

# TEXAS INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATION



- Texas History Symposium
- Cook-Off
- Art Contest
- Music - Food
- Market Days

Our mission is to educate, participate and celebrate Texas Independence.



MARCH 10, 2018



# PA QUE SEPAN

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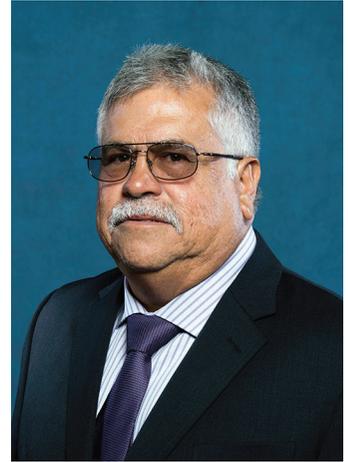
# Letter from the President

On behalf of all the volunteers of THICA (*Texas Heritage and Independence Celebration Association*), I would like to thank all of our visitors for celebrating our 11th Annual Texas Independence Celebration. What started out 11 years ago with just several hundred visitors has now grown into the largest celebration of Texas Independence, outside of San Antonio, according to Humanities Texas of Austin.

Let our battlefield re-enactors take us back to those early morning hours at the Battle of the Alamo as General Santa Anna orders his soldiers to have no mercy and show no quarter for the Texas and Tejano defenders. Listen to the roar of the cannons and see the clouds of gun powder from the flint-lock muskets on the battlefield, as history becomes alive again. Come celebrate the victory of the Texas army of Gen. Sam Houston as they win our Texas Independence at the Battle of San Jacinto against General Santa Anna and the Mexican army. Join the total resolve of our Texas and Tejano heroes as they fight for their right to keep and bear arms at the Battle of Gonzales (the Lexington of Texas). The goal of THICA at each annual event is to tell the history of Texas Independence accurately and completely, which includes the participation of Tejanos (Texas-born citizens of Mexican and Spanish ancestry) on the battlefields and at the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence.

Our Texas Independence celebration continues to get bigger and better each year because of the total community effort that includes the San Benito mayor, city commissioners, and the city manager, as well as the San Benito School superintendent, school board members, and the school district, with the financial support of the San Benito EDC. THICA would also like to thank all our sponsors, our food vendors, our arts and crafts vendors, our musicians, our bar-be-que cooks, our re-enactors, and all our volunteers to allow us to celebrate and honor the bravery and courage of our Texas heroes and our Tejano heroes that help win our Texas Independence. Happy Birthday Texas!

**Victor Rosas,**  
*THICA President*



**Victor Rosas,**  
*THICA President*

**THICA Founders**  
Federico V. Garza  
Carol Garza  
Jack Ayoub

## 2018 THICA Volunteers

Anabeth Molina-Cordova  
Bill Elliott  
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Caryn A. Cadena  
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**Texas Heritage and Independence Celebration Association, Inc.**  
402 E. Harrison, Suite B, Harlingen, Texas 78550  
[www.happybirthdaytexas.com](http://www.happybirthdaytexas.com)



**Texas Heritage and Independence Celebration Association Committee**

*(L-R) Standing: Victor Rosas, Julio Guerra, Ruben Cordova, Fernando Hernandez, Jack Ayoub, Bruce Kidd, Jose Jaramillo, Elizandro Muñoz, Fred V. Garza. Sitting: Letty Gonzalez, Diana Bates, Anabeth Molina-Cordova, Christine Kidd, Veronica Rodriguez*

Texas Heritage Independence Association, Inc. is an organization dedicated to promote the participation of Tejanos in the Texas Independence. Our vision is to bring awareness and acknowledgement to Tejanos who participated in the Independence of Texas and in U. S. history. We (THICA) want to educate and promote Texas Independence by reenacting events of the Texas Revolution leading to Texas Independence.

