

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF COMMISSIONER BOB JANES

FORT MYERS, Fla. (March 12, 2010) – Lee County will host a public ceremony celebrating the life of Commissioner Bob Janes on March 22 at 4 p.m., Harborside Event Center in downtown Fort Myers.

The public is invited to attend, with doors opening about 3:30 p.m.

Below is information about Commissioner Janes' career and legacy.

Lee County honors the lifelong public service of Bob Janes

The Lee County, Florida community is mourning the loss, but celebrating the life and accomplishments of Lee County Commissioner, former Sanibel Mayor and former National Association of Counties and Florida Association of Counties board member Robert P. (Bob) Janes, who died in his home March 10. Janes was a lifelong public servant and champion for the local community.

As a county commissioner, Janes represented the residents of District 1, which includes Cape Coral, Captiva, Upper Captiva, Sanibel, Matlacha, Pine Island, St. James City, Bokeelia and Boca Grande; however, he served the entire community and his impact will be felt county-wide for years to come.

As the son of educators, Janes' parents taught him about the necessity of public service and the importance of volunteering. He took that lesson seriously and began his career early in life in the United States Army, retiring as a colonel.

He was first elected into public service in the 1960s as a Minneapolis city alderman and then as a Hennepin County commissioner, where he served five years as board chairman. From Minnesota, he moved to Washington, D.C. and served as the deputy director of the White House Intergovernmental Affairs, where he worked as liaison between the White House and state governments, counties and cities. Among other issues, he tackled key health care policies. In 1975, he and his family moved to Sanibel.

Janes was a successful businessman in the local community, including a banker and owner of a real estate school, hotel and restaurant. He stayed true to his parents' example and became a dedicated community volunteer and public servant for Lee County. He served as a member of the Sanibel Planning Commission, where he was instrumental in passing stringent building codes on the island to protect our environment.

Janes was elected to the Sanibel City Council and then was elected mayor. In 2000, he was elected to the Lee County Board of County Commissioners and re-elected in 2004 and 2008. As a member of the Lee County Commission, he focused on his lifelong passion of human services and health care issues, serving as the board's advocate and liaison for mental health and substance abuse issues at local, state and national levels. He was instrumental in the creation of Lee County's mental health triage center and low demand shelter. He also served as liaison between the board and the Florida Legislature, Public Safety Coordinating Council, Human Services Council, Babcock Ranch, Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council and Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Last June, the 5,620 acres of the Babcock Ranch that lie in north Lee County was renamed the Bob Janes Preserve in honor of the active and dedicated role Janes played in negotiating the public purchase and subsequent preservation of this important piece of the local environment.

A memorial fund to collect donations for the Bob Janes Preserve has been established through the Conservation 20/20 Program. Donations may be sent in care of Cathy Olson, Conservation 20/20 Program, 3410 Palm Beach Blvd., Fort Myers FL 33916. Checks should be made out to "Lee County Board of County Commissioners," and "Bob Janes Memorial Fund" should be written in the memo.

Janes is survived by his wife of more than 55 years, Lynda Janes, and their three daughters, Susie (Janes) and Colin Flinn, Sandy and Mary.