

Proclamation

CELEBRATING FLORIDA'S EMANCIPATION DAY OBSERVANCE IN INDIAN RIVER COUNTY ON MAY 21, 2022

Whereas, on January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, stating that "all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free"; and

Whereas, more than two years later, at the end of the Civil War, on May 10, 1865, Union Brigadier General Edward McCook arrived in Tallahassee to take possession of the city from Southern forces, and on May 20th, after official control of the region was transferred to Union forces, he declared the Emancipation Proclamation in effect, and that "the people of the black race are free citizens of the United States"; and

Whereas, newly-freed slaves celebrated this announcement with a picnic at Bull's Pond, today called Lake Ella, and since that first celebration in 1865 Floridians in many areas of the state have annually celebrated May 20th as Emancipation Day in Florida; and

Whereas, the Gifford Historical Museum and Cultural Center will host the first "Emancipation Day" celebration in Indian River County on Saturday, May 21, 2022, an event filled with great food, music, entertainment, and a re-enactment of General McCook reading the Emancipation Proclamation on the steps of the Knott House in Tallahassee in 1865.

Now, Therefore, be it Proclaimed by the Board of County Commissioners of Indian River County, Florida, that the Board congratulates the Gifford Historical Museum and Cultural Center on its leading role in the observance of this landmark day in United States' and Florida history, and extends its warmest wishes to the entire Gifford community for an unforgettable Emancipation Day celebration, with many more to follow.

Adopted this 17th day of May, 2022.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS,
INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Peter D. O'Bryan, Chairman

Joseph H. Earman, Vice Chairman

Susan Adams

Joseph E. Flescher

Laura Moss