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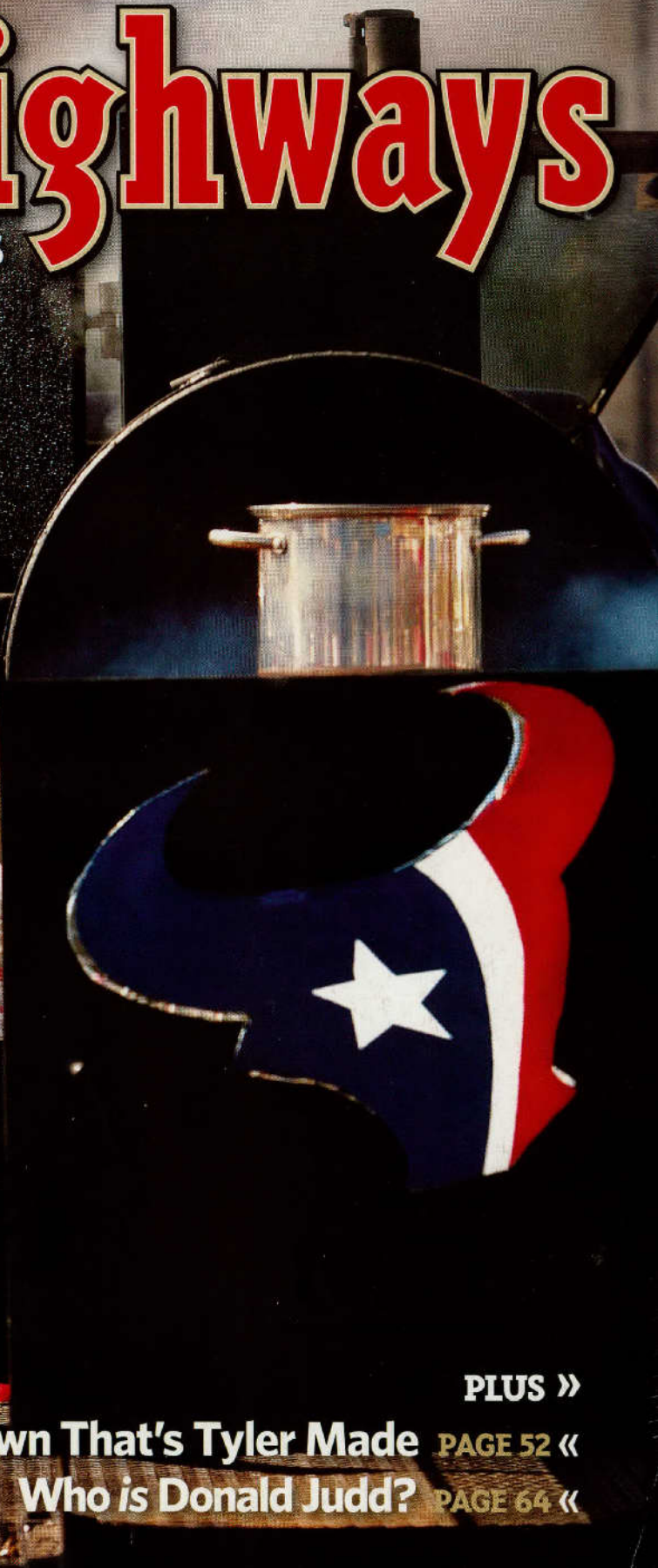
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A Town That's Tyler Made PAGE 52 «

Who is Donald Judd? PAGE 64 «

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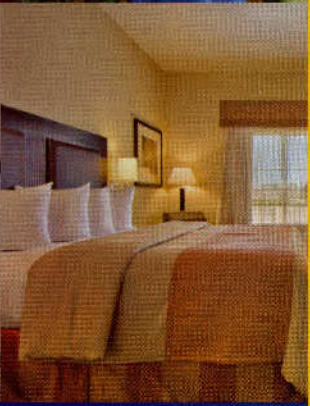
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Check out www.texashighways.com
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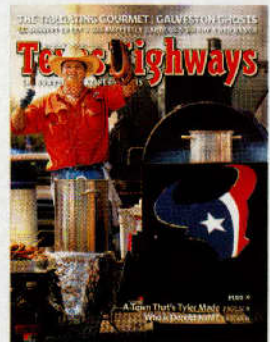
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FRONT: Serious tailgater Ben Duncan
shows off his custom-made garlic-jala-
peño sausage (from Chappell Hill Meat
Market) in the parking lot of Houston's
Reliant Stadium. **Photo © Paul S. Howell**

BACK: Stately monuments distinguish plots
in Broadway Cemetery, a fixture on Galves-
ton ghost tours. **Photo © Sarah Kerver**

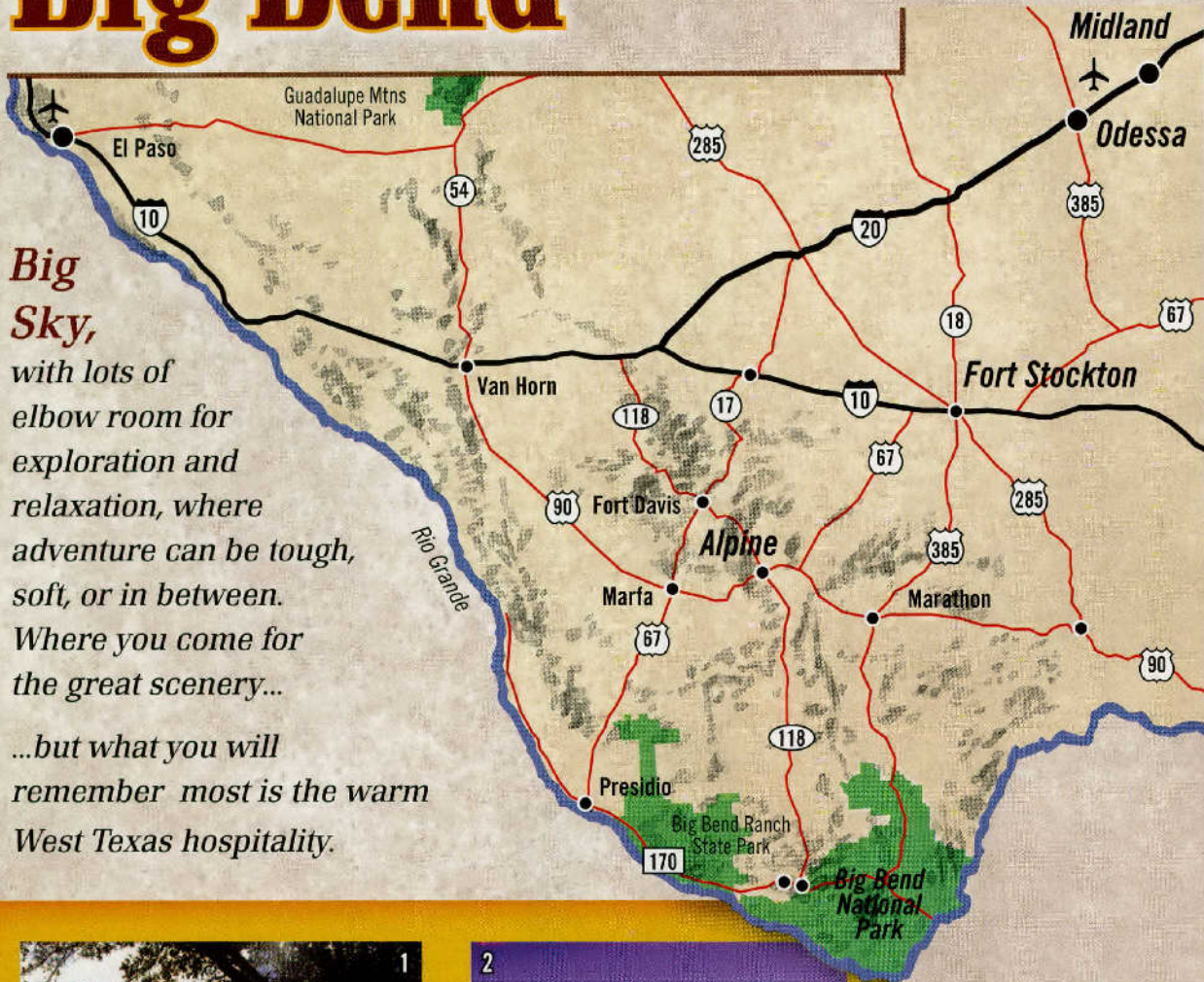
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Texas Spirit means the unusual: like the metal cowboy performers that decorate this street sign in Monahans (left), or the fine ribs at the Gonzales Food Market (below).

