

# PIONEER DAYS



24-25 FEB 2024





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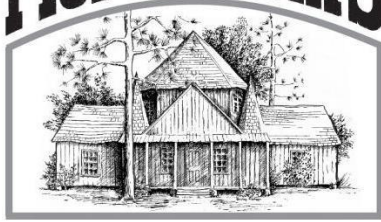


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# PINE CASTLE PIONEER DAYS



## **Who we are:**

Pine Castle Pioneer Days, Inc., is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) public charity whose primary goal is to organize an annual family-oriented community event to promote the living history of Central Florida.

**Pine Castle Pioneer Days, Inc.  
2023-2024 Board of Directors**

### **Executive Board:**

Billy Morgan, Chairman  
Charles Rutterbush, Vice Chairman  
Ginger Rudiger, Secretary  
Bart Abel, Treasurer  
Lynn DeJarnette, Corr. Secretary  
Leigh Anne Morgan, Sergeant-at-Arms

### **At-Large Members:**

Kristel Abel, t-shirts  
Larry Alexander, car show  
Ben Bateman, at large  
Sue Denison, at large  
Bobby Lance, food/beverage  
Dawne Miles, Sunday services  
Susie Mosholder, hospitality  
Sue Nielson, City of Belle Isle  
Dionne Marinaccio, Scouts  
Comm. Mayra Uribe, Orange County  
Jenn Weidley Smykay, music & sound

### **Special thanks to:**

Karl Ambrose, Fr. Kevin Bartle, Rick Cronin, John DiCrisci, Thomas Feaval, Bob Foley, Jay Herrington, Vicki Jones, Cindy Lance, Monica Leibacher, Pete Madison, Dave Mason, Cliff Matthews, Glen Richardson, Bob Samson, and Dave Smith.

## **Table of Contents**

- A Message From Our Chairman
- Car Show on Saturday, Jeep Show on Sunday
- Cypress Grove Park: Our Beautiful Venue
- 10 Tips for Enjoying Pioneer Days
- 2024 Signature Artist Carolyn Schultz
- Orlando Colonial FFI Alumni & Supporters
- In Memoriam
- Silent Auction Thank You List
- Park Lands an Eagle Scout Project
- Bat Boxes at the Randolph Boat Ramp
- Flag Retirement Ceremony (Sat evening)
- The History Tent schedule of speakers
- The Herrington Wagon
- Festival Schedule/Performance Times
- "Soundtracks," our 2024 Musicians
- Will the Circle be Unbroken?
- Pioneer Days Scrap Book
- What was YOUR first car? An invitation . . .
- Charlie's Pie-oh-Near Days Pie Eating Contest
- Wheels of Time in Pine Castle, by Karen Heasley
- The East Florida Rangers
- Our Native American Heritage
- The Not So Young Guns
- P.T. Mortimer's Traveling Medicine & Magic Show
- Spinning Wheels, Spinning Tales
- Circuit Rider Sunday Service
- Pioneer Days collectibles and our online store!



### **Contact us:**

Pine Castle Pioneer Days, Inc.  
P.O. Box 593175  
Pine Castle, FL 32859-3175  
407-427-9692

[pinecastlepioneerdays@hotmail.com](mailto:pinecastlepioneerdays@hotmail.com)  
<http://www.pinecastlepioneerdays.org>





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& START SHOPPING**





## A Message From Our Chairman

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Committee Chairs of Pine Castle Pioneer Days, Inc., it is my distinct honor to present the 51st Anniversary edition of our souvenir magazine and to welcome you as our event returns to beautiful Cypress Grove Park.

Each year, the Board of Directors establishes a theme to unify the various aspects of Pioneer Days. This year's theme WHEELS OF TIME is a nod to one of humankind's earliest inventions. In perusing old photographs of the pioneer era, we see them everywhere. Oxcarts and wagons, trains and vintage cars, all had wheels. At home, there were spinning wheels and clockfaces. In the fields, there were mule driven sugar cane presses. And, at church, we sang "Let the Circle be Unbroken."

The echoes of all these "wheels of time" ripple not only across our festival grounds but also on our magazine cover artwork by 2023-2024 Signature Artist Carolyn Schultz. Her original image also appears on event posters and souvenir t-shirts.

Rest assured that plans for the 2025 festival are already underway, as we build on more than fifty years of great experiences. The circle will be unbroken! If **YOU** would like to be a part of the effort, please consider volunteering. We always appreciate helping hands!

**William S. Morgan, V**  
2023-2024 Chairman  
Pine Castle Pioneer Days, Inc.  
P.O. Box 593175  
Orlando, FL 32859-3175  
(407) 427-9692  
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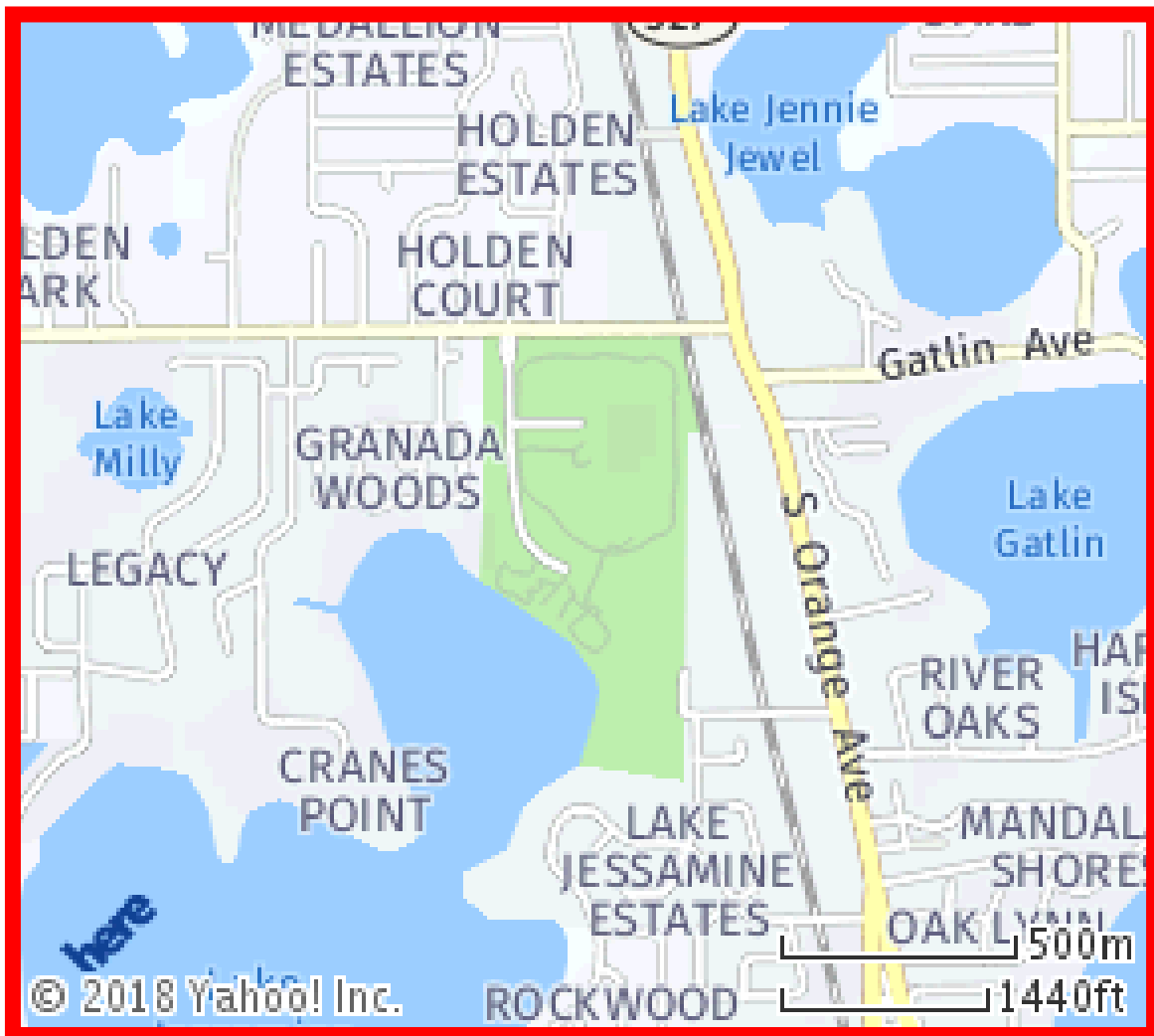
RATS AND RODS



