Planning for the Future
Program’s 5th Anniversary Spurs Advice for Effective CHC Performance

By Amy Hammons, County Historical Commission Outreach Coordinator

April 2013 marked the fifth anniversary of the County Historical Commission (CHC) Outreach Program. While reflecting on our accomplishments, we’re also meditating on changes that will increase the effectiveness of future Texas Historical Commission (THC) services.

The CHC Outreach Program was created to empower CHCs through knowledge and use of THC programs, and to encourage CHCs to plan, train appointees, and improve partnerships. To evaluate our work, we discuss what efforts we made toward these goals, what administrative resources we expended, and what worked for our partners.

An added challenge for the CHC Outreach Program is to identify which less-successful efforts we might eliminate to provide a manageable workload for our reduced staff. We look for ways our efforts helped or hindered the way CHCs and the public understand the value of preservation.

We recommend using this type of discussion to evaluate efforts within your CHC or nonprofit organization. Gathering this information is one of the many planning exercises we suggest conducting to ensure you are meeting organizational goals and strengthening connections to your community.

To assist CHCs in this effort, CHC Outreach staff has placed sample discussion questions on the THC website. The first discussion addresses how to evaluate your ongoing projects. Although contemplating change can be challenging, it is important to assess, redirect, and evolve to accomplish your goals.

To begin the process, use the search function at www.thc.state.tx.us and enter the words “developing organizational goals” to locate a page containing CHC planning information. Enter the phrase “CHC discussions” to locate a sample conversation on evaluating your organizational capacity.

EXCERPT: Discussion 1
Evaluating Organizational Capacity
This discussion should be used to accomplish the following:
A. To evaluate an organization’s past performance.
B. To help participants articulate successful and challenging aspects of an organization’s workload.
C. To enable an open discussion of practical ways to improve your organizational capacity.
D. To identify specific changes that will improve ongoing projects and introduce new projects.