



Proclamation

WHEREAS, by 1776 nearly 300,000 Irish nationals had emigrated to the American colonies and played a crucial role in America's War for Independence and five signers of the Declaration of Independence were of Irish descent and three were Irish born; and

WHEREAS, Irish Americans helped to fashion a system of government for our young Nation and twenty-two Presidents have proudly proclaimed their Irish American heritage; and

WHEREAS, in 1792 Irish born James Hoban provided the architectural plans for the White House and served as one of the supervising architects for the construction of the Capitol; and

WHEREAS, Irish born Commodore John Barry was recognized by the United States Congress in September of 2002 as the "First Flag Officer of the United States Navy" and Commodore John Barry fought the last sea battle of the American Revolution off the coast of Florida; and

WHEREAS, in 1813, Captain Oliver Perry, an Irish American, achieved a major naval victory in the Battle of Lake Erie and in 1942 the 5 Sullivan brothers made the ultimate sacrifice for democracy and freedom during the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal and later had the Destroyer USS Sullivan commissioned in their memory; and

WHEREAS, the Irish first came to Spanish "*La Florida*" in the 1500s - first as missionaries and mercenary soldiers and then as planters, traders, businessmen, doctors and administrators and three of the Spanish Governors of "*La Florida*" were actually Irish military officers; and

WHEREAS, Fr. Richard Arthur, an Irish-born priest from Limerick who was appointed parish priest for St. Augustine in 1597 and ecclesiastical judge of "*La Florida*," established the first public school in America and opened it to both boys and girls of all races; and

WHEREAS, Andrew Jackson, whose family came from County Antrim, served as Florida's military governor following its acquisition by the United States.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kent Guinn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Ocala, Florida, do hereby proclaim March 2023, as

IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

in Ocala and I encourage all citizens to join with me in celebrating the rich cultural heritage, leadership, and service that Irish Americans have provided and continue to provide to this nation's political, business, and religious establishments since America's inception.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Ocala, Florida, to be affixed this 21st day of February 2023.



Kent Guinn, Mayor
City of Ocala