Revolution + 175

GUESS FOR SOME FOLKS, “Texas Spirit” (not a brand of distilled beverage) could be characterized by smoked ribs and cowboy kitsch.

Because 2011 is the 175th anniversary of the Texas War for Independence, now’s the time to consider, or reconsider, what Texas Spirit means. Of course, Gonzales lays claim to the site of the first battle—it’s the birthplace of the “Come and Take It” flag as well as the fight itself. Gonzales figures prominently in the final stages of the war as well. When General Sam Houston learned about the fall of the Alamo, he ordered Gonzales burned rather than allow the town to fall under Mexican control.

One of the reasons I enjoy visiting Gonzales (apart from the Sam Houston Oak and the classic Gonzales Memorial Museum building) is the ribs at the Gonzales Food Market on St. Lawrence Street, a stone’s throw from US 183 in the middle of town. The ever-epicurious Robb Walsh once explained that the reason these ribs are so succulent is that the cooks put them in a pan and crisp up the outside slightly before serving them. Walsh also contributes his observations on the Texas football season tradition of tailgating in an article that starts on page 26. He’s added a couple of recipes that sound tantalizing and, as always, he conveys his enthusiasm for the fun of exploring Texas’ food quirks and traditions. Be on the lookout for more information about Foodways Texas, an organization that Robb helped found. The Foodways group promises to come up with some amazing events.

So the season of Texas Spirit is upon us, whether that spirit revs up for football, travel, or Texas Independence—or maybe all three.



Fests Up with TH!

Visit our booth at the Texas Book Festival, Oct. 16-17 at the State Capitol in Austin. And on Oct. 23, come see TH Web Editor Lois Rodriguez make her tres leches cake at the Fredericksburg Food & Wine Festival.

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Charles J. Lohrmann, Editor

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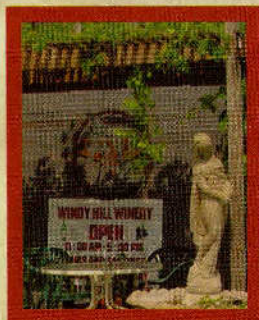
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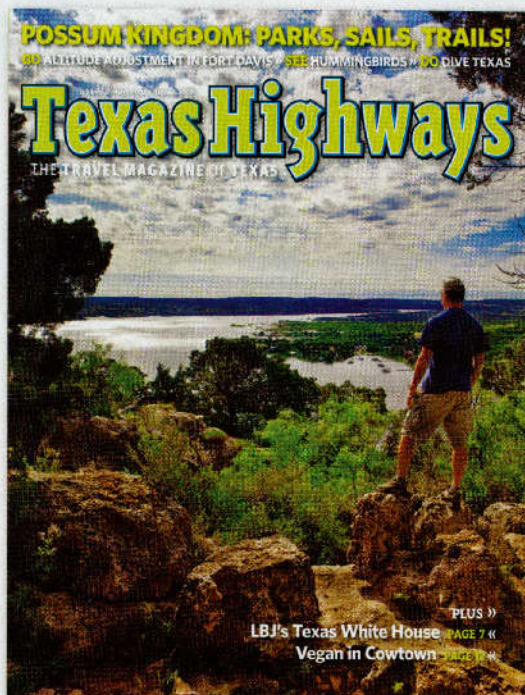
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"Wish I was a photographer for TH. Man, oh man ... the places you'd see."

—JAYNA L. LITTLE,
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Altitude Adjustment

Regarding E. Dan Klepper's story on Fort Davis [August]: We went to Fort Davis recently and it was gorgeous! So green, and they've done so much work on the buildings [at the national historic site]. It's one of our favorite places to visit, but we had not been in the past few years, so were very pleasantly surprised.

KAREN LEE NORWOOD

TH Facebook Fan

Got A Beef With Vegan

In regard to "Vegan in Cowtown" [TH Taste, August]: You just lost a renewal. I can't support a magazine that is publishing vegan information. Been in the cattle business too long to give money earned from the sale of my cattle to a subscription [continued on page 72]

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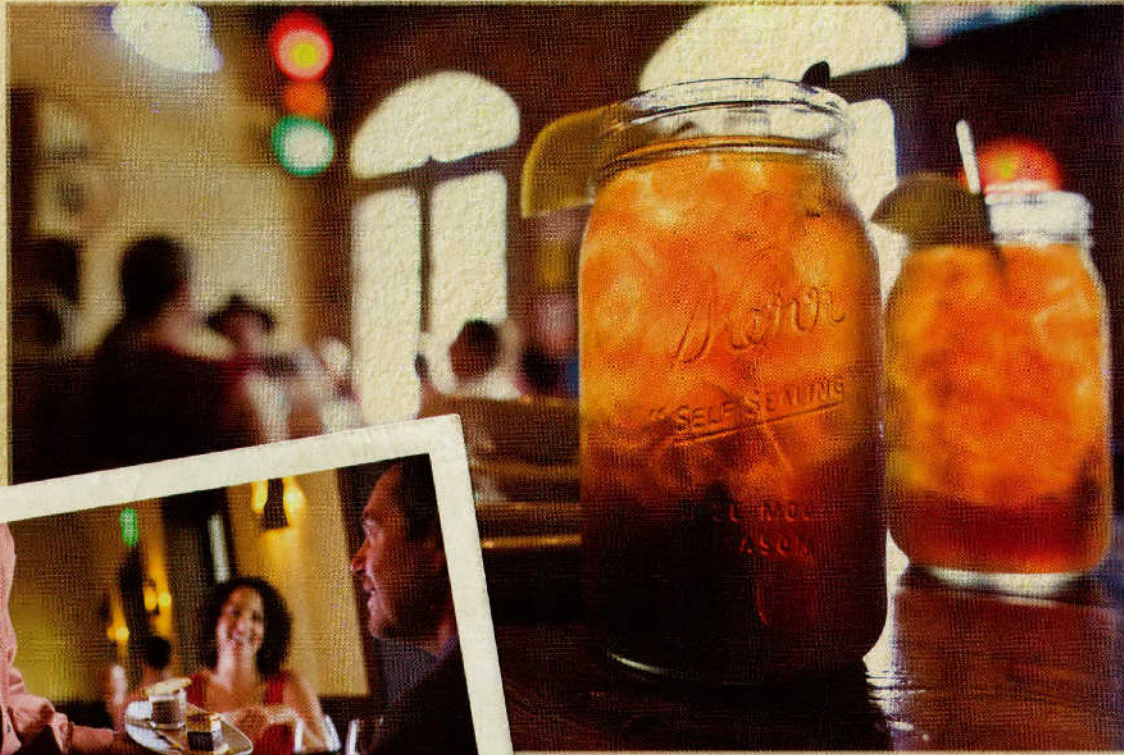
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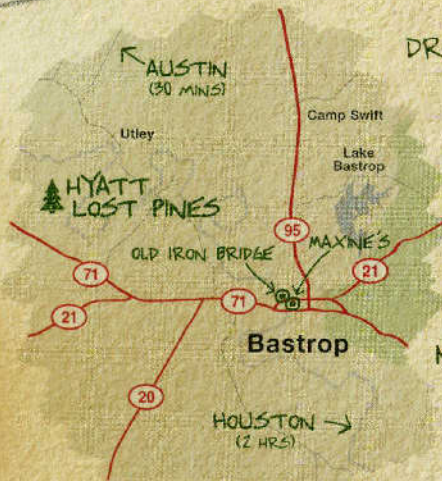
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German Impressionist Landscape Painting: Liebermann—Corinth—Slevogt
Drawing from Nature: Landscapes by Liebermann, Corinth, and Slevogt

The exhibitions *German Impressionist Landscape Painting* and *Drawing from Nature* bring together exceptional works by the triumvirate of German Impressionism: Max Liebermann, Lovis Corinth, and Max Slevogt. More than 110 paintings, drawings, and prints—many never previously shown in the United States—are on view through December 5 only at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Max Liebermann, *Country House in Hilversum—Villa in Hilversum* (detail), 1901, oil on canvas, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Nationalgalerie.

German Impressionist Landscape Painting organized by the MFAH and the Wallraf-Richartz Museum & Fondation Corboud, Cologne. Generous funding provided by Linda K. Finger.

Drawing from Nature organized by the MFAH. Generous funding provided by the Rand Group.

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INSIDE: SWEET TALK: PIE SHOTS AND CHURROS...16 STARS AND BUTTERFLIES AT X BAR RANCH...21



See!
Historical reenactments

You Say You Want a Revolution?

