

The BATTLE REPORT

1836 1945

San Jacinto Battleground/Battleship TEXAS State Historic Site

Report for December 25, 2006 through December 31, 2006

Now on the web at www.usstexasbb35.com & www.texianlegacy.com

"The purpose of this newsletter is to communicate the site's day-to-day natural and cultural resource management activities. Our goal is to inform and educate our staff, partners, and friends – and those we have yet to meet – Welcome!"



COMMANDER'S CALL:

- ❖ Friends of San Jacinto Battleground President Jan DeVault nabbed the story below from the Houston Chronicle on Christmas morning, about state highway 134, aka Battleground Road, leaving TXDOT jurisdiction to that of Harris County, Precinct 2. We will likely learn more about it in months ahead:

Top Stories

Dec. 25, 2006, 11:20AM

By Rad Sallee

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The state will hand over to Harris County a 3.5-mile stretch of Texas 134, known as Battleground Road. The county is planning a park near the south Lynchburg Ferry landing nearby, part of an overall effort aimed at making the area more appealing to businesses.

Photo: DAVE ROSSMAN: FOR THE CHRONICLE



North End Of Battleground Road Near Monument Inn

Fight for San Jacinto Upgrade Still On

Commissioner works to beautify battleground area despite failure to get \$10 million

Where it is: Battleground Road

Harris County Commissioner Sylvia Garcia is continuing a battle for park and road improvements at San Jacinto, even though the county didn't get hoped-for reinforcements in the form of a federal grant. At her request, the Texas Transportation Commission voted this month to turn over to the county a 3.5-mile stretch of Texas 134 called Battleground Road, from Texas 225 (the Pasadena-La Porte Freeway) to the Lynchburg Ferry.

Garcia had sought a \$10 million federal grant for road upgrades as part of Project Stars, the initiative she and the private Economic Alliance-Houston Port Region are leading. The effort is intended to increase business in east Harris County by making the industrial area around the battleground and ferry crossing more visually appealing while highlighting its crucial role in Texas' independence.

But the Texas Department of Transportation announced last month that funding wasn't available for the requested Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program grant. The grant, for a beautification effort along the roads that serve the San Jacinto Battleground, was among hundreds TxDOT scrapped statewide because of federal cutbacks.

Project Stars is continuing, however, funded by county park money and private contributions, including \$450,000 in seed money Garcia raised earlier this year, spokesman Paul Mabry said. The name alludes to the Lone Star of Texas atop the San Jacinto Monument, and stars will be a central theme in the project's artwork and landscaping.

Garcia aide Mark Seegers said plans for the Battleground Road area include development of parkland near the south Lynchburg Ferry landing and improvements to David G. Burnet Park near the north landing. Burnet, first president of the Republic of Texas, owned land where the 10-acre park sits.

rad.sallee@chron.com

- ❖ **Diane Schenke, Executive Director of The Park People, has requested that we pass the notice below on to any groups or individuals who may be interested in joining hers for a “State Parks Day” at the State Capitol on January 17. Attendees will have a chance to hear the Parks Bill promoted, etc.:**



THE PARK PEOPLE

**State Parks Day
January 17, 2007**

Join the “Parks Bus” from Houston

Meet with your legislators

Wear Green!

Hear the Parks Bill promoted at the State Capitol

Why:

- **Parks supporters from throughout Texas will be in Austin to meet with legislators that day to support adequate funding for parks**
- **Bill to provide adequate funding for parks will be promoted that day in the Capitol at 1:30 by bill sponsors, Senator Harvey Hilderbran (Chr, Culture, Recreation and Tourism Committee) and cosponsors.**

Your Role:

- **Meet with your local state senator and representative about parks legislation.**
- **If you are unable to join the bus, please consider meeting with the Houston staff of your local state senator or representative that day; contact us for more information.**

Details:

- **Bus will leave 3015 Richmond at 8 am, and return by 7 pm**
- **Cost: \$25/rider**
- **Legislative training provided on the bus by Joe Turner (Director, Houston Parks and Recreations Department).**

Contact Diane Schenke (713/942-7275 or dschenke@parkpeople.org) to reserve your place on the bus!

- ❖ Friends Group President Jan DeVault sent us the following correspondence by way of Ramona Davis of the Greater Houston Preservation Alliance a few weeks ago, and space restraints have prevented us from inclusion in the newsletter until now. The announcement deals with the TXDOT enhancements:



GREATER
HOUSTON
PRESERVATION
ALLIANCE

Houston's Local Partner of the National Trust for Historic Preservation

Contact your elected officials now to save Transportation Enhancements in Texas

Greater Houston Preservation Alliance has joined with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Texas and Texas Downtown Association to respond to the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) recent notice that it will stop funding the Transportation Enhancement Program, which has long benefited Texas downtowns and heritage tourism programs.

If TxDOT's decision stands, Texas will be the only state in the Union that does not benefit from federal transportation enhancement funding. In Houston, TxDOT's decision eliminates \$16 million that had been allocated to restore the Battleship TEXAS and jeopardizes the creation of the Buffalo Bayou Heritage Corridor.

Both the U.S. Code for the Surface Transportation Program (23 USC 133) and SAFETEA-LU (Public Law 109-59) state that 10 percent of federal transportation funding is to go to enhancement projects, but now the Texas Department of Transportation has decided, on its own and without consulting state legislators, to take away this valuable source of funding for important projects that improve Texas communities of all sizes.

