

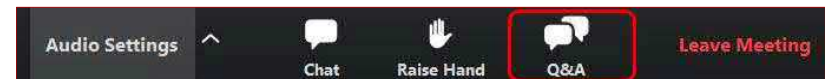


# The Lay of the Land: Cemetery Orientation

Disaster Planning and Response in Historic Texas Cemeteries

## Zoom Webinar Housekeeping

- Trouble with computer audio? Try using your phone instead.
  - 1-346-248-7799 Webinar ID 896 6474 2131
- All attendees are in listen-only mode
- This session is being recorded for later viewing
- Use the **chat box** to
  - Ask for help
  - Make comments during the presentation
  - Share links or tips
- Use the **Q & A box** to
  - Ask the presenters a question
  - We'll answer them live at the end of the presentation





## Disaster Planning & Response in Historic Cemeteries

## Webinar Series Introduction and Overview

- The National Park Service (NPS) awarded THC **\$12.3 million** from the Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund (ESHPPF) to address the consequences of Hurricane Harvey on historic properties.
- THC has awarded over **\$8.3 million** in sub-grants to date.



*Rosewood Cemetery, Galveston County*



*Wood Mansion, Refugio County*

## Webinar Series Introduction and Overview

### Online Training Series: Disaster Preparedness & Response for Historic Cemeteries

- **Goal:** Provide cemetery caretakers with the knowledge and skills necessary to build greater resiliency to withstand and recover from future disasters
- **Timeline:** Summer 2021 – Summer 2022
- **Project Team:** Lead by Terracon Consultants, Inc.
- **Program:** Six webinars + six stakeholder meetings



*Rockport Cemetery, Aransas County*

## Instructional Webinars

1. Lay of the Land: Cemetery Orientation
2. Cemetery Survey and Data Collection
3. Risk Assessment & Pre-Disaster Planning
4. Immediate Response to Natural Disasters, plus Preservation Funding
5. Post-Disaster Recovery & Restoration
6. People's Choice!

## Stakeholder Meetings

- Highly interactive
- Group discussions
- Feedback opportunities



*McGaffey Cemetery, Jefferson County*

**Stay Up to Date!**

[www.thc.texas.gov/Harvey-cemeteries](http://www.thc.texas.gov/Harvey-cemeteries)



# The Lay of the Land: Cemetery Orientation

**Disaster Planning and Response in Historic Texas Cemeteries**

*This material was funded by the Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund, National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material do not constitute endorsement or necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior or U.S. Government.*



# Foundation for Disaster Planning



*Kirby Cemetery (aka Peaceful Rest), Hardin County*

- Broad overview of the characteristics of a historic Texas cemetery
  - Recognize physical components of a cemetery.
  - Understand and convey the historic significance of cemeteries.
  - Recognize common funerary practices and cultural traditions.
  - Understand the importance of community engagement
  - Understand safety concerns and legal framework surrounding cemetery ownership, care, and access.

# Cemetery Components

## Grave vs. Memorial

- Grave – where the interred is laid to rest
- Memorial – the physical marker of the grave



*Wallisville Cemetery, Chambers County*



# Cemetery Components

- Grave
- Crypt
- Vault



*Crypts in a mausoleum and above grade vaults at Broadway Cemetery, Galveston County*

# Cemetery Components

- Grave
- Crypt
- Vault
- Mausoleum



*Mausolea in Broadway Cemetery*

# Cemetery Components

- Grave
- Crypt
- Vault
- Mausoleum
- Columbarium



*Columbarium niche (top left), Prosperine Lawn Cemetery (top right), Arlington National Cemetery (bottom)*



# Cemetery Components

## Common Features

- Fence
- Road
- Curb
- Wall
- Path
- Gate
- Bench
- Lighting
- Landscaping



*Wallisville Cemetery gates; Broadway Cemetery caretaker's building; Lamar Cemetery gates and bell tower*

# Active or Inactive?



*Wallisville Cemetery, stakes and flagging tape are marking areas for new plots/burials*

## Active vs. Inactive

- **Active:** current burials and internments
- **Inactive:** no longer have burials and internments
  - Many historic cemeteries fall in this category
- Cemeteries can have both active and inactive sections



## Abandoned or Unknown?



*Abel Ranch Cemetery, Hays County*

“Abandoned cemetery’ means a cemetery, regardless of whether it appears on a map or in deed records, that is **not owned or operated by a cemetery organization, does not have another person legally responsible for its care, and is not maintained by a person.**”



