

## **A Step Back into the Future**

The year 1928...one fine day, a January afternoon, the 25th to be exact, two men met. One a bachelor, R. L. Eschenburg of Wilson County, Texas and the other, Theodore Johns, also of Wilson County, came together and in agreement to wit a certain tract or parcel of land, lying and being situated within the corporate city limits of the City of Floresville, known to many of us as the "Knights of Columbus Hall" or the "Senior Citizens" gathering place.

As of late there have been questions raised about the hall again like how long it had been there, when it was built, who originally owned it? When my dad started going to Sr. Citizens (shortly after my Mom passed away) the subject came up and he got up and told the story to those who wanted to hear. There are always those who want more so my Dad went to the Courthouse in search for information when several other sources didn't pan out. After speaking to Eva Martinez, County Clerk, the search was complete.

Mr. Theodore Johns first acquired the property for \$750. He erected a tin barn, which he specifically built for boxing and wrestling.

The "Country Boys" were the "top" draw. This went on for approximately 6 months. After the boxing/wrestling fever cooled down, the barn took on a different form of entertainment -- roller-skating. To add to the excitement, Grandpa Theodore decided to put some greased pigs in the mix! If you could catch on, it was yours.

Finally, the competition came down to the "city boys" vs. the "country boys" and when it was just too hard to keep a greased pig within your hold...Theodore Johns just gave them to the boys!

The regular skating ring lasted about 6 years. After the skating ring closed down, a couple by the name of Mr. and Mrs. Mares took over the place and turned it into a dance hall and cafe. A good time was had and enjoyed by all.

Between 1940 and 1950 there had been renovations, additions and remodeling at Mr. Johns expense.

The 1960s and 70s brought about more changes and the purchasing of the hall by the Floresville Jaycees organization. After many awards banquets, membership meetings, fund-raisers and dances, the Knights of Columbus became the present day owner and proprietor where the Lions Club also held their meetings.

In addition, there were many outside personal and private citizens who rented the hall for many occasions such as birthday parties, wedding receptions, high school reunions and more. The Knights of Columbus started serving lunches to the Sr. Citizens as a well-deserved community service to Wilson County.

Betty Manik is in charge and has a lot of dedicated helpers. If you are 65 years or older, come join in the fun. Its not just a lunch. Sometimes there is dominoes, bingo, exercise, pledge of allegiance and prayer before meal time.

With nice prizes, it all adds up to an hour or two of fun. I'm 47 and was very impressed and had a lot of fun at the Easter dinner.

I even ran into an old school mate of my own... Betty Sue Cantu-Silva. She helps with the meals-on-wheels. I wish I knew the names of all the helpers but I took some photos and I am hoping to get them printed in the paper with this story.

Thank you Knights of Columbus and for those who wondered about the halls history and where the hall and property got it's beginning. We hope your questions have been answered and history has been put in its proper place.

Thanks to Eva Martinez and Dan Johns for the research and Karen Johns for writing this article...it was indeed an honor.

This article, written by Karen Johns and published in the Floresville Chronicle Journal in 2005, was found in the Wilson County Historical Commission Archives and submitted by Gene Maeckel for Historic Moments in Wilson County, Texas. Wilson County Historical Society, P. O. Box 101, Floresville, Texas 78114.