



# COLLIER CLERK NEWSLETTER

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## Youth Leadership Collier receives proclamation for empowering students



Fifteen years ago, a group of ladies who connected through Leadership Institute and Leadership Collier formed a group devoted to helping young Collier County residents become future leaders.

Their desire turned into Youth Leadership Collier in 2005. Since then, more than 500 local high school students have graduated from this week-long intensive program, held every June after the school year ends.

The founders of Youth Leadership Collier, led by the vision of Donna MacNiven, include Joan Cox, Kathy Curatolo, CJ Hueston and Collier County Clerk of Courts Crystal Kinzel.

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, five representatives from the Youth Leadership Collier program attended the Board of Collier County Commissioners meeting to accept a proclamation recognizing June 2019 as Youth Leadership Month, seen in the photo above. From left to right, in the foreground, are Alex Breault, Julien Zappulla, Katrina Varela, Tiffany Lehman, and Amanda Beights. The five Collier County commissioners in the background are, left to right, Andy Solis, Donna Fiala, Chairman Bill McDaniel, Penny Taylor and Vice-Chair Burt Saunders.

*Right: Graduates of the Youth Leadership Collier Class of 2019 pose for a group photo on Government Day in front of the Collier County Courthouse.*



“I want to congratulate the 31 graduates of the Youth Leadership Class of 2019,” said Clerk of Courts Crystal Kinzel. “I encourage them to take advantage of the mentorship and knowledge they gained through the program to become leaders in Collier County.”

The Youth Leadership Collier program, which is celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> year of operation, is part of the Leadership Collier Foundation, an affiliate of the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce. It empowers students to become effective leaders through hands-on experience and field work with key organizations, encouraging them to return or stay in Collier County to begin careers. It is open to area high school juniors who have an interest in furthering their knowledge about the county and community leadership.

## **Amendment 4 aftermath: Collier County felons owe \$94 million in fines**

Floridians chose to restore the voting rights of most former convicted felons by approving an amendment to the state’s constitution in last year’s general election.

In response, the Florida Legislature approved a bill in May to implement the amendment, requiring felons to complete “all terms” of their sentence, including paying any fines, fees, restitution, or court costs associated with their conviction. Gov. Ron DeSantis signed the bill on June 28, 2019.

Following the Legislature’s decision, some clerk’s offices in Florida have reviewed their databases to determine the amount of fines owed by felons convicted in their respective counties.

For example, an article in the Sun-Sentinel reported that millions are owed by felons: \$534 million in Broward County; \$278 million in Miami-Dade, and \$201.6 million in Palm Beach County.

In Collier County, the outstanding amount owed by felons since 1980 is over \$94 million. These outstanding payments represent only fines and fees due, and do not include restitution awarded to victims of the crimes committed.

When the amendment was presented to the Florida Supreme Court for their opinion on March 6, 2017, three of the seven justices asked whether completing all terms of a felon’s sentence outlined

### **Where you can find us:**

If you need to pay a fine or court fee, obtain a marriage license, apply for a new passport or take advantage of the many other services our agency provides, here is where to go:

#### **MAIN CAMPUS:**

- **Collier County Courthouse:** 3315 Tamiami Trail E., Suite 102, Naples, FL 34112

#### **SATELLITE OFFICES:**

- **North Collier Government Services Center:** 2335 Orange Blossom Drive, Naples, FL 34109
- **Golden Gate:** 4715 Golden Gate Parkway, Naples, FL 34116
- **Eagle Creek:** 12668 Tamiami Trail E., Naples, FL 34113
- **Immokalee Courthouse:** 106 South First Street, Immokalee, FL 34142
- **Everglades City Hall:** 102 Copeland Avenue North, Everglades City, FL 34139

in the ballot language meant a former convict would have to pay all fines, fees, court costs and restitutions.

“Yes, sir, all terms means all terms,” said Jon L. Mills, who coauthored Amendment 4 and represented the issue before the state’s highest court.

