

**CHC Recruitment and Retention Efforts**—CHCs report on organizational improvements in annual reports.

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**2015--Collin**—Planning session for the upcoming year—We have been meeting each fall to get our committees together at one time to plan their upcoming year. This fall we had a smaller attendance, but the networking crossover of information was fantastic! Everyone brainstormed and it was very productive! Committees then broke out and got quickly to the work at hand--planning the year goals, and budget. It brought new appointees into the group in a more relaxed atmosphere and it has benefited the organization—those new appointees are active and involved! Doing something a little different from past years worked well—brainstorming from everyone—got all of us excited again!

**2015—DeWitt**—CHC has tried to improve its membership and attendance by asking present members to present names of persons interested in the county history and invite them to our meetings. We try to meet each month at different historical locations in the county with a program on the history of the site or building. Attendance is higher with the change of meeting sites. We have met at various museums, historical churches, and homes. The members seem to enjoy the change of meeting places as well as learning facts about areas of our community many did not know. Several new members have been added as they were involved in these meeting places and enjoyed our group and the work we have been trying to do. We are still trying to diversify our membership and have recently added a pastor from the black community. We will continue to seek members from different sections of our community.

**2015—Victoria**—CHC made big strides in improving the attendance of our meetings. The local newspaper has been very helpful in posting our meeting notice with the program's name as well as the presenter. These articles run starting on Friday and continue until our meeting on Monday. This year was very special because every meeting was presented by a VCHC member. We have had some very interesting and valuable programs.

**2014—Burnet**—One area of our by-laws was not geared toward an easy transfer of officers. The timing of the nominating committee and election was changed to allow outgoing and incoming officers to meet and pass along guidance and materials. The transitions were much smoother than in the past. The attendance requirement implemented in 2013 was put into practice in 2014. To be an active member a minimum of four meetings must be attended during the year (with a provision for excused absences). As a result many became more active than previously and meetings were very well attended.

**2014—Cameron**—CHC worked hard on membership and attendance. A collective initiative was started to work on a grassroots program for recruitment, which resulted in good additions to the commission. The initiative was started due to the analytics of the county. A conclusion was made that though we had a good set of members, it was lacking as to the ratio, which we have in population. The recruitment program is one that will continue to be part of the Cameron CHC. For 2015, a more concentrated effort is being prepared for recruitment, one that is adopted from major recruiting programs of the nation. This program will be an ongoing effort into which the Cameron CHC is dedicated. *[A different chair reported for 2015 than 2014, so the THC doesn't have more specifics on how this program progressed or the specifics of what was done.]*

**2014—Galveston**—The CHC set out a goal of increasing member attendance at the quarterly commission meetings. This effort was made to get people involved in the activities the commission represented and joining a committee that sparked their interest. Actions taken to improve attendance were a list of meeting dates and places sent to members at the first of the year. Additional notices were emailed prior to each meeting. The results of this effort increased attendance from an average of 12 months to over 30. Additionally, the County Judge and a County Commissioner usually attends each meeting.

**2014—Milam**—CHC has been working on our Strategic Planning. A perceived weakness was/is membership attendance and involvement in meetings and events we sponsor and/or support. We explored new meeting places & used historic sites that had not been used previously. One example is the historic Conoley Church and Cemetery. Interesting speakers have been invited that encourage discussion and renew our resolve to preserve, protect and promote Milam County history.

**2013—Bandera**—Recruit and nominate CHC qualified people with special training to serve on the BCHC. 2011-12 many of the previous BCHC members were not attending regular meeting and were not volunteering for projects leaving the majority of the project work load for the Chair and Co-Chair. Set up committees, assigned experience CHC project managers to organize and oversee special projects and report to the CHC Chairman and at regular CHC Meetings. The BCHC is now operating more efficient, getting projects completed in less time and with better results. Our CHC members work closely together and offer assistance to other project managers whenever needed.

**2013—El Paso**—CHC in their effort to bolster outreach to the populace of our county coordinated with several groups and sponsored the first El Paso Heritage Summit which was heavily advertised in all forms of media. The event lasted for five hours and drew more than 400 people plus eighteen exhibitors from the various sites in the county. We held a “round table” discussion the result of which was a listing of sites that the attendee’s prioritized by voting for them. We then staged group discussions on the top ten vote getters to make suggestions on how to promote each of these. The entire event was simulcast on line as it progressed. Because of the great success we experienced, the 2014 Summit has garnered a new co-sponsor, the El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau. They are not only joining us as a major sponsor, but are also supplying four of the large conference rooms, tables and chairs this year at the Judson Williams Convention Center.

**2013—Fayette**—Most members did not realize the CHC was operating under a set of bylaws. The new chairman contacted previous chairmen to locate a copy of the existing bylaws and distributed them to our membership. The membership then passed amendments to reflect our current needs. The new chairman discovered that not all members were aware of meeting dates. E-mails were sent and phone calls were made to each member to verify and correct e-mail addresses and determine who did not have internet access. In addition to e-mails to members and newspaper notices, written notices are now mailed to members who do not have internet access. Additionally, the meeting dates and time were adjusted to allow more members to attend meetings. Meetings now alternate between a central location near La Grange and outlying communities to further increase attendance. More effort is put into finding interesting meeting places, such as historical properties and museums. More effort is put into getting members involved in projects and activities.

