Commissioner Steve Radack and his staff wish you a great Texas Independence Day. We invite you to visit the park and museums and learn more about the local history of the Cypress area.

A group of eager Boy Scouts volunteered to paint the tree trunks in the park. Painting the bases of trees was a common practice in the early 20th century. It was thought to help protect the tree from insects and helped define a well-kept yard or park. E. F. Juergen began painting the trees in this location at least by the 1920s and the family continued the tradition until they donated the property to Harris County. We have continued the tradition as well. The boys were diligent and did a great job painting the trees, which should be good for another three or four years.

The February History Bus Trip went to the Danish Heritage Preservation Society Museum Complex in Danevang. The visit started with a tour of the Danevang Lutheran Church. The guide explained the history of the church, its role in the Danish community and the history of the community itself. Danevang, which means "Danish field", was first settled in 1894. Many of the Danish immigrants were farmers who soon found out the crops they grew in Denmark did not do well in this climate. So, they adapted and started raising cotton. The immigrant families adapted to their new culture, changing the area’s demographics and economy.

Citizens of Danevang recognized the need to preserve their history, so in 1993, several residents and former residents formed the Danish Heritage Preservation Society. The society has a complex of three buildings: the Danevang Lutheran Church, "The Pioneer House" and the museum building, dedicated in 2001.

The Pioneer House was a residence built in 1898. It was donated to the Society and was moved to its present location. It was gradually repaired and restored to almost the original configuration. The furnishings and appliances are from the pre-1920 era and are not necessarily original to the house. One of the guides proudly pointed out the donated baby crib that he had slept in when he was a child.

The museum building resembles a typical Danish barn with a red roof. It houses exhibits depicting various aspects of the everyday lives of Danevang's pioneer settlers. Displays stress the ties that still exist with the Mother Country of Denmark, and the Viking influence. Because farming has been the primary occupation in Danevang, the museum shows samples of the crops grown in the area and how methods and equipment used for growing these crops have changed over the years. One section of the museum is dedicated to family histories of various pioneers of Danevang. Descendants may use this space for their family exhibits.

Lunch was provided by volunteers from the heritage society. They served a sit-down Danish meal to the seniors. The meal included dessert and was followed by a short film about the site itself and the history of the museum. After the film,
the seniors were free to more closely examine the displays and artifacts in both the museum and The Pioneer House or visit the museum’s gift shop. Some of the seniors bought the cookbook containing all the recipes for the dishes served at the sit-down lunch. One of our seniors later reported that he had prepared most of the dishes for his family’s Sunday dinner.

At left, the seniors enter the museum. At right, the monument with info on Danevang’s history and settlers. Photos by Jim Pulliam.

At left, tour participants view a short film on Danevang’s history. At right, some of the exhibits in the museum. Photos by Jim Pulliam.

At left the traditional Danish lunch begins. At right a close-up of the meal. Photos by Jim Pulliam.
Signing Up for Senior History Bus Trips (Must be at least 50 years old to go on these trips)

Future trips: There is now a waitlist for the March 16th trip to the Texas Cotton Gin Museum in Burton and Chappell Hill Museum in Chappell Hill. You may now sign up for the May 18th trip to Beaumont for a Neches River boat cruise. 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 now 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, we 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. 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 February and March calendars can be found on the Precinct 3 web site www.pct3.com. There is also a link from the Park’s web page.