

San Elizario Genealogy & Historical Society



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To: Rosemary Neill, Director
Date: May 2, 2008

Dear Ms. Neil,

Please find attached SEGHS Quarterly Report for May 5, 2008.

Thank you for your attention.

Frank Soto

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SAN ELIZARIO GENEALOGY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

QUARTERLY REPORT FOR
May 08, 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SEGHS is a 501(c) 3 non profit organization dedicated to the promotion and cognizance of the rich history and culture of our region. We reach out to San Elizario residents and to anyone planning to visit our area by sponsoring special events, maintaining promotional material, including permanent exhibits in the museum. All activities are intended to promote historical and cultural tourism. **Our 17th Annual Genealogy Conference** this past April 26, 2008, was a great success which attests to the fulfillment of our mission statement which calls for four events. In this report, we have only one event to report on and that is our annual San Elizario Genealogy and Historical Society's 17th Annual Conference which took place on April 26, 2008, from 8:00 AM to 1:30 PM, at Alarcón Elementary School right here in San Elizario. This event is sponsored by Humanities Texas which endows us with a grant for \$1,500.00 from which we pay two speakers (presenters), video production, and various miscellaneous expenses. In collaboration, SEGHS matches or exceeds the funds contributed by Humanities Texas, as stipulated in their guidelines, either through volunteer service (in-kind) contribution by our members and school personnel, or funds raised by our membership. Finally, we are happy to report that progress towards SEGHS and the San Elizario Community's goal of establishing a veterans' memorial as a tribute to the lower valley veterans at Casa Ronquillo (the Viceroy's Palace) is getting close to fruition. In our previous Quarterly Report, we reported that we had submitted several grant proposals seeking funds from private corporations, specifically to enhance our Veterans Exhibits which will be housed at Casa Ronquillo when the El Paso County completes its projected restoration of that historical house. We are happy to report at this time that El Paso Natural Gas Company has endowed us with a small grant of \$5,000 which will be used for

aesthetic enhancements, of this veterans memorial. Our Director, Frank Soto has consistently involved a significant group of San Elizario volunteers, Church Youth Groups, and Community Service Workers in a project aligned with SEGHS which is in the interest of the veteran's domain of SEGHS' Goals and Objectives of our contract, as well as of all lower valley area veterans. Most importantly, the ultimate goal of this is to augment the number of tourists not only to San Elizario, but to El Paso as a whole. SEGHS has arrived at a higher level of importance as a tourist attraction and this Veterans Project will extend SEGHS' facilities to Casa Ronquillo, a historic building which Commissioner Teran has supported in order to enhance tourist attraction to the Historic Mission Trail. This is in alignment with one of SEGHS' 4 special events which our organization's charter requires, our annual Veterans' Day Parade.

MISSION STATEMENT

The San Elizario Genealogy/Historical Society maintains a community Tourist Information Center/Genealogy/Historical at the Los Portales Museum that provides a deeper understanding of the historical significance of San Elizario, instills local pride, encourages the preservation of historical sites, and enhances the historical and cultural tourism value of San Elizario.

Highlights of Current and Future ACTIVITIES – SEGHS is sponsor or co-sponsor for four special events during the year including the reenactment of The First Thanksgiving and Genealogy Conference (April), Founders Luncheon (September), Veterans' Day Celebration (November), and the Luminarias and Posadas (December). It is worth elaborating on the fact that we just completed First Thanksgiving Genealogy Conference on April 26, 2008. We had excellent participation, with an attendance of 262 people, including VIP's: representatives from El Paso County Government Commissioner Miguel Teran, Rosemary Neill, Mike Flores of the County Veterans Department, Gary Williams, District Attorney Jaime Esparza, retired Department of Justice Regional Director Richard Sambrano, and others who I will not mention due to space limitations. The Conference provides us with the opportunity to listen to presentations by eminent scholars who take pride in preserving San Elizario's colorful and historical contributions during the United States pioneer stages of development. The scholars review helps us to enhance our knowledge about San Elizario's ancestral lineage to the historical founders of the southwest.

We received an abundance of compliments regarding the success of the SEGHS Conference, an event which attracted participants from as far away as Los Angeles, CA, Dallas, TX, and Colorado. We are grateful for the

assistance from several El Paso County agencies which delighted the public in attendance throughout the day which included visitors to the afternoon Reenactment Pageant produced by El Paso Mission Trail Association. Including their guests, the overall attendance was well over 1,000 enthusiastic visitors. San Elizario received well deserved recognition in several news media outlets, including the El Paso Times, the Texas Courier, el Diario, and various radio and television stations. In addition we received written praise from our members who reside throughout various far away states.

