

# Luminaries

March 29, 2021

Martin Co., St. Lucie Co., Indian River Co.



## REMEMBERING LAVAUGHN TILTON

HIBISCUS CHILDREN'S CENTER  
HONORS BELOVED FOUNDER





# TREASURE COAST

## COVER STORY

# Hibiscus Children's Center honors beloved founder

**Michelle King**

Special to Treasure Coast Newspapers  
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

VERO BEACH — LaVaughn Tilton, Hibiscus Children's Center founder, had a passion stirring in her heart to make the world a safer place for children, free from abuse and neglect. A Missouri native, LaVaughn

and her family moved to Jensen Beach in 1963. Earlier this year, the Hibiscus Children's Center and the community lost one of our children's greatest advocates and heroes on Jan. 8 when LaVaughn Tilton died.

In 1985, with her late-husband Ransom R. Tilton at her side, LaVaughn began to fulfill her dream to create a safe haven for abused children to call home, receive critical services and foster a healing environment.

The community-wide effect created by LaVaughn is still going strong today in the family of volunteers, staff and supporters who continue to join in the fight against the devastating trauma children experience in Treasure Coast communities.

LaVaughn laid the blueprint for the care victimized children would need. Following in her footsteps, the goal was implemented to protect children and help them cope with trauma while building positive adaptive and problem-solving skills that will lead to a successful future.

During April, "Child Abuse Prevention Month" and every day, we are grateful that LaVaughn never wa-



**LaVaughn Tilton, the founder of the Hibiscus Children's Center of Vero Beach.** MICHELLE KING

vered in her determination to answer the resounding question that troubled her, "What about the children? We don't have any facilities for them."

More than 35 years later, LaVaughn could not have fathomed the impact that her selfless dedication and heartfelt motivation would have on the more than 3,000 abused, abandoned and neglected children who have received safe haven, comfort and healing at Til-

**In 1985, with her late-husband Ransom R. Tilton at her side, LaVaughn began to fulfill her dream to create a safe haven for abused children to call home, receive critical services and foster a healing environment.**

ton Family Children's Shelter in Jensen Beach and Hibiscus Village in Vero Beach.

LaVaughn's perseverance positioned Hibiscus as a leader in child welfare and promoted expanded services that currently include residential services; trauma-informed care; mental health counseling; educational and career planning; abuse prevention/intervention; in-home parenting support and substance abuse services across the Treasure Coast and Okeechobee County.

There is no way to measure the lives that LaVaughn has touched with her gracious demeanor, kindness and generous spirit. She was a genuine beacon of hope to our community and a voice for our fragile and traumatized children.

LaVaughn will always be our hero and be remembered with love and gratitude for the priceless gifts she bestowed upon our children. She will be greatly missed, but her legacy lives on in the precious children we continue to save and help transform their lives for the better.

For information, contact Michelle King, chief development officer, 561-452-5791, or visit [www.HibiscusChildrensCenter.org](http://www.HibiscusChildrensCenter.org)

## Luminaries

Luminaries is published each Monday by Treasure Coast Newspapers, distributed throughout the Treasure Coast and is available online at [TCPalm.com/Luminaries](http://TCPalm.com/Luminaries).

### ADVERTISING SALES

**INDIAN RIVER**  
772-409-1301

**ST. LUCIE**  
772-409-1301

**MARTIN**  
772-409-1301

### How to Submit:

Please submit press releases and photos to [TCNreadercontent@tcpalm.com](mailto:TCNreadercontent@tcpalm.com) or go online at [TCPalm.com/Submit](http://TCPalm.com/Submit). All subjects in photographs must be properly identified from left to right.

We LOVE photos...the more the merrier! Please make sure your submissions have photos that are a minimum of **1MB/300 dpi, but no larger than 15MB** (check your camera/phone settings). The higher the resolution, the better the print.

The Luminaries staff reserves the right to determine whether and when submitted material is published in any Treasure Coast Newspapers/TCPalm.com print and online product. Publication is not guaranteed.

All submissions will be edited for clarity, grammar and length.