

LOCAL

# Comments made during historical re-dedication

By Bernard Mayfield & Jane Purtle

Most people are familiar with the "burning bush" Moses encountered in the wilderness near Mt. Horeb. Not as many are familiar with the Burning Bush Colony in Cherokee and Smith Counties.

From 1913 to 1919 the Society of the Burning Bush maintained an evangelistic community on 1,500 acres of land astride the Cherokee and Smith County line about one-fourth of a mile southwest of the town of Bullard.

Commonly called the Burning Bush Society, the Metropolitan Church Association had its genesis about 1900 in Chicago, Illinois, when a group of Free Methodists, unable to prevent the creeping growth of formalism in their church, opted to form a separate religious order.

The organization's religious zeal was based on the third chapter of Exodus in which God, speaking from the burning bush, commissioned Moses to deliver the Israelites from Egyptian bondage.

The site of the Burning Bush Colony was on land once owned by Joseph Pickens Douglas, a cotton farmer, who built a large plantation home known as the "Douglas Mansion." The land was sold to Charles Palmer who grew large orchards of peaches, plums, and pecans. Palmer traded the land to the "Metropolitan Institute of Texas" for a number of holdings the church owned in other parts of the county.

In the spring of 1913, 375 members of the Metropolitan Church arrived by chartered train to populate the Texas Colony of the Burning Bush.

The old Douglas mansion became the headquarters for the group, and a sawmill was set up to cut pine timber for the various building projects. These included a tabernacle, dwellings for individual families, male and female dormitories, and a two-story guest house housing the community dining hall. The colony operated a steam-powered electric generating plant, a community water system, and a sewage disposal system.

Every person who joined the order donated his/her personal wealth to the society and lived from the community storehouse. Each Burning Bush Colony was expected to be self-sustaining economically.

A community cannery preserved enough peaches and tomatoes for community consumption with surplus to be sold. Income from all sources was never sufficient to meet the expenses of the colony.

J. L. Vandever's Mercantile store at Bullard furnished goods not produced by the settlers. From him the colony bought clothing, flour, sugar, lard, tea, coffee, and other items. D. M. Farson, president of the Metropolitan Institute, personally guaranteed to pay Vandever for all the debts incurred by the Bullard colony.

The inhabitants of the Burning Bush Colony were a variously talented cross-section of American life. Among the 400 members were many professional people, such as school teachers, musicians, engineers, surveyors, and ministers. Among the skilled tradesmen of the community were a blacksmith, an electrician, many carpenters, and workers in leather and metal.

Mrs. Jewel Payne Russell, now deceased, who lived in

Bullard for many years, had very positive memories of the colony. "The Burning Bush people were laughed at and scorned for their peculiar methods and mode of dress, but behind all their peculiarities they each had a heart of gold." Mrs. Russell wrote of her memories of living in the colony for several months in an article published in the Tyler Courier-Times-Telegraph on October 21, 1962.

Agriculture employed the largest number of colonists. The farming procedures of the colony amazed the neighboring landowners. The steam-powered tractors and other modern farm machinery were strangely out of place in East Texas, where mule power was still used to till the soil.

Church services at the colony were also a curiosity to the local folk. The unique doctrine of the Metropolitan Church embraced a belief in the "gift of the Holy Ghost." The strong emotional effect produced by this Second Blessing resulted in unusual demonstrations and behavior. Religious services were characterized by much praying, shouting, and singing which could be heard throughout the countryside. Mrs. Russell remembers both a brass and a string band, as well as a piano and organ. She says, "Their music and singing were out of this world." She also recalls a hayride and picnic to Flat Creek crossing.

In spite of their spirited and noisy worship services, the members generally were law-abiding citizens who never caused any trouble. All residents were forbidden to use tobacco or liquor.

The colony managed to survive through the boom days of World War I, but the following depression brought hard times to the Burning Bush Community.

The Metropolitan Corporation had two large notes with Mr. Vandever. When Mr. Farson was unable to pay the debt, Vandever sued the Metropolitan Institute and was granted judgment for over seventeen thousand dollars. The Burning Bush estate was sold at public auction, and Vandever bought the land April 15, 1919, for \$1,000.

Members of the colony had already left, some to other

colonies and some to their former homes. The colony had lasted only six years.

On September 9, 1984, the Cherokee County Historical Commission dedicated a marker to commemorate this novel and innovative endeavor in the history of East Texas.

Until sometime in 2007, the marker stood about one-fourth mile south of Bullard on FM 2493 near the Cherokee-Smith

County line. During construction work in the area, it disappeared and has not been recovered.

Today, thanks to the efforts of Betsy and Elmer Ellis the marker has been re-installed and we re-dedicate it to mark for posterity this unique experiment in communal living in East Texas during the early part of the twentieth century.

### Notice of Drinking Water Monitoring and Reporting Violation(s)

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has notified CITY OF BULLARD that the water system has violated the requirement for monitoring and reporting (M&R) for chemical compliance monitoring.

We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminations on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not our drinking water meets health standards and is safe for consumption. We did not fully complete all monitoring and/or report the results of that monitoring for drinking water contaminants, and therefore cannot be sure of the quality of our drinking water.

#### What should I do?

There is nothing you need to do at this time.