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**MARCH 3**

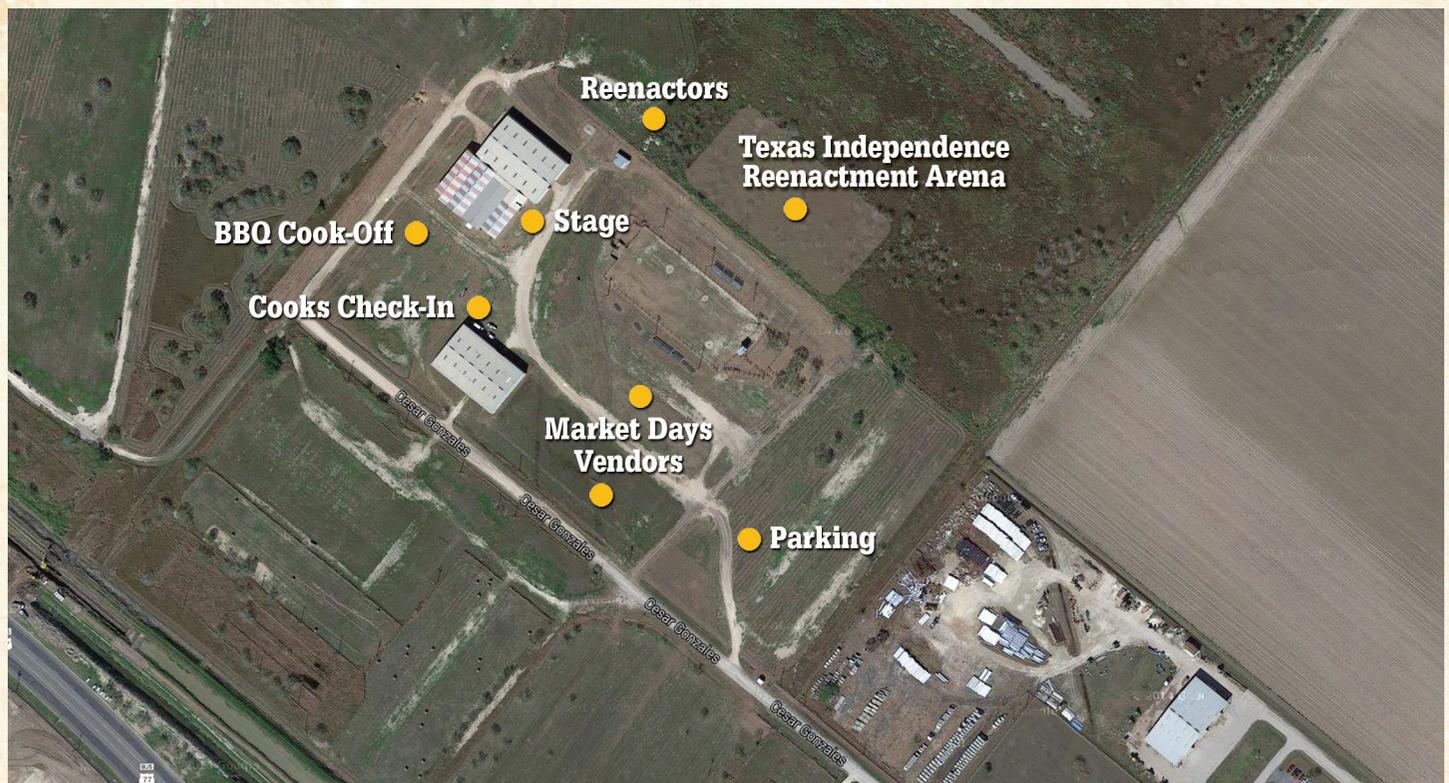
\$10 for students and general public  
 \$40 for teachers  
 (SBCISD Administration Bldg. School Board Room)

**Texas History Symposium Agenda**

- 8:30 - 8:55 AM Welcome and Pre-Registration
- 8:55 - 9:00 AM Elizandro Muñoz,  
Master of Ceremonies
- 9:00 - 10:00 AM Dr. Joseph Chance:  
"The Battle of Bexar (San Antonio)"
- 10:00 - 11:00 AM Dr. Trinidad Gonzales:  
"Texas Constitution in Perspective:  
Rights and Race"
- 11:00 - 12:00 Noon Dr. Jamie Starling:  
"The Cordova Rebellion"
- 12:00 - 1:00 PM A Tejano Lunch of Pan de Campo  
and Chile con Carne
- 1:00 - 2:00 PM Manuel Hinojosa:  
"History Rediscovered with metal  
detecting at the Battle of San Jacinto"

**MARCH 10**

- \$5 Parking Per Vehicle (San Benito Stock Show Fairgrounds)
- 8:00 AM LIVE Music: DJ Franko & Cooker's Meeting
- 9:00 AM Market Days, MUSIC: SBCISD Mariachi del Sol
- 10:00 AM Lone Star Dream Musical performed by  
Ed Downs Elementary students
- 11:00 AM Commencement Ceremony & Presentation  
of Colors - The San Benito Naval JROTC
- 11:15 AM Invocation - Rev. Michael Fulk
- 11:20 AM Proclamation - City of San Benito Mayor  
Ben Gomez
- 11:25 AM Key Note Speaker: Elizandro Muñoz
- 11:30 AM Resigning of Texas Declaration of Independence
- 12:00 PM Battle Reenactment: Battle of Gonzales  
*Narrated by Jack Ayoub*
- 12:30 PM Art Show Awards - Fred Booth Elem. Choir
- 1:00 PM BBQ Cook-off Judging begins
- 2:00 PM Battle Reenactment: Battle of the Alamo  
*Narrated by Jack Ayoub*
- 2:30 PM LIVE Music: Roy Solis
- 4:00 PM Battle Reenactment: Battle of San Jacinto  
*Narrated by Jack Ayoub*
- 4:30 PM LIVE Music: Ramon Lucio y Conjunto  
Dominated, SBCISD Conjunto Estrella
- 5:30 PM BBQ Cook-off Winners Announced



