

# CONFEDERATE GAZETTE



## Confederate Gazette

*Is a monthly publication of the Major Robert M. White Camp #1250 Sons of Confederate Veterans Temple, Texas*

**Best Newsletter 2003 Texas Division**

Web Site:

[www.rootsweb.com/~tx1250](http://www.rootsweb.com/~tx1250)

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*Multiple Events Honor Confederate Heritage*

## CONFEDERACY REMEMBERED IN APRIL

The Major Robert M. White Camp #1250 honored its member's ancestors during Confederate History Month in April.

The Bell County Courthouse saw two different events mark Confederate History Month. On April 4<sup>th</sup> the Camp sponsored an event on the courthouse square. The Camp laid a wreath at the Confederate soldier's statue and raised the Confederacy's First National flag.

Immediately following the wreath laying the crowd re-gathered at the South Belton Cemetery. At the cemetery the Camp honored the newly established Confederate grave markers placed there by the Camp under the lead-



Confederate First National flag flies from flag pole next to the Confederate monument

ership of Camp member Rocky Sprott. Army of the Trans-Mississippi Commander John Perry talked about Confederate heritage in general and how Bell County answered the call and supported the Confederacy.

After the cemetery events the crowd went to Confederate Park and feasted on a lunch of hot dogs and hamburgers.

Another event at the courthouse occurred on April 25<sup>th</sup>. A memorial service was held at Confederate Heroes Monument. The service was to honor the ten Bell County Confederate

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## Hunley Crew Funeral Held

With nearly 10,000 reenactors marching and a civilian crowd of about 20,000 as onlookers the eight members that made up the crew of the CSS *Hunley* were laid to their final rest in Charleston, S.C. on April 17<sup>th</sup>.

The ceremonies, which attracted national media coverage and sold out every hotel room within about a 45 mile radius of Charleston, saw the crew

buried in a common grave in Magnolia Cemetery in Charleston.

After lying in state at the Church of the Holy Communion, the coffins containing the crew members were carried through the streets of Charleston. The march was a 4½ mile trip from The Battery area of Charleston to Magnolia Cemetery.

The CSS *Hunley* apparently sunk on February

17, 1864 after successfully sinking the USS *Housatonic*. The sub was raised from the ocean's floor in August of 2000. Once the sub was opened the bodies and personal belongings of the eight crewmen were found inside.

There were 69 Texas Division members marching; ladies in black and

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# CONFEDERATE PROFILE HISPANIC CONFEDERATE



Colonel Santos Benavides was the highest ranking Hispanic Confederate Officer

**H**e literally risked his life for states rights a quarter of century before the War Between the States. It was back when Texas was under Mexican rule and Santos Benavides sided with the "Federalist" against the "Centralist" in the 1830's and 1840's. The Centralist wanted the power to originate in Mexico City while the Federalist wanted more local rule. Benavides, from Laredo, fought for the Federalists.

Benavides was born in Laredo on November 1, 1823. His great-great-grandfather was Tomás Sánchez de la Barrera y Garza, who was the founder of Laredo. He was well connected, in part due to his uncle, Basilio Benavides. His uncle was the former Mayor of Laredo and state representative.

Discouraged with the Mexican government, he joined with the forces of Mirabeau B. Lamar, who occupied Laredo during the Mexican War. After the Mexican War when Texas joined the Union, Benavides and his uncle opposed the annexation of south Texas by the United States. In spite of their opposition they did not take up arms against the United States. Benavides did however see some military action. He led several campaigns against the Lipan Apaches as well as

other Indian tribes.

Santos Benavides married Augustina Villareal in 1842. The couple would eventually adopt four children. Benavides



Above: Santos Benavides  
Below: Actual flag carried by the 33<sup>rd</sup> Texas Cavalry



was involved in both ranching and in the mercantile business. In 1856 he was elected the mayor of Laredo and three years later became the Chief Justice of Webb County. When Texas left the Union, Benavides and his brothers quickly supported the Confederacy, and its states'-rights principles.

