



# Flowering of Nicodemus

The official newsletter of Nicodemus National Historic Site

August 2006  
Vol. 3: Issue 3

## From the Superintendent

Thanks to all of you who attended the program celebrating the **10<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of Nicodemus National Historic Site on July 29<sup>th</sup> during Homecoming! [See related article.] As I mentioned in my remarks at the program, it is a privilege to be part of this community and to be working with residents, descendents, and many friends on preserving this incredible history. Working for the National Park Service is a very special job, but working at Nicodemus is simply the best of the best! Our staff and I truly enjoy being part of this continuing, living history.

We are grateful to our former director Robert G. Stanton for his return to Nicodemus to help honor this first big anniversary for the park. He led the National Park Service towards making sure history is told from other than just one perspective. Although now retired, Mr. Stanton continues to work at both publicizing African American history and at encouraging minority youth to pursue careers with the National Park Service. We also thank the Nicodemus Homecoming Committee for being willing to share the town's Homecoming weekend with us. And, I am especially grateful to our staff: Park Ranger Phyllis Howard, Maintenance Worker Robert Brogden, and Administrative Technician Betsy Crawford-Gore. It is a real testament to their dedication that we are able to put on a 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary program with a small staff.

An anniversary celebration helps emphasize that it is important that all Americans learn about and, hopefully, come to appreciate the history of Nicodemus, Kansas...to deepen our understanding of what it means to be an American, to acknowledge the truth of the African American experience in America, and to ensure that your history and the stories of your family's contributions are preserved forever. When the Congress of the United States passed the law that created Nicodemus National Historic Site and President Clinton signed that law on November 12, 1996, they helped you create a permanent legacy for your families and for all Americans. Ten years seems important to us, but next year in 2007, the town of Nicodemus, Kansas will be 130 years old and is still going strong ... Now, that will be something to celebrate!

*Sherda K. Williams*



New residents Kenyan, Olivia, and Rashanda Rew joined their cousin Heather Alexander, boarding the schoolbus in Nicodemus this Fall. Children of John and Rachel Rew, these three new residents are joined by two younger siblings who are still at home.

## Visitor Survey Project Completed

The in-depth visitor survey cards that were handed out at the Visitor Center (Township Hall) last year between July 23-September 13 have now been analyzed and the results are posted on a web site, <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.reports.htm>. We had 208 people send in their completed questionnaires to the researchers at the University of Idaho. The results are very interesting:

- 37% of our visitors are African American (a high percentage for a national park);
- 80% had some college education or a college degree;
- most came from Kansas and surrounding states, but we draw a good number of people from across the nation;
- most want to use the park's web site to plan their visit;
- 63% came here primarily to visit Nicodemus National Historic Site;
- 42% obtained support services (gas, food, lodging, etc.) in Hill City, Kansas;
- and when asked about the importance of preserving different things, the survey responders rated the historic buildings, historic artifacts, stories from settlers/residents, traditions, dugout sites, and the landscape all highly.

You can download and print all the details from the web site!

*Please forgive the lateness of this "August" issue of our newsletter! We are still short one employee. Hopefully, we will have someone hired to help at the Visitor Center by November.*

## Small Oral History Project Completed

We completed an oral history project in May, interviewing Mr. Lee Switzer, Mrs. Bertha Carter and Mrs. Florence Howard, Mrs. Ora Switzer, Mr. James Bates, and Mr. Fred Switzer, Jr. This small oral history recording project was funded by a grant from the African American Experience Fund (a nonprofit, see [www.aaexperience.org](http://www.aaexperience.org)), with additional funds provided by the Western National Parks Association (also a nonprofit, see [www.wnpa.org](http://www.wnpa.org)). Mr. Luis Torres of San Antonio, Texas—who had interviewed people in and around Nicodemus in 2000—returned on May 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> to conduct some more interviews.

