

The BATTLE REPORT

1836 1945

San Jacinto Battleground/Battleship TEXAS State Historic Site

Report for October 2, 2006 through October 8, 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:

- ❖ **This week, more bad news to pass along. Just keep in mind your newsletter is only the messenger! In a letter dated September 28, 2006, Ric Williamson, Chair of the Texas Transportation Commission informed TPWD Infrastructure Division Project Manager Chris Greer that their agency has declined our request for a \$20 million SAFETEA grant to construct a permanent dry berth for the Battleship TEXAS. Copies of the letter also went to Lt. Governor David Dewhurst, Senator Mike Jackson, and Representatives Wayne Smith and Robert Talton, as well as various TXDOT personnel. Stay tuned:**

Dear Mr. Greer,

Thank you for nominating The Battleship TEXAS Dry Berth Development and Ship Repairs project to receive Transportation Enhancement funding. The nomination you submitted to the Texas Department of Transportation was forwarded to the Texas Division of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) which is temporarily being operated out of the FHWA Atlanta Resource Center. The Texas Division staff reviewed your application as submitted and determined, based on current federal regulations, that the project is not eligible to receive Transportation Enhancement Funds. We are not comfortable with this determination.

As you know, in order for a project to qualify for Transportation Enhancement funds the project must meet two requirements. It must relate to surface transportation and it must fall into one of the twelve eligible project categories. The Transportation Enhancement program has been refined with each transportation bill passed by Congress, including the most recent, SAFETEA-LU. Most recently, the Congress, speaking in the Conference Report that accompanied the FY '06 Transportation, Treasury, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations Bill, reaffirmed that it expected FHWA to continue its close scrutiny of projects to ensure that they meet federal requirements. The FHWA Texas Division found that the project described in your nomination does not relate to surface transportation and is therefore not eligible for Transportation Enhancement funding.

I know you invested considerable time and effort in the nomination of this important project. We believe FHWA's determination should be reviewed and we would like to work with them to see how your nomination could be reconstructed to highlight the ship's historical significance and more clearly define its relationship to surface transportation.

Thank you for your efforts to improve and enhance transportation in Texas. We will keep you apprised of our continued work with FHWA on your nomination. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (512) 305-9509, or if your staff has any questions, please have them contact Kelly Hoffman, Policy Analyst, Government, and Business Enterprises Division, at (512) 463-8665. Sincerely,

**Ric Williamson, Chair
Texas Transportation Commission**

ON THE HORIZON:

- Oct 14 **Hard Hat Tour aboard BB35**
- Oct 14-15 **Timeline Living History at the Battleship TEXAS SHS, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**
- Oct 17 **Birthday of Park Store Clerk III, Linda West! Happy Birthday Linda!!!**
- Oct. 21 **U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association Dinner aboard BB35, from 5:30 to 9 p.m.**
- Oct 21-22 **Wings Over Houston Airshow at Ellington Field. Go to: www.wingsoverhouston.com**
- Oct 27-29 **Texian Market Days Celebration at George Ranch Historical Park, 9 to 5 daily**
- Nov 4 **Texas State Guard Maritime Regiment Commissioning aboard BB35 at 2 p.m.**
- Nov 5-11 **Battleship TEXAS Veteran's Day Art/Essay Contest Exhibit**
- Nov 18 **Hard Hat Tour aboard BB35**
- Dec 1-31 **Yuletide TEXAS Christmas Event Aboard BB35; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Daily**
- Dec 2 **Pearl Harbor Ceremony By U.S. Naval Order, Texas Commandry, aboard BB35 at 11 a.m.**
- Dec 9 **Santa's Swingin' 40's Christmas**

TROOP MOVEMENTS:

Our first story this week comes from our BB35 Collections Manager Susan Smyer, who assisted with the "2nd Division" reunion aboard the ship on Friday, October 6. These fellows call themselves the "2nd Division," because they were all assigned to work in Turret 2, one of the big, 14-inch guns. They have been conducting their own mini-reunion for several years, and this year keyed around the 88th birthday celebration of Fred Winter. His son Dick sent Susan a little "blurb" with some photos for all of us to enjoy.



(L-R) Paul Haig, Fred Winter, And Tom Weisbecker Celebrate Fred's 88th Birthday!



Birthday Boy Fred Winter – Happy 88!

Susan:

Thank you for the great time we had this past weekend. Dad enjoyed himself greatly. I'm sure he wishes he could be on the ship more often. I've attached a few pictures for you. Thanks for the CD of color photos. Do you know who the officers are doing the inspections? Also, do you have a digital copy of the picture hanging above Angela's desk? The one of the Texas at sunset. I thought that would make a nice Christmas present for Dad. Thanks again.

