



HOUSTON INFORMER FOUNDATION, INC.

Preserving the Past...and the Future.

www.HOUSTONINFORMERFOUNDATION.ORG

4542 N. Ripple Ridge Dr. Houston TX 77053 • NPO# 86-2509947

HIFI's 2024 mission is to bring people together through the power of history and culture; promote cultural equity, inclusion and education that engages the public by creating memorable events of historic and edutainment value.

THE ROSENWALD CENTENNIAL PROJECT:

“Step Back in Time: Huntsville Texas”

A need exists to attract a new generation to an appreciation of history. That need is made more necessary with recent culture wars against the value of historical fact. HIFI's focus is to use entertainment venues and events to share real-life stories of ordinary citizens who accomplished extra-ordinary achievements in Huntsville Texas history.

For this reason, after a very successful HEB sponsored 2023 “Steppin’ Back in Time: Houston in Retrospect,” the 130 year old Houston Informer Foundation, Inc (HIFI), is expanding to history-loving Huntsville Texas.

We have partnered with the generational custodians of Huntsville’s **Rosenwald School Acres’** (the site of Walker County’s 1st black public grade school) and 2 local Huntsville/ Walker County museums to join the Rosenwald Centennial Project: three innovative, family-friendly historic edutainment events designed to subliminally encourage East Texas generations that it’s fun to **“Step Back in Time”**

Rosenwald Centennial Project’s three-part initiative:

2/16-18/24 **Texas Medieval Merriment Festival** at the fairgrounds in February... Combining historic costume play with unique and acoustic musicians, demonstrations and lessons from skilled artisans and vendors on “how things used to be”;

4/21/24 **“Back to Our Roots” Earth Day Music Fest...** A free Sunday Afternoon celebration of the earth and classic American music on the county’s 1st Tuskegee-Rosenwald school grounds; with live bands playing classic oldie American music on the HEB sponsored d Rosenwald School Acres’ Outdoor Stage, with lectures on the conservation, the Julius Rosenwald Schools Act and the founders of Walker county’s 1st Tuskegee-Rosenwald public school for black children.

6/1-30/24 **“Step Back in Time: Huntsville Heroes”** a Juneteenth VIP reception and Photo Exhibit of little known facts about the black and white patriots (including General Sam Houston, Doc Pleasant William Kittrell and the millionaire philanthropist Julius Rosenwald) who helped advance the cause of emancipation in the greater Huntsville area.

THE HUNTSVILLE INFORMER will be resurrected and distributed as an ebook and custom purveyor of historical facts at each of the events. This unique approach to generating an interest and educating the public of the stories and lessons the past has to offer is a perfect fit for the history-loving hometown of General Sam Houston!

Publisher Lorenza P. Butler, Jr.
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STEP BACK IN TIME: HUNTSVILLE TX

2024 Overview of proposed Historical and Edutainment Events for Walker County...

Working closely with the **Houston Informer Foundation, Inc (HIFI)**, Huntsville Texas area museums, and local Walker County Texas non-profits, schools, social organizations and businesses, we are pleased to inform you of three exciting educational entertainment events (and one historical correction) proposed for Huntsville, Walker County, Texas in 2024.

“Step Back in Time... Huntsville”



FEBRUARY 16-18, 2024:

Texas Medieval Merriment Festival, is scheduled for Friday-Sunday February 16-18, 2024, at Walker County Fair Grounds.

