

Proclamation



Jane Castor, Mayor

WHEREAS, the city of Tampa, Florida has a rich history and cultural diversity that is unique to our community, and much of it can be attributed to the legacies of those who came before us and created neighborhoods, businesses, churches, and homes, and developed our special city and laid down roots for others to follow; and

WHEREAS, one significant founding community to be revered was an area called the Scrub, once Tampa's oldest and largest African American neighborhood established after the Civil War, when newly freed enslaved individuals built their homes in a scrub palmetto thicket northeast of the Town of Tampa; and

WHEREAS, the heart of the Scrub was in the Central Avenue Business District, also known as the "Harlem of the South" where culture and small businesses thrived and provided economic resources for the rapidly growing community; and

WHEREAS, the Scrub was home to many outstanding businesses and residences, and two of the original homes remain on Scott Street today, as well as the historic Jackson Boarding House, built in the 1890's by Moses and Sarah Jackson, and its proximity to Tampa Union Station provided crucial lodging accommodations for African American visitors and railroad workers during the segregation era; and

WHEREAS, despite its rich culture, continued social conditions stressed and impacted the Scrub as well as other segregated Tampa neighborhoods, and it suffered inequitable resources including unpaved streets, inadequate water and sewer services, parks, and playgrounds that other areas of the city were afforded, and the beginning of the construction of Interstate 4 and urban renewal projects caused businesses to be disrupted and residents displaced; and

WHEREAS, to honor those who came before us and helped to create our city and its uniqueness, and to acknowledge the historic significance, impact, and resilience of a neighborhood, on Thursday, July 13, 2023, a celebration is held at the Robert W. Saunders, Sr. Library, and it includes honoring the homes, families, and businesses of the Scrub and those who had the opportunity of boarding at the Jackson House.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim Thursday, July 13, 2023, as

"THE SCRUB AND JACKSON HOUSE CELEBRATION DAY"

in the city of Tampa, Florida, and urge all citizens to become aware of the importance our heritage plays in our lives, visit the cultural and art areas that calls attention to the vast contributions of those who came before us, including Soulwalk, a trail that tells the rich history and diversity of Tampa's African American communities, and honor those who have made an impact in the development, progress, and success of our incredible city.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 13th day of July 2023.



Jane Castor

Mayor