



Fall 2016

## A Letter From The President

Welcome back to another exciting year at VAHS! I am pleased to share several announcements with you.



**The Circus Train Car is "Back on Track."** The *Short Leaf Pine* is finally coming to Venice! The 85-foot long Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus car will be moved from the Florida Railroad Museum to Uni-Glide Trailer Company, a local contractor, in the dead of night this fall. A key advantage of working with Uni-Glide is that the car will be restored in Venice, on Seaboard Avenue, potentially allowing the public to see the car while it is being refurbished. The work on the car will take approximately nine months. Once the car has been moved to the Venice Train Depot, interior exhibits will be finalized. They will illustrate how Ringling performers lived while in Venice and on the rails, and they will describe the many interrelationships between Venice and the circus.

Having a retired Ringling Brothers car that was actually used in Venice is the ideal fulfillment of the original vision and plan for the Historic Venice Train Depot. VAHS is proud to play a part in the vision.

**You are Invited to a Reception for VAHS Members.** A reception for VAHS members has been scheduled for Sunday, November 6, 2016 at 2 PM. **SAVE THE DATE!** All members are encouraged to attend and to bring a friend or two. The meeting will be held at the new Loveland Recreation Center located at 157 South Havana Road, located off East Venice Avenue, east of the Jacaranda roundabout. Light refreshments will be served.

The purpose of the meeting is to update members on VAHS's plans and initiatives for both the coming season and the next few years. One of the main topics, of course, will be the circus train car. The reception is also an opportunity for you, the member, to ask questions and interact with the Board, VAHS committee chairs, and fellow members. I hope you will join us!

**Wild Apricot is Up and Running.** I am pleased to announce that the Technology Task Force has met the challenge of implementing a new membership management system, "Wild Apricot," by September 1. The system is now in place, and this year, membership renewal notices will be sent electronically to those who provided an email address. The newsletter will be sent electronically as well, which significantly reduces the cost of publication.

Implementing this software package took hundreds of hours. I would like to thank the members of the Task Force who worked with me on this project--George Miller, Evelyn Nelson, and Brenda Holland. I cannot thank them enough for their hard work and dedication. Thanks also to Carol Bailey and Mary Huba for ensuring that letters and emails automatically generated by the system are timely and appropriate.

I hope you had a wonderful summer and that you are ready to join VAHS for a season filled with stimulating programs and activities. See you soon!

Carolyn Redlin, VAHS President

## 2016-2017 VAHS Events Calendar

**\*October 18, 2016. 7 PM.** “President Andrew Johnson’s Impeachment and Relationship to Reconstruction.” David Tschanz, Ph.D., Vice-Chair, Venice Chapter of the Civil War Roundtable.

**November 6, 2016. 2 PM.** VAHS Member Reception, Loveland Recreation Center, 157 S. Havana Road (off East Venice Avenue).

**\*November 15, 2016. 7 PM.** ”13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments to U.S. Constitution.” David Cornish, Attorney and Member of Venice Chapter of the Civil War Roundtable.

**November 20, 2016. 7 PM.** *The Flight Fantastic: A Story of Legend and Legacy on the Flying Trapeze.* Documentary film about Venice's Gaona family. Contact the Venice Performing Arts Center for tickets.

**November 26, 2016.** Venice Holiday Parade.

**\*January 17, 2017. 7 PM.** “Reconstruction: What It Meant To Do and What It Failed To Do.” James M. Denham. Ph.D., Professor of History at Florida Southern College and Director of the Lawton M. Chiles Jr. Center for Florida History.

**\*February 21, 2017. 7 PM.** “Hayes-Tilden Election of 1876: Compromise & Consequences.” James C. Clark, Ph.D. Lecturer, History Department, University of Central Florida.

**February 26, 2017. 12 PM.** VAHS Fundraiser—“Waterway Cruise, Narrated by John McCarthy.” Embarks from Historic Venice Train Depot.

**\*March 21, 2017. 7 PM.** “Convict Leasing and Peonage: A History and Legacy.” Jack E. Davis, Ph.D., Professor of Environmental History and Sustainability Studies, University of Florida.

**March 29, 2017. 11:30 AM.** VAHS Luncheon and Annual Meeting, Pelican Pointe.

**April 9, 2017.** "The Circus in Venice" Fundraiser. Venice Performing Arts Center. Films, dinner, auction, variety show--details to be announced. Save the date!

