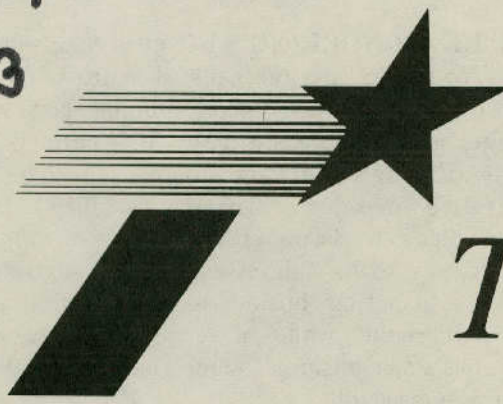


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# TEXAS TRAVEL LOG

Texas Department of Transportation, Austin, Texas

March Division of Travel & Information, P. O. Box 5000, Austin, Texas 78763 512/467-3722 1992

**PLANS ARE SHAPING UP** for the annual Texas Travel Counselors Conference (TTCC) to be held at the Harvey Hotel, DFW Airport, April 5 through 9, 1992. The confab begins Sunday, April 5, with registration and a short tour of the Irving area and an evening at Six Flags Over Texas. The conference begins in earnest Monday with individual organization meetings in the morning, an afternoon study tour of Dallas, and an evening at Las Colinas.

**TUESDAY MORNING** will begin with round table sessions, followed by an afternoon and evening study tour of Fort Worth. A morning session on Wednesday will be devoted to new developments in Texas tourism, while the afternoon sees a study tour of the mid-cities area topped off by an evening at the Palace of Wax. A joint session of all TTCC participants is set for Thursday morning, followed at noon by the annual Awards Luncheon and an afternoon training session.

**THE CONFERENCE CONCLUDES** with an opportunity for all participants to visit with representatives from the attractions and chambers of commerce throughout Texas at the popular TTIA Travel Fair. TTIA members should coordinate with Vic Heller at 512/476-4472. For additional TTCC information call David Linzey at TxDOT 512/467-3716.

**DID YOU KNOW** that the first FAX machine was invented before the telephone, and even before the telegraph? It was created in 1842 by Alexander Bain and was capable of transmitting text and simple drawings. If you'd like to FAX information about your attraction or event, *Travel Log's* number is 512-465-3090. To paraphrase the *New York Times*, all the news that fits we print!

**WE HAVE A NEW LOGO!** With the advent of a new name, the Texas Department of Transportation has come up with a distinctive new logo that will appear on all department publications, stationery, hard hats, buildings, and automobiles. While we'll miss the familiar state outline and lone star that has graced *Texas Travel Log's* banner for the past four years, we think the new logo reflects the new look of the department as it moves forward into its expanded role. We hope you'll like it, too.

**TEXAS TRIVIA:** What vegetables are immortalized in Texas by statuary?



**IMAGINE A WORLD** where insects are the size of dinosaurs and blades of grass tower higher than a house! Visitors to San Antonio's Witte Museum will be dwarfed by "Backyard Monsters: The World of Insects," the new exhibition of animated, robot creatures opening March 14. Designed by Creative Exhibits, the makers of *E.T.*, the Extra-Terrestrial, and Universal Studio's *Phantom of the Opera*, the exhibition features five robot creatures, a stationary oversize dragonfly, hands-on interpretive displays, and insect specimens — all designed to introduce visitors to the broad diversity of insects and their impact on the world. Included are a 12-ft. praying mantis, a 13-ft. black widow spider, the horned male beetle, a stinging red harvester ant, and the endangered monarch butterfly. On display through May 31. Call 512/820-2127 for details.



## Around the Centers



The Texas Transportation Commission in a late February meeting approved funding for the new Texas Travel Information Center to be built along US 75 north of Denison. Center manager Anne Newsome, who has been assigned to the Travel Services office in Austin during the temporary closing of the center, was positively glowing. Next step: right-of-way and site acquisition.

Jesus Torres was one of the early settlers of the Langtry area, predating even the arrival of the infamous Judge Roy Bean. Recently, his great-grandaughter, Lupe Torres McDowell of Santa Barbara, CA, visited our Judge Roy Bean Visitor Center at Langtry, reports counselor Cheryl Cash.

Henry R. Muñoz III, one of the newest members of the Texas Transportation Commission, recently visited our Valley Travel Information Center at Harlingen, reports counselor Lucia Fonseca.

