



FRANKLIN COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Volume 24, Number 5, September/October 2019

Website: <https://www.fchatx.com>

Date: Monday, September 2, 2019 - Pot Luck

Time: 6:00 p.m.

**Program: Dr. Paul Benson
"Made in Texas"**

Place: Mount Vernon Masonic Lodge

Hosts:

Lillie and Nathan Reves, Jerald and Mary Lou Mowery, Jeanne Pamplin, Margaret Sears

Dr. Benson will be speaking about all things Texas.

Notable Individuals, Groups, Fads, Innovations,
Institutions & Movements in
Lone Star State History will be highlighted.

Dr. Paul Benson

From his beginning in 1965 as a teacher in the Freedom Schools of rural Alabama run by Tuskegee Institute to his appointment as Director of the National Endowment for the Humanities' Institute Slavery and the Constitution at the Library of Congress in 2018, Paul Benson has dedicated his career to enriching the lives of others through education.

Winner of four national teaching awards, Dr. Paul Benson is a long-time Professor of Humanities at Mountain View College in Dallas, Texas and Adjunct Professor at Dallas Baptist University.





Memorials & Honorariums

Donated By:

Karen DeWolfe
Jaime Bennett

Donated By:

Randy Stribling
Bob & Donna McFarland
B.F. Hicks
B.F. Hicks

In Memory Of:

R.F. & Bettie Mattinson Herring
Floy Aileen Rutherford

In Honor Of:

Lisa Lowry
B.F. Hicks
David & Debbie Norman
Samantha Hamrick Lilley

NTCC Honor Students Film
At
Parchman and Thruston House

Dr. Andrew Yox and members of his honors program at Northeast Texas Community College spent a day filming *Starlight: Adina DeZavala and the Making of a Patriotic Supersite*.

Locations for the filming included the Alamo Mission Museum as well as FCHA's Majors-Parchman Visitor's Center and Henry Clay Thruston house.

Dressed in authentic costume for the period piece, the cast and crew braved the 103- degree heat while filming at all three locations. Dr. Yox explains the concept of the movie:

Today the Alamo attracts over three million visitors a year and remains the preeminent landmark of Texas.

This is somewhat surprising in that when the State of Texas commemorated its 50th anniversary in 1886, it staged its celebration at the San Jacinto battlefield.

Everyone had apparently forgotten about the Alamo. It was, after all, a defeat.

Though the patriotic heiress, Clara Driscoll, paid the purchase option to secure the land around the Alamo, and though the state had title to the building by the late nineteenth century, a single woman, without funding, was the primary motive force in the making of this Texas icon.

Adina De Zavala, the granddaughter of Texas's first Vice President, Lorenzo De Zavala, first approached the giant Hugo Schmeltzer grocery firm to secure the land around the Alamo.

She next persuaded Driscoll to secure the site financially, and then bathed the landmark in the limelight when she staged the "Second Siege of the Alamo" in 1908.

Rather than allow part of the complex to be destroyed, the ancient Long Barrack, Zavala risked her life, taking possession of the building when it was about to be destroyed.

Her action created a national sensation, highlighting Texas's famous revolutionary fortress, and bequeathing to modern Texans an accessible symbol of their heritage.

The eighth feature-length film of Honors Northeast, the honors program of NTCC, examines the character of Adina De Zavala, and the nature of her struggle to secure the Alamo's centrality.

The film explores the intense Catholic faith of De Zavala, and her concern that Texas patriotism be equated with love and sacrifice rather than a mere victory.

Maritza Quinones of Mount Pleasant plays the main role of Adina De Zavala in this dramatic re-telling.

The film captures the rivalry between two factions of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, and the final triumph of the De Zavala faction in securing its aims.

The trailer for the film, directed by Jacob Lambie, and produced by Jalyn English is scheduled for release in October, and the premiere is scheduled for February of 2020 at the Whatley Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of Northeast Texas Community College.



Meeting by the Alamo: Maritza Quinones as Adina De Zavala, third from left: Courtesy of Jacqueline Bateman. Left to Right: Dr. Andrew Yox, Jalyn English, Maritza, Caleb Armstrong, Rebekah Reed as Clara Driscoll, Andrea Reyes, and Karla Fuentes.



Trying to Hold Out by the Long Barrack: Left to right: Daniel Landaverde as Henry De Zavala, Presley Smith as Julia De Zavala, Maritza Quinones, Andrea Reyes, and Parker Smith.



Lunch at M. L. Edwards provided by Jerald and Mary Lou Mowery. Picture Courtesy of Jacqueline Bateman.



