



FRIENDS OF DESOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL, INC.

Rota DeSoto

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Who are Friends of DeSoto?

Friends of DeSoto National Memorial, Inc. was created for the purpose of supporting the National Park Service's DeSoto National Memorial. We are a private non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Florida. Our purpose and mission statement:

To initiate, promote, and support the educational, historical, interpretive, and scientific activities of the DeSoto National Memorial.

Please visit www.friendsofdesoto.org.

Membership

We are now enrolling new members at a donation level of \$25 per person annually. Join our Email List. We send out periodic notices and email newsletters with the latest information on activities at the Park or with the Friends group.

Members help the park in various ways, including raising money to help pay for Junior Ranger camp, concerts, special membership events, the annual luminary walk, improvements to the park, and much more. Joining the Friends organization allows one to help preserve a valuable natural and historical resource, and enjoy a special relationship with the park and community.

Thanks to park volunteers for donating more than 1,000 hours of their time in the past year.

Friends Seek Volunteers

Friends of DeSoto National Memorial Inc. is looking for volunteers from its membership to help with upcoming events and to help create some additional upcoming events for our members.

If interested in taking more of an active role and supporting the Friends and DeSoto National Memorial, please contact Lucy Lawliss (Friends president) at 540-903-2113.

Newsletter Returns

The Friends of De Soto National Memorial newsletter is back after a short hiatus for election of new officers.

The newsletter is published every two months.

Friends Group Hosts November Sunset Cruise



Autumn is a perfect time to enjoy a beautiful sunset over Sarasota Bay.

Join the Friends of DeSoto National Memorial Inc. on Nov. 5 for a sunset cruise of Sarasota Bay on Paradise Boat Tours. The boat leaves from the Historical Bridge Street Pier at 5:45 p.m. for a leisurely, informative 90-minute cruise. Boarding time is 5:30 p.m. Tickets are \$30 per person for paid Friends of DeSoto members and \$35 for

non-members.

Please visit www.friendsofdesoto.org (click on "Events") for information and to order tickets. For more information, please call Teresa Cunningham at 571-277-9209.

All proceeds benefit DeSoto National Memorial through the Friends of DeSoto, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

New Officers Take Reins of Friends

The Friends of DeSoto National Memorial elected new officers and welcomed new board members in August. Friends' officers are: **Lucy Lawliss, president; Carol Heckman, vice president; Susan Johnson, secretary; Teresa Cunningham, treasurer.** Members of the Friends' board are **Valerie Bell, Jamie Linnane, Joan Dowling, Elfi Starrett, and Jan Riggs.**

The new officers and board extends thanks to outgoing members **Margo Belaga, president; Mary Hawk, secretary; Scott Bassett, treasurer.**

SAVE the DATES

Dec. 17, 2016 • 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

DeSoto National Memorial Park's popular winter luminary event returns to help brighten the holidays. More information on this holiday tradition is forthcoming.

**Dec. 10, 2016 – April 2017
10 a.m. - 4 p.m. daily**

Camp Uzita provides visitors a unique look into Spanish and American Indian life in the 16th Century. Park staff offer talks and demonstrations on the lasting impact DeSoto would have on the history of America and its native people. Programs run at the top of every hour. A schedule will be posted at the camp.



Eerie sights await visitors during the park's annual Desoween event.

The DeSoto Paranormal Investigation Society cordially invites everyone to walk the trails of De Soto National Memorial 7:30-10 p.m. Oct. 29, because society members have rounded up 13 of Florida's most ghastly ghosts and dastardly villains.

Do not worry, all the ghosts are contained during Desoween VIII: The 13 Ghosts of Desoween. See the Wiccademous. Marvel at Ma Barker and her boys. Be shocked by Count

Von Kossel. Shy away from Robert the Doll. Evade conquistadors and pirates.

Everyone should be safe and sound ... unless the power goes out! Then it is everyone for themselves!! Desoween is recommended for ages 7 and up.

Park officials insist that no pets are allowed on the trail due to surprise situations and flashing lights and sounds.

Park Celebrates NPS Birthday with Special Ceremony



Ranger Dan Stephens and new American citizens helped celebrate the National Park Service's 100th birthday.