# Texas History Symposium 2018

## Keynote Speakers

### **Elizandro Muñoz** (Master of Ceremonies)

Elizandro is an Asst. Professor of History at South Texas College, and an avid historian, focusing on South Texas History. He has been recognized with a South Texas College Jaguar Excellence Award for Excellence, and a NISOD (National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development) Excellence Award by the University of Texas. He has served as a consultant for the Teaching American History grant, and a United States Dept. of Labor Community based Training grant, as a panelist at symposiums at the collegiate level, and featured speaker at museums, and special events, as the keynote speaker at the Texas Independence Day Celebration event. Elizandro is proud to be a founding Board member of THICA (Texas Heritage and Independence Celebration Association) and the work it does in promoting Texas and Tejano history.



He has spent the last 25 years documenting the Ancient Camino Real, starting in Guanajuato, Mexico and crossing into Texas at Eagle Pass to the battle grounds of San Jacinto. At San Jacinto, he was part of the 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2008 archaeological teams funded by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department grants to dig up battlefield artifacts that helped interpret the last battle for Texas Independence. At the 2009 Battle of San Jacinto Symposium, he was the featured speaker, presenting findings of the latest archaeological investigation of the battle site. Manuel has also participated in 2001 in the archeology investigation at the Fannin Battleground State Historic Park and various archaeological surveys at the Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Park. He has appeared in the Discovery Channel's hour-long documentary "Unsolved History, The Alamo".



### **Manuel Hinojosa** *Speaker*

Manuel Hinojosa grew up in Mission and currently resides in Port Isabel. Manuel earned his B.A. in Art at Pan American University and a degree in Architecture at the University of Southwestern Louisiana.



### **Trinidad Gonzales,** **PhD**

*Speaker*

Dr. Gonzales earned his doctorate from the University of Houston and received a Center for Mexican American Studies Graduate Fellowship and a Smithsonian

Predocutorial Fellowship. His areas of research include Borderlands, Chicana/o, and Civil Rights histories, specializing in early 20th century Lower Rio Grande Valley history. Dr. Gonzales' most recent publication is "The Mexican Revolution, Revolucion de Tejas, Matanza de 1915." In War Along the Border: the Mexican Revolution and

# Texas History Symposium 2018

## Keynote Speakers

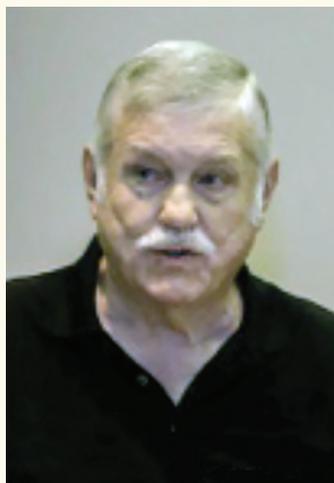
Tejano Communities, edited by Arnolde de Leon and published in 2012.

Dr. Gonzales helps coordinate the South Texas College Mexican American Studies Program, and his leadership role within the division includes being involved in policy-making decision for the AHA and providing standards for the profession of history. Gonzales also advocates for the highest degree of respect for the importance of history to the nation's educational policy makers. His topic for the Texas History Symposium: Texas Constitution in Perspective- Rights and Race.

### Joseph Chance, PhD

Speaker

Dr. Chance earned a PhD in mathematics at UT in Austin in 1974 and has taught at Pan American College in Edinburg from 1969 – 2005 where he served as chairman of the math department for 12 years. He wrote a Texas history column in the Valley Morning Star, "History by Chance" and has authored 10 books: 2 of which were self-published and 8 that were published by the University press that included "The Regimental History in the War between the States and the Mississippi Rifles led by Jefferson Davis in the Mexican-America War." Dr. Chance's great-great-grandfather came to Texas with Stephen F. Austin and became a Mexican citizen, making Chance a true Mexican-American. His topic: The Battle of Bexar (San Antonio).



### Jamie Starling

Speaker

Dr. Jamie Starling is an Assistant Professor of History at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. A 2012 graduate of the University of Texas at El Paso, he completed his dissertation on the Catholic Church in

the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands under the direction of Professor Cheryl Martin. Dr. Starling has published articles on intermarriage during the U.S. Mexico War (American Catholic Studies), Afro-Mexicans in South Texas (The Journal of South Texas), Catholicism in the colonial period (Password), and marriage in the borderlands in the 1830s (The Latin Americanist) and has researched and presented at conferences in Mexico and the United States. Dr. Starling's teaching interests include courses in Texas, Mexican American, Borderlands, and U.S. Southwest history as well as U.S. history surveys.