## Organically Developed

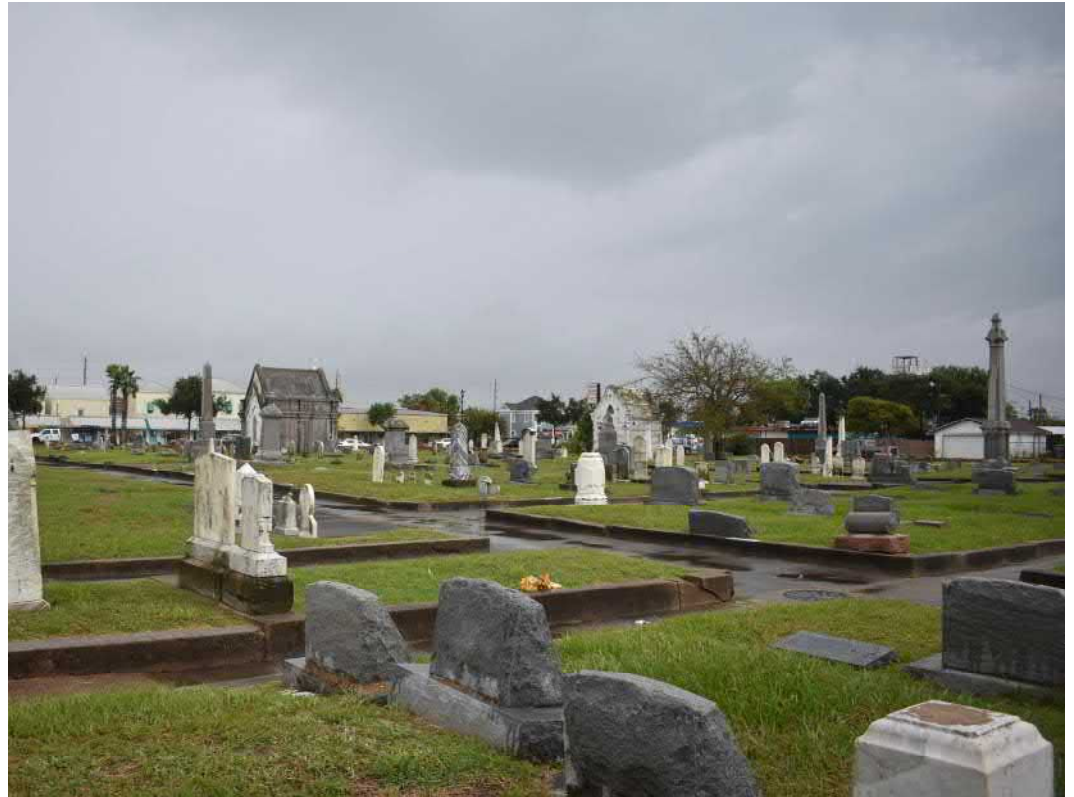
- Impromptu cemeteries
  - Enslaved burials
  - Battlefield
  - Early settlers



*Crawford-Smith Rock Cairns, Presidio County*

## Planned Cemeteries

- Religious cemeteries
- Plotted cemeteries
  - Laid out chronologically
  - Laid out by family plot



*Broadway Cemetery, Galveston County*



## Rural Cemetery Movement

- Late nineteenth century
- Caused by overcrowding of urban and church cemeteries and public health concerns
- Romanticized cemetery based on English landscape gardening
- Commonly used as parks



*Glenwood Terrace Cemetery, Harris County*

## Organically Developed vs. Planned

- Remember: Historic cemeteries change over time and may have been poorly marked originally. This can make determining the original layout difficult.
- Lost or deteriorated markers make determining patterns difficult.

