

Goat Day and Pioneer Day Festival

October 19, 2024 8 am to 3 pm

The Blountstown Rotary is proud to host the 39th Annual Goat Day and Pioneer Day Festival on Saturday, **October 19th, 2024**, at Sam Atkins Park in Blountstown, Florida.

Goat Day was started in 1986 by the Panhandle Pioneer Settlement. This event is one of the largest and best known festivals in the Tri-State Area. This event typically draws a crowd of 5,000-6,000 people! The gates will open at 8 a.m. and the festival is expected to wrap up around 3 p.m. Attendees can expect fun for the whole family from craft and food vendors to games, music, live entertainment, and of course goats! **The cost for entry is still only \$5 per person, and children under three years old will get in free.** Proceeds will be used to fund scholarships awarded to talented, local students that may be applied to a trade school, two-year college, or four-year university.

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Our History as a Rivertown

The Story of Chief Blount & the City of Blountstown

Provided by the Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce: www.CalhounCo.org

The City of Blountstown was named for John Blount, a Seminole Indian Chief. Blount was a guide for General Andrew Jackson who invaded Spanish Florida in 1818. This invasion caused the United States to purchase Florida from Spain and the territory became a part of the U.S. in 1821.

John Blount was rewarded for his services to General Jackson with a trip to Washington, D.C. to visit the President. In 1823, he was granted a reservation along the west side of the Apalachicola River, four miles by two miles square. Blount and his tribe traded with the American and English trading companies while living on his reservation. Several trading posts were located on the "Big River" and the Gulf of Mexico.

Chief Blount had several hundred head of cattle, which grazed in the area. The earlier settlers near the reservation were allowed to slaughter the cattle with Blount being paid in the cattle hides. The hides were placed in canoes and carried downstream to Apalachicola and exchanged for supplies for the Indian people.

There were many products sold by the Indian for such items as cloth, shoes, knives, coffee, and guns. An unusual product was bees' honey and wax. Thousands of trees grew near the Blount lands, which had beehives in their hollows. The warriors would go to the trees at night and secure the honey and wax that was traded to the merchants. The wild bear liked honey and would climb the trees and rob the bees of their honey. The Indian could usually discover a honey or bee tree when a bear lost his hold on the tree and fell to his death at the foot of the tree.

The U.S. government eventually purchased Blount's reservation and transported the tribe to Texas. The cotton planter then settled the rich river bottomland and planted cotton, which furnished the clothing mills in England. The cotton planter used the steamboats to travel to Columbus, Georgia and sometimes to foreign countries. He bought many fine articles for his household which included ice transported from the Great Lakes. The cotton economy declined after the Civil War and large forests furnished trees, which were floated down the Apalachicola River on rafts and manufactured into lumber.

In 1880, Blountstown became the County seat of Calhoun County and a courthouse was built near the river. In 1903, another courthouse was constructed in "new" Blountstown. This courthouse was used until 1973 when the new courthouse was constructed. However, the old courthouse has been restored and is listed as a historic Florida landmark.

Fascinating residents of Blountstown have included the late Fuller Warren, former Governor of Florida, as well as Everett Yon, a native of Blountstown who was honored at the University of Florida, with the creation of Yon Hall