



# CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Established 2008*

ISSUE 9

JANUARY, 2011

## President's Column

*by Jane Ledbetter*

The end of an old year and the beginning of a new one is traditionally the time for individuals and organizations to review past accomplishments and establish goals and activities for the new year. The Cypress Historical Society began that process in late 2010 with the idea in mind that we would be able to hit the ground running in 2011. We are looking forward to having you run with us as we work to continue to build a great organization ready to accomplish the CHS mission set forth when the organization was established in March 2008: discover, educate, promote, collect, preserve, and make available to the public, historical documents and artifacts of the Cypress area. Specific goals were developed to help us accomplish this mission. These were published in the November 2010 newsletter. If you did not get a copy of that newsletter, please contact one of the CHS board members. A roster of the board members with contact numbers appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

Two brand-new members were added to the Board of Directors in November: Tammy Andrews and Erline Schoenfeldt. They bring with them many skills and interests which we look forward to tapping into as we work together; we are very fortunate to have them with us.

In November the Board of Directors also elected officers for 2011: President: Jane Ledbetter; Vice President: Karen McGilvery; Secretary: John Goodwin; Treasurer: Becky Martin.

Our primary ways of communicating with the CHS membership is through our quarterly newsletters, email, and occasionally through telephone calls. We do want to stress, though, that the telephone works both ways: you are welcome to call (or E-mail) any of the board member with questions, concerns or ideas any time. We promise that we will respond to your call as quickly as possible.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will see several dates to mark on your calendars for coming events in 2011. Other important dates will be published in later newsletters.

We're inviting you to be an active CHS member in 2011 . . . We want you, we need you, and we'll have a great time together!



*The 2011 Board of Directors for the Cypress Historical Society: (From Left) Erline Schoenfeldt, Becky Martin, Darline Roth, John Goodwin, Jane Ledbetter, Karen McGilvery, Tammy Andrews, Joyce Kleb, and Elroy Hirsch.*

# 2011 CHS EVENTS

## Mark Your Calendars !

You may want to put these known 2011 events on your calendar:

**February 19 – Board of Director's Meeting** At Jim & Terri Sigmund's home. All Members welcome!

**February 25 - Bus Trip.** Harris County (over 50) Bus Trip to Texas Ranger Museum in Waco. Contact Linda Martin-Rust at Kleb Woods, or Jane Ledbetter if you are interested in attending.

**March 19 – Board of Director's Meeting** Location to be determined. All Members welcome!

**March 25, 26, 27 - Tomball German Heritage Festival.** CHS has had a booth there the last two years. It has been well-received by the community: many have viewed our displays and asked questions about CHS and Cypress history. We need volunteers to help man the booth. Also, we need some new displays. Contact Darline Roth if you will help us in the booth a couple hours on Saturday or Sunday; Contact Jim Sigmund if you want to help create new displays. (These displays will also be used in other CHS displays throughout the year.)

**April 16 – Board of Director's Meeting** At Jim & Terri Sigmund's home. All Members welcome!

**April 30 - Spring Event, 2011** – Save this date for a Spring CHS Member Event.

**June 25 - Big Cy-Fair High School Reunion for 1935-1953 Students.** This event will be held in the community building in Bear Creek Park. Displays created for the German Fest will be used there. CHS members who staff our booth talk with attendees about Cy-Top and CHS, encouraging visits to Cy-Top, as well as CHS membership.

### July 9 - Fourth of July Celebration.

This is a star-spangled "red-white-and blue day" as CHS and the community celebrate July 4th with an Old-Fashioned Picnic: lots of food, music and activities for everyone. This event follows the tradition set by Gene Zaboroski, who for years hosted a Barbecue and Dance at Cy-Top to celebrate Independence Day. If you want to be a part of the picnic planning team, please contact Jane Ledbetter. This event is a lot of fun, both to plan and to attend!

**October 8 - CHS Annual Meeting.** More about this important event will follow later.

## GET YOUR 2011 CHS CALENDAR!



**Only \$15.00  
+\$3.00 (if Mailed)**

Contact Terri Sigmund  
(281) 373-9052 or JSigm@aol.com

## Time to Renew Your Membership!

Membership in the Cypress Historical Society runs through the Calendar year, so it is time for most of us to Renew for 2011. If you have joined since October, 2010, then your Membership is good through the rest of 2011, and you do not have to renew.