175 years ago, Texans'—or Texians'—war for independence became a cause for patriotism today. Text by CHARLES LOHRMANN

EVEN THOUGH ENTHUSIASTIC groups of Texas patriots annually engender colorful and noisy commemorations of the state's War for Independence, this year's celebration—the 175th anniversary—promises to create even more boisterous Texas spirit. Just the word that denotes this anniversary (Demisemiseptcentennial, or one-half of one-half of 700 years) creates a memorable start to the festivities. But no matter

what you call it, the cities and towns that mark the Texas Revolution each year are laying plans to keep crowds excited from October 2010 through April of 2011.

The celebration, or rather, the series of celebrations, begins in Gonzales in October. The opening salvo of commemoration is the reenactment of the Come and Take It battle, in which the first shot in Texas' War for Independence was fired at Mexican soldiers hoping to reclaim a

cannon that was loaned to the citizens of Gonzales for added protection against the Comanche. That's when the distinctive flag, decorated with cannon, star, and the words "Come and Take It," first flew over Texas territory. This year's battle reenactment takes place on October 2 in the Pioneer Village just north of Gonzales.

The Sam Houston Oak sits just a few yards off County Road 361, about eight miles east of Gonzales.

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The battle is a quick one, but there's a heated verbal exchange between approximately 50 soldiers on each side before shots are fired.

The Come and Take It Flag also will be flying on the grounds of the historic Gonzales Memorial Museum, itself a

The Texas Heroes Monument in Gonzales, created by sculptor Pompeo Coppini, pays tribute to those who fought for Texas' independence.

A monument created by Waldine Tausch is located very near the site of the battle of Gonzales.

Texas Centennial memorial, on October 3 when the local chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas will be honoring the men from Gonzales who fought their way into the Alamo—the only ones to respond to William B. Travis' dramatic letter from the siege—to fight and die for the cause of independence.

Celebrations and *Continued on page 12*

A Legendary Ride...A Texas-Sized Cause!

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Postcards

☉ continued from page 10] commemorations will continue at different locations from the October start until the April 21 Battle of San Jacinto reenactment at the battleground site, where reenactors will once again depict General Sam Houston's vic-

Reenactments will take place in various sites along the Texas Independence Trail, including Goliad.

tory over Mexican General Santa Anna.

"This year, communities are taking particular pride in getting ready for the 175th anniversary," observes Lee Towns, executive director of the 28-county Texas Independence Trail Region. "Each stop along the way is vital to interpreting what we call

the spirit of Texas independence. And the sites are working together to make sure the visitors have the best experience possible."

Texas State Historian Light Cummins,

now at Austin College, suggests that, "The Texas Independence Trail is of particular sig-

nificance to me because Emily Austin Bryan Perry, Stephen F. Austin's sister, is a specific research interest of mine and I wrote a biography of her. Her Peach Point Plantation is just a stone's throw off Highway 36."

"Now," Cummins continues, "I'm researching the monuments, statues, and markers the state erected in the 1930s, and one interesting example is the monument erected seven miles southeast of Gonzales. It's a monument created by the famous San Antonio sculptor Waldine Tausch, titled *The First Shot Fired for Texas Independence*, and it's located very near the site of the battle of Gonzales."

Gonzales figures prominently in not only the first chapter of the 1835-1836 war, but also in the later chapters as well. The original Come and Take It battle set events in motion in October 1835. Five months later, in mid-March of 1836, Sam Houston, working to organize an army in Gonzales, dispatched scouts to confirm news of the Alamo battle.

On the road to [continued on page 14 ☉



Historical reenactments, like this one that commemorates the Battle of Goliad, reinforce the human scale of the Texas Revolution.



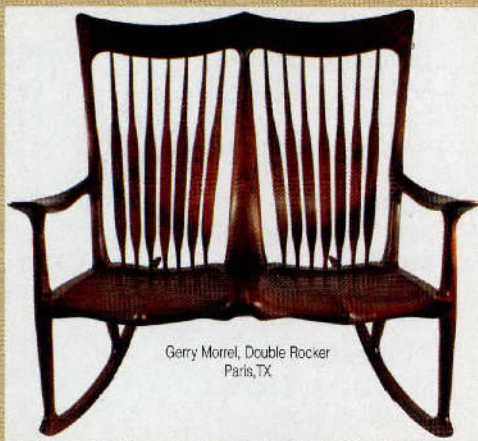
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Sculpture in the Raw

Powerful, archeological, philosophical art in Dallas

EVEN THOUGH SCULPTOR JAMES MAGEE CONTINUES TO create the expressive sculptural forms that have attracted a regional West Texas following for four decades, a current Dallas exhibit of his art "will come to many as a wondrous surprise," explains Nasher Sculpture Center Curator Jed Morse, describing the installation of Magee's work in this Dallas museum gallery, Magee's first public exhibit in almost 20 years.

Magee has received modest notice beyond the far West Texas where he works, but a much broader audience will now have access to this collection of his medium-scale pieces, which will be on view at the Nasher through November 28.

Magee works with an unexpected assemblage of found and castoff materials, including iron, glass, concrete, enamel, wire mesh, linoleum, car parts, ceramic tiles, and roof panels. He often combines these elements to create a sense of an archeological site or even an ancient altar. In some cases, the pieces are framed in steel boxes with protective finishes over complex textures.



One of Magee's large-scale works, called *The Hill*, is under construction in the desert east of El Paso. *The Hill* has been in the works for more than 30 years and is planned for completion in another 15 years. The Nasher Sculpture Center is at 2001 Flora St. in Dallas. Call 214/242-5100, www.nashersculpturecenter.org. —Charles Lohrmann

The Hill defines the monumental work of El Paso sculptor James Magee.

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Postcards

Which Wine Goes with That?

Fredericksburg showcases Texas food, wineries, and music

ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23, FOODIES AND wine enthusiasts can enjoy the artistry of more than 20 Texas wineries along with offerings of nearly 50 food and arts vendors sprawling across Fredericksburg's Market Square. The occasion is that Hill Country town's 20th annual Fredericksburg Food & Wine Festival, which also includes performances by Texas musicians.

Texas Highways Web Editor Lois Rodriguez will lead one of the day's six cooking-demonstration showcases, presenting her interpretation of *tres leches* cake. (For a preview of this popular dessert, with a recipe, see page 14 of the May 2010 issue of *Texas Highways*). Visitors will be able to roam from wine tasting and food demonstrations to listen to Jeff Lofton, named best performing jazz band by the *Austin Chronicle's* 2009-2010 music poll, and bid in a live auction that includes art, wine baskets, tickets for winery and museum tours, lodging and restaurant certificates, and food and jewelry.

Since the festival's inauguration in 1991, attendance has steadily grown, and this year's crowd is expected to number 5,000. The 2010 lineup brims with wineries from across the state. Fall Creek Vineyard offers a crisp and light Sauvignon Blanc; Messina Hof will present samples of its Barrel Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, a winner at the Houston Livestock Show; and Val Verde Winery, Texas' oldest continuously operating vineyard, presents a 2009 Muscat Canelli as well as a dry 2007 Sangiovese.

Festival admission (\$20) includes six wine-tasting tickets. Guests may buy additional tickets (\$1 each) at booths throughout Market Square. Admission also grants access to the Grape Expectations Cooking School. In each of six showcases, talented Texans exhibit their creations throughout the day.

So head to Fredericksburg for a taste of Texas. For further information and tickets to the festival, visit www.fbgfoodandwinefest.com. Tickets may also be purchased the day of the event at the festival gates.

—Haley Dawson



Visit Fredericksburg to choose tastes from more than two dozen Texas wines.

Go!

To the National Museum of the Pacific War

continued from page 121 San Antonio, the scouts encountered Susanna Dickinson, who was making her way to Gonzales after surviving the battle. She shared the disastrous news with Houston, who immediately ordered all citizens to abandon the settlement. Houston then ordered his soldiers to set fire to the town, preferring

that Gonzales be destroyed rather than occupied by Mexican forces.

