

## FALL GENERAL MEETING

7:30 P.M., Thursday, November 2, 2017

Black Jack Fire Protection District – 5675 North Highway 67

### PROGRAM

Presentation by AARP on Fraud and Identity Theft  
Nan Lowery Speaker

NEIGHBORHOOD POLICING OFFICER—UPDATES ON AREA ISSUES—Q & A

REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED—BRING YOUR NEIGHBORS!



ANNUAL DUES

Single—\$10.00

Family—\$15.00

#### LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ELLEN LUTZOW



An OJA View from Ellen's Desk

Having now served The Old Jamestown Association as its President for over a year, I thought it time to reflect on what I have learned in this role in a brief time. I also think it important that I communicate how I and the other members of the OJA Board work in support of this community.

In the last year, I have come to learn much of the rich history of this region from reading *OLD JAMESTOWN ACROSS THE AGES* by our fellow OJA member, Peggy Kruse. I have learned of those who originally settled and those that followed in the different waves of immigration. I came to recognize names that I see today in some of the families who still live in the area or those who are memorialized in street or place

names. I learned of our churches and schools which play such an important role in shaping the character of those whose lives they touch. I have learned of our cemeteries that are witnesses to this history. And I have come to understand better that this area will continue to change as yet new residents find this area. In time these new residents will become a part of Old Jamestown history.

(For those of you who have not taken a closer look at this book, access to a free copy has been made available for you. See <http://oldjamestownassn.org/> for details on how to obtain a copy by downloading a pdf. A copy is also available at the Jamestown Bluffs Branch of the St. Louis County Public Library.)

*OLD JAMESTOWN ACROSS THE AGES* covers much about the history of the area from its earliest records. That history, however, largely predates the Association itself. I think it is important that I communicate to you about Old Jamestown as it serves the community today.

The Old Jamestown Association was founded in 1942 as a Benevolent Corporation in the State of Missouri. Its purpose then was to give a collective voice to area property owners in addressing issues generally related to development in the area. For a period of time beginning in the early 60's the organization became inactive.

The Old Jamestown Association was reactivated in late 1987 in response to a study by St. Louis County focusing on development in this unincorporated area. During that period the Old Jamestown Association was actively involved in the development of legislation that would become the Karst Area Protection District. In February, 2013, there was a conversion of The Old Jamestown Association to a non-profit corporation. The necessary documents to change were filed with the State of Missouri and are public record. With that change came a shift in focus as the organization became known as a "501(c)(3)" noting its tax exempt status in Internal Revenue Code.

This status has allowed us to accept donations as a tax exempt organization. That is something the Board considers an important consideration as The Old Jamestown Association continues to change and grow.

We remain an organization that is committed to preserving a sense of community, focusing on educational pursuits like the history of this area. If you are a member of the Association we welcome your input on how we can better meet this goal. If you are not a member we ask that you consider becoming one and being an active participant.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
[www.oldjamestownassn.org](http://www.oldjamestownassn.org)

## MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION REOPENS ROAD

*MDC work crews have repaired spring flood damage to make the road drivable again.*

SPANISH LAKE, Mo.—The main access road on The Missouri Department of Conservation's (MDC) Columbia Bottom Conservation Area in Spanish Lake is now open again. The asphalt road experienced extensive damage along the Missouri River levee during the floods last April/May and had been closed since that time.

MDC work crews installed gravel over the damaged portions of the asphalt road to make them drivable again, and restore the same level of access prior to this year's flooding.

Opening of the main road reestablishes quicker and more direct access to the boat ramp, fishing pier, and the viewing platform at the Confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.

Prior to the repairs, motorists needed to access most of the area via the southern gravel road immediately past the visitor center. Visitors should note that this gravel road will be closing starting Oct. 15th for the upcoming waterfowl hunting season and will remain closed until the afternoon of Jan. 7.

Columbia Bottom Conservation Area is located at 801 Strodtman Road in Spanish Lake. It can be reached by taking the Riverview Drive exit three miles north from I-270. For more information on the area and the latest updates, go to <https://goo.gl/vGzvit>.

