

# JCHC JOURNAL

JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION VOLUME 2019, ISSUE 4

## CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Members,

Congratulations to our JCHC members for earning our 37th Distinguished Service Award from the Texas Historical Commission! This award is presented in recognition of JCHC's dedication to historical preservation. Our members contributed over 3100 volunteer hours in 2018, working on many projects including our first ever historical calendar published for 2019.



2018 Distinguished Service Award  
Photo Credit: Theresa Goodness

Thank you to our members for your time and service.

Theresa Goodness, JCHC Chair

### VOLUME 2019, ISSUE 4

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### JULY, 2019

#### Special points of interest:

- \* Jefferson County Fast Facts
- \* Area Museum Upcoming Events

## JEFFERSON COUNTY FAST FACTS

**June 24, 1950**

Date of election to abolish Sabine Pass Independent School District and to re-establish the district as a Common District. The measure failed with 66 votes for abolishing the school district and 144 votes against.

**\$134,000**

Amount of Loan Agreement dated 6/2/1934 between United States Public Works Administration and Jefferson County for the construction of the Port Arthur Sub-Courthouse and Jail .

**July 9, 1980**

Date John Paul Davis took the oath of office, becoming the City of Beaumont's first African-American Municipal Court Judge.

## TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION TRAINING

The Texas Historical Commission will host two webinar trainings for county historical commissions this summer.

The first training session will be conducted on July 10, 2019, at 2:00 p.m. This free webinar will cover ways to promote history through historical markers. Examples will include how to use markers to promote heritage tourism and other ways to use markers in our community. A workshop to view this training will be held in the Jefferson County Historical Commission's conference room on the third floor of the courthouse on July 10, 2019, at 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. The training is open to the public.

The second training will be conducted on August 15, 2019, at 2:00 p.m. This free webinar will walk through a sample historical marker application, line by line, and cover the 2020 work plan for the upcoming marker round. A workshop to view this training will be held in the Jefferson County Historical Commission's conference room on the third floor of the courthouse on August 15, 2019, at 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. The training is open to the public.



First National Bank Building Historical Marker in downtown Beaumont  
Photo Credit: Theresa Goodness

## UPCOMING JCHC MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS IN 2019

Meetings to be held at Jefferson County Courthouse, 1149 Pearl Street, 3rd Floor, Beaumont, TX 77701 in the JCHC Conference Room.

- July 17, 2019
- September 18, 2019
- November 20, 2019

### VOLUNTEER HOURS AND MEMBERSHIP

Any work in the preservation or promotion of Jefferson County History may be counted toward your volunteer hours. JCHC meetings and travel time to and from meetings also count as volunteer hours. Members are reminded that at least 50 hours of volunteer work per year is required of each member.

Also with the number of hours, JCHC needs a general description of work performed, for example: 3 Hours – Marker Survey.

If you have any questions, please call the office at 409-835-8701 or contact Linda via email at [hstcomm@co.jefferson.tx.us](mailto:hstcomm@co.jefferson.tx.us)

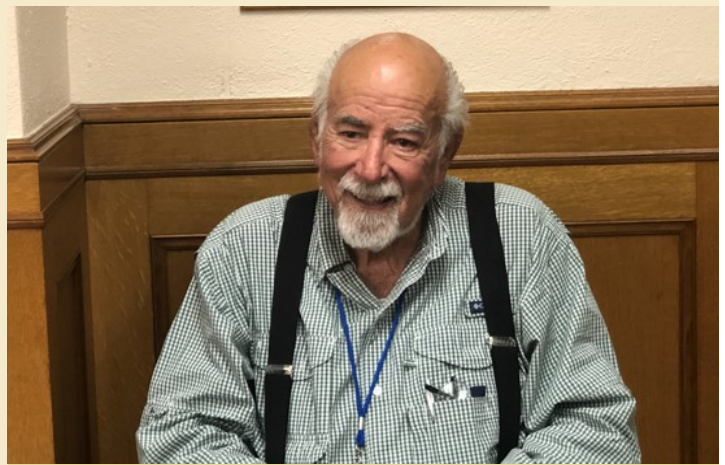
### PRESERVATION PARTNERS

Beaumont Heritage Society  
Beaumont Landmark Commission  
Port Arthur Landmark Commission  
Texas Historical Foundation  
Beaumont Main Street  
Museum of the Gulf Coast

