

## **Pine Cone Profiles – December 2021**

### **John Caraway**

In this season of joy so often symbolized by lambs and sheep, it is our pleasure to feature an ETHA member who has not only written extensively on woolybacks' value in Texas history, he runs his own herd. John Caraway's articles on the state mohair industry, ranchers of West Texas, and the infamous Seven Year Drought in the 1950's have enlightened readers of both the West Texas Historical Review and the East Texas Historical Journal, and his piece on "Dallas Scarborough, Abilene Attorney and Civic Leader" won the Mrs. Percy (Ruth Leggett) Jones Award for Best Article on West Texas History just a few years ago.

He's reviewed books ranging from Devil's River to Civil War Texas; he's given talks on San Angelo, Texas, and Miss Wool Contests; and he's headed the History/Government Department of Cisco College for the last five years. Most of all, John has combined the hard-headed sensibility of the west with the perceptive insights of the east, as part of his position on the Editorial Board of the East Texas Historical Journal. A historian of practical as well as academic expertise, here is John Caraway, our Pine Cone Profile for December.

#### **Where do you live?**

I live in Clyde Texas.

#### **How long have you been in the East Texas Historical Association?**

I think I have been an ETHA member for ten years or so.

#### **Who convinced you to join? and what is there within ETHA that has kept you a member?**

Scott Sosebee. As predominantly a West Texas Historian, I joined the ETHA to learn more about another section of the state I am not as familiar with and to meet historians and others I might not otherwise come into contact with. Being able to do these things has kept me a member.

#### **What is there about Texas that attracts you?**

I was born in Texas and my family has resided in the state for generations. In many ways Texas history represents a microcosm of American history within a distinctive social and political culture.

**What is there about history that attracts you?**

As I often tell my students, history is the story of people, the choices they make, and the consequences of those choices. History's story is not just about major figures like presidents, generals, kings, and queens but also about the average American or Texan. It is the story of the everyday person that interests me in history.

**How do you usually pursue history?**

I primarily pursue historical study through my classes at Cisco College. Engaging with students in regard to the history of our nation, state, and region is one of the most fulfilling aspects of what I do. I also enjoy researching, writing, and presenting on topics related mostly to West Texas and Agriculture.

**Why do you love history? Has there been anything in your personal life that led to this? What was it?**

I think my interest in history began with traveling around the state with my family and reading historical markers along the way. Also, I was fortunate to have professors at Cisco College, Hardin Simmons, and Texas Tech who fostered my love of history and my curiosity.

**What is your favorite historical period or historical movement? Why?**

I would say the Gilded Age era is probably my favorite because, when studying this time period, my students and I encounter so many interesting and unusual historical personalities.

**Who is your favorite historical person and why?**

Lyndon Baines Johnson because he was such a complex figure and personality.

**If there is one event in history at which you could be present, what would it be and why?**

That is a tough one. As I also teach government, I think I would like to have been present at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia to witness the Founders drafting what became our remarkable United States Constitution.