**2013—Liberty**—With a new county chair and executive committee in January, our CHC began an aggressive plan for the next two years. We reviewed our existing Bylaws and updated, bringing them in line with those suggested by the THC and with approval of the Commissioner's Court. Our CHC designed a new website with information on our commission work, events, projects and local history. We also began an aggressive media blitz, placing articles on our events and upcoming quarterly meetings and speakers in the area newspapers, local news internet site and on the local radio. We encouraged the public to attend our meetings and to volunteer for our projects and programs. Chair Jamison developed a quarterly newsletter which is emailed to all appointees and “friends” groups as well as printed copies placed in the courthouse and area businesses to inform the public about our commission and various projects. Appointees are kept abreast of current news via email when needed between quarterly meetings. We also established committee workshops the month preceding our quarterly meetings. These workshops are informal and roundtable. The county chair begins these workshops by discussing each committee and the work to be done. We have open discussion about each committee project and then break into individual committee groups to implement the work at hand. Chairman Jamison also has established contact with local historical societies and preservation partners as a part of our CHC outreach. She has presented several PowerPoint presentations to our CHC, clubs and area organizations: “What Is Historic Preservation?” and “What Are County Historical Commissions and What Do They Do?” Our CHC initiated several new programs as well as improving existing efforts.

**2013—Lubbock**—After successful efforts to diversify the membership of LCHC, the first meeting in January included a new member orientation. THC guidelines for CHCs were reviewed and THC resources outlined. LCHC had not previously had a work plan, so a 2013 work plan with activities and timelines was presented to the group. Increased communication efforts improved meeting attendance and meeting participation, resulting in more volunteer hours toward educational and preservation activities.

**2013—Palo Pinto**—CHC worked on several areas this past year to expand membership, including different cultures groups and educational levels. We concentrated on membership by reaching out to different areas of the county for a broader idea base of the county. We eliminated members from the board which were not coming to meetings and replaced with these people with the above. Our meeting attendance has increased and ideas for countywide projects have steadily increased.

**2012—Jim Hogg**—One major improvement was in the area of community outreach to adults and young people. The year 2012 was a planning year for our CHC in preparation for the county's centennial anniversary in 2013. We started up a website that is currently live and we held community meetings, participated in community events and festivals by sponsoring exhibits and informational booths related to area history and upcoming events. We developed a calendar of events for 2013 and had banners and posters made to inform the public of future activities. Articles related to area history and culture written by CHC members were published in local newspapers weekly. We met with our local school superintendent and principals to form partnership to promote youth involvement and appreciation of local history and historic landmarks. As a result, local students and educators were involved in the plaza dedication ceremony as well as in other activities . . . Through our improvements efforts we have brought renewed awareness and appreciation for our local heritage and culture in our community.

**2012—Nacogdoches**—The CHC wanted to improve their identity with community leaders. While their appointees are active individually in local museums, archeology, and history programs, they felt that the CHC was rarely recognized as an organization. For this reason, they made a concerted effort to invite city and county leaders to attend CHC meetings. Leaders included the Chairman of Historic Sites for the city, the chairman of the Historical Overlay Committee, the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, the leader of the Main Street Program, and others. Each CHC meeting featured one local leader who was asked to present a short synopsis of the functions and goals of their organization/ committee. An open discourse followed each presentation, which allowed discovery of commonalities and a discussion of shared interests. There were many profitable discussions on tourism, historical preservation, and community involvement. These efforts have established a better relationship with these individuals (and their committees) and helped to promote the CHC's identity throughout the county.

**2012—Pecos**—CHC members attended the Preservation Month Regional Workshop in Fort Davis May 22, 2012. "Strengthening Community Partnerships" was the main topic of discussion. A report of the workshop was made at the next CHC meeting. During the discussion that followed it was decided to reach out beyond history and preservation groups to see if we might expand our membership to younger members of our communities. As a result, we added four appointees to the other members who have served faithfully over the years. Although four may not seem like very many, we have not added that many new appointees in over ten years.

**2011—Van Zandt**—Our specific area of improvement has been to narrow our focus and concentrate on the strengths, abilities and talents of the individual members of our commission. We encourage and inspire each other to stress our goals of identifying and preserving our county's historic resources. The CHC holds meetings in the various towns in our county to get more involvement at the local level. At each of these meetings, we involved not only the CHC, but local historical groups and city officials to promote our CHC, as well as, promoting history and preservation. By reminding citizens in the various towns of the importance of preserving their history, more locals have become involved with Chamber of Commerce efforts to improve the city and their museum's preservation efforts, along with becoming aware of the importance of passing this history down to their children.

**Game Changers**—[www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/county-historical-commission-outreach/chc-game-changers](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/county-historical-commission-outreach/chc-game-changers). On Game Changers webpage, also look at projects under "Proactive and Progressive CHCs" heading.

**Reporting Links and Templates** heading on this webpage: [www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/county-historical-commission-outreach/annual-reporting-county](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/preserve/projects-and-programs/county-historical-commission-outreach/annual-reporting-county).

**Improving CHC Reports**—[www.thc.state.tx.us/improve-chc-annual-reports](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/improve-chc-annual-reports). On Improving Reports webpage, look at information under "Reports from Distinguished Service Award Winners heading.