

## ***The Legend of the Krewe of Seville***

When the dreaded pirate, Jose Gaspar, was but a boy of 12, living in the Province of Seville, he was visited by his cousin Leon. Leon was a ship builder who had just returned from sea after many years of pirating. Young Jose was intrigued by Leons many stories and made a deal with the ship builder: "You build me a boat and I will teach you to read and write." Leon eagerly complied and Jose soon had his own boat in which he and his schoolmates began pillaging and looting up and down the river. The boys' insatiable appetites for pirate life lead them to kidnapping a young lass and demanding a ransom for her return. Alas, a teacher recognized the handwriting on the note to be that of Jose Gaspars and he and his gang were soon in custody. With a plea bargain to escape jail, the boys agreed to return the girl, the loot they had stolen and destroy the boat. Without a boat to continue on, "The Pirates of Seville" as they called themselves, disbanded.

As legend tells, Jose Gaspar went on to become one of the most feared and successful pirates of all time. Annually, the City of Tampa trades the keys of the City to Gaspar and, in return, the pirates share their bounty with all. But, it was really many years ago, in the small Spanish Province of Seville that the pirating actually began!