Benavides was appointed a captain in the 33<sup>rd</sup> Texas Cavalry and assigned to the Rio Grande Military District. Benavides quickly won accolades as a fighter and was promoted to the rank of major. He drove the Mexican bandit Juan Cortina back into Mexico at the battle of Carrizo on May 22, 1861. In November of 1863 Benavides was promoted to colonel and authorized to raise his own regiment of "Partisan Rangers," for which he used the remnants of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Texas Cavalry. As a full colonel Benavides was the highest-ranking Mexican-American to serve on either side during The War Between the States.

In March of 1864, Col. Benavides was ill in Laredo, but he had a greater problem, Federal cavalry was advancing on Laredo. The Confederates were greatly outnumbered, some accounts have them with only 42 men others as many as 72 men. The Federal force numbered over 200. The Federals, the 1<sup>st</sup> Texas Cavalry U.S., were under the command of Col. Edmund J. Davis, who had, ironically, offered Benavides a Union generalship earlier. The first attack occurred in mid afternoon on March 19, 1864. Three Union assaults failed and finally darkness ended the Yankee attack.

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By: George Ballentine

# Commander's Call

April was a very busy month for our camp. But now it is over and we must turn to new business. The Texas Division Commander has called for another Supreme Court Vigil to be held. The goal is to have representation weekdays from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm. Our camp has been assigned the week of May 17 - May 21. We are asked to have two camp members present each day. I will have a sign-up sheet at our May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting for volunteers. Instead of just the same members always volunteering for everything, let's have some new blood. It is a small price to ask to honor your ancestors.

The trip to Charleston for the Hunley Funeral Procession went well. There is an article about it elsewhere in this issue. You will also find an article about the Memorial Service for Bell County's Confederate Companies that was organized by Compatriot Rocky Sprott. This was a non-SCV event, but was well attended by SCV members.

We have two other important events scheduled for May that I would like to see maximum participation. On May 23<sup>rd</sup> we will be participating in a grave dedication ceremony for James E. Thompson, Jr., Scout, Indian Raiders, in Old Copperas Cove Cemetery. His ancestor, Anice Vance of Belton attended our April Ceremony at South Belton and was so

impressed that she asked us to participate in her dedication. We will also need a firing detail, so limber up those long arms. The other event will be on Memorial Day, May 31<sup>st</sup> in Salado. More information will follow, but they have asked that we provide a detail to post the colors at the beginning of the ceremony. Of course, they would also like to see as many SCV members there as possible.

Our Liberty Fest event for our store was postponed due to the heavy rains that weekend. It has been rescheduled for June 5<sup>th</sup>. If anyone would like to come out and help, we can always use help with recruiting.

We will also be set up at the Bellmead Reenactment May 14-16<sup>th</sup>. This is a good time for members to come out and pick out a uniform from the sutlers. Prices are reasonable, and no shipping charges if they have your size on the rack.

Our program this month will feature LTCIC Denne Sweeney who will present his platform to our camp for his bid for election as CIC. He is also scheduled to give a program on the Genealogy of Robert E. Lee. If you have questions for him, be at the meeting and fire away. We will meet at the Doctor's Conference Room, but this should be the last time.

Meetings beginning in June will be at the Golden

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## Camp Schedule

**May 11, 2004** Camp Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Founder's Room, Scott & White Hospital, Temple, TX, Speaker: Lt. CIC Denne Sweeney Genealogy of Robert E. Lee

**May 14-16<sup>th</sup>, 2004** Battle for Lake Bellmead, Reenactment, 8:00 a.m. (We will have our camp store set up here)

**May 23, 2004** CSA Grave Dedication at the Old Copperas Cove, Cemetery, 2:00 p.m. Dedication of James E. Thompson, Jr.'s marker - Scout, Indian Raiders, 2<sup>nd</sup> Frontier

**May 31, 2004** Memorial Day Services at Salado Cemetery. Check camp website for additional details.

**June 5, 2004** Liberty Fest & Fire Expo, Liberty Hill, TX Rescheduled due to rain. We will have our camp store set up at this event. Come out and support your camp.

