



4/01/2022 Edition #1a

## The Friends of Historic Southeast Colorado

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Email us at:

Friendsofhistoricsoutheastcolorado  
@outlook.com and like us on [facebook](#)

Pres. Sue Dreiling, VP Donna Abert, Sec/Treas.  
Jeanette Myers, Director Dustin Bryan

### The Friends of Historic Southeast Colorado

is organized as a public benefit corporation exclusively for charitable & educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and, more specifically, to discover, collect, restore, and preserve materials of information, publications, accounts, and illustrations about Southeast Colorado, and then, develop, promote, and teach said history to engage the community. A repository for historic data.

In the first week of February 2022, **The Friends of The Rocky Ford Historical Museum** have recently transformed their Corporation and service area. The Friends had officially changed their name with the Colorado Secretary of State to **Friends of Historic Southeast Colorado** as our services are no longer needed at the Museum. There isn't a non-profit

Friends of the Museum anymore. New Articles and Bylaws have been created. The change with the IRS has been updated as well, but that will take a bit longer..... It's tax time! This is a bonus to all because we can now serve all of Southeast Colorado with our newly revised volunteer program and historic projects. We are excited to see where our new venture will take us. So come join us!

The "Little" White Schoolhouse was built in 1877, to accommodate 15-20 students. It was the first schoolhouse in the township of Rocky Ford, and was located where the Otero County Office and Nava Manor are located now, 10<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut streets. The 15 X 15 foot original adobe building was weather-boarded and painted white. Ten years later, Rocky Ford held it's first election in the building on August 6, 1887. The Little White Schoolhouse was the place of all important meetings at the time, whether it was held as a voting booth, a city ordinance meeting, or a meeting place for churches at that time. While the Sugar Factory was being built, the town grew very fast and the student population doubled and tripled in size monthly. In 1896 the school was then enlarged to hold more students. Finally, when a bigger school was built to replace this building (known as the First Liberty School) this school was then sold and moved to its current location in 1898.



Valley-Wide  
Health Systems, Inc.  
*Your Health. Our Priority!*

One year ago, The Friends asked Angela Ayala from Norm Murphy & Associates, who had the little White Schoolhouse listed for sale, about asking the owners to donate the building to us so we can restore it. The next day, we were told by Angela that Valley Wide Health Systems had agreed about the donation; one month later, we closed on the property.

Now, the Friends plan on restoring the 1877, historic Little White Schoolhouse to its original condition but cannot start until we can get funding. Our share of a Colorado Historical Society grant would be about 25%. We can start sooner if we could get more volunteers and of course, money! We are a 501(c)(3) so you could get a deduction on your taxes if you chose to donate.

Our volunteers will be working from home until our new office in the schoolhouse has some restoration before working in there.

Our plan is to also have classes in the schoolhouse like quilting, painting, genealogy, etc. We plan on helping Southeast Colorado in raising funds for specific historic community projects like restoring the schoolhouse, ghost signs, historic cemeteries, store fronts, etc.

## Membership Application

The Friends of Historic Southeast Colorado is always seeking new members. Below are the fee requirements.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Contact # \_\_\_\_\_

Please check how you want your next newsletter, by mail or email. Email is suggested due to cost of mailing or you can let us know in an email or call. Email us for questions.

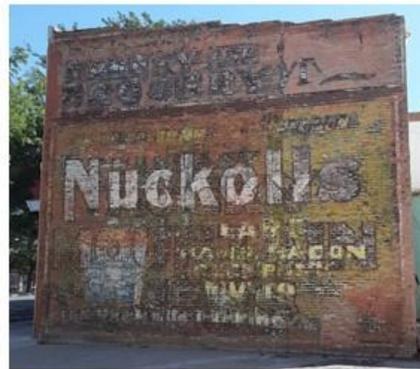
Annual Membership \$25 Individuals

Annual Membership \$50 Businesses

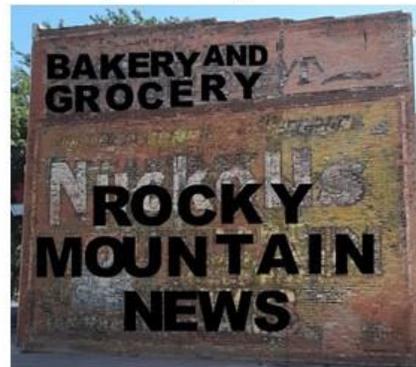
One time donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_  
state which project you are donating to

I want to volunteer \_\_\_\_\_



A member in Rocky Ford had asked the Friends if we could help in restoring the "ghost signs" on North Main Street. Above is the actual, below is the translation of the old historic sign. There are two signs there painted on top of each other. Members will have their option of which project they donate to, like the ghost signs, restoring the school, the cemetery, etc.



### Walking Tours of Downtown Rocky Ford

The idea of Walking Tours of Downtown Rocky Ford occurred to the Friends before the pandemic. On Easter Sunday, our tour guide, Emmett Davis, will be practicing the information-filled, historic tours. Comfortable shoes are a must!

Tours sometimes start at Christine's Restaurant, wandering south and east through Rocky Ford's picturesque neighborhoods, across Main Street to the museum park, all the way to the Fairgrounds and historic adobe stables.

All this area was once a shallow sea with dinosaurs leaving their footprints in the shore's mud. We will discuss the pre-Columbian Apishapa Phase (a 1000 - 1400 BCE culture), the Apache, the Spanish, the Comanche and Kiowa, the Cheyenne and Arapahoe, the French Louisiana, Bents Fort, Santa Fe Trail, and the Atchison Topeka Santa Fe Railway. We will discuss George Washington Swink, his Illinois roots and migration to what becomes Rocky Ford with its future cattle-raising, experiments with irrigation and horticulture and honeybees, the sugar beets and our former factory, the Volga Germans, the Japanese, and Latinx, especially from northern New Mexico. We will cover Odd Fellows, seeds, Woman's Club, Carnegie Library, and Watermelon Day, plus much else in between.

We are looking for board members, volunteers, volunteer contractors like carpenters, painters, electricians, gas installers, tech savvy individuals, etc. to join our team; we are tax deductible. Our meetings are held on the last Thursday of every month at 5pm, unless otherwise amended. Call Jeanette Myers 719-468-9126 for more information.



The Denver Foundation

The Friends were recently awarded a grant from The Denver Foundation for \$2,531 for Museum quality storage in our new building. We can now receive historic Southeast Colorado data, scan it into our repository system, store it safely in a proper museum-quality way and then share it with the public for research. We also can give material scanned back to the owners if desired.

**Remember us prior to throwing away those old newspapers, scrap books, flyers, signs, documents, pictures of Southeast Colorado, awards, phone books, etc. When you are digging through it thinking "what am I going to do with all of it?" Email or call us!**



The Schoolhouse was gutted of chalkboards, child desks, etc. in the late 1800s to use in other schools in Rocky Ford. So we are looking to replace them. Items needed are four rows of school desks seating 20 students. Let us know what you have.