



HERE'S THE
DIRT
News from the Manatee County
Agricultural Museum, Inc.

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**A NOTE FROM OUR
BOARD PRESIDENT**

Welcome to our first newsletter for the Manatee County Agricultural Museum. We are so glad you are interested in learning more about what goes on at the Museum. Please consider supporting the Ag Museum by volunteering, becoming a member, or making a donation. All of these help us to continue to provide exceptional programs and events for all ages. Drop by and see what is new (or old in our case!) and tell your friends about the great time you had. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Robin Bryant, President

KIDS & AGRICULTURE

Check out these websites & enjoy them with your children:

www.sites.ext.vt.edu/virtualfarm/main.html

www.moomilk.com/

http://entomology.ifas.ufl.edu/bug_club/



Highlights of 2011

What a terrific year 2011 turned out to be! With almost 16,000 visitors, the Ag Museum was hopping for most of the year. Our school program was as busy as ever with Pre-K through 5th grade on our grounds at least two days a week to learn about why agriculture is important to their lives. They learn many different things during their field trip, but they are ALWAYS surprised to learn that cows have horns too!

The extremely popular Florida Highwaymen Exhibit made June, July, and August the busiest summer the museum has ever had since opening in 2002. We had steady walk-in traffic and conducted many a tour throughout the museum and historical park. It was fun to meet so many new and in-

teresting visitors who were intrigued by the artwork. Through the generosity of Don & Janey Ball of Clearwater and Highwaymen Artist Robert L. Lewis, we were even able to raise some funds through sales commissions and a painting raffle to help support the cost of the exhibit.

And the 1200 visitors we had during the Meet & Greet Highwaymen Art Show & Sale certainly created lots of excitement and energy around the place!

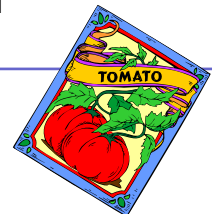
Pongo, Palmetto High School's Holstein Goodwill Ambassador had his 3rd birthday celebration with us. Next year Pongo's birthday party will be held up at his home at Palmetto High



A View of the Green Bridge by Robert L. Lewis,
Highwaymen Artist

where visitors can tour the land lab and learn what our young people are learning about in their Ag classes...our future farmers!

We welcome the opportunity to share our fine museum with new folks. 290 people visited us with a group of their friends in 2011. Schedule a tour for your social club or church group. You'll be glad you did!



SEE WHAT'S SPROUTING...

Heritage Day on March 10, 2012 marks the 10th Anniversary of the Ag Museum. Watch your inbox/mailbox for news of special happenings to help us celebrate!

We have a vintage Carnival Glass exhibit on display now through March 15th, courtesy of the Tampa Bay Car-

nival Glass Club. A standing room only crowd has already enjoyed a presentation on the glass. Two more are scheduled for March 3rd at 10 am and 1:30 pm in the Carnegie Library. Reservations are needed.

The Florida Highwaymen are returning! Summer 2012 will

welcome a brand new exhibit and another Art Show & Sale. Keep your eyes and ears peeled for dates in upcoming issues.

Model trains will be the focus of another Summer Social in August. Our community can't seem to get enough of trains!

