

Gov. Jeb Bush proclaims state 'Treasures' day

Year-long observance continues across Florida

Tuesday, February 15th was proclaimed "Caring for Our State's Treasures" Day in Florida, a day to honor Florida's elderly for their many contributions to our state and nation and to honor all those who provide the hands-on care that enables the elderly to live in dignity. The proclamation singles out members of the Florida Health Care Association who provide "professional and compassionate care" on a daily basis.

"Our elderly patients truly are our state's treasures," FHCA Secretary Deborah Franklin said. "We show our appreciation for all they have done for us

by attending to their medical, physical, social and emotional needs."

Morale, outreach

The concept for "Caring for Our State's Treasures" Day, the proclamation and the other "Treasures" materials was the work product of an FHCA Consumer Relations Committee subcommittee named by Region I Vice President Michael Alexander, chairman of the committee. Members included FHCA Secretary Franklin, Region II Vice

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A circular logo with the text "Treasure Our Elders" in a stylized font. The word "Treasure" is at the top, "Our" is in the middle, and "Elders" is at the bottom, all in a blue, serif font.

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President Jo-Ann Grasso, FHCA District IX (Jacksonville) President Connie O'Donnell and FHCA Assistant Director of Quality Assurance Debbie Afasano. Each member in the past had undertaken similar morale-building and outreach efforts that were successful in their own facilities.

"Programs like these really help staff keep in mind why we are here and why we do this hard work," Debbie Afasano, a former DON, noted. "It also helps show visitors, volunteers and the patients that we respect and treasure those precious lives entrusted to our care."

The governor's official proclamation reads:

WHEREAS, Florida's elders shaped the history of our state and nation by defending our freedoms and preparing us for the future; and

WHEREAS, our elders positively influence our quality of life through their physical and intellectual efforts that result in innovative advances in the arts and sciences, medicine, education and transportation; and

WHEREAS, Florida's elders deserve our respect and gratitude for their contributions to our state and nation; and

WHEREAS, Florida long term care providers consist of thousands of caregivers and health care associates who honor Florida's elders daily through their commitment to excellence, quality of care, integrity, compassion and respect; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Health Care Association is a federation representing long term care providers who believe the elderly people they serve are entitled to a supportive environment where professional and compassionate care is delivered;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jeb Bush, Governor of the State of Florida, do hereby extend greetings and best wishes to all those observing February 15, 2005 as *Caring for Our State's Treasures Day*."

All Year-long observance

"Treasure Our Elders" has the full support of Family Forum and the FHCA Quality First Credentialing Foundation. FHCA

members who come to Tallahassee to lobby their legislators one-on-one are given a "Treasures" button to wear as an attention-getter and conversation-starter. FHCA members are encouraged to host their own "Treasure Our Elders" events and efforts in their buildings throughout the year.