# CYPRESS GROVE PARK

## Our Beautiful Venue

Since 2014, Pine Castle Pioneer Days has been held at CYPRESS GROVE PARK, which offers expanded opportunities for the public to engage in local history and great amenities for our guests. This site is made available to us thru a dynamic community partnership with Orange County Government.



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# 10 Tips for Enjoying Pioneer Days

**1. Arrive early.** Even though gates technically open at 10am, there are pre-opening festivities both mornings. On Saturday, we welcome classic cars to rally at the festival entrance. And, on Sunday, there is a nondenominational "sunrise" service at 8am honoring the area's pioneer era circuit riding preachers. Both are free of charge and open to the public.

**2. Be prepared for the weather.** This is an outdoor event. In Central Florida. So, weather conditions are changeable. Layer your clothing so you can adjust for a rise or drop in temperature. Consider a hat for gusts of wind, sunglasses for sun, and an umbrella in case of rain.

**3. Bring the kids/pets.** Admission fees have been waived again this year! So, you are free enjoy all shows and performances, rides, and bounce-houses at no charge. Four-legged friends are welcome as long as they are on a leash.

**4. Get a copy of the free souvenir magazine.** Not only does it contain some great pictures and articles about local history, but it also includes a schedule of events so you can plan what musical acts to watch and which shows/demonstrations to see.

**5. Attend the opening ceremonies.** These are held at 10:30am Saturday at the sound stage and will help to orient you to the overall event and its theme. They include proclamations by dignitaries and introduction of VIPs.

**6. Patronize the vendors.** Many will be featuring items specifically created for this event and offering special deals to festival goers that they don't offer at other events.

**7. Appreciate the music.** It's not just there for background noise. There's a LOT of talent in the line-up. So, take some time to sit and listen to the performers. And give them some applause.

**8. Talk to the demonstrators and traditional crafters.** The "living history" performers at Pioneer Days aren't just there for the scheduled show times. They enjoy visiting with festival goers during the entire event. So, don't be shy! Ask them questions. They love sharing their knowledge and welcome you to take a few selfies!

**9. Visit the Old Timers tent.** Volunteers will be on hand to share bits of local history and help you build your family tree. These include old documents and photographs. And there is always an "official old timer" on hand to share their memories firsthand.

**10. Don't be afraid to ask a question.** If you need information that can't be found at the festival web site ([www.pinecastlepioneerdays.org](http://www.pinecastlepioneerdays.org)), you can call 407-427-9692 during non-event hours or email [pinecastlepioneerdays@hotmail.com](mailto:pinecastlepioneerdays@hotmail.com). During the event, visit the Information Tent. It is staffed with experienced volunteers who can answer any questions.



# 2024 Signature Artist CAROLYN SCHULTZ



**2023-2024 Pine Castle Pioneer Days Signature Artist Carolyn Schultz with event sponsor Orange County Commissioner Mayra Uribe at the unveiling of this year's original artwork. The image appears on the cover of this magazine and on all the event's promotional items.**

Each year, Pine Castle Pioneer Days proudly showcases a local artist whose work reflects our area's unique culture and heritage. This year, we are very proud to have **CAROLYN SCHULTZ** as our signature artist!

Carolyn is a native of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and earned a degree in Biology from the University of South Florida in Tampa. A longtime resident of Central Florida, she has extensive experience as a street painter and realist artist. She is known for her larger-than-life projects, including chalk reproductions of well-known images like Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa," and Jacques-Louis David's "Napoleon Crossing the Alps."

In addition to her talent as a visual artist, Carolyn is also adept with the bodhrán, a traditional Irish folk instrument. And her natural artistic abilities are shared with her daughter Zoey Carr, whose "Acidic Sheep" creations have appeared in a variety of craft fairs.

Please visit Carolyn in person during the festival weekend at Booth #25. She will be glad to autograph magazine covers and event posters and show you other examples of her work!

Follow Carolyn on Instagram @schultzie55



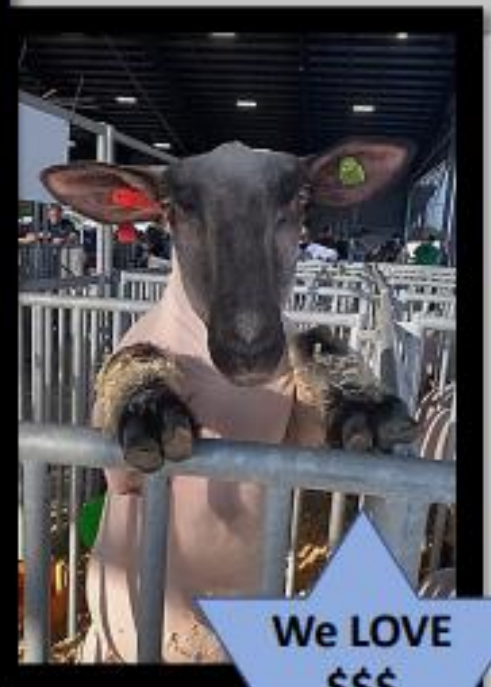


# ORLANDO COLONIAL FFA ALUMNI and SUPPORTERS



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## Come visit our booths and learn all about FFA





Each year, Pioneer Days pays tribute to members of the extended Pine Castle “family” who have passed away since the last festival. This year we mark the passing of these special people:

**Luke Crossley** (31 Jul 1942 – 12 Jan 2023) was a member of one of Pine Castle’s “old timer” families. He attended the old Pine Castle Elementary School before graduating from Boone High School in 1963. He subsequently worked for his family’s well-known business, Crossley’s Nurseries.

**Virginia Glor** died 5 Dec 2023, age 82. A native of Baltimore, she was an area resident for more than 60 years. A talented quilter and seamstress, she was also a familiar face at the Pine Castle Women’s Club where she volunteered as a server at tea parties.

**Rev. Glen Koger** (6 Aug 1938 – 22 Jul 2023) was a native of Kissimmee. He came to Pine Castle to serve as the longtime pastor of Galatian Baptist Church, from 1977 until his retirement in 2015.