Members receive quarterly Newsletters, notices of CHS Meetings and Special Events, and, most of all, Membership shows your support for the preservation of Cypress History.

## History & Genealogy Report

*by Darline Roth & Jim Sigmund*

Currently we have worked with Joyce Moore in researching her mother's family who were railroad people in the Satsuma area. Much to our delight, she has provided about 350 pictures of the Smith/Schuenmann family for us to copy.

Another subject is the House family, who go back to the early Spanish land grants and were some of the earliest settlers of the Republic of Texas. Calvin House has met with us, and supplied pictures and information from his known family history. We were able to find early Republic records, land grants, and census copies, which greatly added to Calvin's family tree, including another earlier generation!

Jane Ledbetter has been researching the early ranches and dairies west of Cypress Top. If anyone has pictures or news articles on the Nine Bar Ranch of Cypress, please share them with us. There is still a lot of area history to uncover, and we appreciate any information.

Jim Sigmund and Trevia Wooster Beverly have been working on our Application for a Texas Historic Landmark Marker for Cypress Top.



*Calvin House gave us a great tour of the beautifully restored House Plantation on House Road in Hockley, built by his grand-father in 1890. The House Plantation is available for Weddings and Special Events ([www.houseplantation.com](http://www.houseplantation.com)). (From left: ) Calvin House, Darline Roth, Terri Sigmund, Jane Ledbetter.*



*After making their ornament, the children hung them on the live Christmas tree, donated by the Cypress Historical Society.*

## **Cypress Top Christmas Party!**

*by Jim Sigmund*

On December 9, 2010, Harris County Precinct 3 hosted a Christmas Party in Juergen's Hall at the Cypress Top Historic Park. CHS members joined other volunteers to help Harris County hosts Fred Collins, Linda Martin-Rust and Kendra Kocab throw a party for the local area families. Children of all ages were able to create their own home-made ornaments, often with materials from nature (collected at the nearby Kleb Woods Nature Center). A variety of Christmas cookies and treats, as well as refreshments, kept up the sugar levels of the children, and gave them endless energy to move between the ornament-making tables and the 10-foot Christmas tree, donated by the Cypress Historical Society. The festive spirit was topped off by the beautiful sounds of the North Harris County Dulcimer Society.

## **From Our Members . . .**

### ***Rosehill Band Picture.***

I just received all the Historical info including the Calendar. The December picture has one name flaw. Bet you get that all the time.

The Rosehill Band picture . . . I have one of them. My father is Arthur Kobs and the two names that are switched - end of Row 1: last man with bass drum is Erich Benignus, so the other drummer is Arthur Jaeger. I'm sure of this because the two Benignus' are Dad's cousins, and I'm one of the few that still remember Erich. You have again done a great job with the Calendar and memberships.  
-- Margaret Kobs Kitzmann

### ***Thank You.***

Our out-going CHS President, Terri Sigmund, has done a great job this past year in leading CHS toward our goals. She promises to remain as active as her student Nursing classes will allow.

Also at this time, we would like to acknowledge and thank Jim Sigmund for all the research he does on Cypress history and genealogy. Together, Jim and Terri are a great team and CHS is fortunate to have them both.  
-- Darline Roth

## **The Rest of the Story . . .**

*By Jane Ledbetter*

In the November, 2010 issue of the Newsletter, we ran a picture of the old Satsuma Railroad Section House. The house is still standing today (barely!). Imagine our delight when CHS member Joyce (Schuenmann) Moore called us to say she knew who had lived in that house! Indeed, Joyce's mother, Naomi (Smith) Schuenmann, born in Heights Hospital in 1916, came home to that house and lived there until she was sixteen years old.

Naomi's mother died when Naomi was born; fortunately, Grace Smith was living with the family as a "family helper" and took on the task of caring for the newborn infant as well as Naomi's four sisters. A neighboring family also cared for Naomi some of the time with the idea of adopting her, but her father did not want that to happen. He ended up marrying the Grace; they then had three children of their own, making a total of eight children in the family.

One of the little boys in the family liked to play with matches, and one day the inevitable happened: the house caught fire and burned. The family moved into an old barn behind the house (it only had a dirt floor) where they lived until the house could be rebuilt.

