



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 20, 2013

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Grand Opening of the new Riley Museum Visitors Center promises to be a celebration not to be missed

TALLAHASSEE - The public is cordially invited to join in the activities taking place on **Tuesday, September 24, 2013** beginning at **9:00 A.M.** with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to celebrate the Grand Opening of the new Riley Museum Visitors Center, followed by tours of the newly constructed building, Cascades Park and the museum's Florida Highwaymen Exhibit at **10:00 A.M.** The celebration will continue with the unveiling of a new commemorative book and exhibit about the Smokey Hollow Community, followed by a Fish Fry from **11:00 A.M.** until **3:00 P.M.** All festivities are free and will be held on the grounds of the John G. Riley Center/Museum located at 419 East Jefferson Street (two blocks east of the Leon County Courthouse).

Tuesday, September 24, 2013 is a very special day for the John G. Riley Center & Museum. This day also marks the 156th Birthday of Mr. John Gilmore Riley, the community pioneer for which the museum is named, and will pay tribute to his legacy and leadership within the Tallahassee community through the expansion of the museum's community and public service programs during a full-week of festivities.

The Riley Museum is dedicated to discovering and recovering the history of the Smokey Hollow Community in Cascades Park and will highlight primary sources of oral histories, photographs and memories from families who once called Smokey Hollow home during Tuesday's event.

The new Visitors Center is a public use project that was made possible through the substantial funding support of the joint Leon County – City of Tallahassee Tourist Development Council (TDC); the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA); and a significant corporate investment by the Pittman Law Group. The Beatitude Foundation, Publix Charities, In Tents Events and Andrews Catering also played an integral role in providing support for this initiative.

The Riley Museum is open for tours from 10:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M. Monday through Thursday and 10:00 A.M. until 2:00 P.M. on Friday and Saturday. (Admission: \$2 Adults | \$1 Seniors | \$1 Children ages 12 and under). For more information on the schedule of events, please contact the Riley Museum at (850) 681-7881 or info@rileymuseum.org.

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HOUSE & MUSEUM

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Riley Visitors Center Officially Opens to the Public

WHAT: Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

WHEN: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 at 9:00 A.M.

WHO: John Riley Center and Museum & Local Elected/Appointed Officials

WHERE: The event will take place at the new Riley Visitor Center, 419 East Jefferson Street, Tallahassee, Florida.

HOW: To celebrate the Grand Opening of the new Riley Museum Visitors Center, followed by tours of the newly constructed building, Cascades Park and the museum's Florida Highwaymen Exhibit

WHY: The new Visitors Center is a public use project that was made possible through the substantial funding support of the joint Leon County – City of Tallahassee Tourist Development Council (TDC); the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA); and a significant corporate investment by the Pittman Law Group. The Beatitude Foundation, Publix Charities, In Tents Events and Andrews Catering also played an integral role in providing support for this event.

For more information regarding the event and/or our organization please send email inquiries to info@rileymuseum.org or call (850) 681-7881.

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Smokey Hollow Reunion, Unveiling of Commemorative Book and Guided Tours of Cascades Park

WHAT: Smokey Hollow Reunion, Fish Fry and unveiling of the new commemorative book and exhibit detailing the history of the Smokey Hollow community (a thriving 20th Century community of over eighty families, their churches and businesses that were destroyed and displaced by urban renewal in the 1960s).

WHEN: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 from 11:00 A.M. until 3:00 P.M.

WHO: John Riley Center/Museum, Blueprint 2000, Smokey Hollow Community Legacy Initiative

WHERE: The event will take place at the new Riley Visitor Center, 419 East Jefferson Street, Tallahassee, Florida.

HOW: The highlight of the event, and purpose of the project, is to capture the history of the community, later declared a historic district, before it dims completely from private and public memory. The exhibit will feature photographs of homes, businesses and families that once occupied the community and a chronology of events that led to its demise.

WHY: This creative place-making initiative, known as “The Smokey Hollow Legacy Project”, is a collaboration of community and government, and was the brainchild of the John G. Riley Center/Museum. For the past three years, former residents of Smokey Hollow, and other interested individuals with an affinity for historic and cultural preservation, have collaborated to make this project a success. The Tallahassee and Leon County Council on Culture and the Arts (COCA) funded the exhibit and book. Blueprint 2000 is funding the Cascades Park/Smokey Hollow Village and Walking Trails.

