

President General's Dispatch October 2011



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GONZALES DAY

"Gonzales Day" was October 2nd, and of course it is one of our ten official DRT Honor Days. October 2, 1835 is recognized as the first military engagement of the Texas Revolution, when in Gonzales, a Texas force of one hundred and sixty men challenged the Mexican military authority by refusing to surrender a cannon previously given to the town as a means of protection against the Indians. The Gonzales men said "Come and Take It!" and the war was on!

In 1831 a small cannon was given to the Gonzales settlers by Colonel Ugartechea, who by June 26 of 1832 attempted to stop colonist from bringing a cannon up the Brazos River at Anahuac in what became the Battle of Velasco where Ugartechea ended up surrendering to the colonist on June 29th. This led to the Convention of 1832 in San Felipe de Austin where many of the 55 delegates were from Gonzales. On April 1, 1833 in Mexico Santa Anna was elected president, and on that same day Gonzales men were part of the Convention of 1833 where they appointed a commission to draft a constitution. Those Gonzales settlers were a major part of both pre and post Republic days.

Since this is only a newsletter, I must skip to 1836 in San Antonio de Bexar where on the morning of March 1st, thirty-two of the sixty men of the "Gonzales Company of Mounted Volunteers", including Captain Almaron Dickinson entered the Alamo in the defense of freedom. Susanna Dickinson (aka Dickerson) wife of Captain Almaron Dickinson chooses to stay with her husband, and she had her daughter Angelina as well.

The last of the Texians to die was said to have been Almaron Dickinson, manning the two 12-pounder cannon in the chapel. The people of Gonzales were involved in every aspect of the Texas Revolution and isn't it amazing how many cannons played a roll in our history? The recovered "Come & Take It" cannon is on display at the Gonzales Memorial Museum, 414 Smith Street, Gonzales, and is insured for ten million dollars.

Fast forward to Sunday, October 2, 2011, the 176th anniversary of that first shot fired for Texas Independence. I had the pleasure of speaking at the 51st Annual Memorial Service sponsored by the Gonzales DRT Chapter at the Gonzales Museum & Amphitheater where 41 flags flew in memory of the 32 volunteers from Gonzales and 9 regular army men who gave their lives at the Alamo for Texas freedom. The Gonzales Chapter was chartered in 1903.

Earlier in the day the Gonzales DRT Chapter, hosted a brunch at the historic J. B. Wells House, 829 Mitchell Street, which of course is owned by DRT. Chapter president Linda Tart and chapter members gave us the grand tour. The home was built in 1885 and retains much history of the early years of Texas. Original furnishings continue to grace the fifteen rooms of the interior surroundings. The structure consists of Florida long-leaf pine lumber delivered from the port of Indianola by oxen to Gonzales. Talk about a jewel in the DRT crown, this is it! I pumped water from a cistern/well with a hand pump that still works.



J.B. Wells picture above President General Karen R. Thompson



Polly Fink and President General Karen R. Thompson - J.B. Wells House



Evelyn Reininger and President General Karen R. Thompson - J.B. Wells House



Mason Thompson, President General Karen R. Thompson and Darla Simpson, DRT Prospect - J.B. Wells House

MEMBERSHIP DUES

2012 Membership dues. As a membership association, we operate on our dues. Bylaws Article II, Section 2 (b) The annual dues shall be payable in advance. Dues apply from first day of June...through May 31st of each year. Dues shall be accepted beginning with the first day of June and shall be considered delinquent after the first day of October. The bylaws go on to explain reinstatement fees, duties of the chapter treasurer, and other pertinent information. If a chapter treasurer does not have a printed copy of the Bylaws and Manual of Procedure, remember they are online on our members website at

www.drinfo.org/members. The fastest way to find things on our website to use "search" on the right hand side. All 230 ages are online, so we don't have an excuse of not knowing the bylaws and MOP.

Speaking of bylaws, this convention, May 17-19, 2012, Austin, is a bylaw year. But please be aware that all bylaw change suggestions MUST be received by Doris Johnston, Bylaws Committee Chairman, by November 15, 2011. That means Doris must have them in her hands by November 15th. Please e-mail or post mail to Doris Johnston, 734 Egyptian Way, Grand Prairie, TX 750-50-6306 or e-mail outahere4@sbcglobal.net. For information call Doris at 972-262-1344.

