

An early A&NR locomotive on a track near Nacalina.

## An Unlikely Partnership

By Bob Bowman

They were an unlikely business partnership--a German immigrant, an Irish storekeeper, and two Jewish brothers.

But in 1900, Joseph Kurth, Simon W. Henderson, and Sam and Eli Wiener pooled their resources and created the Angelina and Neches River Railroad.

It wasn't much of a railroad in the beginning--two wood-burning narrow-gauge locomotives and ten miles of track.

But in almost 110 years, the A&NR has become as much a part of East Texas as the pine trees that blanket the region.

The shortline's service helped shape the success of Lufkin's largest corporations--firms like Lufkin Industries, Texas Foundries, Inc., South-

land Paper Mills, which made the South's first newsprint from southern pines, and Angelina Plywood, which made some of the first southern pine plywood in the nation.

The A&NR also became a viable business partner with dozens of other businesses, transporting chemicals, construction materials, groceries, metals and other goods.

The railroad also became one of the proudest possessions of the founding families, and many of them spent time "just riding up and down the line" with the railroad crews.

Charles L. Kelty and James A. Ewing, who owned the sawmill before selling it to Kurth in 1888, had previously utilized a crude log tram consisting of four-by-four wooden rails over which a few log cars were pulled by

oxen and mule teams and later by a small shay or "dinky" steam engine.

For the most part, oxen pulling eight-wheel wagons were used to transport logs from the woods to the wood-en-tracked tram sites. This worked fine as long as timber stands were accessible within a few miles from the sawmill or the tram roads. In 1911, the A&NR completed a line from Nacalina, at the Angelina River, to Chireno in Nacogdoches County, a distance of 10.74 miles, after the citizens of Chireno agreed to pay \$10,200 to the company when the tracks were completed to the community.

(Bob Bowman of Lufkin is the author of more than 40 books about East Texas. He can be recontacted at bob-bowman.com)

## Heroes of the past looking toward the future

by Congressman Joe Barton

They won a World War and overcame economic strife. When their country needed them most, they answered the call. This week members of the Greatest

Generation inspired me with their strength, patriotism and vision for the future.

On Wednesday I had a chance to spend some time with 36 World War II survivors from our area. They

travelled to Washington to see "their" memorial -- that is what many veterans call the WWII memorial, which was finished in 2004.

The trip was made possible by Ellis County Honor

Flight, which is a local branch of a nationwide non-profit organization whose goal is to transport veterans to the Nation's Capital so they can visit and reflect. Thanks to generous donations from community these survivors got to make the trip for free.

This was the third group of veterans from our area to visit Washington, DC and the second time I was lucky enough to talk with them.

I started by thanking them for their service, something they had likely heard before -- but haven't been told nearly enough.

After I spoke for a few minutes about the valor and bravery displayed by those sitting before me, I opened the floor to questions. There were a few inquires about Social Security and Medicare, but it didn't take long for these heroes from the past to express concern for our future.

They survived one of the toughest times in our

country's history. World War II truly threatened our very existence as a nation and as a culturally diverse, free society. But we prevailed and began a historic rise as a military and economic power.

Members of the Greatest Generation created that momentum and used it to improve their lives. They passed on their work ethic and morals to their children. It was then passed on to their grandchildren.

But these heroes are worried about the next generation.

Several veterans expressed concern to me that the success of their great grandchildren would be hamstrung by our nation's exploding debt.

It is a different kind of threat than the one they faced 65 years ago, but it is a threat nonetheless.

The generation that fought for freedom watches in agony as government gets

involved in private industries and tinkers with financial markets. Their hard work helped pave the way for the successful society we have today, but many are worried because we are currently making less at home and borrowing more from foreign countries.

The veterans expressed fear that the ideals they fought for are being thrown by the wayside.

I explained to them that as a Conservative Republican I fight every day for smaller government, lower taxes and a strong military. They told me I have their support, but urged me to fight harder. And when you hear those words coming from those people -- you pay attention.

Despite the fact that many of these veterans were in wheelchairs and had a hard time navigating the hallways of the Capitol, I learned a simple lesson - the Greatest Generation still has the ability to inspire and lead.



Congressman Barton addresses World War II survivors.

## VETERANS – We appreciate you

By Sherry Matney

On Saturday, May 16, 2009, the Veterans Service Officers of Leon County along with the American Legion of Leon County and the Patriot Guard will sponsor a Veterans Appreciation Day. The purpose of the event is to let all Leon County vets know that they are appreciated and apprise them of new and additional benefits.

Opening ceremonies will include a Color Guard from Ft. Hood. There will also be a Capison Ceremony honor-

ing fallen warriors. This will feature a horse with an 1857 Cavalry saddle. There will be no rider and boots will be turned backwards in the stirrups. A retired air force man will sing the National Anthem.

A representative from Texas Workforce will be on hand with employers and recruiters. Veterans Land Board and the Texas Veterans Commission will also be available to answer question and to assist where needed. Representatives from Temple

VA Hospital and other dignitaries from Austin will join the group.

Centerville's own County Cousins will cater a free lunch for all veterans and their spouses. The event will be held in Centerville High School's old gym and the way will be marked by 100 flags.

Gary Maples, the legs behind this occasion, said "We request all Leon County vets to come and participate. We think there will be something there for everyone."