This event holds special significance to thousands of avid medieval, fantasy and renaissance costume-play attendees from all over the state. Last year's TMMF venue was on Rosenwald's small 2 acre farm— *and we had over 2000 visitors that weekend.* This fact prompted us to move to a

larger venue perfectly suited to this type of festival...offering great parking and over 100 Vending booths with both power and water. This year's festival will benefit the Houston Informer Foundation, Inc with the medieval revival of the “Huntsville Informer” as a physical and digital souvenir book plus student Merriment Village “Town Criers” hired to announce sponsors, demos and events. More info: www.TexasMedieval.com

APRIL 21, 2024:

“Back to Our Roots” Earth Day Music Festival on Earth Day Sunday, April 21, 2024, 3-8pm at Rosenwald School Acres' HEB Outdoor Stage, 639 Rosenwall Rd, Huntsville, TX 77340. www.EarthDayJamFest.com. This free “Old-School Music” festival on the “old school” grounds celebrates the land and the memories of the founders of Walker County's first Black public primary school. Walker County's Rosenwald School Road (currently misspelled) once dead-ended at this oasis of education for black families in the early-mid 1900's.



A portion of proceeds to benefit...the Kittrell-Wilson Cemetery Restoration Fund, historic preservation projects of the Houston Informer Foundation, Inc. and Walker County's original Tuskegee - Rosenwald School Acres.

“Back to our Roots” has been sponsored by grants from H-E-B, Awesome Without Borders, numerous local organizations, individuals and Huntsville businesses. With this support we have been able to benefit the Samuel Walker Houston Museum and allow the community to feel welcomed once again on their beloved school grounds. Proceeds from this festival benefit the continuing non-profit historic education and preservation projects of the **Houston Informer Foundation, Inc.** (see *“Step Back in Time: Huntsville Heroes”* below); **the Kittrell-Wilson Cemetery Restoration** (where founders/caretakers and alumni of Rosenwald School#1 are buried) and the community utilization and environmentally friendly modernization of Walker County’s original **Tuskegee - Rosenwald School Acres.** (www.rosenwaldacres.com)



JUNE 1-30, 2024:

“Step Back in Time: Huntsville Heroes” A Juneteenth Photo Exhibit, June 2024. ...A Houston Informer Foundation Inc Historical project in honor of the Huntsville Informer Newspaper...

This East Texas expansion and adaptation of HIFI’s hugely successful traveling history Photo Exhibits in Houston will continue in 2024 in the Huntsville area. The multi-location exhibits highlight the stories and accomplishments of oft-over-looked Texas historical figures who — despite Jim Crow—were determined to improve the lives, educational access and business opportunities of East Texas’ African-American communities.

The Texas Freeman newspaper first hit the streets “Without Fear or Favor” in 1893. Later merging into the Informer and Texas Freeman, the newspaper became the hub of a multi-city chain... chronicling the news of, by and for black folk in **Houston, Dallas, Galveston, Huntsville, Beaumont, San Antonio, Austin, Shreveport and New Orleans, Louisiana** and even **Jackson, Mississippi**. By the 1950s, the paper was a major player in advancing the call for equal rights for citizens of African descent. The Huntsville Informer will be revived, reimagined and distributed at all three events here.

*Please see the 2023 Steppin’ Back in Time Souvenir Booklet...October, 2023: <https://anyflip.com/weccp/lftb/>

The VIP reception and multi-location photo exhibit will be free to the public and promoted via press releases to our by media partners, internet announcements, social media dispatches and, print and on mic announcements to the crowds at earlier festivals. It will be curated by **Linda Moten**, of the Samuel Walker Houston Museum and both SWH Elementary and High School alumni organizations. Positive feed back by museum and educators has been encouraging.

The “HUNTSVILLE HEROES” exhibit will highlight the stories of not only area historical African Americans... but also the contributions of **General Sam Houston, Dr. Pleasant William Kittrell and Julius Rosenwald**. The 24 honoree displays will be free standing outdoor modules at these proposed locations in Huntsville/Walker County: the Huntsville Library, Walker County Courthouse; H-E-B’s announcement Corner (at 30 and Hwy 75) and / or the lawns of these museums: Sam Houston, the University Museum, Samuel Walker Houston Museum and the Walker County Museum.