These new interviews recorded what people remember about growing up in or near Nicodemus and about their lives. Mr. Lee Switzer reminisced about his experiences serving in Company C, 406 Engineers Construction Battalion during the Korean War. He talked some about serving in a segregated unit when he first was drafted. He got to see England, Germany, and France and learned how to handle big construction equipment. Mr. Switzer also remembered the late Winford Bronson and his ability with raising and training horses. Lee's brother, Fred Switzer, Jr. also talked about the various jobs he worked as he grew up, including working on the construction of Webster Dam. He talked about his school teachers, playing baseball, and about his mother Mrs. Ora Switzer working for a time in a restaurant in Topeka and at the Governor's house. Mrs. Switzer talked about how she met her husband of 63 years, some of the pastors for the First Baptist Church, and about helping Doctor Brown as a midwife and assisting with childbirths. It must have been near lunchtime, as she began talking about "I knew how to fry [chicken]. I've got my recipe, you see. We had it fried nice and brown, and they couldn't figure out how I could do it like that. But, anyway, I got to be top of the crop for frying chicken!" Mr. James Bates remembers visiting around with his Grandmother when he was 8 or 9 years old. She was born in Juarez, Mexico and came to the United States during the Spanish American War. She would visit family in Kansas City, Leavenworth, and Denver. He remembered his Uncle Harry Bates talking about how "people had to walk to Ellis and back to get supplies and groceries when they first settled out here and homesteaded." He also talked about his Dad's love of baseball and about Nicodemus' baseball team "that nobody could beat." Sisters Mrs. Florence [Moore] Howard and Mrs. Bertha [Moore] Carter were interviewed together. They talked some about what their grandmother, Effie Johnson Moore, told them of slavery. "I don't see how she lived through it." They remember their grandparents having big gardens, with beans, black-eyed peas, navy beans, and peanuts and watermelons. Bertha said the "rows looked like they were a mile long" when they had to help pick beans. Peanuts were

roasted in the oven and "the watermelon patch belonged to most of the town kids, because they would slip in there at night time and steal the melons." Florence thought their grandpa George Moore was the first to own a team of work horses here in Nicodemus. Mrs. Howard also talked about living on a farm near Oakley after she got married.

Today, so few people live in rural areas that most have no idea what it was like to grow up in a place like Nicodemus! We have visitors that come from around the nation, including big cities like New York City. We even have international visitors, coming from the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Japan, Canada, and England. So many visitors will tell us how neat it is that there are still descendents living here. They want to hear the story of what life was like for you and your ancestors directly from you. It makes their experience here very meaningful and something they will remember for the rest of their life! So, we appreciate very much when people are willing to share their memories with us! Even if you do not want to share your family memories with the National Park Service, please start writing those stories down ... tell them to your children and grandchildren, or get a tape recorder and record what life was like for you and what your parents told you! Think how much the world has changed since Mrs. Ora Switzer was born and think how much it's changed since you were born – very few children born today will have the same kind of experiences that you have had ... your memories can be your legacy to your family!

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## Happy 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday!!

The National Park Service was founded 90 years ago on August 25, 1916. President Bush and the Secretary of the Interior have directed the Service to plan our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration for 2016. The National Parks are often touted as "America's best idea" – our system of national parks has influenced the formation of park systems in other nations across the world and still serves as an international model. Teams of specialists from the National Park Service occasionally offer assistance in park planning to other nations, as part of USAID (U.S. foreign assistance).

Today, the National Park Service manages 390 different parks, including 20 that focus on African American history. These parks include Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site (NHS), Martin Luther King Jr. NHS, the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park, Maggie L. Walker NHS, Central High School NHS, and the Brown v. Board of Education NHS. Explore the National Park system at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) and African American parks at [www.aaexperience.org](http://www.aaexperience.org).



# News From Our Park Partners



## SOLOMON VALLEY-HIGHWAY 24-HERITAGE ALLIANCE

[Nicodemus National Historic Site is a member of the SVH24H A. The following article on this Alliance was submitted by the Alliance's President, Ms. Joan Nothern.]

The Solomon Valley-Highway 24-Heritage Alliance was established in the year 2000, with the mission of researching, preserving and promoting the heritage of the communities in the Solomon Valley. From the very beginning, Nicodemus played an active part in the development of the organization and from the beginning, the unique role of serving as a "Gateway to Nicodemus" has been important to the member communities along Highway 24. With our collaborative approach, we have gained strength in telling our stories and promoting travel along the Highway!

The ultimate goal of the SVH24HA is to increase economic activity in the Solomon Valley, as visitors spend time enjoying the area...perhaps discovering they want to stay in our sane rural setting. In order to meet this goal, we have invested resources and effort to research and preserve our histories. You can see the results of this work in the 24 informational kiosks found in each of 24 communities along Highway 24—including the kiosk in the Township Park in Nicodemus.

