

TRACKS OF TIME

Monthly Publication from the Zephyrhills Historical Association

Volume 15 – Number 10

October 2013

The next Zephyrhills Historical Association meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 5th at **The Commons on Pretty Pond**, 38130 Pretty Pond Road. The business meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. and the program is at 7 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

Speakers



Our speaker for October was Brantley Smith, lifelong resident and businessman. He's the creator, owner, and operator of Silverado Golf & County Club in Zephyrhills and a proven friend of the community and Zephyrhills High School. He characterized himself as just an old farm boy and took us down memory lane in regard to the Smith family and the land on which the housing development and golf course now sits. Everyone in attendance enjoyed his method of relating the stories. We were very happy to have Brantley as our speaker.

Our special guests for November will be Christine Krusen Douglas and Raybelle Surratt. Christine is the daughter of I. A. Krusen and the wife of H. C. Douglas. Both men made lasting marks on the Zephyrhills community, as did she. Raybelle is the wife of Sam Surratt, longtime businessman and City Council member. This couple also had a lasting impact. We look forward to visiting with these wonderful ladies, and thanks go to Bill Kustes for coming up with the idea.

Thursday, November 21st, is our next Ruby Tuesday Scholarship Fundraiser

We are meeting up at 5 p.m. on that day, but you can come anytime.

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Please consider contributing old photos for the website.

My email address is on the opening page

ZHA Mission Statement

The mission of the Zephyrhills Historical Association is to research, gather, and share local historical information with all generations, through our literature, programs, and scholarships, and to volunteer assistance to the Zephyrhills Depot Museum and WWII Barracks Museum.

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Feature Article – Zephyrhills News

by Clereen Brunty

Happy 102nd Birthday to The Zephyrhills News. The following are three articles posted in The Tampa Tribune and The Zephyrhills News. The third one was written by Clereen Morrill Brunty and Madonna Jervis Wise as part of the Centennial Celebration in 2010.

Weekly may have new owner


Published in Tampa Tribune – Pasco
June 6, 2009
By: Laura Kinsler



ZEPHYRHILLS - The former chief executive of Zephyr Egg Co. could be the owner of The Zephyrhills News. **Danny Linville** bought the newspaper's downtown building, according to papers filed with the city building department. Linville requested city inspections that are typical when commercial buildings change hands. Linville is the sole officer and director for Linville Enterprises, which was registered with the Florida Secretary of State on May 29.

No one at the weekly newspaper would comment on the sale. The paper's Web site carried a brief article notifying readers that a "long-time local businessman" was in the process of buying the newspaper from publisher Barry Scripps, who bought it in 2003. The deal was expected to be completed by Thursday, but the city will not inspect the building until next week. "The days of absentee ownership are fading away, so this move of bringing back local ownership is a positive move as Zephyrhills prepares to celebrate 100 years of publishing a community newspaper in 2011," Scripps said in the article.

Linville is the son of Jack Linville, a Kentucky dairy farmer who started Zephyr Egg in 1954 and incorporated the business in 1961. Danny Linville and his four brothers continued to run the operation after their father's death in 1991. The business had grown into a multimillion-dollar operation when the family sold it to Mississippi-based Cal-Maine Foods in 2008. The Zephyrhills News has had 14 previous owners since its founding in 1911, including the New York Times Co.

<p>Shirts & Caps, founded in Zephyrhills in 1982, is now an internet-based national supplier of custom screen printed t-shirts. Still family owned and operated; find us online at www.ClassB.com!</p> 	<p>Artistic Expressions Custom Picture Framing specializing in the framing of needlework 5906 7th Street Zephyrhills, Florida 33542</p> <p>(813) 783-7731 Beverly Koehler Barnett, Owner E-Mail: aeframer@aol.com</p>
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The History of the Zephyrhills News

Published in The Zephyrhills News
September 10, 2009

The Zephyrhills News is the oldest business in the city. The debut issue of “Your Hometown Newspaper” was published October 5, 1911 and was called The Zephyrhills Colonist. The News has been published every Thursday or Friday for 89 years despite 12 different owners, heat waves, hurricanes and the Great Depression.