The leaders who took us through 50 scenes in 7 days of filming: Peyton McClendon, Unit Production Director from Mt. Pleasant, Jalyn English, Producer from Bogata (Mt. Vernon High School) and Jacob Lambie, Director, from Scroggins.

INTRODUCTION:

In connection with the launch of our revised website, we are planning a section on Franklin County Personalities. We're talking about a section with biographical summaries for Col. H.C. Thruston, Dan Dodson, The Brooks Brothers, Dr. Jabez Galt, Joshua Foster Johnson, Dr. Byron Bennett, Sam Harvey, Maureen Holbert Hogaboom – and more – people who served society, who excelled.

I told my brother John Hicks how I was trying to sort through a stack of old Optics that my father had saved in a musty cardboard box. My dad died in 1998 and if the newspapers were not addressed now, they would be totally worthless. John reminded me that we can read the Optic on disks; he even thought I could get it online; that it was an unnecessary task and I should not risk setting off an asthma attack by working through the dust and mildew.

That sage advice was ignored and I've enjoyed turning through papers which my dad saved with a purpose. I found the 1949 paper with the coverage of his wedding (front page). The 1956 paper with his mother's obituary (front page). And, among many others, the 1951 paper with a notice of Glove Factory planning (Frank Hicks will be general contractor for the project). But that April 20, 1951 newspaper with the factory coverage, has a great human interest story in the lower corner of the paper. "Cam Galt Recalls Good Old Days." It's a great article with the reminisces of a Mt. Vernon native who had moved to the Indian Territory in 1897. And he tells of the large number of fellow citizens who moved north into the territory.

And, of real note: how several of those citizens went into leadership roles. Carlton Weaver became Speaker of the House in the new Oklahoma legislature. Ewing Davenport went on to Ellis Island and headed up immigration admissions. Hollis Oliver became the first attorney general for the State of Oklahoma. Howard Parker, the one Supreme Court reporter from statehood served for over 40 years. The Weaver family home stood until recent times. The Davenport ancestral home still stands. The Oliver childhood home stands on Yates Street. What great examples for our youth to learn of this heritage.

The 1951 article is a history lesson in itself; we reproduce it in full:

When Eggs Were 5c a Dozen Cam Galt Recalls Good Old Days And Mt. Vernon Trek To Oklahoma

The recent account of the golden wedding celebration of the Rev. and Mrs. George McAuley which appeared with their picture in the Optic-Herald prompted Cam Galt of Pauls Valley, Okla., former Mt. Vernon citizen, to reminisce of the old days in a letter to Mr. McAuley.

Mr. Galt and his wife, the former Ada Penn, observed their 54th wedding anniversary Jan. 20 of this year. They arrived in Pauls Valley, then in Indian Territory, on March 4, 1897. Wrote Mr. Galt: "I came to accept a job with my brother-in-law, John Brooks, a good job, \$30 a month. I borrowed \$50 from Jimmie Turner, no note. Just promised to repay him, so we rented a three-room house, bought our furniture - \$3.50 – for a dining table. \$6 for a cook stove, a few chairs at \$1 each and soon bought Ada a rocking chair for about \$3.

"We saved our money and paid Jimmie that fall and enough to pay the doctor for our first baby. But we bought frying size chickens three for a quarter, eggs for 5 cents a dozen, or six dozen for a quarter. Confidentially, Ada would not let me have but two for breakfast because we had to save our money as she said, and we did.

“Soon after I arrived in Pauls Valley John Majors wrote and wanted me to find him a job, but they were hard to find; I had the only one available and I could not afford to quit, so he didn’t come. Otis Weaver soon followed, came to P.V. broke, but got some lamp black and kerosene and painted buggy tops that came from the country for 75 cents each and did fairly well. But the paint soon showed to be of little value, just didn’t last. I gave him my other coat and helped him get a ride to the new town of Ada, Okla. It cost me 75 cents. He prospered in real estate and insurance and became one of the leaders in that county and Oklahoma, prospering beyond his fondest hopes. He died many years ago in Shawnee.

“Then Ewing Davenport showed up...He was later our state health officer, then many years in New York as major receiving immigrants on Ellis Island, retired to a citrus grove in South Texas and died there two or more years ago.

“Carlton Weaver came, broke, went to Ada to join Otis, and grew into one of our prominent citizens, later in the Legislature and Speaker of the House. He died in Wilburton.