ONE FINAL HISTORICAL PROJECT:

Correct the misspelled “Rosenwall Road.” ...Return it to its historically accurate “Rosenwald Road” ...honoring the name and legacy of Julius Rosenwald—an early 20th century multimillionaire philanthropist who joined with Tuskegee Institute to make a huge impact on the educational history of Huntsville/Walker County Texas. (More info: [RosenwaldAcres.com](https://rosenwaldacres.com)).

1912: Julius Rosenwald, then president of Sears and Roebuck, donated \$25,000 to Tuskegee Institute. That was when he discovered that southern states were not building public schools for their African American citizens. **In 1915,** he began a financial collaboration with Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee Institute and eventually donated \$63 million of his personal income to subsidize the building of 5,357 schools for African American students in 15 southern states. Texas received \$980,615 in grants to build 79 schools and over 500 supplemental buildings.

WALKER COUNTY’S 2 TUSKEGEE-ROSENWALD SCHOOLS: *Huntsville/Walker County was the only ISD in Texas that had multiple Rosenwald funded buildings.* In 1921, Huntsville’s gifted Professor Samuel Walker Houston, his cousin English professor John Wesley Wilson and John’s wife Amarentha Kittrell-Wilson began to plan, build and maintain the following institutions in Walker County, utilizing multiple Rosenwald Fund grants:

Rosenwald School #1: “an Oasis of Education.” The wagon trail that became a road once dead-ended at the historic Rosenwald School Acres gate. This newly reopened gate is the 102 year old location of Walker County’s first public grade school for colored children...Our annual EarthDay Festival and community events on the H-E-B sponsored stage allows families a chance to return to their gathering place.

The Samuel W. Houston Industrial and Training Institute opened its doors on Highway 30 (near the current Walker County Fair Grounds) in 1906—teaching marketable occupational skills: carpentry, plumbing, sewing, cosmetology, general maintenance, fine arts and music. Good works were recognized by Tuskegee Institute. The Rosenwald Fund awarded repeat grants. This allowed Prof. Houston to build multiple buildings—even creating Texas’ first boarding school for African American school children. The Samuel W Houston Museum, formerly the High, then Primary school on 10th Street in Huntsville, stands as a tribute to this great educator. (<https://rosenwaldacres.com/samuel-w-houston-museum-1>).

“Rosenwald” Road is not a name change...only a clerical correction.

The US Congressional **Julius Rosenwald and Rosenwald School’s Act**, signed in 2021, has recorded Huntsville’s two schools and their locations—one on “**Rosenwall**” Rd—in its national registry. The Rosenwald School Road’s original name was both a tribute and “Thank You” from a grateful community honoring the name of a compassionate businessman whose generosity made their beloved school possible—providing hope and opportunities for their children’s futures.

The Act—and a new blinking light at FM2821—means this is the best time for Huntsville/Walker County authorities to join the Us Congress’ commitment to this great man...*Correct the clerical error.*

(....**PERHAPS IN TIME TO BE ANNOUNCED AS PART OF THE COUNTY’S NEW PUBLIC 2024 “HUNTSVILLE HEROES” OUTDOOR PHOTO EXHIBIT?**)

**The US Congressional
Julius Rosenwald and
Rosenwald Schools Act**
became law on January 13, 2021



THE ROSENWALD FUND

Julius Rosenwald
(1862-1932)

*Chicago businessman,
philanthropist and president
of Sears, Roebuck and
Company during the early
1900s. Rosenwald’s German-
Jewish family fled
persecution in Europe.*

*Rosenwald established the
Rosenwald Foundation for
“the well-being of mankind”*

*He funded 5,357 schools in
Black communities because
he believed that everyone
deserves the opportunity to
an education.*

"Our History is Our Wealth."

JOIN US! Working closely with publisher/publicist Lorenza P. Butler and his NPO historical event planning teams at Houston Informer Foundation, Inc and Butler Wiseman, LLC; coordinating with Huntsville curator Linda Moten, SWH Museum curator; Walker County and other area museums, schools, the county, city and the two Samuel W. Houston School Alumni organizations, local media, the Huntsville library; educational/corporate partners plus amazing small business vendors, sponsors and individuals...**2024 promises to be a memorable year.**

We would love to discuss how best to collaborate with you and your resources for the success of these events so let me thank you in advance for your support for any—or all— of these projects.