## FORMER COMMISSIONER'S COURTROOM RESTORED

The County Engineering Superintendent, Don Rao, has made a special effort to restore the former Commissioner's Courtroom on the fifth floor of the historic courthouse to reflect the manner in which the room looked when it was used for this purpose.

On June 26, 2019, Commissioner Brent Weaver and former County Judges who held court in this room were invited to tour the restored courtroom and to reminisce about their time on the bench. Former County Judges, Leonard Giblin, Jr. (1974-1978), Richard LeBlanc, Jr. (1978 - 1996), Robert Stroder (1/8/96 - 11/12/96), Carl Griffith, Jr. (1996 - 2010) and current County Judge Jeff Branick were on hand for the tour. JCHC Coordinator, Linda McMahan was also present. Many thanks to Don Rao for his efforts to preserve this beautiful courtroom.



Don Rao, Jefferson County Engineering Superintendent  
Photo Credit: Carol Bowman, Engineering Secretary



L-R, Robert Stroder, Richard LeBlanc, Jr., Jeff Branick, Carl Griffith, Jr., Brent Weaver, Leonard Giblin, Jr.  
Photo Credit : Carol Bowman, Engineering Secretary

## PORT ARTHUR LIBRARY NEWS

Port Arthur Library, located at 4615 Ninth Avenue, recently re-opened after massive damage from Hurricane Harvey. The library is hosting Family History Fridays on select Fridays to explore genealogical resources in depth. Join them to discuss freedman's bank records, pension applications, city directories, and more on the following dates:

- July 5, 2019 from 10:00 am. - 11:00 a.m.
- September 6, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Port Arthur Library is also hosting Hands-On History sessions. Join them on the following dates to learn more about specific subjects:

- August 3, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

**Salvaging your treasures in the event of flooding, insects, mold, and other troubles.**

- October 12, 2019 from 10:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

**Analyzing old documents and photos.**

- December 7, 2019 from 10:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

**Preserving family stories through oral history.**

## JEFFERSON COUNTY RECEIVES DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FROM TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

**AUSTIN, Texas**—The Texas Historical Commission (THC) recognized the Jefferson County Historical Commission (CHC) with a Distinguished Service Award (DSA) for the 2018 year of service. This annual award affirms CHCs that document ongoing, well-rounded programs of history and preservation-related projects that enrich local communities. The award was mentioned by County Judge Jeff Branick during a meeting of the County Commissioner's Court on July 1, 2019, to acknowledge the CHC's accomplishments.

"The Distinguished Service Award honors County Historical Commissions that go above and beyond to protect and promote local historic and cultural resources. They are essential to our agency's efforts to save the real places that tell the real stories of Texas," said THC Executive Director Mark Wolfe. "The Texas Historical Commission presents this Distinguished Service Award to the Jefferson County Historical Commission to honor its efforts to preserve the Lone Star State's unique heritage."

Texas CHCs provided more than 447,000 volunteer hours in 2018, which is an in-kind donation to the state valued at more than \$11 million. The THC assists more than 200 CHCs through programs and services that preserve Texas' heritage for the education, enjoyment, and economic benefit of present and future generations. The THC's advisory role to CHCs is outlined in the Texas Local Government Code, the statute that enables County Commissioner's Courts to establish CHCs. The volunteer appointees, as directed by county officials, initiate and conduct programs that preserve the historic and cultural resources of Texas.

For more information about CHCs in Texas, visit [thc.texas.gov/chcoutreach](http://thc.texas.gov/chcoutreach) or contact the History Programs Division at 512-463-5853.



