

Monthly Publication from the Zephyrhills Historical Association

Volume 16 – Number 9

September 2014

The next Zephyrhills Historical Association meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 7th at the Zephyrhills Depot Museum, 39110 South Avenue. The business meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. and the program is at 7 p.m. Refreshments include drinks, which are provided, and food brought in to share by members.

Speakers



Van McKenzie made a return visit and was our speaker in September. Van grew up in Zephyrhills and was a standout student and athlete at Zephyrhills High School. He currently works in Parole and Probation, and he told us he is looking forward to retirement in just a few years. He talked about his upbringing here and about the problems he sees facing the youth of today. He spoke much about personal responsibility, and it's clear that he's a good role model in this regard. Those in attendance enjoyed his presentation very much.

Our speaker for the October meeting will be Steve Spina. He's a charter member of our organization and has recently been named City Manager for the City of Zephyrhills, a position he once held and from which he once retired. Obviously the city is happy to have him back in that position, and we are happy to welcome him as our speaker. Come join us.



The Rosemary Trotman Scholarship Fundraiser Day will be held on October 30th
at the **Abbott Station Restaurant** on Hwy. 301. ZHA members will be meeting at 5:00 p.m., but you can go anytime that day during regular hours. Just show a flyer to your server or say you are supporting the Zephyrhills Historical Association for us to receive 20% of sales.
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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
Centennial Birthday Celebration
Velma Bosley Parsons Van Dine
Interview by Clereen Brunty

What does it feel like living 100 years? Ask a longtime resident of Zephyrhills, Velma Van Dine who turned 100 on September 1st. A prim and proper woman who has “been there, done that” and definitely seen a lot of changes in the world over the years. It was a pleasure to visit with Velma to talk about her life’s journey and rewards.



Velma Rowena Bosley was born on September 1, 1914 in Jerusalem...Maryland to James and Bertha Bosley. She was joined by three siblings — two brothers, Raymond and Milton and a sister, Geraldine. Upon moving to Bel Air, Maryland and attending Bel Air High School, Velma enjoyed devoting a lot of her time to playing her baby grand piano. She even recalls how she had marveled at a blind man who used to tune her piano. As time marched on, she would accompany soloists at the Mountain Christian Church, which led her to travel to Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, DC with many soloists and ballet dancers to perform on stage.

In 1938 Velma moved to Zephyrhills, Florida and met Arthur Parsons. They married and raised three loving children, Bill, Bessie, and Artiste Parsons. For several years they lived in a two-story home across from the First United Methodist Church. The home has been listed in the National Historic Registry and still stands today, even though Velma is no longer living there.

<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 align="center">ClassB[®]</p>	<p align="center">Artistic Expressions Custom Picture Framing specializing in the framing of needlework 5906 7th Street Zephyrhills, Florida 33542</p> <p align="center">(813) 783-7731 Beverly Koehler Barnett, Owner E-Mail: aeframer@aol.com</p>
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Being a housewife, Velma was a wonderful seamstress and made all their clothes using Vogue, McCall and Simplicity patterns. Today, most of us find it is cheaper to buy a dress than to make but the satisfaction of designing your own style and perfect fit was more rewarding to Velma. She also loved to entertain and put on many social events, setting a beautiful table adorned with delicious food. You never went away hungry at dinner table.



A member of the St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church in Zephyrhills, Velma led the ladies in the Altar Guild, ECW (Episcopal Church Women) group and oodles of church bazaars. Her creative talents were used in making items to sell at the bazaars. She has composed and given wonderful talks in her community and has touch many lives with her time, talent and wisdom. Velma is also a member of the P.E.O. Chapter BG organization in Zephyrhills since 1972. She has held positions of Chaplain and President.



Velma's beloved husband Arthur passed away in 1970. After some time, while attending church services at St. Elizabeth's Episcopal, Velma had become friends with a Don Van Dine who was also a member. He too had lost his wife and over time they fell in love and married. He passed away in the early 1990's.

Asking her what is her favorite color she was quick to say Blue and she enjoys reading classical stories. *Gone With The Wind* was one of her favorite movies. She prefers historical style shows and learns a lot from them. The song *Hark, Hark the Lark* sung by Lily Pons, an opera singer, is one of her favorites. She enjoys going out to eat at Red Lobster and any seafood place. She said there is nothing like the crab cakes you would get in Maryland and has not been able to find any southern place to make them as well. Gardening was a joy in her life and she and her husband would not only have a flower garden but grew their own vegetables as well. She loved to decorate and has a keen eye for colors and styles.

