



LEON COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Rick Minor

DISTRICT 3 NEWSLETTER



June/July 2022 News & Updates

Hello,

It's been a busy summer at our home. Our 8-year-old is away at her first sleep-over camp and she left us with the **30 Monarch caterpillars** she was raising. So almost daily we release the new butterflies that have emerged from their chrysalises. Our 3-year-old has been at home throughout the summer break and is getting into *everything*. When does school start? :-)

Great news for District 3 this month -- the Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA) presented awards recently and named **District 3 resident Ms. Amanda Herring as Leon County's Neighbor of the Year!** We're proud of you, Ms. Herring! Please read her interview below.

Also, **Leon County's Vince Long** was named by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) as the 2022 recipient of the **Award for Career Excellence**. This award is the highest recognition in the profession and is given to one local government CEO in the world each year. Vince deserves this honor and we're all very proud of him. More details can be found below.

My Chief of Staff Jodi Wilkof and I have also had the pleasure of having **three interns** in our office this summer. All three are incredibly bright students with big plans! Please read about them in the next section.

We hope you'll find the rest of this newsletter helpful, too. As always, it's a sincere honor serving you and the people of Leon County. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any comments, questions or suggestions.

Rick Minor

Commissioner, Leon County District 3
MinorR@leoncountyfl.gov

P.S. If you have friends and family who might be interested in receiving this newsletter each month, please ask them to sign up at www.LeonCountyFL.gov/RickMinor. Thank you!



Welcomes Summer Interns!



Our office is pleased to participate again this year in the Summer Youth Training Program - a joint venture between Leon County Government and CareerSource Capital Region. This program gives youth ages 14-24 the opportunity to gain work experience and explore career options. Participants are chosen for these positions after a competitive application and interview process. During their 5-week internship, the three interns in our office are getting a first-hand look at Leon County Government - from touring County Departments to assisting with constituent issues to doing policy research. Below is a bit of background on each of the interns in their own words; and later in this newsletter is a piece that they helped prepare. Welcome to Aida, Camryn and Shubaum!



Aida Richardson

Hello, my name is Aida and I'm one of Commissioner Minor's interns for this summer! I'm a senior at Leon High School and am involved in many extracurriculars such as the Leon Girls Soccer Team, Pierian Honors Society, Science National Honors Society, English National Honors Society, Lions United, Interact Service Club, Dance Marathon, and Student Government. As you might have picked up, I have a strong passion for serving people in my community and school in many different ways! After finishing high school, I plan to attend college and get an M.S Degree in mechanical engineering.

I love to travel and collect stickers of wherever I travel to (so I can put them on my water bottle of course), read, and learn more about any random topic that comes up on my YouTube recommended. Many of my friends will tell you that I don't go anywhere without

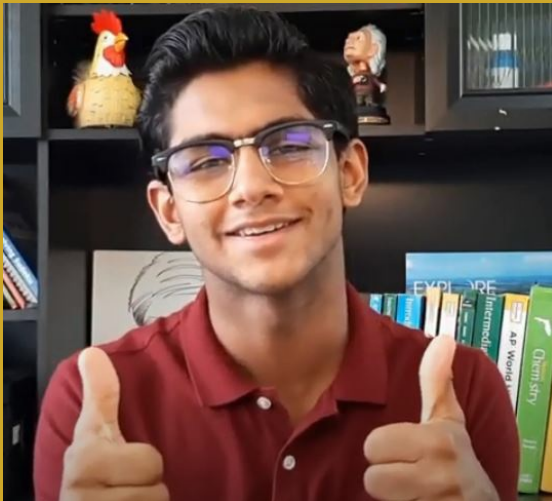
my AirPods so I can strongly say that I'm also a big fan of music and can listen to any genre. I'm excited to see where this internship takes me since I've been able to meet many amazing people because of it and form connections that can get me to many helpful places! GO NAVY.