Naomi's father died when she was sixteen years old; by that time one of her sisters had married and lived in Cypress across from the original St. John Lutheran Church. Naomi came to live with this sister and her husband. She attended worship services at St. John Church, as did the Schuenmann family who lived on Mueschke Road. In due time, Naomi became acquainted with Albert Schuenmann, a romance developed and they married. They built their home on Schuenmann property and raised their two daughters, Carolyn and Joyce, there. Joyce and her late husband built their home in the same area on Mueschke Road, where Joyce still lives today. Her son lives nearby.



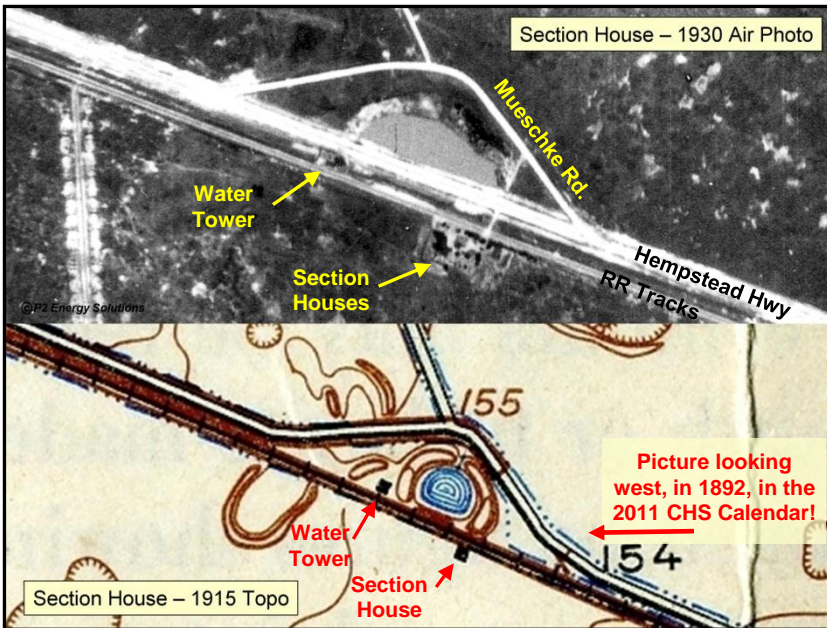
*Joyce Moore's parents: Naomi (Smith) and Albert Schuenmann.*

# Memories of Cypress . . .

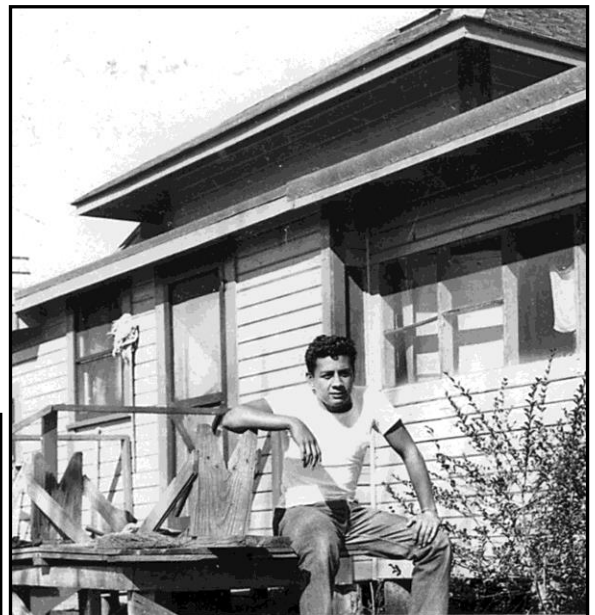
by Robert Rivera

The Southern Pacific Railroad ran along side Hwy 290 in the old days. The tracks were maintained by work crews living along side the tracks in what was called Section Houses. There was one at Fairbanks and one at Cypress. It was about 1 ¼ mile west from Cypress (at Mueschke Road). That was called Section House #4. There were six houses there. My father, Melecio Rivera, was the Foreman. Five other houses were there also, where the other workers and their families lived.

There was a big pond across the RR tracks, across 290 Hwy. The pond was big, about 200' long, and 10-12 feet deep. We used to swim and fish in it.



Comparison of the 1930 air photo to the same area on the 1915 topo map.