An act of heroism during the Civil War led to the birth of the Zephyrhills News. Capt. H.B. Jefferies, owner of the Colony Co. and one of Zephyrhills’ founding fathers, witnessed an act of



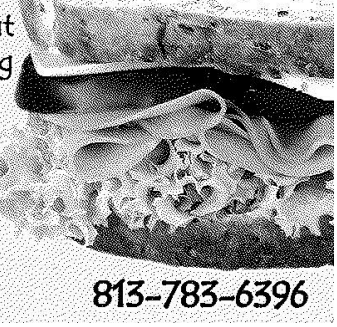

heroism during the Civil War, in which his adjutant’s life was saved by Pvt. G.H. Gibson. When the Colony Co. decided to start a newspaper as a vehicle for local real estate investors to advertise land for sale, Jefferies remembered the hero was a printer by trade. Jefferies began an extensive search for the man finally locating Gibson in Nebraska. Jefferies made a lucrative offer to lure Gibson to the rolling hills of east Pasco County. Gibson, publisher of the weekly Loup City, Nebraska newspaper, The Standard Gauge, jumped at the offer and had his entire plant shipped by rail to Zephyrhills.

Gibson’s printing equipment arrived before the plant was completed - only the floor slab was in place. The first several months of the Zephyrhills Colonist were written, composed and printed outside. The equipment was covered with canvas each night, while staff members took turns standing guard until the roof and walls were built.

The Colonist became the Zephyrhills News in the 1920s under owner Sam Lovett who sold the paper to a coalition of Zephyrhills businessmen in 1930. The principal owner was Dr. Bernard A. Thomas, a local dentist. When Thomas died, ownership went to Walter Gall, a prominent Zephyrhills businessman. Gall sold the News in 1948 to Howard Berg, who published the paper just two years before selling it to George Johnson, formerly of The Lakeland Ledger and owner of papers in Kentucky, Tennessee and Florida. Johnson died shortly after purchasing the paper and his widow sold the publication back to the Gibson family.



In 1955, George Wickstrom purchased the paper. Wickstrom came to Zephyrhills from Rock Island, Illinois. He brought extensive experience, gained working at daily newspapers, to this community. He also taught college journalism and wrote several books.

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George Wickstrom’s son, Bernie Wickstrom, later became editor-in-chief in 1960 when he moved to join his father from Stanton, Iowa, where he published The Stanton Viking (per daughter, Valerie Wickstrom Davis). Bernie is the most remembered editor in the current community. The stage on the north side of Lake Zephyr in Zephyr Park is named in his honor.


George Washington Wickstrom sold the paper to the New York Times Company on December 15, 1978. He remained an editor of the Zephyrhills News until he passed away on September 10, 1987.

The New York Times sold the paper to Asterisk Publishing Company in February 1984. Republic Newspapers purchased the News in 1988. In January 2003 the publication was purchased by Barry Scripps of Orlando and currently operates under the legal name of Scripps Zephyrhills News LLC.

The newspaper was initially located where First Baptist Church now stands. The original building served the staff well until growth forced a move in 1926. In 1947 the News moved to a location on Sixth Avenue, between Sixth Street and Highway 301. Another move came March 18, 1955, when the News moved to Fifth Avenue where there is currently a children’s consignment shop. The News moved next door into its current plant at 38333 Fifth Avenue February 22, 1959. Before the 1950s the News was an eight-page publication. Four pages carried local news and the remainder carried syndicated material. It was during the second move that the newspaper expanded significantly.



Though there have been many changes in location, ownership, editors and technology; The Zephyrhills News has been an information source to the community from the city’s birth. As the "City of Pure Water" moves into the future, the Zephyrhills News staff is committed to continuing the tradition of providing dedicated service and accurate news to the people of Zephyrhills.

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Celebration of Generations

April 14, 2011

The Zephyrhills News

By: Clereen Brunty & Madonna Wise

Captain Howard B. Jeffries, credited with founding Zephyrhills as a retirement area for old union soldiers, arrived in Zephyrhills in 1909, purchased 35,000 acres and embarked on development. He acknowledged the need for a newspaper –probably for real estate investors to advertise land for sale. Howard who had been a writer and printer, began a search and located George H. Gibson in Nebraska and enticed him to come. Gibson was publisher of “Standard Gauge,” from Loup City, Nebraska; and intrigued with the frontier, moved his family to Zephyrhills in 1911, along with his printing equipment (which actually arrived before the family by railroad). For the first several months the fledgling newspaper, dubbed the Zephyrhills Colonist, was printed on a make-shift slab outdoors; staff members took turns guarding the equipment while the first news office was being erected.