In Aug. 25 the National Park Service celebrated its 100th birthday. In parks all across the nation, including DeSoto National Memorial, special programs and events were held to commemorate this momentous event.

In conjunction with Department of

Emigration Naturalization Services, the local park hosted a naturalization ceremony in which 11 new American citizens took the oath of allegiance and completed a process that for many took more than 10 years.

The keynote address was given by Ranger Dan Stephens, who touched on themes of the National Parks mission of telling the American story through the eyes of immigrants.

His speech was concluded by the reading of the poem "American Colossus" by Emma Lazarus, which adorns the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. Each new American was then given a passport to the National Park's books and encouraged to forge their own stories and to find their parks.

After the naturalization ceremony the Haile Middle School choir recorded the National Anthem as well as the Children's Earth Anthem as part of a nationwide event. Videos of both ceremonies can be viewed on the park's Facebook page.

Friends Support Summer Junior Ranger Camps

The 2016 June and July Summer Junior Ranger camps at DeSoto National Memorial were a blast.

The free camps are made possible largely through the Friends of De Soto National Memorial Inc.

This year's camp theme was the Park Service Centennial. Junior Rangers learned over the course of four days what roles the NPS plays in conservation, preservation, historical and ecological protection, and the many different types of parks from Yellowstone, to the Icons, and the military parks.

At the end of the camp each child received a special edition centennial Junior Ranger shirt as a memento of the experience.



Junior Rangers find a lot to look at during an activity on the Manatee River.



Ranger Dan Stephens drills Junior Rangers in the finer points of marching.



Nota DeSoto



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Walk the Nature Trails

The Nature Trail winds along the shoreline and through several Florida ecosystems, including a mangrove forest like the one that DeSoto's men would have encountered when they landed. Trails include interpretive signage and waysides that tell the story of the DeSoto Expedition and the natural history of the area. Bicycling is allowed in the parking lot, but not on the sidewalks or trails.

Forty-five minute guided Trail Walks are offered by Park Rangers daily at 11 a.m., staff availability and weather permitting. Inquire at the Visitor Center. For tour availability, call 941-792-0458, ext. 105.

Picnic Area: A ten table picnic area is located adjacent to the parking lot and is available for visitors on a first come basis. Large groups and schools should call ahead to reserve seating. Grills and alcohol are not allowed within the park.

Bird Watching: The seasonal migration of birds brings many bird watchers to the park in the fall and early spring. The exact timing of migration is dependent upon weather. Come to our visitor center and inquire what new and rare birds have been sighted recently at DeSoto National Memorial.

Camping: DeSoto National Memorial has no facilities for camping. The park grounds are closed from sunset to sunrise.

Beach: Several small beaches are located within the park. The DeSoto Point Beach is located west of DeSoto Point and northwest of the Visitor Center. This beach is exposed to the current of the Manatee River and the waves of Tampa Bay. The Cove Beach located on the south side of DeSoto Point and is more popular because it is sheltered from most current and waves. No life guards are on duty. Swimmers use park beaches at their own risk.

Fishing: Fishing with rod and reel is allowed within the park with a valid Florida drivers license and valid State of Florida fishing license. Fishermen are not allowed to stand on rip rap or to clear brush from any area in order to gain access to the water. For questions of licensure and eligibility please visit <http://myfwc.com/license/>

Boating: The Cove is a popular temporary anchorage for small pleasure boats. Canoes and kayaks may be launched and carried to the water by hand. They can be launched from the park beaches provided that vegetation, terrain, and wildlife is not disturbed. Loud motors and the creation of excessive wave action is prohibited.

Dogs: Dogs are permitted within the park only when on a hand held leash. For all of our dog walkers and four legged friends make sure to come to our Dog Days at DeSoto event held annually in March.

Exhibits: The Visitor Center includes stunning displays of historic armor, weapons, and related period items. Helmets and armor are available to try on.

Theater: Our newly re-modeled theater and museum features a wide array of exhibits of Spanish and Native American artifacts. The new museum exhibits are designed to be rotating with new items and art that will be displayed periodically. Our theater shows our parks film Hernando DeSoto in America throughout the year. During season the film is shown on a time schedule to coincide with scheduled living history programs.