Camryn Sawyer

My name is Camryn, and I am working as Commissioner Minor's intern. I currently attend Leon High School as a junior and recently got accepted into Bacchanal, their advanced Steel Band. Steel Band has been a defining factor of my 10th grade year, and I've pushed myself to play with heart and to have fun while doing so. I am also a part of Amitié, the French Club at Leon. I have grown in love with French over the course of both the 9th and 10th grade and continue to participate in meetings and activities.

Every year, we create a team that prepares for Le Congrès de la Culture Française en Floride, a statewide competition featuring different competitions centered in French Culture. It is definitely an interesting and informative experience that I've had the pleasure of knowing. Additionally, I'm a part of Key Club, the National Honor Society, and Rho Kappa, the Social Studies Honor Society. Leon has many great programs and clubs to participate in and I enjoy doing so during my time there.



Shubham Dixit

Greetings, y'all! My name's Shubham and I'm a part of the class of 2023 in the IB program at James S. Rickards High School here in beautiful ol' Tallahassee, Florida. Although my primary interests are typically encapsulated by "the Big Three": binge eating, spending deleterious amounts of time debating with complete strangers on Reddit, and of course, watching cute dog videos on YouTube, I can guarantee you that I am indeed half normal... Sort of. Outside of being trapped in the walls of my delightful educational institution, I am a

year-round competitive swimmer, passionate Speech & Debate competitor, Model United Nations maestro, and somewhat knowledgeable Quiz Bowler. My interests vary from time to time, as I have been involved in initiatives such as spreading awareness on teenage mental health and physical well-being, publishing a research paper at an FSU data science research internship, and doing this now - Interning at Commissioner Rick Minor's office! I have a dynamic and constantly-evolving view of life and my perception of success is doing what truly makes me happy. Shout out to my mom and dad by the way!

Updates on WastePro



A number of you have reached out to our office with concerns about Waste Pro. Accordingly, we wanted to provide this update, from the July Board of County Commissioners Meeting Agenda:

- Culminating in June, Waste Pro experienced a reduction in service delivery to unacceptable levels. Most notably this reduction has impacted collection of yard debris, with some areas not receiving service for several weeks. Numerous garbage and recycling routes also were incomplete. Staff remained in near constant contact with Waste Pro leadership in the field and met with impacted residents to validate complaints and ensure citizens receive the service they pay for.
- Waste Pro acknowledged the broader sentiment of operations not being acceptable in preceding months. Indeed, there have been recent changes in management in light of needed improvements. New interim leadership has made numerous corrective actions to improve staffing, equipment, and service response. To ensure all routes are caught up, additional trucks have been added to service yard debris and Waste Pro is running an extra day (Saturdays) until further notice. It is expected that all customers will receive service as required by the Agreement.
- Waste collection in general has been facing challenges: a combination of COVID, hiring and retention troubles, supply chain interruptions, and equipment failures.
- WastePro's efforts to correct the decline in service include:
 - New management continues to make numerous process improvements focusing on internal and external service delivery.
 - Wages have been increased 30% for field staff;
 - Waste Pro supervisors are temporarily driving service trucks and weekends are being worked to complete routes;
 - Using large trailers in conjunction with collection trucks, to increase efficiency of collection.

At the Commission meeting, Rick stated that he had heard from people in our District about yard debris sitting for months and missed pick up.

"It's a problem. This is unacceptable," he said. "As far as I'm concerned, Waste Pro is on notice. If they do not have an improvement, we're going to have a serious discussion about the contracts going forward."

We will continue to pay close attention to WastePro's service, and please continue to notify our office whenever you have issues so that we can help you resolve them. You can reach out directly to Jodi Wilkof by phone or text at 850-491-0192 or email WilkofJ@LeonCountyFL.gov.

988 is the New 3-Digit National Suicide

Prevention Lifeline Number

What are 988, 911, & 211?

