



DeSoto County Historical Society News

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May 2009

Sponsors Needed for This Newsletter!

We're looking for individuals, organizations, and businesses to become sponsors of this newsletter. For a donation of \$100, you, your organization, or business will have a listing in this newsletter for 12 months!

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January - **Jack Shore**

February - **Joshua Creek Realty Group**

March - **Arlene and Warren Conley**
in memory of **Leo and Hazel Williams**

May - **Historic Parker House B & B**
Kay and Leonard Higley, Proprietors
863-494-1060

Historical Publications Committee

Copies of the booklets: *DeSoto County Historical Society's Recollections I: A Collection of Historical Photographs, Documents, Stories, Recipes, Sayings, and Other Memorabilia about Arcadia and DeSoto County, Florida*, and *The Walking Tour of Historic Arcadia, Florida*, will be on sale during the meeting. *Recollections* sells for \$7 and the *Walking Tour* for \$5. All proceeds will benefit the Historical Society.

Thanks to James Westberry

for volunteering to clean the Florida Historical Marker located in front of the Fort Ogden post office on Highway 17 about ten miles south of Arcadia, and to Kings Nursery for volunteering to landscape the area afterwards. Lorna Johnson, great-granddaughter-in-law of legendary mailman Acrefoot Johnson, requested these preparations for the annual May Day Picnic, now held on the first Sunday in May in Kings Park in Fort Ogden.

We Need New Members: You Can Help!

If each member of the Historical Society invited one friend, family member, or neighbor to join, we would easily double our membership. At the meeting, we'll have copies of our membership application, return envelopes, and extra newsletters available to help you interest others in our Society. Or, visit our web site and download the application at www.historicdesoto.org.

Membership Dues

Membership dues are due on January 1, and fees are prorated for the first year:

- Individual \$12
- Family \$22
- Sponsor \$30
- School \$25
- Club \$25
- Business \$100
- Name tag \$10

Messages from Our Online Visitors

Gary Q. Johnson of Cincinnati, Ohio, sent a copy of a photograph made on New Year's Day, 1926, and wrote: "My grandfather and grandmother drove their car to Florida from Michigan in 1925 and 1926, quite a trek when few roads were paved. . . . Since they were selling souvenirs as "Arcadia Souvenirs," I wonder if they were in Arcadia when the photo was taken."

Debbie Hollingsworth, a fifth-generation native Floridian and native of DeSoto County, shared a "cattle-drive" story told by her father, J. L. Hollingsworth, Jr., that will be included in *Recollections II*.

Margie Huffman of Palm Bay, Florida, wrote that she and her husband, Joe, were members of the Peace River Valley Quartet.

Please send all news, corrections, and suggestions to Carol Mahler online at carolm@strato.net or call 491-0286.

Pioneer Day Wrap-Up Meeting

Thanks to Kay and Leonard Higley for hosting this meeting and barbecue at the Historic Parker House on Monday, April 13. Thanks to those who attended and shared their comments and suggestions on how to improve our annual festival: Arlene Conley, Cindy Ely, Paul and Marion Glanden, Bebe Jackson, Vernon and Linda Keen, Jahna Leonard, Carol Mahler, Mitzie McGavic, Harold McLeod, John and Forest Reynolds, Evelyn Sasser, Jack and Clel Shore, and James Westberry. If you have an idea or comment about Pioneer Day, please call Bebe Jackson at 494-6607 or send an e-mail message to historicparkerhouse@yahoo.com.

Thanks to Mitzie McGavic

for attending a town hall meeting with U. S. Senator Bill Nelson held in Arcadia.

She thanked him for sending Lynn Bannister, his Director of Outreach, to join our delegation in presenting our application for a Small Matching Historic Grant from the State of Florida Division of Historic Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation, to complete the restoration of the J. Morgan Ingraham House.

Historical Society to Consider Funding a Scholarship

Arlene Conley, Vernon Keen, Harold McLeod, and James Westberry welcome you to serve with them on a committee to consider funding a scholarship with particular requirements for a DeSoto County High School senior who will pursue a college degree in history. If you're interested, please contact Arlene at 993-3861.

Thanks to Selma Smith

for her donation of aprons for volunteers to wear during Pioneer Day and thanks to her and Kay and Leonard Higley for loaning historic artifacts to Carol Mahler who did a presentation about pioneer life for the fourth grade classes of Missie Clemons, Mary Pete Martin, Melissa Marini, and DeAnna Smith at West Elementary School on April 1.

May Meeting Announcement

The DeSoto County Historical Society's regular monthly meeting will be at the

Family Service Center

at the corner of Orange Avenue and Effie Street in Arcadia

on the THIR^D rather than second

Thursday, May 21, 2009.

Lunch will be a **Potluck Meal**,

beginning at 11:30 a.m.,

so please remember to bring a covered dish (beverages, paper products, and table settings will be provided), and the meeting starts at noon.

Come early and bring a friend--or two!

Mark Burrow

of Wildlife Services of Florida

and "resident naturalist" at Crowley Museum and Nature Center will talk about

"Medicinal and Edible Plants of Florida."

New Venue for June Meeting

Our regular monthly meeting on June 11 will be held at the Arcadia Woman's Club, 2288 NW American Legion Drive (Old Highway 70 West), across the street from DeSoto Park, east of the boat ramp.

Our speaker will be Bill Sullivan of the American Heart Association.

Mark Your Calendars: August 20

Our regular monthly meeting for August will be the THIR^D rather than the second Thursday: **August 20 at the Family Service Center.** Our speakers will be Bruce Neveau and Dennis Tyson, who have beautifully restored the Ralls House, 640 W. Whidden Ave. They will talk about the Ralls family, who moved to Arcadia in 1905, and display artifacts owned by the Ralls family, some of which they reconstructed from a "trash pit" in the backyard. These items reveal about early twentieth century life in Arcadia. After the meeting, the Ralls House will be open for tours all afternoon.