The Kansas Humanities Council supported our research for the publication of *Weaving the Common Threads of the Solomon Valley Fabric*. Other efforts to nourish the spirit and resources of the Solomon Valley include commissioning the band suite *Solomon Valley Anthology: Dreams and Faith*; sponsoring writing workshops to nurture contemporary writing; sponsoring an annual 'Call for Voices' writing contest; developing networks between the museums in the Solomon Valley; and presenting symposiums to explore topics of interest. One symposium featured five authors discussing literature and landscape, while another was dedicated to locating the site of the 1857 Battle of Solomon Fork.

The SVH24HA is now launching an ambitious research effort, tracing the history of the development of Highway 24 through the Solomon Valley. Local researchers will be trained to access the materials available in their area. We hope to find photographs and identify significant persons and events in the making of, what is now, US Highway 24. If you have information on how US Highway 24 was built and when, or would like to help with research, please consider this a special invitation to join in this project! Contact Joan Nothern at either [jnothern334@usd334.org](mailto:jnothern334@usd334.org) or 785-568-0120/-2350.



Flower beds in front of the Nicodemus First Missionary Baptist Church are in full, Fall bloom.

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## NICODEMUS TOWNSHIP BOARD

The new equipment for the playground has arrived and is waiting to be installed. There are three new pieces and replacement seats for the swings. The plan is to have the new items installed in the next few weeks.

Also in the hopefully near future, the township will be receiving a mower that has been promised from some grant money acquired. The maintenance man will be using that mower in most cases instead of his own equipment.

The board continues to search for the perfect solution to how to keep the town site clean and mowed. Several suggestions have been made and are being considered.

Sharyn Dowdell-Kountz, Trustee; Esther Clark, Treasurer; Alvena Alexander, Clerk

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## NICODEMUS FLOUR CO-OP

The Co-op continues to try to find a 'home.' We have been asked to leave the Villa and will use a storage container for our belongings for the time being. Pancake mix will still be available at the Visitor's Center and by contacting a Co-op member in person or at the Co-op telephone number. Don't wait until the last minute to order your supply for the upcoming holidays!! We are also working on a new and improved website. Watch this newsletter for updates.

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## Our Apologies !

A photograph of the Nicodemus Pride Committee in our last newsletter identified Mrs. Florence Howard as a member of the Committee, which is incorrect. Sherda Williams saw Mrs. Howard talking with the other members after taking the picture and made the assumption she was also a member. Ms. Esther Clark is a member of the Committee.



## Rock of Ages -- A Landmark Still Standing

Work on stabilizing the First Baptist Church Work is complete at last! The final inspection for this contracted work was done on August 14. The National Park Service moved the furnishings back into the church in September, since it is now water-tight. If asked, we will also provide assistance to the Church as they develop grant proposals to completely rehabilitate the structure so it is usable. When the building is completely rehabilitated, we will negotiate with the Church for some level of public access to the building for visitors to Nicodemus National Historic Site. For now, it is wonderful to drive into town after a night of storms and NOT be worried about whether this historic building is still standing! The 1907 First Baptist Church is one of the five historic buildings that were designated by Congress as Nicodemus National Historic Site in 1996.



2006



The Church as it appeared before work began in October 2005. There were major holes in the roof, birds were nesting in the eaves and inside the church, and the bell tower was about to collapse.



Rafters are strengthened and the roofing on the north-west side is underway, 2005.



All the eaves are boxed in and vented window covers are in place. 2006



Assisting Mr. Price with some final stucco patching was subcontractor Charlie Scott, owner of DSK Drywall & Stucco of Hosington, Kansas. August 2006.



The new bell tower structure under construction, 2006.



Watertight and stabilized, thanks to Price Construction Company and a cooperative agreement with NPS, September 2006!

*All photos by NPS*

## Wonderful Discoveries in a “Time Capsule”—the Thomas Johnson Family Dugouts

In October, check out the summary of the Washburn University archeology project that investigated the two Tom Johnson family dugouts this summer, at our website, [www.nps.gov/nico](http://www.nps.gov/nico)! The Tom Johnson family homesteaded on what is known as the Henry Williams place, a property now owned by Mr. Veryl Switzer. While only partially excavated, the two Johnson dugouts were very interesting. The lower dugout appears to be the house, while the smaller dugout up the slope was probably the cellar. The cellar dugout appeared to be about 10-foot square. Dr. Margaret Wood and students from Washburn University had time to excavate only one wall of the lower house dugout—a nicely finished stone wall with some plastering on the interior side. It is not clear whether the stone wall was original or if an entirely earthen dugout was improved at a later date by the family. With only one wall excavated, it is hard to predict the overall size of this lower dugout. Ms. Angela Bates, Executive Director of the Nicodemus Historical Society, said Mrs. Lula Craig’s diary talks about Mr. Johnson holding the first church service in his dugout. Several Nicodemus residents and descendants visited the excavations as they progressed and shared their memories of the place and the Johnson and Williams families with the students.