“I can’t bother you with a history of all the Mt. Vernon boys and girls who came this way, but they included Bob, Oscar, and Floyd Davenport, Hollis Oliver, Elmer Miller, Claude Stringer, Kat Miller, sister of Elmer and Mart...Howard Parker died here last week, our one Supreme Court reporter since statehood. His daughter Cynthia lives here, spent several years overseas as a lieutenant nurse, now a nurse here in Veterans Hospital. Also there were E.C. Patton, attorney, and his wife, Eleanor Davenport, Boss Woodard (living) Les Woodard; Floyd’s wife, sister of Boss and Les, lives here...Lottie Malone Stringer, many years in our school system now lives in San Antonio...I came near forgetting my brother, Jim, who got hungry or homesick and went back to Texas. Tom Miller, brother of Elmer, is prosperous and a splendid citizen living near Sulphur, Okla., a cow man and rancher. Pauline Miller Jones, a sister, lives here...

“Tell Ora to copy this for you, so our Methodist Brother Joe Parchman can have a copy. May God bless you and yours and all our Franklin County folks.”



The Wilborn Jabez Galt Family at the Galt Home, corner of English Street and West Main, ca. 1898. Front row: Mattie Cox Galt (second wife), W.J. Galt, Ed Galt; Back Row: Sidney Galt, Cam Galt, Ora Galt Fletcher, Jim Galt, Bess Galt O’Tyson. *(Photo Courtesy of James Galt Reeves)*

A Story – The Sugar Wagon

Throughout the summer of about 1942 from the front porch of our little house on a hill in the Flora Bluff Community in East Texas, I could look out east, onto a patch of growing sugar cane on our neighbor's property. In the previous fall, we had watched as "stems" from sugar cane stalks were planted in a patch of moist creek bottomland by our Neighbor. Each stem included two or three "joints" of the stalk, from which sprouts eventually grew, with the sprouts growing into new stalks of sugar cane which grew upward out of the ground into maturity.

It was now approaching late Fall of the year later, since the cane stems had been planted. And, the neighbor was making plans for stripping and cutting the new cane stalks down and transporting them to a roller-mill where juice was squeezed out of each stalk, with the juice then cooked in a large, open-pan, down into a syrup which tasted great over hot biscuits, butter and pork sausage at breakfast on cold, winter mornings.

So, in the coming days the neighbor, with my dad's help, did just that, with the new sugar cane stalks carefully placed in my dad's farm wagon, with the wagon hitched to a farm tractor that our Neighbor had borrowed from another neighbor.

And, early one November morning my mother and I watched from our front porch as the neighbor started the farm tractor motor and towed the loaded farm wagon down the unpaved country road and over the far hill, with my dad sitting and waving from atop the wagon load of fresh sugar cane stalks. The wagon load of sugar cane was finally enroute to a mill and cooking area, located several miles away. Then, throughout that day, my mother and I would sit on our front porch for long periods of time and anxiously watch for the returning tractor and empty wagon rig.

But, the tractor and wagon did not return that day until just about dark, when we finally saw the lights of the tractor as it passed over the final hill before reaching ours and the neighbor's houses.

Our dad, who was really worn out after a long day of delivering and unloading the sugar cane at the mill and cooking area, was finally able to sit down to a supper of hot bacon and bean soup and cornbread, that my mother had waiting for him.

Then, a couple of days later, the neighbor and my dad had to return to the mill and cooking area to pick up the now-canned ribbon cane syrup. But the men were able to return earlier in the day on the tractor and wagon rig after this second trip.

EPILOGUE: My parents were Leta Lois (Mattingly) and Roger Joe Banks, and the "little house on a hill" was located in the Flora Bluff Community, northeast of Mount Vernon, Texas, in east Franklin County, Texas. The "Neighbor" who grew the sugar cane, was Forrest Suggs. The "mill and cooking area" was located on Old Highway 67 (later Farm to Market Road 899), east of Winfield near the Community of Farmers Academy, almost to Mount Pleasant, Texas. This mill and cooking area apparently operated until the 1950's, until farmers in the area finally quit raising sugar cane.

*Ralph K. Banks
Austin, Texas*

(Published by The Clarksville (Texas) newspaper, 27 Dec 2018)

Cheesecake

By Deborah Tom Norman

1 Cup sifted all-purpose flour
¼ Cup sugar
1 tsp. grated lemon peel

½ Cup butter
1 egg yolk, slightly beaten
¼ tsp. vanilla

Combine flour, sugar and lemon peel in a bowl and cut in butter until mixture is consistency of meal. Add egg yolk and vanilla; blend thoroughly. Pat 1/3 of the mixture on bottom of 9" spring form pan. Bake at 400 degrees for 8 minutes or until golden. Cool. Pat remaining dough on sides to height of 1-3/4".