You can find information on me at www.kijana.com and on my 44 year old creative production and marketing firm at www.wisemancompany.com. Please feel free to contact me directly at the digits below.

Thank you!

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Cc: Lorenza P. Butler, Houston Informer Foundation, Inc,
Linda Moten, SWHouston Museum
Lee Ann Wiseman, Walker County Museum
Lynn Page, HIFI SBIT Project Coordinator
Carmen Herrera, HIFI Corporate Sponsorships
Kathy Burke, TMMF Vendor Coordinator
Dorothy Cantor, The National Rosenwald Park Campaign, Bethesda MD

Rosenwald Centennial Project References and Resource Links:

CBS MORNINGS Broadcast, June 2021...

The Impact of Rosenwald schools on education and how they changed the lives of Black Americans... <https://youtu.be/dVg-xOBw8kY>

Julius Rosenwald's Gifts to America's Well-Being

A short documentary on the life of Julius Rosenwald and his impact on America and underserved populations. ... <https://youtu.be/68JO3qo2oUU>

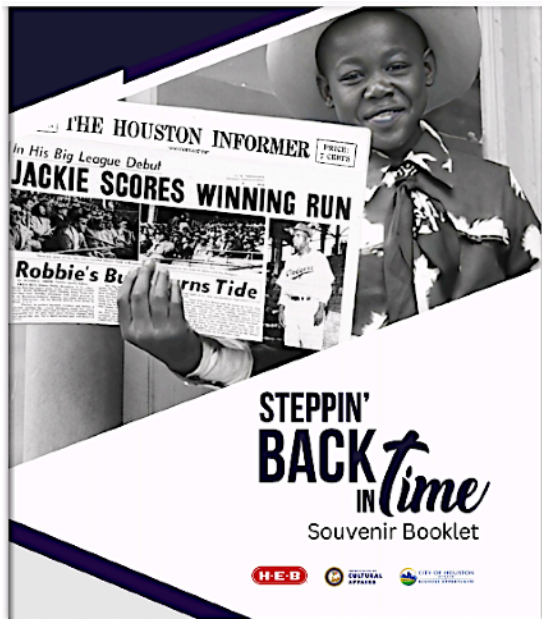
The Julius Rosenwald Legacy and the National Park Campaign

<http://rosenwaldacres.com/the-rosenwald-legacy>

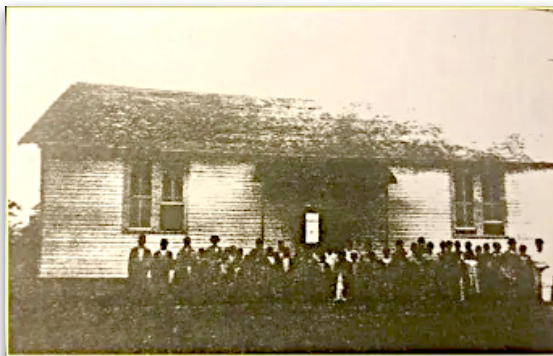
The history of Huntsville/Walker County's Rosenwald School #1

<http://rosenwaldacres.com/the-rosenwald-school>

Addendum:



Steppin' Back in Time: Houston TX
Souvenir Booklet... October, 2023
<https://anyflip.com/wecp/lftb/>



THE HISTORY OF HUNTSVILLE'S ROSENWALD SCHOOL ACRES: *"An Oasis of Education"*



Julius Rosenwald (1862-1932) Chicago philanthropist and part-owner of Sears and Roebuck, believed all Americans deserve an education. **1912:** He established the Rosenwald Fund for "the well-being of mankind" and collaborated with Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee Institute to build over 5,300 + rural school buildings for colored children across the Jim Crow south. 79 schools were built in Texas.