For 15 years, hundreds of communities in Texas have utilized the Enhancement Program for downtown streetscape projects, visitor centers, historic preservation projects and hike and bike trails. More than \$466 million has been distributed to 505 different enhancement projects across Texas since 1991.

The Greater Houston area has benefited greatly from the Enhancement Program. Enhancement funds have been used to construct or improve the White Oak Bayou, Braes Bayou and Hermann Park trails, support the MKT/SP Rails to Trails project, landscape the Gulf Freeway, Hardy Toll Road and Bellaire Boulevard, construct pedestrian improvements in West University Place, and repair Allen's Landing in downtown Houston. The Fort Bend County Courthouse restoration in Richmond, Dickinson Depot restoration, Mustang Trail project in Alvin and League City bikeways project have all received enhancement funds.

Please contact Governor Rick Perry, your state and federal representatives, Texas transportation officials and the Houston-Galveston Area Council and tell them you disagree with TxDOT's decision to eliminate the Transportation Enhancement Program.

[Contact the Governor](#)

[Contact Your U.S. senators](#)

[Contact Your U.S. House Representative](#)

[Contact Your State Senator](#)

[Contact Your Texas House Representative](#)

[Contact Your Regional Council of Government](#)

[Contact the Texas Department of Transportation](#)

You may also contact the Texas Transportation Commission, however, the Commission only accepts written comments by mail (no phone calls, faxes or e-mails). To express your concerns, please write:

**Mr. Ric Williamson
Chairman
Texas Transportation Commission
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701-2483.**

[Click here](#) for the list of all of the commissioners.

Read what newspapers around Texas have been writing about TxDOT's decision:

[Houston Chronicle, December 3](#)

[Abilene Reporter News, December 5](#)

[Austin American-Statesman, December 7](#)

See for yourself what countless communities have been able to achieve with transportation enhancement funding. Be sure to highlight "Texas" and check all the years since 1992 in your search.

[Link to see a list of all Transportation Enhancement Projects in Texas](#)

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**Greater Houston Preservation Alliance
712 Main Street, Suite 110 Houston, Texas 77002**

ON THE HORIZON:

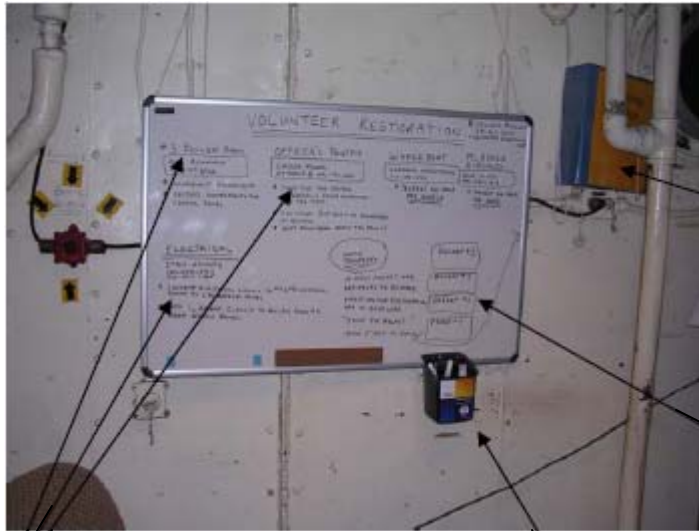
- Dec 1-31 Yuletide TEXAS Christmas Event Aboard BB35; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Daily**
- Jan 13 Friends of San Jacinto Battleground Annual Meeting at Monument Inn Restaurant at 3:30 p.m.**
- Jan 17 State Parks Day at the Texas State Capitol from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.**
- Jan 20 Hard Hat Tour aboard BB35, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**
- Feb 10-11 Remember the MAINE, aboard Battleship TEXAS from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**
- Mar 18 24th Annual Fords Of The 50's Old Car Picnic, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**
- Apr 8 Easter Sunday**
- Apr 14 Battle of San Jacinto Symposium at the University of Houston/Hilton Hotel & Conference Center**
- Apr 18 San Jacinto Museum of History Association Annual Dinner**
- Apr 21 San Jacinto Day Ceremony**
- Apr 21 San Jacinto Day Festival & Battle Reenactment**
- Apr 22 Battle of San Jacinto Triathlon**
- May 20 Bay Area Volkswagen Club's "Monumental Bug Bash"**

TROOP MOVEMENTS:

- ❖ Dennis Mitchell of the First Texas Volunteers sent us a restoration update which we pass along to all:

Restoration Update

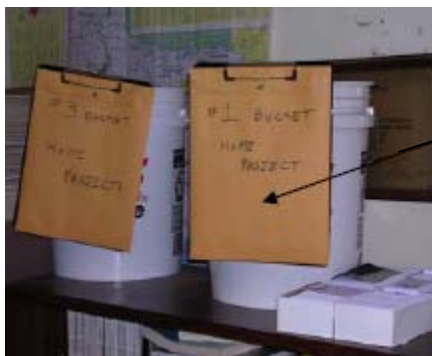
Just wanted to remind everyone that we have some new procedures in place and I hope you can take advantage of them. Our project board (See Photo below) will have up to date information on each of our projects. When you sign in take a look at the board to let you know what is on the agenda.



Project status information and the contact phone numbers of the project managers

Sign-out log book for items removed from the ship for restoration

After you sign out in the log book place your name in this box for a quick ref. who has what bucket



We have four "Home Work" buckets that are in our office. The artifacts are ready to go and the directions are in the envelope

Provided everyone puts it back after using them this is where the "ERASABLE" markers are and the eraser

Happy Holiday's Everyone, I want to thank all of you for making this restoration year a very safe and productive year.

