS:**

Green Schools strive to:

- have a litter-free campus
- have a graffiti-free campus
- landscape the campus using native Florida plants
- conserve natural resources and energy sources
- improve water quality
- contribute to the enhancement of the community's physical environment

Elementary School: Oneco Elementary School  
Middle School: Haile Middle School  
High School: Bayshore High School  
Higher Education: State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota

**RECYCLING AWARDS:**

Recycling Awards honored those going beyond the norm to recycle goods used in the workplace or at home that otherwise would be discarded.

Government: Manatee County Government  
Small Business: Keeton's Office & Art Supply  
Large Business: Waste Pro SRQ Material Recovery Facility  
Youth Organization: Toad Hall Children's Center  
Individual: Elizabeth Paskvan

**LANDSCAPING IMAGE AWARDS:**

Landscaping Image Awards recognized landscapes that surpassed the norm for design, maintenance, neighborhood enhancement, community awareness, and use of native and drought tolerant plants.

Professional & Office: Bradenton Cardiology Center  
Public Open Spaces: Ungarelli Preserve and City of Palmetto Riverside Multimodal Project  
Public Building: Memorial Garden at Holmes Beach City Hall  
Neighborhood Communities: Valencia and Wild Oak Bay  
Multi-Family Community: Manatee County Habitat for Humanity

MORE

ADD 2

KEEP MANATEE BEAUTIFUL AWARDS

**PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS:**

These awards recognize those demonstrating leadership in cleaning up and improving the community environment through litter prevention, preventing illegal dumping, beautification and minimizing impacts of waste.

Environmental Law Compliance:

1. Bradenton Police Department – They actively address graffiti removal, illegal vendors on Palma Sola Scenic Highway and homeless issues.
2. City of Holmes Beach Holiday Cleanups – In 2016 the City initiated Holiday Cleanups for Veterans Day, July 4th and Labor Day. The challenge is to keep the beaches clean on-going, as a solution to citizen input concerning the amount of trash on the beach following holiday weekends.

Small Business & Industry Partnership:

Jones Potato Farm – Jones Potato Farm is a family-owned and operated business located in Parrish that takes great pride in supplying high quality produce from Southwest Florida. Jones Potato Farm was recognized as one of the recipients of Commissioner Adam Putnam's 2016 Agricultural Environmental Leadership Awards. Keep Manatee Beautiful also recognizes Jones Potato Farm for practicing environmentally innovative techniques.

Large Business & Industry Partnerships:

1. Florida Power & Light Company – In February 2017, 1 million new solar panels were celebrated in Manatee, DeSoto and Charlotte counties. Doing so will advance affordable clean solar energy for the next generation.
2. Lowe's Local Heroes at Cortez Store – In 2016, 20 of these heroes brought paint, tiles, flooring and other materials to spruce up the Palmetto Police Station, so as to give back to the local police. The work was needed and would not have been able to be done otherwise.
3. SMR Aggregates, Inc. – This company donated of 400 tons of bank-run shell valued at \$5,000 to restore eroded shoreline at water-way accesses on Palma Sola Scenic Highway.
4. Woodruff & Sons – Woodruff & Sons enhanced Palma Sola Scenic Highway on S.R. 64 West by donating labor for grading, trucking shell, shelling, installing rope and bollards, as well as straightening existing bollards valued at \$22,907.

MORE

## ADD 3

### KEEP MANATEE BEAUTIFUL AWARDS

#### Community Organizations:

1. Our Earth Matters –This organization is founded on the strong concern for the future population growth in and surrounding Cortez, Florida. Their inaugural “Say No To Fossil Fuels” Earth Day Festival dawn to dusk was held this year dawn to dusk. Attendees were encouraged to find get there by kayak, canoe, paddleboard, bike, skateboard, hoverboard, Segway, golf cart, electric car, trolley, MCAT, or simply walk to.
2. Suncoast Aqua Ventures – After a successful first go, this group of concerned divers will be holding its second competitive coastal cleanup. Cash prizes enticed teams and volunteers to gather nearly 3,000 pounds of debris last year that included metal and non-metal recyclables.
3. Surfing’s Evolution & Preservation Foundation – They support programs that are focused on keeping Florida’s beaches safe, clean and healthy, promoting beach education and supporting organizations that incorporate board sports into their programs. Keep Manatee Beautiful has received grants from them for two years now.

#### Government Partnership:

Port Manatee – Port Manatee advances environmental excellence from its thriving bird sanctuary and flourishing seagrass habitat to low-emissions rail locomotives and energy-efficient lighting. To protect Tampa Bay’s pristine ecosystem, a 400-acre area is set aside where boat engines are not allowed to run, including a portion around the Manbirtee Key’s bird sanctuary that is restricted to craft of those who are part of the port’s Zone Watch Program. Port Manatee is partnering with Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, the Shellfish Institute and Manatee County-based Bay Shellfish Co. in a one-of-its-kind clam restoration endeavor, which is bringing about clearer waters, and, in turn, helping many native species thrive.

#### Media Community Relations:

1. Chris Fitzgibbons – For almost 20 years, Chris has been our Awards Celebration professional photographer at discount. She is truly a member of the Keep Manatee Beautiful team!
2. Video Techniques – This business has been providing discount support for more than 15 years from 30-second public service announcements to documentary productions.

#### Youth Volunteers:

Youth Group of Our Lady of the Angels Catholic Community – The 120-member youth group has started its first of many service projects. Through the project called Sole Hope, they collect used denim jeans to be sewed into shoes for children in Junja, Uganda. Without shoes in Uganda, children in that region are most likely to be afflicted with tiny fleas that burrow under the skin and lay eggs, infecting the skin.

#### Personal Contribution:

Linda Watkins – While most of us are still sleeping, Linda is on her bicycle cleaning litter on Southern Parkway 6 days a week, and has done so for almost 7 years. Recently, she and her family painted the entrance sign to the development at their own expense. She volunteers with a smile and waves at all who pass her!

#### **EMERITUS AWARDS:**

1. Chairman Emeritus Keith Banasiak. He has served for 9 years since 2008 and has been Chairman for 3 of those years.
2. Chairman Emeritus Tom Hovanec accepting Marjorie Drake. Tom began as a Board member in 1996, and served 4 years with one term as Chairman. He returned in 2010 to serve another 4 years with 2 terms as Chairman.
3. Executive Director Emeritus Ingrid McClellan. She is the organization’s 4th Executive Director since 1991, and has served the longest time at 22 years.

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