

CITY OF LIVE OAK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

PROCLAMATION

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE W. B. HOWLAND COMPANY

WHEREAS, the W. B. Howland Company has faithfully served the City of Live Oak since 1926, with its Suwannee County roots tracing even further back to the Clayland community on the Howland homestead in the 1880s, reflecting a proud and enduring legacy of family, hard work, and commitment to community; and

WHEREAS, from its earliest days the store served as more than a place of commerce—offering a full-service gas station, groceries, hardware, lumber, and the beloved hand-dipped ice cream that became a cherished memory for generations of families across the Suwannee Valley; and

WHEREAS, founder William Beverly Howland established the company not only as a business, but as a pillar of the community—providing meaningful employment opportunities, supporting local economic stability, and ensuring that every customer who walked through the doors was treated with fairness, dignity, and neighborly respect; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Live Oak and the surrounding region embraced W. B. Howland Co. as their “community store,” relying on the exceptional service, generosity, and integrity of the Howland family and its dedicated employees for generations; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, under the leadership of Hal Fletcher and Billy Howland, a modern storefront was constructed, expanding the company’s operations as an independent grocer and hardware retailer while continuing its longstanding tradition of service to the community; and

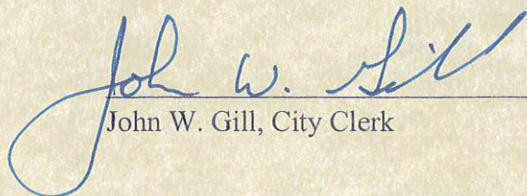
WHEREAS, for decades the W. B. Howland Co. has quietly and generously supported the Suwannee Valley through contributions to schools, churches, families in need, civic organizations, youth programs, and countless community initiatives—embodying the spirit of service and neighbor helping neighbor; and

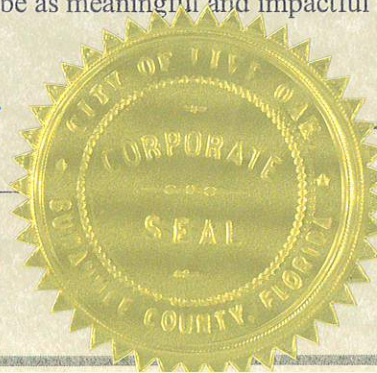
WHEREAS, in the early 1990s, under the leadership of Lyn Fletcher and Bill Howland, the company once again adapted to meet the needs of the region by transitioning from its grocery operations, establishing Howland’s Express convenience store, launching a truss manufacturing division, and strengthening its mission as a premier supplier of hardware and building materials to the community; and

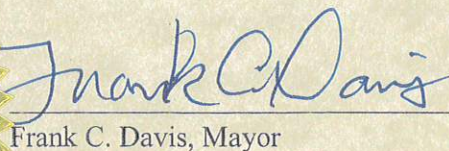
WHEREAS, in 2001, the W. B. Howland Co. undertook a major expansion of its retail storefront and warehouse facilities, further demonstrating its continued investment in the people, businesses, and future growth of Live Oak and Suwannee County; and

WHEREAS, for 100 years the W. B. Howland Co. has stood not merely as a business, but as a symbol of community pride, resilience, and generosity—touching the lives of countless families through its service, leadership, and unwavering dedication to the place it calls home.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Frank C. Davis, Mayor of the City of Live Oak, Florida, do hereby proclaim March 28 as **W. B. Howland Co. Day** in the City of Live Oak, and proudly recognize the company, its leadership, its employees, for a century of faithful service, community leadership, and extraordinary generosity. May the next 100 years be as meaningful and impactful as the first.


John W. Gill, City Clerk




Frank C. Davis, Mayor