**June 8, 2004** Camp Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Golden Corral Restaurant, Temple, TX Speaker: John A. Stovall, "The Singer Torpedo"

**June 11-13<sup>th</sup>, 2004** Texas Division Convention, Fredonia Hotel and Convention Center, Nacogdoches, Texas

**July 10, 2004** Quarterly Dinner Meeting, Golden Corral Restaurant, Temple, TX. Speaker: TBA

**July 28-31, 2004** SCV National Reunion, Dalton, GA

Next Camp Meeting:  
May 11<sup>th</sup>  
7:00 P.M. at  
Scott & White  
Hospital  
Founder's Room  
Temple, TX

# CHM in Bell County

*(Continued from page 1)*

Companies that fought for the Confederacy.

This event was organized by Camp member Rocky Sprott and was well attended by both SCV members and local citizens. The ceremony was covered by Channel 10 and was aired that evening on the 5:00 and 10:00 news.

The program began with Wes Riddle reading

the Senate Resolution proclaiming April as Confederate History and Heritage Month. While "Dixie" was being played, the 1st National Flag of the Confederacy was raised above the Confederate Monument by Compatriots Steve Wooley and Gordon Mobley. Rocky then welcomed everyone and gave a short history of Texas to Secession.

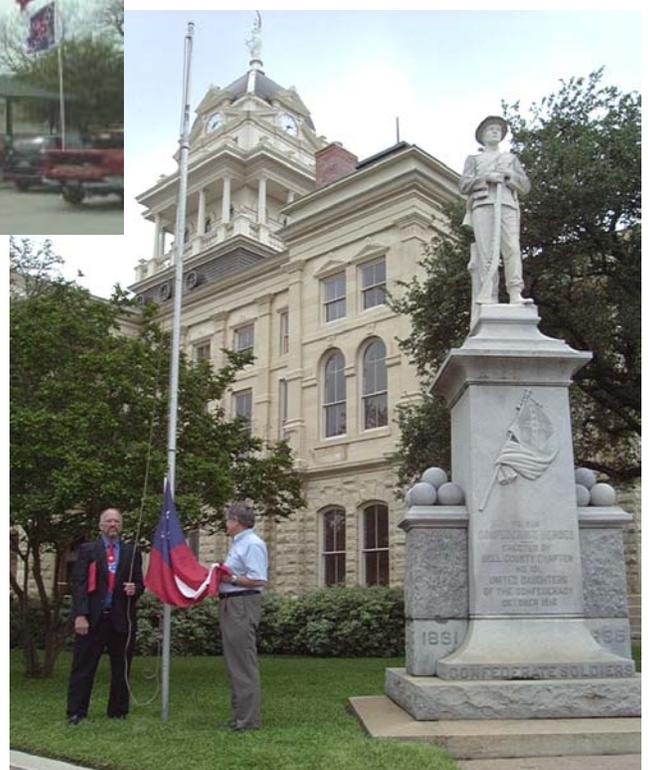
Under a constant

threat of rain, Rocky read a short regimental history of each unit before a designated person conducted a roll call for each unit. After the first five companies had been done, Rocky paused for a prayer from the Confederate prayer book. A number of the persons conducting the roll calls were direct descendants of members of those units.

Bell County  
Confederate  
Veterans Honored  
In Multiple  
Ceremonies  
In Belton

Photos:

*Right:* Crowd gathers at South Belton Cemetery on April 4<sup>th</sup>;  
*Below Left:* Lunch at Confederate Park in Belton;  
*Bottom Right:* Flag being raised by Steve Wooley and Gordon Mobley on April 25<sup>th</sup>;  
*Bottom Left:* Rocky Sprott speaks at courthouse on April 25<sup>th</sup>



# Commander's Call

(Continued from page 3)  
Corral in Temple.

The Division Convention is coming up on June 11-13<sup>th</sup>. If you plan to attend, please let me know at the May meeting. If you plan to attend and cannot make the meeting, please contact me. We need to elect our six delegates to the convention. The National Convention in Dalton, Georgia is also coming up. If you plan to attend that convention July 28-31<sup>st</sup>, please let me know at the May meeting also.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the next meeting. We have a lot of 2005 Convention planning to do and will need help from all members to make this the best convention, yet.

