Commissioner Steve Radack wishes you a “Safe and Happy 4th of July.” We hope you enjoy one of the many planned community events celebrating this great day in our Nation’s history.

We had a group from a local daycare center visit this month. As is typical, the kids found many things which fascinated them in the store. Volunteer Jay Gavitt’s enthralling stories got the kids thinking about what life was like in the past.

Cypress Historical Society’s Summer Camp, Hands-on-History, was the last week of June and had 20 participants. The kids toured all the museum buildings at the park. They also had a variety of activities centering on the history of Cypress, oral histories and genealogy. On one day, they visited Kleb Woods Nature Center and tried their hands at blacksmithing.
Campers build a log cabin as an activity. Photo by Jim Wilson.

Campers in front of the 1956 Humble Service Station during a tour of the park. Photo by Jim Wilson.

A camper studies a picture of old Cypress while other campers watch and reflect on the past. Photo by Jim Wilson.
The senior history bus trip in June visited the Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin. If you have not visited this museum, it is world class and beyond comparison to any other museum regarding Texas history. One of the draws for the visit was the La Belle exhibit. The La Belle is one of the ships of the French explorer La Salle. It was recovered from the bottom of Matagorda Bay nearly twenty years ago. It has been preserved and is reassembled in the museum. Much of the salvaged cargo and artifacts are on display as well. Some of these will soon leave and return to France, which actually owns the ship and cargo.

The seniors enjoyed a one-hour guided tour through the museum’s three floors. Artifacts from the La Belle accompany the actual ship on the first floor of the museum, while the second floor covers Texas history from 1821-1936. The third floor explores the emergence of Texas on the national stage in the 20th century. Two well-informed and trained docents were very engaging during the tour. One of the more interesting things pointed out was the museum floor in front of the Alamo display. Embedded in the floor were items which would have been found at the scene of that battle, including shell casings, pieces of guns and gunpowder pouches. Participants also learned about the three C’s which drive the Texas economy: cotton, cattle and crude oil.
The group listens to the story about the La Belle artifacts in the cabinet, Photo by Jim Wilson.

For lunch, seniors tried a variety of restaurants near the museum. Then in the afternoon, some returned to the Bullock Museum while others visited the capitol building. A small group visited the Harry Ransom Center on the University of Texas campus. This center displays one of the original Gutenberg Bibles, one of the rarest and most valuable of all books, and perhaps the most sought after. After a full day, the group returned to Cypress Top at 7 p.m.

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

Future trips: You may now sign up for the July 21 trip to the Houston Museum of Natural Science’s exhibit Mapping Texas: From Frontier to the Lone Star State, the August 4 trip to Port Arthur’s Museum of the Gulf Coast, and the September 15 trip to the Bastrop Museum & Visitor Center. 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. (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 July and August 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