The table below lists the sample type(s) we did not properly test for, the monitoring frequency and the number of associated violations that occurred. Primary M&R violations are for regulated contaminants that have a health based Maximum Contaminant Level. Secondary M&R violations are for state regulated constituents that do not have health based maximum contaminant levels, but are regulated for other reasons.

TCEQ ID	Test Type	Sample Period	Violations	
			Primary	Secondary
0736182	MIN03	Triennial	2	4
<b>Total Primary Monitoring and Reporting Violations:</b>			2	
<b>Total Primary Monitoring and Reporting Violations:</b>				4

#### What happened? What is being done?

Our water system failed to conduct the above referenced monitoring as required by state and federal law, and therefore results were not reported to the TCEQ. Samples have been rescheduled for November of 2008.

For more information, please contact: Larry Morgan  
At the following phone number: (903) 894-7223  
Or by mail at: PO BOX 107, Bullard, TX, 75757

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand mail.

This notice is being sent to you by the CITY OF BULLARD. PWS ID# 2120006.

# BACON AUTO COUNTRY



1033 N. Jackson, Jacksonville, TX

903-586-3511 • 800-462-8862

\*ALL PRICES PLUS TT&L



**Sonny Plunk**  
General Manager  
51 Years Service



**Paul Laney**  
Sales  
32 Years Service



**Bob Thomason**  
Sales  
10 Years Service



**Mike Mason**  
Sales  
27 Years Service



**Ronny Fisher**  
Sales & Used Car Mgr.  
35 Years Service



**Skip Bevers**  
Finance Mgr.  
33 Years Service

'02 SATURN SC2 3 DR COUPE \$5,995  
PW, PL, TILT, CRUISE, BLUE, 6307

'03 PONTIAC GRAND AM \$5,995  
4 DOOR, SILVER, PW, PL, SUNROOF, FULLY EQUIPPED

'99 GMC YUKON SLT \$7,995  
LEATHER, ALL POWER, ONLY 60K!

'01 MERCURY GRAND MARQUIS LS \$7,995  
CLOTH, ALL POWER, ONE OWNER, ALL EXTRAS

'06 CHEVY MALIBU LS \$8,995  
ONE OWNER, SILVER, LEATHER, ALL POWER, FULLY EQUIPPED

'01 CADILLAC DEVILLE \$8,995  
LEATHER, ALL POWER, ONLY 67K!

'07 CHEVY COLORADO LS \$11,775  
CLOTH, PW/PL

'03 DODGE QUAD CAB SLT \$11,995  
LEATHER, PW/PL, ONLY 50K!

'04 CHEVY SILVERADO X-CAB \$12,995  
FIBERGLASS RUNNING BOARDS, 69K!

'06 FORD MUSTANG \$12,995  
CLOTH, PW/PL

'03 BUICK LE SABRE LTD \$12,995  
FULLY EQUIPPED, LEATHER, 10K

'03 CADILLAC DEVILLE \$13,995  
ONE OWNER, FULLY EQUIPPED, DIAMOND WHITE, 69K!

'07 CHEVY HHR LT \$14,775  
CLOTH, PW/PL

'05 CHEVY SILVERADO LS EXT CAB \$14,995  
ONE OWNER, FULLY EQUIPPED, MAROON, 2002

'05 NISSAN XTERRA SE \$14,995  
CLOTH, PW/PL, 20K!

'06 FORD MUSTANG \$15,475  
LEATHER, PW/PL, EXTRA CLEAN, 24K!

'06 DODGE DAKOTA SLT QUAD CAB \$15,995  
CLOTH, ALL PW/PL, CO

'06 HONDA ACCORD EX \$16,995  
LEATHER, MOON ROOF

**Rebates on new vehicles up to \$6500 and some vehicles with 0% for 72 months financing. Check with dealer for rebates and terms.**

'05 GMC YUKON SLT \$16,995  
LEATHER, ALL POWER

'04 CHEVY AVALANCHE Z71 \$17,995  
LEATHER, 4X4, ALL POWER

'06 BUICK LUCERNE CXL \$17,995  
LEATHER, ALL POWER

'06 TOYOTA TACOMA PRERUNNER \$18,995  
DOUBLE CAB, 22K, FULLY EQUIPPED, SILVER

'08 CHEVY IMPALA LTZ \$18,995  
LEATHER, SUNROOF, 18K!

'06 GRAND CHEROKEE OVERLAND 4X4 \$19,995  
LEATHER, ALL POWER

'07 HONDA ACCORD EX \$19,995  
LEATHER, MOON ROOF, 19K!

'05 CHEVY AVALANCHE 4X4 \$19,995  
CLOTH, ALL POWER, 18K!

'05 CHEV SUBURBAN Z71 4X4 \$20,995  
WHITE, FULLY EQUIPPED, SUNROOF, NAVI, LEATHER, REAR ENT!

'06 CHEVY AVALANCHE \$21,995  
LEATHER, MOON ROOF

**Check out our website! www.BelieveInBacon.com**

Picture for illustration purpose only

'08 TOYOTA TACOMA PRERUNNER \$23,995  
TRD SPORT, DOUBLE CAB, V6, AUTO, FULLY EQUIPPED, BRIGHT BLUE, 3K!

'07 HUMMER H2 4X4 \$43,995  
LEATHER, ALL POWER, ONLY 12K!