



Nota DeSoto

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 3



JUNE/JULY 2016

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 Margo Belaga (Friends president) at 941-704-6825.

LBK Garden Club Makes Mark at Park

Friends of DeSoto National Memorial Inc. extends a "thank you" to the Longboat Key Garden Club for its \$1,000 grant. DeSoto National Memorial used the money to include plant descriptions on the new trail map for the park.

Friends, Volunteers Join Park Staff in Annual Parade

By Richard Donnelly, Student Trainee – Park Guide

With more than 150 crew entries, the 2016 DeSoto Grand Parade spectacle in late April was a cacophony of sound, sight and variety.

DeSoto National Memorial marched in the parade, with staff and volunteers helping the park put its best foot forward. DeSoto's centerpiece, the Ana Menendez float, was manned by members of the Friends of DeSoto and volunteers. They responded to cheering and waving spectators, who in turn, were rewarded with coveted beads and stickers.

This year's annual pageant featured staff in uniform, and a wide variety of volunteers in and out of armor and period clothing. As always, the Friends of DeSoto National Memorial played a significant role. The Friends are valued partners who help support the National Park Service's memorial in Bradenton.

The occasion proceeded seamlessly and amidst the flag waving and bead throwing, the DeSoto National Memorial continued its celebration of the National Park Service's Centennial. The National Park Service marks its 100th birthday in August.



Friends of DeSoto vice president Carol Heckman had a seat on the float for the grand parade.

The park is in Bradenton, minutes from downtown and nearby to Sarasota, St. Petersburg and Tampa. The National Memorial invites the public to find their park and discover national parks and programs, literally in their own back yard.



De Soto National Memorial staff, volunteers and Friends members gave the park a strong presence at the annual grand parade.

SAVE ^{the} DATES

June 21-24 and July 26-29 • 9 a.m.-1 p.m. daily

At Junior Ranger Summer Camp youngsters will learn about Florida's environment, conservation, archaeology, and this year they will explore the importance of America's National Parks and celebrate the Centennial. The Friends of DeSoto National Memorial donate money to pay for activities for the summer programs and T-shirts that Junior Rangers will receive as a reward for completing the camp. For more information on the Friends, please visit www.friendsofdesoto.org.

DeSoto Lands in Florida – Again!

The annual re-enactment of DeSoto's landing in Florida took place on April 16.

The weather was beautiful as Hernando de Soto (Tim Burke) came ashore and claimed Florida in the name of Spain and King Charles.

Both landing events drew great crowds and were covered by local news media. Park leaders send a special thanks to the "excellent staff and volunteers."



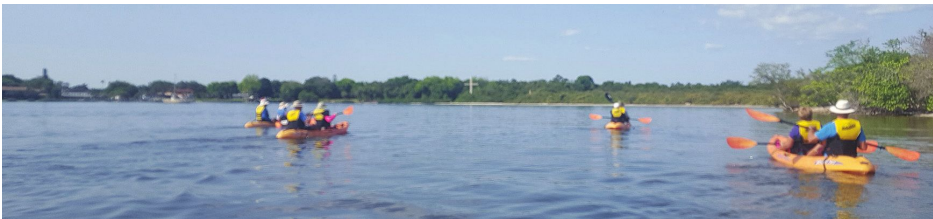
Hernando de Soto and his men move inland after landing.

Regional Director Visits DeSoto

Southeast regional director Stan Austin visited DeSoto National Memorial on May 24 and expressed his pleasure with the appearance and quality of services the park offers.

He then addressed the audience of staff, volunteers and members of the Friends Group. Director Austin spoke on matters relating to staffing, budget, job satisfaction, and the value of every employee, volunteer, and the Friends organization.

Park's Kayak Tours Draw a Crowd



The summer kayak program at DeSoto National Memorial gives visitors a chance to get out on the water.

DeSoto National Memorial's popular kayak season is off to a roaring start with spots already filled up into mid-August. The free tour has always been a huge hit with visitors, with many experiencing their first time on a kayak. Special advance

tours will begin once a month starting in July. Call 941-792-0458, ext. 107, ask for Ranger Dan to schedule a special Friends of DeSoto tour. Please sign up with more than five, but fewer than 10 people, so invite your friends!



Regional director Stan Austin shares his insights and impressions during his visit to the park.

Tabby House Ruins Investigated



Archaeologists from various organizations look for answers at the park's tabby house.

From May 23-28, archaeologists from the Southeast Archaeological Center (SEAC), Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN), New College and the University of South Florida conducted an archaeological investigation of the tabby house ruins at the park.

Lead archaeologist Margo Schwadron hopes to find answers to the questions of who built the tabby house, who lived there, and when. They are also conducting studies on how global climate change could affect the site in the coming decades.

Many artifacts were uncovered, from broken pieces of china and ceramics to musket balls and burnt timbers. The artifacts were taken back to SEAC's headquarters for cleaning and archiving. The archaeologists will return in the winter to continue their investigation.



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FRIENDS OF DESOTO
NATIONAL MEMORIAL, INC.

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

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Valerie Bell
Joan Dowling
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DeSoto National Memorial adds \$22 million annually to our local economy, according to a federal study of tourism dollars spend 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 _____

Family \$40.00 _____

Youth/Student \$10.00 _____

Business \$75.00 _____

Senior Citizen 65 and over \$20.00 _____

Active Military \$20.00 _____

Additional donation to help save the Gumbo Limbo trees is enclosed in the amount of \$ _____

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)