Dick Winter



Fred Checks Out McArdle Room



Paul, Fred & Tom Pose For A Photo



BB35 Historian Rusty Bloxom & Vets

❖ **TPWD Infrastructure Inspector Carl Warren is back in the saddle with his weekly reports on the \$2.14 million repair project at the San Jacinto Monument. Yes, the ribbon cutting/grand opening event is behind us, yet work continues. A final inspection was scheduled for the first week of October, but pieces of the puzzle were still missing, so was postponed indefinitely. We will continue to provide updates until work can be completed and a final inspection can be conducted. Here is Carl's report and photos for the period of September 18 thru September 29, 2006:**

09-18-06 Inspector on site. No contractors on site.

Inspector observed that Switzerland Air had completed the installation of the insulation at the Library air handling unit. The return air duct, supply duct, and the entire air handle unit had been insulated.

09-19-06 Inspector on site. Otis Elevator, KBR, and Hendricks Engineering on site.

Otis Elevator provides access and assisted Hendricks Engineering to verify measurement and design for the new rope gripper platform. Hendricks Engineering will be completing the design and submitting it to KBR. Otis Elevator remains on site to perform some adjustment work with the braking mechanism. David Vice informs the Inspector that the fourth floor folding platform has been modified and KBR will be pick it up on Wednesday. CL Vicks is on standby and ready to install the platform.

09-20-06 Thru 09-29-06 Inspector not on site. No report.

And now Carl Warren's photos for work conducted through the specified period:



Return Air Duct Is Now Insulated



Missing Insulation Section Is Installed



4th Floor Platform From Elevator Car



Side View Of The 4th Floor Platform



Winch To Raise & Lower The Platform



Platform Closed/Closed Stairway Gate



Close Up View Of The Gate Projection



Close Up View Of The Winch



Overall View From The Elevator Car

- ❖ **In the September 18-24 edition of “The Battle Report” we featured a story on page 10 by Bryan Schlomach, Ph.D. He is the chief economist at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a non-profit, non-partisan research institute based in Austin. His think-tank viewpoints about privatizing state parks seemed to have spread far and wide, and we thought you might be interested in what Beth McDonald, President of Texans For State Parks (TFSP) had to tell Dr. Schlomach. TFSP is the friends group for the Texas State Parks Division of TPWD. Schlomach responded, and while Beth emailed him back, she hasn’t heard any more from him since....**

Dear Doctor Schlomach, I am very interested to learn how you did your research; and who were the persons involved? Your conclusions are so contrary to my interpretation of the news I am reading and the situation I have witnessed as I have visited various parks.

OUR PARKS ARE NOT MEANT TO BE MONEY-MAKERS. THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS AND THEIR GUESTS.

There are many services provided to the people of Texas that are not money makers. Had we been taking care of our parks, and encouraging our youth to protect, as well as enjoy the once beautiful parks, I am sure we would not be sending so many people to prison. Are you interested in the history of our parks? Do you know the history of any of our parks, historic sites, and state natural areas? I really would like to see the studies you did which brought you to the conclusions you have regarding Texas’ parks. (And where did you come from?)

I sincerely hope you will do more research with an open mind regarding parks in general, and particularly those in Texas. What is your solution to the current funding crisis? Would you have the state sell or just close the parks that are not making money? Do you not realize the millions of tourist dollars brought into our state because of our parks; the local economic impact on areas surrounding the parks, as well as other businesses statewide?

I would gather from your editorial that you do not have children and that you personally are not park user, or swimmer, or fisher, or equestrian, or outdoorsman other than your own surroundings (yard, ranch, farm, whatever?) Granted, there are people not attuned to nature, and it is not important to them – they have my utmost pity.

**Beth McDonald, President
Texans for State Parks**

Dear Ms. McDonald, It is surprising to me some of the reactions to an article that basically said the state's park system could be run better, for the benefit of park users and to the benefit of taxpayers, too. It also made the very valid point that bureaucrats are consummate political tacticians. Especially amusing have been the assumptions regarding my background. You are wrong on every count.

First, I use the state parks. I would like to use them more often but I'm very busy. A high proportion of my income is taxed away at various government levels as everyone has gotten in the habit of demanding other peoples' money to subsidize what they personally care about, using the coercive power of government to force the subsidy payments through taxes. Some care most about roads. Others care most about medical charity. You care most about parks. Personally, I believe in paying my own way and seek not to impose the cost of my personal interests on others.