Filling:

4 pkgs. 8 oz. cream cheese
¼ tsp. vanilla
¾ tsp. grated lemon peel
1-3/4 Cup sugar
3 Tbs. all-purpose flour

¼ tsp. salt
4 eggs
2 egg yolks

Place the cream cheese in a bowl and let stand at room temperature until soft. Beat until creamy. Add the vanilla and lemon peel; mix. Mix sugar, flour, and salt. Add to cream cheese gradually. Add the eggs and egg yolks, one at a time, beating after each addition just until blended. Stir in the whipping cream then pour into crust-lined pan. Bake at 450 degrees for 12 minutes. Reduce temperature to 300 degrees and bake for 55 minutes longer. Remove from oven and cool for 30 minutes. Loosen sides with spatula. Cool 30 minutes and remove from pan and cool for 2 more hours.



Deborah Tom Norman is the daughter of the late Dr. Calvin Tom and Teny Gothard Tom. The Tom family moved to Mt. Vernon in 1956 and took over the practice of Dr. Henry Stanford who had moved to Galveston. She is descended from one of the soldiers who fought at the Battle of San Jacinto; buried in the State Cemetery in Austin. She married David Lee Norman on August 2, 1975. David is the son of Paul and Ruth Lee Norman. They have two daughters, Lauren and Audrey and live in the Will Tittle House on West Main Street.

**THANKS TO OUR MANY VOLUNTEERS WHO KEPT OUR
MUSEUMS OPEN THIS SUMMER!**



Ken Greer, Frankie Cooper, Kathy Shelton, Don Easterling, Paul & Victoria Fletcher, Sheryl Divin, Kelly Briley, Cindy Stutts, Elaine Thomas, Jerald & Mary Lou Mowery, Tommie Smith, Lauren Herman, John Bradberry, Cynthia Loftis, Chock & Marcy Yates.

Donna Page Art Reception

FCHA will host an artist reception for Donna Page on Friday, October 11th from 5-7 p.m. at the Fire Station Museum. Donna's show will feature her large impressionistic abstract paintings, some small works paintings and the illustrated pages from her children's book, *Katrina Dogs*, which she wrote and illustrated. *Katrina Dogs* was written to encourage animal rescue to a young audience. Donna's talent is in a variety of mediums ranging from traditional impressionistic fine art pieces to a technique called negative painting which creates a more abstract form of fine art.

Page knew from age six that she wanted to be an artist. In college, she took an interest in sculpting but eventually switched to painting and earned a degree in Fine Art. After graduation in the early 80s and before computer graphics became huge, Donna became an architectural illustrator at a major architectural firm in Dallas. Ultimately, around 2001, Donna returned to her first love, fine art and painted with a group in the Cedars area of Dallas. In 2018, she traveled to North Carolina, where she studied under Linda Kemp, known for negative painting, an intriguing, alternative approach in which the subject is established by painting a dark background around a light-colored central object rather than by painting the object itself. Most artists work in the positive, typically adding one shape on top of another.

She earned her Masters Degree in Fine Arts in 2012 from Texas A & M - Commerce, where as an adjunct professor she taught drawing and design. Upon graduation Donna landed a job teaching drawing at NTCC.

Now retired from teaching, Donna created an art group in Winnsboro that meets once a month. They enjoy painting, visiting art exhibits and challenging each other as artists.

Donna and her husband of forty years have two grown daughters and live on Lake Bob Sandlin. A passionate animal lover, they have two new Border Collie puppies and eight cats.

We hope you'll come by the Fire Station Museum to see Donna's exhibition which features large works, a small works series and her children's book all available for purchase just in time for Christmas.



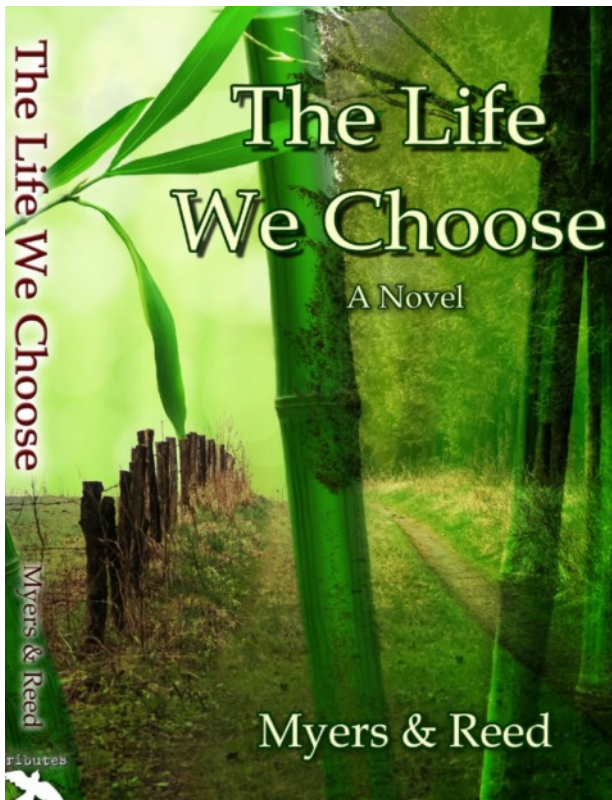
Two of Donna's paintings that will be on display during the exhibit.

