



# CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 2008

Issue 30

June, 2016



*Terri Sigmund is ready to share information about CHS and the history of Cypress at the Bridgeland Nature Fest.*

## CHS Reaches Out To The Community

Besides an active program with our area schools, The Cypress Historical Society has offered several programs to local groups. In March, a 2-day class in "How to Get Started with Your Family History" class was held at Pct 4's Big Stone Lodge in Spring. On April 6, "The Early History of Cypress:1836-1907" was offered at the Pct 3's Glazier Senior Center. This same talk was repeated for the Village on The Park-Steeplechase folks on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. And CHS reached out to some of our newest neighbors at the Bridgeland Nature Fest on April 30<sup>th</sup>, where, despite a big storm in the morning, the skies cleared for a beautiful day!

*Be sure to See the Flyer for:*  
**"Good Ole Summertime"**  
*Event for CHS members and their Families*

**When: Saturday, August 6th**

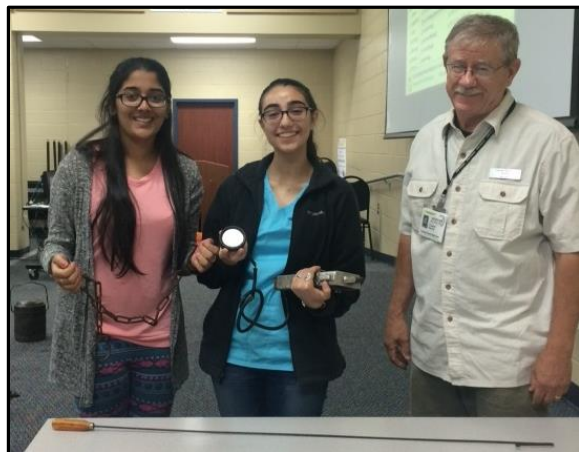
**Time: 11am - 3pm**

**Where: Inside Juergen Hall**

## Rho Kappa Students Examine Artifacts

*by Jay Gavitt*

The last meeting of the year with Cy-Ranch's Rho Kappa organization focused on examining historic artifacts. About 60 students took part in the presentation provided by the Cypress Historical Society. The students examined a series of guidelines provided by the Library of Congress and the National Archives for examining artifacts. The students were then able to use these guidelines to examine a number of items from the CHS collection. These included a chicken catcher, wolf trap and weight, miner's



*CHS Jay Gavitt with two members of Rho Kappa examining artifacts at Cy-Ranch HS.*

dinner pail and Edison electric miner's lamp, milking bucket and cow hobbles. Time was allowed at the end of the program for students to more closely examine the artifacts. The program was set up by Evelyn Gallego, club president and Christina Shively, faculty advisor and department chair.

This year the club had a number of meetings at the school. An earlier program was presented by Jim Sigmund. The session focused on the historical research done for "Hot Wells". CHS also provided a venue for the Rho Kappa's two movie nights.



*The weight and chain are a mystery to students until they see the wolf trap that goes with it!*

## Local 7th Graders Explore Early Cypress

### History

by Jay Gavitt

For the 4th year in a row the Cypress Historical Society has presented an end-of-the-year program at two local middle schools. The Smith Middle School program was set up by Texas History teacher Samantha Nuber-Moser for the 18 classes at her school. The Salyards Middle school program was set up by Social Studies subject chair Amanda Banks for the 21 classes at her school. Over 900 students participated in the programs. Three to four classes participated in each of 45-60 minute programs. The students first examined printed sources including maps, land records, census data, and photographs to investigate the factors that have caused the growth of Cypress over the years. The students then applied steps for analyzing historic artifacts as they examined items from the Cypress Historical Society's collection. These artifacts provided a glimpse into our local history. These included farming artifacts - a milking pail and cow hobbles; wolf hunting artifacts - a wolf trap and homemade weight for the trap; and homemaking artifacts - a butter churn and molds. The students were finally treated to photos and articles about the early locations of their schools. At Smith Middle School they were exposed to the Josey rice farm, ranch, and oil. At Salyards Middle School students learned about the early rice farming and Wortham's Nine Bar Ranch. If anyone is interested in having this program for 7th graders at their local middle school next year, have the school contact the Cypress Historical Society at 281-758-0083 or cypresshistsociety@att.net.



\$58,000 Bull - Breaks Sales Record for Harris County

Left to right - Gus Wortham, Nine Bar Ranch; Robert Kleberg, King Ranch; and Mrs. J. D. Alexander.

King Ranch paid \$58,000 for a bull. The record for a Santa Gertrudis is \$59,000 from the Winrock Farms owned by Winthrop Rockefeller.

**A single picture portrays the prominence of the Nine Bar Ranch as it deals with the famous King Ranch.**



Jim Wilson, historian for Harris County Precinct 3 at Cypress Top.