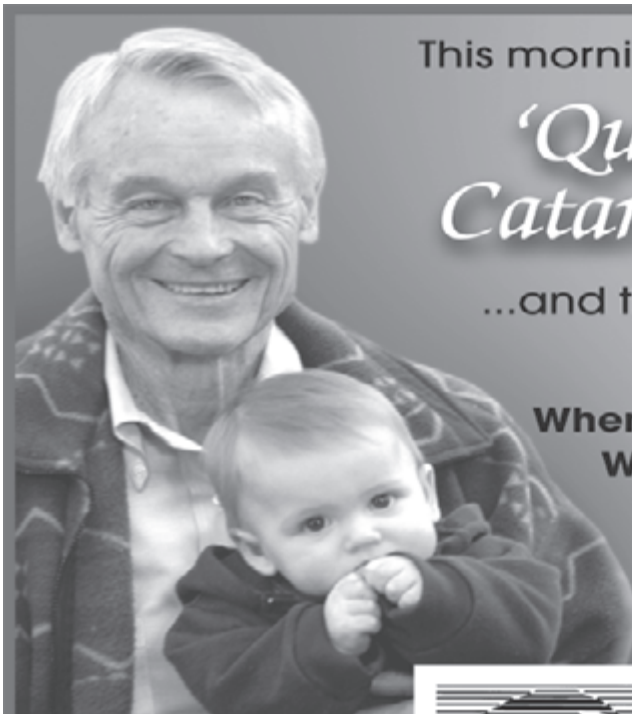
## Barton Staff to Hold 'County Day' in Leon County

Congressman Joe Barton's District Assistant, Karla Carr, will be at the Centerville Housing Authority, 130 East Main Street, Centerville, on Wednesday, May 20, from noon until 2pm to meet with anyone having concerns with the federal government. No

appointment is necessary. If Congressman Barton's office may be of assistance in providing information regarding the federal government, or if you or someone in your family needs assistance with a matter involving Social Security, Medicare, the Armed


Services, Veterans' services and benefits, immigration issues, and or other federal agencies, please do not hesitate to come and meet with Mrs. Carr.

Please direct any additional questions to Mrs. Carr at (936) 544-8488.

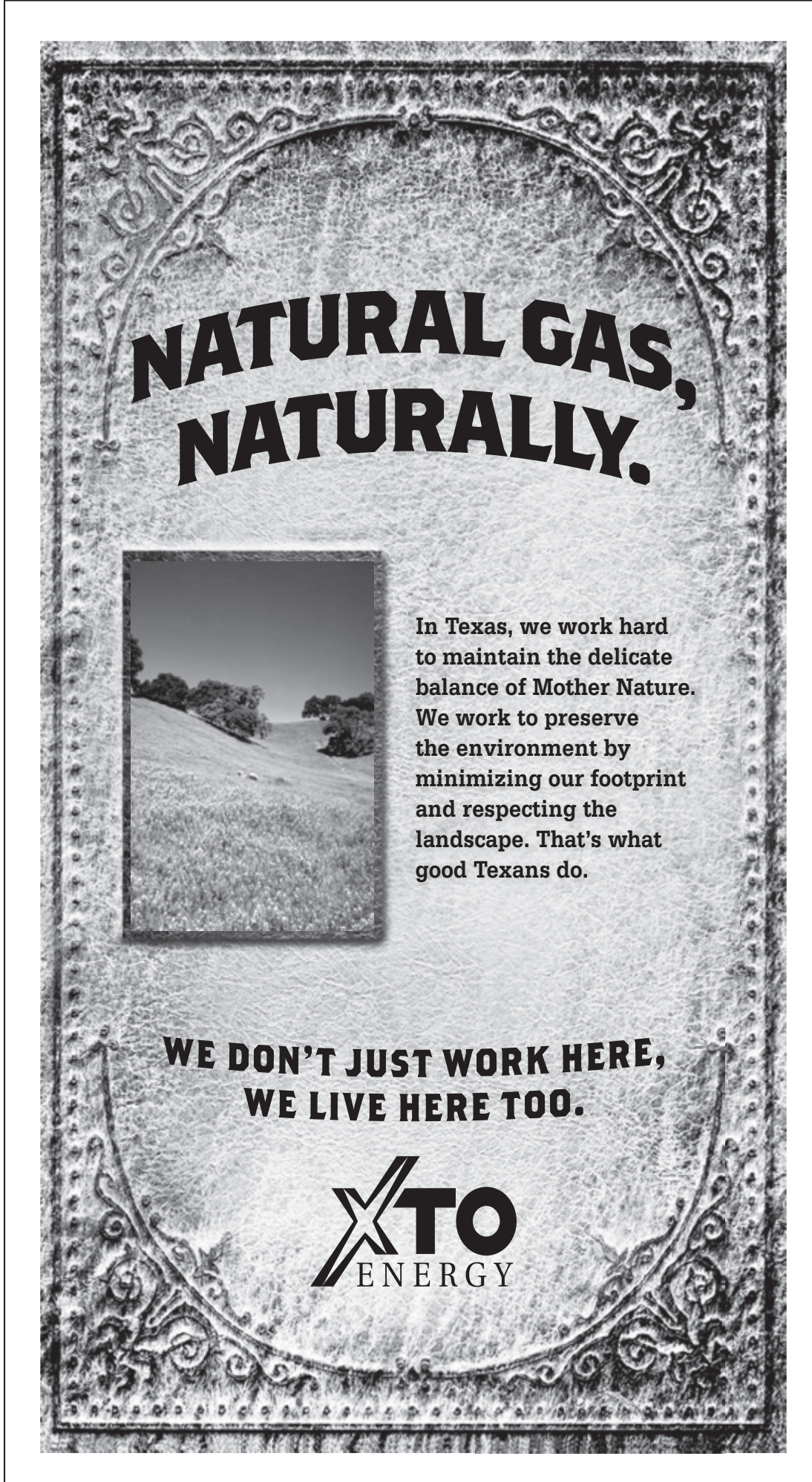


This morning Charlie will have  
*'Quick Vision'*  
*Cataract Surgery*  
...and this afternoon he will  
see his grandson.


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