Commissioner Steve Radack and the staff of Cypress Top Historic Park wish you a Happy Easter and invite you to a special open house at Cypress Top's Juergen's Store on Saturday, April 8, from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Tours of the Juergen home and other buildings will be available as well.

We had two special tours of Cypress Top during March. The Oak Forest Belles & Beaus and the Peace Lutheran Seniors toured the old general store, the house and the depot. One group even managed to tour six buildings!

Our March volunteer work party focused on cleaning the store. Spring Break was in full swing, so our volunteer group included some energetic student volunteers. Oh, are our windows clean! Our volunteer work parties for building maintenance are the second Tuesday of each month. Please come and join us. Each work party is from 9 to 11 a.m. Contact Jim Wilson at cypressstop@pct3.com if you would like to help.

The senior history bus trip in March visited the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center near Liberty. The center includes many public records for most of the counties in southeast Texas. It also has many history books about the area and personal records of historical significance for the region. In addition to the library and research center, the facility also preserves a historic church, two historic homes and the Jean and Price Daniel House.

The main library and archives building contains artifact displays which include many Native American artifacts from the local area. It also houses a significant collection of state and regional historical items. The seniors were invited into the archives proper, which is closed to visitors normally. There they could see the actual records stored, and the archivist showed them an example of a county ledger which was all hand written. She also showed them some type and advertising plates from a printer's cabinet of an old local newspaper.

The Episcopal Church was built in 1898 and was originally near the courthouse square in Liberty. It is purported to be the oldest church building in continuous use in Liberty County. It was moved to this site, restored, and updated with electricity and air conditioning. The Gillard-Duncan house was built by a plantation owner in 1848. It was recently moved to the site and is not yet open to the public. One interesting aspect of this house is that the pillars it sits on are bald cypress tree trunk sections. Cypress was used because it was plentiful in the area, while stone or concrete was unavailable.
The Norman House was staged with period furnishings including wallpaper, rugs and furniture. This house was built in 1883. It has a central hall with two or three rooms off each side of the hall. Along with Victorian décor, the home featured 20th century aspects as well, including some furniture which belonged to a later occupant, the Norman family.

The tour highlight was the Jean and Price Daniel house built in 1982. It is patterned after the Governor’s Mansion in Austin. The Daniels owned the home only a few years before donating it to the state. Governor Daniel’s wife was a descendent of Sam Houston and Price was one of old Sam’s biggest fans. Consequently, the collection of books and memorabilia they donated to the state includes some genuine Texas history artifacts besides the many mementos Price Daniel acquired while Governor.
Following the tour of the research center, the group found a surprisingly good Italian restaurant in Liberty. To a person, they would all recommend it and many expressed they wished it was closer to home in Precinct 3. The fact that almost every person took home a to-go box allowed them to enjoy their wonderful Italian meal twice.

Following the hearty meal, the seniors then headed to the Colbert Rosenwald School Museum in Dayton. This museum is perched on the high bluff above the Trinity bottoms on the Colbert Elementary School grounds. The school operated from 1927 until 1967. This building is thought to have been built about 1933, with the assistance of philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears, Roebuck & Co., and Booker T. Washington. It is one of more than 5000 Rosenwald Schools that were built across the South to improve education for blacks in segregated schools.
The collection of artifacts in the school ranges from school-related memorabilia to general life among the community in the middle 20th century. The collection had many pictures of the Colbert Tiger football team and cheerleaders. There are memorials to beloved teachers, beginning with Mrs. Colbert and extending through the last principal of the school. Community artifacts ranged from horse harnesses to clothing to quilts. One inspirational quilt had an interesting note regarding its maker. The maker, a lady, was diagnosed with a terminal illness by her doctors and sent home, given only six weeks to live. The lady decided not to wait around for death, but instead to do something useful. She began making quilts for her family, and then her friends. Eventually, she had made 589 quilts. At 89, she is still going strong and producing quilts.

The Colbert Rosenwald School Museum still stands today because of the determination of a dedicated group of alumni. With the support of the Dayton ISD, the alumni were able to save the museum from demolition preserving the history and spirit of the school. The class of 1967 is the youngest of the alumni. One but wonders what will become of the museum when these dedicated alumni are no longer present to share their enthusiasm and school spirit with visitors.

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

Future trips: **May 19**, Waco: Waco Mammoth National Monument and the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum. **June 16** to the Bob Bullock State History Museum in Austin, and **July 21** to the Houston Museum of Natural Science to see the Mapping Texas: From Frontier to the Lone Star State exhibit.

You may sign up for future trips by emailing cypressstop@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 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 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 April and May 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