

The Almanac



F L O R I D A ' S P A S T A N D F U T U R E

Special points of interest:

- **PROFILE OF CHARLES H. BRONSON**
- **MESSAGE FROM DOYLE CONNER**
- **STRAWN BUILDINGS MAKE THE MOVE**
- **1770s MILL SITE TO BE DONATED TO THE MUSEUM**

CHARLES H. BRONSON

Charles H. "Charlie" Bronson currently serves as Florida's 10th Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services. He was appointed to the position by Governor Jeb Bush during 2001 and elected to a four year term during 2002 with over 57% of the vote to become the first Republican elected to that office. Born into a Kissimmee based ranching family in 1949, Bronson is a 5th generation Floridian and comes from a family with a long agricultural tradition. His father, "Shang" Bronson, was one family member responsible for the preservation of the famous 'Bronson' line of Florida Cracker horses. Before becoming Florida's Agriculture Commissioner, Bronson taught vocational agriculture and was involved in the fertilizer, chemical, feed and nutrition industries. He also served as a sworn law enforcement officer in Dade and Brevard Counties while staying actively involved in the family's cattle business. From 1994-2001, he was a Florida State Senator serving as Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee and Agriculture Committee. Commissioner Bronson manages the largest state Department of Agriculture in the country with more than 3700 employees. Bronson's priorities include oversight of the state's vast agriculture industry and helping to promote its products, safeguarding the state's food supply, protecting consumers from unfair and deceptive trade practices, controlling plant and animal diseases and the management of nearly one million acres of state forests. Family man, rancher, lawmaker, and leader, Charlie Bronson is proud of his heritage, proud to be a farmer and proud to support the Florida Agricultural Museum.



Charles H. Bronson, Commissioner

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A MESSAGE FROM FORMER COMMISSIONER DOYLE CONNER

I had the honor and privilege to serve as Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture for thirty years. During that time, I realized that Florida's agricultural history was in danger of being lost forever. I created the Florida Agricultural Museum so that we could save the stories and artifacts of our state's rural working past and present. Today, in the face of urban development, rural working lands are rapidly disappearing. I have benefited from your help in the past and I am asking for your help again by joining the museum membership at a level that is comfortable for you. The museum will open to the public this year and needs your financial support. **BECOME A 'FARMHAND' AND HELP SAVE OUR HERITAGE.**

EQUINE GENOME PROJECT

The Florida Agricultural Museum has been invited to participate in a research project focused on endangered horse breeds. Equus Survival Trust & a research team from the Texas A&M Veterinary College have partnered to analyze the equine genome. The project researches the bloodlines and fertility of

stallions. The DNA study will also focus on tracing male lineages in various rare breeds of horses, investigate the relationships between different breeds as indicated through genetic markers, and the discovery of male specific genetic factors both common and diverse between different equids (horse, zebra,

donkey, etc). The museum is cooperating in the study by providing blood samples from our stallion 'Stormy'. He was recommended by James Levy as a superior example of an Ayers line Florida Cracker horse and a proven sire having produced thirty foals so far (with one on the way).



Cracker Stallion 'Stormy'

"As a kid, I worked for the Strawns in the summers picking fruit and chasing mules", said Jack Lastinger, 79, long time resident of DeLeon Springs.

STRAWN BUILDINGS MAKE THEIR MOVE

Theodore Strawn was born in Illinois in 1870.



He came to Florida in the early 1880s to visit

and stayed to establish a large agricultural operation, primarily citrus, based in DeLeon Springs. Two worker's cottages and a granary dating to the early 20th century have made the 50 mile move to the Florida Agricultural Museum. Two more buildings, a mule barn

and a wagon barn, are scheduled to be moved in mid-May. Grant funds for the move were provided by the State of Florida. The museum has also been awarded a \$350K grant from the State Division of Historical Resources to stabilize and restore the buildings.

VOLUNTEERS RESTORING A VINTAGE TRACTOR

Three of our hardworking volunteers, Roy Amy, Bernie Weis, and Jeff Mullinax are hard at work at the museum. Their projects include mowing, fencing, construction, and mechanical maintenance. Roy's

latest project is the restoration of a 1940s John Deere tractor. He has painted all the exterior parts and is now working on the main body of the tractor. Our volunteers are preparing to build horse stalls and an equipment shed

for the storage of antique tractors and tools as well as our modern equipment. The team is also working to stabilize the Strawn buildings; protecting them until our restoration grant funds are available.