Second, there are many state parks that I like a lot. Some of them have a deep and honorable history. Others do not. Some properties were donated and never had a prospect of being anything but drains on taxpayers' wallets. Others, like Goliad, should be heavily visited. Hardly anyone knows what a treasure is there. I do not know why it is not better promoted. I only relatively recently learned of the Texas State Railroad. I went there and found it interesting, but the destination of the railroad ride is a cheesy little souvenir shop with over-priced sandwiches, not exactly the sort of operation disciplined by the need to make a profit (though the sandwiches are provided through a private vendor).

Third, why in the world does it or should it matter where I'm from? I grew up in Archer City - TEXAS - Larry McMurry's hometown. I've lived in Texas all my life. All of my higher education is from Texas A&M. I probably speak with a more authentic Texas accent than you do - a linguist has claimed that the authentic Texas accent is concentrated in North Central Texas.

Fourth, every agency in state government would claim a funding "crisis." There is supposedly a Medicaid funding "crisis," a CHIP funding "crisis," an education funding "crisis," a road funding "crisis," an arts funding "crisis," and a prisons funding "crisis," just to name a few. Texas government alone takes up over 8 percent of the state's gross product. ALL of government took up only 10 percent of the nation's gross product at the turn of the 20th century. We are too affluent to be robbing each other through taxes.

I have three children, including two boys. I would love to do more outdoor activities. But, I work more than a third of the year to pay taxes. Please do pity me - and my children. Resist the temptation to demand more tax money. Finally, my research includes personal experience and some extensive documentation produced by TPWD due to official requests (not mine). I have only scratched the surface. Sincerely,

Byron Schломach, Ph.D.
Texas Public Policy Foundation

❖ **Dennis Mitchell of the First Texas Volunteers sent in the following excerpts from the October 3, 2006 Outlook section of the Houston Chronicle. Three are about Texas State Parks; one is about clean air:**

Oct. 3, 2006, 7:07PM – LETTERS
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Cost Of Maintenance Neglect

Byron Schломach made some interesting observations related to the state money that has been allocated to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. While I would agree there has been some misallocation of resources, I believe that money spent to support parks can be an investment in productive travel and tourism for the state. Texas tourism is a \$40 billion industry (second to agriculture) and it employs about 1 million people.

Many of our state treasures — such as the Battleship Texas and the San Jacinto Monument — have been underfunded for years, which in the long run causes higher repair and maintenance costs. Had the funding for just these two projects alone been accomplished on schedule, Texas would have reaped the reward of destination tourism in a much larger way. I am sure there are other examples of neglected maintenance, as well. We cannot afford to let our parks go any longer due to lack of proper funding.

Malcolm Browne, Houston

On Privatizing Parks Funding - State's Rank The Best Rebuttal

I disagree with Byron Schlomach on several points (see his Oct. 1 Outlook article "Politics of parks"). How can he say taxpayers and the outdoorsy public don't benefit from adequate park funding? What? Visitors to parks don't benefit from working restrooms, educational presentations and trails that are maintained?

To compare state parks and their "profitability" to private hunting ranches and RV parks totally misses the point: State parks provide an outdoor experience for those who cannot afford the price of a private venue. As more and more prime recreational land is developed and sold to private owners, state parks become the last place where the most people can go to enjoy those areas.

It matters not where the sporting goods are used on which the sales tax is collected. If the sales tax was dedicated to state parks, just as the tobacco tax had been — were cigarettes smoked primarily in state parks? — then that is where the funds should be spent.

Sales tax allocation doesn't necessarily need to follow some product. The idea is to determine some source of funding that can be utilized to support state parks, and the tax on sporting goods was chosen. The fact that Texas ranks 49th in state spending on parks really makes the best rebuttal of all to Schlomach's article.

Candy Donahue,
Webster, Texas

Holding Texas' Lands In Trust

Byron Schlomach proposed that the Texas parks system be dismembered and sold to the highest bidder, but he apparently forgot that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is not the owner of the park system — only its caretaker. The owners of the park system are the people of Texas.

Our public resources, such as our parks system, are being held in trust for our children and grandchildren — not to be privatized for the benefit of a few friends of politicians.

Thomas Barber, Houston

Choked Up By Air

The Sept. 28 Chronicle article "Study: Urgent action needed to cut air toxics / Risk is higher in Houston area than in other big cities, new report says" reported on the unhealthy levels of air pollution in our area.