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# Forgotten Tejano Heroes

## Ambrosio Rodriguez

by Jack Ayuob

**T**exas history has long forgotten Tejano heroes who fought for Texas independence from Mexico in 1836, such as 2nd Lieut. Ambrosio Rodriguez. Born in San Antonio, his father was Don Manuel Ignacio Rodriguez and his mother was Antonia Curbiere, of the early Canary Island families, which settled San Antonio; he was married to Miss Maria de Jesús Olivarri on January 16, 1828. He joined Captain Seguin's Company on the 23rd day of February, 1836. On April 21st, 1836, Rodriguez marched with Capt. Seguin's Tejanos in Texas General Sam Houston's army at the Battle of San Jacinto for victory against the Mexican General Santa Anna's army.

None of his Tejano comrades knew that day of the battle, that Ambrosio has hiding a secret. His first cousin, Mariano Rodriguez, was a Mexican soldier in the paymaster corps of Santa Anna's army. Rodriguez also contributed during the war for Texas Independence when he became the first Tejano in Capt. Seguin company to warn Lt.

Col. William Barrett Travis that Gen. Santa Anna's army had crossed the Rio Grande about 150 miles north of Laredo in the dead of winter after being informed by his wife's parents living in the Laredo area.

Although Travis did not believe Rodriguez, Capt. Seguin did and decided to send Jose Cassiano to spy for Texas, as well as send his best Tejano scout, Blas Herrera, to patrol the Laredo area for Santa Anna's army. Although both reported to Seguin that Santa Anna had indeed crossed the Rio Grande River and was marching to San Antonio, Travis still refused to believe both reports about the Mexican Army movements.



Texas Independence from Mexico was won because of contributions from our Texas heroes and our Tejano heroes, such as 2nd Lieut. Ambrosio Rodriguez who were willing to fight and die for Texas. He died in San Antonio in 1848.

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# Forgotten Tejano Heroes

by Jack Ayuob

**T**exas History has long forgotten our Tejano heroes who fought and died for Texas Independence in 1836, and that trend continued through 1875. In 1870, the State of Texas was granting pensions to anyone who fought for Texas Independence from Mexico. Texans and Tejanos would go before the board, raise their right hand, and take the oath that everything they were saying was the truth. The Texans were granted their pensions, but unfortunately, the Tejanos never received their just compensation. This led to 20 Tejanos, including Lt. Col. Juan Seguin and Capt. Antonio Menchaca, on Jan. 12th, 1875, to petition the State Comptroller and document their military participation in five major battles for Texas Independence.

At the Battle of Bexar (San Antonio), 160 Tejanos under command of Capt. Juan Seguin fought alongside of about 200 Texans with Col. Ben Milam and Col. Ben McCullough, house to house and finally capturing the Alamo from General Cos and his Mexican Army. Two miles outside of San Antonio, 70 Tejanos with 25 Texans under the command of Col. Jim Bowie defeated 300 Mexican soldiers including cavalry and one cannon, at the Battle of Concepcion. Fifteen Tejanos entered the Alamo with Capt. Juan Seguin, and eight Tejanos would die alongside Davy Crockett, Col. Jim

Bowie, and Lt. Col. William Travis.

After the Battle of San Jacinto, Capt. Seguin was asked to list the names of the 20 Tejanos who were on the battlefield that day on April 21st, 1836. According to the lost Tejano petition,

there were Tejanos on cavalry patrols south of San Antonio protecting ranches from Indian raids and Mexican soldier deserters. Deaf Smith, Chief of Texas scouts, had Tejanos scouting in his company, as well as there were Tejanos serving as guards and escorts for the Texas families fleeing eastward from General Santa Anna's army. Horses and luggage had to be taken care of and protected, as well as several Tejanos who were sick at San Felipe.

On March 10th, Saturday, at the 11th year Texas Independence Day Celebration on the San Benito Stock Fair Grounds, the courage and bravery of our Texas heroes and Tejano heroes will be honored and remembered at the re-enactments of the



**Captain Juan Seguin**

*At the Battle of Bexar (San Antonio), 160 Tejanos under command of Capt. Juan Seguin fought along side about 200 Texans.*

Battle of the Alamo and the Battle of San Jacinto. And just before the Battle of San Jacinto, the battlefield narrator will announce the correct number of Tejanos who fought for Texas Independence in the Texas Army with Gen. Sam Houston.

# Reenactors depict Texas Independence

The sounds of firing muskets and cannon blasts fill the air each year during the month of March in San Benito as part of the annual Texas Independence Celebration.

Battle skirmishes and reenactments by living historians detail the Battle of the Alamo, Siege of Béxar and finally the final clash, the Battle of San Jacinto, where Texas was born as a republic, free from Mexico.

Reenactors staged as both Texan and Mexican soldiers dress in period attire, ride on horseback and marched in make-shift formation for the battles. Defenders at the Alamo readied their

muskets and cannon in anticipation of the looming battle. Many crouched behind the fortified wooden walls and hay bales, watching the Mexican troops in crisp blue coats moving towards them.