Dennis Mitchell, First Texas Vols
Volunteer Restoration Coordinator

- ❖ Our next story is an update to a December 13 email from TPWD Region 4 Natural Resources Manager Andy Sipocz to Bill and Jan Neiman (See “Scuttlebutt” in the December 11-17 issue) concerning our prairie restoration project funded by the Shell Oil Company. Bill mentions an earlier attempt at doing this project a few years ago, which was foiled by heavy rains. He sent along a couple of photos from that time which have never been publicly distributed – that is until now! Thanks, Bill and Jan Neiman:



Ted Hollingsworth & Bill Neiman Survey Tallow Wood Chips South Of 4-Corners



Trailerred Harvester Machinery On Site



After The Rain...Comes The Sunshine Along With All Of Those Darn Weeds!

Andy and Company,

I appreciate you thinking of us in reference to the San Jacinto project. I am familiar with the site and the 100 acres of chipped tallows. I toiled with the hopes of restoring this site a couple years back. in fact, we even went so far as to move in harvest machinery just as a 3-4 inch rain fell. The site was so wet and the seed shattered, thus dashing our efforts, but we have the rest of our lives... still to try again.

I would definitely get a handle on the vaseygrass with a well thought-out herbicide program before attempting to re-seed with the natives. We have numerous options and experiences which could be applied to your project to eradicate/control/subdue the exotic grass...then, though I have not been back to the site recently, I presume the chipped wood is significantly decomposed. We might do a 'lil investigating of the soils ...analysis of nutrient/organic matter/ and dormant weed seed. We would definitely refrain from major disturbance...not even discing if able.

In lieu of burning, move towards perhaps a cut/bale and remove either the herbicided vasey...or even follow with benign no-till planted cover crop (summer 07 milo) to then be sure the vasey is gone...then cut/bale/remove (early-fall 07)...then no-till the native seed into the stubble. This approach would take up the better part of 07 to implement.

OR a second cool season cover crop could be put in fall 07 which could again be no-tilled into spring 08 with the native seed. This might allow for a black-gumbo native harvest to be conducted fall 07. Otherwise, we have Attwater National Wildlife Reserve seed in barn at this time which could be dedicated for fall 07 planting...if your "friends" speak up soon.

With a 'lil finaglin' and a 'lotta luck, we could line up some blackland sites for harvest next year specifically for this planting. unless the prairie remnant at the monument has gotten a whole lot better, I would not count on it producing enough yield to plant your 100 ac project. It would be best to find a larger resource to be the donor site if possible. We could definitely do some limited harvesting at San Jac just for posterity sake, but will need much more seed.

The coastal blackland sites are the trickiest....as when they get wet...they stay wet, and the harvest windows of opportunity are really quite small, lasting but maybe only a couple weeks. This also holds just as true for your spring planting windows. Actually a late-summer/early-fall dry stretch may be the best time to plant the natives ...especially at 5 feet above sea level.

In any effort, I would recommend a post planting follow-up component with some of the new generation herbicides which can be used over the top of many native spp plantings to maintain control of invasives as required ...till the new plantings are established...sometime within the first year. If nothing else, a provision to do spot treatments if needed.

Let me know how I can help you formalize your ideas into a real project. For fun, I attached a few pics from my files. Enjoy, and have a happy holiday to all!

Bill Neiman
Project Oversight

Neiman Environments, Inc.
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Junction, Texas 76849
off 325. 446. 4141
fax 325. 446. 8884

An Environmental Restoration Company
Native American Seed Farm Headquarters
Helping People Restore the Earth...
Solutions for Ecological Land Management
www.seedsources.com

*A Rare Aerial Of San Jacinto Battleground Post
Hydro-Mulching Of Trash Trees (At The Bottom)
(Note The Beginning Of Restoration Work On Goat
Island With Levee Construction At Top Of Photo)*



- ❖ **With all of the recent hullabaloo about historic sites, the loss of transportation enhancement dollars, and other current events, we have had an important story about the Texas State Railroad on hold. In hindsight, however, what better time to share this good news than the holidays with all of its fans? Happy New Year!**

Texas State Railroad Received A "New Lease On Life" Late Last Year!

EXTRA TP&W REVENUE COULD FUND RAILROAD

A portion of more than \$18 million in additional revenues in the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's budget could be used to fund the Texas State Railroad through August 2007, according to a letter to the department from the state's Legislative Budget Board dated Monday. State Sen. Todd Staples, R-Palestine, whose office along with several others have worked to save the threatened railroad, called it a "significant breakthrough" in the fight to keep the train that runs between Palestine and Rusk alive.

Officials have said previously that current funding will only keep the railroad operational through December, forcing it to become a static display after that time. "I think it's great news from Lt. Gov. (David) Dewhurst and Speaker (Tom) Craddick for the Texas State Railroad and the people of Texas," Staples said by phone. "The additional revenues have been identified which should provide funding for full operations for the Texas State Railroad through FY 07." Dewhurst and Craddick serve as co-chairs of the Legislative Budget Board.

Staples said late Monday afternoon that this was new information and there had not yet been a response from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and action will be necessary on their part. "Obviously, parks will have to respond in their internal organization and the allocation of the money," Staples said. "But I see no impediment. I view this as extremely great news ..."