### Meet Jim Wilson from Precinct 3:

by Jane Ledbetter

I am happy to take this opportunity to introduce our newest Harris County employee at Cypress Top Historic Site and Kleb Woods Nature Preserve, Mr. Jim Wilson. Jim was born in California and from an early age expressed an interest in history. He fine-tuned this interest over the years by taking online college classes, which was a great help to him as he could hold a job and do his studies online at the same time, working at his own speed whenever he had time. He pursued an undergraduate degree in history from the University of New Mexico and completed a Master's degree in museum studies at the University of Kansas in 2014.

Going at a slower pace allowed him to add all kinds of work experience to his resume. Prior to arriving at Cypress Top, Jim was a historic site interpreter at Mahaffie Stagecoach stop in Olathe, Kansas, and a site educator for both the Meeteetse Museum District in Meeteetse, Wyoming, and for the Texas Historical Commission at Confederate Reunion Grounds State Historic Site in Mexia, Texas. Now, in 2016, Jim is adding many more new experiences to his life through his job with Harris County.

**Cypress Historical Society**

**P.O. Box 2963**

**Cypress, Texas 77410**

**E-Mail: [cypresshistsociety@att.net](mailto:cypresshistsociety@att.net)**

**Darline Roth Research Library: 281-758-0083**

**Hours: Tue, Wed, Thur 9 - 4, & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat 11 - 2**

**THANKS TO OUR APR-JUN**  
**BENEFACTORS!**

**Life Members:**

Calvin House

Frankie Litt

Barbara Schletzbaum

**Scholarship:**

Marg Andreo

## **CHS Presents Agriculture Program at Robison Elementary School** *by Jay Gavitt*

This year the Cypress Historical Society was asked to present a program on agriculture as part of Robison Elementary School's Annual Inventor's Day. The society provided a number of hands-on experiences for the students. The students were first introduced to the program by Cel Guerra, who gave a brief description of the agriculture program. All students were then given an opportunity to "shell corn" using one of two corn shellers provided by Rodney Sprenger. Jim Sigmund first demonstrated how a sheller is used and then each student was able to shell an ear of corn.

Students then viewed Wayne Callender's collection of over 200 hand tools and hardware. The students had many questions for Wayne and wife, Helen about the early tools. The final part of the program allowed students to investigate and use a number of artifacts from the CHS collection. These included a chicken catcher, scythe, flail, butter churn, butter molds, milk pail and hobbles. These were presented by Jay Gavitt and Helen Callender. The day-long event at Robison Elementary had classes scheduled to visit different exhibits during the day. Over 180 students, in 7 classes, participated in this year's event. This was the 1<sup>st</sup> year that CHS has participated in this event and we are looking forward to next year's Inventor's Day.



**Wayne Callender shows vintage tools to the students.**



**Jay Gavitt challenges the students to guess what the "Chicken Catcher" was used for, while Helen Callender gives a hint!**



**Helen Callender watches closely, so only corn cobs, and not little fingers, go through the sheller!**

## **Gene and Delphine Zaboroski Scholarship Awarded**

*by the CHS Scholarship Committee*

Four Cypress area high school students submitted their applications for the Gene and Delphine Zaboroski Scholarship presented by the Cypress Historical Society. The scholarship committee selected one \$1,000 recipient for 2016 which is proudly presented to William Ayala. William, a recent graduate of Cypress Lakes High School, plans to attend Texas State University and develop his studies towards business marketing. His graduation is a proud capstone to William's academic years at Cypress Lakes High School. His college ambition will provide opportunity to his future.

William included in his activities outside high school, involvement in his local community through volunteer work and public outreach made possible through the Key Club. Caring for families in need during the holiday season and tutoring elementary school children were some of the areas that William paid special attention to. The social tools developed through his time in service of his community will carry with William throughout his lifetime.

We sincerely wish William the very best in his future endeavors.



**William Ayala, our 2016 CHS Scholarship Winner!**

# REMINISCENCES OF EARLY DAYS IN TEXAS.

One of this class is Mrs. Rebecca Caroline Lee, now a resident of Deepwater, Harris county. Mrs. Lee's father—her maiden name was Rebecca C. Burnett—was one of the very earliest settlers of the county. Several of the things she tells about are well-known portions of the history of the State, but they are nevertheless of extreme interest, coming from such a source.

Here, in Mrs. Lee's own words, is her interesting narrative of early days in Texas, as it was given to a representative of The Post not long ago:

"Many and varied are the changes that have taken place since first I viewed the prairies of Harris county, sixty-nine years ago. My parents, Mathew and Sallie Burnett, settled on Cypress creek, twenty-four miles north of the present city of Houston, in the year 1831. The nearest and only white neighbors were the families of Messrs. Roberts and McCurly, who settled on Spring Creek about fifteen miles distant.

