

*End of the Year Report from Mayor Daisy Raisler  
December 13, 2018*

Thank you Lake Helen.

And I ALSO thank the commissioners I serve with: Tom Wilson, Vernon Burton, Jim Connell and former commissioner Michael Woods, as well as our city staff, our police department and public works for their professionalism and dedication.

Special mention here to Commissioner Tom Wilson who has been battling cancer, despite his many visits to the hospital he has been unwavering in his duty to serve Lake Helen and our citizens... his valor and dedication is admirable.

**LET ME SHARE WITH WHAT TOGETHER WE (the commission and you the citizens) HAVE ACCOMPLISHED:**

- • The Massey James Youth Center celebrated 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lake Helen African American reading program.
- Even our historic churches were celebrating birthdays... Mt. Olive celebrated 135 YRS!

**WHAT AN HONOR! OUR CITIZENS WERE BEING RECOGNIZED OUTSIDE OUR CITY BOUNDARIES:**

TODD PRESTON was awarded Volusia Citizen of the year by the Volusia League of Cities AND MS ALZADA FOWLER received NAACP West Volusia Trail Blazer Award.

**We started the year BY DOING SOME HEAVY LIFTING AND finalizing what the previous commission worked so hard at:**

- APPROVED our Comprehensive Plan and Zoning,
- We gave our city website a facelift -[www.lakehelen.com](http://www.lakehelen.com),
- WE EXPANDED our boundaries via annexation of lands west of I-4 - which proposes to boost our economy.
- APPROVED a utility agreement with DeLand
- APPROVED the codification of our ordinances which are now in Municode
- APPROVED the Downtown Master Plan, a city wide collaboration & possible vision of our future (Thank You to all who attended the workshops and participated on the online survey).
- With the help of FISHERIES & WILD LIFE we had Lake Macy restocked
- We demonstrate COMMITMENT TO CONSERVATION and changed out our city street lights to LED's - a cost saving to our city as well.
- We are flying banners on our poles through our Main St Gateway and Downtown Lakeview Dr. – a MUCH ANTICIPATED MOMENT
- We now have equestrian caution signs placed through our city to protect our equine friends.
- We had FDOT INSTALL A WALL OF TREES ON I-4 to abate the noise from the highway
- We REMOVED A FEW EYE SORES by approving the demolition of D R HORTON PROPERTIES FROM MAIN STREET GATEWAY AND DEMOLITION OF PROPERTY ON PARK AND EUCLID

**FROM OUR POLICE DEPARTMENT:**

- Chief Walker obtained a grant and gave our police building a major facelift with new windows and paint job
- PURCHASED A MOBILE RADAR SIGN – to address our speeding issues through our city
- Upgraded the police golf cart which allowed Market in the Park to acquire the old PD golf cart
- Received donation of a new police car.

**FROM PUBLIC WORKS- THERE IS TOO MUCH MAINTANANCE WORK TO MENTION BUT TO RECAP:**

- We finally converted to SMARTMETERS THROUGHOUT THE CITY
- BUILT A NEW PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING on Lemon (**ribbon cutting scheduled for FEB 2019**) for use by Public Works, Utilities, and Park and Recs – finally we can protect our city equipment.

- RE-PAVING of Water Street and Michigan,
- REPAVED the sidewalk on Ohio east of Church St.
- Installed electricity and outlets to the pavilion on Melissa Park.

### **ON THE COMMUNITY FRONT**

- We were honored to have Florida Scenic Highways & River of Lakes Heritage Corridor Scenic Highway HOST their venue in our Lake Helen Historic District at Hopkins Hall.
- Had an honorary visit from the Ambassador of Kosovo
- We joined the West Volusia Regional Chamber of Commerce
- WE ALSO JOINED VISIT WEST VOLUSIA
- We celebrated 10 YEARS TREE CITY USA and we are now a MONARCH CITY USA as well.

