

September 08

Vol. 2

# JAILHOUSE NEWS



Hi Friends,

We've been really busy since the last newsletter, so lots to tell about. Welcome to new members. Like our new logo? Danielle Carmichael designed it for us – we own it, so can use it on any documents we wish.

## **FUTURE EVENTS:**

### *1. Haunted House (Oct. 30 and 31)*

The Llano Volunteer Fire Dept. Auxiliary will hold the annual Haunted House at the Red Top October 30, 31. Don't tell the kids, but we have some fun and creepy things planned. Like, a real casket with a live person laying in it, a skeleton playing the old organ, and of course, locking up kids in the jail cells. Tom Suarez from the Llano News will take pictures of kids locked in the jail and post them on his website for parents to buy. Both the Llano VFD and Tom Suarez will contribute a portion of their proceeds to the Friends. Bring your kids and grandkids!



### *2. Heritage Days (Oct. 18)*

As part of Llano Heritage Days we will have jail tours. Mike Reagor plays the sheriff and Sheri plays the jailor's wife. Tom Suarez will also photograph anyone who wants to be locked into the jail. Now that we found the jail cell keys, we may actually be able to free the prisoners!

### *3. Paranormal Soc. Seance (Dec. 5)*

If anyone wants to see ghosts, a paranormal society is holding an all night seance. If the Haunted House doesn't scare you, maybe this will?

## **WHAT IS THE RED TOP, ANYWAY?**

There's been a lot of speculation about the composition of the Red Top roof. Turns out Pamela Fowler was right – it was painted red. Walt Zoch did the microchemical analysis of the red top roof and determined that it was steel with a lead coating. On top of that was an iron based pigment with the remains of a binder, suggesting a red paint. The ridgecap was also painted red, but was steel with a zinc coating (galvanized steel). A decorative metal piece was pure zinc with a tar coating. We still don't know about the gallows roof, but the LCRA has volunteered to lend us a cherry picker to sample the tile up there.

Because of the lead and other issues, the Board decided that the best way to use the LCRA grant money is to repair the holes and flashing, coat the roof and paint it red again. We will need help from people who recall the exact red color to match it, so we will probably present a series of red swatches for Llanites to choose. Of course, the City of Llano will make the ultimate decision for the roof renovation.

## GRANTWRITING NEWS:

### 1. *National Trust*

We are submitting a grant due Oct. 1 to the National Trust for the Master Plan that was mentioned in the last newsletter. This will help guide us in the serial renovation of the Red Top. Last year the City of Llano paid for a structural engineer (Pat Sparks) to tell us what needed to be done to preserve the Red Top. He said we will need ~\$420,000 to provide temporary bracing, install concrete piers, etc. As grantwriter, I am taking a piecemeal approach by setting goals and asking for money a little at a time. One of the main recommendations of the Sparks report was to hire Karl Komatsu to produce a Master Plan to assist with this orderly progression of grants.

### 2. *San Antonio Conservation Society*

We are also submitting a grant due Aug. 26 to the San Antonio Conservation Society, which has sponsored renovation of the Blanco Courthouse and other non-San Antonio locales. This grant will be to partially match the grant submitted last month to the Texas Historical Commission for bracing.

### 3. *Llano County Hotel Tax Grant*

If you read the local papers, you'll know that Llano County recently allocated some hotel tax money for a grant that is intended to promote overnight stays in Llano Co. hotels, like an event. The treasurer assured me that an event at the Red Top would certainly be considered. One idea I have heard so far is to hold an artist "paint-in", where artists paint/draw the Red Top and then come back for a competition and/or auction of their work. Another idea is to hold a music festival (bluegrass?) /cowboy poetry/ Red Top storytelling. Since so many of the people I have talked to have stories about the Red Top, we need to start collecting this information as oral history. Therefore, the storytelling could be recorded and added to our archives. If you have some ideas about an event, please call Sheri. Your input is always welcome.

If any of you know about other grants that I can apply for, let me know. I am happy to write it, even if it is for not very much.

## DOOLITTLE CHAPEL

The Friends now has a safety deposit box to protect the archives of the Red Top and Doolittle Chapel.

Gene Hall Miller and Walt Zoch have agreed to assist with the archives. Dale Fry gave us a box of INCREDIBLE documents related to the Doolittle Chapel. In it were pictures of Llano black people, articles about the Doolittle Chapel and ledgers dating back to 1928 about the Chapel. These are now safely stowed away.

Walt scanned the pictures of the black people, mainly black cowboys, into the computer and printed them out on 8 X 10 photo paper. Gene and I met with Doris Revada to help identify some of the people in the pictures and articles. Doris was happy to help identify some of these people, although she pointed out that many of the photos were before her time!

The Ledgers included in the Dale Fry collection are amazing. For example, they show the money paid to the Doolittle Chapel Pastor in 1944-45 (\$206.06) with original receipts, Board meeting minutes, race relations, benevolence pledges, discussions about "insurancing the parsonage" and many, many other fascinating entries. On July 11, 1949, at the monthly business meeting, "It was moved that two dollars \$2.00 be drawn out of the church treasurers for Quarterly Conf. Jul. 26. It was moved that the pastor would take the organ and make a pulpit for the church. Closing song, Bless Be the Tide. Sect. Sis. Dorothy Ward." This material is priceless.

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

**President:** *Sheri Zoch, 325-248-0284*

**Vice President:** *Tom Dalrymple*

**Secretary:** *Sandy Shaw*

**Treasurer:** *Ovetra Hartman*

**Member:** *Frank Rowell*

**Member:** *Gene Hall Miller*

**APPLICATION 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 and Doolittle Chapel, as well as to determine a function for the structures (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!*