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Riley Museum Premieres the NEH Created Equal Film Series

WHAT: The NEH *Created Equal* project uses the power of documentary films to encourage public conversations about the changing meanings of freedom and equality in America. The *Created Equal* film set includes a collection of four documentaries: *The Abolitionists*, *Slavery by Another Name*, *Freedom Riders*, and *The Loving Story*.

WHEN: Wednesday, September 25, 2013 from 3:00 P.M. until 5:00 P.M.

WHO: Featured panelist include: Dr. Anthony Dixon (*Historian/Archivist, John G. Riley Museum & Professor of History at Florida A&M University*), Professor Mary Ziegler (*Assistant Professor of Law, Florida State University College of Law*) and Dr. Patrick Mason (*Professor of Economics & Director of the African American Studies Program, Florida State University*).

WHERE: The event will take place at the new Riley Visitor Center, 419 East Jefferson Street, Tallahassee, Florida.

HOW: The John G. Riley Museum is one of only 473 institutions across the country awarded a set of four films chronicling the history of the civil rights movement. The powerful documentaries, *The Abolitionists*, *Slavery by Another Name*, *Freedom Riders*, and *The Loving Story*, include dramatic scenes of incidents in the 150-year effort to achieve equal rights for all. Clips from all four films will be previewed during this feature film presentation to introduce the *Created Equal* series to the local community. We are pleased to receive a grant from NEH to provide programming around these meaningful films.

WHY: *Created Equal: America's Civil Rights Struggle* is a national film project by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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4th Annual Regional L3X “Legacy Tour” Event

WHAT: 4TH ANNUAL REGIONAL L3X LEGACY TOUR (*Cost: \$20.00/per person*)

WHEN: Thursday, September 26, 2013 from 9:00 A.M. until 2:00 P.M.

WHO: John G. Riley Museum in partnership with the Tallahassee Senior Center’s Life-Long-Learning Extravaganza (“L3X”)

WHERE: The event will take place at the new Riley Visitor Center, 419 East Jefferson Street, Tallahassee, Florida.

HOW: The Legacy Tour will kick-off with an overview of the Historic Smokey Hollow Community that will be commemorated in the new Cascades Park. Blue Print 2000 and Tallahassee Parks and Recreation staff will then provide a guided walking tour of Cascades Park to assist participants in learning about past history and future plans for this well designed urban park. Following the walking tour, participants will return to the new Riley Visitors Center for a “A Taste of Home” luncheon, featuring an array of delicious southern and regional fare, by Fit -to -Eat Catering (owned by Lou Armesto). Eluster Richardson (Artist in Resident for the Museum) will lead an intimate discussion during lunch about the inspiration for his artwork, which pays tribute to the legacies of many of Tallahassee’s unsung heroes and heroines. The day will culminate with a special guided tour of the Highwaymen Exhibit display in the historic Riley House Museum, provided by Curator, Eluster Richardson.

For more information on this year’s L3X event or to REGISTER FOR THE TOUR visit www.talqov.com or call (850) 891-4033.

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New Riley Museum exhibit recognizes those who 'Led the Way' in the integration of Leon County Public Schools

WHAT: *They Led the Way* is a riveting exhibit detailing the intimate portraits and oral histories of the first 8 students to integrate the Leon County public school system. This exhibit is presented in partnership with Kent State University's School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

WHEN: Friday, September 27, 2013 from 5:30 P.M. until 7:30 P.M.

WHO: The exhibit was created by Ann Beasley Schierhorn, a professor of Journalism and Mass Communication at Kent State University who attended Leon High in 1963 and graduated from Florida High School in 1968. *They Led the Way* features the photography of David LaBelle, nationally known photojournalist, who also teaches at Kent State University.

WHERE: The exhibit opening reception will be held at the new Riley Visitor Center, 419 East Jefferson Street, Tallahassee, Florida.

HOW: In September 1963, four African American students walked through the doors of formerly all-white Leon County public schools for the first time. It marked the official end of segregated schools in Tallahassee 100 years after the Emancipation Proclamation. This exhibit recognizes these students' perseverance and that of their contemporaries who integrated the Catholic school, the Florida State University high school and the new Rickards High School. The students went on to become lawyers, teachers, a businessmen and a doctor.