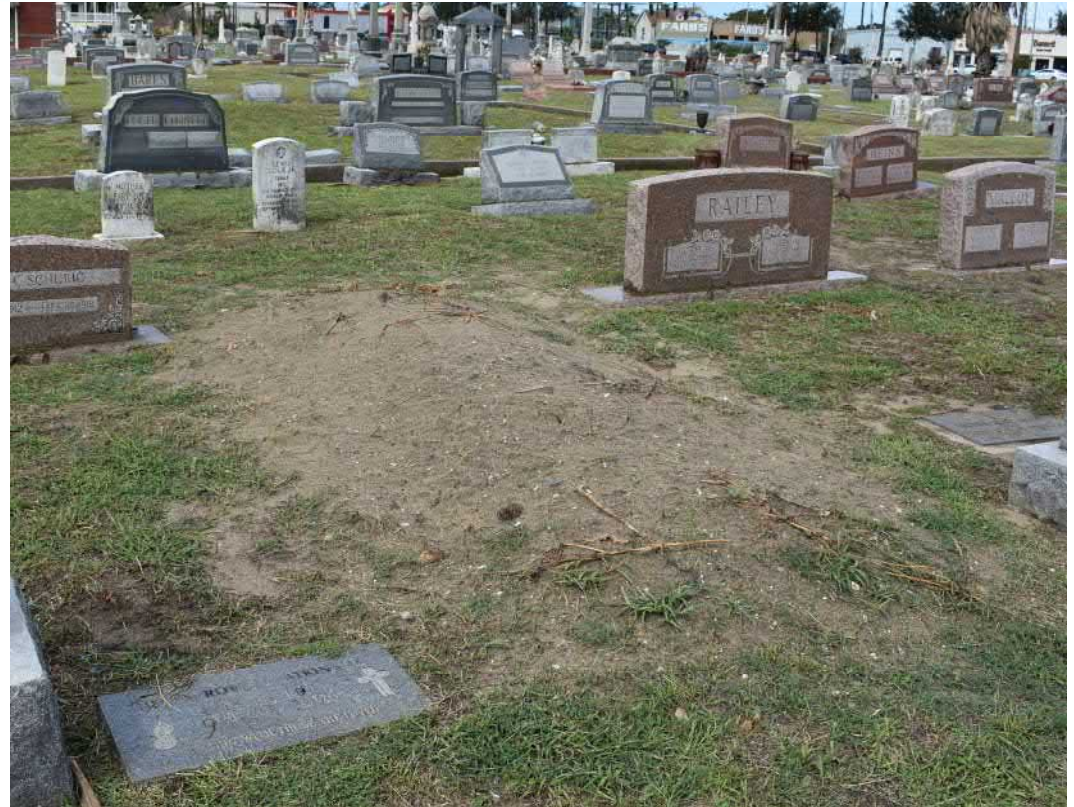


*Broadway Cemetery, Episcopal Section, Galveston  
Ground level raised in late 19<sup>th</sup> century resulting in a partially covered doorway.*



# Grave Marker Types

- Unmarked



*Unmarked burial, Broadway Cemetery*



# Grave Marker Types

- Unmarked
- Temporary



*Temporary marker at Stick Cemetery, Brazos County*



*Temporary markers at Orchard Cemetery, Fort Bend County*

# Grave Marker Types

- Unmarked
- Temporary
- Permanent



*Broadway Cemetery, Galveston*



# Grave Marker Types

- Unmarked
- Temporary
- Permanent
  - Single element
  - Multiple element
  - Structure



*Broadway Cemetery, Galveston*



# Marker Materials

- Marble



*Detail from Broadway Cemetery, Broadway Cemetery; Wallisville*

# Marker Materials

- Marble
- Limestone



*Limestone marker, Tivydale Cemetery, Gillespie County*

# Marker Materials

- Marble
- Limestone
- Sandstone



*Brownstone (sandstone) Broadway Cemetery, detail*



# Marker Materials

- Marble
- Limestone
- Sandstone
- Granite



*Granite resources at Broadway Cemetery*

# Marker Materials

- Marble
- Limestone
- Sandstone
- Granite
- Metal



*Cast iron at St. Dominic Cemetery,  
Medina County*



*Zinc at Broadway Cemetery, Galveston*



# Marker Materials

- Marble
- Limestone
- Sandstone
- Granite
- Metal
- Brick



*Brick and concrete vaults at Wallisville Cemetery*



*Brick vaults, Chrisman Chapel Cemetery, Burleson County*

# Marker Materials

- Marble
- Limestone
- Sandstone
- Granite
- Metal
- Brick
- Concrete



*Brick and concrete mausoleum, Broadway Cemetery, Galveston*



# Marker Materials

- Marble
- Limestone
- Sandstone
- Granite
- Metals
- Brick
- Concrete
- Wood



*Wooden cross at Wallisville Cemetery (top right); Petrified wood marker at Oddfellows Cemetery – Grimes County (right); Painted wood cradles at Trinity Lutheran Church Cemetery – Colorado County (bottom right)*