### Good Information to Know

Buying gas with your debit card at the pump is convenient, but due to the recent rash of PIN theft at the gas pumps across the country, Commerce Bank advises that you DO NOT use your PIN at the pump until further notice. Choose "credit" instead of "debit". The money will still come out of your checking account. If fraudsters steal your card information and PIN, they can print a counterfeit card and go straight to the ATM and drain your account. Pay inside the station if "credit" is not an option.

## THE PASSING AND THE PERMANENT

By Robert Swanson (1862)

The Pattersons were the first to people the area, but the James family were a close second. Several of the Jameses held title to original land grants, mostly along the river bluffs, but some holdings were recorded in the James name in the Florissant and Bridgeton areas. Old county records list James James, Sarah James, Thomas James and Joseph Austin James as property owners before 1800. Of these, Thomas James leaves his name on the pages of recorded history as a fur trader, celebrated explorer, and writer. He left Florissant in 1809, to accompany Auguste P. Chouteau on a trading and trapping expedition into the virtually unknown and unchartered northwest section of America. In 1821 he commanded an adventurous expedition into Santa Fe, to become the first American to penetrate so deeply into Mexico. Following his return, James wrote, "*Three Years Among the Indians and Mexicans*," which was widely read by his contemporaries, and it is recognized today as an important contribution to the literature of western exploration.

Joseph Austen James, brother of the explorer, came to Missouri from Kentucky in 1793, and at first settled on the bluffs area along the Missouri River. He moved to Florissant in 1804, and died there in 1834, leaving four sons and five daughters to establish homes and families, and to play an important role in the future events of this historic city. One of the sons, Samuel James, born in Florissant in 1817, was the town's treasurer for twenty-seven years (1854-1881). He had served as trustee on the town board for many years prior to that, having been elected as a trustee in 1837 when he was but twenty-one years of age. In 1860, he became a judge of the county court.

James James and Sarah James, the founders of the family fame and fortune, owned the area which is now called Musick's Ferry. Many of the land titles in that area today have been traced back to the James James estate. Mrs. Sarah James received an original land grant of three hundred forty acres along the Missouri River, which was part of the Government Survey #105. In addition, she owned all of Survey #106, which was sold in 1813 to a kinsman, Phineas James,

for one thousand dollars. Two years later, he, in turn, sold it to Rufus Easton (first postmaster of St. Louis) for three thousand dollars. Some of that same land, unimproved, is selling on the current market (1862) for four thousand dollars for a single acre.

### \* "James Town" -- Phinehas James

The first historical reference to the area known as Jamestown is documented in June 1819. Phineas James, one of the earliest settlers to this area, advertised the sale of lots in what he called "James' Town." According to his plans, a sizeable community would be started on the limestone plateaus that border much of the Missouri River in this area. It has been speculated by historians that Phineas James had visions of this settlement someday rivaling the City of St. Louis. (Old Jamestown Area Study, page 5 -- [http://www.stlouisco.com/Portals/8/docs/DocumentLibrary/planning/community\\_planning\\_and\\_revitalization/north\\_county/Old\\_Jamestown\\_Community\\_Area\\_Study.pdf](http://www.stlouisco.com/Portals/8/docs/DocumentLibrary/planning/community_planning_and_revitalization/north_county/Old_Jamestown_Community_Area_Study.pdf))

From the front page ad for "James Town" in the Missouri Gazette, the St. Louis area's first newspaper, June 16, 1819 (reprinted in the September 1975 Hazelwood School District Newsletter):

### Notice

The subscriber informs the public that he has just completed laying off James' Town, and will offer the LOTS at public sale to the highest bidder on the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth day of July next. The terms of . . . . date of sale, at which a correct plat of the town can be seen.