Founded in 2007, Texas Heritage & Independence Celebration Association, Inc., (THICA), produces Texas Independence Day. The organization is dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of Texas, from the natives who first settled here to the numerous flags that have flown over Texas.

The group works to bring the story of the Alamo to life in celebration of Texas Independence Day. The San Benito

community comes together in an effort to remember the bravery of the Texans and Tejanos for our independence.

It was on March 2, 1836, when Texas severed ties with Mexico and became a free and independent republic, when at the Town of Washington, 59 representatives voted into existence a sovereign nation: the Republic of Texas. Both Anglo and Tejano delegates declared to the world that they were different: Neither Mexican or American, but to be known as Texians.

The Independence Day reenactments honor the independent spirit of those early Texans and the sacrifices made



# Independence Celebration in San Benito

for the independence that was won at the Battle of San Jacinto where the battle cry that day was “Remember the Alamo” and “Remember Goliad”; The battle lasted only 18 minutes and ended with the unconditional surrender of General Santa Anna to General Sam Houston in a victory that secured Texas’ Independence.

We honor the heroes of the Texas Revolution such as Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie and William Barrett Travis; and we honor the influential Tejanos such as Jose Antonio Navarro, Gregorio Esparza, and Juan Seguin who proudly risked death with the other signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence.

An emotional portrayal of the Battle of the Alamo over the years has been performed for increasingly large number of spectators coming from across the Valley to witness the historic depiction.

In one performance, the audience watched in disbelief, and awed silence, as Davy Crockett was executed. In apparent disbelief at seeing the legendary hero gunned-down, the crowd remained reverently silent until the announcer asked for applause for the reenactors.

The reenactors themselves come from across the Valley, and sometimes across the state, to participate in the memorable events.

Event moderator described the scene where the defenders were holed-up in the Alamo in preparation for the advancing Mexican troops under the command of



Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna.

“The general ordered that no prisoners would be taken, which only deepened the resolve of the Alamo defenders to fight to the end,” moderator said.

added a sanctioned cook-off for a variety of dishes, an art show is featured and arts/ crafts/ corporate vendors join with food concessions to service the attendees.

THICA endeavors to retell these stories and honor the memory of



those who came before us, shaping the Texas we enjoy today. Texas Heritage & Independence Celebration Association, Inc., (THICA), helps educate and celebrate Texas culture and to encourage participation by promoting the history of our state through symposiums and community events

The event has grown significantly over the years, moving from Plaza de San Benito on Stenger Street, to the San Benito Fairgrounds to accommodate side attractions and a more appropriate area to support an increasing audience base.

In recent years, the organizers have

that recreate this area’s rich and colorful history.

For more information, please contact visit our website at [www.happybirthdaytexas.com](http://www.happybirthdaytexas.com).



# The Battles for Independence

## THE BATTLE OF THE ALAMO

**O**n Feb 23rd, 1836, General Santa Anna and his Mexican Army nearly caught the defenders of the Alamo by surprise, but these brave Texans and Tejanos would hold out for 13 days against impossible odds. As these defenders saw it, the Alamo was the key to the defense of Texas, and were ready to defend their fort rather than surrender

over ran the north wall. Once inside, the Mexican army turned the captured 18-pounder cannon on the southwest corner on the defenders behind the barricaded doors of the Long Barracks and the chapel. Their desperate struggle continued until all the defenders were overwhelmed. By sunrise, the battle of the Alamo had ended, as General Santa

## “Remember the Alamo”

to General Santa Anna. Among their leaders were Lieut. Col. William Travis, commander of the Alamo, Col. James Bowie, famed knife fighter, and Davy Crockett, famed frontiersman and former congressman from Tennessee.

The final assault came before daybreak on March 6, 1836, with the calls of “viva Santa Anna and viva Mexico”, on each side of the Alamo. Small arms fire and cannon blasts beat back several attacks, but the 3rd assault finally

Anna entered the compound to survey the bloody scene of his military victory.

While the facts and legends of the Alamo continue to be debated by Texas historians today, there is no doubt that the Battle of the Alamo has come to symbolized a heroic struggle and the supreme sacrifice for freedom and liberty when brave Texans and Tejanos (Texas-born Citizens of Mexican and Spanish ancestry) fought and died together.



