

Nov., 2010  
Sheri Zoch, Editor

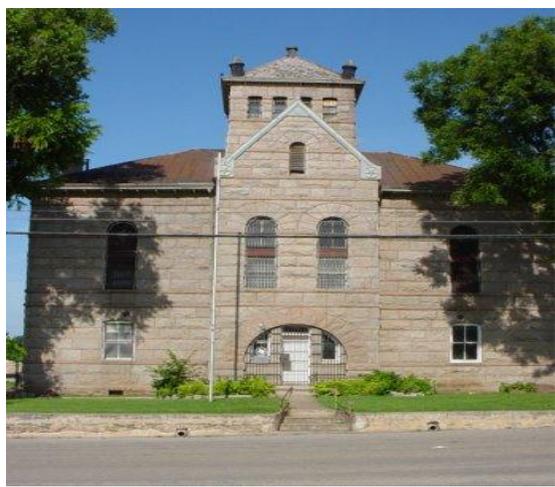
# JAILHOUSE NEWS



We are getting ready for another garage sale at the Red Top this next weekend. Bring us your junk and help us make some bucks for the Red Top restoration. Another grant is due in November, and our Advisory Board has been busy. I've included some interesting oral histories in this edition of former jailors at the Red Top prepared by Llano High School students. Read on...

**Giant Garage Sale at the Red Top Jail 11/20.** Our members have donated some very cool stuff for this sale. You'll have to come and discover what is available. Volunteers have first dibs on sales. Come help us price items on Friday, or help sell on Saturday. Call Sandy Shaw (247-2787) if you can help.

**THC Grant due Nov. 30.** If I have asked you to write a letter of support, please get it to me soon. This is a grant for \$60,000 that is to pour 32 new piers and grade the grounds around the jail to below the crawl spaces. The Texas Historical Commission will be responsible for \$30,000. We will do the rest.



## **What are we fighting for? A MUSEUM!**

In case you have lost sight of what our mission is, we want to preserve the history of this jail. Your newly formed Advisory Board had its third meeting 11/16.

If you remember, Llano received an \$80,000 grant from Preserve America (part of the National Park Service) to plan for a museum at the jail. Of this grant, \$6500 will be used to buy audio/visual/digital equipment for the Llano High School to continue the oral history project. The new class of kids is touring the jail with Mike Reagor on 11/17.

The rest of the money is to hire a museum designing consultant for the future Red Top Jail **MUSEUM!!!!**

Toxey/McMillan Design Associates gave a presentation to the Advisory Board about their past endeavors with Disney and small museums throughout the states. Their approach is to try to focus the idea of the museum to fit with the building, then build an interactive, interpretive museum around it.

After the presentation, the Advisory Board met privately to discuss whether to interview other candidates. The Board unanimously voted to hire this group to design our new museum. The thinking was that the Toxey/McMillan group was local (San Antonio), low-key (no high pressure), and willing to work with a small community. Anne Toxey was integral to the writing of the Preserve America Grant. Her group was recommended by the Texas Historical Commission. We still need approval by the City, but this is a big step!!

**And speaking of the City...** The Friends need to show up to the next City Council Meeting Dec. 6 to show our support for the museum planning contract. The City needs to approve the contract with Toxey/McMillan, and we need to be there to make sure it happens. Talk to your aldermen, too.

**Oral History Project.** For the next few newsletters, I will showcase the results of the oral history project at Llano High School. Last year, Deidre Henderson's Community Service and Planning class interviewed 6 people who were associated with the Red Top. These are their stories.

## The Life of a Jailer

You would think living in a jail would be chaotic but Ken Rhoades, former Red Top Jailer, remembers it as uneventful. He did have a few interesting bits to tell about his time in the jail.

When prisoners were brought in, their shoelaces, belts and belongings were confiscated. The night watchman at the time was uncomfortable taking belongings so he would instruct the jailer to do so.

There were rare issues with rowdy prisoners. In the instance that one was out of control, they would be sprayed down with a water hose. Since the floors were concrete and had to be washed anyway, it worked out well in that instance. When prisoners saw the hose coming, they would quiet down. No one wanted wet clothes or a wet bed.

Privacy was minimal. Men and women were on opposite sides of the room. They were able to hear each other but no visual contact was made since they were separated by a sheet.

Meals were dependent on how many people were in the building.

Most prisoners came in the evening and would see the judge the next afternoon. Breakfast and lunch were small but decent meals (cereal, eggs, toast for breakfast and sandwiches for lunch.) Since many of the prisoners were gone by evening there was more money and a more elaborate meal was feasible for dinner.

In the time Ken Rhoades was jailer, there was one escapee, Larry Fry. Larry was a slender man who was able to wiggle through the jail bars. He then tied sheets together and escaped through the window. Larry was later caught and returned to finish his sentence.

**Script available for tours.** Sheri has prepared a script for anyone wanting to learn to give tours. We will also make one for Mike Reagor's and Ray Theiss' tours, so you can pick and choose, or mix and match.

**ANOTHER Garage Sale?** We are planning to have such a good response this Saturday, that we will co-sponsor the citywide garage sale with Main Street on Jan. 19. We will have our own booth, as well as collect half of the proceeds from ticket sales. There will surely be lots of good stuff left over to sell. We will need volunteers to help set up tables and chairs, man the booth and help sell tickets.

It all helps the jail! Thanks for your help.

### 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:** *Frank Rowell*

**Secretary:** *Sandy Shaw*

**Treasurer:** *Ovetra Hartman*

**Member:** *Earl Theiss*

**Member:** *Gene Hall*

# 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**