



PROCLAMATION #PRO2021-11

IN HONOR OF CENTENARIAN CLINTON C. BURNS

WHEREAS, Today, January 2, 2022, marks an extraordinary day in our great City. Clinton C. Burns celebrates a “youthful” one-hundredth birthday; and

WHEREAS, Clinton was born to Lennon Burns, a phosphate miner, and Ida Burns in Felicia, near Hernando, Florida. He was one of seven children and the only son. He moved to Dunnellon with his parents and siblings in 1926 and began his formal schooling in a little church school before attending Booker T. Washington High School; and

WHEREAS, In 1942, at the age of 20, during the early stages of the US involvement in World War II, Mr. Burns, as did thousands of African Americans who had been denied the full benefits of American citizenship, valiantly joined the army committed to doing his part to win the war. He served in South Hampton, England before courageously landing on the beaches of Normandy aboard a LST 542 class tank. After D-Day he served in Belgium and Germany; and

WHEREAS, during World War II, Mr. Burns served with the Third Army, 364th Engineer Combat Regiment under the command of General George S. Patton as a truck driver with the famed Red Ball Express. The Red Ball Express, comprised mostly of African American soldiers, was the supply truck convoys that were instrumental in the Allies’ race across France in the summer and fall of 1944, which succeeded because of the men’s devotion and sense of duty; and

WHEREAS, on July 4, 1945 Mr. Burns was honorably discharged from the Army as Technician 5th Grade and the recipient of five campaign medals for his service including; Normandy, Cherbourg, Aachen and the Battle of the Bulge. After dutifully serving his country, with a sense of pride, Mr. Burns returned to a segregated America where people of color were subject to Jim Crow law, and denied the full benefits of American citizenship, including the right to vote; and

WHEREAS, upon his return, Mr. Burns worked on the Cross Florida Barge Canal lock, in the phosphate mines and hauled pulp wood. In 1950 he married Idella Coston, to whom he was married for 63 years until her death in 2013. They built a home in south Dunnellon and raised eight children - Lois, Christine, Linton and Clinton (twins), Reginald, Althea, Daryl and Mavis. He has twenty-six grandchildren and nineteen great grandchildren. Mr. Burns worked for Atlantic Coastline Railroad for 15 years before working for Florida Power Corporation where he retired after sixteen years of service. He continues to remain active; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Burns has seen many changes over the last century and remains uplifted and hopeful. He stays busy maintaining several lawns and enjoys visiting his grandchildren. He is a longtime Baptist deacon and member of the Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church. He enjoys singing and is often invited to sing at area churches and events throughout Citrus and Marion Counties. He has been an Honorary Police Officer with the Dunnellon Police Department for eight years and has been featured in numerous news articles, most recently in the Citrus County Chronicle on June 5, 2021. Mr. Burns has been recognized for his community and military service including: The Certificate of Congressional Recognition from former Congresswoman Karen Thurman on January 29, 2002; Certificate of Recognition from the Marion County Board of County Commissioners dated November 11, 2016, City of Ocala Proclamation in recognition of the 75th Anniversary of D-Day dated June 6, 2019 and City of Dunnellon Proclamation honoring him on March 9, 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED that the Dunnellon City Council recognizes January 2, 2022 as “Clinton C. Burns Day” in honor of his outstanding life accomplishment reaching his 100th birthday. A life well lived of dedication and service to his family, his Country and the people of the City of Dunnellon is appreciated. He has earned the respect of the residents and friends of the community. Delivered with great pride on this this 2nd day of January 2022.

DUNNELLON CITY COUNCIL

William P. White, Mayor

Valerie Hanchar, Vice-Mayor

C. Anita Williams, Councilwoman

Louise Kenny, Councilwoman

Attest:

Amanda L. Odom, CMC, City Clerk

Jan Cabbage, Councilwoman