

**CITY OF PALM BEACH GARDENS
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA
PROCLAMATION**

WHEREAS, Howard "Scrappy" Johnson was born on February 2, 1920, in Knoxville, Tennessee. On August 7, 1942, at the age of twenty-two (22) he enlisted in the Aviation Cadet Program of the U.S. Army Air Forces, was commissioned a 2nd Lt. and awarded his pilot wings on March 20, 1943, and served as a flight instructor and gunnery target pilot at Laredo Army Airfield, Texas, for the remainder of World War II; and

WHEREAS, Howard Johnson had been promoted to Captain and deployed to South Korea at the beginning of the Korean War; and Captain Johnson served as an F-51 Mustang pilot in Korea from July 1950 to June 1951, where he flew 87 combat missions; and

WHEREAS, Captain Johnson served at Thule Greenland and Goose Bay Air Base, Labrador, Canada, from August 1952 and was the first pilot to fly a jet fighter over the North Pole and was promoted to Major; and

WHEREAS, in August 1953, Major Johnson served as an F-94 Starfire pilot with the 84th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron at Hamilton Air Force Base, California, from March 1954 to February 1955; and

WHEREAS, Howard served as an E-86 Sabre and F-104 Starfighter pilot with the 83rd Fighter-Interceptor Squadron at Hamilton Air Force Base, from 1955 to June 1958, and during that time he set a new world altitude record of 91,249 feet in the F-104A on May 7, 1958, and was presented with the Robert J. Collier Trophy for Aeronautical Achievement by then Vice President Richard Nixon; and

WHEREAS, Major Johnson served with Headquarters Air Defense Command at Ent AFB, Colorado, from June 1958 to June 1960 and was promoted to Lt. Colonel, served as a Senior Tactical Advisor with the Military Assistant and Advisory Group in West Germany from June 1960 to June 1963, served as an F-104 pilot and Operations Officer for the 476th Tactical Fighter Squadron at George Air Force Base, California from June 1963 to November 1964, followed by service as Commander of the 436th Tactical Fighter Squadron at George Air Force Base; and

WHEREAS, Lt. Col. Johnson was promoted to Colonel and served as Assistant Deputy Commander for Operations, and later served as Deputy Commander for Operations of the 479th Tactical Fighter Wing at George Air Force Base; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Johnson deployed to Southeast Asia, served as an F-105 Thunderchief Pilot and Director of Operations for the 388th Tactical Fighter Wing at Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand, from September 1966 to August 1967, in which he flew 117 combat missions over North Vietnam and Laos; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Johnson served as Deputy Commander for Operations of the 507th Fighter Wing at Kincheloe AFB, Michigan, from October 1967 to September 1968, Deputy Commander of Operations and Training for the 4780th Air Defense Wing, and as Commander of Detachment 1, Air Defense Weapons Center, at Perrin AFB, Texas, from September 1968 until his retirement from the Air Force on October 1, 1972. While serving in Thailand, Colonel Johnson was co-founder of the Red River Valley Fighter Pilots Association (a/k/a River Rats) and served as the organization's first President in 1967. The River Rats celebrated their 50th anniversary in 2017 and have raised more than \$3,000,000 to assist the families of veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Johnson was inducted into the Kentucky Aviation Hall of Fame in 2002, and later the Florida Aviation Hall of Fame. Col. Johnson was further honored at the gathering of the Eagles at the Air University, Maxwell AFB in 2012. His performance in aviation history reflects great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force; and

WHEREAS, Col. Johnson has received 2 Silver Stars, 7 Distinguished Crosses and 17 Air Medals for his flying in the Korean and Vietnamese Wars; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, after selling their local business True Treasures, Howard Johnson and his wife Elena Johnson co-founded JOINT MISSION, Inc., a charity organization which to this day continues to provide home furnishings to formerly homeless US veterans in Palm Beach County. Joint Mission has to date served over 350 formerly homeless veterans.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Maria G. Marino, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, do hereby honor and express gratitude for Colonel Howard Johnson's outstanding achievements, commitment and dedication for thirty (30) years of service to the United States Air Force and his humanitarian efforts on behalf of our United States service members and veterans.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, to be affixed on this 7th day of June in the year Two Thousand and Eighteen.

Maria G. Marino, Mayor

Attest:

Patricia Snider, City Clerk, CMC