At about midnight, Houston directed the army to retreat, and the force of close to 400 marched the rest of the night. Just before dawn, the troops made camp about eight miles from town, and from there, they could see the glow of the fires



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- 16-17 Victoria Garden Tours
- 16 "The Cowboy Ain't Dead Yet," Theatre Victoria, Leo J. Welder Center
- 22 Victoria Garden Tours
- 22-Nov 28 Dia de los Muertos, Nave Museum
- 29-30 Victoria Preservation's Annual Cemetery Tour
- Nov 12-14, 18-20 "Christmas Belles," Leo J. Welder Center
- Nov 20 Market Days, De Leon Plaza, 9-4

DECEMBER

- 2 Victoria Bach Festival Conspire Christmas at the Carillon
- 10-Jan 16 "All that I can't leave behind"—Lea Barton, Nave Museum
- 15-19 The Nutcracker, Leo J. Welder Center
- 18 Market Days, De Leon Plaza, 9-4

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consuming Gonzales. The site is marked by a grand live oak,

The Texas Independence Trail reveals local landmarks and historic sites.

called the Sam Houston Oak, which is visible from County Road 361, less than one-half mile off Alt. US 90. The two-story McClure-Braches house, built in 1843, and most recently restored in 1995, sits just a few dozen yards from the oak.

Such monuments as the one designed by Waldine Tausch are all the more interesting because they present a sense that the events leading up to Texas Independence took place on a very human scale. And, with all the celebrations taking place this year, those events 175 years ago do not seem frozen in time, but more alive, even if only in the collective memory. **TH**

Gonzales

For information, visit www.cityofgonzales.org. For details about the **Texas Revolution**, including a calendar of historical reenactments, go to www.texasindependencetrail.com. To check on State Historian **Light Cummins' blog**, visit historianoftexas.blogspot.com.



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Landa Park is a great place. My kids can't wait to go there again. I can't either. They were so worn out they were asleep by 7:30."

Jenny Maline
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



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Text by **ANDREA BEARCE**

Do!

Try Royers' "pie shots"

Pulled straight from the oven, the pie fills the dining room with aromas of brown sugar and chocolate.

Royers' famous **Chocolate Chip Pie** satisfies diehard sweets aficionados, especially when served with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.



AS A PASTRY CHEF FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, MOST RECENTLY AT FINO Restaurant Patio and Bar and Asti Trattoria in Austin, I've obsessed over the height of my meringue, the precision of my mint chiffonnade, and the chewiness of my coconut macaroons. Working in the sweet side of the kitchen can be as demanding as any other job in the restaurant, which is why, when dining out, I often bypass the entrées and turn straight to the dessert menu. Whether experimenting with molecular gastronomy, using childhood memories as guidelines, or satisfying a taste for nostalgia, restaurant chefs throughout Texas are proving their pastry prowess by creating desserts that steal the show.

Austinites flock to Uchi, the wildly popular sushi restaurant created by Tyson Cole, to feast on dishes so dazzling in color and texture they sometimes appear more like art than dinner. The dessert menu of Uchi pastry chef Philip Speer is a playful extension of the ingenious Uchi menu. With the aid of modern kitchen gadgets and an ingredient list that reads part farmers market, part laboratory, he concocts magical dishes that successfully merge American flavors with Japanese aesthetics.

For example, Speer serves his signature peanut butter semifreddo (a luxuriously creamy, frozen mousse) with a tangy-yet-earthy apple-miso sorbet. Topped with the crunchy apple chips he calls “ringo crisps,” the dish offers a surprising combination of familiar and exotic flavors. Making the most of kitchen alchemy, Speer offers a delicate sphere of silky, coffee-flavored panna cotta with encapsulated mango juice, which



Uchi pastry chef Philip Speer gives equal attention to presentation and flavor. Here, mangoes and white chocolate sorbet complement silky, coffee-flavored panna cotta.

quivers like an egg and promises to ooze its sweet contents at the mere prick of a fork. A scoop of white chocolate sorbet

on the side balances the dish's sweetness.

If Speer is a consummate innovator, then brothers Hugo and Ruben Ortega are true traditionalists. At Hugo's, the central-Houston restaurant that introduced Oaxacan-style fried grasshoppers to Texan palates, the brothers based their dessert menu on the traditional sweets of their childhoods in Mexico. Dishes like *arroz con leche*, *tres leches* cake, and flan are all homages to the chefs' taste for authenticity. But they make sure to elevate every item with a modern twist.

For a fresh (and over-the-top) take on *churros*, a popular Mexican street food, Ruben fills slender tubes of crunchy fried dough with warm, goat's-milk *dulce de leche*, dusts them with cinnamon-sugar, and then serves them with house-made chocolate ice cream and a rich cup of hot chocolate—the latter a nod to his grandmother's original recipe. Ruben makes his own chocolate in-house, patiently pan-

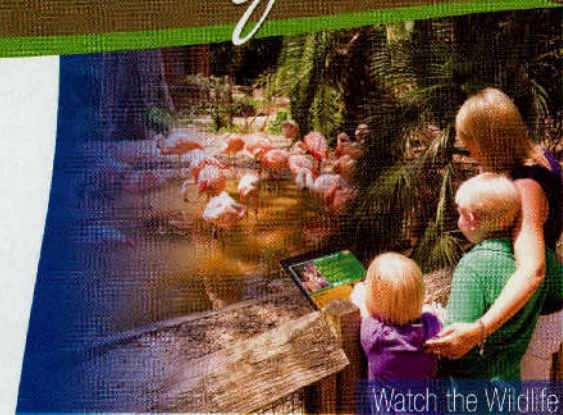
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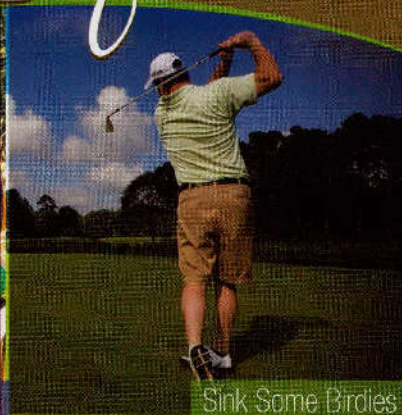
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Taste

Here's the Beef

Amarillo's Coyote Bluff Cafe fires it up

HOME TO THE BIG

Texan Steak Ranch and its famous 72-oz.-steak challenge, Amarillo certainly knows its beef. And while this Panhandle city is loaded with hidden culinary treasures, don't miss Coyote Bluff Cafe, a 12-table burger joint that whips up Southern-style dishes with a fiery Texas kick.

Thanks in part to a recent spot on the Travel Channel's "Man v. Food," Coyote Bluff draws in nearly 300 hungry patrons each day. "The atmosphere is very relaxed and easygoing—it's like having a cookout in your backyard," owner Rob Haas says.

With its checkered tablecloths, wooden benches, and chalkboard menu, Coyote Bluff has no shortage of Texas appeal. Outside, crowds line up on the restaurant's wooden porch beside leaning wagon wheels, and a toilet-turned-flower "pot" holds bouquets of fake greenery by the door. But it's the food that gives customers a Texas-size wake-up call.

Meet the Burger from Hell. "It's not the hottest burger you've ever eaten, but it should be the best hot burger you've ever eaten," Haas says. The Burger from Hell delivers the heat with its zesty mix of Tabasco, cayenne sauce, and a full cup of sautéed jalapeños on top of a juicy half-pound of ground beef. "I never thought I would sell one," Haas says. "I like fresh jalapeños on my burger instead of the pickled ones, so I put that burger on the menu. Now, it's what most people know me for."

Coyote Bluff's no-frills menu includes rib-eye steaks, stuffed jalapeños, fresh-cut chili-cheese fries, and a whopping eight ounces of lean ground beef in each of its 10 different burgers. Cooks trap steam, flavor, and juiciness in the patties by covering them with individual caps while they grill; then they slide the plump burgers between fresh, locally baked white buns.

Try the hearty California Burger, packed with guacamole, sour cream, and green chiles, or chow down on the succulent Mushroom & Swiss Burger, a top seller. "We hand-form all of our burgers ourselves. There are no fillers. It's just plain ground beef, and we try to make everything that we can fresh every day," Haas says.

Step up to the plate at Coyote Bluff Cafe at 2417 S. Grand St. in Amarillo. Call 806/373-4640; www.coyotebluffcafe.com.
—Sheri Alzeerah



Go!

Try Coyote Bluff's chili-cheese fries.

roasting cocoa beans, then grinding them in an imported stone molcajete while they are still warm. The extra effort results in an eye-rolling satisfying dessert. "People will kill me if I take the churros and hot chocolate off the menu," Ruben jokes.

Tradition also reigns at Royers Round Top Cafe in Round Top. According to owner Bud Royer, who runs the café with his wife, Karen, and their four adult

children, the perfect dessert is a prodigious piece of pie, à la mode. Customers drive to Royers from the edges of Texas to eat pork chops and other comfort-food standards, and they often grab a beer or two from the cooler outside (and pay later on the honor system) before sitting down to peruse the lengthy pie menu.