"My father and mother soon formed a fast and true friendship with a tribe of Bedias Indians, the members of which located their little wigwam town around and near my father's place. Their chief was named Francisco. In those days the trees where the city of Houston now stands were full of wild turkeys from sundown until daylight, and the great American bison spent the hot hours of the day under the same trees. It was nothing uncommon to see a bunch of fifty deer come up within gunshot of the house at midday and graze contentedly. Lobo wolves would catch chickens out of the trees in the yard at night and would even venture under the house after a pig or a puppy. Prairie chickens would cover the yard and cowpen fences in the morning and crow till the sun was several hours high, and bears were not by any means scarce, but not so tame and plentiful as other game. Of course, we did not want for meat, as there was game enough within a few miles to feed for a year the entire city of Houston as it is at present; but we did suffer for bread. In fact, we almost had to do without for a distressingly long time. However, this situation of things did not last as long as it seemed to us, for in 1832 a great influx of settlers began, and the friendly wild game commenced to move off westward.



MRS. REBECCA CAROLINE LEE

## Ever-changing Cypress, Texas

by Jim Sigmund

How often do we think about "the good old days" and talk about the many changes we have seen in the Cypress area, even in just the last 10 years? It seems that Rebecca Burnett Lee felt the same way, even in 1900! Rebecca was the daughter of Matthew Burnett, who was the first Anglo settler in Cypress. Her family settled on the south side of Cypress Creek just east of Telge Road, where the Atascocito and Washington-to-Harrisburg roads crossed. Arriving in 1831, Matthew Burnett ran a boarding house and tavern on this river crossing through the 1830's. He was the first Postmaster of "Cypress" in 1840, and the Burnett settlement was the campground for the Texian Army on the way to San Jacinto.

If Rebecca thought that a lot of people were moving to Cypress in 1832, she would sure be surprised now!

## CHS Library News

by Jim Sigmund

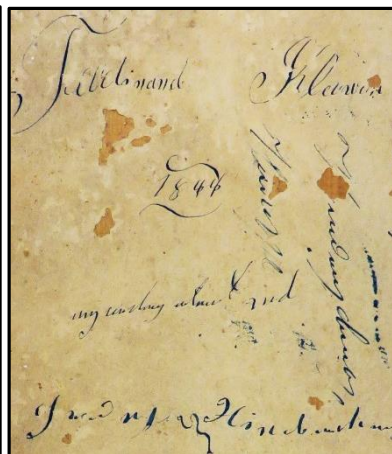
- The Anderson family donated a set of spurs owned by their grandfather, Eric Anderson (1882-1968). They were found in the family barn on Grant Rd.
- We recently obtained a full set of "Roadrunners", a publication of the *Chaparral Genealogical Society*. The books contain transcribed records, mostly from this area. Publication dates are in the 1970-80's. We are working on indexing them.
- While cleaning up after the recent flooding at St John Lutheran Church, it was noticed that an old German Sermon book (c.1799) had handwritten notes in both the front and back of the book. Members Stephan and Jeannie Bergmann are working on the translation. We believe it was brought over by the Klawon family, and hope it may hold clues to the early history of the St John "Settlement" in the late 1840's.
- Gladys Dean donated two crock-ware pieces owned by the Fenske and Krahn families. The larger piece is a butter churn, and the smaller one was used for drinking water out in the fields.
- We have been recently contacted by an Archeological firm researching a site in Rosehill, looking for the original location of Dr. J.F.W. Metzler's office (before it moved to Tomball) and old Rosehill post office. If you can help, please let us know.
- After meeting Michael Nitsch at the Bridgeland Nature Fest, he came by the CHS Library to bring his family's genealogy. His Great-Uncle Arthur Nitsch had a house on Hempstead, just down from the Neal's Store (recently known as the little, yellow Tea Room).



**Crock-ware from Gladys Dean were made by Love Field Potteries in Dallas, Texas. They were in operation from 1923-1948.**



**The Eric Anderson spurs were made of old Mexican coins inscribed "Estados Unidos Mexicanos".**



**Translating the St. John Sermon Book notes is complicated by the old German script writing.**

## Mark Your Calendars!

### Jul 16 – CHS Board Meeting

(All Members welcome)  
Saturday, 9:00am at the  
Darline Roth Research Library  
Cypress Top Historic Park

### Aug 6 – "Good Ole Summertime"

(Members and their Families)  
(Cy-Fair H.S. Classes of 1938-56)  
Saturday, 11am-3pm in the  
Juergen Hall, at Cypress Top Park

### Sep 17 – CHS Board Meeting

(All Members welcome)  
Saturday, 9:00am at the  
Darline Roth Research Library  
Cypress Top Historic Park

### Oct 8 – CHS Annual Meeting

(All Members welcome)  
Saturday, 10:00am in the  
Juergen Hall, Cypress Top Park

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CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2016 MEMBERSHIP FORM

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Individual (\$15) \_\_\_\_\_

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Corporate Sponsor (\$250) \_\_\_\_\_

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

Lifetime Individual (\$150) \_\_\_\_\_ Lifetime Family (\$250) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL DONATION (CHS is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corp)

General Fund \_\_\_\_\_ Scholarship Fund \_\_\_\_\_

Make check to: Cypress Historical Society

Mail to: CHS Membership, P.O. Box 2963, Cypress, TX 77410

Questions? Please contact Jane Ledbetter at 281-758-0083  
[www.cypresshistoricalsociety.com](http://www.cypresshistoricalsociety.com)

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