John Wesley Wilson (8/12/1860 - 4/20/1948) and his wife, **Amarintha Kittrell Wilson** (8/9/1864 - 4/4/1944)... well-connected, educated and concerned about providing a formal education for their little brown grandchildren. **1921:** As per Rosenwald Fund guidelines, the couple transferred 2 acres of land to the HuntsvilleISD and, with family and community, raised the funds needed for the creation of the original 2-room school building with a kitchen, well and 2 outhouses. *John and Amarintha's children, cousins and grandchildren attended & helped maintain it.**



1921-1962: With dedicated educators such as **Esther Bridges, Maddy Jewel Walker, Thelma McGuire, Mary Helen Wilson** (alumni & granddaughter of John & Amarintha), plus volunteers from the **Kittrell, Wilson, Spivey, Cotton, Wiley, Vann, Baker, Crawford, Houston** families et.al, Rosenwald School grew until "**Rosenwald School Road**" was the place to go for meetings, events, picnics, horse & foot races, basketball, etc. (The name was later shortened & misspelled as "Rosenwall Road.")



1962: Rosenwald School#1 is demolished and the land auctioned to **David Branch Jr.** who, in **1963**, sold it back to **Charlie Wilson** (John & Amarintha's eldest son). **1966:** **Mary Helen Wilson Wiseman, M.Ed.** requested that her father Charlie will the beloved school grounds to her.

2020: Rosenwald Acres was inherited by Mary Helen's eldest, **Kijana Wiseman-Fusilier, M.Ed.** (WisemanCompany.com, kijana.com); with **Joy D. Wiseman** and **LaTanya Michell Brooks, M.Ed.** (GrowWithStem.com, nextlevelpublishing.com). **PRESENT:** The land has being renewed as a community space with an energy/ environmentally-friendly, solar-lighted Outdoor Stage where the school once stood.

**Rosenwald Founders and Caregivers are interred in the
Kittrell - Wilson Cemetery behind the property.*

"BACK TO OUR ROOTS" EARTH DAY MUSIC FESTIVAL celebrates the land and legacy of the **Founders, Caregivers and Alumni** of a small rural school that nurtured and encouraged so many "tiny, shiny minds" ...*to blossom.*

Read their stories. Share yours. Become a legacy supporter and join us at...

RosenwaldAcres.com
rosenwaldacres@gmail.com ny. All rights reserved.

FYI:

EVENT DONATION NEEDS...

Sponsoring any of these needs will help make each event a success.

=====

____\$200-\$2500.
ENTERTAINMENT: Sponsor the cost of a band, solo act, poet or storyteller. *Get online and sign recognition.*

____\$250-\$2500
FINE ARTS: Supplement the employment of college theatre and music dept. students as costumed actors in period performances. **Sponsor a contest in the sponsor's name** with cash prizes for best musical or theatrical performance.

____\$500-2500
Sponsor of the cost of security officers and traffic direction needs.

____\$1000
Sponsorship of a free hayride transport around the grounds and from the parking area. (May be decorated golf carts?)

____\$700-2000
Sponsor yard signs, decorations, festival banners, etc

____\$300-700
Materials and labor for Staging and Volunteer overlay costume creation. Also costumes for Town Criers

____\$100-400
Help with cost of after festival cleanup, etc.

____\$750
A 3 day bank of port-a-potties or Camp outdoor showers.

____\$600
Bouncy house, Clown/Magician or other other attraction for children's entertainment

Physical equipment, materials or volunteer time donations are often a good as money!

Press Coverage: 2023 "Steppin' Back in Time" Houston

Project Manager: Lynn Page. PageGirl 101 Solutions; Public Relations: Butler Wiseman, llc

Below are links to media coverage for your reference.