A member may submit two bylaw change proposals, chapters can submit as many as they approve and committees shall not make any. It is very important for us to make changes that help us operate in a more business like manner. We are a CORPORATION, a 501 c (3) non-profit corporation, actually a multimillion-dollar corporation operated by volunteers. We are subject to many local, State, and Federal laws, and in addition to the IRS, I am working with six State agencies to fulfill our obligations. Please keep this in mind when you study our bylaws and suggest improvements.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY DRT!

Sunday, November 6, 2011 – 120 Years!

The Daughters of the Republic of Texas dates to the summer of 1891, in Galveston, when Miss Betty Ballinger and her cousin, Miss Hally Bryan, conceived the idea of forming an association of Republic of Texas descendants. Meeting in the law library of Miss Ballinger's father, William Pitt Ballinger, they formed the idea of perpetuating forever the memory of the Texas pioneer families and soldiers of the Republic of Texas.

The two cousins later traveled to Houston where they shared their idea with a group of women. The meeting took place on the afternoon of November 6, 1891, in the home of Mrs. Andrew Briscoe. A Texas Sesquicentennial marker was placed by DRT on the site at 620 Crawford Street in Houston, and provides details of that meeting and the earliest history of the association. The text of the marker reads: "On November 6, 1891, seventeen women met at the home of Mrs. Andrew Briscoe at this site to organize an auxiliary to the Texas Veterans Association. Mrs. Anson Jones was elected president of the new organization, Daughters of the Lone Star Republic. Goals set for the group included preserving the memories of Texas Revolution heroes, instilling Texas patriotism in the state's school children, preservation of historic sites, and promoting statewide celebrations of Texas Independence Day (March 2) and San Jacinto Day (April 21). The first annual meeting of the organization was held in Lampasas on April 21, 1892. A resolution was passed to change the group's name to The Daughters of the Republic of Texas. By 1892 the first two chapters had been formed, one in Galveston and one in Houston. The DRT has been in the forefront of many historic preservation projects throughout the state. Clara Driscoll, on behalf of the D. R. T., wrote personal checks to save the Alamo from demolition. The organization also led efforts to preserve and commemorate the San Jacinto Battlefield site, and maintains the old General Land Office and French Legation buildings in Austin as museums."

In 1894, The Daughters were asked by the Texas Veterans Association to "Carry On" with the work of preserving Texas history. At there Reunion in Waco, a Resolution was presented which read:

"RESOLVED, that among of the greatest pleasures we have enjoyed during our present reunion is the presence of The Daughters of the Republic of Texas; that we approve and admire their noble efforts to perpetuate the memories of the patriots of Texas and to prepare and preserve data for the correct history of Texas; and that we exhort them to preserve in their laudable enterprise and pray them God's help." Early meetings were held jointly with the Texas Veterans Association. At their meeting in 1907, only six veterans were able to attend. The men recognized their increasing frailties and voted to dissolve their organization. Before adjournment, however, the resolution was made to merge the memories of their association with the DRT. The old veterans then bequeathed their memories and their deeds as a precious legacy to be held in trust forever by The Daughters of the Republic of Texas. Come to Alamo Hall, Sunday, November 6, 2011, 2 pm to help us celebrate our 120th anniversary. The Alamo Couriers Chapter will host the birthday party, and your entire family, including all children, is invited. It is FREE, but they need a count, so please RSVP to Mary Ann Oliver at lloliversr@yahoo.com or call 210-824-0277.

DONATE TO CRT'S PROJECT

The James Frederick Gomer Chapter of Hemphill invites all DRT members to the historic Gaines-Oliphint House, off Highway 21 east of Milam, on November 12th at 10:30 AM to help them celebrate our 120th anniversary. A short program will be followed by a light lunch. Please RSVP to Nina Gooch at 409-787-4088 or e-mail bfus42@windstream.net. This chapter owns the Gaines-Oliphint House, which is the oldest two-story, double-pen, hand hewn log structure in Texas, and they are working hard on the correct restoration and raising funds for a proper roof. Even the CRT is helping raise funds for this worthwhile project.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FATHER OF TEXAS!

Another official DRT Honor Day is Stephen F. Austin's birthday, November 3rd. November 3, 2011 will mark 218 years since the birth of Stephen F. Austin. Known as the Father of Texas, Stephen F. Austin carried on the work of his father, Moses Austin, to establish the first Texas Anglo-American Colony by bringing 300 families to a part of Mexico in what is now known as Texas. Referred to as "The Old 300," they settled along the bottomlands of the Brazos, Colorado, and San Bernard Rivers. Austin was known for his diplomacy, and following Texas independence, served the new government of Republic of Texas as secretary of state until his death on December 27, 1836. Each year a celebration is held at the site of his death in Brazoria County.