The Chronicle's Oct. 1 editorial "Smoking gun / A new study makes the case for tougher standards and decisive action to clean Houston's air" told how our local politicians still don't comprehend the severity of our air pollution crisis. They are not even seeking to improve legislation.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time our political leaders have failed us. Ignoring the 2004 air study of particulate matter associated with the expansion of Interstate 10 is an example of how local politicians, the Texas Department of Transportation and a federal judge failed us by not considering a safer design. Children in 13 schools and thousands of individuals living within the "danger zone" of particulate matter along Interstate 10 are going to pay the price for those officials ignoring the study.

Air studies alone won't alleviate all the ignorance of our governmental leaders — it will take the public rising up to demand change. In going to the election polls this November, each of us should know where our chosen candidates stand on the air-quality issue. The health of all Houstonians depends on it.

Terri Thomas, Board Member,
Mothers for Clean Air, Houston

- ❖ Although an unplanned segue from the last Outlook editorial, our next story also concerns air quality in Houston. Representatives of both the Deer Park and La Porte Community Advisory Council's (CAC's) sent us a copy of a report distributed recently by the East Harris County Manufacturer's Association (EHCMA), with their perspective and a web link to review further details on the matter:

The Houston Endowment recently funded a study to look at air quality in the Houston region. This report is likely to get some attention by local news outlets, and may generate some questions from your neighbors. The East Harris County Manufacturers Association would like to offer its perspective on this important issue.

Houston has the most extensive air monitoring network of any city in the country nearly 50 monitors strategically located throughout Harris, Brazoria, Chambers and Galveston Counties.

The quality of the air in Houston region has improved dramatically. The monitoring data shows that levels of air pollution from industry, homes, utilities and mobile sources have declined more than 80 percent in the past 15 years.

We have achieved a 41 percent reduction in ozone days across the monitoring network. This has been achieved at a time when production at the plants, the populations and the number of cars on the road in the region have increased significantly.

The quality of the air in the region compares favorably to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, the state's health-based guidelines and to other U.S. cities. This new study makes comparisons to other U.S. cities, including Chicago, Los Angeles and St. Louis. In comparing the quality of the air to these cities, it's important to note that Houston fails to meet just one of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) – Ozone. St. Louis fails to meet two of the NAAQS, Chicago fails to meet three of the NAAQS and Los Angeles fails to meet four of the NAAQS.

While we have made tremendous progress, we recognize there is more work to be done.

New tools and resources are available which will help continue our progress. Infrared camera technology is being widely used throughout the Houston refinery and petrochemical industries to improve leak detection of escaping vapors not visible to the naked eye or other monitors.

The State of Texas, Harris County, the City of Houston and industry are sponsoring the HEATS (Houston Exposure to Air Toxics) study. This two-year project will study the relationship between the levels of air toxics compounds that are measured at fixed-site monitors and the levels that individuals are actually exposed to as they move throughout their daily activities.

If you are interested in learning more about regional air quality, please visit www.houstonairquality.com. You can download a detailed trends report that has recently been published by the Houston Regional Monitoring Corporation from the "media" tab on this houstonairquality.com website.

- ❖ Our next state park story comes from the October 7, 2006 Outlook section of the Houston Chronicle, sent in by Region 4 State Parks Director Jerry Hopkins, written by three folks many of you know:

Oct. 7, 2006, 6:19PM

Reality Vs. Dogma - Proudly Partisan For Texas Parks Critics Of Funding Ignore The Benefits Of Our Park System

The public's awareness of the financial desperation of the Texas state park system has spread so that we now hear a statewide upwelling of support for the Texas state parks. There is a chorus of calls to the Texas Legislature to increase state park funding. Park supporters consistently recommend the elimination of the cap set on the amount of the "sporting goods sales tax" authorized to flow into the state parks' budget, currently set at \$32 million.

However, there is a critical difference between what the Legislature authorizes and what it appropriates. Currently, only \$20.7 million is appropriated of the \$32 million authorized cap. That is the reason park proponents advocate both the elimination of the cap and the appropriation of the full amount of the sales tax on sporting goods. If this is done, the bottom line is that the Texas state park system and matching grant funds funneled to local parks through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will increase by about \$85 million per year.

It is inevitable that some would clamor that there must be some nebulous waste and inefficiency in the system, which, if corrected, would be a simple solution to the problem. Some critics of the Texas state park system believe the funding problem can be remedied via privatization, selling parks with "low demand" and the free market. But this approach is rooted in a fixation on philosophical dogma, not reality. The first question to ask is: "Who benefits from Texas state parks?" The snappy answer would be: "Picture a city that combines the populations of Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and Austin. Now double it and think of all those people visiting Texas state parks." Those are the primary beneficiaries of Texas state parks — the 10 million-plus visitors welcomed each year.