**Richard Curtis LeSturgeon** (11 Sep 1955 – 12 May 2023) was a longtime area resident and a US Navy veteran. He had a lifetime love of baseball and spent several years as a coach with Pine Castle Little League.

**Harold Tyrus “HP” Pierson** (1954-2024) was a lifelong area resident and a 1972 graduate of Oak Ridge High School. He worked for the former Pine Castle Fire Department from 1975 until 1981, when it was consolidated with Orange County Fire Rescue. He retired in 1997, after which he became a familiar figure as he navigated local traffic in his signature orange VW Bug.

**Dr. Robert Pribell** died 28 Sep 2023, age 88. A native of Elizabeth, New Jersey, he graduated from dental school at Temple University. After serving in the US Air Force, he established a private practice in Pine Castle and lived here for many years. He proudly pointed out that his home stood on the site of Will Wallace Harney’s original Pine Castle homestead. Dr. Pribell also served on the Belle Isle city council and was an avid golfer, making no fewer than six hole in ones!

**Paula Burns Story** (2 Dec 1931 – 30 Sep 2023) was a Pine Castle native and the descendant of the pioneer Macy, Patrick, and Jernigan families. She graduated from the old Orlando High School. Her 1950 wedding at Pine Castle’s Baptist Church was one of the most impressive social events of the year. She subsequently lived in Gainesville and Jacksonville, where she worked as a church secretary. She was survived by a large family and, locally, by her sister Bobbie Meloon.

# Thank you FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Pine Castle Pioneer Days salutes all of the people and places who donated their time or treasure to make our annual Silent Auction a great success! All proceeds from the event help underwrite our February festival and ensure free admission to the public. If YOU would like to volunteer or donate to the 2024 auction, call 407-427-9692 or email [pinecastlepioneerdays@hotmail.com](mailto:pinecastlepioneerdays@hotmail.com).

Larry Alexander  
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Kristel Abel  
Cathy Baird  
Mark Baird  
Anza Bast  
Ben Bateman  
Holly Bobrowski  
Boy Scout Troop 36  
Celery City String Band  
Corner Rose Tea Room  
Lynn DeJarnette  
Sue Denison  
Design Team Hair Salon  
Gatorland  
Johnny's Fillin' Station  
Vicki M. Jones  
Janis Joslin  
Bobby Lance  
Cindy Lance  
Vicki Littell  
Pete Madison

Dee Dee Marinaccio  
Rob Matheson  
Dawne Miles  
Billy Morgan  
Leigh Anne Morgan  
Susie Hayes Mosholder  
Victor Mosholder  
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Orlando Coin Exchange  
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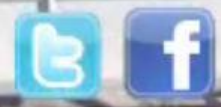


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## Hours

Monday - Friday: 800 am - 5:30 pm  
Saturdays: At this time, by appt only  
Sunday: Closed

Pine Castle Pioneer Days invites you to "join us on Facebook" to keep up with festival planning all year long. Posts also include regular local history tidbits & images.  
[www.facebook.com/groups/pinecastlepioneerdays](http://www.facebook.com/groups/pinecastlepioneerdays)

# Cypress Grove Park Lands an Eagle Scout Project

By Deedee Marinaccio, a Proud Scout Mom

Mattingly Marinaccio, a Boy Scout in Pine Castle's venerable Troop 36, recently earned scouting's highest honor. And Cypress Grove Park, site of the Pioneer Days festival, was the benefactor of his Eagle Project.

It only seems fitting that the park would be the site of the Eagle project since Mattingly started playing here long before he was a Tiger Cub Scout. He joined Pack 36 in 2012 when he was in the first grade at Cornerstone Charter Academy, where he will graduate in May of this year.

Eagle Scout is the highest rank or achievement in the Scouts BSA program of the Boy Scouts of America. Since its inception in 1911, only about 4 percent of scouts have earned this rank after a rigorous review process. Candidates must plan, develop, and lead others in a service project that benefits any religious institution, school, or part of the local community in order to receive the rank.

Mattingly's project involved beautifying the courtyard behind the Grove House with landscape design and reconstruction that included planting shrubs and flowers, placing steppingstones, and building a rock garden, stone benches, an arbor, and water feature to make the space more inviting and aesthetically pleasing for guests. According to Troop records, the project took more than 250 service hours, which were completed by Mattingly and other scouts and adults from Troop 36.

Mattingly knew he wanted to do something at the park and simply asked what needed to be done. Penny Fawcett, Cypress Grove's site supervisor, provided him with ideas that brought his Eagle project into focus. As it turned out, Penny wasn't only his project inspiration, she's now his employer—just another testament to how much the rank of Eagle Scout can mean for employment opportunities.

During his time with the Scouts, Mattingly has served as a patrol leader and senior patrol leader. He has earned 25 merit badges covering subjects from art to culture and hobbies to health, including 14 Eagle-required merit badges that focus on valuable life skills such as citizenship, personal fitness, personal management, and family life.

Chartered by Belle Isle Community Church (previously Pine Castle United Methodist Church), Troop 36 has activity records dating back to the 1930s and 40s, with the "official" founding date of 1951. Over its more than 73 years of history, the troop has seen many Scouts join its rank and has produced several accomplished Eagle Scouts.



# Randolph Boat Ramp Launched an Eagle Project

By Diego Montgomery, a Proud High-Schooler



Diego Montgomery, a Boy Scout in Pine Castle's Troop 36, recently earned scouting's highest honor, and Pine Castle's historic Randolph Boat Ramp was the benefactor of his Eagle Project.

Diego joined Pack 36 in 2013 when he was in the third grade at Cornerstone Charter Academy, where he will graduate in May of this year. His Eagle project involved designing, assembling, and installing four bat boxes, each containing four chambers. After digging a four-foot-deep hole and bolting the boxes on a 16 foot pole, they were fastened with planks and the hole was filled with concrete.

According to Troop records, the project took over 200 service hours, which were completed by Diego and other scouts and adults from Troop 36.

Diego has always been interested in watching bats fly at sunset. Eventually, though, he noticed the bats stopped coming and were replaced by mosquitoes. Recognizing that bats are a lot cooler than mosquito bites, Diego's project sought to reduce the mosquito

population and restore balance to our local ecosystem.

During his time with the Scouts, Diego has served as a patrol leader, senior patrol leader, and troop quartermaster. He has earned 25 merit badges covering subjects from engineering to culture and hobbies to health, including 14 Eagle-required merit badges, focused on valuable life skills, such as citizenship, cooking, first aid, and personal management.



The public is invited to stick around after Pioneer Days on **Saturday** to witness the Scouts of Troop 36 conduct a Flag Retirement Ceremony. It begins **at 5pm**.

**Daniel Mascarel**  
Sales Consultant

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# The History Tent

Sponsored by Pine Castle Historical Society

## Saturday, Feb 24<sup>th</sup> (“Texann Ivy Buck Day”)

**11am – Dr. Jim Black, UCF History Professor.**

The author of *A History Lover’s Guide to Florida* will deliver this year’s keynote address.

**12 noon – Bennett Lloyd, Seminole County Museum**

An overview of the museum’s collection of historic buggies and the ongoing effort to preserve them for future generations.

**1pm – Christy Grieger, Exec. Director, Winer Park Museum**

A discussion of the people and places of Central Florida before we became America’s Vacationland.

**2pm – Robert Redd, author**

Postcards as historical resources.