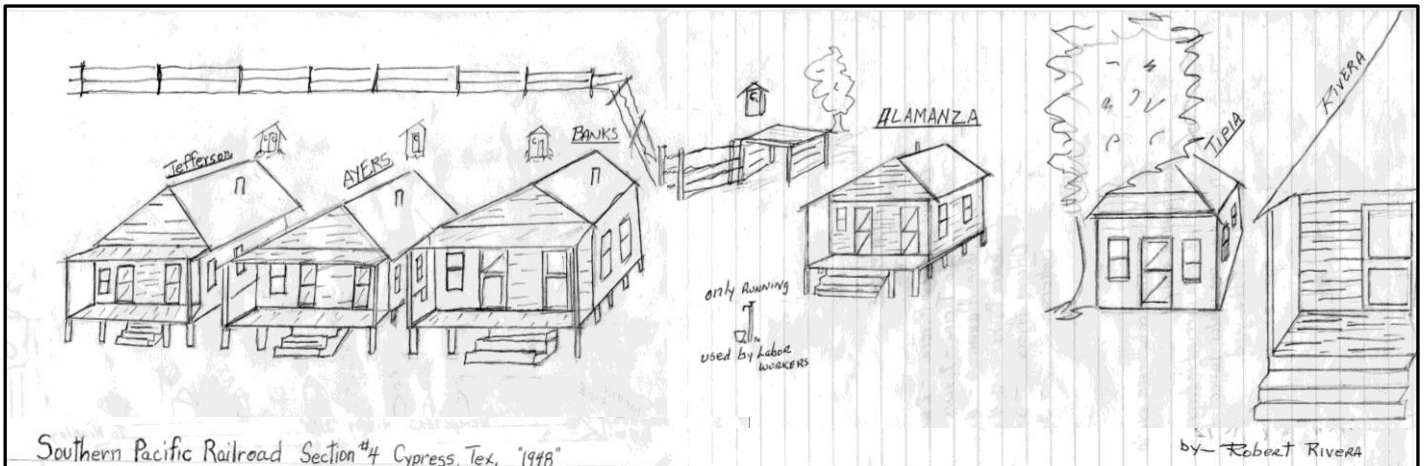


Robert Rivera, at 15 years old, in 1951. This picture was taken in back of the Cypress Section House.

The crew at the #4 Section House in Cypress were:

- Foreman Melecio Rivera – 2 sons
- Pete Tipia – 2 sons
- Jose Alamanza – 5 children
- James Banks – 4 children
- Orleans Ayers – 3 children
- Jefferson – 3 children

Only the Forman's house had indoor water. All the others had to get water from a single faucet in the middle of the yard, and carry it indoors. All bathrooms, of course, were outside.



Southern Pacific Railroad Section #4 Cypress, Tex. "1948"

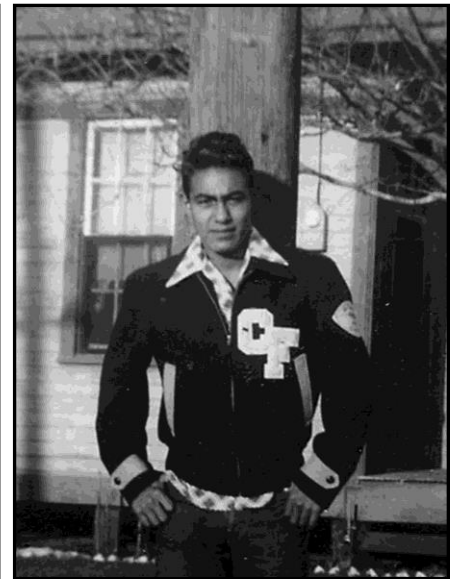
by Robert Rivera

## CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY - 2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jane Ledbetter	President	(281) 255-9297	janel_54@att.net
Karen McGilvery	Vice-President	(281) 246-1776	MMcgilveryt@aol.com
John Goodwin	Secretary	(713) 254-9589	JGoodwin64@comcast.net
Becky Martin	Treasurer	(281) 376-5054	bmartin115@gmail.com
Tammy Andrews	Director	(281) 758-0034	tandrews41@sbcglobal.net
Elroy Hirsch	Director	(281) 351-0984	jah787@peoplepc.com
Joyce Kleb	Director	(281) 894-1662	jtk1951@sbcglobal.net
Darline Roth	Director	(936) 931-9958	(none)
Erline Schoenfeldt	Director	(281) 255-2769	(none)



*Robert and Victoria Rivera, with Virginia and John Alamanza at the 2009 CF Class Reunion.*



*John Alamanza in 1950.*

## **Memories of My Father**

*by John Alamanza*

In the year of 1894, the 11th month, the 11 day our father Jose Martin Alamanza was born to Benito Alamanza and Tomesa Rodriquez in Zuronuato, Mexico

At the age of 19 years our father entered the United States by swimming the river coming from Michocan. Daddy started working for the railroad in Calvert, Texas where the railroad house section was. His foreman was Alfredo Begas until he was transferred to Cypress, Texas. In November 2, 1935 our daddy married Luz Rodriquez, daughter of Refugia and Ramon Rodriquez who came to the United States from San Luis Potosio.

