

Celebrating Twenty Years of Environmental Stewardship 1996-2016

April 26, 2016

Linda Hudson, Mayor
City of Fort Pierce/City Hall
100 North U.S. Highway One
Fort Pierce, FL 34950



Dear Mayor Hudson,

As a friend and partner in our success, we invite you to write a letter in support of the **Manatee Observation and Education Center (MOEC)** to endorse its grant application to the **Florida Division of Cultural Affairs for general operating support for 2017-2018**. 2016 is a milestone as MOEC celebrates twenty years as St. Lucie County's first non-profit, environmental learning center - teaching, guiding and inspiring stewardship of the Indian River Lagoon and its fragile inhabitants - including the endangered Florida manatee.

With the visionary partnership of the Florida Inland Navigational District (FIND), Main Street Fort Pierce, City of Fort Pierce, Fort Pierce Utilities Authority, Indian River State College and local business and community donors, MOEC became a cultural community gathering place and a catalyst for ecological education. Today, MOEC continues as an anchor in the economic revitalization of Fort Pierce, contributing to the local economy through cultural eco-tourism and attracting visitors from all over the world. Enclosed you will find highlights and milestones and we ask you to provide the following:

1. A letter from you on your letterhead endorsing MOEC's application for support and
2. **Addressed to:** Florida Division of Cultural Affairs
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250
3. Email PDF to: donate@ManateeEducationCenter.org
or mail to my attention at : 480 N Indian River Drive, Fort Pierce, FL 34950

Funding from the **Florida Division of Cultural Affairs** will enhance MOEC's ability to deliver teachable moments for children and families about the importance of the environment and ecology through enriching public programs and engaging exhibits. Best of all, MOEC remains accessible to all who enjoy historic downtown Fort Pierce and its waterfront.

Please contact me with any questions at 772.429-8597. Thank you for your support!

Diane Kimes
Development Officer

Explore. Educate. Inspire.



Celebrating Twenty Years of Environmental Stewardship 1996-2016

Manatee Observation & Education Center (MOEC) and Community Impact at-a Glance

MOEC serves as a regional environmental and cultural leader, promoting the area's natural and cultural heritage that makes the Treasure Coast a special place to work, live and visit. Our location is ideally suited as a community gathering place for cultural audiences. Fort Pierce is also home to distinguished research facilities, including Smithsonian Marine Station and Florida Atlantic University - Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, and Ocean Research & Conservation Association (ORCA). An array of federal, state, local and public maritime organizations, as well as marine industries are located here to fuel enrichment and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

- **MOEC** has educated and entertained 850,000 visitors since its doors opened in 1996.
- **MOEC** is home to fresh & salt water aquaria, touch tank, interactive displays, indoor and outdoor classroom, "Under the Dock" Theatre, solar-powered tower lights, waterscape that uses reclaimed water, butterfly garden, wildlife observation deck and several interpretive signs surrounding its perimeter to inform and educate the public about the inhabitants in and around the Indian River Lagoon.
- **MOEC** offers a wide range of public programs and events for all ages, *guided kayaking trips, wildlife eco-boat tours, and Lunch & Learn Lectures.*
- **MOEC** annually hosts **36,000 visitors (2015)**, including **5000 schoolchildren** through visits to the Education Center, outreach to the schools and field excursions.
- MOEC offers youth summer and winter "break" Camps, "Sleep in the Deep" overnight camp, "Dining with the Fish" feeding program, *Mermaid Tales* storytime and monthly themed curriculum of the *arts in nature.*
- **MOEC** is the meeting place for the RIVER KIDZ of St. Lucie and Indian River County, a youth environmental awareness organization on the Treasure Coast.
- **MOEC** is accessible across diverse sectors to improve the economic vitality of the Treasure Coast with low admission fee of \$1.00 per person and many free community events such as NATURE FEST and mascot MOE the Manatee's Birthday Celebration.
- *In 2015, of the 35,000 visitors to MOEC, 30% were "local"; 10 % from Florida, 47% from outside of Florida and 13% of visitors from outside of the United States.*
- 120 docents, part of **MOEC's "ManaTEAM"** provided 12,445 hours of service to the community.
- MOEC partnering with local wildlife boat tour operator, Captain Barry "Chop" Legé for eco-boat tours and business operator Lisa Kayaks to coordinate community kayak tours.

