

## LOCAL

# 2024 Sarasota County Heritage Awards honor exceptional contributions to local preservation

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The Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation, in collaboration with the History & Preservation Coalition of Sarasota County, will present the Sarasota County 2024 Heritage Awards at a ceremony on March 21 at the Sarasota Art Museum, 1001 S. Tamiami Trail, in Sarasota.

The awards – hosted by Andrea Knies and Mimi Cirbusova, co-founders of Compass Rose History – recognize individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to the preservation and understanding of Sarasota County's historical resources.

The 2024 Heritage Awards:

- **Gregory A. and Eleana Najmy Hall Adaptive Use and Historic**

**Preservation:** Named in honor of the legacy of architect Gregory A. Hall and his wife Eleana Najmy Hall, the awards celebrate the best historic preservation projects in Sarasota County.

Winners: **Vickie Oldham and the Sarasota African American Cultural Coalition**, in recognition for the preservation of the Leonard Reid House, honoring one of the early leaders of the Sarasota's African American community. **Florida Studio Theater Preservation**, in recognition of FST's extraordinary efforts to

incorporate the Sarasota's Woman's Club and Gompertz Theater historic structures into its campus and repurpose them with sensitive alterations.

• **The Lillian Burns Individual Achievement Awards:** Winners: **Frank Cassell**, in recognition of outstanding contributions to the history and preservation movement in Sarasota County in the areas of scholarly research and publications, and for devotion to community service with leadership of the Sarasota County Centennial Committee, the History and Preservation Coalition of Sarasota County and the Friends of the Sarasota County History Center. **Dorothy Korwek**, in recognition of outstanding contributions to the history and preservation movement in Sarasota County, including efforts to preserve and maintain the Triangle Inn building and the Lord-Higel House.

• **Archaeological Conservancy Award:** **Marion Almy**, in recognition of outstanding efforts to preserve and document prehistoric sites in Sarasota County and the Tampa Bay region; decades of advocacy for archeological conservation and historic preservation in Florida; and effectiveness in advancing archeological preservation with national, local and state government agencies.

• **Historical Research Award:** **Deborah Walk**, in recognition of outstanding contributions to historic research and archival preservation of cultural past, including research into the history of the Crocker Church for the Historical Society of Sarasota County; research for the Church of the Redeemer and the Founders Garden Club; and for work as an archivist, researcher, and author.

• **Organizational Achievement Award:** **Venice Heritage Inc.**, in recognition of efforts to advance historic preservation, education, research, and community engagement in Venice. It is curator of two of the community's most important historical structures – the Lord-Higel House and the Triangle Inn (now Venice Museum). The group has also published books documenting the historical and cultural fabric of the city and continues to have, strong impact on raising community awareness of Venice's past.

The Heritage Awards committee includes professionals in the fields of architecture, historic preservation, real estate development, archaeology, history and collections management. For more information on the awards ceremony and to purchase tickets, visit [PreserveSRQ.org](https://www.preserveSRQ.org) or call 941-254-3002.

*Submitted by Su Byron*