## AREA MUSEUM UPCOMING EVENTS

### Museum of the Gulf Coast May 4 - July 27, 2019

The Museum of the Gulf Coast is proud to announce its 4th Annual Community Art Show, OPEN TO ARTISTS OF ALL AGES.

There will be adult and child Professional and Non-Professional Divisions with prizes and a cash prize for BEST IN SHOW. We will begin accepting entries April 14. The show will open and be judged May 4.

Submissions of 2D or 3D art or photography should feature shipwrecks, sunken cities, and/or sea creatures real or imagined.

Children's activities and live animals will be featured on the opening day.

Credit: [Museum of the Gulf Coast website](http://MuseumoftheGulfCoast.org)



Museum of the Gulf Coast

Photo Credit: [MuseumoftheGulfCoast.org](http://MuseumoftheGulfCoast.org)



Photo Credit: [Beaumont Heritage Society website](http://BeaumontHeritageSociety.org)

### John Jay French Museum

Camp Lookinback July 9, 2019 - July 19, 2019

Camp Lookinback is a fun and educational four-day summer camp held on the grounds of the historic John Jay French museum. Children, ages 6-11, experience another time in Texas history while in a safe and enriching environment. Hands-on activities related to the 1800s will be conducted each day. Camp Lookinback is fun for both boys and girls! Registration is required and space is limited and filled on a first come first serve basis. Cost per child is \$75.00 for Non-Members and \$65.00 for BHS Members.

Credit: [Beaumont Heritage Society website](http://BeaumontHeritageSociety.org)

### McFaddin-Ward House Museum

#### "A Day in the Life" Kids' Camp

Our popular kids's camp starts July 23rd, 2019. "A Day in the Life" gives campers a birds eye view of what it was like to be a McFaddin and live in their big house!

The details:

- Campers must be ages 8 – 12.
- Camp is Tuesday, July 23rd, Wednesday, July 24th, and Thursday, July 25th, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day.
- Lunch provided each day!
- Registration is \$25 per camper.
- Camp is limited to 24 kids.
- Credit: [McFaddin-Ward House Museum website](http://McFaddin-WardHouseMuseum.org)



McFaddin-Ward House Museum

Photo Credit: [McFaddin-Ward House Museum website](http://McFaddin-WardHouseMuseum.org)

**JEFFERSON  
COUNTY  
HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION**

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Linda McMahan, Coordinator



*To preserve and  
promote history within  
the County.*

We're on the web!  
[http://co.jefferson.tx.us/  
Historical\\_Commission/](http://co.jefferson.tx.us/Historical_Commission/)

Jefferson County Historical Commission

Executive Board 2018 - 2019

Chairman, Theresa Goodness

1st Vice-Chairman, Bruce A. Hamilton

2nd Vice-Chairman, Les McMahan

Treasurer, Linda McMahan

Secretary, Jen Trenbeath

**JCHC MINI-MUSEUM  
“BEAUMONT ODDS AND ENDS”**



Flyer advertising Sells & Cray's United Shows,  
1901

Photo Credit: Linda McMahan

Beside sparkling cider and mineral water, what flavors of soda did the East Texas Bottling Works bottle?

Did Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show ever perform in Beaumont?

Find answers to these questions as well as numerous other interesting "Odds and Ends" at the Mini-Museum this summer.

Many thanks to Historical Commission member **Don Smart** for putting the exhibit together.

Do you enjoy impressing your friends with trivia – an odd fact or the end of the story?

Beaumont could produce her own trivia game as shown in the latest exhibit in the Jefferson County Historical Commission Mini-Museum located on the first floor of the historic Jefferson County Courthouse. The exhibit runs through August 26, 2019.

**Beaumont History Trivia  
Questions Answered**

How were gas headlights on cars turned on? *Yes! Cars did have gas headlights!*

How, when, why was the entire San Jacinto Building moved? *Intact!*

What was the cost of a meal at some of Beaumont's finest restaurants in the 1930s?

Was the Hobo Medicine Company an actual legitimate business?