Try a slice of the Buttermilk Delight, a twist on the Southern classic studded with

chocolate chips, pecans, and coconut; D'Ette's Strawberry Rhubarb, a pretty pink triangle topped with crunchy granola; or Ann Criswell's Pecan, a not-too-sweet version of the Texas favorite. Or try Royers' "pie shots"—a trio of two-bite pies served in shot glasses with mini-scoops of ice cream. While all of the pies here are nostalgia-inducing wonders, Bud's Chocolate Chip Pie makes customers weak at

At Hugo's, the brothers based their dessert menu on the traditional sweets of their childhoods in Mexico.

the knees. Pulled straight from the oven, the pie fills the dining room with heavenly aromas of brown sugar and chocolate. Dense, intense, gooey, and especially irresistible topped with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, this pie testifies to Royers' reputation as a dessert destination.

Through innovation and passion, Uchi, Hugo's, and Royers have redefined the role of the last course, elevating it from optional encore to anticipation-worthy showstopper. With such stunning sweets as theirs, you may be tempted to skip the main course all together. **TH**

Sweet Spots

Uchi is at 801 S. Lamar Blvd. in Austin; a sister restaurant, Uchiko, is at 4200 N. Lamar Blvd. in Austin. Call 512/916-4808; www.uchiaustin.com.

Hugo's is at 1600 Westheimer Rd. in Houston. Call 713/524-7744; www.hugosrestaurant.net.

Royers Round Top Cafe is at 105 Main St. in Round Top. Call 979/249-3611; www.royersroundtopcafe.com.



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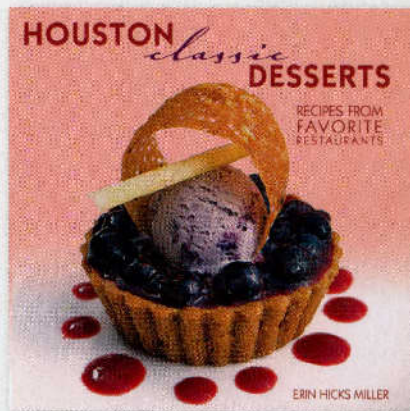
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Taste



Desserts First

New books give Texas some sugar

DALLAS AND HOUSTON HAVE more in common than most people think at first glance—world-class museums, international business cultures, and thriving restaurant scenes, for starters. So when Pelican Publishing Company decided to expand its popular “Classic Desserts” series of sweet-centric cookbooks into Texas, it chose these two mega-cities as their first Texas locales.

Writer Helen Thompson’s *Dallas Classic Desserts* came out first, highlighting sweets such as Caramelized Apple Fritters from Fearing’s and Chocolate Pots de Crème from Lola—each one garnished and photographed like a piece of culinary art. And *Houston Classic Desserts* just hit the bookshelves; written by Texas author and restaurateur Erin Hicks Miller, it delivers nearly 40 dessert recipes from such trailblazing Houston restaurants as Feast, Haven, Backstreet Café, and Artista. From unusual preparations like Almond Cake with Caramelized Figs to traditional sweets like Buttermilk Pecan Pie, *Houston Classic Desserts* offers the perfect finale to a grand meal. Will San Antonio and Austin editions be next? Check your bookstore, online, or see www.pelicanpub.com. —Lori Moffatt

See!

Margarita pie recipe
at texashighways.com/thtaste

FUN FINDS ALONG THE ROAD

Chasing Butterflies, Catching Stars

The fickleness of nature leads to new explorations in the skies over a remote retreat near Eldorado

Text by **RAE NADLER-OLENICK**



Go!

Take a tour of the Eldorado Woolen Mill

You don't need elaborate gear to enjoy the heavenly spectacle out here—eyes and a sense of wonder suffice.

WHEN I LEARNED THAT MILLIONS OF MIGRATING MONARCH butterflies move through West Texas each October, I had to see for myself. I've always found these fragile, vividly colored insects intriguing, and the fact that they fly south en masse from locales throughout the United States and Canada to overwinter in the mountains of Central Mexico amazes me.

I chose for my base the X Bar Ranch Nature Retreat, 20 miles southwest of Eldorado, which lies along the western edge of the monarchs' central flyway, a 300-mile-wide swath that centers on a line from Wichita Falls to Eagle Pass. Though the butterflies' schedule is unpredictable, I'd heard that mid-month was usually a good time to see them coming through this area. By chance, the days I picked fell during the week of the annual Eldorado Star Party, which brings amateur astronomers together for a week of serious skywatching. Ordinarily the ranch would have been fully booked, but due to a last-minute cancellation, my husband, Walt, and I were able to obtain a cabin, a real stroke of luck for us.

Situated in the rolling hills of southwest Texas, the nature retreat comprises about a third of a 7,100-acre working ranch owned and managed by three generations of the Meador

The X Bar Ranch Nature Retreat welcomes visitors with trails for mountain biking and hiking, a swimming pool, and especially dark nighttime skies.

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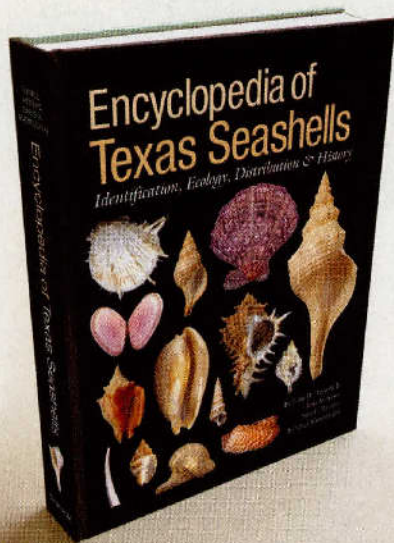
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family. C.L. Meador established the original ranch in 1903. Today, Ed Meador, his son Lynn, and his grandson Chris manage the traditional livestock side of the ranch. Another grandson, Stan, manages the tourism operation, which includes the Live Oak Lodge, cabins, campsites, the elegant “Round House,” 16 miles of hiking and mountain-bike trails, a blue gem of a swimming pool, and a panoramic view of Texas’ big-sky country. It has become a hotspot for mountain bikers, nature lovers, hunters, and astronomers fleeing urban light pollution. The X Bar’s night skies are not only big, they’re dark—a rarity in our modern world.

We arrived in late afternoon on a Wednesday that had morphed from wet and chilly to sunny and hot. Stan Meador greeted us warmly amidst the distractions of helping people set up their telescopes and other equipment in a large field. After two rain-swept days, the clearing weather promised fine viewing that night. Although the star party itself is a private event (with one free public night), Stan welcomed us, as ranch guests, to join in the fun.

I, of course, was more interested in butterflies. Had he seen any? “I saw quite a

few yesterday, but I haven’t noticed any today,” he replied. That wasn’t good news, but I’d go with the flow.

We settled into a cozy, Mexico-themed cabin near the Live Oak Lodge some 200 yards from the star-viewing area. The lodge, which is available to all guests, offers full-service cooking facilities, a large-screen TV, a conference space with wi-fi, and plenty of comfortable porch chairs. Caterers were busy setting up a country-style barbecue, and at Stan’s urging, we joined the star-party folks in the chow line. Astronomers, we quickly learned, are a friendly, helpful bunch, eager to share their passion for the skies with others. We jumped at an invitation to learn more at the star party afterwards.

We approached the viewing field as night closed in, warm and clear and very black. The canopy of stars blazed overhead, and on the field, dozens of telescopes of all sizes loomed dimly in a reddish glow—only red illumination is permitted during “darkout” to avoid light pollution. Gingerly, we picked our way among

Lynn Meador checks the telescope available for visitors who want to watch stars but don’t have their own equipment.



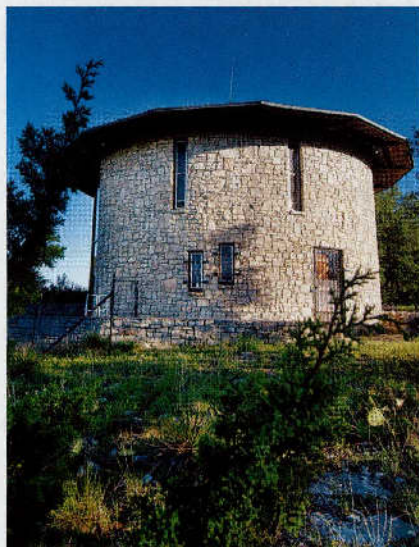
170 skywatchers, stopping often at an invitation to peer through someone's eyepiece. We admired Jupiter's cloud-banded surface and Cassiopeia's nebulae, and learned sky lore from new friends whose faces we couldn't see. (For example, Jupiter has 63 moons; its four largest—Io, Europa, Callisto, and Ganymede—were discovered by Galileo in 1610.)

