

...Local veteran
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went to work for GTE, first in the Houston area and then transferring to San Angelo. In 1970, son Greg joined the family.

In 1974, Charles moved his family to Bronte. They opened El Vaquero Restaurant with the talented Arturo Benitez leading the kitchen crew. Luis left his family during this time to take a contract job installing computers in Mexico City. He and his family went on to purchase and operate the Country Inn in Bronte. He also purchased the Texas Theater building. His family has grown during these last 47 years in Coke County to include six grandchildren and one great grandchild.

[Editor’s Note: We, at The Observer/Enterprise, are always honored when we are able to recognize one of our veterans. If you would like us to tell your story or the story of a veteran you love, please contact us on our office line



Luis and Paula Charles

(325) 453-2433 or by calling Melinda’s cell (325) 473-8863.]

...Runaway Scrape
(Continued from previous page)

The second-largest city in Texas on the eve of the revolution, San Felipe had close to 600 residents and was a bustling center of government and commerce. As in the town of Gonzales, the Texians and their army burned the town behind them, a strategy to deny Santa Anna’s troops food and supplies.

Angelina Peyton Eberly, a tavern owner, recalled in a letter to a friend the evening she evacuated San Felipe across the Brazos River: “Much was left on the river banks. There were no wagons hardly ... few horses, many had to go on foot the mud up to their knees - women and children pell mell.” Safely across the river, Eberly could hear “the popping of spirits, powder & [etc.] in our burning homes.”

Creed Taylor, a Texian soldier who escorted his family to safety before fighting in the Battle of San Jacinto, wrote in 1900, “I have never witnessed such scenes of distress and human suffering. ... Delicate women trudged alongside their park horses, carts, or sleds from day to day until their shoes were literally worn out, then continued the journey with bare feet, lacerated and bleeding at almost every step. Their clothes were scant, and with no means of shelter from frequent rains and bitter winds, they traveled on through the long days in wet and bedraggled apparel, finding even at night

little relief from their suffering since the wet earth and angry sky offered no relief. ... Thus these half-clad, mud-besmeared fugitives, looking like veritable savages, trudged along.”

Harris, Bryan and Eberly converged with other refugees at Lynch’s Ferry, on the south bank of the San Jacinto River, within a mile of the future battlefield at San Jacinto. “Arrived at the San Jacinto River in the night,” wrote Harris. “There were fully 5,000 people at the ferry. ... We waited three days before we crossed. ... It was all-most a riot to see who should cross first.”

The crossing was daunting. The ferry was a wooden, flat-bottomed raft, hand-drawn along cables. A few dozen people and possessions could travel per trip.

After crossing the ferry at Lynchburg, Bryan and his party moved 6 miles southeast. “When we joined the long line of ‘Runaways’ at Cedar Bayou the sight was most piteous. I shall never forget the sight of men, women and children walking, riding on horseback, in carts, sleds, wagons and every kind of transportation known to Texas.” Many became ill or died along the route. There are no official records of deaths, but historians estimate hundreds died. “Measles, sore eyes, whopping cough, and every other disease that man, woman or child is heir to, broke out among us,” wrote Harris. Her younger sister died of a flux - diarrhea—and was

buried at Liberty. With scant updates, families kept moving east, toward the Sabine River and the safety of the United States.

Harris recalled one evening: “All of asddnt we heard a report like distant thunder. ... Father said it was cannon that the Texas army and Mexicans were fighting.” They thought the Texians had lost because the cannon fire ended so quickly. They hurried eastward until a messenger found them and yelled, as Harris wrote, “Turn back, turn back. The Texas army has whipped the Mexicans. No danger, no danger.”

Relieved but exhausted, many halted their exodus. Refugee camps sprang up for families to rest and regroup. “They suffered just as much and sometimes more on the return trip,” Hardin says. Many returned to find their homes burned and their livestock missing.

Harris’ memoirs recall quicksand and a fatal alligator attack when they turned back toward home after five weeks on the run. Eberly had traveled more than 100 miles before hearing of the victory at San Jacinto. Once back in San Felipe, Eberly found her tavern and home in ashes, “the place bare of everything but the ruins of all my things burnt up,” she wrote. Many residents, including Eberly, abandoned San Felipe de Austin, which never regained its former stature. Many left Texas

for good after the spring of 1836. For those who stayed, the scrape left a scar.

Hardin explains that many Texians were hesitant to rebuild after the war. “I’ve found many people saying they don’t want to invest in a fancy house because the Mexicans might invade again, and we’re going to have to burn it down again,” he says. “So that plays a huge role in the Texian psyche for years because they just didn’t have the confidence.

“ ‘Remember the Alamo’? What they’re remembering is the Runaway Scrape and the hardship.”

Julia Robinson is a photojournalist in Austin. This article also appeared online at www.texascooppower.com.

Teachers can attend Summer Ag Academies

By Julie Tomascik
TFB Editor

Texas teachers will get to the science of agriculture in Texas Farm Bureau (TFB)-hosted workshops this summer. Held in four locations across the state, the Summer Ag Academies offer teachers practical experience in agriculture-related concepts, and they can take home resources to use in their classrooms.

The Summer Ag Academies are one- and two-day professional development events to immerse teachers into agriculture.

“Teachers will learn about a variety of topics at each of the different Summer Ag Academies,” said Jordan Walker, TFB associate director of Organization, Educational Outreach. “The main goal is to give teachers a glimpse of agriculture and showcase

presentations that help them learn how to incorporate agriculture into the classroom.”

This year’s Summer Ag Academies will be held at the following locations:

June 14: Burleson (K-5 teachers)

July 19-20: New Braunfels (K-12 teachers)

July 22: Fort Bend (K-8 teachers)

July 27: Lubbock (K-12 teachers)

There is no cost to attend the academies.

Certified, active teachers of all subject areas can benefit from the material that is shared, Walker said.

For more than 20 years, TFB has hosted professional development events in the summer to help Texas teachers make the connection with agriculture, providing them innovative techniques to incorporate the subject in their curriculum.

The curriculum provided by TFB is aligned with Texas teaching standards to help teachers better incorporate the material in the classroom.

Teachers also receive continuing education credits in addition to the resource material.

“The Summer Ag Academies are free, provide resources and expertise for the teachers to take back to the classroom and open up networking opportunities with industry experts and fellow teachers who are interested in or already incorporating agriculture into the classroom,” Walker said.

Additional information and registration details for the Summer Ag Academies are available online at <https://texasfarmbureau.org/aitc>.

For more information, contact Walker at edoutreach@txfb.org or call 254.751.2569.

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