

On the Presidents Meeting, June 21, 2008

My fellow Bexareños,

I attended the meeting at the **Mexican American** Cultural Center in Austin, Texas. In an ironic twist, one of the first points of contention among the attendees was the name of this new organization, I was happy that they did not vote for Mexican American. The meeting was not a President's meeting but rather a gathering of people interested in consolidating our memberships. The group made up of the following; Tejano Genealogy Society of Austin, HOGAR of Dallas, SAGA of Corpus Christi, Victoria Hispanic Genealogy Society of Texas, Villa De San Agustin Genealogical Society, Laredo, Hispanic Genealogy Society of Houston, and East Texas Hispanic Genealogy Society of Nacogdoches, all seem to be in agreement with the concept of a state wide alliance.

The groups gathered at the meeting agreed on the Articles of Incorporation for the alliance. Committees were set up for by-laws and a constitution for the group. The name of the group is now Hispanic Genealogy Societies of Texas. I do not understand the use of the noun, genealogy, rather than the adjective, genealogical in the name. I would have liked to have The Tejas Alliance of Genealogical Societies as a title.

There were six reasons or goals given for the creation of this alliance, I could only remember five, and they are as follows:

Corporate Memory-a method to record trial and errors in conducting state conferences for the benefit of future conferences.

Secure More Funds-*

State Wide Affiliation-*

Rules-I understood this to be rules for governing the alliance; by-laws for the alliance.

Hire Staff-A grant writing staff to secure funds for paying hired staff and other employees.

Work on What Has to be Done.-You guess is as good as mine, on this one?

After reading some of comments that I received when I asked the executive board and directors about this alliance I was instructed not to commit our group to the alliance. Now we can support the effort, but for this group to use our name in the appropriation of funds, donations, corporate sponsorship and political issues is a different matter.

*One of the concerns was the securing more funds; according to Andres Tijerina companies do not want to be nickel & dime to death by having

different small groups constantly asking for funds. He contends that corporations would rather have one organization speak for all the groups. He hoped to use the alliance as a block to raise funds for state conferences. A United Way of Genealogical Societies, that could hurt the individual group funding, because Corporations could just say, "We already gave," only time will tell on this goal.

*The second point is the State Wide affiliation for the recognition of Hispanic parks, monuments, and genealogy. My question to achieving this point is simple, how? Because the only way to create, change or erect Hispanic monuments is by voting or pressuring state officials, at that point we cross the political line and risk losing our non-profit status. Do the collective genealogical societies become lobbyists?

I abstained from the voting in order not to commit Los Bexarenos, however because I abstained I caused tension among the group because of their desire to see the creation of this organization. Personally, I feel, for the alliance to work and achieve their goals they would have to enter the political arena. Our name, Los Bexarenos, would be part of a political lobby holding the voting threat to politicians to favor our Hispanic projects. I do not support this element of the alliance. The alliance when created will basically be an entity on its own and what we may end up with is the genesis of a self-serving organization.

Also, if the Alliance gave a fundraiser where beer was sold and someone ended up in an accident, does a lawsuit affect all of the societies and their insurances? The lack of control in the guidance of the Alliance prevents me from recommending active participation in this Alliance.

However, I do support the Writers Prize Project, an award given at the State Conference, and recommend that Los Bexarenos contribute \$200.00. The Writers Prize is given to outstanding writers of Hispanic History. Last year, Jerry Thompson was the winner of the prize.

I also recommend we buy an ad in the conference's newspaper for \$100.00.

Santiago Escobedo
President, Los Bexarenos Genealogical Society
July 4th, 2008