Bernie and Roy hard at work on waterline repair

CONSERVATION OF RURAL WORKING LANDS A CONCERN

The preservation of Florida's working farm lands is strongly supported by the museum in general and through the Century Pioneer Family Farm program. To help Floridian's address land conservation we have put together some useful resources. Conservation land trusts are non-profit organizations designed to help family farmers, landowners and communities preserve natural and agricultural lands. There are

more than 1300 and trusts in America. The national umbrella organization is the Land Trust Alliance who can be contacted at www.lta.org. The Conservation Trust for Florida (CTF) addresses the issue of the conversion of rural working lands to urban uses and is primarily an educational project to inform landowners about land conservation options with the goal of protecting land with conservation

easements. You can contact them at 352-466-1178 or www.conserveflorida.org. The Tampa Bay Conservancy (TBC) is an organization dedicated to working with families to preserve their lands from development. TBC is committed to providing landowners information regarding land preservation programs and solutions where appropriate. Contact them at 813-924-8252.

1770s SAWMILL SITE TO BE DONATED TO MUSEUM

The Florida Agricultural Museum will receive an unusual donation this year. The Hewitt sawmill is an 18th century British period site located on the other side of US 1 from the museum property. The Palm Coast Park Community Development District is donating the 10 acres site along

with funds to construct a trail system, parking lot, and boardwalk over the remains of the mill dam with appropriate interpretive signs. The mill was built by an Englishman named John Hewitt more than two hundred thirty years ago and provided lumber to meet a building boom in British

period St. Augustine. Today, the mill site is still visible in the remains of an earth dam across Hewitt's Creek. A future museum goal is the reconstruction of the 18th century sawmill.



Cracker mare and colt



THANKS FOR AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION SUPPORT

We would like to thank the following agricultural associations for their support: the Florida Nursery Growers & Landscape Associates, the Florida International Agricultural Trade Council, the Florida Farm Bureau Federation, Southeast Milk, Inc., Dairy Farmers, Inc., and the

Dade County Farm Bureau. We also want to thank corporate sponsors Alico, Inc., Arapaho Groves, Cura Sod Corporation, A. Duda & Sons, Florida Favorite Fertilizer, Blue Goose Growers, Palm River Dairy, Leprechaun Racing Management, Roper Brothers Foundation,

Florida Community Bank, S.E. Cline Construction, the Community Foundation, Florida Trail Blazers, Ben Hill Griffin, Inc., & the Alfred I. DuPont Foundation. A special thank you to ROGER C. HATTON of Pahokee for joining the museum at the donor level.



PLEASE JOIN US
TODAY



**FLORIDA'S PAST
AND FUTURE**

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PLEASE SEND US YOUR EMAIL
ADDRESS SO THAT WE CAN BETTER
COMMUNICATE WITH YOU. YOUR
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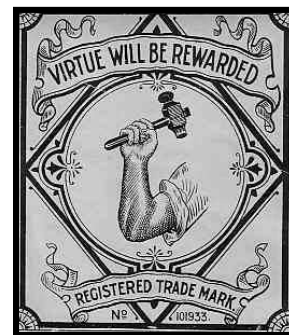
*TELLING THE STORY OF
FLORIDA AGRICULTURE*

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**JOIN THE FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL
MUSEUM – BECOME A FARMHAND**

MEMBERSHIP

<u>Annual</u>		<u>Life</u>	
Individual	\$20	Donor	\$5000
Family	\$35	Sponsor	\$10,000
Contributor	\$125	Patron	\$25,000
Patron	\$500	Benefactor	\$50,000
Benefactor	\$1000	Founder	\$100,000



PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM

1850 PRINCESS PLACE ROAD

PALM COAST, FLORIDA 32137

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

**MEMBERSHIPS RENEW EACH JANUARY, IF
YOU HAVE NOT YET RENEWED PLEASE DO SO
TODAY. WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT.**