When asked about the possibility that the extra revenues might be spent on other items instead of the railroad, Staples said, "It would be an unexplainable tragedy for parks not to use these identified revenues to continue full operations and give the agency, the Legislature and the local community the opportunity to work through a long-term operating plan. I'm confident that our dedicated commissioners and parks staff will view this as a clear opportunity and instruction to continue the Texas State Railroad."

Attempts to reach State Parks and Wildlife Department officials for comment were unsuccessful late Monday after the letter was released. The letter, addressed to the executive director of Parks and Wildlife, and signed by Dewhurst and Craddick, states that, "We believe there to be sufficient appropriations within the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department budget to fund the Texas State Railroad through August 31, 2007."

They point out that appropriations to the department included a contingent revenue rider, which states that the agency is appropriated additional funds in excess of the Comptroller's Biennial Revenue Estimate for each year of the 2006-07 biennium from two accounts. "It is our understanding that this contingent revenue rider resulted in additional revenues totaling \$18,148,706 in fiscal year 2006 and that similar amounts can be expected in fiscal year 2007," the letter states. "A portion of this additional revenue could be used to fund the Texas State Railroad through the end of the 2007 fiscal year."

CLEARING A 'HURDLE'

Staples said he is proud that those working to keep the railroad alive appear to have "cleared this hurdle." He said work has been under way since December 2005, when word came that budget constraints on a state level would mean cuts to the state railroad. At least 50 other state parks also felt the effect of budget constraints.

At the Texas State Railroad those cuts translated into a temporary shutdown of the Palestine-based operations of the railroad earlier this year. Texas Parks and Wildlife officials said then that without a change in funding, the costly railroad would have to be turned into a museum come 2007.

In August it was announced that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department asked the Legislative Budget Board for a \$650,000 supplemental appropriation to help keep the railroad running through the end of fiscal year 2007, which ends at the close of August 2007. Staples said Monday's letter should be seen as a response to not only that request, but also the original efforts to reopen the Palestine end of the railroad earlier in the year.

While Staples is optimistic about the letter and what it means, he also is aware of the work ahead. "This is a great short-term victory, but there is a great deal of work yet to be done for the long-term preservation (of the railroad)," Staples said. "It will take great cooperation between all parties ... I look forward with continuing to work with Rep. (Byron) Cook, the parks, the Legislature and the local communities to devise a long-term operating strategy to preserve this irreplaceable piece of history."

TASK FORCE

Earlier Monday, apparently before the Legislative Budget Board letter was distributed, the Texas State Railroad Preservation Task Force met and discussed various issues, including the possibility of hiring a lobbyist. The Task Force was formed in February at the request of Staples and state Rep. Byron Cook, R-Corsicana, and at the direction of the mayors of Rusk and Palestine. Staples praised the hard work of Cook as well as the task force members for their efforts in working to save the railroad. State Rep. Chuck Hopson, D-Jacksonville, has also worked to see the continued operation of the train.

The goal of the task force has been to save the railroad, whether it be with the state operating it or another entity taking over its operations, task force officials have said. The task force has been in talks with potential private operators that are interested in operating the railroad. Steve Presley, chairman of the task force, said Monday, before the letter's release, that he was hopeful about the fate of the railroad. "I think enough people have been letting their legislators know parks are very important to us," Presley said. "It's ridiculous to allow a historical treasure such as the Texas State Railroad Park to close."

Megan Middleton covers Gregg and Anderson counties. She can be reached at 903.596.6287. e-mail: news@tylerpaper.com.

By: Megan Middleton - 11/27/2006
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- ❖ **We heard from the TPWD Business Management crew at Austin Headquarters this week about an exciting new marketing campaign for bus tours, scheduled for later on this month:**

Please see the attached information sheet on the upcoming promotion at Indian Lodge. Invited parks are: Davis Mountains SP Complex; El Paso Complex; Big Bend Ranch Complex; Seminole Canyon, Fort McKavett, WBC, Government Canyon, Eisenhower Complex, Landmark Inn, Lake Livingston; WOB Complex; TSRR Complex; Abilene SP, Tyler SP, Caddo Lake Sp, Bastrop SP Complex. Parks should arrive by January 22 and stay through the evening of January 24, 2007. Rooms are being held at Indian Lodge and other area hotels. Please advise of your willingness to attend by January 8, 2007. Thank you,

**Michael L. Creviér, Director
Business Management
TPWD State Parks Division**

Concept for Bus Tour Promotion

Bus tours from all over the United States travel to and throughout Texas as our state gains more and more status as a premier destination. Undoubtedly, many bus tours drive by State Park and Historic Site entrances all the time and never stop—primarily because there is a basic lack of understanding and awareness of what Texas State Parks are all about.

Because bus tours are lucrative business, many competing destinations seek to capture this opportunity of capturing up to 54 paying customers in one vehicle. In addition, these folks are usually restricted to one activity unless overnight accommodations are available.

The Texas State Park System is limited in its ability to house these folks for overnight stays. Indian Lodge, Big Bend Ranch, Lake Brownwood, Bastrop and Garner are the only sites with sufficient overnight inventory to handle bus tour groups. Camping is usually not an option.

However, all parks and historic sites provide public restrooms, tours and with advance notice could arrange meal service through local foodservice providers.

Often times, bus tour operators seek out places that offer rest stops. A place where the bus load can get-off the bus for periods of time. The actual tour guides are looking for an opportunity to entertain these folks during these rest stops.

Some state parks/historic sites are currently or have provided this service in the past. Indian Lodge is hosting a bus tour operator familiarization tour in late January 2007.