The original installment of the ‘Zephyrhills Colonist’ was in October of 1911 with a whopping 3,000 copies. George’s brother, Floyd A. Gibson joined the operation as foreman and later became mayor of the town as well. The Colonist evolved into to the ‘Zephyrhills News’ in 1925 and had a stint from 1936-1941 with the name of ‘Pasco Free Press.’ (For those enthusiastic amateur historians, you can find most issues of the paper in the Zephyrhills Library microfilm and a few in the Hugh Embry microfilm.) A chronicle of the owners of the newspaper are posted on the ‘Zephyrhills News’ website and include some of the following:

1917: Jesse F. Stebbins

1921: Maxie Smith -Publisher

1922: Sam D. Lovett owner and publisher.

1926: S. D. Lovett, editor and publisher.

1930: coalition of local businessmen with chair-- Bernard A. Thomas, Dentist

1940: Walter Gall

1948: Howard Berg

1950: George Johnson

1951: Floyd A. Gibson, a son of the original owner.

1955: George W. Wickstrom with son, Bernie, as editor.

1978: New York Times Co.

1984: Asterisk Publishing Inc.

1988: Republic Newspapers of Knoxville, Tenn., purchased the News in 1988.

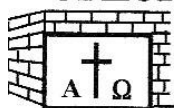
2003: Barry Scripps of Scripps Newspapers Inc.

2009: Danny and Jan Linville purchased the newspaper.

Locations have varied slightly but the newspaper office has hovered in the vicinity of the same general area for most of its history (originally at the site of where the First Baptist Church now stands and later near where the original school was located.)



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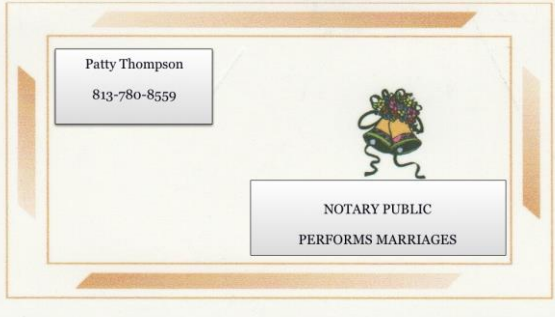
God Bless America

In the ‘News’ history, we particularly savor the community activism and volunteer work of Bernie Wickstrom, perhaps because he impacted our most formidable years. We both knew him and have often quoted him in our historical articles. We had the privilege of interviewing his family for one of the countdowns. With our main focus on education, we would be remiss, if we did not recall the fact that Bernie printed the ‘Zephyrhills Bulldogger School Newspaper’ for over twenty years at the ‘News’ office although the forerunner to the Bulldogger, the ‘Orange and Black’ was also printed by the newspaper as excerpted below. Bernie also developed and published the weekly “School Daze” columns which featured school news reports by local students which Danny & Jan recently resurrected with the stories of Chelsea Smith in 2009. Along the way, he was a tireless reporter of school information, and very involved in education at the schools. Again, Dan and Jan continue this legacy.

FROM TAPESTRY: A school newspaper existed throughout ZHS history. One of the first was called The Orange and Black Paper—published in the then local community newspaper called the Pasco Free Press (a name the Zephyrhills News used for two years). This particular paper in the 1930s was quite interesting in format. It offered not only school information but also local school gossip about students and issues that often bordered on risqué. Confidentiality had not seen its advent in education and student absences, school parties, dating situations, song hits, and even innuendos were published not in the school paper alone but also as an insert in the community newspaper. The Orange and Black offered regular columns entitled, “The Stroller” and “Your Society Column.” Here’s a juicy example: “Genevieve Seaburg and Joan Cook had a very enjoyable time after the ball game Friday night...oh yes! Phillip Guy and Ralph did too. The moon was full.”