After Walt turned in, long past midnight, I relaxed in a lounge chair on the lodge deck for another hour, taking in the grand vista of the Milky Way. Soft red lights nearby marked the presence of a lone star-partier who had mounted binoculars on a tripod. Her simple setup reminded me that one

needn't have elaborate gear to enjoy the heavenly spectacle—eyes and a sense of wonder suffice. What fun it would be to watch a meteor shower here!

Next morning we rose early, eager to pursue Project Butterfly. After breakfast, we hit the nature trails, watchful for the live oak stands that roosting

X Bar guests can choose from a range of accommodations, from campsites to the Round House below.



monarchs favor. Walking a three-mile loop and enjoying the desert landscape, we flushed a bevy of quail, which rose startled before us. We watched in amazement as a blue scrub jay joined a hawk on a tree limb and chased the much larger raptor away.

The X Bar's night skies are not only big, they're dark—a rarity in our modern world.

Doves called, and a gentle breeze murmured. But no butterflies. We returned to the lodge, discouraged, near noon.

What next? I called a friend in Sonora, known as a stopover spot for migrating monarchs. Had she observed any? Yes, she replied. Indeed, thousands were

said to be roosting in the fruitless mulberry trees at a local ranch. Within the hour, we were in Sonora, on our way to the ranch. We drove through the gate, past an employee on a riding lawnmower, and up to the house. The owner welcomed us and led us to a lofty shade tree. We looked up; a few dozen butterflies circled lazily. "I don't know where they all went," he said with a puzzled look. "They were here earlier. Maybe the mower scared them off."

My heart sank at this latest letdown. But back at the X Bar, a treat awaited. Stan's father, Lynn, offered us a guided tour of the property, to its farthest reaches where the elusive monarchs sometimes roost. "They say when hummingbirds migrate, they follow these washes," he explained. "I thought maybe down here at the bottom, we might come across something."

We found no butterflies as we explored the wash area, but a large turkey feather on the ground captured his attention. "There'll be a lot more turkeys here by

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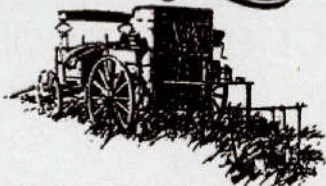
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SITUATED ON THE ROCKY SLOPES OF THE SOUTH Concho River Valley, five miles southwest of Christoval, the Mount Carmel Hermitage seems an unlikely tourist destination. A monastic community that welcomes visitors? The concept seems counterintuitive. Don't hermits seek to separate themselves from the world?

Brother John David, who does most of the baking in the commercial kitchen, turns out hundreds of loaves of bread a week during the holiday season.

For the five Carmelite monks who live here, the answer is yes and no. While they spend most of each day in silence and solitude, they sustain themselves partially through the production of bakery goods, jams and jellies, apple butter, and fudge.

They originally relied on Internet sales, but with the completion of a handsome, rock-faced bakery building in March 2009, they also offer these items in a gift store on-site.

The hermitage gift store offers breads, jams and jellies, apple butter, and fudge.

Brother John David, who does most of the baking, makes five kinds of bread—honey-whole wheat, apple-walnut, almond-poppysseed, pumpkin-pecan, and plum-pecan bread, as well as biscotti and kolaches. He wasn't always an accomplished baker.

"When I first started making kolaches, some women from the Wall Brethren Church came over and taught me the techniques," he says. The lessons paid off, judging by the tender, sweet rolls he produces now.

The Rev. Fabian Rosette, who established the hermitage in 1961, offers Mass daily, as well as on feast days and special occasions. "We have both Catholics and non-Catholics at the services," says Father Fabian. "The Christmas Eve Midnight Mass draws the biggest crowds—300 to 400 people. They come from all over—Christoval, Eldorado, Sonora, San Angelo. Local cowboys bring their sweethearts. We have a life-size nativity in front of the chapel, and Christmas lights outline the buildings." Call the hermitage prior to visiting at 325/896-2249; www.carmelitehermits.org. —Nola McKey

next week," he said, with the satisfaction of a man who knows every inch of his land. Driving through acres of cedar, mesquite, and prickly pear dotted with stock tanks and old windmills, he regaled us with accounts of a life dedicated to the balancing act of taming the land while preserving it. He referred to the constant struggles with erosion and encroaching brush, as well as the importance of good management. We felt privileged to view the rugged terrain through the longtime rancher's eyes.

We returned to the lodge in time for another star-party meal, a Mexican buffet. Then, we went down to the viewing area. This time, we made a methodical circuit of the entire field, admiring the ingenuity of the astronomers. Small, gear-packed trailers doubled as workshop-bedrooms for folks hauling equipment long distances. Telescopes ranged in size from small, beginner models to massive, professional-caliber instruments. Computer screens glowed.

"Can you show me the Pleiades?" I asked one old timer. "They won't rise till 2 a.m.," he replied. "Come back then."

It was not to be. Around midnight, a cold front blew in, bringing condensation moisture along with chilly temperatures. People began to cover their lenses and shut down. I thought of the monarchs shivering on their branches and hoped they were well into Mexico by now.

We departed the next morning. As we drove off, I pondered the vicissitudes of life. Instead of finding the butterflies I came for, I'd rediscovered the excitement of astronomy, forgotten since childhood. The trade seemed fair enough. Butterflies may be fickle, but the stars are always there. **TH**

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Honk if You ♥ Tailgating!



Text by ROBB WALSH *Photographs by* PAUL S. HOWELL

In the parking lot of Houston's Reliant Stadium, a few hours before the Houston Texans played the Carolina Cougars, I witnessed a scene that forever changed my attitude about tailgating. My Sunday excursion to the stadium fell under the umbrella of "research" for my book *The Tex-Mex Grill and Backyard Barbacoa Cookbook*, and I hoped to find a few extra recipes that afternoon.

I expected to encounter some fanatical football fans drinking beer and

Tales and recipes from the Parking Lot Gourmet



ask them what they were cooking for lunch. What I actually discovered in the stadium parking lot that day looked like Woodstock on wheels with Weber grills. Just outside the stadium's main gate, I climbed a ladder bolted on the side of a repurposed school bus to an observation deck on top so I could gain some sense of what I was in for. From that vantage point atop the bus, I was amazed to see thousands of smoky fires in all directions. And I could make out more white plumes rising from remote parking lots where other tailgaters were cooking, more than a mile away.

Outside Houston's Reliant Stadium, you're likely to find 30,000 tailgaters before a Texans home game.

I love these gatherings because they are the purest form of culinary competitions—a place where great cooks go to show off in public.



Tailgating in Texas is not just a casual, snacks-for-friends-only affair: These cooks often feed hundreds of fans.

Houston Texans officials estimate that 30,000 people tailgate before the average home game. (That's more than the population of Tyler.) In a recent survey, 52 percent of Texans fans said they ate in the parking lot before the game. When the Texans play Monday Night Football at home, the crowd swells and the cooking gets even more serious. That's when the turduckens and the whole hogs show up.

Why do these people do all this work? What's the point of the elaborate rituals associated with tailgating? Rabid tailgaters will tell you it's to create fan camaraderie and support the football team. But these motives hardly explain the massive undertaking that tailgating in Texas has become.

Honk if You ♥ Tailgating!

As you prowl the tailgating community, expect to discover every imaginable combination of grilling and barbecue.



It all started with the college football crowd. If you've ever been to a Longhorns football game in Austin, you've probably encountered the burnt orange-clad tailgaters grilling Central Texas sausages and fajitas in the parking lots just north of Scholz Garten, just a few blocks south of the University. Flour tortillas and Shiner Bock are found in abundance. And if you've experienced a football game at Kyle Field in College Station, you've walked right through the tailgaters who gather under maroon flags in the shadow of the stadium. Ask them what they are cooking and they all claim to be grilling Bevo.

Tailgating at college football games traces its roots back to the traditional picnic lunch your mom and dad brought along for the family to eat after the long drive to the big game at their old *alma mater*. Bringing a grill and roasting weenies would have been considered a big deal back then. But tailgating started drawing larger crowds after it achieved a boost in popularity from regular cable television coverage. With several hours to fill on game day, shows like ESPN's *College GameDay* started paying attention to what the fans were cooking in the parking lots. And the camera crews found an interesting array of local favorite dishes on display. There was bratwurst at the University of Wisconsin, barbecue down south, and shrimp along the Gulf Coast. Interviews with tailgaters became a regular feature of game-day coverage. Following all

that media attention, the cooking and the showmanship kicked into a higher gear and started getting more elaborate.