We hope to use this opportunity to make these operators aware of our parks, their programs, tours and services. Ideally, by offering them our parks as rest stops with refreshments (coffee breaks) and an interpretive program or tour, interest and utilization can be created and we can introduce our products/services to these groups.

To this end, the division is hosting a small mini-travel show to showcase some of our parks from around the state. Invited parks will be provided with a 6' x 30" table (covered and skirted) from which to distribute promotional literature and any give-a-ways. Each park should be prepared to decorate their table top with items that will help communicate the parks programs and resources.

Thanks for agreeing to participate.

Mike

- ❖ In another story related to Battleship TEXAS, we received the memorandum below from Jeffrey S. Nilsson, Executive Director of the Historic Naval Ships Association:

29 December 2006

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MEMORANDUM 46-06

Subj: Various

1. **Open House - MARAD Beaumont Reserve Fleet.** On March 13 -14 and April 10-11, 2007, MARAD's Beaumont (TX) Reserve Fleet (BRF) will make accessible and available for donation to qualified organizations, a large collection of WWII-era and Victory ship equipment and components that has been maintained and preserved aboard the YFNB4 (the Navy Barge). This is the last major collection of WWII and Victory Ship material remaining in MARAD custody. Organizations qualified to participate in this Open House include non-profit museum ship organizations and maritime-related public and non-profit museum organizations and historical societies. Access will be provided via boat lift to and from the Navy barge.

An unconfirmed inventory listing of the material, a collection of photographs and the general BRF information has been uploaded to <http://www.pmars.msg.com/largefile.asp?ship=5616> <http://www.pmars.msg.com/largefile.asp?ship=5616>.

Organizations interested in participating in this event must first register at: <http://www.pmars.msg.com/artifact/organizationlogin.asp> <http://www.pmars.msg.com/artifact/organizationlogin.asp>. Organizations approved for participation will be notified shortly after registration. Visitation for this event will be supported on March 13th and 14th, and April 10th and 11th 2007, during normal business hours. Groups will be limited to five (5) people.

This will likely be the final opportunity organizations will have to access and obtain this WWII vintage material before its disposal. Selected material will be donated on a first come/first serve basis to qualified organizations that are immediately able to take custody of the material. Property transfer documentation will be completed at that time. Interested organizations not immediately able to take custody of the selected material will be afforded until no later than July 1st, 2007 to take custody or lose rights to the material. MARAD will make every effort to support organizations with crane lift and shore-side staging, but BRF material handling equipment and staging limitations may come into play. Specific material handling support requirements will be addressed as required.

Additional questions may be directed to Pete Wagner, at (202) 366-6129 or <mailto:peter.wagner@dot.gov> peter.wagner@dot.gov.

2. **ex-Charles F. Adams.** The Adams Class Veterans Association (ACVA) has received word from NavSea that ex-Charles F. Adams may be removed from the Donation Hold list as soon as February 2007. The ACVA has spoken to many ports on all three coasts with no success. If there is a museum that might be interested in offering the Charles F. Adams a berth, the ACVA would be most interested in discussing details. ACVA President Tom Crosser may be contacted by email at tecrosserbsausn@aol.com: <mailto:tecrosserbsausn@aol.com>, while Association Secretary Dave Myerly may be reached at DaveDDG2@aol.com: <mailto:DaveDDG2@aol.com> or Association Advance Man Jim Aldrich may be reached at jaldrich@aol.com: <mailto:jaldrich@aol.com>. Information on USS Adams DDG-2 is available at <http://www.bozair.com/adamsmen?DDG2.html>: <http://www.bozair.com/adamsmen?DDG2.html> and ACVA at <http://adamsclassddgvets.org/>: <http://adamsclassddgvets.org/>.

3. **New Year's Greetings.** Permit me to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year. 2006 was a year of milestones. 2007 will offer challenges, which I know that we are more than capable of meeting. Onwards and upwards. HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!

Jeffrey S. Nilsson
Executive Director

SCUTTLEBUTT:



★ Here's hoping your holidays are filled with family, friends, fun, laughter, great memories, and oh yeah – a little rest! **Merry Christmas** and **Happy New Year !!!**

Koy Coffey, TPWD
Operations Manager
Texas State Parks Customer Service Center

★ Merry Christmas Everyone!

Leslie Williams, TPWD
Coastal Fisheries, Dickinson

Editor's Note: *Leslie served San Jacinto as a college intern once upon a time. Marry Christmas to you!*

★ *Hi Mike, Definitely sounds like fun, as well as being a great idea! Always love to see promotion of the Trans Pecos, going all the way back to our "good old days" out there Mike. I hope all goes well - wish I could be there - take care and have a great 2007!*

Russ Kuykendall, Park Manager
San Jacinto Battleground S.H.S.