JOIN US FOR

**AN OPENING
RECEPTION**

**THE DONNA
PAGE EXHIBIT**

Friday, October 11th, 5-7 p.m.
The Fire Station Museum Gallery
107 Scott Street
Mount Vernon



The Life We Choose, the third novel written by Myers & Reed, was donated to the Wilkinson Texana Library located at the Fire Station Museum.

Helen Myers, who lives in Winnsboro, Texas, and Gail Reed, Office Manager for FCHA, and who resides in Mt. Vernon, co-authored the book.

It was released in August and is available on Amazon.

Join Gail and a Helen for a book signing and launch party on Saturday, September 7th from 5-7 p.m. at The Gallery on Main.



Price of Cotton

June 15, 1917

Harve Newton sold ten bales of cotton for 24 cents per pound.

October 13, 1916

Ten bales of cotton brought to town in one wagon drawn by four mules, sold by Gilbert Smith of Sulphur Bluff, was sold to M. L. Edwards & Co., at 16-1/2 cents per pound.

Mr. Smith and another Sulphur Bluff farmer received \$116.50 for 5,010 pounds of cotton seed purchased by J. T. Banister & Co.



Pictured Above: Some of the R. J. and Mary Jane (Arrington) Stephenson family poses on cotton bales that were a common sight in the area. The Stephenson family lived just north of where the railroad tracks cross the road, and west of the Wilkins Cotton Gin, later known as the Meek Gin—E. S. Meek purchased it in 1946.

The two-story Stephenson home is in the background (to the left and barely showing) and today survives as a single story dwelling that was remodeled in 1928. The story is that one son left Mt. Vernon around the time of World War I and a candle was lit every night in an upstairs window to light his way home. He never returned and the top floor of the house was taken off after his mother's death.



Knife Making Course Offered at Blacksmith Shop

Contact Joel Dihle for information
309-333-1817



Join us for iced tea!



Cotton
Belt
Depot
200 S.
Kaufman
Street

Meet and greet a team of
historic preservationists
with Preservation Texas
to discuss local
preservation issues,
projects and funding!

MONDAY,
SEPTEMBER 23RD,
4-5:30 P.M.

SPONSORED BY FRANKLIN COUNTY
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
CALL 903-537-4760 FOR MORE INFORMATION

Pollinator Prizes

Hey, kids!

Come by the Fire Station
Museum on the Second
Saturday in September and
October to tour the butterfly
exhibit and take home a pot
of pollinating flowers!



Don and Susan Meredith Art Show Reception

Refreshment tables were set up on both floors of the Fire Station Museum for the opening of the Don and Susan Meredith Art Show, with cheese, crackers, wine, water, lemonade and cookies served at the family-friendly reception by members, directors, and officers of the Franklin County Historical Association.

Michael Meredith, Don's son, spoke to the over 200 guests in attendance, about the paintings on display, and the great pleasure his father took in learning to paint in retirement. Don would set up his easel along with his great friend, Dinah Shore, and the two would spend time painting together. Don was a regular player in the Dinah Shore Celebrity Golf Tournament, and photos from the tournaments are on display at the Fire Station Museum, along with his paintings.

Don always had his beloved home town, Mount Vernon, on his mind, and gave all his memorabilia to the Franklin County Historical Association, which displays his jerseys, trophies, photos, and now, his paintings at the Fire Station Museum. The Museum is open Saturdays from 10 until 2., and the art exhibit is on display until September 13, 2019.



Dandy Don Meredith's number 17 is displayed on the cookies provided at the reception. Mount Vernon Brookshires provided the refreshments.



Michael Meredith makes comments on the paintings by done by his father, Don, to the huge crowd who attended the opening reception on July 18th, in the Second Floor Gallery of the Fire Station Museum. Crews from NFL Films were on hand as they taped interviews for the upcoming documentary, First Cowboys, written and directed by Michael.

Special thanks to the many volunteers who helped with the reception, which included Sasha Eggen, Steve Hammons, Jason Burton, Sheryl Divin, Kelly Briley, Lisa Lowry, John Bradberry, Cynthia Loftis and many others.