The connection between tailgating and the team spirit of college football fans impressed professional sports organizations enough to change their dismissive attitudes about fans cooking in their parking lots. The Houston Oilers originally banned tailgating at the Astrodome in Houston. But when the Houston Texans debuted in 2002, the team made tailgating a part of the game-day tradition at Reliant Stadium. With all the team flags, tents, cushions, coozies, and other team-logo-emblazoned paraphernalia snapped up by free-spending tailgaters, the NFL probably decided that tailgating could be a profit center.

These days, tailgating is everywhere. At Jimmy Buffett concerts, the Parrotheads gather with Landshark beer, margaritas, and paradisiacal cheeseburgers. At NASCAR events, each track has its own food themes (baby-back ribs at the Kansas Speedway, pulled pork at Richmond International Raceway, and anything with chipotle barbecue sauce at Fort Worth's Texas Speedway).

Tailgating started out as a culinary pep rally, but somewhere along the way, it became a sport unto itself. I love these gatherings because they are the purest form of culinary competition—a place where great cooks go to show off in public.

In the small city of 30,000 tailgaters I



surveyed in the Reliant Stadium parking lot that autumn afternoon, I could see all different kinds of cooks. And nearly all of them were putting on a performance. A white-haired gentleman named Sal Ramirez sat behind his vehicle, grilling on a tiny charcoal grill not much bigger than a shoebox. He was cooking a couple of boneless, skinless chicken breasts for himself and a lady friend. But his grapefruit marinade caught my attention. (See the recipe on page 32.) When I asked about his secret, he pointed out that he picked the red grapefruits from his own backyard tree.

Nearby, Jacob Trevino flipped his special-recipe stuffed hamburgers. The half-pound patties combine ground chuck mixed with chopped black olives, chipotle peppers, several kinds of cheese, and Lipton Onion Soup mix, he told me. Inside each patty, he creates a cavity and stuffs it with cheddar and chiles. Trevino hunted me down a few hours later so I could try one of his Tex-Mex stuffed burgers. (It was terrific.) Another tailgater named Gabe Gonzales handed me a roasted jalapeño stuffed with cream cheese.

Wild game is especially popular at football games. I have seen elk, wild boar, and venison served at tailgate parties. Game typically impresses fellow tailgaters because you can't always buy it at the grocery store or order it in restaurants. Besides, I suspect that in many households, mom is eager for dad to get that deer meat out of the freezer. (That's the way it was when I was growing up, anyway.)

Some tailgaters give food away to fellow fans. In the south parking lot in front of Reliant Stadium's main gate, the Raging Bull Tailgaters, past winners of the "Tailgater of the Year" award (which is paid in grocery store coupons), serve free food to hundreds of people they have never met before. Each week this team of eight spends \$2,000 on food.

LEFT: The *caja china* is a Cuban-style pig-roasting contraption that features an oven box with a mesquite-fired grill on top. BELOW: Some of the savory pork that emerges from the *caja china* roaster.

Typically the menu includes half a dozen briskets, 10 racks of ribs, six pork loins, 30 pounds of chicken wings, 100 pounds of sausage, 40 pounds of shrimp, 20 pounds of fish steaks, and 100 pounds of smoked *boudin*. There are seldom any leftovers.



Virgin Mary Grilled Shrimp Cocteles

(Recipes from *The Tex-Mex Grill and Backyard Barbacoa Cookbook* by Robb Walsh)

Makes 4

Tailgaters are great at coming up with new uses for the ingredients on hand. But this tailgaters' recipe for grilled shrimp cocktails using Bloody Mary mix is sheer genius. The spicy tomato juice makes a much better shrimp cocktail sauce than the ketchup-based glop you get in a lot of restaurants.

Four 8-inch wooden skewers, soaked in water for 15 minutes

1 lb. jumbo shrimp (16 shrimp)

½ c. grapefruit juice

¼ c. jalapeño jelly

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 T. vegetable oil

2 T. soy sauce

2 ripe avocados, sliced

1 c. chopped red onion

½ c. chopped cilantro

juice of one lime

Tabasco sauce to taste

Your favorite Bloody Mary mix

Place the shrimp on the soaked wooden skewers. Combine the grapefruit juice, pepper jelly, garlic, oil, and soy sauce. In a baking dish, cover the shrimp with the marinade, cover with plastic wrap, and place in the refrigerator for half an hour.

Light the grill. Shake the shrimp skewer to remove excess marinade. Coat the shrimp with cooking spray and grill for about 2 to 3 minutes on each side, or until shrimp are cooked through. Remove from the grill. Remove the shrimp from the skewers.

Divide the avocado slices among four martini glasses (or four clear plastic glasses if you're tailgating). Sprinkle with red onion, lime juice, and hot sauce. Add four shrimp to each glass. Fill the glass with Bloody Mary Mix (without alcohol) until it covers the bottom of the shrimp. Garnish with cilantro. Serve with a spoon and saltine crackers or tortilla chips.

Honk if You ♥ Tailgating!

Grapefruit Chicken Fajitas

Makes 6 chicken fajita tacos

Sal Ramirez sat behind his pickup truck grilling chicken. He had marinated two boneless, skinless chicken breasts in red grapefruit juice and seasoned them with paprika and lemon pepper.

"You baste the chicken with more grapefruit juice while it's on the grill," he said as he demonstrated his technique. There were more grapefruit sections ready to garnish the finished chicken, which he served in slices over salad greens. "The grapefruit comes from a tree in my backyard," Ramirez told me. He looked to be in his late sixties or early seventies, and he said he used the skinless chicken because he was watching his cholesterol.

1 clove garlic, minced

2 T. Mexican oregano powder
juice of 2 Texas Red grapefruits

1 T. olive oil

Four 7-oz. chicken breasts, boneless,
skinless

salt and pepper to taste

6 warm flour tortillas

Texas Red Grapefruit Salsa (*at right*)

Pound the chicken breasts flat between two sheets of plastic wrap. Combine the garlic, Mexican oregano, juice from one grapefruit, and olive oil in a mixing bowl. Add the chicken breasts to the mixture and marinate for at least 4 hours or overnight. Discard the marinade.

Heat the grill. Season the breasts with salt and pepper and grill over hot coals for 2 minutes on each side. Move the chicken to a cooler part of the grill. Cook for 6 to 8 minutes basting with the juice from the 2nd grapefruit until cooked through. Heat the tortillas on the grill, turning often. Transfer the chicken breasts to a cutting board and slice them into long strips. Place the chicken strips on a serving platter. Bring to the table (or tailgate) with the warm tortillas, grapefruit salsa, and other condiments such as chopped lettuce or black olives. Invite your guests to make their own fajita tacos.



Texas Red Grapefruit Salsa

Makes 2 cups

Try this tangy salsa on grilled chicken or fish.