Sneaky snakes invaded the Capitol rotunda to advertise the annual Sweetwater Rattlesnake Roundup last month, reports counselor Mary Ulrich of our Capitol Visitor Information Center. "Most of the visitors kept a respectful distance," she noted.

Visitors often stop to watch a touch of old Texas in the pasture out behind our Texas Travel Information Center at Gainesville. A half-dozen or so Texas Longhorns are the star attractions, as groups of visitors line the fence for a glimpse of the legendary animals, reports counselor Reva Keltner.

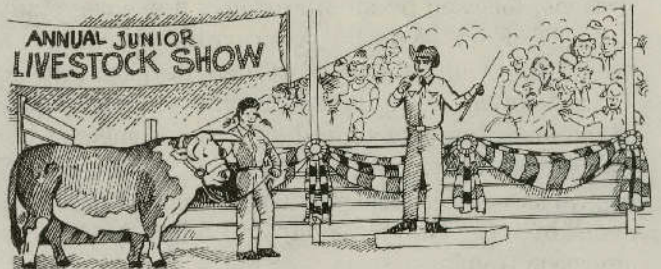
Some 29 members of the East Texas Tourism Association debarked from their tour bus to visit our Texas Travel Information Center at Orange, reports manager Pam Crew. Each year the center distributes several thousand *East Texas Travel Guides* published by the ETTA.

Manager Melissa Heard of our Texas Travel Information Center at Waskom was named Chamber Member of the Year at the annual banquet of the Waskom Chamber of Commerce.

**IF YOU'RE WONDERING** what ever happened to *Texas Highways* magazine's discount cards, announced at the Texas Travel Summit last year, you'll be glad to learn the program is on track — although delayed a few months by administrative procedures. The state's official travel magazine plans to issue special *Texas Highways* Discount Cards to its subscribers as a no-extra-cost service. Participating businesses would give card bearers a discount, while in return, the magazine would publish the business' name, location, and the nature of the discount.

**"WE HAD HOPED** to get the program running this spring," says publisher Herman Kelly, "but the necessity to publish the procedures in the *Texas Register* delayed the project a few months. Many comments offered by Travel Summit attendees have been incorporated in the procedures." Kelly also noted that a University of Texas study of *Texas Highways* readers shows that 87% visit sites each year after having read about them in the magazine.

**THE TEXAN DINING TRAIN**, may either be reopened for business in March or sold, "either one," according to Nick Atkinson, vice president of the San Francisco based company that owns the train. Operations of the train were suspended for maintenance during January and February.



**MORE THAN A RECORD STORE**, the walls of Preservation Records in Dallas are replete with photos, posters, song folios, and ticket stubs that reflect decades of country music history. The collection was started 30 years ago by her late drummer husband, Keith Kolby, and proprietor Dona Kolby Jackson knows the story behind each item. The 7,000 or so record albums for sale likewise reflect the history of country music. Open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. at 1318 North Industrial Boulevard in Dallas.

**IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF TIME!** The federal government has given a wine designation, "Texas Hill Country Appellation," to a 20-county area of central Texas. The designation, which encompasses ten wineries and 27 vineyards, is expected to enhance the area as a major visitor destination.



**WISH WE'D KNOWN EARLIER** that there's a spot in East Texas — of all places — for snow skiing! And that's not all. Lookout Mountain, some 20 miles south of Tyler on US 69, also features mountain canoeing, tobogganing, and mountain sledding year round on artificial snow/turf. It's open daily 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and offers skiing lessons and ski rentals. Call 903/586-2644 for details.

**TEETER ON THE RIM OF A VOLCANO**, if you dare. Visitors to the new OMNIMAX/ film "Ring of Fire" will come heart-stoppingly close to the great circle of volcanoes and seismic activity ringing the Pacific Ocean. The popular feature of the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History's Omni Theater takes viewers to the crater's edge of some of the world's most violent and active volcanoes, including Mount St. Helens, Navidad in Chile, Sakurajima in Japan, and Mt. Merapi in Indonesia. Call 817/732-1631 for show times.



**ANSWER TO TEXAS TRIVIA:** Crystal City maintains a statue of the spinach-eating cartoon character Popeye, Poteet boasts a gigantic strawberry on its courthouse lawn, and a monster pecan replica is in Seguin. Do you know of any others?

