



DENHAM SPRINGS Main Street Historic Preservation Volunteers

NEWS RELEASE

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(short version)

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LA Endowment of the Humanities Contact – Christopher Robert – 504-620-2639, robert@leh.org

Smithsonian Contact: Jennifer Schommer – 202-633-3121, schommerj@si.edu

Smithsonian traveling exhibition coming to Denham Springs ***Residents invited to share stories of their flood experiences, volunteer as docents***

The local Denham Springs Main Street volunteer organization which provides exhibits for the museum in Denham Springs' Old City Hall is very happy to announce that they are one of only a few museums in Louisiana chosen as a site for the Smithsonian's traveling exhibit, "Water/Ways."

The "Water/Ways" exhibit will be at Old City Hall, 115 Mattie Street, Denham Springs, LA, August 11-September 22, 2018, in cooperation with the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities. It explores the endless motion of the water cycle and water's effect on landscape and people's settlement, migration, culture and spirituality. It also looks at how political and economic factors have long affected control of water resources and how human creativity provides new ways of protecting such resources, and renews respect for the natural environment.

The Denham Springs Main Street volunteers are adding a local aspect to the exhibit by including information about the area's devastating flood of August 2016. The group is asking people in Livingston Parish to submit their written flood stories, photographs, art and poems, as well as artifacts which reflect their personal experiences with the flood. A form with instructions on how someone can share their flood experience is on the website www.denhamspringsmainstreet.org, and at Old City Hall, 115 Mattie St., Denham Springs. Items must be received by July 15, 2018.

The group is also inviting residents ages 16 and older to participate in the event by volunteering to be a docent (host/guide). Docents will receive training and will be asked to serve one or more shifts of 10am-1:30pm or 1:30-5pm on any of the dates the exhibit is in Denham Springs. Scouts, clubs, and civic organization are encouraged to volunteer as a service project; friends or family may volunteer together. Anyone interested in the docent program should call Patricia Genre, Project Director and Chairperson of Denham Springs Main Street, 225-933-2867, or email her at ppgenre@cox.net.

"Water is an important part of everyone's lives, and we are excited to explore what it means to people in our own community," said Genre, "We want to initiate conversations about water, and we have developed local exhibitions and public programs to complement the Smithsonian exhibition."

Mark your calendar for these free local events which will complement the exhibit:

- Aug. 11 – “Meet and Greet” with first responders, shelter workers, National Guard, Cajun Navy, Cajun Army, and all those who stepped up to rescue, house, feed, and comfort those flooded in the Great Flood of 2016. 10AM - 3PM, Old City Hall, Denham Springs.
- Aug. 18 – “Boat Building” – A presentation by Jules Lambert, a local expert on building pirogues and other primitive sinker-cypress boats common to south Louisiana. 11AM - 1PM, Old City Hall, Denham Springs.
- Aug. 23 – “Station 15” – A Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities film and public discussion about the Great Flood of 2016. 7PM - 8:30PM, Livingston Parish Library, Denham Springs/Walker branch.
- Aug. 30 – “Diversions” – A Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities film and presentation by Dr. Craig Colten, LSU and Dietmar Rietschier, Amite River Basin Commission. River Control issues and solutions will be discussed along with Q & A from the audience. 7PM - 8:30 PM, Livingston Parish Library, Denham Springs/Walker branch.
- Sept. 1 - Adin Putnam, author of “Rising Above – The Great Flood of 2016,” will give a presentation and discussion of his book. 1PM - 3PM, Livingston Parish Library, Denham Springs/Walker branch.

Denham Springs Main Street previously hosted the Smithsonian “Journey Stories” exhibit in fall 2011, Main Street helped renovate Denham Springs’ Old City Hall in 1990-1998, established its museum and has provided its rotating exhibits for 20 years. Their volunteers also spearheaded the establishment of Sanctuary Park, Driggers Park, Centerville Park and other improvements in the historic downtown Antiques Village. They are part of the state and national Main Street programs.

For more information about the local exhibit, activities, sharing flood stories and docent opportunities, see www.denhamspringsmainstreet.org, call Old City Hall at 225-667-7512, email oldcityhall@cityofdenhamsprings.com or visit Old City Hall at 115 Mattie St., Denham Springs, LA 70726. The public can participate in the conversation on social media at #thinkWater.

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