# Cemeteries are Diverse



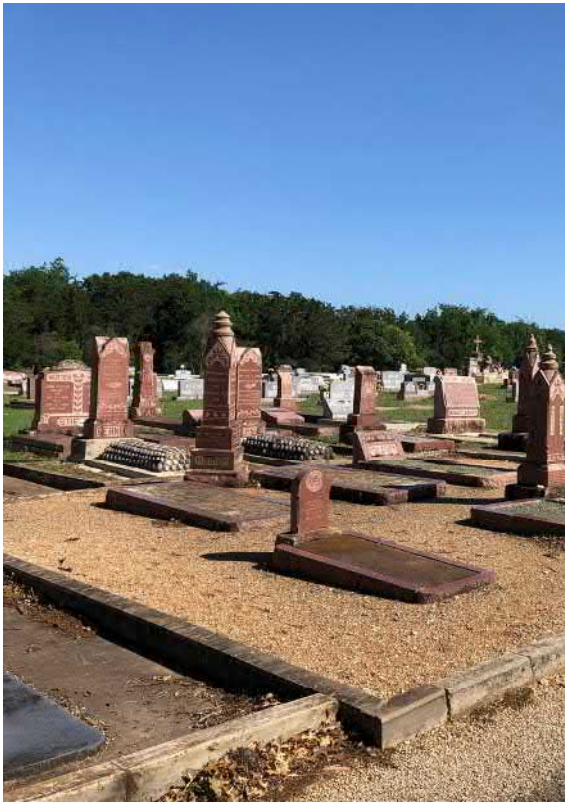
*Merry Cemetery, Sapanta, Maramures, Romania*



*Old Jewish Cemetery in Josefov, Prague*



# Texas Cemeteries are Diverse



*Comfort Cemetery*



*Concordia Cemetery, Chinese Section*



*San Antonio de Padua Cemetery, Aransas County*

# Why are cemeteries significant?



*Sisterdale Oak, Kendall County*

- Historical Significance
- Cultural Significance
- Cemeteries are significant for the data they contain: physical remains, cultural practices, and historical and genealogical information



# Cultural Practices in Cemeteries

**Grave offering:** any item sacrificed or donated at a grave

- **Durable** and visible (e.g. shells, jewelry, coins)
- **Ephemeral** (e.g. wine or beer poured into the ground)
- Anywhere in between (e.g. flowers)