The William Barret Travis DRT Chapter in Austin will have their annual Stephen F. Austin's Birthday and Founders Day Luncheon on Friday, November 4, 2011 at the Austin Women's Club, 708 San Antonio Street, Austin with a program starting at 10:30 a.m., with speaker Mike O'Kent on Keeping Your Life Stories Alive. The cost is \$25.00. For more information call Nancy Shurtleff at 512-338-9036.

EIGHT DOWN AND TWO TO GO

We have finished eight of our ten district workshops. I have been to Livingston, Brownwood, Beaumont, Houston, Amarillo, San Angelo, and New Braunfels twice. We only have two more workshops to go. I have enjoyed presenting my talk with PowerPoint at seven of the events. I sincerely appreciate all the work the District Representatives have done putting on these workshops, including a Friday night affair. Every one of them has been very rewarding and most of all informative for the members in that district. My 5th VP General Shirley Burnett, education and flag committee, and she has attended every district workshop and given a complete report. Judy Tannehill, 2nd VP General, dues collector, has attended all but one.

The District I Workshop in San Angelo was hosted by the Fort Concho DRT Chapter, Joyce Gray president, and held at Historic Fort Concho. I had never visited Fort Concho and I am in love with this fort, it is different than all the other West Texas forts. I had no idea the facility was so large with original buildings completely restored. It is owned and operated by the city of San Angelo even though it is a National Historic Site. At the Friday night dinner at the beautiful new Visitors Center downtown on the Concho River, we were treated to a talk from two Buffalo Soldiers, who are totally dedicated to telling the story of the Black soldiers at Fort Concho.



Fort Concho's Buffalo Soldiers at District I Meeting

PENNIES FOR PATRIOTS

I will be honored to introduce Texas school children and to call the names of the twenty five Texas Revolutionary Soldiers who the students of the Red River Valley, Paris, Texas area, have raised pennies for their pavers. The program is named "Pennies for Patriots Campaign – Texas Revolutionary Soldiers". They are honoring these soldiers, plus seven Choctaw WWI Code Talkers. The Choctaw were the original Code Talkers and two chiefs of the Choctaw Nation are invited to the event. For information call Pat Egert at 903-325-4495.

EVENING UNDER THE OAKS OR SOIRÉE SOUS LES CHÊNES

DRT's French Legation Museum, 802 San Marcos Street, Austin, kicks off the annual outdoor music series and invites everyone to "Evening Under the Oaks" series featuring Merci Buckets will play an acoustic set of original music for picnic-goers on October 28th from 7 to 9 pm. Merci Buckets' concert celebrates the beginning of the new, complete historic preservation effort for the oldest home in Austin. The last preservation was done in the 1950s by DRT and new work is needed to keep this jewel in shape. The project has been five years in the making. For more information call the museum at 512-472-8180.

CARRY ON!

Reminder. We are trying to get 10,000 members by May 2013 at our convention in Beaumont. Ask those lazy cousins to get with it, help them, push them, or have them over for dinner and shame them! There is no reason we should not have larger membership. We are doing great work all over the State of Texas and I meet people everyday that praises what we do! Remember those Texas Veterans asked us to "CARRY ON" and save the correct history of Texas!!

ASK THE PRESIDENT GENERAL

Questions? As I said before, I will answer questions at the end of every monthly newsletter.

1. Can a chapter pay dues for an elderly member since DRT doesn't have life members?

Yes, of course. We don't want to lose those long time members. Please be generous and help pay their dues. I just hate to drop dedicated, long-time members that can no longer pay. Let's take care of them and keep their membership paid.

2. Do we have a contract with the General Land Office yet to operate the Alamo?

No, not yet. The GLO was at the called BOM meeting on September 30th in Round Rock.

(Minutes from all BOM meetings are sent to Chapter Presidents to share with members).

The GLO will be at the up-coming BOM meeting Nov. 3rd & 4th.

3. What is the best way to learn what is going on with DRT?

Go to the members website at www.drinfo.org/members.

4. Who is the Forum?

I don't know, they don't send anything to me and I think it is a man who just wants to get women upset with lies and gossip.

My cell phone number is 512-923-0010