- **Sales in Vanishing Mermaid Gift Shop** of MOEC, contributes to close to \$150,000 in gross revenues.
- **MOEC** spends under \$400,000 on its annual budget.
- **MOEC** is one of the original members of **FPAT – Fort Pierce Authentic Tours** an economic development initiative for sustainability and capacity- building for the area.
- **MOEC** and its volunteers actively participate in a wide range of community events: EARTH Day, RIVER clean-ups, oyster restoration events, and festivals to promote environmental education.

Impact Measurement:	FY 2013		FY 2014		FY 2015		FY 2016
	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal
Lunch –n- Learn Lectures (12 per year)	240	247	250	263	275	295	300
Education Program Participants (Students & Campers)	4500	4895	4900	5658	5000	3800	5500
Annual visitors	35,800	32,985	36,500	39,732	36,500	36,300	40,500
Volunteer hours	10,300	10,485	13,000	10,528	13,000	12,445	13,500
Manatees Spotted	**	645	**	407	**	515	

Explore. Educate. Inspire.

MANATEE OBSERVATION AND EDUCATION CENTER



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

WHERE YOUR ADVENTURE BEGINS!

Swim & Crawl. Slither & Glide.

Animals & habitats surrounding the
Indian River Lagoon await your discovery.

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?



**Watch
for
wildlife!**



**Touch
a
seastar!**



**Get eye
to eye with
an eel!**



**Follow
a
turtle!**

Located along the waters of the Indian River Lagoon and Moore's Creek in historic downtown Fort Pierce, MOEC offers something for everyone!

Engaging, hands-on exhibits feature a touch tank, aquariums, and informative displays. Stroll the covered walkway and climb the observation tower for a breathtaking view of the Lagoon, along with an opportunity to view manatee and other wildlife in their natural habitat.

BE INSPIRED!

You'll want to come back again and again.

Manatee Observation & Education Center
480 North Indian River Drive | Fort Pierce, FL 34950

772.429.6266

Visit us at www.ManateeEducationCenter.org

Explore. Educate. Inspire.

MANATEE OBSERVATION AND EDUCATION CENTER

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

WHERE YOUR ADVENTURE CONTINUES!

Your adventure does not end on land! Sign up for a Wildlife Boat Tour to discover the wonder and beauty of the most bio-diverse estuary in North America, the Indian River Lagoon! Watch for dolphin, manatees, fish, birds, and more. Reservations are highly suggested.



The *Vanishing Mermaid Gift Shop* has an exciting assortment of gifts inspired by nature. Clothing, home décor, stationary, books, jewelry and more await your discovery! Take home the perfect gift or two that captures the wonder of your visit.

Visit www.ManateeEducationCenter.org to learn more about the Manatee Observation & Education Center and what we are doing to teach, guide and inspire stewardship to protect our world!



Manatee Observation & Education Center
480 North Indian River Drive | Fort Pierce, FL 34950

Exhibit Hall 772.429.6266

Gift Shop 772.429.6267

October 1-June 30:

Tues-Sat 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun 12-4 p.m.

July 1-September 30:

Thurs-Sat 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Visit us at www.ManateeEducationCenter.org



TAKE A CLOSER LOOK
and you will see unique and
amazing creatures in the Indian
River Lagoon! Learn how life on
land connects to the water.

Help MOEC continue to foster
environmental stewardship that
lasts a lifetime!

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!
Thank you for your support.

ADVICE FROM A MANATEE:

