

# Chalkboard Notes

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## Volume 3 - Fall 2014

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Friends of the Gillespie County Country Schools Fall Chalkboard Notes. You have requested information about our work through our website and given us your email. This pleases us and we are happy to share our work to preserve and utilize the historic country schools in Gillespie County, Texas. As you might know, Gillespie County has saved the most historic country schools in one county in Texas and in America. Even though this work began over 12 years ago, we continue to have much excitement about our current projects and the plans for tomorrow. I am one of the Directors-at-Large of the Friends of the Gillespie County Country Schools (Friends GCCS, and part of my job for the schools is to keep in touch with you. This is a new job for me, so assist me by making suggestions or asking questions. I welcome your feedback.

### 2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- [Lower South Grape Creek School Open House](#) on Saturday, September 13, 2014, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., located at 10273 East Highway 290, between Fredericksburg and Stonewall, Texas.
- [Luckenbach School Open House](#) on Saturday, September 13, 2014, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. located at 3566 Luckenbach Road, near Luckenbach, Texas.

- **Williams Creek School (Albert, TX) Open House** on Saturday, October 11, 2014, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., located at 5501 South Ranch Road 1623, near Stonewall, Texas, next to the Albert Dance Hall.
- **Pecan Creek Open House** on Saturday, November 8, 2014, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., located at 3410 Pecan Creek Road.

Visit our our website at [www.historicschools.org](http://www.historicschools.org) for a map and driving instructions to each school. Just your visit and signing our visitor's register assists us in obtaining funding. You will be able to visit with students who attended these schools and talk with the docents.

It is an opportunity to learn the history and experiences of the one-room, one-teacher school, and the struggle to receive an education. Some students walked as far as 10 miles to the Luckenbach School. You can sit in handmade desks at the Lower South Grape Creek School. This school looks as if the students just left for the day. Of course, the early settlers grew grapes, but today the vineyards and winemakers are our country neighbors. You'll find much to see and learn in the Texas Hill Country when you visit our 17 schools. Note that only the schools listed on the Open House schedule are open on these dates. You can pick up our Country Schools Driving Trail and drive the whole 120 mile Trail if you like. You'll find our 2015 Open House schedule on our website.

### **PROJECTS ON OUR DESKS:**

We have just finished the Gillespie County Fair Exhibit with great success. The miniature Willow City School painted curtain was part of the Exhibit. Members answered questions and gave out our school pencils and Friends' brochure with the Country School Driving Trail. Yes, it was hot.

We are beginning to ask for volunteers for the preservation project slated for end of February and March, 2015. Anne Zannikos, Preservationist, from San Antonio will head up the professional preservation of the approximate 9'X 20' painted school stage curtain at Willow City School. She will train our volunteers to complete this repair/preservation work. By using volunteers, we can save thousands of dollars, learn how to preserve other painted school curtains in Gillespie County, and insure that these historic school art treasures will be here for the future. The Painted School curtains are not that common across America, so they are an additional reason to visit our schools. We have at least six painted curtains. They were used to create a stage area for presentations and plays in the schools. If you are interested in learning more about how their restoration will unfold, please go to the website for [The Vermont Curtain Project](#). If you are interested in more information or in volunteering to help in this important work, you can contact me at my email, [jane4232@austin.rr.com](mailto:jane4232@austin.rr.com). This has been a partnership project among the Willow City School members, the Willow City Volunteer Fire Department, private citizens, and the City of Fredericksburg Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant.

Excitement is too small of word to describe how the FGCCS feels about hosting the 2016 Country Schools Association of America national conference on June 19, 20, 21, and 22, 2016. Visit the [CSAA website](#) to learn more about this national organization that is in harmony with the FGCCS goals. You'll hear more about this conference in the future. Five of FGCCS members attended this year's conference in St. Joseph, MO, and learned so much.

The FGCCS is beginning work on adding roadside or property signs at the member schools. A Country Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant will assist with the signage. Our number of visitors has increased and many are travelers from other states and areas, so way finding signs are important.

Repairs and restoration on many of our 17 schools has continued. Think of how your home is never finished and in perfect condition . . . always needing something. We have 21 buildings to maintain, so you know we always have a roof to repair, a need to add a small kitchen area, replace windows, work on the fences, repair water pumps, or a bathroom repair, etc.

Our plan is to send out an email every two or three months or as needed. Please give us your feedback. If you know of others who would be interested in learning more about The Friends, forward this email to them.

Thanks for indicating your interest in the historic country schools of Gillespie County. I attended a

one-room country school, so maintaining and sharing them is dear to my heart.

**Jane Woellhof**  
**Director at Large**  
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