**3pm – Steve Patrick, pioneer descendant**

Orange County’s postal history.

## Sunday, Feb 25<sup>th</sup>

**11am – Phil Eschbach, pioneer descendant**

Florida’s pioneer Eppes and Randolph Families.

**12 noon – Jonathan Rich, author and historian**

A history of the Episcopal church during Florida’s pioneer era.

**1pm – Mike McGinness and Jeff Davis**

Co-authors will discuss their recent book *Florida: A History in Pictures*.

**2pm – Lydia Roper, Pine Castle Historical Society**

A presentation on the inspiring women of Pine Castle.

**3pm – Elaine Powell, President, Central Florida Genealogical Society**

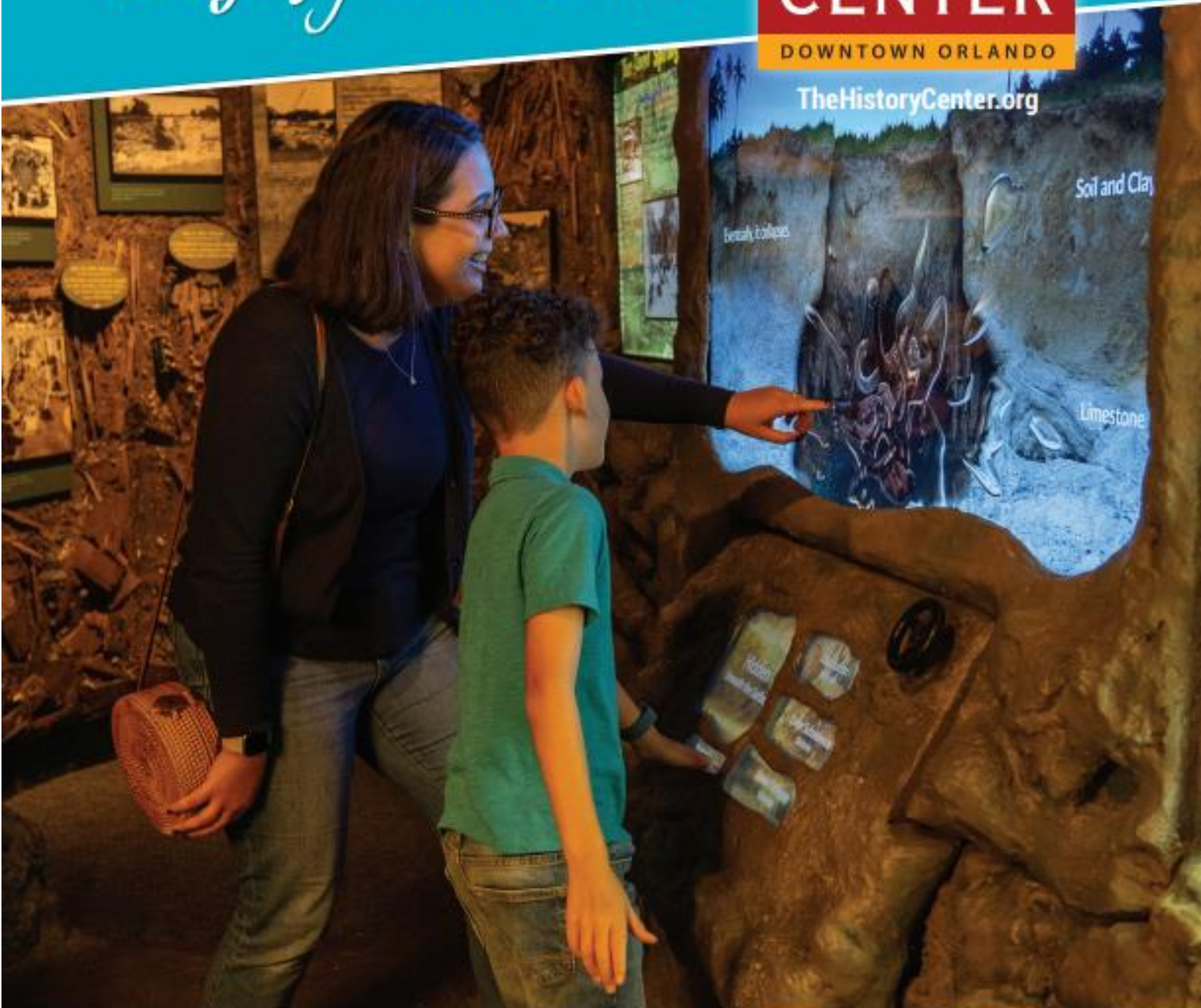
The pioneer Rouse family of Orange County and their connections.

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# THE HERRINGTON WAGON

Pioneer Days Preserves a Piece of History



Pine Castle Pioneer Days frequently received donations of items related to our local history and the pioneer era. Usually, it's small household items, photographs, or books. Recently, though, we received a really cool old wagon.

Unfortunately, it was in rough condition (see photo above). Some of the wooden box components were rotten and blew-off during transport to our storage facility. The good news was, the chassis was intact and the extraneous material was easily removed.

Last summer, intrepid volunteer Cliff Matthews hauled the stripped-down wagon to his workshop and prepared it for media blasting—a process that removed all the old paint. He also had to replace the rotted brake link support.



BEFORE



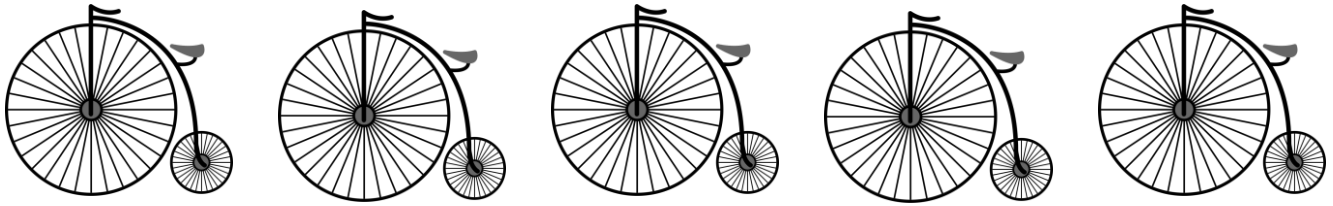
DURING



AFTER

With a newly-cleaned slate, Cliff primed all the metal components and brake link bar. He then consulted with the Pioneer Days board of directors to decide the final color scheme. After some research on period authentic colors, it was decided to go with red and white.

The Herrington Wagon will be on display during our 2024 festival. It looks a lot prettier than it did when we received it and it embodies this year's theme: WHEELS OF TIME. But, there is still work to be done before it can be used to haul passengers. Stay tuned!



