



Vol. XVI No. 1

# News and Views

February 2010

*The Past is my Heritage, the Present is my Responsibility  
The Future is my Challenge.*

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### **Historic Preservation**

Angela Nicols

### **Technology**

Richard Geib

## **Museum of the Apopkans**

122 East 5th Street

Apopka, Fl 32703

Phone: 407-703-1707

FAX: 407-703-1773

## **Hours of Operation**

Wed/Thurs -10am to 4 pm

Saturday—10am to 2pm.

### Web Site:

[www.apokmuseum.org](http://www.apokmuseum.org)

### Email

[director@apokmuseum.org](mailto:director@apokmuseum.org)

## **General Meeting**

**Saturday, March 20, 2010**

**10 a.m.**

### *From the President*

We are off to a new year. As mentioned in the last newsletter, 2009 was a very good year despite the loss of staffing the museum by the city. Our many volunteers and board members rallied to keep the museum open three days a week.

We had in excess of 2,600 visitors to the museum and the volunteers put in over 3,00 hours. Thanks to all who stepped up to make the difference.

Our Black History Month exhibit was a huge success thanks to Francina Boykin. She really out did herself this year.

During the month of March which is Women in History month, we will showcase some of the women who were instrumental in the early formation of the city of Apopka.

The program for the first general meeting on March 20, 2010 will be very interesting and informative (see article on back page), you won't want to miss it.

Vice President Ray McLeod and I met with Mayor Land this past week to discuss the future of the museum as it relates to the downtown development project and other areas of concern by the Society. While it is still to early in the project, we were assured that the museum would be part of the overall downtown development. Whether or not a new museum might be built remains to be seen. The immediate plan to expand the present facility will be considered, as it was pointed out the present museum building has run out of space for additional exhibits; and storage is a huge problem. The Society has managed to refresh most of the present exhibits and add new temporary exhibits this past year. However, no new permanent exhibits are anticipated, though several are on the drawing board.

The concept of the city giving the Society money to hire a part time employee did not work out as there was no interest on the part of the board to get involved in hiring, training and supervising an employee. We are hopeful that the city will begin a search for a museum director to run the museum. It was pointed out that Sanford, Maitland, Winter Garden, Kissimmee, Orlando, Orange County and others have museum directors to run their museums; and if the city wants this museum to survive, it needs to do the same.

We assured the Mayor that the Society would do its best to keep the museum open.

Planning is under way for the Mother's Day Tea. It is again slated to be held at the historic Highland Manor Inn. Pricing has not been firmed up as yet, but information will be forthcoming. Mark your calendars now—May 8, 2010.

Larry Leudenburg, President

**Black History Month exhibit a huge success!!** Thanks to Francina Boykin's effort in putting up a great exhibit and Jeanne Gorman's publicity, we have had the best turn out for Black History Month than ever before. Great work ladies.  
 Next month—Women In History Month will feature the pioneer women of Apopka.

**March General Meeting Program**

Central Florida historian Jim Robison of Casselberry and creative nonfiction writer and filmmaker Bill Belleville of Sanford will give a PowerPoint talk on their new book *Along the Wekiva River* at the March meeting of the Apopka Historical Society. The meeting is set for 10 a.m. Saturday, March 20, at the Museum of the Apopkans, 122 E. Fifth St. For more information, call the museum at 407-703-1707.

Robison and Belleville will honor Apopka Mayor John Land for his assistance in the research for the book and selection of photographs used to illustrate its pages as well as his life-long efforts to preserve the river and surrounding lands.

Then Apopka's youthful mayor, Land was an eye witness in 1965 at a downtown Orlando hotel when Walt Disney announced his plans for a Florida theme park. Land was still leading the city in 1991 when he and other founders of the Apopka Sportsmen's Club held a reunion at Wekiwa Springs State Park, land that had been their private hunting preserve. The Wilson Cypress Company sold most of what today is the Wekiwa Springs State Park in 1941 to the members of the Apopka Sportsmen's Club, which built remote hunting camps and maintained the land surrounding the river. In 1969, the club members sold their land to the state, which in 1970 opened the park to visitors. Turning away lucrative offers from developers, the club's members sold some 6,000 acres of Wekiwa land to the state at well below market value and persuaded other land owners to do the same.

Belleville is an award-winning non-fiction writer specializing in nature, conservation, and "sense of place." He's authored five books, scripted and co-produced two PBS documentaries, and written more than 1,000 articles with by-lines in *Audubon*, *Sierra*, *Outside*, *New York Times*, *Oxford American*, *Newsweek*, and many more. His books include the critically acclaimed *River of Lakes: A Journey on Florida's St. Johns River* and *Losing it all to Sprawl*.

Robison, a retired Orlando Sentinel reporter, editor and history columnist who has published more than 1,600 articles and nine books about the history of Seminole, Osceola and Orange counties, co-authored *Along the Wekiva River* with Belleville to carry on the mission of The Friends of the Wekiva River, Inc., which has championed the protection of the Wekiva River Basin since the early 1980s



**VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED!**

Many of you have offered to volunteer where needed on committees, at events, and at the Museum.

For this, we are deeply appreciative. If you are retired, looking to be a part of something, or have an expertise to share, let us know. You can also volunteer for three hours shifts weekly or monthly as a docent or helping with projects on Wednesdays & Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 1- 4 p.m. and on Saturdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Contact any Board member or email to: [director@apokamuseum.org](mailto:director@apokamuseum.org) or call 407-703-1707.**

**Wanted !!**

If you have old photos or other artifacts that you would like to donate or lend to the Historical society, we will be glad to accept them. We can also make copies of photos or documents so you can keep the originals.

We are looking for anything to do with the foliage industry, muck farming industry, family histories of pioneer families, early settlers, lumber industry, citrus industry, turpentine industry, railroad industry, Lake Apopka fish camps, Rocks Springs, Wekiva Springs and any other places or things that have to do with Apopka, Zellwood, Plymouth and Tangerine.

This will help us to build on what we have and expand into other areas.

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