Editor's Note: *Response to Business Management Director Mike Crevier about (p. 9) bus tour promotion.*

★ *Whatever happened to this possibility?*

Don Fischer, President
First Texas Volunteers

Editor's Note: *Don is referencing our idea of a few months back to collect salvage from DES MOINES.*


★ *All: Still have not heard from the project manager down there and have called and emailed quite a few times. Was still planning on going when we got the word, BUT over the past month I have found out both the MASSACHUSETTS and NORTH CAROLINA have already made very large salvaging trips while she was still up north. According to the lists I've seen, I really don't see any point in us going down there...there is not much left of what we could use. She's been pretty cleaned out. Better luck next time!*

Angela McCleaf, Curator
Battleship TEXAS State Historic Site

★ *Angela, we are in desperate need of light fixtures & electrical switches. Do you know if these are still on board? If so, it may still be worth a trip. Our old light fixture sockets & switches are giving up at an alarming rate, at present I have been unsuccessful finding replacements. Thanks,*


Stan Adams,
First Texas Volunteers

Editor's Note: *Good thought, MASSACHUSETTS & NORTH CAROLINA may have overlooked this....*

 *My wish to you is that this new year will find all of you and your families in good health.....like my mother used to say, if you don't have your health, you might as well have nothing....that is so true. I hope you had a good Christmas and managed to find laughter with your family...that is very important. I keep reminding my husband of that.*

Judy Gillespie, Admin. Assist.
TPWD Region 4 Headquarters

Editor's Note: *Judie's holiday greetings to Region 4 staff.*

 *Thank you, Judy. I do agree with your mom on the health issue, all my body parts are still intact. The privilege to be able to come to work and be a part of what I accomplish everyday at my job site is something I do not take for granted, just like my health and my immediate family, it is my hope that we all continue to work together as a group and find ways to better improve our park sites and our region. Best for all of you !!!!*


Susie Taylor, Office Manager
Brazos Bend State Park

 *Ditto....on everything you said!!! And a safe and HAPPY NEW YEAR to everyone!!*

Jan McAdoo, Office Manager
Village Creek State Park


 *Same to all.*

Anne Taylor, Asst. Park Mgr.
Stephen F. Austin S.H.S.

 *This is the salvage trip to make.*

Barry Ward, Executive Director
Battleship Texas Foundation

Editor's Note: *Barry's thoughts on the Historic Naval Ships memo (see Troop Movements, page 10).*

 *I agree. We should start planning on this. I'll see what needs to be done for our registration. Do we want to use foundation monies for this? Do they charge us by weight? I looked at the registration form and didn't know if you wanted to register the foundation instead of TPWD?? Let me know! Thanks,*

Angela McCleaf, Curator
Battleship TEXAS S.H.S

Editor's Note: *Angela on salvaging in Beaumont.*

 *Whatever is easier; BTF can cover costs either way.*

Barry Ward, Executive Director
Battleship Texas Foundation

 *You do good work Mr. Russ...simply amazing what you, TPWD, are able to accomplish with such little funding from our Great State of Texas. Guess it shows the citizens we still have the best Governor money can buy....*

Randy Billingsley,
Maysfield, TX

Editor's Note: *Thanks Randy...we definitely spend your money wisely here at San Jacinto Battleground and Battleship TEXAS, and all across the state park system. We sure wish we had more!*



Dear All: I was just reading Russ's newsletter with interest. Thought I would pass on the e-mail from Seneca McAdams of Texas Heritage Trails Program asking us to write letters for their agency, which was threatened by loss of their funding by the Legislature. Nau mentioned that this Program was the rationale for transferring parks to THC in the letter included in the newsletter. Regards,

Dianne Powell,
D.P.Sellmark

Editor's Note: *Dianne's email to Sarita Hixon, Larry Spasic, and the editor, about the THC letter in last week's issue...pointing out the irony of THC's rationale in light of the appeal from Texas Independence Trail's Seneca McAdams, which we published the week before (12/11-17/).*



Russ, those thickness measurements on BB35 ought to tell you that the ship's life expectancy is getting short. Unless someone comes up real soon with the money for the graving dock proposal, TP&W won't need a parking lot for BB35 other than for the salvors dismantling the vessel. It is a shame the Port of Houston can spend \$1.2 billion on a container and cruise terminal, yet can't/won't purchase a drydock that would be the essential element of a ship repair facility. Portland, OR did this in the 1970's, renting the use of the drydock to private contractors who the repair work on Alaskan crude tankers and oil modules with local employees. Houston, the second largest port in the country, doesn't have a drydock/repair yard while smaller ports such as New Orleans, Mobile and Tampa do.

Tom Gillette,
First Texas Volunteers

Editor's Note: *Tom's comments on the hull sounding results reported last week by TPWD's Chris Greer.*



Hi Randy, I wanted to make sure that all of you had the latest missive from the Infrastructure of TPWD. Please feel free to pass it along to any of those that might be interested. I have told the board of the Friends of the San Jacinto Battleground that over the past week, I've had some very interesting discussions with Charles Alcorn of the Battleship TEXAS Foundation and Barry Ward, the Executive Director, regarding (1) moving the ship from its present location to a site north of its current berth, (2) conducting feasibility studies, and (3) an alternative dry berth plan. As plans for the Battleship evolve, the land that Kester speaks of might be utilized for the ship. This would allow for even a greater restoration of the Texan camp. You need to be aware of this in the continuing and ongoing saga. In addition, Jeff Dunn has asked TPWD to supply additional information. Note the time-table that Kester suggests. Best,

Jan DeVault, President
Friends of San Jacinto



Thanks for sharing Ms. Jan...Jeff beat you to the punch by a few minutes with Kester's letter. Their new choice is still inn the Texas Army camp...so my stance has not changed. Tell Captain Alcorn I said howdy when you speak with him again...he knows I am a hardhead from his dealings with me at the Port of Houston...but he will have to admit I was fair and even agreed with him on occasions.....I have spoken my feelings on moving the ship, but will repeat them again.

Fact: The ship will have to be moved to build the dry berth where it sits now.

Fact: The ship has to be moved.

Fact: The ship is better off dry berthed out of the salt water.

Fact: Dry berthing will lower the maintenance cost tremendously.

