



The Daughters of The Republic of Texas

Friday, July 2, 2010

The Daughters of the Republic of Texas would like to respond to the series of unrelenting attacks being made on the organization by the San Antonio Express-News, its publisher, its editorial board and Scott Huddleston. It seems fair to ask the following question: Is it the business of the Express News to report the news or has it placed itself in the role of creating the news? For months the Express News has promoted the story that the DRT has neglected the Alamo, even insinuating that the Alamo presented a safety hazard to visitors. When presented with information that contradicts the situations as described by them, the paper released a sophomoric, sarcastic, and hostile editorial which offers them the opportunity to once again repeat their agenda driven story. Are the owners and staff of the San Antonio Express-News incapable of simply admitting they were wrong and that the story they have helped to create really isn't the crisis they believed it was? Or this "take no prisoners" attitude an attempt to save face after a well respected professional engineer attested to the fact that the Alamo has been well maintained and is indeed safe?

As for specific points raised in this latest opinion piece by the Express News, before the comprehensive study that the author says is "supposed to be forthcoming" can be released, the report first has to be completed. The choice of the word "supposed" is clearly intended to make the reader doubt that this study exists at all. The analysis of this study and testing will be completed by Datum Engineering in late August. Moreover, studies on The Alamo roof were on going and being conducted before the governor's office made any requests of The DRT. The governor's office was doing its job by looking into these highly public allegations and we applaud the governor for his prudence. As for the charge of secrecy, the DRT has routinely submitted annual reports to the governor.

Regarding the issue of the trademark for the Alamo, the intention never was for the DRT to own the words "The Alamo." It is part of an effort to raise money for the preservation and operation of the site by creating a line of licensed merchandize similar to that offered by the NFL, NBA, Disney, and a whole host of corporate entities. Customers would be presented with the opportunity to purchase official products sanctioned by The Alamo, the sale of which would go back to support the Alamo. The reader can decide for himself whether that sounds like a smart business move or a dastardly attempt to keep anyone else from uttering the words "The Alamo" without having to pay the DRT for the privilege.

There has been a cost to these public attacks. The DRT depends on donations, sales in the gift shop, and grants to fund preservation and operations. Since the Express-News began publishing its tales of alleged neglect and mismanagement, the DRT's fundraising efforts have been adversely affected. As an example, The Allies of The Alamo program has seen a drastic decline in the rate of new memberships added. While some critics will take joy in this fact, the true victim is the Alamo itself. Calls for the State of Texas to take over the site fail to consider that like many other states, Texas faces a future budgetary shortfall. What assurances are there that the State can care for the Alamo when tough decisions have to be made over the future allocations of funds? The Daughters of The Republic of Texas are a professional workforce of VOLUNTEERS.

Finally, The Daughters of The Republic of Texas for over 105 years have made The Alamo a place of Great Respect, a place many people from around the world want to visit, a place of beauty and solace, a place many people want to associate with and use its name, a place of remembrance and proud history, a place of learning and freedom and open to anyone of any race, creed, color or nationality, a place that belongs to all Texans everywhere. The proof is at 300 Alamo Plaza, and going there and seeing it for yourself speaks louder than any words written in any newspaper...