Our Conference speakers were Dr. Michael Torok who captivated the audience with his excellent coverage of the topic: "The Camino Real, Indian Trails, and Stagecoaches through the Pass of the North." The second presenter, Mr. Glen Sample Eli, was just as interesting with his excellent discussion of the "The Butterfield Overland Mail and its Impact on El Paso County and the San Elizario Area." Our third presenter was Mr. Paul Cool, whose presentation mesmerized the audience with his excellent research and coverage of San Elizario history in such an authentic and unbiased manner.

SEGHS accomplishes these memorable events through its initiatives and excellent contributions in the form of volunteer service from our members, in addition to the assistance rendered to us by the El Paso County, and in addition by securing a small grant from Humanities Texas.

Progress on MAJOR PROJECTS –

Through interaction with El Paso County Commissioners Court, recommendations are being followed to enhance the ongoing exhibit and increase the visitor experience by making available access to Casa Ronquillo which is still a work in progress. We are awaiting the acquisition of some acreage adjacent to Casa Ronquillo which will provide parking facilities to this attraction as it reaches completion. We have submitted several grant proposals seeking funds specifically to enhance our Veterans Exhibits which will be housed at Casa Ronquillo when the El Paso County completes its projected restoration of that historical house which has had the interest of El Paso newspapers since as early as 1917, with extensive coverage during the 1920's through the 1930's. The news stories of that era gave San Elizario the well deserved historical credit which SEGHS is attempting to restore, which will enhance our attraction to tourists.

BUDGET ANYLYSIS – The budget is reviewed monthly by the board to ensure compliance with County and organization guidelines.

GRANT STATUS

We were successful in acquiring a small grant from Humanities Texas which covers our financial responsibilities for the First Thanksgiving Conference on April 26th, 2008, as well as miscellaneous expenses such as paying the presenters/speakers, supplies, and other related expenses at our Genealogy Conference. This Humanities Texas award made it possible for us to host our genealogy conference.

On a similar note, our search for endowments from the private sector appears promising. El Paso Natural Gas Company has endowed us with a nice grant for \$5,000 which is designated to be used for the amenities, such as picture frames and other such needs, in restoring Casa Ronquillo once the county completes the restoration.

CONTRACT STATUS

SEGHS has one part-time assistant through Senior Employment Agency (AARP).

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

During the last three months, our sign in sheets indicate we have had 67 out of country visitors out of **1,744** visitors. Out of that number 435 were out of state tourists representing 34 states. We had 289 tourists staying in hotels. Interest in our area continues to grow. We often get calls from out of country and out of state people who read about SEGHS on our Web site; we have upgraded our information on our website:

www.rootsweb.com/~txseghs/NewHistory.htm. We received raving praise from our members who live out of state and others for the new level of attainment in our service to the San Elizario community and to the tourist visitors who come to visit and most recently, for the success of our 17th Annual First Thanksgiving Conference.

TRAINING

All volunteers are trained in the importance of attending to all our visitors, especially those from out of town. Our Vice-President and Treasure are attending a workshop in Corpus Christi, Texas from May 1 -- 3, and we are researching for additional training which will enhance our history and cultural cognition and improve our skills in attending to our visitors.

BOARD STATUS

The board has done an excellent job in performing its responsibilities and making difficult decisions when necessary. They regularly meet on the first

Sunday of each month. Our last meeting took place on February 10, 2008 at. The meeting was very well attended by a good number of our members, with the focus on attaining success at our approaching April 26 Conference.

Activity Report

Report Covers from February1, 2008 to April 30, 2008

Total Tourists visiting Los Portales Museum & Information Center	1, 744
Number of students on School Buses	689
Total Adult Tourists	1,055
Tourists staying in hotels	289
Texas Tourists	1, 034
Out of State Tourists	435

Note: Our visitors represented the following 25 states:

**AL, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, IN, ID, IO, IL, KS, MA, ME, MI,
MN, MO, MT, NJ, NM, NY, OR, PA, SC, SD, TN, VA, WA, DC, WI, WV, WY**

Out of Country	67
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Australia, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Mexico, and Switzerland
Number of days museum open (in 3 month period)..... 74

Volunteer hours:

SEGHS members.....	863
Volunteers Church Catechism & 1st Communion Students.....	206
Community volunteers at Casa Ronquillo.....	485
TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS	1,544

Our Director, Frank Soto has actively involved a significant group of San Elizario volunteers, Church Youth Groups, and Community Service Workers in a projects involving restoration of Casa Ronquillo for Veterans Museum, as well as in the 17th Annual First Thanksgiving Conference.