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Needle work with hoop is another past time Velma enjoys. She has a nice collection of cups and saucers and angels and over 30 cross necklaces. At times she would pass on a necklace to a dear friend as a way to remember her by. She loves animals including her beautiful dogs, Reno, Fanchon and Echo as well as Ginger Snap the cat amongst others during her lifetime. She enjoyed traveling and would often go back to Maryland to visit with loved ones as often as she was able to.





Saturday, September 6, 2014 was proclaimed as “Velma Van Dine Day” per a proclamation made by Mayor Gene Whitfield and presented by Luan Gore and daughter, Kathleen Ure at a special event. It states “A day to honor and congratulate Velma Van Dine on her 100th Birthday celebration as she has attained the status of CENTENARIAN”.



Daughter, Artiste Parsons, put on a marvelous celebration to honor her mom with family and friends held at the First Christian Church in Zephyrhills. Over 75 in attendance, with food made by Dottie Marston and Barbara Lilley and music played by Elayne Morgan on saxophone and Debbie Watson on organ. Lucile Rom was Mistress of Ceremonies and read two personal letters with birthday greets from President Barack and Michelle Obama as well as one from Senator Bob Nelson.

A slideshow of “This Is Your Life, Velma was presented by Clereen Brunty and Jerry Pricher. Lucile Rom also hosted a game of “Name That Tune” which was assisted by Luan Gore and Kathleen Ure. Several ladies of the Zephyrhills P.E.O. Chapter BG helped with the event. Caring neighbors, Carol and Rich Newell, honored Velma with a beautiful floral arrangement designed by The Chalet Florist of Zephyrhills for the family table. Other flower centerpieces were made by Louise Lashley and Sylvia Cunningham for the individual tables.

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Velma attributes her youthful look to Ponds Facial Cleanser and Cold Cream, which she has used since it first came out. She will also tell you her longevity is due to her belief in God and trying to follow his teachings, as well as taking good care of herself.

Thank you, Artiste, for sharing your mother with all of us. She is an inspiration and gives us the strength to never give up, and always believe in yourself. Artiste is a retired music and chorus teacher who taught at West Elementary and Raymond B. Stewart Middle School for over 30 years. Her love of music must have been inspired by her mother’s desire to entertain folks in song.



From the Desk of the Editor

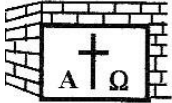
Personal Response

I lost my sister, Sandy Pricher, on September 11, 2014 at about 2:30 in the afternoon. She was member of our association as well as being a contributing member of other organizations devoted to our fair community. I cannot adequately express how much the show of support from so many of you has meant in this troubling time. I’m including some information you’ve already seen here in tribute to her, along with some words from another member of our association, Greg First. I can tell you that my brother and I shared a good laugh at Greg’s comparison of our sister to Alice Hall, but I can also tell you that we thought he made a pretty good case for his opinion. Thanks, Greg. Thanks, Clereen, for being such a big help in getting the word out. And thank you all for your kind words and actions.

Sandy Pricher

Sandra Ellene Pricher was born January 26, 1943 in High Springs, Florida, the daughter of Otis M. Pricher and Ellene Thompson Pricher. She died on September 11, 2014 at Florida Hospital in Zephyrhills, Florida, from complications following heart surgery.

Sandy, as she was most commonly known, graduated from Zephyrhills High School in 1961, and from Lakeland Business Institute in 1963. She worked as a legal secretary in Lakeland until 1965 when she moved to Cocoa Beach to work for Hughes Aircraft as part of the team at NASA in the Surveyor Project, which placed the first unmanned spacecraft on the moon. She moved to Atlanta in 1967 to work at Georgia Tech. She returned to Orlando in 1973 and took a job as Vice President of Shareholder Relations and Corporate Secretary with Sun Banks, Inc. One of her responsibilities there was producing the Annual Report to Shareholders.