Mills, who is also a former Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, told the state Supreme Court justices that a felon would have to satisfy all terms a judge enters into their sentence, including probation, parole, and full payment of any financial obligation before they could apply to have their voting rights restored.

To view the 21-minute video of the Florida Supreme Court hearing about Amendment 4, visit <https://wfsu.org/gavel2gavel/viewcase.php?eid=2421>.

The Collier County Clerk of Courts offers payment plans to citizens for fines, fees and court costs. To find out more about how to make payments, log onto [www.collierclerk.com/court-divisions/criminal/collection-agency-payments](http://www.collierclerk.com/court-divisions/criminal/collection-agency-payments).

## Clerk, County staff successfully conducted annual test of backup servers

Once a year, a team of Collier County Clerk of Courts employees get together to make sure the agency is ready for natural disasters.

This year, the group worked together for several hours on May 30 to test the agency’s secondary servers located



at the Collier County Emergency Services Center in East Naples. The backup servers are located inside that secure building in case of a major catastrophe, so that the Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller can continue to operate even if a hurricane or other major disaster affects the agency’s main office and computer systems.

The Clerk’s Office is just one of many governmental agencies that work out of that facility during crises. In September 2017, that is exactly what happened during Hurricane Irma. The agency and dozens of others were able to operate when the category 3 hurricane knocked out power, damaged homes, and caused severe chaos throughout much of the region and state.

The “disaster recovery” server test, which was successful, was conducted by the Clerk’s MIS (Management Information Systems) team along with representatives from other divisions of the Clerk’s Office and the Board of Collier County Commissioners. The test verifies that agency departments can function during an emergency basis.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The office of the Collier County Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller has hundreds of responsibilities handled by several divisions. During Fiscal Year 2018, the Courts Division:

- Issued 21,850 juror summons and welcomed 2,631 prospective jurors
- Established over 58,628 new cases
- Entered 2,067,622 docket lines into court files
- Processed and redacted (where necessary) 3,425,264 pages of court records
- Processed 232,126 eFiling submissions
- Issued 85,691 receipts totaling \$38.1 million collected through the court system, of which about \$5.9 was kept for the Clerk's budget and \$32.1 million was sent to the state to fund statewide agencies and municipalities

### **Clerk partners with The Shelter to help domestic violence victims**

For those who find themselves in an abusive relationship, there are people and resources to help. The Clerk's Office has partnered with The Shelter for Abused Women & Children to assist those being assaulted, stalked, or injured. Advocates from The Shelter are available at the Clerk's main office at the Courthouse Annex building within the Collier County Government complex.

These advocates will be able to assist domestic violence victims with critical services including assistance in filing protective injunctions (restraining orders), counseling, and education. The Clerk's Office provides a secure space for victims and their families to file the legal paperwork.

Additionally, The Shelter operates a 24-hour crisis line at 239-775-1101, a 60-bed emergency shelter, seven traditional living cottages with the capacity to house 42 people, provides outreach services, and more throughout Collier County.

### **Clerk planning multiple public presentations over the next several months**

Clerk Kinzel wants to provide information to Collier County's citizens about the many services available to them at the Clerk's Office. Further information is available at the agency's offices or on the website at [www.collierclerk.com](http://www.collierclerk.com).

Additionally, the Clerk is scheduling presentations over the next several months at Collier County library branches, clubs, organizations, and homeowners associations. For those interested in requesting a presentation by the Clerk, contact Jay Schlichter, the agency's director of community relations and outreach, at 239-252-6879 or via email at [jay.schlichter@collierclerk.com](mailto:jay.schlichter@collierclerk.com).

If you know anyone who would like to sign up to receive the Collier Clerk Newsletter, send their email address to [jay.schlichter@collierclerk.com](mailto:jay.schlichter@collierclerk.com). If you wish to discontinue receiving our newsletter, please let us know. If you have any questions about the Clerk's office, we will be happy to help. For more information, visit [www.collierclerk.com](http://www.collierclerk.com).