Bookstore: The bookstore features an excellent selection of books about the DeSoto Expedition and the Native American cultures encountered, as well as keepsakes to remember your visit by. Some items may be ordered on-line.

Other Amenities: Modern restrooms and a drinking fountain and a dog drinking fountain are available in the Visitor Center.

There are no entry fees for the park or the Visitor Center.

Contact Information

Mailing Address:

Friends of DeSoto National Memorial, Inc.
P.O. Box 14422, Bradenton, FL 34280-4422

Email: info@friendsofdesoto.org

Website: FriendsofDeSoto.org

Donations: How to Support Your National Parks

The National Park Service appreciates your support in the form of visitation and donations. Your donations directly contribute to the services and features you enjoy at DeSoto National Memorial. Donation money supports the maintenance of our nature trails and boardwalk, they fund many of our special events like our living history programs and holiday events, and they support many of our youth programs like Junior Ranger Summer Camp.

There are several ways you and your family can make a donation to DeSoto National Memorial or the National Park Service. These options include: on-line giving through our friends group and cooperating associations, Memorial gifts for living or deceased family or friends, Wedding party favors or gifts, holiday gift, and wills and bequests.

Your donation and gifts will be greatly appreciated and be given direct recognition if you and your family desires. You have the option to give anonymously as well. Recognition of your donation can be used to inspire others to give to DeSoto National Memorial or to the National Park Service.

You can make a gift to benefit our park either directly to the National Park Service or to our primary non-profit tax exempt support organization the Friends of DeSoto National Memorial. If you make the gift directly to the park, the entire gift will be used for the purpose you identify. No administrative costs are deducted from your gift to the National Park Service. Your check will be deposited in a government account and the full amount will be spent as you intended. Most parks have separate donation accounts for park-specific projects and programs for which you can earmark your gift. Government accounts are non-interest bearing and cannot generate interest between the time it is deposited and the time it is spent.

The advantage of making your gift check to the Friends of DeSoto National Memorial, our parks Friends Group, is that the amount will be deposited in an interest bearing account to assist park-prioritized requested projects and programs.

To make a donation, go to www.friendsofdesoto.org or mail your check to:
Friends of DeSoto National Memorial • PO Box 14422 • Bradenton, FL 34280-4422

Shop at **AmazonSmile**
and Amazon.com will
make a donation to
**Friends of DeSoto
National Memorial Inc.**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lucy Lawliss, President

Carol Heckman, Vice-President

Susan Johnson, Secretary

Teresa Cunningham, Treasurer

Members:

Valerie Bell

Jamie Linnane

Joan Dowling

Eli Starrett

Jan Riggs



DeSoto



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DeSoto National Memorial adds \$22 million annually to our local economy, according to a federal study of tourism dollars spent by visitors to our National Park. Help the Park maintain the programs that bring over 350,000 visitors to DeSoto each year. With federal funding cuts, the best way to maintain these programs is to join Friends of DeSoto National Memorial. Our Friends group raises money to support important programs such as concerts, educational programs, and maintenance of our Park's facilities.
Join today!

Shop at AmazonSmile and Amazon will make a donation to Friends of DeSoto National Memorial, Inc.

Become a Member

Yes, I would like to support my National Park by becoming a member. Memberships are tax deductible.

(Check one)

Individual Adult \$25.00 _____

Additional donation to help save the

Family \$40.00 _____

Gumbo Limbo trees is enclosed in the

Youth/Student \$10.00 _____

amount of \$ _____

Business \$75.00 _____

Senior Citizen 65 and over \$20.00 _____

Active Military \$20.00 _____

My check for \$ _____, (membership renewal plus an additional donation if desired) made out to "Friends of DeSoto NM" is enclosed. Please send membership materials to the name and address below:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

I would like to help! (Check all that apply)

_____ Membership Committee

_____ Publicity Committee

_____ Fundraising/Special Event Committee

Print out and mail to:

P.O. Box 14422, Bradenton, FL 34280-4422

(Renewals and donations can also be completed on our website using PayPal at www.paypal.com)