

❖ MUSEUM HAPPENINGS ❖



The newest acquisition to the Museum collection is the special chair shown here. It was used when the 37th president of the United States traveled by helicopter. By sitting in this chair, you can get an idea of the special provisions that are made when dignitaries travel. This Helicopter Chair, donated by Commander Lt. Col. Michael Ryan, Avon Park Air Force Range was used by the First Helicopter Squadron stationed at Andrews AFB, Maryland. The Squadron supports distinguished visitors and Airlift Missions throughout the National Capital Region, Washington, D.C.

This chair was used onboard a U1N Huly helicopter for missions which included carrying President L. Johnson to and from Camp David. Presidential airlifts are now carried out by Marine 1.

Hispanic Heritage Month



Observed September 15 through October 15, this month celebrates the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America.

The theme for 2023 is *A Festival of Flavors*. One of the most anticipated aspects of Hispanic Heritage Month 2023 is the culinary celebration.

The theme “Uniting Communities” particularly resonates in the realm of food, where various cultures converge to form a delicious blend of flavors. Rice is a staple in many diets around the world. An exhibit at our museum demonstrates how the cooks in different Hispanic and Latin regions begin with rice and add a variety of ingredients to create a dish with a flavor unique to their culture. There is more than one way to prepare rice and beans !!

Beginning in mid-September, the celebrations coincide with **national independence days** in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, and Chile and are celebrated with parades, music, good food and bright colors everywhere.



Bienvenidos
to the Depot Museum

❖ UP-COMING PROGRAMMING ❖

September 23 - CARRIE SUE AYVAR
returns **Stories of Florida—Con Sabor!**
In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month
Florida stories have never been the same since
Ponce de Leon first arrived in 1513.

Avon Park Community Center - 3 pm
followed by
Question & Answer & Refreshments

October 22 CAREN NEILE,
Educator & Storyteller,

Florida Lore, Only in Florida:
Our Stories, Our Selves



FLORIDA LORE

Garden Party & Vintage Jewelry Sale



*Join us for classical music,
and punch & pastries*



October 17
at 2 pm until

Speaker: Carol Breckenridge



Chinese Auction

featuring designer
pieces with an on-
line value of over
\$100, including

(left, Kenneth J. Lane; right Joan Rivers)
shown here

Tickets on sale now
at the Museum
\$10 admission
Includes 12 auction
tickets

Special Event Benefits the Historical Society

Wild World of Animals

at the Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts,
South Florida State College



The *Wild World of Animals* is an exploration into the fascinating world of the wildlife we share with the planet; featuring live animals including some of the most majestic, interesting, bizarre and critically endangered species in the world today.

Sunday, November 5 at 3:00 pm

Tickets \$10 available at the Museum

This program is sponsored by Bill & Lisa Jarrett and the tickets sold at the Museum benefit the Historical Society.

Proceeds from the sale of these tickets will go towards the cost of the dining car window replacement.

This is a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon and support the museum at the same time.

Living In A Small Town *by Warren McFarland*

(This letter was written to the Historical Society for the newsletter in 2003 but was never published.)
Mr. McFarland is a long-time member and faithful supporter of the Society and the Depot Museum)

Although I left Avon Park after graduating from high school in 1941, I have always felt I was fortunate to have grown up in the atmosphere and culture of that small town.

Our family moved to Avon Park in 1927 when my father, W.W. McFarland, became the station agent for the Atlantic Coastline Railroad. There were eight of us in the family, including my parents, Walter and Rachel. The children, oldest to youngest, were Edna, Edith, Paul, Marie, Warren and Dale. We lived in various rental houses until 1936 when my parents built one of the first, if not the first FHA financed homes in Highlands County, on Lake Lotela, on what was then the new Sebring highway, State Road 8, now State Road 17.

Both parents became active in church, civic, school [activities], with the exception of Dale, who could not wait for graduation to enlist in the U.S. Navy during World War II, but he later obtained a diploma. I (Warren) also enlisted in the U.S. Navy, after graduation in 1941.



**ATLANTIC COASTLINE RAILROAD
1912-1978**

After World War II, only Paul remained in Avon Park, the rest of us were scattered by schooling, marriage and jobs. My father had moved on to become Freight Agent for the ACL in Sarasota, but upon his retirement, returned to Avon Park, where he lived until his death in 1964. My mother continued to live there until her age and health forced her to move into a retirement home in Longwood in 1987, where she lived until her death in 1995.

I think that those of us who grew up in Avon Park in the 1930's are blessed. It was a time

of innocence, both for those of us who lived there and, to some degree, for the world at large. We didn't lock our cars nor the doors to our homes. It was possible to know almost everyone who lived in town. Not only to know them, but to know where they lived, what kind of car they drove, where they went to church, and what they did for a living. My older brother Paul once said to me that he could not think of a single reason why anyone would want to live anywhere but in Avon Park. Although I have not lived there since I graduated from high school (for a variety of reasons), I tend to agree with him.



How many Board Members does it take ?? ,,



No, we were not changing a light bulb. Ricky installed solar panels on the security cameras and readjusted a flood light to illuminate the full length of the dining car ramp. Nancy and Beth assisted and insured that proper safety protocols were observed.



Awards made at the recent Avon Park Chamber of Commerce Banquet

Rosie Longanecker was recognized as *Volunteer of the Year*, shown on the left with two of her "team" who regularly work to



keep our museum landscaping looking great. Rosie is past president of the Founders Garden Club. The Chamber grounds have also benefited from the gardening expertise of Rosie and the Garden Club.

The Historical Society was named **Non-Profit of the Year** for "painstakingly preserving the love affair with Baseball in Avon Park by 'hitting a home run' with the expansion of the Depot museum"



The plaque is on display in the Museum



Sheriff Blackman recently presented certificates of recognition for long-time support of the Florida Sheriffs Association to Rick and Beth Helms for donations over the past 30 years.

These businesses and organizations
support your museum!!

Please show your appreciation with your
patronage when a service is needed.

Thank you to our Corporate members

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Please consider a gift to the Historical Society

in lieu of flowers to honor the passing of a loved one.

We gratefully acknowledge The First Christian Church in Avon Park for
generously allowing us to print our newsletters in their office.

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MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Deborah Crews Nancy Fisk

MUSEUM HOURS

Wed., Thursday, & Friday

10 am to 3 pm



CALENDAR of EVENTS

September 23, 2023

Speaker - Carrie Sue Ayvar

October 17 at 2pm

Garden Party

October 22, 2023

Florida Talks - *Florida Lore*

October 7 (8-10am)

Gardening on the Grounds