But the beneficiaries extend beyond those who enter the gate. The counties where state parks are located gain economically. While an individual state park's strictly defined revenue and expense figures may show a red flag, the positive benefits add up for its neighbors. Economic studies produced by Texas A&M University have shown that the parks are financial engines for their communities through the sales taxes, economic impacts and employment they generate. The January 2005 report produced by the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M University analyzed the statewide impact of only 80 of the state park units. The report concluded that economic activity resulting from visitor expenditures at those Texas state parks yielded approximately \$793 million in sales and \$456 million in impacts on residents' income, and created 11,298 jobs.

For example, consider the historic Indian Lodge built by the Civilian Conservation Corps within the Davis Mountains. It has 22 salaried and 12 hourly employees. Yes, it did show an operating loss of \$196,691 in fiscal year 2005. It's not very surprising since 15 of its 39 rooms were closed for major renovation from October 2004 to July 2006. The overnight visitor and restaurant customer tallies plummeted. But let's examine how Indian Lodge benefits rural Jeff Davis County during a normal fiscal year. In fiscal year 2004, there were 21,948 overnight visitors and 47,169 restaurant customers. According to the Texas A&M study, visitors to the lodge had an impact on sales of \$4.8 million, \$1.9 million in impacts on Jeff Davis County personal income, and created about 90 jobs. Now that the renovated rooms have reopened, Indian Lodge has posted a \$50,000 increase in receipts for August 2006 compared to August 2005. It generates about \$3,000 per month in hotel/motel tax plus sales tax.

There are similar results across Texas. Harris County is fortunate to have an economic powerhouse of a state park the San Jacinto State Historic Site and the Battleship Texas with a \$10.3 million impact on sales. Who else benefits? Just look around your neighborhood. Local city and county park systems have consistently benefited from TPWD's matching grant program, which allows it to leverage local park budgets to better serve their communities. This program has been cut drastically as TPWD's budget eroded, falling from \$20.5 million in fiscal year 2002 to the current \$5.6 million. In 2005, the Spring Creek Greenway project received a regional grant of \$1 million awarded to Harris County Precinct 4 and Montgomery County Precinct 3. This is a major addition to park space in the Houston region. Unfortunately, TPWD has postponed all future regional grant reviews until adequate funding is available.

A healthy state park system contributes to the quality of life of all Texans. Texas land acreage is 94 percent privately owned. We need our open spaces for respite and relaxation. We need our public spaces to be a statement about what we believe is important. Businesses considering Texas will note the quality of the state and local park systems when they decide if Texas is a desirable place for their employees. When Texas ranks 49th in the nation in its per capita spending on state parks, that resonates negatively with potential corporate residents.

The let-them-swim-or-starve philosophical school confuses the mission of the Texas state park system with that of for-profit enterprises such as private hunting ranches and RV campgrounds. If the mission of the state parks was so limited and the population served so restricted, there would be no point to having a state park system. Our state park system is truly multipurpose. The state park experience encompasses hunting, fishing, camping, history, nature study, education and all types of recreation. The state parks customer base is everyone. They serve the toddler and the senior, the long-distance hiker and the handicapped, the financially comfortable and the family feeling a budget crunch.

We will proudly admit to being partisan for parks. We want them to be adequately and securely funded — not just for the upcoming biennium, but for the long term. We want the local parks and the state parks to work together. We want to support moneymakers like Indian Lodge and the money-hungry Battleship Texas. We want the kids to ride free on the Texas State Railroad. We want the open spaces and the fishing dock. We want the state historic sites, from the petroglyphs at Seminole Canyon to the Central Texas forts to the living history farm at LBJ State Park to remind us of the human journey that framed us. The Texas state park system should not be a pawn to serve the gospel of dogma-driven limited government. The parks exist to serve the people and we, the people, define ourselves by how we support them.

By Evelyn L. Merz, Diane Schenke, and Stennie Meadours. Merz is group chair of the Houston Sierra Club. Schenke is executive director of The Park People. Meadours is president of the Houston Audubon Society.