<p>CornerStone  Baptist Church 7th Street & 8th Avenue Come be our special guest Coffee & Donuts 10:30***** Worship 11:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. Dr. Neal Resue—Pastor *NealDoe1956@verizon.net</p>	<p>In Memory of Ryals Furniture Exchange And Great Parents Powell & Maude Ryals From son James God Bless America</p>
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 <p>Balloon City Zephyrhills THE PARTY STORE 813-780-7000 36606 STATE RD 54 ZEPHYRHILLS, FL 33541 BALLOONCITY1@AOL.COM www.BalloonCityZephyrhills.com LOCATED IN THE SWEET BAY SHOPPING CENTER</p>	 <p>Zephyrhills Museum of Military History <i>A City of Zephyrhills Facility</i> Open Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. 39444 South Ave. (813) 780-0078</p>
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She returned to Atlanta after Sun Banks became Sun Trust. She took early retirement in 1986 to return to Zephyrhills and open her own gift shop. That venture went quite well at her first location, in the old Tribune Building on 8th Street, but after the move out to Mission Square it got much tougher to turn a profit.

She went to work at East Pasco Medical Center, which would become Florida Hospital Zephyrhills, in 1987 as staffing coordinator. She held several other positions there before retiring in 2007. After her retirement she has been active in PEO, with the 2010 Centennial Committee, and with the ZHS Boosters Club. Most recently she volunteered with the football team, and is sometimes referred to as “Fairy Dog Mother.” She claimed it was the best job she ever had.


She is survived by two brothers, Jerry Pricher of Zephyrhills and Norm Pricher and wife Kay of Orlando; three nieces and one nephew — Kari Pricher of New York, Nicole Pricher of Tampa, Jean Hence and husband Tyler of Zephyrhills, and John Pricher and wife Aimee of Alachua; and two grand nephews and one grand niece — Cole Pricher, Jonah Hence, and Marlee Pricher.

A memorial service was held on Saturday, September 27th at the First Presbyterian Church in Zephyrhills at 11 a.m. In lieu of flowers the family requests that you make a donation in Sandy’s name to either the ZHS Booster Club or P.E.O. Chapter BG.

Sandy Pricher Remembered

by Greg First

I have seen many changes growing up in this area and I have seen many people that have made an impact here. Sandy Pricher was one of those that made a difference. She was pretty much a no-nonsense person. If she believed in what you were doing she was in your corner, but she would also let you know if you did something she didn’t agree with. She was not bashful when it came to letting you know her feelings on many subjects. She was not a fencewalker.

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I remember once a headline was put in the newspaper about her favorite team, the Bulldogs. She wasn't happy with it. She let them know. Many of you remember Alice Hall. Sandy reminded me of her in many ways. I still remember getting those late night calls from Alice. Steve Spina knows what I am talking about as well as a few others. If she didn't like the way things were being done she would call and expect it to be taken care of. Before you could even respond she would just hang up. Alice never said goodbye. Sandy never hung up, but she was very straightforward with what she had to say.



As the stadium announcer at Zephyrhills High School during football season I used to work with Sandy a whole bunch. She could have been modeling a Bulldog shirt, holding up a banner or waving pom-poms. Even from high atop Bulldog Stadium I could see her communicating with me by hand signals and I knew exactly what she wanted. She didn't have to say a word. When I would mention her name she would jump as high as the cheerleaders. You knew she appreciated it. She even got a shout-out when she wasn't there recently. We were playing Gulf High School on Sept. 5. I got a call from her friend of 30 years, Scarlette Rogers Owens, asking if we could give her a shout-out at the game.

She was in the hospital and prayers were needed. Shout we did. A few days later they had a prayer vigil for her at the hospital and then another. For those that couldn't attend, prayers and well wishes were being sent. On Sept. 11, 2014 at approximately 2:25 p.m. Heaven received another angel. Sandy went to join the many that she loved that went before her. She will not be forgotten.

On Sept. 12 the Zephyrhills High School Bulldogs played the Mitchell High School Mustangs at their field in Trinity. The Bulldogs won big 45-14. On each of the team's helmets was a sticker with "SP" on it. The next day Coach Reggie Roberts said, "Our win last night was for our beloved Sandy Pricher!!! I asked the players to play with their hearts and they responded. She will never ever be forgotten!" It was a very moving experience. She will be remembered in many ways around here.



Thinking back, I finally figured out why Alice Hall never said goodbye. It's because she always figured that she would see you again. To Sandy's brothers Jerry and Norm Pricher, along with her loving family and friends, and the entire Bulldog Nation we won't say goodbye Sandy. Let's just say, "See You Later."

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