988 Suicide and mental health crisis care
New number for National Suicide
Prevention Lifeline

911 Dispatching emergency medical
services, fire and police

211 Suicide & mental health crisis care with
emphasis on local community resources
and care coordination

211 Big Bend is a 988 Suicide &
Crisis Lifeline Center.

2.1.1

Big Bend

In July 2020, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) designated 988 as the new three-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK).

988 is an easy-to-remember number that will not replace any of the functions of 911 or 211 but will focus on providing immediate support for those in emotional distress or suicide crisis.

211 Big Bend has been a National Suicide Prevention Lifeline partner for many years by responding to these calls for 14 counties in Northwest Florida. 211 Big Bend will continue to answer suicide and mental health crisis calls as 988 expands. 211 crisis counselors are trained to assist people in emotional distress or suicide crisis, regardless of whether they call 988 or 211. In addition to mental health crisis, 211 provides support for finding community resources, such as food pantries and basic needs assistance, as well as care coordination services.

To learn more about 211 Big Bend, please visit 211bigbend.org.

**Call for Volunteer Committee Members: Board of
Adjustment and Appeals**



The Board of Adjustment and Appeals (BOAA) currently has an opening for a committee member, as well as an alternative committee member.

The responsibility of the BOAA is to conduct hearings on appeals and variances for the City of Tallahassee and Leon County. BOAA members are required to review the staff reports on the requested appeals and variances cases, conduct hearings in order to make findings of fact and, with the assistance of the BOAA attorney, make conclusions of law to make a determination on the requested appeal or variance. The Board acts on appeals and variance applications in accordance with criteria set out in the city and county codes for such reviews.

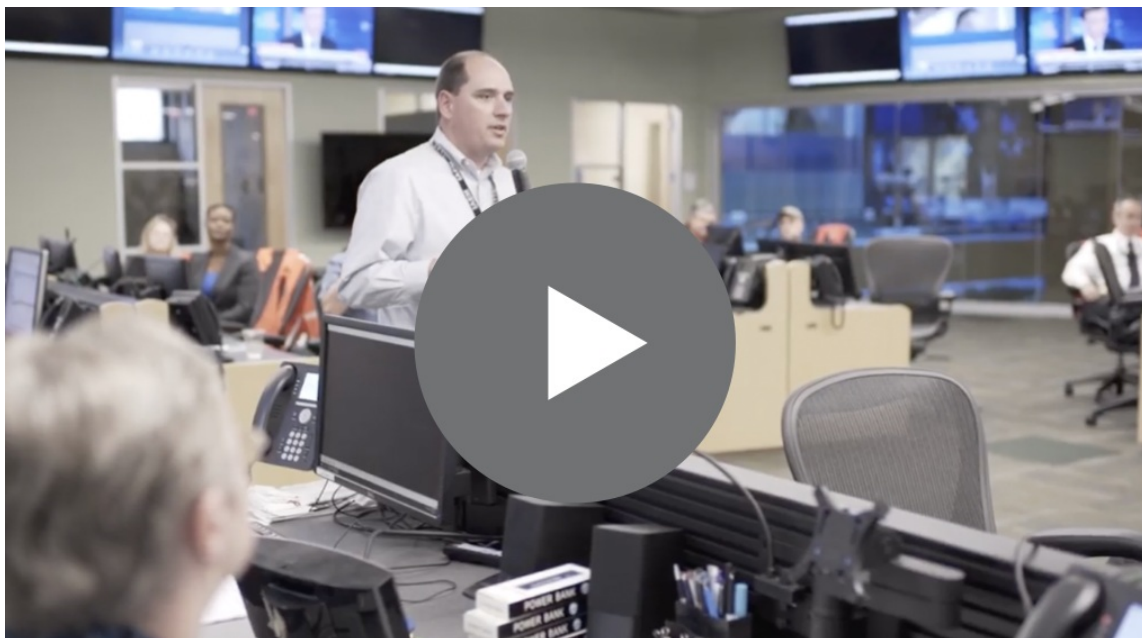
The BOAA is supported with staff of the Leon County Department of Development Support and Environmental Management and the City of Tallahassee's Growth Management Department. The BOAA receives legal advice from its own attorney.