Soooooo...why not build the dry berth and the new boarding North of the Texas Army camp facility first? Then float the ship into its new berth and be done with it. Of course, I know my idea only seems to make sense to me, but they will have a harder time convincing me that floating the ship and temporarily docking it elsewhere, then pumping out the water in its old berth and doing archeological studies on this area, then building the dry berth and boarding facility, then floating the ship again and placing it in the old location in the new dry berth makes more sense...yep.. a very hard time...and it would still be in the Texas Army camp.

Randy Billingsley
Maysfield, Texas



Hi Randy, I do not disagree with you regarding your facts. The plan that I think many of us would favor would be to build a “dry berth” for the ship which would permanently get it out of the water and that berth should be not be built on the Texan camp. Returning the TEXAS to its present location (as proposed by TPWD in their grave docking plan) seems to be insane when there is land to the north of its present site that could accommodate it and keep the ship out of the water. Hopefully, the Battleship TEXAS Foundation will conduct feasibility studies to show that a dry-berth is the best solution for the long term future of the ship. One of my immediate concerns is that again, TPWD as set forth in the latest Kester missive, seems to be “fast tracking” the Visitors Center. Jeff Kester has the archeology on the San Jacinto Inn site completed by May! While I think the San Jacinto Inn site needs to be thoroughly investigated, we know in the general area, there were two shipyards (probably now underwater) that repaired vessels in the Civil War. When you turn the clock back to 1836, that entire road was probably part of the Run-Away Scrape. We have a lot of unanswered questions. At any rate, late for a Christmas party. Have a Merry one. Best,

*Jan DeVault, President
Friends Of San Jacinto*



La Porte CAC members -- Lyondell plant manager Mark Gaddy sent this message this afternoon, intending that it go to community and plant members. It appears to have gone to only part of the CAC list, so I am forwarding it to you.

*Diane B. Sheridan, Facilitator
La Porte Citizen’s Advisory Council*

To LPCAC Members:

Our company has been mentioned prominently in the news this week, and I wanted you to have an explanation as to what this is about. As you may recall, we have been working constructively with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to resolve non-compliance issues that occurred at some of our plants early in this decade. All of those issues have now been corrected or are being addressed to the satisfaction of these agencies.

The Texas Attorney General’s office filed a lawsuit on December 20 against Lyondell Chemical Company, Equistar Chemicals and Millennium Petrochemicals Inc. We are disappointed and frustrated that the state of Texas would file suit when the substantive issues have been resolved and the only remaining issue is the amount of a fine. I have attached a news release that we issued that provides our response to this action.

We are a responsible company that is willing to pay a fair settlement as prescribed in the state’s regulations if any settlement is appropriate, but not one far in excess of what is prescribed by the TCEQ. We are dismayed that the attorney general’s office has used this lawsuit to make unsubstantiated and inaccurate claims and publicized them through the media. Unfortunately, because this matter is now a part of a lawsuit, we must limit our comments on any matters that will be a part of that suit. What I can tell you, however, is that most of these issues were reported to the agencies by our company and all of them have been or will soon be completely addressed to the satisfaction of the two environmental agencies.

It is our hope that the responsible actions that we have demonstrated to you through our operations and through our interactions with our community over the years will overshadow the false impressions that might have been conveyed through the actions of the attorney general’s office and their lawsuit. Our employees are committed to maintaining compliance with all regulations and to maintaining safe, reliable and environmentally responsible plant operations. We strongly believe that our actions as a responsible corporate citizen will allow you to maintain your confidence in us today and in the future.

*Mark Gaddy,
Lyondell Plant Manager*

Editor’s Note: To read an accompanying press release, go to: www.lyondell.com.



It’s really a shame that Jerry Hopkins is leaving – I will certainly miss him and his great leadership for Region 4! Great report -

*Jeff Kester
Region II Program Manager
TPWD Infrastructure Division*



Final Reminder: Deadline for free Migration Calendar Submissions is Friday, January 12, 2007:

The Great Texas Birding Classic is once again offering a free listing of community and regional birding and nature events throughout Texas in Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine's birding issue. This year's birding issue will again be the May issue which hits news stands and mailboxes by mid-April.

The Birding Classic Migration Calendar is an excellent opportunity for your organization to publicize any events of interest to birders and naturalists you might have scheduled, such as lectures, guided tours, photographic tours, regional bird counts, specialized birding workshops, and nature festivals. This year's calendar covers the period from April 15, 2007 through April 15, 2008. Bird and nature-related events throughout Texas that are open to the public are eligible for inclusion in this calendar of events.

To have your events included for free in this year's Migration Calendar, please submit the event forms in the proper format to me no later than Friday, January 12, 2007. Please do not just cut and paste your organization's calendar and send it to me--- I will not format your events for you. You MUST use the format provided online in order to be included in this year's calendar. I receive close to one hundred events and do not have time to edit and format each and every one.

You can submit your event in any of the following ways: electronically on our website with our fillable form, by email <gtbc@tpwd.state.tx.us>, by fax at 512-389-4550, or in the mail at Shelly Plante, Great Texas Birding Classic, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744. All necessary forms and information can be found at the following website: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/birding/gtbc/calendar/>.