Virtual Tour the inaugural display at Houston City Hall MLK Day - February 28, 2023:
<https://app.my360store.com/tour/view/MTA3MTQ=>

City of Houston Office of Business Opportunity:
https://fb.watch/igsMZu_V6t/

2023 Steppin' Back in Time Souvenir Booklet, October, 2023:
<https://anyflip.com/wecp/lftb/>

Photo Coverage:
<https://priscillagraham.zenfolio.com/p47536396/h542697af#h542697af>

Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs (MOCA) Opens 2023 Exhibition Series: Steppin' Back in Time:
<http://houstontx.gov/moc/moca-2023-exhibition-series.html>

Happening Next:
<https://happeningnext.com/event/steppin-back-in-time-houston-in-retrospect-eid4so1302p4r1>

Houston Style Magazine:
<http://stylemagazine.com/news/2023/jan/18/moca-opens-2023-exhibition-series-expressions-high/>

FOX26 PSA:
<https://app.box.com/s/btz1csxoig6ut3eaejnnb5z9viblt80w>

News Coverage TV, Online, Website | FOX 26 Houston:
<https://www.fox26houston.com/news/steppin-back-in-time-exhibit-history-of-black-newspapers-houston>

Majic 102 Public Affairs Podcast:
<https://bit.ly/3Gglfrt>

KPRC Click2Houston.com:

<https://www.click2houston.com/news/local/2023/01/19/houston-newsmakers-congresswoman-sheila-jackson-lee-says-congress-must-do-more/>

Local Today | Texas News:

<https://localtoday.news/tx/unique-exhibit-in-houston-highlighting-the-history-of-the-citys-black-newspapers-150290.html>

City of Houston entire Kickoff Reception | YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jILe2micLcU>

The Isiah Factor Uncensored | FOX 26 Houston:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2a5RcMjF-g>

Houston Newsmakers | KPRC TV:

<https://www.click2houston.com/video/local-news/2023/01/23/houston-newsmakers-houston-informer-celebrates-135-years-of-black-houston/>

HTV Houston Television:

<https://fb.watch/igsA2F4B1W/>

FOX 26 Houston:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZfETNM_RZw

Que Onda Magazine:

<https://queondamagazine.com/moca-opens-2023-exhibition-series-expressions-with-a-high-tech-exhibit-to-honor-dr-martin-luther-king-jr-and-black-history-month/>





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promote cultural equity, inclusion and education that engages the public by
creating memorable events of historic and edutainment value.

“STEP BACK IN TIME: HUNTSVILLE TX”



A 3- Event Historical Edutainment Sponsorship Matrix for...

TEXAS MEDIEVAL MERRIMENT FESTIVAL

February 16-18, 2024

“BACK TO OUR ROOTS” EARTH DAY OLDIES MUSIC FEST

April 21, 2024

STEPPIN’ BACK IN TIME: HUNTSVILLE JUNETEENTH HEROES Photo Exhibit

June 1-30, 2024

SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS:	IRON \$500-\$2K	COPPER \$3K-\$5K	BRONZE \$6K-\$9K	SILVER 10K-14K	GOLD 15K-24K	PLATINUM 25K-30K	TITLE \$31K-50K
Prominent Recognition as “Title Sponsor on all stages and marketing materials.							✓
Booth / Space to showcase branded materials/programs and Complimentary tickets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Logo on official invitations banners and onsite posters			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
High visibility logo placement on banners and onsite posters					✓	✓	✓
Microphone opportunity from the festival stages					✓	✓	✓
Access Passes as a VIP to the Pre-Event Receptions /Hospitality Tent		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Custom banner space on the Main stages / Photo racks						✓	✓
Premium logo placement on main stage posters/ banners						✓	✓
Logo on poster/banners				✓	✓	✓	✓
Mention in Press Releases,	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mention in interviews, ads and promotions					✓	✓	✓
Ad or logo on the website with a link to your chosen URL	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Inclusion in email, website and social media dispatches	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reserved Parking space and (if desired) Campsite at the 2 festivals.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Logo / AD in the physical and digital Souvenir Book / Schedule handouts. (Ad size based on level).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