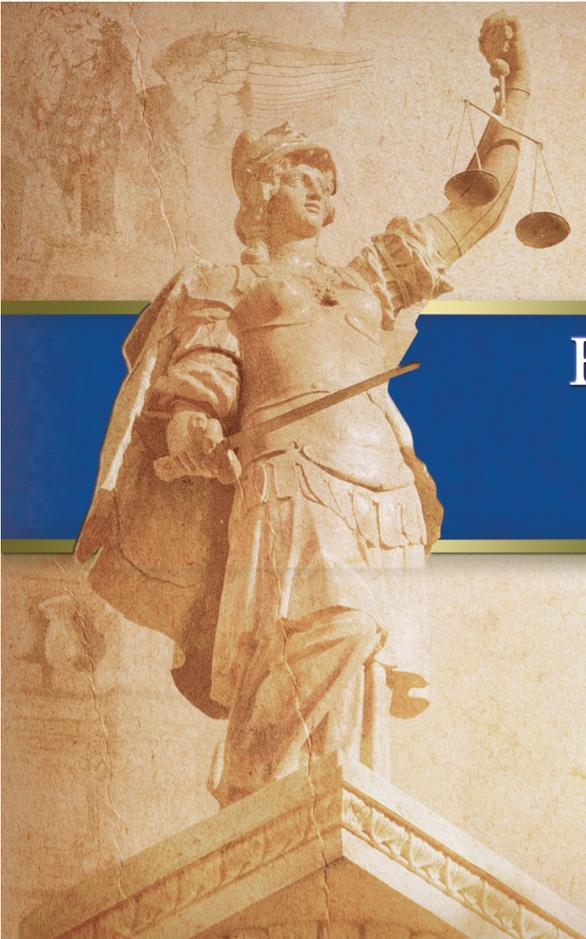
# “Come and take it.”

## THE BATTLE OF GONZALES

**I**n 1835, with tensions rising with the Texans and Tejanos against the central Mexican government of General Santa Anna, the military commander of San Antonio began taking action to disarm the region. When his request for the return of a small cannon from the citizens of Gonzales was refused, Lieut. Francisco Castañeda was dispatched with 100 calvary men to seize it. Lieut. Castañeda and his soldiers were eventually attacked while they were resting at their camp about 7 miles from Gonzales, by Col. John Henry Moore and 150 Texas militia with the battle cry, “Come and take it”. Out numbered and out-gunned, Castañeda ordered his troops back to San Antonio. Although the only casualty of the skirmish was a Mexican soldier, the Battle of Gonzales, sometimes called “the Lexington of Texas”, symbolized the beginning of the Texas War for Independence, on Oct 2nd, 1835.

## THE BATTLE OF SAN JACINTO

**O**n April 21st, 1836, General Sam Houston led his 900 Texans and Tejanos to a decisive victory over General Santa Anna and his 1300 Mexican soldiers in just over 18 minutes. Battle cries, such as “Remember the Alamo and Remember Goliad” could be heard all over the battlefield. About 630 Mexican soldiers died and 730 captured, while only 9 Texans died. Santa Anna was captured the following day and held as a prisoner of war. About 3 weeks later, the Mexican general was forced to sign the Treaty of Velasco ordering his armies to leave Texas and cross over the Rio Grande River; allowing the Republic of Texas to become established as an independent country.



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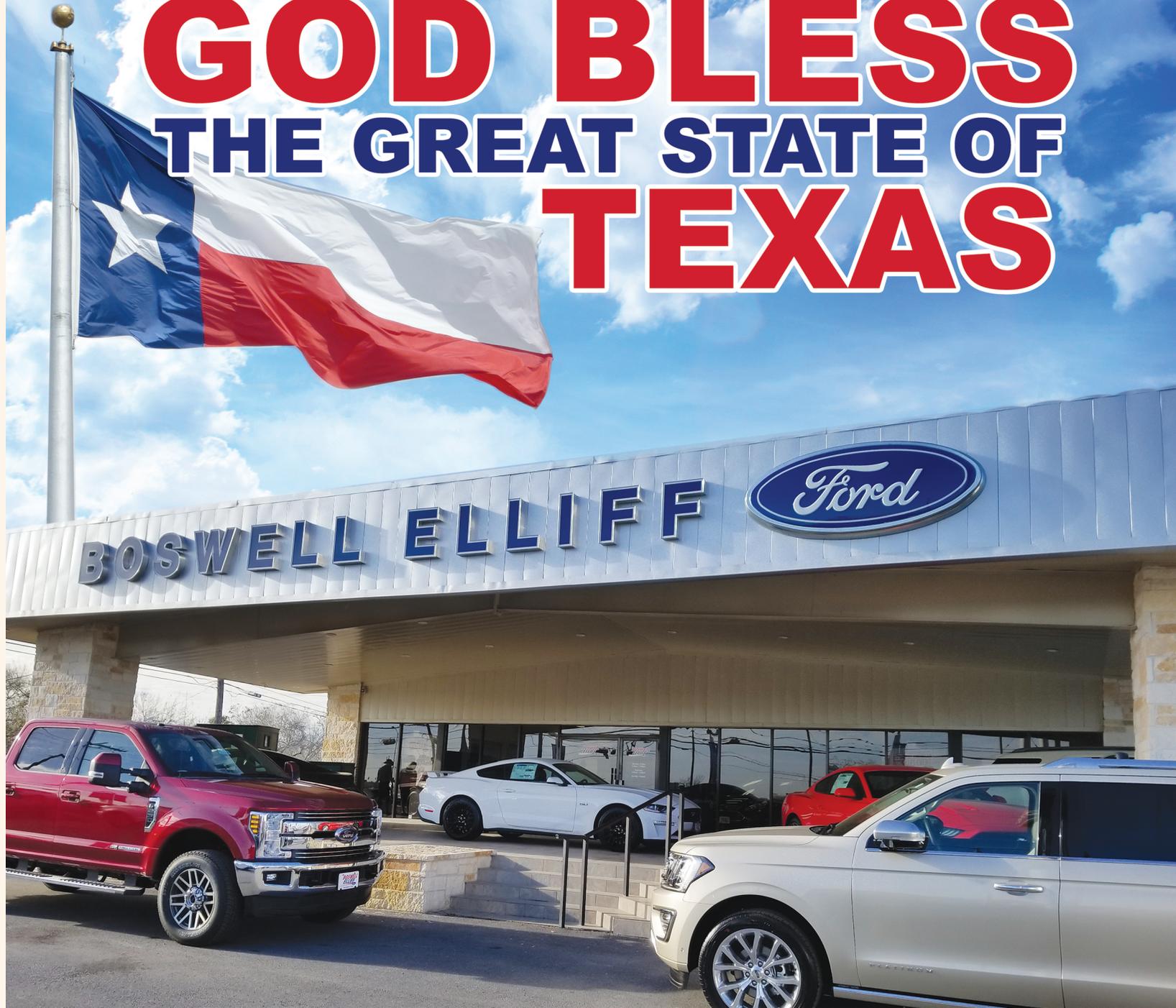