- ❖ Still more media accounts about the plight of Texas State Parks are appearing in newspapers across the state. First, an editorial from the October 8 Lufkin Daily News, sent in by Region 8 State Parks Director Ellen Buchanan about the Texas State Railroad, written by Park Manager Bob Crossman:

LETTER: Time Is Now To Save Park

By Robert N. Crossman Jr.
Sunday, October 08, 2006



The fate of any continued operation of the Texas State Railroad historical park beyond Dec. 31, 2006, is firmly in the hands of the State Legislative Budget Board. Texas Parks Wildlife Department requested a Supplemental Appropriation of \$650,000 several months ago. To date no action has been taken except to block approval. A task force appointed by Sen. Todd Staples is working to secure an alternative to state operation, which seems to involve paying a private operator \$10 million to \$12 million to take our assets with some guarantee from the state that they will not lose any money for a period of two to three years. There are a number of legal problems with this and the railroad should continue to be operated by the state through August 2007. If you believe the state should continue to operate the TSRR through August 2007 and in the FY 2008 and 2009, write the LBB in care of Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst or House Speaker Tom Craddick. I urge you to go to the "Save State Parks" Web site (www.savestateparks.com) for information on all state parks and to contact your state legislator from the site. The time is now.

- ❖ Our final Troop Movements stories this week are from our TPWD Austin Headquarters Media Branch. One is a wrap-up of the 15th annual EXPO, and the other is about the meeting of the Senate Finance Committee. Incidentally, we were unable to participate in the EXPO this year, due to staff shortages and the "2nd Division" (Turret 2) reunion. Typically, the BB35 Veterans' Reunion is held the same weekend as EXPO every year, with the exception of this year due to the Submarine TEXAS christening event. The 2nd Division reunion usually follows the mainstream reunion a few weeks later.

EXPO CROWD NUMBERS BACK UP WITH NEAR-PERFECT WEEKEND

After two years in which hurricanes and rain doused visitor attendance, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Expo crowd count from this past weekend was back up to an estimated 35,644 people, close to the 36,000 guests we had in 2003, the last "regular" year. Fallout from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita dropped the crowd to about 28,000 last year and a rainy Saturday in 2004 sagged numbers down to 22,500. This year, blue skies, cool mornings and warm afternoons, and a great performance from employees and partners made this one of the smoothest-running events ever. The Expo has had five years of 40,000-plus crowds, mostly in the late 1990s, when long lines clogged some popular activities. Some longtime Expo staffers believe the event works well and provides a good visitor experience with 30,000-to-40,000 attendees, where we've been for six years out of 15. Perhaps a better numeric measure of success is 510,421, the total number of lives the Expo has touched in 15 years. But none of these data speak to the quality of the Expo experience, which by all accounts this year was superb. The standard visitor exit survey will provide firmer answers when analysis is complete by early November. But anecdotal observations indicate several things. The new grounds layout was almost universally well received. The relocated Law Enforcement area was effective, although some tweaking will help bring crowds in there better. Staff and volunteer labor allocation remains a topic of discussion and TPWD will continue to work to make sure the right number of workers get to each job and shift. This year's crowd was diverse, including a significant number of Spanish-speaking visitors and other nontraditional customers. Probably at least half the crowds were newbie's savoring their first Expo. "The Expo is especially valuable for our field employees to see the breadth and diversity of what our agency offers, and for employees whose jobs don't typically put them face to face with the public," said Robert L. Cook, TPWD executive director. "I can tell you on behalf of myself, our commissioners, all the division directors and many others, our hats are off to all the employees, volunteers and partners. You make this event special. I cannot tell you how many people came up to me this weekend to express similar thoughts and congratulations on a job well done. We should all be very proud."

SENATE FINANCE MEETS

The Senate Finance Committee met at noon Monday to consider Legislative Appropriations Requests for FY08-09 from about eight state agencies, and TPWD was fifth on the agenda. TPW Commission Chairman Joseph Fitzsimons, Commissioner John Parker and department leaders provided information and answered questions about the department's LAR. This meeting marks the official start of the state budget process that will be completed in the upcoming legislative session starting in January.

- ❖ Our next item is an event announcement from our friend Albert Seguin, descendant of Colonel Juan Seguin of the Battle of San Jacinto. The event is in honor of the 200th birthday of Juan Seguin!!!

S A V E T H E D A T E !

Sunday, October 29, 2006 1:00 p.m.