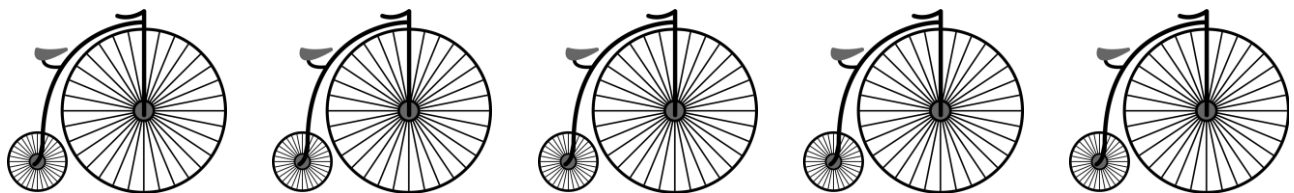
# Performance Times/Venues

## Saturday, February 24, 2024

<u>Time</u>	<u>Main Stage</u>	<u>Acoustic Stage</u>
10:15	Opening Ceremonies	Closed
11:00	Bear and Robert	Jackson Creek
12:00	Frankie J and the Chicken Parade	Billy Floyd
1:00	Jerry Mincey	Celery City String Band
2:00	Jackson Creek	Frankie J and the Chicken Parade
2:45	Car Show awards presentation	Closed
3:30	Celery City String Band	
4:20	Billy Floyd	

## Sunday, February 25, 2024

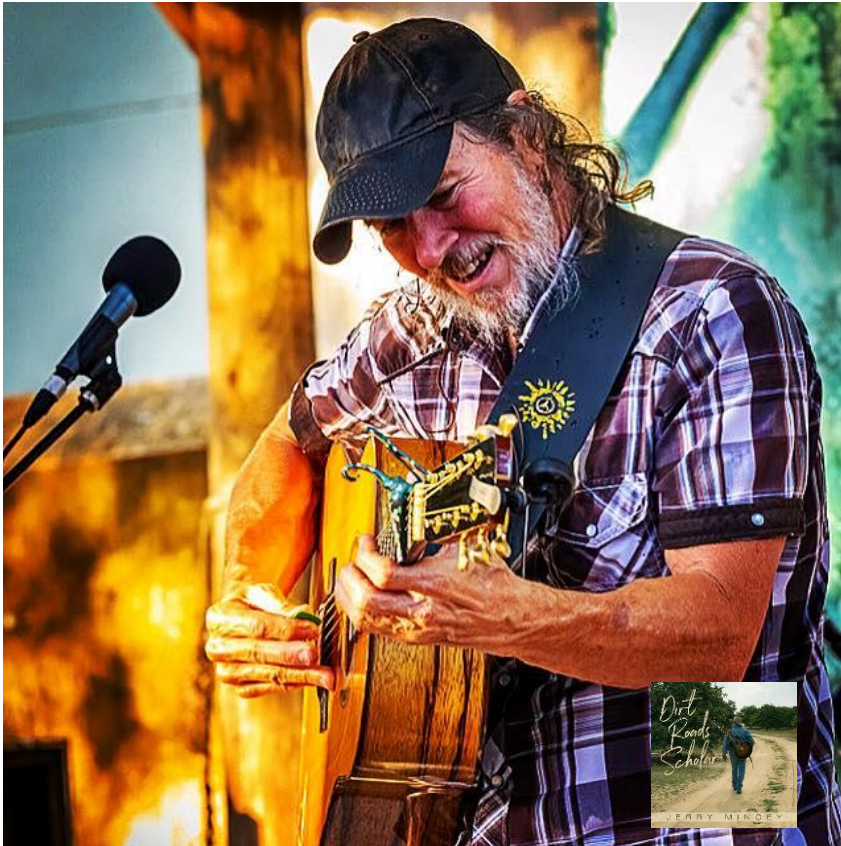
<u>Time</u>	<u>Main Stage</u>	<u>Acoustic Stage</u>
8:00	Circuit Rider Sunrise Service	Closed
9:30	Bear and Robert	Quincy Newton
10:30	John French and Friends	Brian Smalley
11:30	Hard to Port	Rambler Kane
12:30	Brian Smalley	Justin Mason and Blue Night
1:30	Rambler Kane	Hard to Port
2:30	Quincy Newton	John French and Friends
3:20	Justin Mason and Blue Night	Closed





# “Soundtracks”

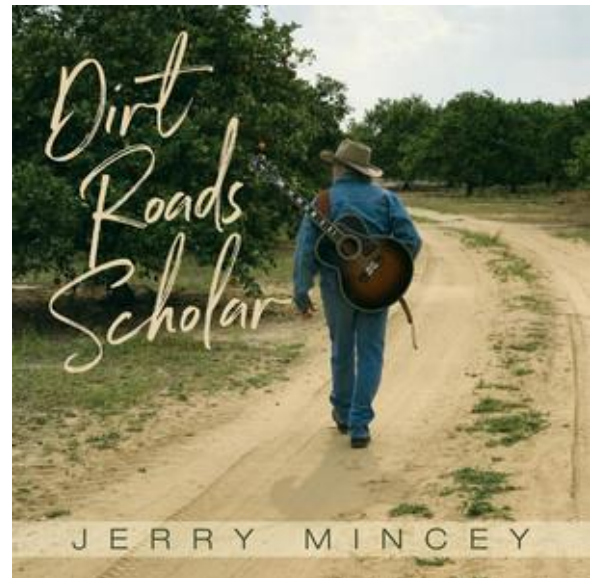
2024 Pioneer Days Musicians



Many Thanks  
to  
**The City of Belle Isle**  
for sponsoring  
Pioneer Days' Acoustic  
“MOO-sic” Stage!



Festival favorite **Brian Smalley** will be returning to Pine Castle Pioneer Days in 2024. Visit his website: [www.BrianSmalley.com](http://www.BrianSmalley.com) for more info!



2024 will mark the Pioneer Days debut of the **Celery City String Band** and the long-awaited return of our favorite “Dirt Roads Scholar,” **Mr. Jerry Mincey!**





**Billy Floyd** has been part of Central Florida's music scene for more than two decades and has cut his teeth on national tours, too. His performances draw from a diverse arsenal of over 300 songs, with each set uniquely composed for the venue. Billy livestreams performances Mondays thru Fridays thru social media outlets. To check out his upcoming performances, visit his Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/officialbillyfloyd>.



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**South Orange  
Chamber of Commerce  
Salutes**



**Pine Castle  
Pioneer Days**





Other first-time performers in 2024 include Rambler Kane (top left) and the Florida Bluegrass stylings of Justin Mason & Blue Night.

### Jackson Creek String Band

This longtime festival favorite produces a dynamic blend of music including folk, mild bluegrass, Celtic, and fiddle tunes with a bit of Gospel, cowboy, and just plain fun! Many of their songs were written by Joe Waller who leads the group. They play for festivals, barn dances, weddings, parties and civic events throughout Central Florida. Their latest album "I Wish I Was..." includes many of Joe's original songs. Their web site is [www.folkfiddle.com](http://www.folkfiddle.com).

A decorative border consisting of a row of five bicycle icons at the top and another row of five bicycle icons at the bottom, all on a bright green background.A cartoon illustration of a white chicken with a red comb, wearing a blue vest and playing a yellow acoustic guitar. The chicken is standing on a wooden fence. The background of the illustration is a white square with a yellow sun.

# Frankie Jay and the Chicken Parade





**Hard To Port** formed as a trio in 2012 but expanded to a core five-piece band with regular guest musicians. Core members include Jenn Weidley, Ron Smykay, Steve Hinksman, Christina Hinksman, and Chuck Spano. They play a range of music called “Celtic Fusion,” including traditional Irish/Scottish reels, jigs, tunes, pub songs, and ballads as well as folk, country/western, and hard rock material. Spend some time with Hard to Port during Pioneer Days, and they will take you on a musical journey from the green fields of Ireland to the Blue Ridge mountains, demon-haunted woods, across the Australian Outback, out west to Carson City, and through the painted canyons of California! Their web site: [www.hardtoportband.com](http://www.hardtoportband.com)



**Bear and Robert** is an award-winning singer-songwriter duo from Jacksonville, consisting of Cindy Bear and Franc Robert (pronounced “Ro-bear”). They have performed at venues across Florida since 2005. Their music is sure to touch your heart in many ways and will leave you wanting more. Learn more about them at [www.cindybearmusic.com](http://www.cindybearmusic.com).