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# Forgotten Tejano Heroes

## Rear Action Guard

by Jack Ayuob

**T**exas history has long forgotten who served as the rear action guard for Texas General Sam Houston's retreating army, after the fall of the Alamo to Mexican General Santa Anna's soldiers. Houston was concerned about the Mexican cavalry attacking his army from behind. Unlike the Mexican infantry who often recruited convicts and prisoners at the point of a sword, Mexican soldiers had to show they were excellent horsemen to qualify for the cavalry. Mexican cavalry units carried metal tipped sharp edges on their 7 foot lances. Many of the Mexican cavalry wore metal helmets and metal vests, so they looked and fought like the medieval knights of old.

General Houston could have chosen Capt. John Billingsly, a frontiersman and Indian fighter, or Capt. Mosely Baker, totally fearless and a good shot, or Capt. Henry Karnes, an excellent scout. And all these Texas captains had fought the Mexican infantry before and were good choices, but his best choice to confront the Mexican cavalry was his Tejano vaqueros under the command of Capt. Juan Seguin. These rancheros were riding horses before they could walk and had all worked on their ranches, branding cattle and roping horses.

According to the memoirs of Juan Seguin, he felt honored and privileged to have his company of Tejanos chosen to be Houston's army rear guard action, and his Tejano soldiers were not going to let the General down. Houston's deepest concerns came true, when advanced units of Mexican cavalry confronted Captain Seguin's Tejanos at the town of San Felipe at the river crossing. Gun shots were exchanged, but the Mexican cavalry were never able to cross over to attack the Texas army. Seguin's Tejanos were able to catch up to General Houston and fight with their Texas comrades at the Battle of San Jacinto to help win Texas Independence.

In addition to being Houston's rear guard action, Capt. Seguin and his Tejanos fought in 5 different battles, including the Alamo and San Jacinto, but Texas history does not even remember their military contributions with a footnote in the history books. However, on March 10th, 2018 at the San Benito Fairgrounds battlefield re-enactors will honor our Tejano heroes and Texas heroes at the re-enactments of the Battle of the Alamo and San Jacinto, and the battlefield narrator will explain the events leading up to these battles.



Commandancy of the The Alamo  
Bejar, Feby. 24th. 1836

To the People of Texas & All Americans in the World—  
Fellow Citizens & compatriots—

I am besieged, by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna — I have sustained a continual Bombardment & cannonade for 24 hours & have not lost a man — The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken — I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, & our flag still waves proudly from the walls — I shall never surrender or retreat. Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism & everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid, with all dispatch — The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily & will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible & die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor & that of his country — Victory or Death.



William Barrett Travis.  
Lt. Col. comdt.

P. S. The Lord is on our side — When the enemy appeared in sight we had not three bushels of corn — We have since found in deserted houses 80 or 90 bushels and got into the walls 20 or 30 head of Beeves.

Travis

# The "COME AND TAKE IT" Spirit:

## A brief look at the Battle of Gonzales

By Luis H. Loza

**T**he most famous battles of the Texas Revolution are arguably the battle at the Alamo and the Battle at San Jacinto, but the Battle of Gonzales is another battle worth remembering and retelling.