If you have questions about the Migration Calendar or the Great Texas Birding Classic please contact me at 512-389-4500. Call the Birding Classic tournament coordinator, Carol Jones, at 979-480-0999 with any questions about this year's 11th annual tournament. Thanks,

Shelly Plante
Nature Tourism Coordinator
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE:

This week, a year-end summary about the weather we've experienced in 2006, courtesy of Compuweather.com. Seems like the global warming watchdogs are gaining some momentum:

2006 WAS A HOT ONE:

Lead by a July heat wave that produced all-time record temperatures in hundreds of cities, the year 2006 is poised to be the third warmest ever across the United States. Only 1998 and 1934 were warmer. The average temperature across the contiguous 48 states will end up about two degrees above the historical average. Worldwide, 2006 is on track to be the sixth-warmest year ever. The ten warmest years ever, including this one, have occurred since 1995. Is that Al Gore knocking?

AND SPEAKING OF WARM:

The Alpine region of Europe is going through its warmest stretch of time in 1,300 years according to climatologists at Austria's Central Institute for Meteorology and Geodynamics. Officials say that the current warm period began in the 1980's, and noted that a similar warming occurred in the 10th and 12th centuries. The unseasonably warm weather so far this year has caused great concern for Austria's ski resort industry. Slopes are still covered with green grass instead of snow and most resorts have had to postpone the start of their season. In a normal year, most are open by late November.

ANOTHER VICTIM OF GLOBAL WARMING?:

Temperatures in the northeastern part of the U.S. have been running 15 degrees warmer than last year at the same time. This has given retailers great concern, as winter-wear items such as coats, scarves, gloves and fur coats are not selling. Estimates are that outer-wear sales will plunge 20 percent this holiday season, compared to last year. Some retailers have already rolled out sales, with offers of as much as 50 percent off winter clothing.

SHIP STORE SHOWCASE:



Well gang, now is the time to come to the BB35 Park Store and grab some of those holiday season items before they are put away until next year. An assortment of Christmas tree ornaments are available for those of you who are looking to prepare for next year a little bit early. All are classy and affordable, just take your pick, you can't go wrong!

Tree Ornaments On Display At BB35 Park Store

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY:

- Dec 25 BB-35 hosts kids from the Conway Cove School, Argentia, Newfoundland in 1941
- Dec 25 Country western singer Barbara Mandrell is born in Houston, Texas in 1948
- Dec 25 Well known actress Mary Elizabeth "Sissy" Spacek was born in Quitman, Texas in 1949
- Dec 26 Joe McCombs stages the first commercial buffalo hunt in Texas in 1874
- Dec 27 Stephen F. Austin known as the "Father of Texas" dies in 1836
- Dec 27 First hull material ordered for BB-35 in 1910
- Dec 27 BB-35 miles sailed to date: 99,952 by this day in 1918
- Dec 28 Rebecca Cummings marries, David Portis while William Travis is fighting at Alamo in 1843
- Dec 29 Texas enters the union as the 28th State in 1845
- Dec 30 Homer Norton, the leading football coach of Texas A&M in history is born in Alabama in 1895
- Dec 30 Second most deadly fire in the U.S. took place at the Iroquois Theater in Chicago killing 602 in 1903
- Dec 30 Singer and songwriter of "The Monkees," Michael Nesmith was born in Houston, Texas in 1942
- Dec 30 USS George Washington SS BN 598 was the 1st ballistic missile sub to be commissioned in 1959
- Dec 31 The Archives War: Austin citizens keep the state's papers from being moved to Houston in 1842
- Dec 31 BB-35 has 12 Mark IX torpedoes by Bliss Leavitt aboard in 1915

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

Think "impossible" and dreams get discarded, projects get abandoned, and hope for wellness is torpedoed. But let someone yell the words "It's possible," and resources we hadn't been aware of come rushing in to assist us in our quest. I believe we are all potentially brilliant and creative--but only if we believe it, only if we have an attitude of positive expectancy toward our ideas, and only if we act on them. -- Greg Anderson

PARTING SHOT:

This week, our closer catches up on some nice thank you letters from Cub Scout Pack #1029, who visited December 3; and photos and a thank you letter from Cub Scout Pack #696, who visited December 14. Both packs were guests on the Battleship Texas Foundation's overnight youth adventure program:

The program experience was well above my expectations. As the cub master of the pack, I wish to thank you for the educational opportunity and great experience provided to the scouts. Homer was a courteous and patient host. He really impressed the scouts with the history of the ship, but credit is due to all. I hope to make this an annual visit!

Matthew Kelley - Pack # 1029

The tour was great!!!! I am interested in finding out more about the hard hat tours. Captain Moore is a great host and guide. I thank him and his crew for this time and dedication to the TEXAS. Thank you all.

Steve Berckenhoff - Troop # 1029



What an awesome experience to view places not normally shown to visitors. It was great to sleep where all the sailors did.

T. Berckenhoff - Troop # 1029

Tour guide was fantastic. Related well to both adults and children. Would love to have had more time. Best of luck on the restoration and keep up the excellent work.

Anonymous - Pack # 1029

This was such a great experience. To imagine all that happened and all those who lived and worked here and made our country what it is today is an awesome feeling.

Angelina - Pack # 1029

Great time!!! Something that will always be remembered. Thanks.

Kevin Glass - Pack # 1029

Dear Barbara Tankink and the Battleship Texas volunteers,

On behalf of the Cub Scout Pack 696, our Cub master, the participating scouts, family members and myself, as project coordinator, we warmly thank you, your staff and volunteers for such a wonderful day tour, overnight stay & arrangements at /on board the Battleship Texas! We just may remember it forever! We had a lot of fun! Thank you!

Sincerely,

*Shawna Peek
Pack 696*

