Commissioner Steve Radack and his staff wish you a Happy Easter and a Happy San Jacinto Day. If you would like to learn more about Texas history, we recommend the San Jacinto Symposium on April 6 at the University of Houston-Downtown. This year’s Symposium will feature “Women and the Texas Revolution”. The Annual San Jacinto Battle Reenactment will take place on April 13 at the San Jacinto Monument. This is a great way to introduce your children or grandchildren to Texas History. Information about both events can be found on the web.

The Senior History Bus Trip for March visited Goliad. Few towns have such early history and are more closely associated with the Texas Revolution and Independence than Goliad. The Seniors first stopped at a well-known “Texas landmark,” Buc-ee’s, on Hwy 59 in Wharton. Then it was on to Goliad State Park and Historic Site. Once there the Seniors proceeded up a small hill to the Franciscan Mission Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo de Zuñiga. The Mission was originally established in 1722 on Matagorda Bay, moved to Victoria in 1726 and again to Goliad in 1749, where it remains today. By 1788 the Mission was growing a variety of crops and had over 15,000 head of cattle. The priests armed the native peoples living at Mission Espíritu Santo to defend against raiding Lipan Apache and Comanche groups. By 1790, the raids became more regular and severe. Raiding, desertion, and disease caused the native population to decline. Although ordered to secularize the mission in 1794 into private ownership, the order was ignored until after Mexican Independence in 1821. The Franciscan Friars still resisted and continued to minister to local settlers until the mission was fully secularized by 1830. After Texas became a state in 1845, the Mission fell into disrepair. The site and its outlying buildings were used for a variety of purposes. Residents of Goliad were permitted to take stones from the structures to reuse in new buildings. By the 1930s most of the mission structures were gone. However, with the Texas Centennial in 1936, interest in the old historic site was renewed, and the Civilian Conservation Corps rebuilt the Mission between 1935 and 1941. The restoration has been an inspiration and model for the process to recreate 18th Century Spanish-American Architecture. Additional construction in the 1960s and 1980s brought the Mission back to its 1749 appearance. The Mission was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on August 22, 1977.
Inside the Mission quarters are displays and exhibits of what life was like for those that lived there. There were looms, a blacksmith shop, and other exhibits that displayed everyday life at the Mission in the 18th Century.

At left, the blacksmith display in the foreground. At right, a display of the Franciscans' daily life. Photos by John Lumb.

After the Mission, the Seniors went to the Goliad Square where they explored and dined at various restaurants. Following a pleasant lunch, they then walked a block away to the Goliad County Museum. This small building houses a great variety of artifacts and is interpreted by a dedicated and knowledgeable group of staff and volunteers. Our Seniors loved the place, and we had to drag them away for the long ride home.

Above, the Seniors explore the Goliad County Museum. Photo by Florence King.
The last stop of the day was Prasek’s in Hillje, Texas. This roadhouse is an institution and a favorite place for our Seniors to stop on the way home. Many leave with bacon, sausage, pies, and other items to tide them over for the weekend.

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

The **May 17** trip will be to Schulenburg to tour the painted churches in the area. You may add your name to the waitlist for this trip. The **June 21** trip will be to the Vincent van Gogh Exhibit at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. 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, 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, 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 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 Precinct 3 website, [www.pct3.com](http://www.pct3.com). There is a link from the park web page as well.