In 9-10-1942, Daddy was employed by Southern Pacific RR. His foreman was J. Gray.

In 11-18-1947 his foreman was C. O. Powell in Cypress, TX.

In 11-28-1947 his foreman was F. C. Hooper in Ennis, TX.

In 1954 his foreman was Melecio Rivera in Cypress, TX.

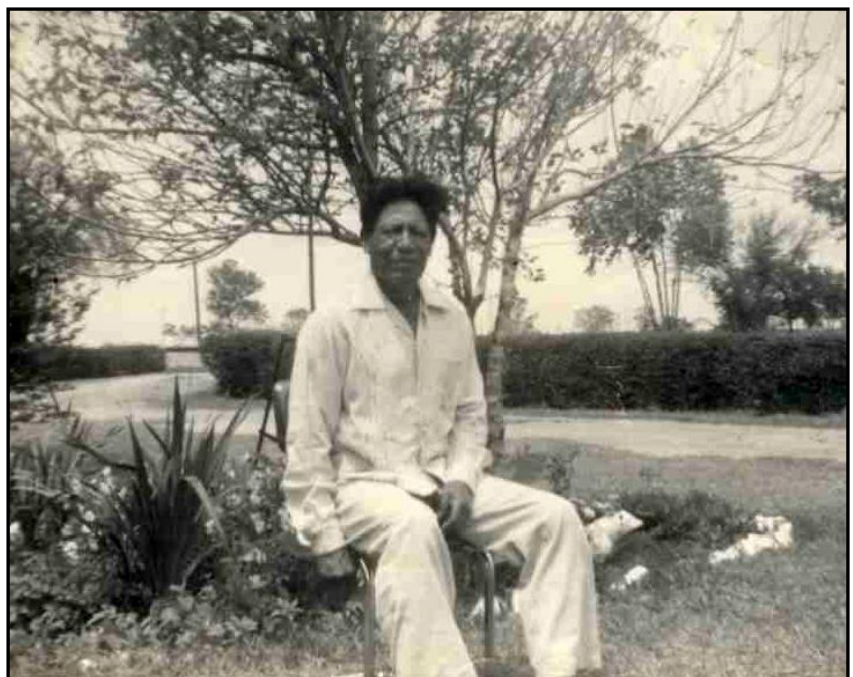
In 6-24-1958 his foreman was C. O. Powell in Cypress, TX.

Daddy and Mother had five children who are John Alamanza, Margaret (Martinez), Carmen (Martin), Mary (Vargas), and Tommie (Barrera) who, thanks to God, are still living. In Cypress, Texas, we were given houses to live in. Our neighbors were Mr. Rivera and family, Mr. Tapia and family, Mr. James Banks, and Mr. Orleans Ayus and family.

My mother, brother, and sisters worked in our garden and took care of horses, cows, chickens, pigs, ducks, rabbits, and dogs. We would cut wood for our stove while our father worked out of town. Mother and the girls sewed our clothes and canned food that we grew in our garden. The Waltons had nothing on us!

In 10-30-1958 Daddy retired from working with Southern Pacific. On September 24, 1974 we lost our father at the age of 80.

To the right is a picture of our father sitting under his apple tree. The round flower bed he is sitting in is our Mother's flower bed. Our Mother took great pride in her flower bed.



*John's father, Jose Alamanza, in May, 1956.*

Cypress Historical Society  
19518 Lutheran Cemetary Rd.  
Cypress, Texas 77433

CYPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

Individual (\$15)	_____	Sustaining (\$50)	_____
Family (\$25)	_____	Sponsor (\$100)	_____
Business (\$30)	_____	Corporate Sponsor (\$250)	_____
		Donation	_____

\* CHS is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Corp.

Make check payable to: Cypress Historical Society

Mail check and membership form to:

Becky Martin, 11911 Waterford Estates Ct., Tomball, TX 77377-2714

Questions? Please contact Jane Ledbetter at 281-255-9297

[www.cypresshistoricalsociety.com](http://www.cypresshistoricalsociety.com)