Per the BOAA bylaws, to be eligible for appointment, members must be a resident of Leon County, an owner of real property, and a taxpayer. In addition, any person selected for the BOAA is expected to attend all meetings.

Members must file a Financial Disclosure Form 1 from the Florida Commission on Ethics within 30 days of being appointed and annually by July 1 thereafter. In addition, when leaving, the committee members must file a final Form 1F within 60 days of leaving their public position. The final Form 1F covers the disclosure period between January 1 and your last day of office within that year.

To learn more about the BOAA, as well as information on how to apply, click [HERE](#).

Hands-On Emergency Preparedness Training



Step behind the scenes at the Emergency Operations Center and learn how to prepare for disasters with local public safety experts at Leon County Government's Citizen Engagement Series: Disaster Resilience Edition.

The upcoming session will occur on **Thursday, July 28 at 6 p.m.** and will cover topics such as what to include in a disaster preparedness bucket, who to call in an emergency, and the importance of having a plan for your home.

Dinner and refreshments will be provided. Registration closes Thursday, July 28 at noon. Space is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

This interactive event will feature hands-on activities and demonstrations to place critical disaster preparedness information front of mind as the 2022 Atlantic Hurricane Season heats up. Citizens who attend the event will have a chance to leave the session with critical disaster preparedness supplies, such as a weather radio and a hurricane preparedness starter kit. We hope to see you there!

Leon County Wins Bid to Host World Cross Country Championships in 2026 at Apalachee Regional Park



World Athletics recently announced that Leon County has been awarded the 2026 World Athletics Cross Country Championships at the award-winning Apalachee Regional Park!

As the *most prestigious competition in international cross country running*, this event marks the first world championship sporting event ever to be held in Tallahassee/Leon County.

Held since 1973 in cities across the globe, including Paris, Rome, Denmark and others, the World Athletics Cross Country Championships has only been held in the U.S. twice: East Rutherford, New Jersey, in 1984 and Boston, Massachusetts, in 1992.

The World Athletics Cross Country Championship is expected to draw more than 550 runners from over 60 countries that will compete in five official World championship races at Apalachee Regional Park. While it will be internationally broadcast, the event is projected to be attended by 10,000 spectators from around the world, bringing in an estimated economic impact of over \$4.3 million!

Free Balanced Meals for Kids



Leon County and [Second Harvest of the Big Bend](#) continue to offer free healthy, packaged meals and snacks for kids and teens 18 and under at three [LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library System](#) locations.

No registration is required, and meals must be eaten inside the building.

Dr. B.L. Perry, Jr. Branch Library, 2817 S. Adams Street
Lunch: Tuesday through Friday from 12 - 1 p.m.
Now through July 29

Jane G. Sauls Ft. Braden Branch Library, 16327 Blountstown Hwy
Snack: Tuesday through Saturday from 1 - 3 p.m.
Supper: Tuesday through Friday from 4 - 6 p.m.
Now through August 5

Leon County Main Library, 200 W. Park Avenue
Snack: Monday through Friday from 3 - 4 p.m.
Now through August 5

Newly Discovered Species of Crustacean Found Only in Lake Jackson



The WFSU Ecology Blog has done a wonderful segment about a newly discovered species of crustacean found only in Lake Jackson!

Click [HERE](#) to read the story and [HERE](#) to watch the video.

Leon County Accepting Tourism Grant Applications for Signature, Special & Sports Events



In its ongoing efforts to promote tourism and financially support events that have a history of or show potential to attract out-of-town visitors to the area, the Leon County Division of Tourism (Visit Tallahassee) grant application process for the 2022-23 Signature/Emerging Signature, Special and Sports Events Grant is now open and accepting applications through Aug. 12, 2022.