**COLUMBUS COMES TO TEXAS** this month — at least his fleet does. Authentic replicas of the *Nina*, the *Pinta*, and the *Santa Maria* will visit Corpus Christi, March 13 through 22, and Galveston, March 25 through 29. Cultural and educational exhibits accompany the fleet. They'll be docked in Corpus Christi at the north end of Shoreline Boulevard by the barge dock. In Galveston, they'll be moored at Pier 21 near the *Elissa*. The ships were built and are owned by the Spanish government and sailed by members of the Spanish Navy. Corpus Christi hotel and motel rooms are at a premium for this period, the C&VB reports.

**THE MOST EXPERIENCED RUNNERS** in the country gather in El Paso for the grueling Transmountain Run, commencing at 8 a.m. on March 15. The 10-mile run leads across Transmountain Road high above the city, one of the highest roads in Texas. Call 915/833-1231 for more information.

## Looking Ahead



The aircraft carrier *Lexington* has arrived at her temporary berth at Naval Station Ingleside. Decommissioned last November at the Pensacola Naval Air Station, her home for 29 years, the carrier will be moored at Ingleside until she is moved to a permanent site off Corpus Christi Beach near the Texas State Aquarium. Officials hope to open her to the public on Memorial Day.

May 21 is the target date for the opening of the long-awaited Hummel Museum in New Braunfels. The museum, at 199 Main Plaza, will feature the world's largest collection of original Hummel artwork from which the famous figurines are crafted. Some 200,000 visitors are expected to flock to the museum during its first year of operation, according to C&VB director Jim Scheele, Jr.

Once again, the last full weekend in April will bring the 22nd Annual Wildflower Trails of Texas to the East Texas triangle bounded by Avinger, Linden, and Hughes Springs — an area noted for its large variety of wild flowers. Also featured is a variety of other events, including a popular passion play. Call 903/639-7510 for complete details.

Grand opening for Austin's new convention center is now set for July 3-12, 1992. Its first major convention and trade show, Texas Travel Summit 1992, is scheduled for September. The three-day event is expected to bring between 500 and 600 travel industry representatives from around the state to the new facility.

Plans are in the formative stage for a new Ennis Railroad and Cultural Heritage Museum. If an upcoming bond election is successful, the museum would be housed in the old Southern Pacific Railroad office building on Main Street in Ennis' Historic Downtown District.

Visitors to Texas appear to be on the move again, as the rising numbers of folks stopping at our Texas Travel Information Centers indicate. See the Box Scores on page 4, a good bellweather.



Data as of February 29, 1992

Austin Office	For TxDOT This Month	For TxDOT This Year	For DOC This Month	For DOC This Year	Total Year to Date
Mail Services	9,588	14,838	110,513	140,601	155,439

Services to Travel Industry	Subscriber Inquiries This Month	Addresses Offered This Month	Addresses Transmitted This Month	Addresses Transmitted Year to Date
TxDOT TRAX System	40	135,489	30,264	39,867

Official State Travel Magazine	This Month	This Month Last Year	This Year to Date	Last Year to Date
Texas Highways Print Run	437,467	429,302	888,617	874,718

Travel Center	Month Total Visitors	Percent Variation*	Year Total Visitors	Percent Variation*	Travel Center	Month Total Visitors	Percent Variation*	Year Total Visitors	Percent Variation*
Amarillo	6,861	+ 2.0	13,992	+ 17.5	Orange	34,506	+ 7.1	74,289	+ 26.7
Anthony	18,228	- 2.1	35,604	- 1.0	Texarkana	20,091	- 4.0	47,274	+ 9.3
Denison	Temporarily Closed				Valley	48,312	+ 22.7	95,526	+ 16.3
Gainesville	27,639	+ 4.3	52,701	+ 9.9	Waskom	26,460	+ 34.6	54,441	+ 35.7
Langtry	7,296	- 2.1	13,608	+ 7.7	Wichita Falls	10,785	- 0.8	21,690	+ 4.5
Laredo	13,020	- 3.0	26,523	+ 14.1	Capitol	32,538	- 25.2	61,140	- 32.2
					<b>Center Totals</b>	245,736	+ 2.7	496,788	+ 6.4

\*Compared to last Year

Dial toll-free 1-800-452-9292 for travel assistance from TxDOT's Texas Travel Information Centers (8 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily)

**FINAL NOTICE!**

This is the third of three consecutive issues in which we are required by law to publish notices to recipients that they must formally request this publication in order to continue receiving it. If you desire to continue receiving *Texas Travel Log*, please clip this portion (to include the mailing label) and return it to:

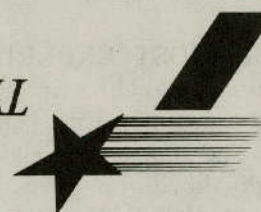
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