

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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Media Contact:

Save Southern Heritage Spokesman: David McCallister 813-778-1202

Email: [SSHMediaTeam@gmail.com](mailto:SSHMediaTeam@gmail.com)

### **SAVE SOUTHERN HERITAGE PROTESTS LAKE CITY COUNCIL PURGE OF CITY SEAL Portraying Battle of Olustee, FL WITH CONFEDERATE FLAG FLYOVER**

**Lake City, FL** – SAVE SOUTHERN HERITAGE, Inc. (SSH) will deliver a special message to Mayor Stephen M. Witt and the Lake City, Florida City Council during the city's Olustee Festival & Parade on Saturday, 12 FEB 2016 from (approximately) 10 a.m. to 12 a.m. in response to the city's 2015 vote to purge the City's ties to its historical past by eliminating its seal – which contained a U.S. Flag and a Confederate flag.

The banned seal had been adopted in 2002, amidst controversy, and was developed by a local artist whose entry was chosen by local voters in a contest. The impetus for the 2002 seal was a 2001 campaign by the NAACP to change the existing seal, which favored a Confederate Flag.

In 2015 the City Council caved to complaints of extremists who feigned offense over the area's unique History, calling the town the "Hateway to Florida" and their seal a "symbol of hate". The city's connection to the historical flags is its proximity to the largest battle ever on Florida soil occurred on February 20, 1864, slightly east of Lake City at "Olustee". Florida's defenders, including many Lake City residents, prevented a massive land attack on North Central Florida by Federal troops, preventing Lake City from being sacked and Florida's Capital being captured. Combined combatants were over 10,000, with nearly 3,000 casualties.

The Festival is the area's largest tourism event, and the City reaps millions of dollars from the tourism generated by the annual observance that co-incides with battle re-enactments on the original battle site. "Its foolishment...Its like killing the goose that laid the golden egg" said David McCallister, spokesman for Save Southern Heritage. "These extremists don't care if the festival helps the City or not, they just enjoy spreading hate" he added.

In late 2015, the Florida Division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) has also called for a boycott of the Festival and Parade, and hundreds of its members from Georgia, Florida and other states, are spending their 3 day weekend dollars elsewhere. The SCV is a Veteran's heritage honor society, the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and is made up of descendants of the Lake City defenders.

A plane trailing a 25' X 40' Confederate flag with the message: **“KEEP OUR SEAL - SSHe.US”** will fly for 2 hours on Saturday over downtown Lake City. This will be Save Southern Heritage's 5<sup>th</sup> flyover, the 2<sup>nd</sup> in Florida, a Robert E. Lee Birthday flyover over the state capitol in Tallahassee, the Fort Worth Stock Show, the Charleston, SC GOP debate, and the recent GOP Debate in Des Moines, Iowa.

A local group, Supporters of Southern History (SOSH), has been active in restoring the seal which is systematically being removed from City property, of course, at taxpayer expense. SOSH is planning a protest at the festival and parade, and will be gathering petitions to restore the seal.

“We are happy to help our compatriots in Lake City with this ISIS-style cleansing of Florida history from people who seem to be conflicted – they're happy enough to take money generated from the area's history, but somehow wish their history would go away,” said P. Charles Lunsford, Save Southern Heritage Director.

SAVE SOUTHERN HERITAGE Inc. is a 501 c(4) public welfare corporation that educates & advocates on behalf of Southern Heritage & History. It was started in 2015 in response to the knee-jerk Anti-Southern institutionalized bullying and *“eracism”* levied against the people of South Carolina by Governor Nikki Haley, after she broke all previous agreements about how South Carolina's historical veterans and their symbols should be treated and respected.

SSH Spokesman David McCallister will be in Lake City for the parade & battle reenactment and will be available for further press comments. Reach him in Lake City at 813-778-1202

SSH is organizing across the South. For more info: [www.SSHe.us](http://www.SSHe.us)