## Confederate Gazette Quiz Questions

By George Ballentine

Subject: **Jefferson Davis**

1. Jefferson Davis was born in:

- a. Kentucky
- b. New York
- c. Georgia
- d. Mississippi

2. Name of Davis' plantation:

- a. Olustee
- b. Belle Reeve
- c. Brierfield
- d. Sylvania

3. Union general who was removed from his command by Lincoln on Dec. 17, 1862 and, six days later, was declared an outlaw by President Davis, who ordered his execution:

- a. John McConnell
- b. Benjamin Butler

- c. George Sykes
- d. Samuel Heintzelman

4. "The request is inadmissible," was Lincoln's response to Davis' 1863 plan to send his vice president to Washington to negotiate for:

- a. cotton purchases
- b. Lincoln to visit Montgomery
- c. war against France
- d. a prisoner exchange

5. University attended by the Confederate president:

- a. Harvard
- b. Transylvania
- c. Duke
- d. Columbia

Answers: 1. a; 2. c; 3. b; 4. d; 5. b

Many Hispanics  
Answered the  
Confederacy's call  
for military service

# Santos Benavides

(Continued from page 2)

During the night the Confederates were reinforced and by the dawn of the next day the Federals were gone. Some feel an even greater accomplishment was Benavides's arranging for safe passage of Texas cotton along the Rio Grande to Matamoros during the Union occupation of Brownsville in 1864. This helped



Grave of Santos Benavides in Laredo, Texas

the South's finances.

After the war was over Benavides remained in Laredo. He resumed his ranching duties and continued being a merchant. He also continued his interest in politics, both on a local and a state basis. He served two terms on the Laredo city council and three terms as a representative in the Texas Legislature. He remained a Democrat

and was instrumental in helping the Democrats

regain dominance in south Texas.

Santos Benavides died in Laredo on November 9, 1891.

## Hispanic Confederates

Santos Benavides was just one of many Hispanics that served the Confederate cause. Estimates of the number of Hispanics that served in the Confederate military range from as low as 2,500 to as high as 30,000. Only a small number, probably 1,500 or less, served in the Union Army.

Significant numbers of Hispanics also served in the 55<sup>th</sup> Alabama Infantry, Manigault's Battalion of South Carolina Artillery, 6<sup>th</sup>

(Continued on page 6)

## Hunley Funeral

(Continued from page 1)

"tag along" for a total of 83. From the Major Robert M. White Camp #1250 George H. Ballentine, Greg and Chanel Manning, and Jerry and Betty Nelson attended. The camp's colors were carried in front of the Texas Division. The Texans were led by Ron Strybos, Texas Division's 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Commander.



**Photos:**

Top: Hunley crew bodies lay in state at the Church of the Holy Communion;  
 Above Left: A crewman's body is lowered into the grave;  
 Above Right: Crewman's body on a casket;  
 Left: The caskets lay in the common grave, side by side

## Hispanics In Confederate Service

(Continued from page 5)



Benavides' brother, Refugio, who served as a Confederate Captain.

Missouri Infantry, the Chalmette Regiment of Louisiana Infantry, and the Second Texas Mounted Rifles.

Other Confederate units which contained large numbers of Hispanics included Vigil's Independent Companies, the Louisiana Zouaves 1<sup>st</sup> Florida Cavalry, the Spanish

Legion of the European Brigade, the Spanish Guard (part of the Home Guard of Mobile, Alabama), and four independent New Mexico militia companies known by their commanders names (Gonzales, Martinez, Tafolla, and Perea).

Santos Benavides and his two courageous brothers and the many Hispanics Texans, called "Tejanos," had been among the very first to take up arms for the Confederacy and were among the last to surrender, at Paliminto Ranch in May of 1865.



# Confederate Gazette

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**Next Meeting:  
 May 11th  
 Scott & White  
 Founder's Room  
 Temple  
 7:00 PM**