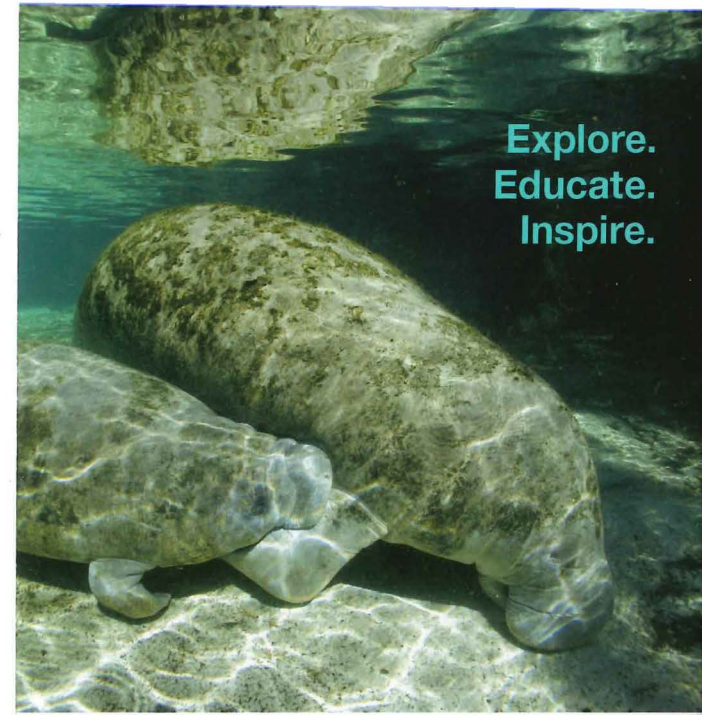
- Breathe deep | Glide through your day
- Have a gentle spirit | Enjoy time alone
- Eat plenty of greens | Keep your whiskers clean
- Live Large!

©2016 Ilan Shamir yourtruenature.com. Used by permission.

Explore. Educate. Inspire.

MANATEE
OBSERVATION
AND EDUCATION CENTER
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

480 N Indian River Drive
Fort Pierce, FL 34950



Explore.
Educate.
Inspire.

CONSERVE
WHAT
YOU LOVE!

Become a
FRIEND of MOEC

MANATEE
OBSERVATION
AND EDUCATION CENTER

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

www.ManateeEducationCenter.org

WHAT'S NOT TO LOVE

when looking into the face of an endangered Florida manatee? This gentle giant with its wrinkled round face, wiry whiskers and ever-present smile needs all the love we humans can provide!

At the **Manatee Observation and Education Center (MOEC)**, learn more about the world of this marine mammal and other Indian River Lagoon inhabitants, while having fun!

Feel the spines of an urchin, get eye to eye with an eel, touch a sea star, or hone your science skills on the *Home Sweet Home!* habitat game. Take home a treasure from the Vanishing Mermaid Gift Shop.

Climb the Observation Tower and watch for wildlife, while enjoying a breathtaking view of the Indian River Lagoon, North America's most biologically diverse estuary.

OUR HISTORY

Manatee Observation & Education Center (**MOEC**) opened in 1996 as St. Lucie County's *first*, not-for-profit, environmental education center with a grant from the Florida Inland Navigational District, Main Street Fort Pierce, City of Fort Pierce, Fort Pierce Utilities Authority and community donors.

Situated along the Indian River Lagoon and Moore's Creek, a freshwater tributary, MOEC provides quality education to more than 35,000 visitors each year, including 5,000 students.

As the cornerstone of Fort Pierce's revitalization efforts, MOEC contributes to the local economy through cultural eco-tourism; attracting visitors from all around the world.

MANATEE OBSERVATION AND EDUCATION CENTER

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Memberships, donations sponsorships, grants and sales from the Vanishing Mermaid Gift Shop further our mission to support:

- Aquariums, displays & exhibits
- Education, public programs and lectures
- Community outreach, taking MOEC on the road to area schools and groups
- Camps, kayaking, and eco-tours
- Operations to keep MOEC's doors open

MOEC is teaching, guiding and inspiring stewardship to sustain our world.

SUPPORT WHAT YOU LOVE!

Explore.
Educate.
Inspire.
JOIN!



EVERYBODY NEEDS A FRIEND **Member Benefits**

As a member, you will not only support the environmental stewardship of MOEC, you will receive valuable benefits. Most importantly, you will join others who are helping to build a community of marine advocates who care about the future of the Indian River Lagoon and its fragile inhabitants.

- Unlimited free year-round admission and membership card at designated level
- Invitations to special members only events
- Early registration for summer camp
- Reciprocal membership to over 170 nature centers in the United States through ANCA – Association of Nature Center Administrators
- 10% discount at the *Vanishing Mermaid Gift Shop*
- Subscription to e-newsletter, *Observations*.

JOIN THE MANATEAM!

Manatee Observation & Education Center
480 North Indian River Drive | Fort Pierce, FL 34950

772.429.8597

or donate@ManateeEducationCenter.org

www.ManateeEducationCenter.org



PHOTO BY JOHN CAMARAO

Kissing
Manatees
in Moore's
Creek

Explore. Educate. Inspire.