

Sheri Zoch, Editor
March, 2010

JAILHOUSE NEWS



Thank Goodness for Spring! We had to give some jail tours this past month and pretty well froze to death! April and May will be busy months with upcoming events, so keep an eye out in the papers and for email updates.

Jail Tours. Thanks to Mike Reagor for touring the 3rd grade Llano students through the Red Top. The kids were amazed that this is what the jail looks like when it is not a Halloween Haunted House! Even spookier! Also, thanks to Mike, Tom D., Frank R. & others for giving tours on demand.

Adopt-A-Pier Campaign. To date, we have 5 piers donated. I will be writing a grant to the Texas Historical Commission in early summer to fund half of the 32 piers needed. Hopefully, we won't be derailed by another hurricane year by the THC. Attaining our status as one of Texas' Most Endangered Places should help a lot with this. The Friends will still need to fund 11 more piers, SO... think about it... \$1200 gets your name on a plaque and is tax deductible. You can also start a "pier group".



Llano High School Oral History Project. LHS and the Friends are joining forces to collect oral histories of anyone who has memories of the old Red Top Jail. To start, Gene Hall and I met with these students to lay the foundation of this project. Next, Mike Reagor gave a fantastic tour for these kids of the jail. Subsequently, John Hollowell spoke to the students about interviewing techniques. Ms. Deidre Henderson, teacher of Family and Consumer Sciences at Llano High School, is now ready to begin this project with her kids.

The idea is for the students to interview and document: (1) inmates who "stayed at the Red Top", and (2) families of jailors. *If you have a story about the old Red Top and could talk to this class about it, even for just a few minutes, please call me (325-248-0284).* John Hollowell and I can feel the student's brewing interest about this project. As you know, these kids are our future. Long after us, this generation will be left to preserve Llano's history. However, these students need to feel that they are a chain in the link, now.

The Friends located the family of the first, second and third jailor of the Red Top Jail, as well as Charles Baldwin (a grandson of a later jailor). We have also met the last co-jailor with Betty Graham, Janie Puryear, who was actually married at the jail. These people have pictures and memories that need to be documented for our history.

John Hollowell has graciously accepted the task of championing this project! Thanks, John! Our first speaker will be Janie Puryear. She has great stories about jailbreaks, the "dungeon" and the "lost" gallows noose-attachment device. Believe me, Llano Red Top history is about to come alive!

What's next for the renovation? The City of Llano will begin grading the land around the jail to 6 inches below the crawlspace in order to curb further foundation rot. The Friends are very grateful to the City for doing this. Eugene Long and Finley DeGraffenried are coordinating this effort. Friends member Ned Woodall obtained the necessary archeological permit from the Texas Historical Commission for this work to go forth – thanks, Ned. A member of the Llano Uplift Archeology Society will be present during the grading, in case some artifact is unearthed. We are lucky to have such great volunteers as members.

Planning for the Future. We have asked the LCRA to help the Friends come up with a strategic plan for the development of our group. As you know, this group was started less than 2 years ago, yet we have accomplished so much. I attribute this to YOUR interest and involvement.

However, we need some help planning for the most cost-efficient way to progress as a nonprofit group. The LCRA offers a free strategic planning service for nonprofits. Since we now have an architectural master plan, we will shoot for a 5-10 year plan for the Friends.

Thanks go to our Business Members:

- * Enchanted Rocks and Jewelry
(Frank Rowell and Patti Felts)
- * Growing Crazy (Celia and Steve Griffin)
- * Industrial Electric (Mike and Louise Hazel)
- * Shaw Realty (Tom and Sandy Shaw)
- * James and Jean Lynn

To become a business member, just send us a check for \$100 and your name will go on the big sign in front of the Red Top. Easy as pie!

Marketing. Sheri Zoch gave brief talks about the Friends at two local clubs this past month, the Women's Culture Club & the Llano Lions Club. Both clubs seemed receptive to our mission and we gained some new members. Also, the ceremony at the state capitol for the Texas' Most Endangered Places designation of the Red Top was featured with beautiful color photos in the Hill Country Magazine and the THC Medallion magazine. The Chamber ribbon cutting ceremony was also in the news.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

April 10: Llano Sidewalk Sale Events. We will give jail tours from 10-3 during the downtown Sidewalk Sale sponsored by Main Street. Mike Reagor will give the tours, but *we need people to sign folks in and take their donations. Please help him out by volunteering for this event.*

April 28. Wednesday at 5:30 PM we will have a work party to clean up the jail, do some minor repairs and continue to remove the false ceiling. *Please come with brooms, ladders and some muscle.* We'll send out a reminder before the event.

April 30 and May 1. The Friends are sponsoring another movie at the LanTex Theater, "Clash of the Titans". *We will need help selling tickets and popcorn, so plan to volunteer a few hours.* Every little bit that we get in donations and fundraising will go toward the renovation of the jail, so please participate. Again, we will send out a reminder.

Memorial Day Weekend, Texas Proud Festival. The Red Top will bring back the Brazos Bottom Cow'ographers to perform their skit, "Breakout of Johnny Ringo". We will also hold jail tours in period costume. In addition, we have invited the Celtaires String Band to return. This year, the Celtaires will perform the day before to all grades of the Llano Elementary School in two assemblies. Kids are entranced by them! Sheri is writing a grant to Humanities Texas for this event.

THANKS FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT FROM THE "FRIENDS OF THE LLANO RED TOP JAIL" BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President: *Sheri Zoch 325-248-0284*

Vice President: *Tom Dalrymple*

Secretary: *Sandy Shaw*

Treasurer: *Ovetra Hartman*

Member: *Frank Rowell*

Member: *Gene Hall Miller*

APPLICATION FORM

FRIENDS OF THE LLANO RED TOP JAIL

The Friends of the Llano Red Top Jail is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the Llano Red Top Jail and the Doolittle Chapel/School. Members are encouraged to assist in the restoration projects and attend an annual meeting to elect directors and discuss projects.

Name(s): _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Phone numbers: _____

Could you help us with: (circle one or more)

Jail tours Work parties (cleaning/painting) Fundraising

Historical research Newsletter Events Marketing

Assisting with bids for contractors Woodworking

Other _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES: (Check one and enclose \$\$\$\$)

Personal: Individual (\$20) Family (\$35)

Business: (Includes your business name on donor sign)
Silver (\$100) Gold (\$500) Platinum (\$1000)

Adopt-A-Pier (\$1200) (Your name on a permanent plaque)

Please print out this form, enclose a check and return to Sandy Shaw, 295 CR 306, Llano, TX 78643. Call Sheri Zoch at 325-248-0284 for questions, comments or ideas. THANK YOU