

# In Memoriam



*Bob Buckhorn, Mayor*

**WHEREAS**, the City of Tampa takes pride in recognizing those individuals whose commitment and dedication have made a lasting impact on our community and its citizens. One of these individuals was **Thomas (Tom) Massey McEwen**, a long-time legendary sportswriter, author, community advocate, and a resident of Tampa, who passed away on Sunday, June 5, 2011; and

**WHEREAS**, born into a pioneering Florida family on March 16, 1923 in Tampa, Florida, Tom McEwen was raised in Wauchula, Florida and as a child he dreamed of being the engineer to build a bridge from New York to Paris. He was salutatorian of his high school class and earned his Bachelor of Arts degree, cum laude, in journalism from the University of Florida in 1944, where his involvement included serving as executive editor of the school newspaper, *The Alligator*, a member of the Florida Blue Key, and student manager of the cafeteria. He received his degree in absentia due to World War II; and

**WHEREAS**, Tom began his Army career at age 18 and served with distinction as a platoon leader with the 785<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion, and later as second lieutenant in charge of a 2,000 prisoner of war camp. He continued his dedication to the military by serving in the Army Reserves, and with the U. S. National Guard retiring from the Florida Guard as Lieutenant Colonel in 1976, receiving the Florida Order of Merit Award; and

**WHEREAS**, Tom began his professional newspaper career with the Fort Myers News-Press in 1946, joined the St. Petersburg Times in 1954 as a sportswriter and became Sports Editor of The Tampa Times in 1958. As the Tampa Tribune's sports Editor since 1962, his award winning columns "The Morning After" and the "Breakfast Bonus" were widely read by sport enthusiasts. Tom grew the sports department from 7 staff members to 57 by the time he stepped down in 1992 and became the most influential journalist in Tampa Bay's history. He authored four books and continued to write a column for The Tampa Tribune as the primary sports columnist until 2001. He produced an estimated 10,000 columns and covered major national and international sporting events from Super Bowls to the World Series to Wimbledon and the Olympics. Tom McEwen was not only the voice in Tampa Bay area sports, but was a legend throughout the sports world and considered a leader in his industry; and

**WHEREAS**, he was named the Florida Sports Writers Association's Sportswriter of the Year 19 times; won the highest honor given to a sports writer, the prestigious Red Smith Award in 1993 for his major contributions to sports journalism; and received the Pro Football Writers of America's Dick McCann Memorial Award in 2000. Tom held memberships in the Florida Sports Hall of Fame, Tampa Sports Club Hall of Fame, and Hardee County Hall of Fame; and

**WHEREAS**, more than a sportswriter, his passion for sports and his love of the Tampa community were evident in all he achieved during his lifetime, including his advocacy for elevating sports in our area to what it is today; he not only chronicled our sports world, but he shaped our city's history by wanting the biggest and the best for Tampa. Tom believed in building his accomplishments on relationships, and it is widely recognized that Tom McEwen put Tampa on the sports map by diligently campaigning to bring professional franchises and state-of-the-art facilities including soccer, baseball, the NFL Tampa Bay Buccaneers and NHL Tampa Bay Lightning to the Tampa Bay area; and

**WHEREAS**, Tom was dedicated to civic causes relating to sports, promoted with enthusiasm local high school and university athletic sports, and championed for more sports facilities for young people. Beloved by the citizens of Tampa, he was once named one of the 25 most influential people in Tampa, a street near the Raymond James Stadium and several press boxes have been named for him, the University of Florida and University of South Florida award scholarships in his name, and he received an honorary doctorate degree in letters from Saint Leo University; and

**WHEREAS**, although we are grieved at the loss of this outstanding citizen, his legacy will continue to live on through the improvements he made to our community and in all those whose lives he touched. Tampa is a better place because Tom McEwen called it home.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bob Buckhorn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Tampa, Florida, do hereby urge all citizens to join me in publicly expressing sorrow and heartfelt appreciation to his wife Linda, his children, Rick, Virginia, Gabriella and Elissa, and other family members and to express our hopes that they will take solace in their many cherished memories and the impact his life has had on our city.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 10<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2011.

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Mayor

