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Annual Villagers' 'Hunt,' Feb 6, to celebrate Miami's history

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"On Golden Wings" is the theme for the 2016 Villagers' Historic Hunt on Saturday, Feb. 6. The annual event is open to the public and will begin promptly at 4 p.m. at the Curtiss Mansion, 500 Deer Run in Miami Springs.

Registered hunters will drive their own cars and set off for a two-and-one-half-hour enjoyable, educational romp through some of the area's most interesting historical sites. The Curtiss Mansion also will be the Hunt's final stop at 6:30 p.m., for an optional cocktail-buffet and silent auction. Prizes will be awarded to winning teams.

Known for pushing participants to explore the little-known and often quirky side of Miami-Dade's colorful history, the event organizers promise to amuse, entertain and surprise.

Tickets are \$25 per person for the Hunt, or \$70 per person for the Hunt and Dinner combined. Tickets may be purchased online at <www.thevillagersinc.org>.

"Heaven to Earth" was the theme of the 2015 Historic Hunt that transported participants into the world of Miami, Coral Gables and Coconut Grove 100 years ago. Dozens of intriguing clues led teams through historic churches, cemeteries and parks. The hunt also included some of the area's largest public art installations.

Intrepid hunters recorded details of some of the area's oldest church buildings, found the "Mother of Miami" Julia Tuttle's grave in the City of Miami Cemetery, located a mythological hero



The 2015 first place team of Thane Malison, Steve Breselieu, Sheffield Macintyre and Toni Garcia receive their basket of prizes at the annual Villagers' Historic Hunt.

in Mary Brickell Village, and visited the Coconut Grove graveyard that inspired Michael Jackson's *Thriller* music video.

At the conclusion of the event, at Montgomery Botanical Center, Hunt Clue-Master Lorraine Sheldon awarded the first place honors and prize basket to the team of Toni Garcia, Thane Malison, Sheffield MacIntyre and Steve Breselieu.

The event raised more than \$5,000 to support historic restoration and preservation in Miami-Dade County.

"I really enjoyed preparing the clues. Many of our historic churches are nearly 120 years old and the cornerstones of our community," Sheldon

said. "We drive by these places everyday but you learn to appreciate them more when the hidden secrets are revealed. Many hunters couldn't wait to share what they learned with family and friends."

"I have lived in Miami all my life and never knew some of these spots existed," guest hunter Jeff Lefcourt said. "It was fun and fascinating."

All proceeds support historic restoration and preservation in Miami-Dade County. Founded in 1966, The Villagers Inc. is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization. This year The Villagers are celebrating "50 Years of Saving Places."