



El Paso CHC tells the stories of local historic sites.

### CHC Outreach Program

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) formed the CHC Outreach Program in 2008 to support County Historical Commissions (CHCs) in their efforts to save the real places that tell the real stories of Texas. The program exists to:

- Empower CHCs through training and assistance
- Educate officials and strengthen public policy concerning preservation
- Expand partnerships and communication networks for CHCs
- Elevate the social and economic benefits of preservation
- Equip sustainable CHCs
- Explore funding opportunities for CHC training and projects

### Contact Us

For information on this and other THC programs that contribute to the livelihood of your county, contact:

#### Amy Hammons

CHC Outreach Program Coordinator  
512.475.2692  
[amy.hammons@thc.state.tx.us](mailto:amy.hammons@thc.state.tx.us)

#### Amber Nunez

CHC Outreach Program Specialist  
512.463.6524  
[amber.nunez@thc.state.tx.us](mailto:amber.nunez@thc.state.tx.us)

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

# County Historical Commissions



Front cover: Dr. Lucile Estell, Milam County Historical Commission member, was honored with the John Ben Shepperd County Historical Commission Leadership Award in 2008.

[www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us)



Lubbock CHC celebrates history.

## What Is a CHC?

County Historical Commissions (CHCs) were established by the Texas Legislature to assist county commissioners courts and the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to preserve the cultural and historic resources of our state.

Texas' Local Government Code directs CHCs to initiate and manage activities as prioritized by their county and the THC.

CHC responsibilities include:

- Annually report to the county commissioners court and the THC
- Meet at least four times each year
- Survey county historic resources
- Assess and/or maintain historical markers, buildings, and sites
- Create awareness and appreciation of historic preservation
- Partner with other preservation entities
- Promote cultural and historic sites to develop and sustain heritage tourism
- Participate in THC programs and consult with THC preservation specialists

## Notable CHC Projects

More than 450,000 CHC volunteer hours are provided annually. Note the broad range of CHC achievements listed below:

- **Atascosa CHC** partnered with the Institute of Texan Cultures and local libraries to scan historic photos and record oral histories.
- **Brewster CHC** partnered with the County Tourism Council to create informational signs for more than 30 historic sites along county highways.
- **Collin CHC** initiated a \$12,000 grant program to fund heritage efforts of Collin County Coalition of Historical Organizations, which is made up of more than 20 different organizations.
- **Crosby CHC** helped build 36 feet of exhibit cases in coordination with the Crosby County Pioneer Museum, the Wheeler Foundation, and the City of Ralls.
- **El Paso CHC** aggressively promoted the Buffalo Soldier Memorial Cemetery celebration and as a result, drew more than 300 attendees and received national publicity.
- **Houston CHC** partnered with SFASU and county citizens to catalog, GPS, and assess 114 cemeteries; they also raised grant money to finance clean-up for some of the cemeteries.
- **Matagorda CHC** administers the Certified Local Government (CLG) program for their county and secured CLG grant funding to repair local historic buildings.
- **Tom Green CHC**, at the request of its county judge, coordinated tours of historic sites for attendees of the West Texas County Judges and Commissioners Regional Conference.
- **Williamson CHC** partnered with Round Rock ISD and the Williamson Museum to work with middle school junior historians to record and preserve Union Hill Cemetery.

## CHC Appointee Selection

Potential CHC appointees should demonstrate an interest in and an understanding of local history and historic resources, and may already be serving with other preservation organizations. Final selection should create a commission with a broad range of ages, ethnicities, and skills, as well as include representation from each precinct.

Before making appointments, consider the following selection criteria recommended by CHC Outreach staff:

- Willing and able to serve
- Positive attitude when working with people within and outside the CHC
- Continually seeks preservation-related educational opportunities
- Able to field inquiries, conduct site visits, and report site conditions to the THC
- Understands the need to pursue a rich and diverse interpretation of county history

## CHC Appointments

County commissioners courts should confirm appointments in January of odd-numbered years, securing a two-year term commitment. Each county should report the CHC roster to the THC with contact information for each appointee; include name, address, telephone number, and email address.

Galveston CHC works with communities to save their heritage.

