Commissioner Steve Radack and his staff advise everyone to stay mindful and exercise care to avoid the spread of COVID-19. Make sure to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue away in the trash. Avoid contact with people who are sick. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Please stay home when you are sick unless going to seek medical attention. Possible COVID-19 symptoms are fever, dry cough, and shortness of breath. If you feel like you are sick or have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, seek medical advice. Stay safe and stay healthy.

Group tours and activities at Cypress Top are temporarily suspended. Call 281-357-5324 or visit www.pct3.com for information and updates to the park calendar.
As Spring Break started towards the beginning of March, Cypress Top received many visits from families looking to learn more about their local history. A Cypress Historical Society Volunteer gave the young visitors a special hands-on history lesson.

The February Cypress Top Historic Bus Trip toured three vastly different but extremely interesting sites. The first stop explored San Felipe de Austin Museum near Sealy. The next stop looked at the Eagle Lake Depot Museum in Eagle Lake. The final destination was the Cat Spring Agricultural Hall in Cat Spring. If you are not familiar with any of these sites, the Seniors highly recommend them.

The San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site now features a relatively new facility full of interesting displays about the settlement as well as interactive exhibits for all ages. San Felipe de Austin was the unofficial capital established by Stephen F. Austin in 1824. The town grew and prospered until the Texas Revolution. To keep it out of the hands of the invading Mexican Army, the town was burned and the residents forced to flee during the Runaway Scrape. The historic site explains the day-to-day activities of the town, the people who lived there, and its importance to Texas History.

The newest exhibit in San Felipe is an entire room filled with photographs of the residents of the Austin Colony. The purpose of the exhibit was to put faces with the names that were left on many locations. The exhibit also showcases the change in
opinion and attitude towards photographs. Today, the ability to photograph and take pictures simply lies in the palm of one’s hand, but back then, it was a special, somber and serious event. People dressed up and did not smile. For many, they may have only been photographed once in their life. The dozens of photographs hanging on the wall came from both private and public collections. It felt much more personal and intimate to be able to see someone’s face while reading about his or her life story and contribution to Texas’ development. That is not to say the group did not take the opportunity to have fun and find some historical doppelgangers. Others enjoyed showing off their dramatic flair. San Felipe de Austin provided a personal and in-depth account of what once was considered home for hundreds of people.

After lunch, the group visited the Eagle Lake Depot Museum. While not a large building, the Museum is packed with fascinating train memorabilia and history. The Museum is actually housed in the original Eagle Lake Depot. It operated as many different businesses over the years, but has been restored as best as possible to its original state. Before even entering the Museum, two large freight scales sat outside for display. One can see the similarities between the ones at Eagle Lake and the one we display outside of Cypress Top. As the Seniors toured the office area, a working telegraph operated in the background, recovering a train order. A train even went by during the tour, serving as a well-timed reminder of the purpose of the museum.
The Eagle Lake Depot opened in 1910 and operated as a passenger carrier service until 1956. After that, it remained only a freight service until 1970. It served as a commercial building until 2011, when it finally became a museum dedicated to its original purpose. It is filled with hundreds of objects all relating to the railroad industry. Every item has a special story but one of the most interesting ones involves the railroad lanterns. The red, yellow, and green colors well known from the traffic light today originally come from the British Railroad. They found these colors to be the most recognizable and visible. Red to mean stop, green to mean go, and yellow to mean slow down are still widely recognized today by cars and trains alike.
The final stop on the bus trip visited the Cat Spring Agricultural Hall. Cat Spring was founded in Austin County in 1832 by German and Czech immigrants. It took about 24 years before the Agricultural Society was established. The Society was meant to educate people about agriculture, like the best time to plant and the best equipment to use. As these meetings grew more popular, they needed a proper space to host them. The hall was built in 1902 to house those meetings as well as to provide a prospering community with a fun community-gathering place. The hall is built with 12 walls and a large support beam in the center. This unique building structure meant that it provided the most room for activities and dancing. While Cat Spring only has a population of about 400, the hall has become a popular venue for the surrounding area. People from Bellville, Austin, and Houston regularly reserve the space for dances, festivals and weddings. Sometimes it can be booked up to 2 years in advance.
Signing Up for Senior History Bus Trips (Must be at least 50 years old to go on these trips)

We will continue to take reservations for bus trips. Registrants will be notified of any changes or cancellations.

You may sign up for the following trips:

**May 15:** Bryan Museum and Pier 21 Theater in Galveston.

**June 19:** Black Cowboy Museum in Rosenberg and a site in Richmond

**July 24:** Houston Museum of Fine Arts - Rienzi House European Decorative Art,
and the Museum of Southern History, Morris Cultural Arts Center at Houston Baptist University

Sign up for future trips by emailing cypresstop@pct3.hctx.net or calling (281) 357-5324. You may only sign up yourself plus one friend/spouse. No multiple reservations. You will get a confirmation e-mail a week before the trip if you have a seat.

Cypress Top Historic Park is open seven days a week from 7:00 a.m. to dusk. The buildings are open Tuesdays through Thursdays from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Formal tours of the museum complex led by CHS volunteers begin from Juergen’s Store at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. each Tuesday. However, our staff and volunteers are happy to have you visit the store anytime while we are there to give you an impromptu tour of any of the buildings. **Group (6 or more) tours may be booked Tuesdays through Saturdays between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.** Group tours are subject to staff availability, so we recommend you make reservations at least one month in advance. The park and museum buildings are open to all and, as with all events offered at Cypress Top Historic Park, **admissions and tours are free.**

Juergen’s Hall is a community center, offering many activities and classes for all ages. Please check the Precinct Three website at [www.pct3.com](http://www.pct3.com) for hours of operation and offerings of Juergen’s Hall Community Center.

Members of the Cypress Historical Society are in the Cypress Train Depot (bright yellow building) at Cypress Top Historic Park every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and on the third Saturday of the month from noon to 3 p.m. They have a great deal of genealogy information on most early Cypress area families. Drop in and visit them when you are in the area.

The May calendar can be found on the Precinct Three website under activity calendars. Select from the drop down menu [www.pct3.com](http://www.pct3.com)