**Plan now to join your family, friends and neighbors at the
200th Celebration of the birth of Texas Hero
JUAN NEPOMUCENO SEGUIN**

Guadalupe County Coliseum, Seguin, Texas

**Maclovio Perez, Master of Ceremonies
San Antonio Television Newscaster 4 WOAI**

**Rick Noriega, Texas State Representative
Portrays Col. Juan N. Seguin**

**Henry Cisneros, Keynote Address
Former Mayor of San Antonio
Served as U. S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
City View, Chief Executive Officer**

**Additional corresponding Events and Activities are also scheduled
Entertainment for the entire family
Free Admission**

Albert Seguin Gonzales: aseguin2@aol.com; 409-948-4094

There is no registration process, just come join us at:

**Guadalupe County Coliseum
810 Guadalupe St
Seguin, TX 78155
830-401-2486**

❖ We have some interesting feedback items this week, which we hope will entertain or enlighten you:

★ *Just a note to let all of you know why I have not been answering my E-mail or telephone. We got a call last Monday from Brownwood telling us that my Mother had suffered a stroke. We dropped everything and went to Brownwood that afternoon. The first diagnosis was that she had a minor stroke and would probably make a complete recovery within two or three days, no paralysis or other physical problems at all. We got to see her and talk to her, she was happy except for having to stay in the hospital, she declared that there was nothing wrong with her. Less than 30 minutes after we got there, she had another stroke, this time major, She lost consciousness and never awakened until she passed away Tuesday night at about 10:45. We were not able to have the funeral until Saturday. I apologize for not notifying you all earlier, I just had too many irons in the fire. I told several people at the funeral that my Mom was the only person there who was not crying. She was happy to be with my Dad again. Thanks all of you for your friendship and support. See you down the road.*

Randy, Kay, Kellie & John
The Donahoo Family

Editor's Note: *We wondered why the newsletter kept bouncing back undeliverable! The entire Donahoo family are members of the San Jacinto Volunteers, that produce the annual reenactment Our hearts go out to you & your family for your loss and we look forward to happier times ahead...from all of us among your extended park family at San Jacinto Battleground...*

★ *Dear Barbara Tankink, Thank you so much for participating in this year's Community Health and Safety Fair! We appreciate the effort than you and yours put forth to make our event the great success that it was (despite the rain)! We felt that we had a great variety of companies involved in many different aspects of health and safety helping to educate our community, and it wouldn't have been the same without you. By now you should have received our Post-Event Survey via email. Please take a few minutes to record your thoughts on the Fair while they are still fresh. We will review your input to make next year's Fair even better. Feel free to pass the survey along to others in your organization who participated in the Fair – we appreciate input from everyone. Thank you so much for all your help organizing the Fair! Thanks for a great Fair!*

Christie Hudlow (2006 Co-Chair),
INEOS-BMC, Innovene
Sarah Moore (2006 Co-Chair),
City of La Porte Emergency Management

Editor's Note: *The La Porte, Morgan's Point and Shoreacres LEPC sponsors the Community Health & Safety Fair each year. Barbara Tankink-Graf and Ken Grubb served for San Jacinto.*

★ *Russ -- this is a terrific issue. Loved your "unpublished" interview. That almost writes your "Houston Review" article, doesn't it? Reading through this issue, several things popped out that might be good to mention in your "current events" article in Houston Review. Obviously, it's your call -- you know the overall picture. First, Toyota Day -- because it might encourage more corporate involvement. A picture would probably be enough if space is tight. Another is the \$10,000 private contribution to TPWD -- plus words about the plight of parks, etc. etc. Finally, I loved the picture of the first volunteer couple of the season. Again, this was an especially good issue.*

Barbara Eaves, Director
Friends Of San Jacinto Battleground

Editor's Note: *Thanks Barb, it was "published," they just didn't use my economic impact information for San Jacinto. I wanted the locals to see how we benefited the community. Drat -- foiled again! Anyway, we're glad to hear you enjoyed reading what we had to say....*

★ *Hello Ms. McCleaf, I request permission to operate the Battleship Texas Amateur Radio Station (BTARS-NA5DV) in the General Stores Keeper's office, on Saturday, Dec. 2, 2006, from 10:00 am until 5:00 p.m. Our operation would be part of the commemoration of the December 7, 1941, bombing of Pearl Harbor. Thank you,*

Frank Cooper, NA5DV Trustee
BTARS-NA5DV web page
--<http://pages.prodigy.net/fxc/btars.html>



Of course, Frank! We'll put you on the calendar! See you then!

Angela McCleaf
BB35 Curator

Editor's Note: *Frank and all the BTARS volunteers broadcast live from BB35 during each Pearl Harbor Day commemoration, and have for the past several years in succession. Thanks!*



Russ,-- Hello and Howdy, I really appreciate the Battleship Report. This absolutely one of, if not the very best, newsletter I've ever seen -- anywhere, and that includes the NPS and several international park systems... Keep up the great work. It is particularly helpful for me as I try to stay current with events and actions as it relates to my involvement with the MPO classes.