**\*April 18, 2017. 7 PM.** "After Slavery: Black Sharecroppers in the South 1865-1940." Brad Jenkins, Ph.D., Retired Chair, History and Political Science Department, Guilford Technical College, and Dan Hadley.

**\*May 16, 2017. 7 PM.** “White Sharecroppers in the South and End of Sharecropping.” Brad Jenkins, Ph.D., Retired Chair, History and Political Science Department, Guilford Technical College; Dan Hadley; and Grace Grote, Equity Actor.

*\*The Betty Intagliata Lecture Series is sponsored by the Venice Area Historical Society, with funding provided by the Bill Jerve, Jr. Charitable Foundation. All programs are FREE and OPEN to the public. They are held at Mark Manor, Village On The Isle, 920 Tamiami Trail South, Venice, FL 34285.*

## Board Member Bill Jervey Underwrites VAHS Annual Lecture Series

With funding provided by the Bill Jervey, Jr. Charitable Foundation, the free history lectures sponsored by the Venice Area Historical Society will be renamed "The Betty Intagliata Lecture Series" beginning this fall. As Bill explains:



"A half century ago, when I was a graduate student at the University of Arizona, a highlight of each week was attending Tucson's "Sunday Evening Forum." This was a series of lectures bringing prominent speakers to southern Arizona to address topics ranging from politics to anthropology. It significantly impacted my early life, and I always thought it would be great to one day play a part in a similar program.

Thus, I was delighted to be presented with the opportunity of having the Bill Jervey, Jr. Charitable Foundation fund the Venice Area Historical Society monthly lecture series beginning in the fall of 2016.

That it will be named the "Betty Intagliata Lecture Series" seems fitting. For decades, Betty has championed historic preservation and education in Sarasota County and has long served as the guiding light for the VAHS lecture series."

Thank you, Bill, for your generosity to the Venice community!

The 2016-2017 Betty Intagliata Lecture Series is entitled "From Civil War to Civil Rights, 1865 to 1965." The author Rob Chernow has suggested that Reconstruction is the period of American History that Americans know least about. The series will attempt to fill this void. It will first examine Andrew Johnson's Presidency and then the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments to the U.S. Constitution. Presenters will also cover the successes and failures of the Reconstruction Act and the "pushback" by the former Confederate states. The resulting terrorism, the rise of the Ku Klux Klan, and the Hayes-Tilden Presidential Election leading to the end of Reconstruction Era will also be addressed. A final topic will be Jim Crow segregation legislation and the slow step-by-step process of gaining civil rights for all African-Americans and others.

All programs will be held on the *third* Tuesday of the month at Mark Manor, Village On The Isle, 920 Tamiami Trail South, beginning at 7 PM. This is a change from previous years when most lectures were on the fourth Tuesday. The first lecture this year will be on Tuesday, October 18. The programs are free, and the public is invited.

## Recap of VAHS / UUCOV Summer History Forums

### Black Lives 1900-1960

By 1900, the Democratic Party had reasserted itself in the South. The southern migration from farm to city and from south to north had begun. The law of the land, Plessy vs. Ferguson's separate but equal, prevailed until Brown vs. Board of Education in 1954. The Klan and a Jim Crow atmosphere of segregation prevailed. A panel of neighbors from the Laurel community--Sandra Terry, Rev. Willie Beckham, and James Brown--provided a personal perspective of life in Sarasota County. They reminded attendees that their interdependent community helped them achieve their goals.

James Brown referred to his Pierian Spring Academy course, A Survey of African Americans in Sarasota County. Registration for Spring 2017 begins online in September at [www.pierianspringacademy.org](http://www.pierianspringacademy.org).

## Miss Scarlet's South

The consensus of the panel was that southern women are more polite, less brash, and maybe more passive than northern women, but they are still very capable. Their behavior is central to the understanding of southern culture. Southern women are the heart of both the family and community. A documentary about Margaret Mitchell, with commentary by Brad Jenkins, provided insight into Mitchell's historical sources for the portrayal of the South in *Gone with the Wind*, a classic movie that has formed many Americans' impression of the South.

## Dixie Becomes America or Vice-Versa

After Reconstruction, agricultural expansion moved people westward and its technological improvements moved people to northern jobs, leaving behind a marginal rural economy. Since then, a significant military and federal presence in the South, in conjunction with urban technology centers, have improved the economic fortunes of the region. However, the predominance of a service economy, employing more than 50% of the population, keeps future improvements challenging.