JAMES' TOWN-Is situated on a beautiful bluff, on the southern bank of the Missouri River, six miles above its confluence with the Mississippi. Being situated on a bluff, it has the advantage of a firm rock shore, along which there are a number of the safest harbors for boats that I presume any other town on these waters can boast of; also, several seats for mills that so large a water course can form. Near the public square, there is a cave through which passes a large body of cold, sweet lucid water which I think could, without much expense be raised and conveyed to every part of the town. The earth after removing the virgin soil is admirably calculated for brick, and the rock along the river, which can be easily procured, is of the best quality, either for building or manufac-

turing into lime; sand for making brick and mortar can be procured without much trouble or expense. Behind this desirable situation lays the rich and flourishing country of Florissant or St. Ferdinand and in front (beyond that majestic river that sweep [s] along its base) is to be seen that fertile bottom that intercepts the communication of those two splendid rivers (Mississippi and Missouri) which not only offers to the fancy a rich harvest of charms, but also to the town an abundant harvest of advantages. The situation of this town is so lofty and noble as never to offend by noxious fumes of putrid sickly air; and the eye has always presented to it, a beautiful and grand variety [In fine?] To give a more powerful and impressive idea of the value of the place, is but to observe that there are now about three hundred lots laid off, of which better than one sixth of that number are already disposed of, and most of the purchasers have promised to build on them immediately, which I consider as one strong, convincing proof of Jamestown having merit as an advantageous and desirable situation.

*Phinehas James*

June 14, 1819

The dream Mr. James held never materialized. In the ensuing years, after his first advertisement, little is heard from the community of "James' Town" – however, it did appear on several maps. One early map showed a community of 3-1/2 blocks, approximately 8 to 16 homes. The name was also used in the application to build a Jamestown Road from Parker Road to the River via Portage Road.

*The following article was written in the early 1860's.*

## GOODBYE TO GLORY

By Robert Swanson

Lead gray clouds, pregnant with snow, scudded across the winter skies. Whistling west winds whipped off the icy waters of the mighty Missouri and wailed in a minor refrain around the great new rock house that stood like a fortress against the rocky cliffs above James Landing Halls Ferry). Built like its mistress, with more than usual physical proportions; with walls more than two feet through, of native rock and massive timbers hewn from virgin forest oaks, the rock house of Possum Hollow had become a legendary landmark to steamboat travelers on the Missouri River. The huge, stone building, three stories high and forty feet square, had become a topic of conversation throughout the surrounding countryside. River-rat gossip at St. Charles had it that a tunnel had been dug under the bluff, connecting the cellar of the house with Dripping Springs Cave which opened out on the river about two miles downstream from James Landing\* Saloon sots (habitual drunks) over at Florissant winked knowingly and wondered at the twenty-room house which Sara James had built down by the ferry. The cellar-to-cave tunnel story was ridiculed by men who had worked on the building, for, as they pointed out, the house was built on a shelf of rock which jutted out from the limestone cliffs that walled the river. "Even the cellar is nonexistent," they said. Fair-minded, clear-thinking people argued against the smutty talk of the saloon sots by observing that Sarah James was a woman of good reputation, a sanctified and shoutin' Methodist who frowned upon the use of tobacco, liquor, and playing cards. Through she seemed brusque, even a little peculiar to some of them, the respectable people of the community agreed that Sarah James' character was above reproach.

Sarah owned the entire Possum Hollow community-every 'possum, and every hollow. The rock quarry from which came the major portion of chat, gravel, and stone used in St. Louis County from 1850 to 1860, belonged to her. The first legally surveyed road in the county was plotted from her door to the St. Louis city limits. The only ferry and steamboat landing on the Missouri River, between northern St. Louis County and St. Charles, was on her

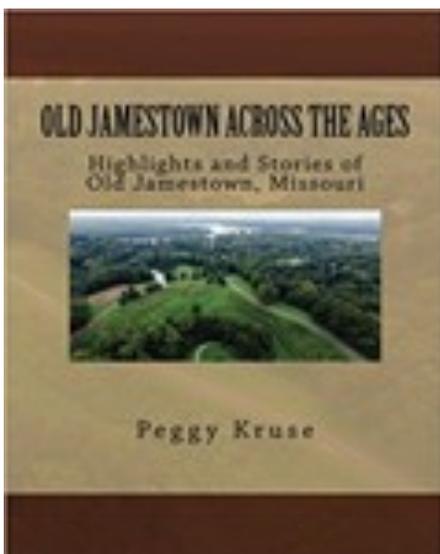
property. More than six thousand acres of river-bluff woodland with its virgin timber, a saw mill, and a lumber business, were all a part of a vast, thriving, and lucrative business empire owned and operated by a spinster woman. At age fifty years of age, Sarah James was wealthy, influential, friendly, and fat.