Although the Orange and Black was the forerunner of the news coverage, the Zephyrhills News, (always a supporter of the school) featured a student-written column entitled, “School Daze,” from many of the years between 1954 and 1986 in which a senior wrote a weekly news column for the local newspaper as the school reporter. These news articles gave a real flavor of school life in each era. The writing styles and expertise vary from year to year. Many examples are included in this anthology. The reporters over time included: 1954-Shirley Dixon; 1955-Susanne Coolidge; 1956-George Trebour; 1958-Margie Braden; 1959-Dedi Anderson; 1960-Sandra Pricher; 1961-Judy Surratt; 1963-Bobbie June Chambless; 1964-Jere Alston; 1965-Susan Bucey; 1966-Sandra Clark; 1967-Marcia Deming; 1968-Janette Dunnigan; 1969-Kathy Shannon; 1970-Lynn Murphy; 1971-Valerie Wickstrom; 1978-Darlene Roman; 1979-Sharon Hasting; 1980-Nancy DeBoe; 1981-Bruce Sofinski; 1982-Lynn Thompson; 1983-Tracy Dunlap; 1984-Jill McDougall; 1985-Kim; and 1986-Jennifer Sibley; 2009-Chelsea Smith and 2010-Victoria Gilbreath & Lindsay Daughtry.”

From 1912 - The most important thing of our beautiful little city is our school house. A little more than a year ago there was a small one-room school building located on the hill south of Fifth Avenue, where school was held. Only one teacher was employed, as there were but few pupils. In the spring the teacher was turned off, as there were not enough pupils to justify carrying on the school. Today Zephyrhills has a four-room, two-story frame school house, five teachers and 150 pupils. This shows very plainly that Zephyrhills is growing, and we are proud to say that we have one of the best schools in Pasco County, with Prof. J. W. Sanders at the head.

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Fast forward to 2011---Today Zephyrhills proudly houses five state-of-the- art public schools, Zephyrhills High, R.B. Stewart, Chester Taylor, Woodland and West with thousands of students and hundreds of teachers. We believe that we continue to have one of the best school configurations around!

We applaud *The Zephyrhills News*. In an age of internet and electronic communication, we savor the newspaper and encourage everyone to continue reading *The Zephyrhills News*. We hope that newspapers will continue to be an essential avenue for information-sharing. After all, history is quite cyclical, so 'back to the future, may very well, mean a return to an earlier practice, trend or fashion. Read *The Zephyrhills News*!

Logan Clarence Peeples

by Jon R. Ferguson

Surely if there ever was a contest for friendliest merchant, Logan Peeples would win top prize. Over the years he owned and operated several different types of businesses. He was always ready to help the needy, and shared a smile with everyone. He had a positive attitude and passed it on to others.

Like most of us, his ancestors were farmers. His grandparents were Edwin M. and Emma T. (mnu) Peeples. In 1880 they lived at Catfish Lake, Polk County, Florida, with three children: Mae Marguerete, Annie Pearl, and James W. In 1885 the Florida State Census shows them with another child, Carrie E. and they lived in Manatee County Florida. In 1900 the U.S. Federal Census reports the family in Bowling Green, Desoto County, Florida with four children at home, adding Richard E. and Ernest S. Mae Marguerete is no longer listed in the family home. The 1910 U.S. Census shows only Edwin M. (50) and his son, Ernest (18) living in Bowling Green.

Earnest (or Ernest) Leslie Peeples, Logan’s father, had completed 8th grade in school. He registered for the WW I Draft in 1917-18. He was born April 16, 1891, in Florida. Both of his parents were born in Georgia. Earnest had married Mamie (mnu) and fathered four children by 1920. They were living in Lakebranch, Desoto County, Florida. The children were: Logan, Hazel, Hubert and Grady. By 1930 Earnest was a widower and he had moved with the four children to Hillsborough County, Florida into a rented house. In 1935 he lived in Wauchula, Hardee County, Florida. In 1937 E. L. Peeples married Bonnie Bell Smith. She was 14 years younger than Earnest, having been born on September 18, 1905. In 1940 they lived in Pasco County. Ernest Leslie Peeples died December 8, 1940 and is buried in Smith Cemetery, Zephyrhills. Bonnie Bell Peeples married a Mr. Wells. She died March 10, 1980 and is also buried in Smith Cemetery.



Logan Peeples was born April 7, 1913 in Desoto County, Florida. He married Corinne Sumner in 1936 in Hillsborough County. She was born February 7, 1919 in Dade City to Hughey and Annie Sumner. They lived on 16th Street in Zephyrhills. The 1940 U.S. Census shows them with their 3-year-old son, Ernest and Logan’s brother, Grady, living together. Logan was a manager of a lunch room. Daughter, Barbara, was born in 1941. During his career he owned and operated various businesses, including a beverage store, grocery store and a shoe store. Logan Clarence Peeples died January 6, 1995. Corrine died June 28, 2009. Both are buried in Floral Memory Gardens in Dade City.

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