The discussion group of 25 was almost 80% non-Southerners. Their exposure to the South came from the military or as snow birds and retirees. Most had had little interaction with Blacks until they left their home towns for school or work. However, all had had experiences with others different from themselves, whether they were immigrant populations, Native Americans, or those with different skin colors or religions. They reflected that this made their experiences more alike than different.

## Kathleen K. Caitlin Foundation at the Community Foundation of Sarasota County Awards Grant to VAHS



The Kathleen K. Catlin Foundation at the Community Foundation of Sarasota County has awarded a second grant of \$36,000 to the Venice Area Historical Society (VAHS) to help preserve the Venice Train Depot's circus train heritage. This brings the Foundation's total donation to \$72,000! VAHS thanks the Kathleen K. Catlin Foundation and the Community Foundation of Sarasota and welcomes them as partners in preserving Venice's circus and railroad heritage in a visible and exciting way.

VAHS plans to purchase the *Short Leaf Pine* train car from the Florida Rail Road Museum this fall. The car will be moved to the Uni-Glide Trailer Company in Venice where it will be refurbished and reconfigured to illustrate how circus performers lived while traveling the country on the circus train. In 2017, the car will be placed on the available track next to the caboose on the Depot campus. Exhibits about the history of the circus and the railroad in Venice will be included. The finished car will be donated to Sarasota County, and VAHS will open it to the public.

Additional donations to the Circus Train Car Project will support the development of interior exhibits. Please send donations to: Circus Train Car Project, Caldwell Trust Company, 1400 Center Road, Venice, FL 34293.

The Community Foundation of Sarasota County is a public charity founded in 1979 by the Southwest Florida Estate Planning Council as a resource for caring individuals and the causes they support, enabling them to make a charitable impact on the community. Learn more at [cfsarasota.org](http://cfsarasota.org).

## Selling Real Estate in Early Venice

Ninety years ago, The Venice Company actively marketed Venice real estate, using advertising approaches and incentives similar to those used today. Examples, provided by the Venice Museum and Archives, can be seen below. Housing prices ranged from \$3,000 to \$60,000, furnished or unfurnished. Financing from the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers was available to the builder and the buyer.

### *BUY a HOME in VENICE*

Venezia Park, Beautiful Home Furnished

Three Bedrooms, Double Garage with Servants' Quarters

Gulf View Section, Attractive Hollow Tile Bungalow

Unique Design, Five Rooms, Double Garage, Furnished or Unfurnished

Bungalow, New, Centre of City

Five Rooms, Tile Roof, Garage, Very Reasonable Terms

Many Other Homes From \$5,000 to \$60,000

*The Venice Company*  
*Venice Florida,*

Homes Department—Cor. Venice Ave. and Nassau St.

## BUILDING

THAT'S OUR BUSINESS



WHEN YOU THINK OF BUILDING IN VENICE  
THINK OF

**CAREY & WALTER, Inc.**

General Contractors

VENICE

PLANT CITY

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A HOME



WHY PAY RENT?

PURCHASE A HOME AT VENICE--LIVE IN IT AND PAY FOR IT LIKE RENT

FOR PARTICULARS SEE

R. S. MARVIN

AT THE HOTEL PARK VIEW BUILDING DEPARTMENT

*The Venice Company*  
*Venice Florida,*

## Changes in Dues and Renewal Dates

You may have noticed that VAHS dues have remained steady for many years. However, in recent years, VAHS's expenses have increased with inflation and with new partnerships. For example, VAHS now has a formal lease with Sarasota County to provide tours of the Depot waiting rooms and caboose. Along with the lease has come the need to assume the costs of maintaining those structures.

Therefore, over a year ago, the VAHS Board of Directors accepted the recommendations of a Membership Dues Task Force that was set up to review the Society's dues. The Task Force reduced the number of membership categories and eliminated the Lifetime Member category. (All current Lifetime Memberships will continue to be honored.) The new dues will be as follows:

Individual:	\$30	Bronze:	\$100
Family:	\$40	Silver:	\$250
Business:	\$50	Gold:	\$500
Non-profit:	\$25		

With VAHS's many free programs, the new dues structure is still a real bargain for members.

VAHS is also transitioning to a new approach to membership renewals. Beginning this fall, VAHS will send out membership renewals based on the date you signed up or renewed last year, rather than asking all members to renew on October 1.

