

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 **Lee Roy Selmon**, a legendary football icon, beloved member of the Tampa Bay community, and a man of great integrity and inspiration, who passed away on Sunday, September 4, 2011 at age 56; and

WHEREAS, born on October 20, 1954, the youngest of nine children, Lee Roy Selmon was raised on a farm in Eufaula, Oklahoma and attended Eufaula High School, graduating in 1971, a National Honor Society member; and

WHEREAS, Lee Roy began his football career joining his brothers Lucious and Dewey in 1972 on the defensive line for the University of Oklahoma Sooners, anchoring one of the best defensive lines in the University's history, and they were instrumental in winning the NCAA Division 1-A National Football Championships in 1974 and 1975. Known as the "Gentle Giant," his many college recognitions include the Lombardi Award and the Outland Trophy in 1975, College Football News placed him as the 39th Best College Player of all time, and he was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1988; and

WHEREAS, as the #1 overall draft pick, Lee Roy and his brother Dewey, the #2 draft pick, joined the newly franchised Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 1976. Lee Roy won the team's inaugural Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable Player awards, and as a relentless pass-rusher, he set the franchise record of 78.5 sacks and 28.5 forced fumbles, and was named the National Football League's Defensive Player of the Year and Defensive Lineman of the Year in 1979, and was selected to the Pro Bowl six times. After an injury ended his football career, his number 63 jersey was retired in 1986. He was inducted into the NFL Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1995, a member of the Florida Sports Hall of Fame, and in 2009 Lee Roy was the first player to be inducted into the Tampa Bay Buccaneers Ring of Honor. He was undeniably one of the greatest players in Tampa Bay Buccaneer franchise history and was well known by the football industry and fans alike as a gentleman of great character, kindness, and humility; and

WHEREAS, after his retirement from playing football in 1985, he worked as a bank executive, and then began his tenure with the University of South Florida serving as Assistant Athletic Director, and then as Director where he launched the football program, spearheaded the construction of the new athletic facility, and led the University's move into the Big East Conference. After resigning as Director in 2004, he assumed the role as President of the USF Foundation Partnership for Athletics, an organization for athletics fund-raising. In 2000 he opened the first of a chain of restaurants, Lee Roy Selmon's, with the motto "Play Hard. Eat Well. And Don't Forget to Share," and it was named by Gayot's as one of the top ten sports bars in American in 2009; and

WHEREAS, more than an athlete, his passion for sports and his love of the Tampa community were evident in all he achieved on and off the football field, including his mentoring of young people, his work with the Special Olympics and the United Negro College Fund Sports Committee. He helped shaped our city's history, and the Lee Roy Selmon Crosstown Expressway is named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, although we are grieved at the loss of this outstanding citizen and NFL football legend, his legacy will continue to live on through the impact he made on our community and in all those whose lives he touched. Tampa is a better place because Lee Roy Selmon 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 Claybra, his children, Brandy, Lee Roy, Jr. and Christopher, and other family members, and to express our hopes that they will take solace in their many cherished memories and the contributions his life has had on our city.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 9th day of September, 2011.

Bob Buckhorn

Mayor

