

**National Volunteer Appreciation Week
Historic Holy Family Center - April 20, 2012
Mayor Van W. Johnson, Sr., - Remarks**

On behalf of the Apalachicola Board of City Commissioners and staff, I thank each of you for coming out and joining with us as we join with other communities across this great nation in celebration of National Volunteer Appreciation Week, which started Sunday, April 15 and will end Saturday, April 21.

National Volunteer Appreciation Week was established by executive order signed by President Richard Nixon in the year 1974, which at that point urged Americans to give of their time to community outreach organizations and programs.

Since the signing of that order, National Volunteer Appreciation Week has served as a call to action – encouraging individuals and their respective communities to be at the center of social change – and to discover and actively demonstrate their collective power to foster positive transformation within their communities.

The city of Apalachicola's celebration of this nationally acclaimed event is the initiative of city administrator Betty Taylor-Webb. Where we all found ourselves in agreement with her to utilize this occasion to recognize, and show our heartfelt appreciation towards you - the many volunteers that have assisted with the daily operation of this city.

In addition, this occasion affords us the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the spirit of volunteerism that thrives so well in this community.

Those who visit and travel to this historic city often marvel at how such a small community, with limited resources can accomplish so much.

I'm willing to concede - that our greatest resource is found in the generosity of you our volunteers. It is through your collective efforts that provide the window in which others see the heart and soul of Apalachicola. No task is never too small or large and no venture to great.

You have risen to the challenge issued by President John F. Kennedy over five decades ago - by doing what - and all you can for your community and by giving freely of your most valued commodity - your time.

By giving of your time, you yourselves have issued a similar challenge to others, that if we really want Apalachicola to be all it can be, we're going to have to start thinking "we" instead of "poor little old me".

Because it's a fact - local government cannot do it alone, but with your help - especially during difficult times, we are able to do more.

Therefore, today, we acknowledge that the key to our success rests in people like you, who embody the spirit of greatness embraced by President Barack Obama by demonstrating through your efforts, "Yes we can".

We also recognize and acknowledge that your time is valuable and by giving of it freely has served as the lifeblood of this community.

Although, we can never assign a value to your time or pay you for the countless hours you spend serving on boards and committees, fighting fires, delivering and serving meals or volunteering at the local library - we can at least say thank you and we do.

May God bless each of you for the difference you have made each day, every day to help build and sustain this great community that we all call home.