Eligible event(s) must take place between Oct. 1, 2022, and Sept. 30, 2023, and are required to comply with Section 125.0104, *Florida Statutes* for the utilization of Tourist Development Tax funds. Event grant applications are evaluated based on the potential to draw overnight visitors, interest to the general public, the ability to demonstrate out of area marketing activities, scheduled programming/activities with visitor appeal and the timing for the event to be held. Event funding levels are determined by the anticipated number of hotel room nights/overnight lodging in Leon County generated by the event.

All grant applicants are required to attend one of three workshops scheduled for July 26 at 3 p.m., Aug. 4 at 10 a.m. and Aug. 8 at 2 p.m. The workshops will take place in-person at the Leon County Facilities Management Building located at 1907 S. Monroe St. and will include an option for participants to attend virtually. Following the Aug. 8 workshop, a recording of the workshop will be made available on the Visit Tallahassee website.

Applications are due by Friday, Aug. 12, 2022, at 5 p.m. For more information, [click here](#) or contact Katie Kole at 850-606-2324 or Katie.Kole@VisitTallahassee.com.

You Can Help Reduce Human Trafficking in Our Community



Survive and Thrive Advocacy Center (STAC) has released [STACPRO](#) - Leon County's first and only comprehensive virtual human trafficking training program. Best of all - it's FREE, takes less than an hour to complete, and is open to all.

Please consider taking this hour-long training to help make our community a safer place. This training applies to workplaces of all kinds including hotels, restaurants, shops, convenience stores, offices, financial institutions and more. In just under 60 minutes, you'll learn how to recognize and respond to suspected human trafficking happening here in Leon County, and you'll receive a downloadable certificate acknowledging your completion of the course.

We can all play a vital role in identifying trafficking acts or victims. With the community's support, we're building a network of people and organizations who stand with survivors and work together to prevent human trafficking.

[Start the Free Training](#)

Leon County Administrator Vince Long Awarded the Top Honor



The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) has recognized Leon County Administrator Vince Long as the 2022 recipient of the Award for Career Excellence.

This award is the highest recognition in the profession and is given to one local government CEO in the world each year. Vince is receiving this honor for his leadership in implementing transformational projects and policy, managing historic crises, protecting public safety during disaster, and consistently setting the highest standard in public service and transparency.

Vince was selected for this honor due to his role in leading Leon County Government through unprecedented challenges, like the Great Recession, Hurricane Michael, and the COVID-19 pandemic, all while launching significant programs, completing game-changing projects, and strengthening Leon County's reputation as a great place to work, live and play. Throughout Vince's accomplished career as a chief local government administrator, he has fostered a high-performing county government that delivers transformational projects, fosters strategic partnerships, and achieves community priorities year after year.

ICMA awards a \$5,000 stipend as part of the Award. Vince will grant the entire stipend to the Askew School of Public Administration and Policy at Florida State University to support and promote career excellence among local government professionals.

Please join us in congratulating Vince on this well-deserved honor.

Leon County wins National Award for Digital Excellence



For the tenth year in a row, Leon County Government was named one of the top-ranked digital county governments by the Center for Digital Government (CDG) and the National Association of Counties (NACo). Leon County placed first in Florida and fourth in its population category. The County has earned top rankings according to how it is harnessing technology to increase services and efficiencies within the organization and for its citizens.

Leon County remains dedicated to providing reliable and effective technology and telecommunication services across all government departments and to the ultimate end-customer, Leon County citizens. The award recognizes the County's ability to leverage innovative technologies that increase the County's efficiencies as well as enhance citizen engagement.

Over the past year, Leon County has implemented numerous technology initiatives and systems to improve internal efficiencies and deliver more effective services to residents while continuing to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the initiatives that earned Leon County this achievement include:

- Implementation of Leon County's Text-to-9-1-1 program, which allows residents in need to send a text message directly to a 9-1-1 call taker
- Creation of the Leon County Vax Map, an online tool to locate COVID-19 vaccine, testing and treatment sites in Leon County
- Enhanced wireless connectivity in preparation for sporting events, like the NCAA Cross Country Championship, at the Apalachee Regional Park cross country course, providing access for ESPN and FSU broadcasting of events
- Creation of Leon County's Text-To-Inspect program, which allows contractors to utilize text messaging to schedule, reschedule, or cancel inspections and obtain inspection results on their Leon County building permits.