We are anticipating another field school this coming summer (June 2007). The Kansas State Historical Society, the Kansas Anthropological Association, and the National Park Service are discussing a “Kansas Archeological Training Program” (KATP) field school to be held at Nicodemus to continue the work started by Dr. Wood. KATP field schools happen every summer in Kansas and attract 100-200 volunteers (approximately 30-40 per day). These schools provide archeologists, amateur archeologists, and just anyone interested a chance to help the State explore important sites in Kansas and learn new skills. Anyone can volunteer and you can commit as little or as much time as you would like. Think what a great learning experience this would make for students...particularly those descended from Nicodemus families!

You can find more general information on the KATP field schools and the program at <http://www.kshs.org/resource/katphome.htm>. The project in Nicodemus will, of course, depend on obtaining permission from private landowners in Nicodemus. In fact, no work will be done on a property unless we have permission from the landowner(s). We will update you on this project in the next newsletter... and, **maybe you can become an archeologist for a few weeks this summer?!**

[The is the first page of the project description that will be posted on our web site in October, [www.nps.gov/nico](http://www.nps.gov/nico).]

### Archeological Testing of Two Dugout Sites by Washburn University (Topeka)

May 15 - June 2, 2006

### Tom Johnson family / Henry Williams place House & Cellar Dugouts

Mr. **Veryl Switzer**, owner of the old Henry Williams place, gave the National Park Service and Washburn University permission to test and excavate possible dugout sites. Research through land records by the Nicodemus Historical Society identified these dugouts as belonging to the **Thomas Johnson family**. Mr. Johnson’s daughter Emma Williams gave birth to the first baby born in Nicodemus, Henry Williams, in 1878. **Many families from Nicodemus are direct descendants of the Williams and Johnson families.**



Rancher **Bobby Atkisson**, who runs cattle on Mr. Switzer’s land, graciously gave us permission to fence the area around the dugouts. Park Maintenance Worker **Robert Brogden** starts the job of erecting an electric fence. The dugout sites are only vaguely indicated by slight depressions on this slope above the spring.



The two Johnson dugouts were located uphill from an excellent spring. Mr. **Harold Switzer** remembered the spring box was constructed of planks, with a pipe coming out of the hill and a piece of tin over the top. Mr. **Rudolph Bates** remembered carrying water from this spring over to other nearby families. Harold Switzer said that he and other children were warned to not go near the old dugouts because they were in bad shape when he was a youngster.

This dugout location provided an ideal settlement location since water was essential. The large cottonwoods may have been much smaller in the fall of 1877, but now they provide a truly beautiful, shaded setting. Many people from Nicodemus remembered more water in the creek when they were growing up... and, several remembered swimming in a deep pool of the creek, just to the north of this area.

Because Veryl Switzer was unable to make it out to the site, Ms. **Angela Bates**, Director of the Nicodemus Historical Society, led the students from Washburn in a prayer and then turned over the first shovel of dirt!

This project was funded by a Challenge Cost Share grant from the National Park Service and by Washburn University. Technical assistance was provided by the Nicodemus Historical Society, Mr. Rudolph Bates, the National Park Service’s Midwest Archeological Center (Lincoln, Nebraska), the Kansas State Historical Society, and staff at Nicodemus National Historical Site.



## Other National Park Service News ...

A former Park Ranger with the National Park Service, Dr. Irving Townsend, celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 2. Dr. Townsend is one of a handful of living park rangers whose birth predates the 1916 establishment of the National Park Service. He began his career as a seasonal park ranger in Yosemite in 1929. Named superintendent of Aztec Ruins National Monument in 1944, Townsend had to get permission from the War Price and Food Rationing Board to buy the 110 gallons of gasoline needed to move his family from Arkansas to New Mexico. He retired from the NPS in 1953 to teach at the University of Albuquerque, becoming Dean of the Graduate School before retiring from his second career in 1973. (Excerpted from *Heritage News*, August 2006, a monthly e-newsletter published by the National Park Service, available on-line at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/HeritageNews>.)