WHY: The students and their parents wanted the best education they could get to open more doors for college, and they wanted to advance the cause of civil rights. This exhibit recognizes these students' perseverance and that of their contemporaries who integrated the Catholic school, the Florida State University high school and the new Rickards High School. The students went on to become lawyers, teachers, a businessmen and a doctor.

For more information regarding the event and/or our organization please send email inquiries to info@rileymuseum.org or call (850) 681-7881.

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TALLAHASSEE - *They Led the Way* is a riveting exhibit detailing the intimate portraits and oral histories of the first 8 students to integrate the Leon County public school system. This exhibit is presented in partnership with Kent State University's School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

The exhibit, "They Led the Way," was created by Ann Beasley Schierhorn, a professor of Journalism and Mass Communication at Kent State University who attended Leon High and graduated from Florida High School in 1968. It features the photography of David LaBelle, nationally known photojournalist who also teaches at Kent State.

In September 1963, four African American students walked through the doors of formerly all-white Leon County public schools in Tallahassee for the first time. It marked the official end of segregated schools 100 years after the Emancipation Proclamation.

The students at Leon High School were taunted with racist remarks by classmates who wanted to provoke a fight. They were lonely because most of their other classmates were silent. They faced anger from some of their friends who questioned their decision to transfer from black schools. The lone elementary school student was more easily accepted by first-grade classmates.

The students and their parents wanted the best education they could get to open more doors for college, and they wanted to advance the cause of civil rights. This exhibit recognizes these students' perseverance and that of their contemporaries who integrated the Catholic school, the Florida State University high school and the new Rickards High School. The students went on to become lawyers, teachers, a businessmen and a doctor.

Collaboration with the Riley House Museum to help identify subjects and provide source information was critical to the success of the project.

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Riley Museum host private screening of *'The Butler'* in honor of Tallahassee's own Civil Rights Foot Soldiers

WHAT: Private screening of Lee Daniels' *The Butler* (cost: \$15.00/per person) Tickets can be purchased on the Riley Museum website: www.rileymuseum.org or by calling (850) 681-7881.

WHEN: Saturday, September 28, 2013

MOVIE SCREENING from 2:00 until 4:00 P.M.

POST-MOVIE RECEPTION from 5:00 P.M. until 6:30 P.M.

WHO: This film tells the story of a White House Butler who served eight American Presidents over three decades. The film traces the dramatic changes that swept American society from the civil rights movement to present day and will feature living legends who worked tirelessly to bring about civil justice through Tallahassee's local civil rights movement.

WHERE: Film Showing at AMC Theaters – Tallahassee Mall 20. Followed by a reception at the new Riley Visitor Center, 419 East Jefferson Street, Tallahassee, Florida.

HOW: In September 1963, four African American students walked through the doors of formerly all-white Leon County public schools for the first time. It marked the official end of segregated schools in Tallahassee 100 years after the Emancipation Proclamation. This exhibit recognizes these students' perseverance and that of their contemporaries who integrated the Catholic school, the Florida State University high school and the new Rickards High School. The students went on to become lawyers, teachers, a businessmen and a doctor.

WHY: Guests are invited to take part in the private reception following the movie viewing, held in honor of Tallahassee's own Civil Rights Foot Soldiers who took part in Tallahassee's 1956 bus boycott and lunch counter sit-ins during the 1960s. More than 50 civil rights activists will be honored on Monday, September 30th at 6 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers and permanently inscribed on an artistic commemorative sidewalk in Downtown Tallahassee.

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Riley Museum Founder, Mrs. Althemese Barnes, will join with the City of Tallahassee to unveil the Civil Rights Heritage Sidewalk, a project documenting the history of the Civil Rights Movement in Tallahassee/Leon County.

The commemorative side-walk is designed to honor the local *Foot Soldiers* that participated in the Tallahassee bus boycott and student sit-ins. The 20 large platforms, with the names of more than 50 local *Foot Soldiers* from the movement will be installed in the sidewalk along the corner of Monroe and East Jefferson Street.

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