Leon County Receives \$3.6 Million in Funding to Restore Old Concord School in Miccosukee



Earlier this month, Leon County Government was awarded a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) of \$3.6 million for the restoration of the Concord School in Miccosukee. The CDBG award is in addition to \$1 million in federal funding Leon County received for the project as part of Congress' Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations bill, as well as a County match of \$850,000.

Before submitting for CDBG funds, the County conducted an extensive engagement plan to gather community input and inform the project's design. Specifically, the County convened a working group and hosted a series of public meetings in the Miccosukee area.

Funding will allow the County to make needed renovations purposed to improve functionality of the building and allow for future amenities. As this 1940 era building will be the only public gathering space in this rural community, the County's investment will ensure a critical site is available for the public to gather, receive needed services, and connect with neighbors. Further, the restored Concord School will have an emergency generator to serve as a comfort station during severe weather events to enhance community resilience.

Teen Summer Programs

At the Leon County Main Library
and Lake Jackson Library



Adulting
101

LEARN TO COOK, MANAGE
YOUR FINANCES, AND JOB
HUNT.

**SOCIAL I.Q.
SUMMER
WORKSHOP**

LEARN TO SUCCEED IN
DATING, SCHOOL, WORK,
AND LIFE!

**DIY DAY AT
MAIN**

HAVE FUN PAINTING,
SCREEN PRINTING, AND
LEARNING CRAFTS.

**GAME DAY
CHALLENGE**

GET COMPETITIVE USING
LEGOS, STEM SUPPLIES, OR
BOARD GAMES!

**Click here to check the Summer
Program Calendar for dates and
locations near you!**

Emancipation Day 2022



On May 20th, Rick and his family joined many other Leon County residents in coming together to commemorate Florida's Emancipation Day.

The day began at Old City Cemetery where children - including Rick's daughters (above) redecorated the graves of unknown Black soldiers with flags and flowers. The ceremony continued with the reading of General Edward Cook's 1865 proclamation from the Knott House steps announcing that the Emancipation Proclamation was from that moment in effect.

Congratulations to Our EMS Team!



Leon County EMS was recently awarded the 2022 American Heart Association Mission: Lifeline EMS Gold Plus Award for their commitment to exceptional care and treatment of patients experiencing an ST elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI), the deadliest type of heart attack. The award recognizes Leon County EMS training and treatment protocols that help rapidly identify and treat patients experiencing STEMI, ultimately saving lives. Congratulations Leon County EMS for this much-deserved recognition!

New Skateable Art Park at Railroad Square

Recently, Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency, Leon County Government and the City of Tallahassee celebrated the new Skateable Art Park and Coal Chute Pond Trail with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The two projects represent a \$2.8 million investment in the Southside and expand recreational opportunities in the community.



The Skateable Art Park and Coal Chute Pond Trail, both located at 810 FAMU Way, are part of Blueprint's goal to cultivate amenities in the Southside and along the Capital Cascades Trail.

For more information about the project's history and other Blueprint projects, visit <https://bit.ly/39WTrw4>.

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS



MAKE A PLAN



BUILD A KIT



BE INFORMED

Hurricane Preparedness

Hurricane season is just around the corner. Be prepared by checking out [LeonReady](#) - a hub of resources to help you, your family and your neighborhood prepare for disasters. There are a variety of resources available to increase your readiness, including Leon County's Disaster Survival Guide, the Leon Ready Neighborhood Readiness Trainings, and access to real-time news and alerts.

CHECK OUT A KAYAK AT THE MAIN LIBRARY!