The current Director of the National Park Service, Fran Mainella, submitted her resignation and will be leaving the agency in the near future. Mainella was the 16<sup>th</sup> director. She was appointed by President George Bush and confirmed by the Senate in 2001 to succeed Robert G. Stanton. Ms. Mainella is resigning to spend more time with family members who are having health problems. Ms. Mary Bomar, currently the Regional Director of the Northeast Region, has been nominated by President Bush as the next Director. However, the President's nominee must be confirmed by the Senate.

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## Interactions between American Indians and African Americans in the West

A fairly new project, "The Warriors Project," is exploring the 19<sup>th</sup> Century interactions between American Indians and African Americans in the West. In March 2002, a group met at the University of Arizona to discuss a research initiative about American Indian and Black interaction. Scholars and representatives from the Department of Defense, the National Park Service, and the universities of Arizona, Washington, Haskell Indian University (Kansas), and Howard (Washington DC) agreed on the following points:

- A program was needed that would put the research concerning minority history in the American West in the hands of the minority students and institutions themselves.
- Black students and Indians students needed a forum in which they could speak to one another about their interrelated histories in the American West and about how their shared history contributed to the nation's history at large.

Thus, the "Warriors Project" (website: <http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=31441>). This group,

with the National Park Service (NPS) and Bureau of Land Management, sponsored archeological investigations of a Buffalo Soldier's campsite in New Mexico's Guadalupe Mountains. Dr. Eleanor King of Howard University and Charles Haecker of the NPS-Santa Fe Office managed a field team in July 2004 that included students from Howard and Haskell universities at Guadalupe Mountains National Park. An Apache campsite from the same period was also investigated and Apache high school students and elders also participated in the field school. A Howard University communications student created a DVD documentary of the project. The field school continued at the site in the summers of 2005-2006.

Because of the interaction between the Osage, Potawatomi, and Nicodemus settlers in the early years of the town's founding and former Buffalo Soldiers settling in the area, we may start participating in this project. [The Potawatomi story of their buffalo hunt and assistance to Nicodemus is told at <http://www.pbpindiantribe.com/lastbuf.htm>.] The Warriors Project is sponsoring a conference called "The First and the Forced" involving Haskell University in November, to be held at the University of Kansas in Lawrence from November 9-11, 2006. If you would be interested in attending this conference, see the web site to register, <http://www.hallcenter.ku.edu/research/projects1/sbconference/index.shtml>.

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## Veterans Honored by American Legion

Flags were placed on veteran's graves at the Mount Olive, Nicodemus, and Samuel cemeteries by American Legion Post No. 270 of Nicodemus, Kansas for Memorial Day. Officers of the Nicodemus chapter--Commander Robert Brogden, Vice Commander Donald Moore, Sr., and Adjutant Lee Everett Switzer--honored veterans who served in the military by placing American flags on their graves. There are veterans from Nicodemus and the surrounding area who have proudly served our nation as Buffalo Soldiers in the Indian Wars and later in World Wars I and II, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam War. Nicodemus descendants have served or are serving our nation in Europe, the Middle East, and countless other assignments. This year, Vice Commander Donald Moore, Sr. had the honor of placing the flags in the three cemeteries at the start of the Memorial weekend. Commander Robert Brogden, along with his wife Billie, removed the flags from the grave sites.

Memorial Day was originally known as Decoration Day as a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's

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service. It has been celebrated since 1868 on May 30<sup>th</sup> by decorating graves in honor of those who have served our nation. Congress declared the last Monday in May, Memorial Day, making the day a three-day weekend under the National Holiday Act of 1971.



*Mrs. Billie Brogden and Mr. Bernard Bates honoring family at Mount Olive cemetery over Memorial Day weekend*



*United States flag proudly flying at the Mount Olive Cemetery.*

*Photos provided courtesy of Mr. Robert Brogden, American Legion Post No. 270.*

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## **Highlights of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Program Nicodemus National Historic Site**

Nicodemus National Historic Site celebrated the park's 10th Anniversary during the 128<sup>th</sup> Annual Emancipation/Homecoming Celebration on July 29. It was a great success. Our speaker was former director of the National Park Service, Robert Stanton, who was the first and only African American Director of the National Park Service. Mr. Stanton dedicated Nicodemus National Historic Site to the American public in July 1998 after Congress declared it a National Historic Site in 1996. During his speech, Mr. Stanton noted that Nicodemus National Historic Site "will be remembered as long as the United States and our government want it to be. There is something special within this park." He applauded the residents of Nicodemus, the family of descendants, and all of those involved in the site. "I have worked to increasingly involve young people with the National Park Service." Mr. Stanton urged those present during the celebration to "Never lose your zeal for building a better world and those involved in the site to always keep our young people in mind." He added that Nicodemus National Historic Site is "on an equal standing with the other 389 areas administered by the National Park

Service. Mr. Stanton concluded his remarks by saying, "I'm proud and gratified to be a son of Nicodemus. I am at home."