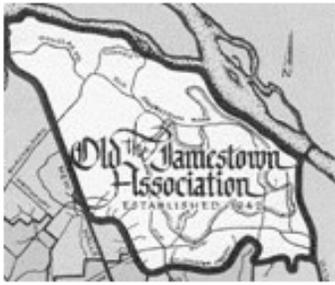
Everyone knew Sarah James, or knew about her. First as a lass, later as a lady, Sarah was often the topic of conversation of men and women alike. Ladies at the Salem Church (Salem Baptist Church on Old Jamestown) Sewing Circle meetings would talk of her latest charitable enterprise, while their menfolk gathered at the Swede's blacksmith shop at the crossroads near Black Jack and discussed Sarah and her latest business success. Whatever she did, it seemed to be of interest and curiosity to others. An aggressive and active character, Sarah was always doing something, and those of loose lip were kept well supplied with topics of conversation. Regardless of the nature of her activities, Sarah seemed to be engaged in projects of interest which oftentimes affected and benefited the lives of others.

## PALLOTINE RENEWAL CENTER CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

December 3, 2017

By now, most everyone in Old Jamestown has heard of the book written by Peggy Kruse, OLD JAMESTOWN ACROSS THE AGES. There will be an upcoming opportunity to purchase one at the annual PALLOTINE RENEWAL CENTER CHRISTMAS BAZAAR. The renewal center is located at 15270 Old Halls Ferry Rd., Florissant, MO 63034. This year's bazaar will be held on Sunday, December 3rd from noon until 4pm. Again, we would like to thank Peggy for her tenacity in getting this book about Old Jamestown history published and her continuing efforts to make it available for all to enjoy!





Old Jamestown Association Newsletter  
P.O. Box 2223  
Florissant, Missouri 63032

Editor: Barb Doner

Writers: Beverly Girardier and Chan Mahanta

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## Calendar of Events that Benefit Our Area

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### Greater North County Chamber of Commerce

#### Announcement

#### *Holiday Toy and Cleaning Supply Drive for those in need.*

**From now until Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>**

Drop off new, unwrapped toys and cleaning supplies  
at the Chamber office – 420 Washington St

Florissant, MO 63031

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### Soroptimist International of Greater St. Louis 42nd Annual Luncheon & Fashion Show

Meet Me in St. Louis, Meet me at the Fair

**Saturday, November 4, 2017**

**Orlando Gardens**

**2050 Dorsett Village Plaza**

**Maryland Heights, MO 63043**

**Doors Open at 11:30 A.M.**

**Buffet Lunch Served at 12:30 P.M**

**Pot of Gold - Basket Raffles - Silent Auction**

**For reservations call Beverly Girardier:  
314.741.7790 or 314.973.3670**



**The Florissant Rotary Club**

**Is Celebrating**

**50+ Years of Service at our**

**Annual Charity**

**Dinner & Auction**

**Join us for our 50's Themed Party**

**with premium bar, dinner & dessert**

**November 18, 2017 • 6pm to 10pm**

**Christian Hospital, Detrick Building, Atrium Room**

**\$100 per person**

**(Get your best "Happy Days" outfit on and get a free prize at the door)**

## St. Ferdinand's Thanksgiving Day Dinner

November 23, 2017

St. Ferdinand Church

1765 Charbonier Rd., Florissant, MO 63031

Two Serving Lines

In-House Dining: 11:30 - 1:30p.m.

Take Out: 11:30 - 2:00p.m.

Donations accepted.

We are entirely dependent upon donations.

Please make your check payable to

"St. Ferdinand Thanksgiving Dinner"

and mail to: 1765 Charbonier Road, Florissant, MO 63031

More information? [thanksgivingdinner@stferdinandstl.org](mailto:thanksgivingdinner@stferdinandstl.org)

## IT'S FREE!!

TO ALL IN OUR COMMUNITY-SERVED OVER 500 DINNERS IN 2016