*Grave offerings, Orchard Cemetery*

# Cultural Practices in Cemeteries



*Abel Ranch Cemetery, Hays County*

## African American traditions

- Bowls
- Plates
- Shells
- Bottles
- Vases/pitchers



# Cultural Practices in Cemeteries

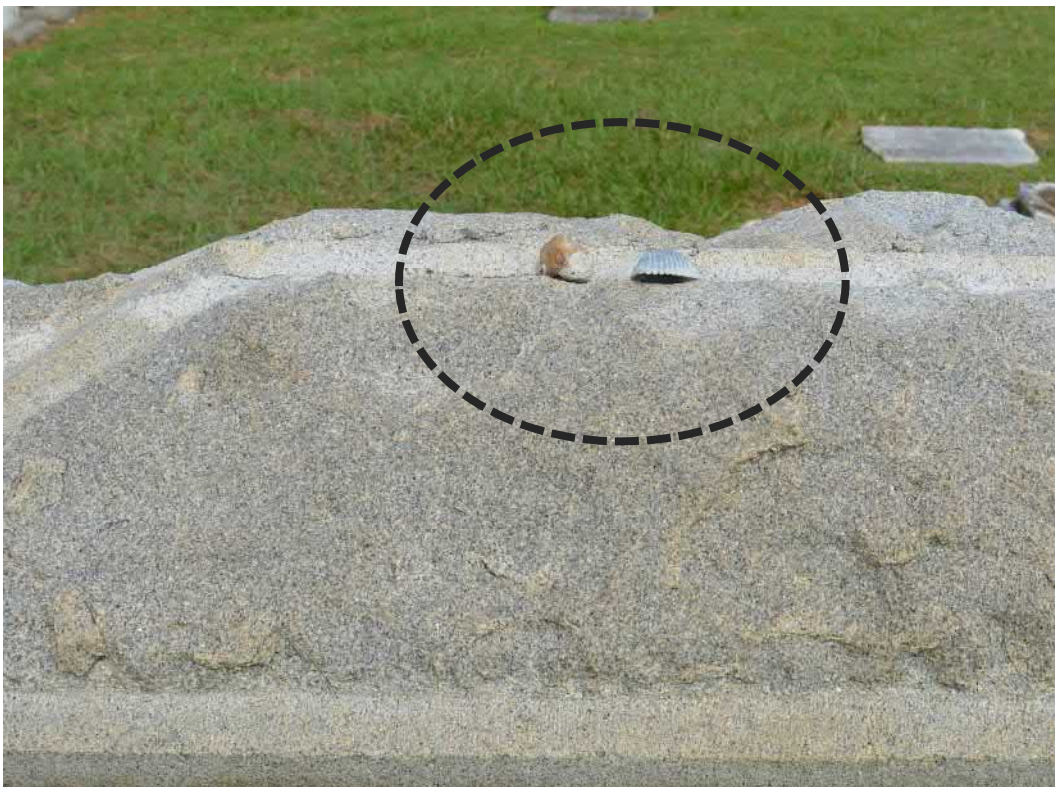


*Nicho at Guadalupe Cemetery, Caldwell County*

## Hispanic traditions

- *Nichos*
- *Relicaritos*
- *Decansos*
- Candles
- Food
- Personal items
- Fresh and paper flowers
- *Coronas* (silk flower wreaths)
- *Cascarones* (confetti eggs)

# Cultural Practices in Cemeteries



*Broadway Cemetery, Galveston*

## Jewish traditions

- Stones on burial markers
- Hebrew text
- Kohanim/Cohanim Hands





# Vegetation

- Planned landscape
- Planned commemoration
- Natural (volunteer or invasive)



*Broadway Cemetery, Galveston*



*St. Mary Cemetery, Frio County*



## Other Cultural Practices

- Use of iconography
- Associations



*Broadway Cemetery, Galveston*

# Common Disaster Planning Threads

- Community engagement
- Safety considerations
- Funding



*Kennard Cemetery, Grimes County*

# Community Engagement

- Remember: every community is unique, and every cemetery is unique; therefore, funding varies dramatically.
- Funding can be difficult to obtain, but funding events help build community support and interest.
- Understand the cemetery and its significance to identify potential stakeholders and investors.



# Examples of Community Engagement



*Historic Cemetery Walk, Hillcrest Cemetery, Van Zandt County*

- Themed tours
- Movies in the cemetery
- Book club
- Exercise events
- Car and hearse shows
- Paranormal investigations
- Open air markets

# Safety Considerations



*Lamar Cemetery, Lamar*

- Know your surroundings.
- Know the potential hazards.
- Know the legal framework.



# The Lay of the Land: Cemetery Orientation

Site safety considerations

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## SAFETY BAG CHECKLIST

- Permission to Enter
- Hard hat
- Work boots
- High visibility clothing/safety vest
- First aid kit
- Sunblock
- Bug spray
- Safety goggles
- Work gloves
- Mobile phone



## ARRIVAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider road conditions
- Park on roadway or designated parking area
- Consider impact of natural disaster and identify potential hazards
  - Standing water
  - Debris
  - Damaged trees
  - Utility infrastructure





## ASSESSING POTENTIAL HAZARDS WITHIN CEMETERY

- Human interaction
- Animal presence
- Vegetative concerns
- Trip hazards
- Tree hazards
- Other environmental factors
  - Sun
  - Rain
  - Heat
  - Cold





# Legal Framework

- Be respectful of listed visitation hours and/or rules of the cemetery
- Obtain permission to enter/work in cemetery
- Be respectful of ongoing funeral services



