



# City of Flagler Beach

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At a recent meeting of all Flagler County government leaders and through subsequent newspaper stories, the Flagler Beach Commission learned of flyers left on the driveways of some residents in three or four sections of Palm Coast by the United Northern and Southern Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). While included in the three-page document was a Happy Easter message, the flyers were clearly meant for the purpose of recruiting new members (including twenty reasons why people should join the organization) and spreading a hate message. Flagler County's population is extremely diverse, representing all races, many nationalities, both naturalized and un-naturalized citizens born in other countries, all economic levels, various levels of educational background, many religious groups, those with differing political stands, and those with non-traditional sexual orientation. We are certainly much more than "white, Christian, native-born American citizens" as the KKK described themselves throughout their message.

The distribution of such a flyer is certainly within the KKK's First Amendment rights, but the Commission of the City of Flagler Beach considers it to be a bias incident and wishes to proffer its own First Amendment right to register its distress that such an episode occurred in our area. If we were to say nothing, such inaction could easily be construed as apathy and/or acceptance. In other communities where bias incidents have occurred and nothing was said about them, hatred has persisted, grown, and led to great divisions within the population. We do not want this to occur in Flagler Beach or in Flagler County.

Flagler Beach and Flagler County should be known as great places to live and work for ALL. In our area, it should be acknowledged that every voice matters, that all people are valuable, and that no one is lesser than anyone else. We should all stand together against bias and hatred. Please note the following two quotes:

Chris Boucher of Yukon, PA: "A united coalition is like Teflon. Hate can't stick here"

Steven Johns Boehme, leader of the Michigan Ecumenical Forum: "If you drop the seeds of prejudice in soil that is not receptive, they won't take root."