Happy Valentine’s Day from Commissioner Steve Radack and the staff of Cypress Top Historic Park. We hope you take full advantage of the cool weather by visiting the park and museum buildings.

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The senior history bus trip in January traveled to Beaumont to visit the McFaddin-Ward House. This 14,000 square foot house was built in 1905. It was Perry and Ida McFaddin’s home from 1907 and then their daughter’s (Mrs. Mamie McFaddin Ward) home until she died in 1982. Before Mamie Ward's death, she created a foundation to maintain the home as a museum. It opened to the public in 1986.

James McFaddin and his son, William M. McFaddin, moved to Texas in the 1830s and began accumulating land. William served in the Battle of San Jacinto; oaks trees grown from acorns he collected on the battleground still stand at the McFaddin-Ward House today. By the time William’s son, Perry, reached adulthood, the family was wealthy from cattle ranching, rice farming and land speculation. Under Perry’s management, the McFaddin Ranches held more than 120,000 acres in Jefferson County. Perry was quoted by his daughter, Mamie, as saying, “Sister, don’t give up the land. They are not making land anymore.” The family became even wealthier after the 1901 Spindletop oilfield discovery, where they owned or had interest in more than 3,000 acres.

Unfortunately, the McFaddin-Ward House Foundation does not permit photos to be taken inside the house. The grandiose furniture and luxurious items it holds must be seen in person. It is clear to see that the McFaddins lived like royalty in their Beaumont home. After an extensive tour that included a carriage house with servants’ quarters, the seniors traveled to Kountze to eat at a well-known lunch buffet. After a hearty lunch topped off with peach cobbler, they traveled to Silsbee for a brief visit to the Ice House Museum and Cultural Center.

The Silsbee Ice House was built in 1930 by Gulf States Utility, and ice was manufactured in the building until 1981. Today it is a museum about the ice house, local culture and history, and it exhibits contemporary art from local artists and schools.
Above, most of the group...getting seniors into a group for a photo is akin to herding cats! Photo by the Ice House Museum Director.

Signing Up for Senior History Bus Trips (Must be at least 50 years old to go on these trips)

Future trips: **February 17, 2017**, Palacios: City by the Sea Museum and possibly the Luther Hotel; **March 17, 2017**, Liberty: Sam Houston Center, including research library, Jean and Price Daniel House and other historic structures; **May 19, 2017**, Waco: Waco Mammoth National Monument and the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame.

You may sign up for future trips **by emailing cypresstop@pct3.com 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 dawn to dusk. The buildings are only open on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Formal tours of the museum complex led by staff or volunteers begin from Juergen’s Store at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. each Tuesday. However, we are happy to have you visit the store anytime while we are there on Tuesdays. **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. It offers 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.

Our volunteer work parties for building maintenance **resumed in January and have moved to the second Tuesday of each month.** The work party in January tidied up the Juergen House. One dedicated volunteer dusted and vacuumed the house. She also removed the Christmas art work from the store windows. On another Tuesday, volunteers made short work of removing the Christmas decorations from the railings around the store and the garland from in front of the Juergen House.

Please come and join us. Each work party is from 9 to 11 a.m. Contact Jim Wilson at cypresstop@pct3.com if you would like to help.

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 also 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 February and March calendars can be found on the website. There is a link from the park web page or you can look under the Community Center events calendar. The website is [www.pct3.com](http://www.pct3.com)