We are also excited to introduce newcomers **Quincy Newton** (not pictured), and **John French and Friends!**



# Will the Circle be Unbroken?

A Favorite Pine Castle Hymn



I was standing by the window  
On a cold and cloudy day  
When I saw the hearse come rolling  
To carry my mother away.

Will the circle be unbroken?  
By and by, Lord, by and by.  
There's a better home a waiting  
In the sky Lord in the sky!

I said to the undertaker,  
"Undertaker, please drive slow,  
For that body you are carrying,  
Lord I hate to see her go.

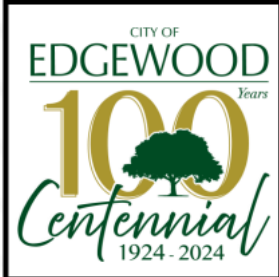
Well, I followed close behind her,  
Tried to hold up and be brave.  
But I could not hide my sorrow  
When they laid her in that grave.

I went back home, Lord,  
That home was lonesome.  
Since my mother, she was gone  
All my brothers and sisters crying,  
What a home so sad and alone!



# Edgewood's Centennial Celebration

Saturday, March 23, 2024  
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Tuesday April 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Thursday May 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Thursday June 20 <sup>th</sup>
Monday July 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Monday August 19 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday September 17 <sup>th</sup>
Thursday October 17 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday November 14 <sup>th</sup>	Monday December 16 <sup>th</sup>

ANY FULL MOON THAT FELL ON A FRIDAY-SUNDAY WAS MOVED TO A DIFFERENT DAY.

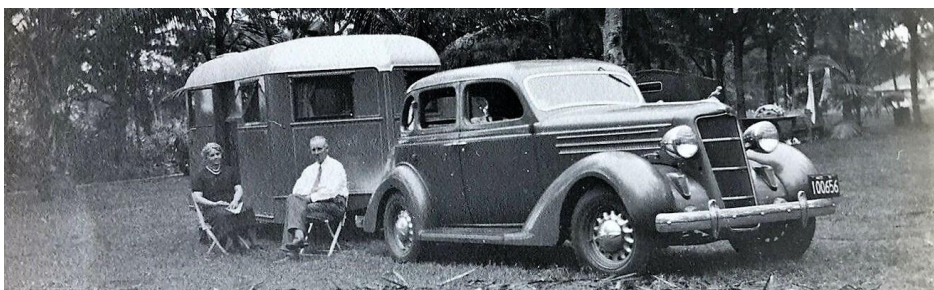
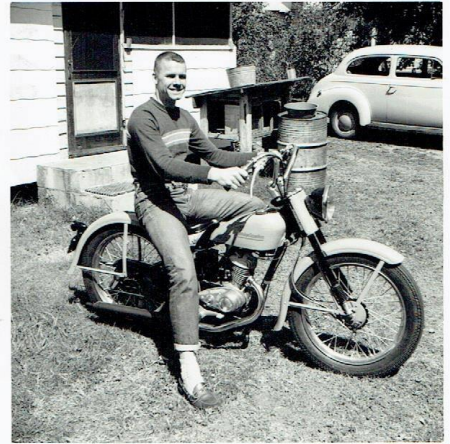
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# PIONEER DAYS SCRAP BOOK

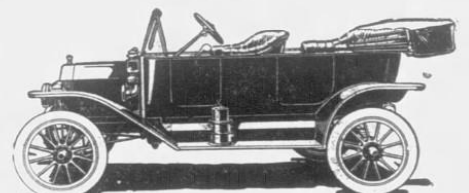
Some Pictures From Our Archives



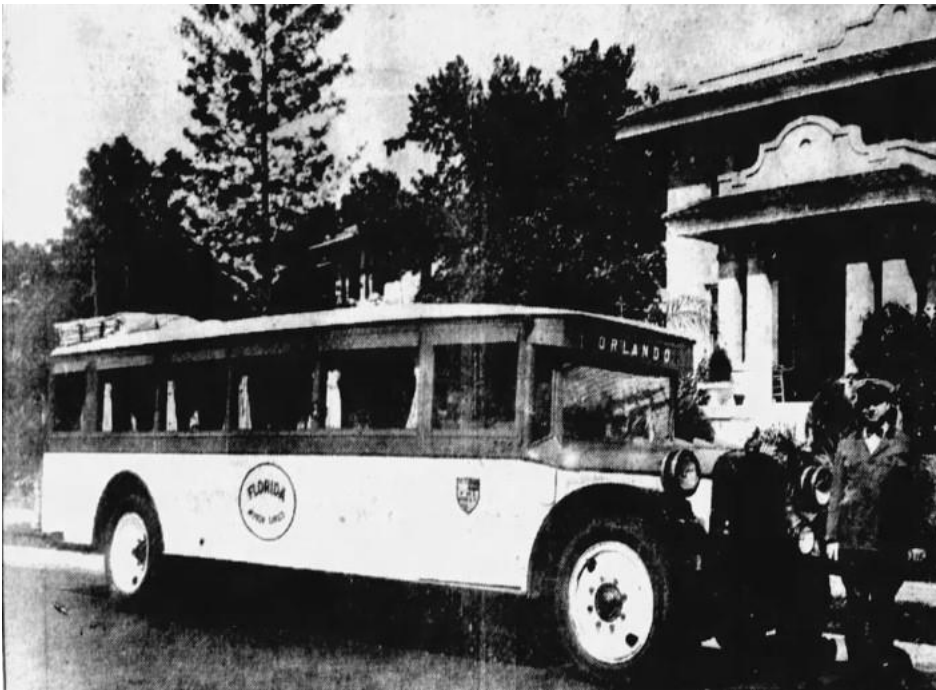
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**Prior page:**

- Racecar driver Johnny Ritter, when he wasn't busy on the track, took the first aerial photographs of Pine Castle.
- Charlie Hayes and his favorite motorcycle.
- The pioneer Bumby family posing with their prized tractor.
- An unidentified pioneer woman with her spinning wheel.
- Tin can tourists during the Great Depression.
- An advertisement by F.G. Rush, who had a home on Lake Conway in Pine Castle.