For example, if you joined VAHS (or renewed your membership) last year on December 10, your renewal date this year and in future years will be December 10, and a renewal reminder will be sent out each year 30 days in advance of that date. Also, if you have shared your email address with VAHS, the renewal reminder will be sent by email. This is a big change for VAHS, and we ask you to help by checking your email and mailing in your payment soon after your renewal notice arrives. Thank you!

## Volunteer Opportunities Available

Are you interested in serving on the VAHS team? If you or someone you know has expertise and interest related to one of the needs listed below, please speak to a VAHS Board member, call 941-412-0151, or email [president@veniceareahistoricalsociety.org](mailto:president@veniceareahistoricalsociety.org).

**Membership Committee.** Individuals needed to assist with the following: proactive recruitment of members and volunteers, maintaining the Society's electronic database of members in Wild Apricot software, and making recommendations to the Board regarding membership issues.

**Executive Assistant to the President.** One person needed for clerical tasks such as picking up mail, accessing phone messages, and similar duties as assigned.

**Special Events Committee.** Two or more individuals needed (a) for program planning (securing venues, selecting menus when needed, preparing decorations, etc.) and (b) to arrange for VAHS participation in community events such as Sun Fiesta, Shark's Tooth Festival, Holiday Parade, etc. Duties include completing applications in a timely manner, planning participation activities, and implementing plans effectively.

**Monthly Program Refreshment Team.** Two or three people needed to purchase, set up, and serve light refreshments (e.g., non-alcoholic beverages and cookies) at each of the Society's seven Monthly Lecture Series programs. (VAHS assumes the costs.)

## Meet Member Penny Phelps, Depot Docent

The Depot Docent corps was established in 2003 when VAHS began giving tours of the Historic Venice Train Depot. In 2004, Penny Phelps volunteered for the second “class” of Depot Docents. At that time, volunteers began as greeters to learn the ins and outs of the Depot tour from more experienced docents. Soon, Penny was promoted to tour guide, and she served in partnership with a variety of other members.



Twelve years later, Penny is one of VAHS’s longest-serving docents. She routinely serves with fellow docent Arletta Slocum. Penny says, “The best part of being a docent is the people you work with and the visitors you meet.”

In 2003, Penny moved to Venice from Laurel, Maryland. For years, her husband Herb had come to this area to play golf with his buddies. Eventually, the family joined him on his trips, and then they purchased a home in Venice.

Volunteering as a docent for the Venice Depot was a coming-home for Penny who had been a docent at the Laurel Museum, a mill worker’s home on the Pawtucket River. Even now, her trips back to Laurel always include a visit to the museum and its fabric collection.

Penny is a long time member of the South County Jazz Club. She and her husband plan annual trips to jazz festivals all over the country to pursue this interest.

Penny has held other important jobs with the Society. A retired seventh grade teacher, she is a natural for one of the “stops” on the Society’s Depot tours for first graders. Penny is the circus story reader at the quiet stop in the Freight Room. She has also been a stalwart volunteer for the style show raffle and 50-50 ticket sales, plus co-chair of VAHS’s former booth at the Shark’s Tooth Festival.

Thank you, Penny, for your years of service to the Society!



# VENICE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## MEMBERSHIP & VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE(S): \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL(S): \_\_\_\_\_

### Check your Membership and Volunteer choices:

- Individual..... \$30
- Family ..... \$40
- Business..... \$50
- Non-Profit Org..... \$25



- Bronze ..... \$100
- Silver ..... \$250
- Gold ..... \$500
- Donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- Greet visitors at the Historic Venice Train Depot
- Share historical information with visitors at the Historic Venice Train Depot
- Greet attendees at the Society's Monthly Lecture Series
- Help with refreshments at the Monthly Lecture Series
- Help to recruit new members
- Help to prepare and present programs for children
- Serve as a day-trip coordinator
- Prepare and present topics related to local history
- Assist with the Society's publicity and communications
- Assist in production of the Society's newsletter
- Serve on a VAHS committee (*Communication, Development, Education, Finance, etc.*)
- Assist with fundraising efforts
- Assist with technology/computers

Skills or talents  
I can contribute are:

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**Make checks payable to Venice Area Historical Society.**  
**Mail this form and check to VAHS Membership,**  
**PO Box 995, Venice, FL 34284. For information, call 941-412-0151.**  
[www.veniceareahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.veniceareahistoricalsociety.org)  
[membership@veniceareahistoricalsociety.org](mailto:membership@veniceareahistoricalsociety.org)

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