LEROY COLLINS LEON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE LIBRARY OF THINGS

Check Out: The Library of Things

Did you know you can check out tools, electronics, indoor and outdoor games, musical instruments, and so much more from the Library of Things at the [LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library System?](#)

The newest items available for check out are inflatable kayaks! There is one tandem kayak and two single kayaks.

Reserve items for check out at LeonCountyLibrary.org/Things.

Innovation Labs

Leon County, [Innovation Park Tallahassee](#), and other community partners recently



celebrated the groundbreaking of Leon County's newest technology incubator, the North Florida Innovation Labs. This facility is estimated to generate more than \$20 million in economic impact and support up to 100 high-tech entrepreneurs simultaneously, which will help to attract and retain top talent in our area. You can learn more [HERE](#).



Fall Seed Library Kick-Off

Join our friends at the Library for the Fall Seed Library Kickoff Event on **Saturday, August 13th from 11 am - 1 pm.**

See cooking demonstrations, get planting information from the UF/IFAS Leon County Extension Office, learn about sustainable gardening from the Leon County's Office of Sustainability, and pick up free vegetable seeds so you can grow your own food!



Market District Placemaking Project

Have you heard about the Market District Placemaking Project? This Blueprint project will bring a central park space, play area, water play elements, restrooms, pickleball courts, multiuse trails, and pedestrian and connectivity safety improvements to the Market District.

Learn more [HERE](#).



Local Conservation Heroes

Last year, Rick presented a proclamation to District 3 residents Jim Stevenson and Tara Tanaka. The proclamation congratulated the couple on receiving the 2020 Florida Wildlife Federation Conservation Award and thanked them for their contributions to the natural values of Leon County.

Rick recently visited Jim and Tara's home and their 48 acres of land, which is designated as a certified wildlife habitat.

Rick and Jim Stevenson holding the framed proclamation Rick awarded to Jim last year.

Congratulations to Amanda Herring, Leon County's Neighbor of the Year



At this month's Board of County Commissioners Meeting, Leon County Government and the Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA) recognized our community's outstanding neighborhoods and neighbors through the 41st Annual Neighborhood Recognition Program. This year's winners were recognized for going above and beyond in the last year to make our community a better place to live, work, and play.

We are thrilled to announce that **District 3 resident Amanda Herring** was selected as the **2022 Neighbor of the Year!**

The following is a summary of an interview of Amanda conducted by District 3 interns Aida, Camryn and Shubaum:

What initiatives did you take in your neighborhood?

- I helped repair the bad roads in our neighborhood.
- I took the initiative to reach out to Commissioner Minor and he accepted the invitation to a neighborhood meeting where he listened to our concerns.
- I helped get law enforcement to monitor vehicle speed near the school bus ramp.
- I helped to get stormwater issues in the neighborhood reduced.

What advice would you give to other neighborhoods?

"Whatever ideas you have or are trying to accomplish, follow up and follow through."

Why is being a good neighbor important?

"It's the relationships... it's always good to have good ones. It's always good to be able to help out. Everyone around me is family - we treat each other fairly, with respect."

What advice would you give to future homeowners in your area that will help carry on your legacy?

- Be a worker.
- If you are going to do anything, make sure to follow through.
- Make sure what you are doing is in the best interest for everyone in the neighborhood.
- Good communication is key.

Amanda concluded by noting:

"This initiative and accomplishment would not have been possible without the assistance of neighbors like Joe and Jackie Stevens, Jerome Golden, Ocie Maddox, Elijah Vickers III, Sonny Herring Sr., and the late Sylvester Jones. These people were all willing to do what they could to ensure the roads were fixed prior to us finding out about the stabilization program. Mr. Maddox, Mr. Golden, and the late Sylvester Jones used their own or rented equipment to scrap/grade the roads and with guidance from the County Office, were all willing to learn what they could do to solve some of the issues we were having with draining and yards flooding. The whole neighborhood really deserves a standing ovation."