*Hallettsville Memorial Park*

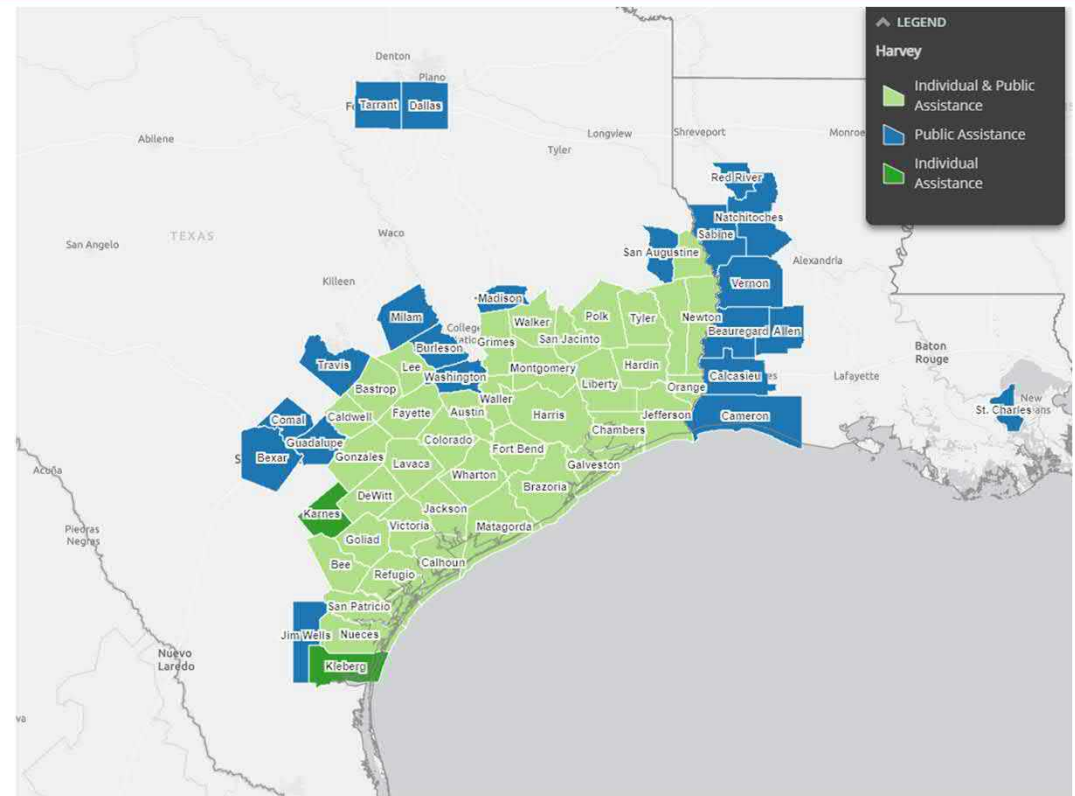
# Legal Framework

- Know the appropriate legislation.
  - Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA)
  - Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA)
- Know the city, county, and state regulatory rules.
- Know who is responsible and who to contact.

# Legal Framework

## Build a network of contacts

- Texas Historical Commission
- County Historical Commissions
- County coroner/funerary professionals
- Local archeologists
- Conservators
- Landscape architects
- Other interested parties (professional organizations, consultants, hazmat contractors, etc)



Disaster Grant Program County Eligibility, National Park Service



# Conclusions

- Know your legal framework and what role you serve in the cemetery.



*Hallettsville Memorial Park*

# Conclusions

- Know your legal framework and what role you serve in the cemetery.
- Create a network of contacts who have interest in the cemetery.



*Lamar Cemetery*

# Conclusions

- Know your legal framework and what role you serve in the cemetery.
- Create a network of contacts who have interest in the cemetery.
- Each cemetery is unique and has its own history, forms, resources, and features which make it significant.



*Restland Memory Park, Bishop*



# Conclusions

- Understanding the cemetery, its components, significance, cultures/history of those interred, and hazards will help you identify stakeholders, plan for future action, and identify/acquire funding.



*Lee St Joseph, Image courtesy of THC*

# Conclusions

- Understand the cemetery prior to a disaster event to better care for the cemetery in the wake of the event(s).



*Bastrop Alum Creek, Image courtesy of THC*

# Resources and References

## Handouts provided

We would like to thank the following individuals for meeting with our project team and allowing us to film and photograph cemeteries under their care.

- Barbara Sanderson, Director of Parks and Recreation, Galveston
- Brenda Holub, Orchard Cemetery
- Doug Kubicek, Chair of the Lavaca County Historical Commission
- Nancy Smith, Restland Memory Park
- Sandra Bridges, Lamar Cemetery
- Sheryl Shaw, Chair of the Chambers County Historical Commission





Thank you!

Questions?

Next time... Cemetery Survey  
and Data Collection

Disaster Planning and Response in Historic Texas Cemeteries

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