Jim Brady, TPWD
MPO Instructor

Editor's Note: *Jim is one of the key Managing Park Operations (MPO) instructors for TPWD, the two – week training session for Park Managers. Hey, did anyone else notice that the acronym should be MPO's? Sort of like RBI's have to be RBI now to be “politically correct....”*

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY:

- Oct 2 The first shots of the Texas Revolution are fired at Gonzales in 1835
- Oct 2 O2U-1 airplane aboard the BB-35 in 1928, 6th of 11 types aboard
- Oct 2 George “Spanky” McFarland known for his role in Our Gang, is born in Mount Vernon, TX in 1928
- Oct 3 Lorenzo de Zavala, first Vice-President of the Republic of Texas was born in 1789
- Oct 3 The Daisy Bradord well blows in & the giant East Texas Oil Field is on its way in 1930
- Oct 4 Texas A&M University opens its doors with 40 students and a faculty of 6 in 1876
- Oct 4 BB-35 arrives at New York Navy Yard for repairs following running aground at Block Island in 1917
- Oct 5 Ned Green drives the first car on a road trip that takes 5 hours from Dallas to Terrell at 6-mph in 1898
- Oct 5 Josh Logan, great Broadway director & producer is born in Texarkana, Texas in 1908
- Oct 6 Cost of a daily ration aboard TEXAS in 1919 – 59.98 cents per sailor
- Oct 6 The 1st international exposition in the South, the Hemisfair, closes in San Antonio in 1698
- Oct 7 Greenberry Logan, free black soldier in TX army, fights in the battle of Concepción in 1835
- Oct 7 First armored plate installed aboard BB-35 in 1911
- Oct 7 U. S. Marine and political personality “Oliver North” was born in San Antonio, Texas in 1943
- Oct 8 CXAM-1 radar added to BB-35 at Norfolk Navy Yard in 1941

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

It's interesting that Rick Perry brought up parks funding in response to a question involving the Texas Enterprise Fund. We challenged the Governor to use \$125 million from the Enterprise Fund to stop the hemorrhaging in our Texas State Parks budget. He wouldn't do it. But it's time to have a governor who will step up and give Texas State Parks the dollars they need to stop the decay. And I will do that when I'm Governor. – Chris Bell (10/6/06)

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE:

CompuWeather.com is circulating a new conspiracy theory. Is it another pre-election fabrication, or the “cloak and dagger” truth veiled in the mists of high-level spin doctoring by the same folks who squelched the UFO believers!?! Read on, and you be the judge...is it “W”...NASA...or El Nino!?!

HURRICANE REPORT HUSHED BY WHITE HOUSE?:

According to the journal “Nature”, the Bush administration blocked the release of a report which suggests that global warming is a major contributing factor to the frequency and strength of hurricanes. The possibility that global warming may have a direct effect on the strength of hurricanes is a politically sensitive issue because the administration has resisted proposals to restrict the release of gases that can cause warming conditions. In the article written in the most recent issue of Nature, the White House is accused of blocking the release of a document written by a seven-member panel of weather experts from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The panel was set up to prepare a consensus report on the views of agency scientists about global warming. According to Nature, a draft of the statement from the panel stated that warming may have a direct effect on the intensity of storms. Separately last week, NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies released a report which stated that the Earth could be at its warmest level in the last million years. This may be especially true in the part of the Pacific Ocean where El Nino weather patterns are born. The report went on to say that the warming doesn’t necessarily mean that there will be more frequent El Nino events, which can disrupt normal weather worldwide, but could well mean that the events will be stronger when they do occur. When El Nino conditions are present, hurricanes and tropical storms in the Atlantic and Caribbean tend to be weaker and less numerous.

SHIP STORE SHOWCASE:

Have you seen this man? He stands guard at the BB35 Park Store, modeling t-shirts, jackets, and his ever-present “watch cap.” It may be a stocking cap anywhere else, but in the U.S. Navy, this item enjoys the status of having its own special name. If you plan to stand watch anytime soon, or if you just want to prepare yourself for those cold fronts in the not too distant future, stop by the Battleship TEXAS Park Store, drop your \$10.99 on the counter and you’ll be all set!



BB35 Park Store Watchman

PARTING SHOT:

Our closer this week came our way from BB35 intern Abbie Salyers, who is also a Rice University doctoral student. She says she caught the photo a couple of weeks ago near closing time, just a few hours before sunset. A brief rain brought about the perfect conditions for a rainbow, with the San Jacinto Monument creating a stunning backdrop. Great job Abbie, did you find the pot of gold?



*Rainbow At San Jacinto Monument –
Photo by Abbie Salyers, BB35 Intern*