

# Randy Mallory Writer-Photographer

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Jill,

As you may know, Carthage is the birthplace of country music legends Tex Ritter and Gentleman Jim Reeves. It's also the home of the Texas Country Music Hall of Fame and the Tex Ritter Museum, which move into a new 13,000-square-foot home soon.

With exhibits designed by Southwest Museum Services of Houston, the new facility will highlight each of the inductees (added to annually) with text, photographs, and artifacts—plus continuously-running "old singing cowboy movies," a replica 1930s theater marquee, and an archetypical 1930s-style hangout where you can play an inductee's music from an old-fashioned jukebox. A recreation of Tex's den, with his original furnishings and knick-knacks is the centerpiece of the Tex Ritter Museum. Outside a larger-than-life bronze statue of Tex Ritter and his horse White Flash, done by a local artist, welcomes visitors.

The facility also contains a multipurpose meeting room for a variety of events and functions.

The Hall of Fame's annual induction celebration (featuring big-name country stars) will continue to be held in a separate local auditorium.

If it would not conflict with the 2004 music series, I'd like to do a short feature with photos on the new facility—plus a mention and photo of the annual induction, held each August. I'll be at this year's event for photos, so we're covered in case you are interested in it for next year (could run in July, since tickets to the event go fast).

Just let me know.