

Grand Marshal Announced for the Vero Beach Centennial Parade



When it came to deciding who would be the Grand Marshal of the Centennial Celebration Finale parade only one name was discussed. It was a quick decision to invite Alma Lee Loy, affectionately known to many as “the First Lady of

Vero Beach” or “the Bridge Lady,” to take the honored ride in the lead automobile. But no matter how you say it, Alma Lee Loy is indeed a lady, boasting a history of community service as long as the parade route she will lead beginning at 10 a.m. from the Vero Beach High School, down 14th Avenue on Saturday, October 26.

Serving as the Grand Marshal in a parade is not Alma Lee’s first rodeo as she served in the same capacity for the Labor Day Parade in 1994. That, and another two dozen honors and awards, along with another fifty civic endeavors in Indian River County, is somewhat mind-boggling to anyone who reads Alma Lee’s resume...but to anyone who knows her personally, it’s no surprise. The mark Alma Lee has made on the progress this community has experienced is a feat few people can make in their lifetime, but it seems like it’s almost been easy since she began her journey in 1955 as a business owner downtown. For 42 years, Alma Lee’s (children’s clothing center) was a happy place for her. Since then, Alma Lee has approached each of her many endeavors with a happy smile and a firm grasp on what needs to be accomplished, while treating every individual she meets along the way with a “hello darlin” as if they were family.

A myriad of prominent areas of Vero Beach seem to have been touched by Alma Lee’s grace, wisdom and tenacity over the years. While the stand-outs are as the first female president of the Chamber of Commerce of IRC, the first female chairman of the County Commission, chairman of the Veteran’s Memorial Island Sanctuary committee, gubernatorial appointment to the Indian River Hospital District and a member of the founding board of the United Way and the Education Foundation, she considers her presidency of the Indian River Land Trust that led the campaign to save and refurbish the now McKee Botanical Garden, as well as the 17th Street Bridge project that now dons her name, as some of her favorite challenges and closest to her heart.

In addition, Alma Lee was the social editor for the daily newspaper, and has served as president, board member, chairman, trustee, or advisory board member for so many organizations that are familiar to our ears including the hospital, Environmental Learning Center, Downtown Merchants Association, the Cultural Council and Museum of Art, to mention just a few. She has been, and still is, a mentor to many, and a woman to consult for opinion, direction, and information that only she has tucked up her sleeve.

As all residents of Vero Beach take pride on October 26, 2019 to celebrate the 100 years of our beautiful community, it is a time for us to look to and thank our founders and forefathers who have taken the significant measures to make Vero Beach the amazing city that we know and love today. And when we do, let us all remember that one woman by the name of Alma Lee Loy sits at the top of that list, and we are so lucky to have her with us as Grand Marshal, representing what she has achieved for the benefit of many thousands of people over the years. “Hello Darlin” and thank you for your service.