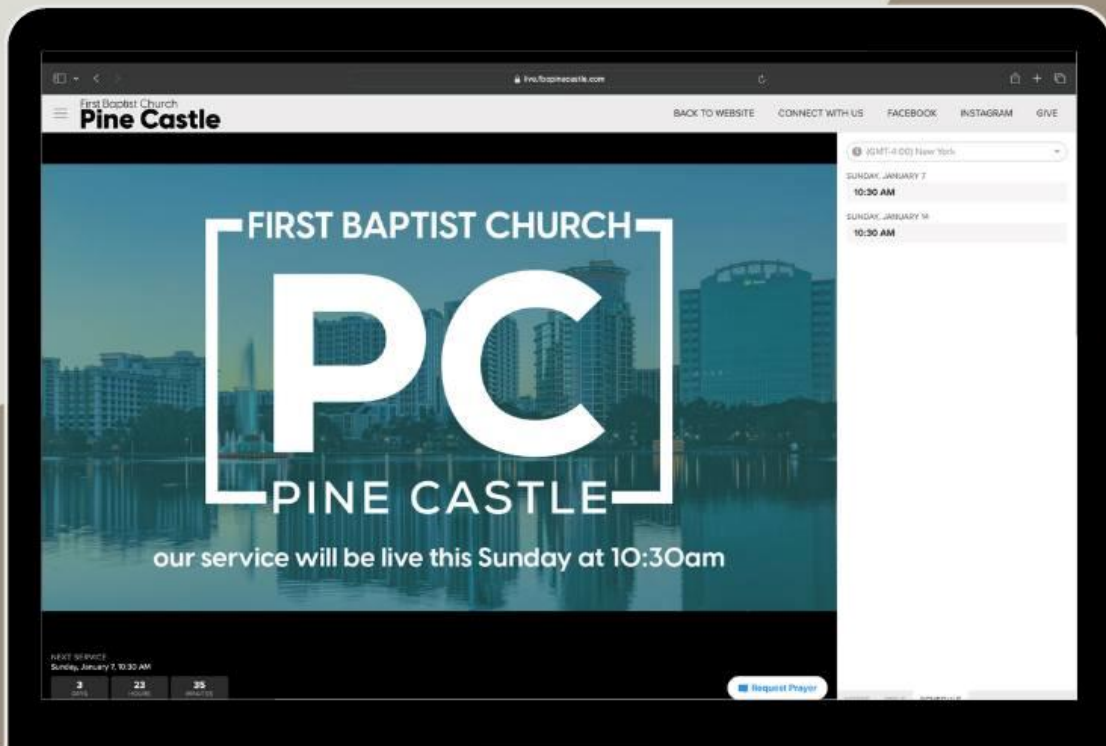
**This page:**

- In 1929, Pine Castle was connected to downtown Orlando by the "Rapid Transit" bus line.
- Unidentified old timer casts a skeptical look at the wheel of a "horseless carriage."
- Unidentified pioneer with his team of mules hauling a wagonload of turpentine barrels. The woods just south of Pine Castle were full of valuable pine sap and many of our early residents were employed at distilleries that converted it into turpentine.
- As paved surfaced became more prevalent in Central Florida in the Roaring 20s, roller skating became a fad. Indoor skating rinks were built in some of the larger towns. Early skates were simply strapped onto a person's shoes and tightened by keys to achieve the perfect fit.





# WORSHIP WITH US LIVE



[live.fbcpinecastle.com](http://live.fbcpinecastle.com)

# What was YOUR first car?



Pine Castle Pioneer Days' chairman emeritus (and all-around good guy) Ben Bateman responded to this question with a cherished photo of himself (at right) with the first car he purchased using his own money. It was a 1963 Alfa Romeo Giulietta.

We invite you to stop by the Oldtimers' Hospitality Tent during the festival weekend to reminisce about YOUR first car . . . Especially if it was cooler than Ben's Italian job!



  
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**RAFFLE DRAWINGS**

# Wheels of Time in Pine Castle

By Karen Heasley

## Have you ever noticed how history often repeats itself?

It's as if time is a wheel, rolling along with certain events coming around again and again. I've certainly found that to be true in my case.

But first I have to give my deepest thanks to the late Ruth Barber Linton, our Pine Castle folklorist and historian who collected so many memories from our original "Old Timers" and their descendants. In her book "A Walk Down Memory Lane," Ruth provided a wealth of history, traditions, and insights into the people who gave this area its character. And for me she brought to life some of my relatives who I never got the pleasure of meeting. Thank you, Ruth!

1914 to 1918 was the time of the Great War. (It was later known as World War I, but when they first named it, they didn't know there would be a second such war!) People didn't have computers, televisions, or even home radios back then, so they learned the news of what was happening from their newspapers, newsreels played in movie theatres, and letters from the frontlines. The government printed colorful posters to educate and encourage folks back home to support the War Effort. A rationing campaign was begun to ensure our soldiers received a steady supply of food, fuel, and other necessities. Posters proclaiming "Food Will Win The War" told us to reduce our intake of meat, wheat, sugar, and fat, so we could send the surplus to our fighting men. There were Meatless Tuesdays and Wheatless Wednesdays to replace feelings of sacrifice with patriotism. Local food boards were established to teach citizens about food substitutes and canning techniques, to help them in their efforts.

During those years, Pine Castle's public school had a Canning Club to get students involved in the food conservation efforts. On Sundays, residents were encouraged to forego the use of gasoline. My great grandfather Charles Hoffner would hitch the family horse "Old Ned" to his Model T Ford and take his wife and children to church in "pioneer style!" It made for some entertaining moments, but it also saved on fuel.

It's hard to imagine making so many changes to our daily routines. I suppose the closest thing many of us have experience was the recent COVID pandemic. For a few years, we were asked to keep a bit of distance from one another, wear masks, and take vaccines. We had to give up eating in restaurants for a while. Favorite buffets disappeared. And there were times when supermarket shelves were sparsely stocked. But we did make it through.

Long ago, the train depot was Pine Castle's most important connection to the rest of the world. And it was from that depot's platform that local servicemen left to serve in our nation's uniformed services. My grandmother Maude Fulford was there one day when she heard a woman burst into song. It was her future mother-in-law Mrs. Edna Hoffner giving a memorable send-off to one of her sons as he departed for the front lines in France. The song was, "America, Here's My Boy."

Although modern residents of Pine Castle may never be motivated to sing in public, we have been through a time where many of us were united in public displays of patriotism following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. After watching those events unfold, we began to see flags, banners, clothing, patriotic art appear throughout our community. Even the music we heard on our radios reflected this feeling of unity.



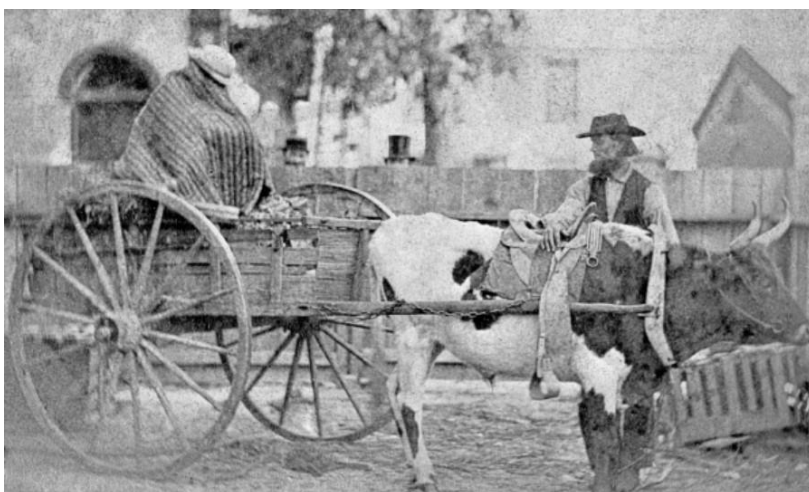
In later years, as I was studying genealogy at the Orlando Public Library, I read that both Edna and her husband Charles performed quite a bit in the old Orlando Opera House. This explained why she felt so comfortable singing at a train depot! Reading a bit further, I found that a better pronunciation of the name would be more like “Opry” House...as in The Grand Ole Opry up in Nashville, Tennessee. Their performances were more like vaudeville skits than classical opera. Oh well, so much for braggin’g rights!