There were several speakers during the program. Ms. Angela Bates, Executive Director of the Nicodemus Historic Society, was pleased to see the many accomplishments that the Site has achieved over the past ten years. She also noted that the Site "pays witness to the progress of the National Park Service," adding that "our youth are our future."

Ms. Danielle Dempsey-Swopes, Executive Director of the African American Affairs Commission, read and present a Proclamation signed by Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius. A letter from former President Bill Clinton was read by the former director of the Midwest Region, Mr. Bill Schenk. Superintendent Williams announced that Congressman Jerry Moran had introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives to honor the accomplishments of Nicodemus [not yet passed].

Mr. Dave Given, Deputy Director of the Midwest Region, was on hand. Kevin McMurry, Superintendent, Fort Larned National Historic Site, Felix Revello, Chief of Interpretation, Fort Larned National Historic Site, and Steve Linderer, former Superintendent, Fort Larned National Historic Site were also present to lend support. We are looking forward to the town's celebration of their 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2007 and the 130<sup>th</sup> annual Emancipation/Homecoming Celebration in 2008.

*Highlights of Mr. Stanton's speech are excerpted from an article by editor Jim Logback in "The Hill City Times," August 2, 2006.*



*Robert G. Stanton, former Director of the National Park Service, speaking at the 10th Anniversary program on July 29, 2006.*

*NPS Photo*



National Park Service  
U. S. Department of the Interior

Nicodemus National Historic Site  
304 Washington Avenue  
Nicodemus, KS 67625

## EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

*The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.*

### Editor:

Phyllis A. Howard, Park Ranger

### Contributors:

Sherda K. Williams, Superintendent  
Robert Brogden, Sr., Maint. Worker  
Betsy Crawford-Gore, Admin. Tech.

### Comments? Write or Call:

Superintendent  
Nicodemus National Historic Site  
510 Washington AVE, # 4B  
Nicodemus, KS 67625  
785-839-4321

### General Information:

Nicodemus National Historic Site  
[www.nps.gov/nico](http://www.nps.gov/nico)  
785-839-4233 Visitor Center  
785-839-4321 Office

Federal Job Announcements  
(USAJOBS)  
[www.usajobs.opm.gov](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov)

*The **Flowering of Nicodemus** is a quarterly publication of Nicodemus National Historic Site.*

## Park Staff Work to Promote Nicodemus History

Park Ranger Phyllis Howard and Superintendent Sherda Williams have made three recent off-site visits. Superintendent Williams spoke at the “Spotlight on the USDA in Northwest Kansas” program in Hill City on July 27th. The program was organized by The Kansas Black Farmers Association and the Resources Conservation & Development (RC&D). Superintendent Williams talked about the economic opportunities presented to the region by having a National Park “in your back yard.” She used information from the 2005 Visitor Survey to emphasize the economic impact from the visitors that come to Nicodemus National Historic Site visitors on surrounding communities.

Park Ranger Phyllis Howard was the guest speaker at the 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Reunion Luncheon for the National Association of Black Military Women in Kansas City, Missouri on September 2nd. Park Ranger Howard spoke on the history of Nicodemus. Ms. Naomi Bundley requested that a Ranger present the history of Nicodemus to the group; she is from Manhattan, Kansas and is a strong supporter of Nicodemus. On September 8th, Park Ranger Howard and Administrative Technician Betsy Crawford-Gore manned a booth at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson, Kansas. They gave out information about the National Park Service and the five National Parks located in Kansas: Brown v. the Board of Education National Historic Site (NHS), Fort Larned NHS, Fort Scott NHS, Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, and Nicodemus NHS. The booth was manned by employees from the five Parks in Kansas throughout the length of the Fair. Phyllis and Betsy talked with approximately 250 people on the day they staffed the booth -- great exposure for Nicodemus!