Unlike the battles at the Alamo and San Jacinto, which were clearly defined as direct intentional war conflicts with Mexico for the independence of Texas, the battle that took place in the small town located approximately 75 miles northeast of San Antonio, was a result of failed attempts by the Mexican government to take back a small cannon that had been given to settlers in Dewitt County, which Gonzales served as the capital city.

The six-pound cannon which historian Timothy Todish described as "a small bored gun, good for little more than starting horse races," was given to Gonzales in 1831 in order to help settlers defend themselves against attacks Indian tribes such as the Comanche.

According to historian Stephen Hardin, on September 10, 1835, a Mexican soldier bludgeoned a Gonzales resident, which outraged and public and led to protests. The attack on the Gonzales resident along with political tension caused by Mexican states revolted during the early 1830s, raised fears among Mexican authorities, who came to suspected Texas might want to break away as well. Colonel Domingo de Ugartechea the commander of Mexican forces in Texas began to be suspicious and thought it would be unwise for Mexican government to leave the residents of Dewitt County with the cannon.

Ordered by the Mexican government to avoid using force if possible Col. Ugartechea sent six soldiers to retrieve the cannon. The request was denied. Ugartechea sent 100 soldiers in response. On September 29, news of the Mexican troops approaching the town of Gonzales forced the residents of Dewitt County to use several excuses to keep them from the town and the cannon. One of excuses was demanding Ugartechea be physically present to make the request for

the cannon. Tactics such as this one delayed fighting and allowed the Texans to covertly relay messages to surrounding towns for support. During the next two days approximately 140 Texians and Tejanos (Texas-born citizens of Mexican and Spanish ancestry) gathered in Gonzales. With a larger number of volunteers poised to do battle, the Texas settlers voted on October 1 to delay the battle no more.

Although women were excluded from physically participating in the battle, they were still able to contribute in a special way. The women created a home-made flag from a white bed sheet and charcoal which featured the black silhouette of

the disputed cannon placed horizontally in the center with the muzzle pointed to the right. A black star was placed above the cannon and the words "COME AND TAKE IT" in capital letters were written below it. The rally cry evoked by the flag led to the controversial piece of artillery to become better known as the Come and Take it Cannon.

Hoping to draw first blood, the Texas fighters approached the Mexican

camp during the early hours of October 2, but they were spotted and the Mexican Army fired at them. After several hours of firing the Mexican troops retreated. According to several historians the skirmish had little military significance; however, the Texans and Tejanos had made their intentions clear with their actions. The war for the Republic of Texas had officially begun, and like the controversial cannon that had led to the Battle of Gonzales, Mexico's Army and its infamous dictator Antonio López de Santa Anna would have to "COME AND TAKE IT", by force because they were not going to give up the land without a fight.

Although the Battle of Gonzales took place more than 180 years ago, the spirit of the colonists and fighters who helped birth the Republic of Texas lives on through the efforts of the proud Tejanos of today.

*(Information from various authors and historical sources was used in this article.)*





IN MEMORIAM  
**MARCO DE LA FUENTE**  
 JANUARY 16, 1978 - OCTOBER 21, 2017

Because of his many selfless contributions to his country, his community, and his family in Christ, Marco De la Fuente is loved and remembered by many. Marco loved the United States of America and proudly served in the US Navy for 12 years. His passion for history led him to become an active member of the Texas Heritage and Independence Celebration Association, Inc. (THICA). He served as THICA Secretary in 2014 and 2015 during the 7th and 8th Annual Texas Independence Day Celebration and Symposium, and he proudly served as President in 2016. Marco also participated in the Texas Independence Day Celebration reenactments; one year, he portrayed a Mexican soldier, while another year, he was William Travis. Marco loved God and served as a Confirmation Catechist at St. Benedict Catholic Church, an "Echoes of Faith" trainer, and a trainer for the "Protecting God's Children" awareness program for several churches. Marco assisted the Youth Ministry CORE at Our Lady Queen of the Universe and St. Joseph Mission and helped with the success of their First Annual Loteria Fundraiser. He served on the Young Adults Ministry for San Benito and the Catholic Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Brownsville. Marco was also part of the ACTS Community and served as the ACTS CORE Facilitator for San Benito. Marco was always willing to help others, share his ideas that would improve the programs or other church-related events, and stand up for the truth. Although Marco refused to receive any recognition for his leadership and service, we now take time to honor this honorable, dependable, and humble man with this dedication.

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**-Juan Seguin**



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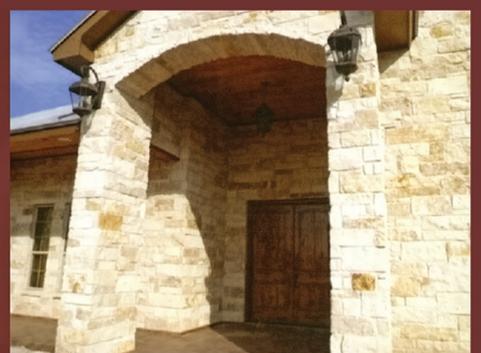


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