

CYRUS TEED: the CULT LEADER IN OUR BACKYARD

Exactly 100 years after his death, the man called "Koresh" still leaves his mark

BY ARTIS HENDERSON
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The silted banks of the Estero River seem an unlikely spot for a utopian community. With acres of scrub pine stretched across sandy soil and patches of rough-barked cabbage palms leading to the murky water, the hot, flat plains of southern Lee County speak more of purgatory than paradise. But in the late 1800s, a charismatic religious leader brought his band of followers to these backwaters of south Florida, setting up camp along the river and christening the spot New Jerusalem. In a move emulated by cult leaders into the 20th century, the group's leader, Cyrus Teed, adopted the Biblical translation of his name. He called himself Koresh.

As the southernmost state on the edges of the frontier, blanketed by swampland and frequented by pirates, Florida has long struggled with its unsavory image in the American psyche.

Even today, Sunshine State

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PHOTOS COURTESY KSHS RITTER COLLECTION AND JIM MCLAUGHLIN/FLORIDA WEEKLY

Cyrus Teed and his inside-out view of the world.



Lee Memorial Blood Centers use incentives to pump blood to hospitals

FLORIDA WEEKLY STAFF REPORT
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With a shortage of a universally acceptable blood type, Lee Memorial Blood Centers are offering a variety of incentives to lure healthy donors.

Free cholesterol tests, blood typing and blood pressure checks are just some of the fringe benefits made available to

anyone who donates blood to any of the Lee Memorial Blood Centers, said Nancy Hendrick, the agency's community relations coordinator.

With only 5 percent of the population donating blood and no decrease in catastrophes that include car crashes and shootings, blood centers like Lee Memorial are pumping everything they got into drawing people willing to donate blood.

Right now the center is in dire need of the O negative blood type - a blood type universally compatible with anyone, said Lee Memorial Blood Center recruiter Gloria Bonventure.

The summer months tend to be rougher for the blood banks with the absence of the snowbirds who tend to be strong

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INSIDE



Drum virtuoso

Taku Hirano headlines Percussion Summit 2008 at the Naples Philharmonic Center for the Arts. C1 ▶



Cafe 2431 party

And other events in Fort Myers' society. C19 & 21 ▶



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