### **ON THE FINANCE FRONT**

- APPROVED purchase of Tyler Technology Software to enhance our efficiency, accessibility, and responsiveness to the needs of OUR CITIZENS. We look to implement this in 2019.
- We choose to be PROACTIVE with Natures calls and instituted addint a line item for HURRICANE REMOVAL DEBRIS EXPENSE IN THE BUDGET and
- ADDED A LINE ITEM FOR NAMESAKE LAKE MAINTENANCE.

### **MARKET IN THE PARK**

- HAS BECOME A SATURDAY MORNING HUB SPOT WITH TWO NEW ANNUAL EVENTS & BIG HITS:
- Dog Drop Bingo AND MIP Community Picnic – THANK YOU KAREN GUAYANTS & TEAM

### **OUR EVENTS**

KELLY FRASCA, our Events Coordinator, HAS ADDED PIZZAZ TO OUR EVENTS: it was more than just an Easter Egg Hunt it was a SPRING FESTIVAL. It was not just Trunk or Treat -we had Urban Legends Haunted House, it was a Christmas Parade AND Santa's Village, 4th of July had a MUSIC FESTIVAL, we had a HEALTH & WELLNESS RESOURCE FAIR and she added First Friday Food Trucks – ALL THIS FOSTERED COMMUNITY AND CREATED A 'WELCOME MAT' FOR OUR CITIZENS AND NEIGHBORING CITIES.

Our CHURCHES AND CIVIC GROUPS create a fabric of community throughout the year.

**AND CITY PRIDE IS AT AN ALL TIME HIGH... WITH MORE CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION AT OUR MEETINGS AND IN OUR COMMUNITY** – from citizen groups such as: SAVE THE LAKE COMMITTEE, LAKE HELEN'S LITTLE CITY BIG SALE CITY WIDE YARD SALE and the return of MISS LAKE HELEN CASSADAGA – PROMOTING LAKE HELEN YOUTH AMBASSADORS AND SCHOLARSHIP GRANT, as well as WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA  
**- ALL these are citizen initiatives FOR A BETTER LAKE HELEN.**

### **SPECIAL MENTION TO**

- AMERICAN LEGION POST 127, SCOUT PACK 590, LAKE HELEN BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB, WEST VOLUSIA SADDLE CLUB, GIRLS SCOUTS TROOP 1830, VOLUSIA PINES ELEMENTARY, IVY HAWN CHARTER SCHOOL, MISS LAKE HELEN CASSADAGA YOUTH AMBASSADORS and CRAFTY LADIES!

We are ever grateful for all the citizens' involvement in so many ways... our volunteers and those serving on our boards -- FINANCIALLY WE COULD NOT DO HALF THE THINGS WE DO IF IT WERE NOT FOR YOU! THANK YOU TO OUR Planning & Land Development Regulation Board, Historic Preservation Board, Police Pension Board, Personnel Board, Citizen Advisory Board, Market in the Park Team, Lake Helen volunteers for University of Florida LakeWatch Program and ALL THE VOLUNTEERS that help our CITY SPONSORED Events - Easter Egg Hunt, Arbor Day, City Wide Clean-Up Day, 4th of July, Fall Fest and Christmas Parade. YOU FOLKS are LAKE HELEN.

AND A HEARTFELT GRATITUDE FOR Alan and Dasha Cooke FOR 'saving' and bringing back the Butler Express-

**IT IS TRADITIONS THAT CREATE OUR CULTURE AND OUR SENSE OF COMMUNITY.**

...to God goes the glory, may we continue to be kind to each other, to allow Love to move us through our differences and our challenges and may we continue to demonstrate community as the BADGE OF CITY PRIDE.

I am humbled to serve as your MAYOR.  
THANK YOU  
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

**Daisy Raisler**  
**Mayor, City of Lake Helen**  
**"The Gem" of Florida**  
**PO Box 39/ 327 S. Lakeview Dr.**  
**Lake Helen, FL 32744**  
**City Hall: (386) 228-2121**

