

Aug. 2008

JAILHOUSE NEWS



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Welcome to the Friends of the Llano Red Top Jail. Our goal is to preserve the Llano Red Top Jail to its original glory, notwithstanding its later accoutrements (i.e., graffiti dating back to 1918). We also intend to restore associated structures, including the Doolittle Chappel/School. Your membership erupts a grass-roots effort to preserve the historical structures that we hold dear to Llano, Texas. We are now a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization, thanks to you.

I vow to keep everyone in the Friends informed of all major activities and give a heads-up of coming events through a regular newsletter. The response from all of the people who came to our first meeting of the Friends of the Red Top Jail was phenomenol. I hope that everyone in attendance enjoyed the event and I look forward to working with you this year. *Sheri Zoch.*



JAIL KEYS FOUND! Mike Reagor finally received the LARGE keys to the various jail cells from the Daughters of the Texas Republic. The keys still work! How cool is that!

HAUNTED HOUSE?: How about doing a Llano Haunted House at the Red Top? Think about it, we can lock kids into the cells, hang a dummy from the gallows... OK, we can tone it down for the little kids.

RED TOP JAIL GHOSTS: The Austin Paranormal Society and the Llano ghostbusters recently visited the Red Top to hunt for ghosts. The Austin Paranormal Society photographed several "orbs", including one that looks remarkably like a person looking out of a window? Mike Reagor has this on his computer, if you are interested. The Llano society met in July and sent several videos of their experience to various sources in Austin for interpretation, and they came up with some "hits". Check out the story in the Llano County Journal.

CAN YOU VOLUNTEER? There is a lot to be done, and we need all of you to volunteer with whatever talents you have. Please call Sheri (325-248-0284) if you have any interest in (1) researching the Red Top's history, (2) recording oral histories from local residents who know stories about the Red Top, or (3) helping with the accurate historical preservation of the building. We also need people who have computer skills (including Photoshop, ArcSoft and website generation). **HELP!**

Now, for more serious stuff...

GRANTWRITING: We received a grant from the LCRA for \$24,000 to replace the red roof. The Red Top will have a new red metal roof within the next year! However, we need to match that with \$6,000. This may be done through fundraising, city coffers or with funds already approved to us from the County (~\$9600). Friends board member Tom Dalrymple is spearheading the bidding process for the accurate roof reconstruction. Thanks, Tom!

Walt Zoch, a chemist working in Austin, has agreed to determine the chemical nature of the Red Top roof at no charge. He will tell us whether it is a copper/nickel alloy, galvanized steel or what. We are pretty sure the ridgeplate was made of lead, so that won't be replaced exactly...

We are submitting a grant due Aug. 29 to the Texas Historical Commission for \$30,000, with \$30,000 matching funds to be obtained from city/county coffers and fundraising. This money will be mainly used for bracing in order to prevent the east and west gables from falling down and the major cracks from eroding further. Keep your fingers crossed...

We also will be submitting a grant due Oct. 1 to the National Trust for historical architect Karl Komatsu to do a preservation master plan of the Red Top. This will tell us what needs to be done, phase by phase. A plan like this will greatly assist us in writing grants, since it lays out what needs to be done and in what order.

We've got several other small grants lined up to write. Sheri Zoch is nailed to the computer these days writing as many grants as possible for the Red Top. One of Sheri's favorite bands is Asleep At the Wheel, who had a sage line in their hit song, "Ain't nobody here but us chickens". They said, "It takes a lot of sitting getting chicks to hatch!".... Cluck!

VIDEOGRAPHY: We are interested in producing videos about the jail for: (1) tours of upper stories for those with limited accessibility, (2) documentation of repairs, (3) promotion and (4) oral histories (including those about the Doolittle Chappel).

Since Llano has a lot of reenactors available, we are thinking of making a short video of some of us in period costume booking Johnny Ringo (our most famous inmate) into the jail. We can then use this video for our website – I know, what website? Frank Rowell is updating the Red Top web page on the Chamber of Commerce website. Thanks, Frank! Call us if you are interested in participating.

DOOLITTLE CHAPPEL: Gene Hall Miller has agreed to work on an oral history with Doris Revada, the last teacher of the Doolittle school and an active member of the chappel for many years. We would like to document everything that we can about the chappel as a prelude to its reconstruction. Notably, Dale Fry donated a treasure trove of documents related to the Chappel, including white and black people's burial records dating back to the 1920s, Doolittle Chappel meeting minutes, photos of Llano black cowboys, early black citizens, and more. Thank you, Dale!

Walt Zoch has scanned the photos into the computer and printed them out for future accessibility (Thanks and kisses, Walt). We intend to put these on display at the Red Top. Can anyone help with this display? Gene and Walt will archive all of these items. We will then store the original valuable documents in a safety deposit box. Because of fires at the courthouse, these may be some of the only records of these early events in existence in Llano. The Friends of the Llano Red Top Jail will treat them as such.

**THANKS FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT
FROM THE "FRIENDS OF THE LLANO
RED TOP JAIL" BOARD OF
DIRECTORS:**

President: *Sheri Zoch*

Vice President: *Tom Dalrymple*

Secretary: *Sandy Shaw*

Treasurer: *Ovetra Hartman*

Member: *Frank Rowell*

Member: *Gene Hall Miller*

APPLICATION FORM FORM
FRIENDS OF THE LLANO RED TOP JAIL

The Friends of the Llano Red Top Jail is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the Llano Red Top Jail, as well as to determine a function for the structure (i.e., some kind of a museum). Members are encouraged to assist in the restoration projects and attend an annual meeting to elect directors and discuss projects.

Name(s): _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Phone numbers: _____

Could you help us with: (circle one or more)

Jail tours Work parties (cleaning) Fundraising

Organizing meetings Painting and repairs Accounting

Historical research Newsletter

Assisting with bids for contractors

Other _____

Our current membership dues are \$20 individual and \$35 family (household). Please enclose money order or a check made out to Friends of the Llano Red Top Jail and send to Sheri Zoch, 700 E. Green, Llano, TX 78643. You will receive a membership card. Questions, call 325-248-0284.

Thank you!