Another example of history repeating appeared in Ruth Linton’s book: the infamous ox-cart incident. In the early days, area pioneers pitched-in wherever help was needed. They would lend their tools, animals, and elbow grease to help one another. On one occasion in the early 1900s, someone died and their casket needed to be hauled to the Oak Ridge Cemetery for burial. The road between Pine Castle and the cemetery was unpaved and quite bumpy. Charlie Hoffner and Charlie Johns volunteered to load the casket into an ox-cart and take it to its final destination. Knowing what I know about my great grandfather, he was quite sociable and could be a talker. So, I’m sure they struck up a conversation as they made the trip. When they arrived, the two Charlies stepped down from the cart to discover the coffin was missing, evidently falling out of the ox-cart somewhere along the bumpy trek! They retraced their route halfway back to Pine Castle before finding the missing cargo.

I imagine there was less chatting on their return journey. We’ve all done something like they did, both embarrassing and comical. I know I have...plenty of times! Once, I was distracted by a good conversation while driving home from a camping trip in Orange City. After a brief stop for lunch, I turned the wrong way out the parking lot and headed back to the campground and drove several miles before I began thinking the scenery was mighty familiar.

Pine Castle’s history is full of examples of how the Wheels of Time revolve. There are the actual wheels of Model Ts, trains, and ox-carts. And there are metaphorical examples like patriotic sacrifice, unity in spirit, and humorous incidents. The common thread is the human condition. We all have a lot in common.

Pine Castle reflects the spirit and personalities of its pioneer settlers. What brought them to the Florida frontier? What inspired Will Wallace Harney to build his castle of pine when those around him opted for simpler log cabins? And what filled them with such a strong sense of community? Well, here you are at the Pioneer Days festival, honoring their traditions, sharing their pride, and connecting with others. I’d say YOU are part of the Wheels of Time, too!



Rustic ox carts were used by our pioneer settlers to haul freight—and sometimes caskets—along the bumpy old dirt trails that crisscrossed the Central Florida frontier.





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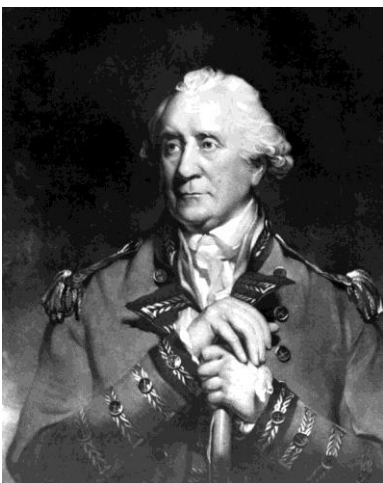


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Pine Castle Pioneer Days salutes Frank the Drainfield Doctor and the team at Drainage Solutions, sponsors of this year's bounce house at our 2024 festival!

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# Our Native American Heritage



Long before pioneer wagons brought settlers to Central Florida, the region was home to Native American people—most notably the Seminoles. According to Pine Castle founder Will Harney, they called this area “Okehitanatchee,” or Land of Fair Waters. Pioneer Days is proud to present a native encampment during our 2024 festival, and we encourage YOU to visit it to learn more about this important part of our heritage.



# The Not So Young Guns



It wouldn't be Pioneer Days without the Not So Young Guns. These members of the Single Action Shooting Society have been thrilling festival goers for years with their scripted shoot-outs. Each show is preceded with an interactive discussion of the importance of gun safety: "Safety is first, last, and always!" And each show is generally based on actual events from Central Florida's frontier era. At least that's what The Conway Kid tells us . . .

As part of their efforts to portray the era correctly, members of the group wear only period-authentic clothing. And, while live ammunition is absolutely forbidden, they do use black powder charges similar to those our pioneer ancestors would have used.

The Not So Young Guns perform twice daily during our festival. To learn more, visit their web site: [www.notsoyoungguns.com](http://www.notsoyoungguns.com).





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# Spinning Wheels, Spinning Tales



Pine Castle Pioneer Days is proud to showcase traditional crafts during our annual festival. As we celebrate the WHEELS OF TIME theme in 2024, we are pleased to highlight the venerable spinning wheel.

Spinning wheels were a vital tool in just about every pioneer household, allowing our forebears to create cloth for their apparel and linens.

They were also a gathering point in an era that had no cell phones, cable television, or the internet. Family and neighbors would gather around the spinning wheel to swap news and tall tales. Perhaps, this was the origin of the phrase “spinning a yarn?!”

Our living history interpreters, including Monica Leibacher pictured above, are carrying on that tradition. They welcome YOU to visit with them this weekend, ask them questions about their craft, listen to their stories, and share some of your own!





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During the pioneer era, the dearly departed in Pine Castle were delivered to Oak Ridge Cemetery on Sand Lake Road in horse-drawn hearses like this one preserved by the Osceola County Historical Society in Kissimmee.



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## OUR SERVICES

**8:00AM TRADITIONAL** Our early service on Sunday is a quiet, reverent time of worship filled with scripture and prayer. This service uses traditional language and does not have music.

**10:00AM FAMILY SERVICE** Our 10:00am service honors the traditions of the early church while making them applicable for the modern world. This service is filled with music, blended with time-tested hymns and praise. **PreK-1st Grade Sunday School is available during the 10:00am service.**

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# CIRCUIT RIDER

**SUNDAY MORNING, FEB 25<sup>TH</sup>, 8:30AM, PIONEER DAYS SOUND STAGE**

During the pioneer era, Pine Castle was too small a community to fill more than one church. So, they erected a "Union Church" and invited circuit riding preachers to visit on Sundays. You never knew just who would be filling the pulpit! In keeping with this time-honored tradition, Pioneer Days invite YOU to greet a circuit riding preacher as he arrives at Cypress Grove Park on horseback! The intrepid Father Kevin Bartle of St. Mary of the Angels Episcopal Church will arrive in Pioneer Era attire to lead a non-denominational service. Coffee and donut fellowship to follow. All are welcome to attend!

A promotional banner for an online store. It features a white shopping cart on the left and a computer mouse below it. The background is orange. The text "NEW" is in white on the orange background, and "ONLINE Store" is in white on a black rectangular background. Below the banner, the text "Click here to SHOP NOW!" is displayed in black.

**NEW**  
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## **SHOW YOUR LOVE FOR PINE CASTLE PIONEER DAYS!**

Limited edition collectible t-shirts featuring Carolyn Schultz's original artwork are available at the Information Booth during the festival weekend. After the festival, you can order this year's shirt and collectible magazine (along with prior years) at the PCPD online store at:

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# PIONEER DAYS

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Welcome to Pioneer Days at Cypress Grove Park. We hope that you enjoy this family friendly event and learn about the beautiful history of Pine Castle. There are many wonderful vendors and county community resources available.

Thank you for joining us and showing your support!

As always, my office and I are at your service. If you have any concerns or comments, please contact us.



Best Regards,

*Mayra Uribe*



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