2 Texas Red grapefruits

1 medium tomato, chopped fine

1 c. diced green, red, and yellow
bell pepper

1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and minced

3 T. chopped red onion

1 T. chopped fresh cilantro

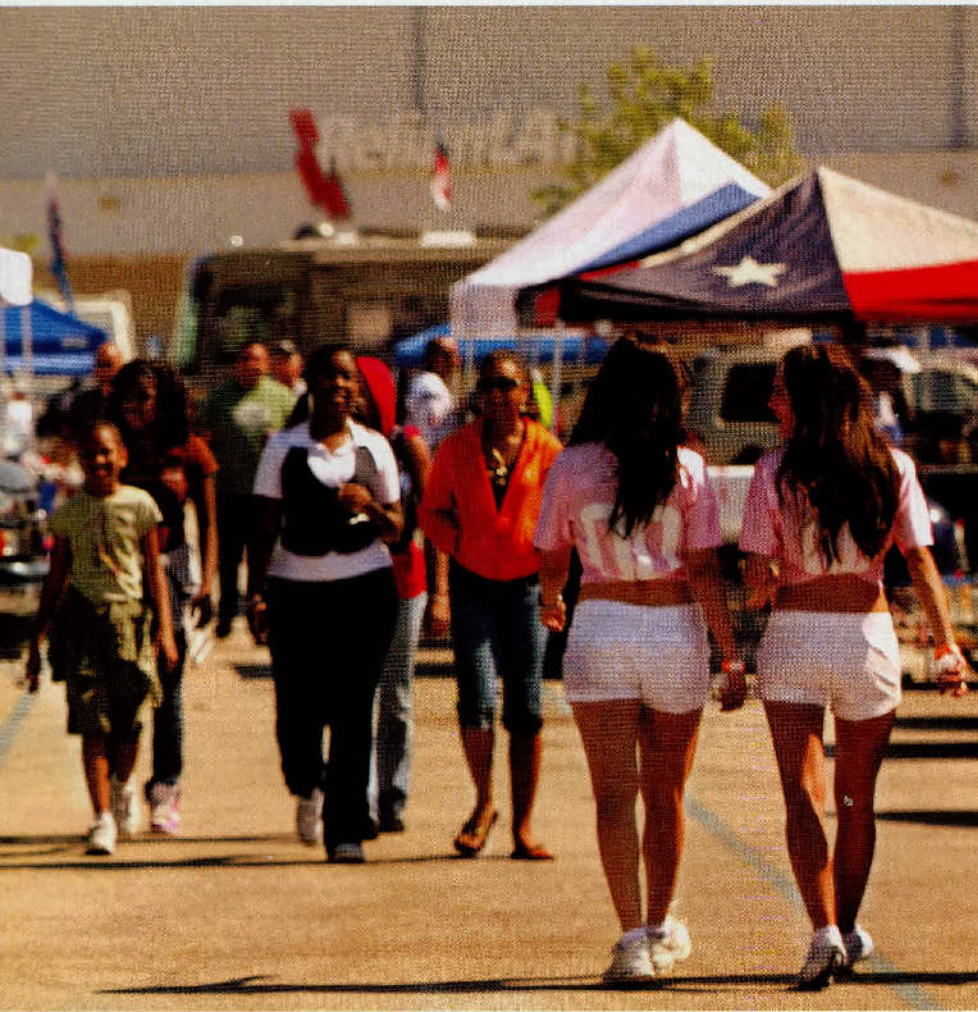
Salt to taste

Remove the skin, seeds, and membrane from the grapefruit and dice the sections. Combine with the other ingredients in a medium bowl and mix well. Allow to mellow for half an hour in the refrigerator for the flavors to combine.

Years ago, there was a similar spirit at Texas barbecue cook-offs. But the rigid rules and rising costs ruined all that. Today, barbecue cook-off teams at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Barbecue Cook-off (which is also held in the same parking lot) are required to carry hefty million-dollar liability insurance policies. Successful teams seek corporate sponsorships to defray the expenses. In exchange for sponsorship, the team serves as a caterer for the corporation's functions. A corporate wristband is required to join the party. With all that rigmarole, the barbecuing that was once a joy for the happy tailgaters turns into a job.

In contrast, I've found that tailgaters grill whatever they want, just for the fun of it and to see how it turns out. Some put on a big show and some cook quietly with class. Either way, there's always something new to see, eat, and talk about.

Feed Yard Saloon, another Reliant Stadium Tailgater of the Year, serves brisket



The tailgating scene in almost every stadium becomes a festival of cooking creativity and people-watching extravaganza.

Tailgaters are incredibly ingenious. They can bake or steam on the grill with a little aluminum foil. Margarita mix straight out of the bottle becomes an easy marinade for pork, and Bloody Mary mix doubles as a great shrimp cocktail sauce (see recipe on page 31). Bacon is ubiquitous because it serves as the butcher's string, cooking oil, and garnish of tailgate cuisine.

The secret to tailgate grilling is lots of advance preparation. Tailgaters tinker with the seasonings and pre-cook things at home in the kitchen so that when they get to the stadium, there's nothing left to do but throw the meat on the grill. Take it from the tailgaters, whether you're cooking in the parking lot before the big game or entertaining in your backyard, do the prep work a day in advance. Then on the day of the party, relax and enjoy. **TH**

ROBB WALSH is the James Beard Award-winning author of several Texas cookbooks and one of the founders of Foodways Texas (FTX), a non-profit organization dedicated to "preserving, promoting and celebrating the diverse food cultures of Texas." Photographer **PAUL S. HOWELL** captured an amazing array of characters in motion at Houston's Reliant Stadium.

and beans to the public from a modern chuck wagon. Family Feud visits all kinds of tailgating events, driving a school bus painted half maroon and half burnt orange—the team colors of archrivals Texas A&M University and the University of Texas at Austin. This team of tailgaters serves gourmet tailgating fare, including chorizo-stuffed quail and grilled chicken in cilantro cream sauce.

I visited with the owners of a Mexican-American meat company who proffered a savory slice from a wild boar cooked in a *caja china*, which is a Cuban pig-roasting contraption that includes an oven/box with a mesquite-fired grill on top.

Next to trailered grills the size of my mid-sized car, I enjoyed medallions of venison backstrap served on hot biscuits with gravy, cheese-stuffed jalapeños wrapped in venison sausage, and grilled shrimp

and pineapple kebabs. But I also learned useful information from people sitting in lawn chairs next to modest propane grills where they prepare asparagus, artichokes, and countless delicacies wrapped in bacon.

Tailgating parties stir up team spirit among a motley crew of serious football fans who add pre-game feasting to the sports ritual.



flashes **of** **CO**LO**R**



Visitors enjoy the midday show at Falcon State Park's butterfly garden, which features dozens of butterflies, including several Queens and the Cloudless Sulphur, shown above.

Butterfly Gardens of the Lower Rio Grande Valley

Text by **ROLAND "RO" WAUER** Photographs by **LARRY DITTO**





IT WAS A SPECTACULAR FALL morning in Hidalgo! The sun had just begun to illuminate the yellow-flowering esperanza shrubs at the Old Hidalgo Pumphouse when the first few butterflies appeared. The initial visitors included a rare Green-backed Ruby-eye and a number of Brazilian Skippers, all flying swiftly from bloom to bloom, feeding voraciously after a night of quiescence. Now they were busily sucking nectar from the esperanzas. Their quickness barely allowed time for good sightings or identification. Soon, however, more butterflies showed up, and many of those seemed less capricious, offering opportunities for better observations and even photos. Representatives of more than two dozen species eventually arrived that morning, including Malachites, Orange-barred Sulphurs, Julia and Zebra Heliconians, Gulf and Mexican Fritillaries, Mexican Bluewings, and other beauties.



Nowhere else north of the Mexican border offers visitors 300-plus butterfly species within a comparable area.

Such scenes take place daily at numerous sites throughout the Lower Rio Grande Valley, a 4,300-acre area in extreme South Texas. Nowhere else north of the Mexican border offers visitors 300-plus butterfly species within a comparable area. Why such a wealth of these gorgeous creatures? It's largely because of the region's butterfly gardens—gardens filled with flowering plants and essential larval foodplants that attract and sustain butterflies. In some gardens, caretakers place banana mash (a mixture of bananas, beer, and sugar) and over-ripe fruit on feeding trays or “paint” the mash on trees and

posts to attract species that seldom or never feed on nectar. With such bounty so readily available, butterflies remain here rather than flying elsewhere.

LEFT: Esperanzas and turk's cap at the Old Hidalgo Pumphouse attract numerous nectar-seeking butterflies. ABOVE: A Julia Heliconian.

To order a print of the photograph at left, call 866/962-1191, or visit www.texashighwaysprints.com.

THE REGION OFFERS more than a dozen of these specialized gardens, including long-established examples at Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge and Bentsen-Rio Grande State Park. However, as a retired biologist and longtime nature writer, I consider four newer gardens extra special.

One of those is the butterfly garden at the Old Hidalgo Pumphouse (described earlier). This multipurpose destination features a restored pumping station built here in 1909 (the accompanying museum showcases the only steam-driven irrigation pumps that remain along the Rio Grande) in a manicured, 20-acre setting. One of nine sites along the Rio Grande that make up the World Birding Center, the Old Hidalgo Pumphouse attracts butterfly enthusiasts as well as birders, thanks to the garden. Since recordkeeping started in 2008, staff and visitors have observed a total of 162 butterfly species.

Mike Rickard, a volunteer who leads butterfly walks here weekly in season (October through December, when many species of butterflies are on the wing in the Valley), has reported such rarities as Creamy White, Marius and Ruddy Hairstreaks, Mimic Tigerwing, Erato Heliconian, Blue-eyed Sailor, Rosita Patch, Variegated Skipper, and Common Bluevent.

“Considering that this site is a city park landscaped with flowering plants, a surprisingly large number of butterfly species have been found here, including some true rarities,” says Rickard. “In August, a visitor spotted a Tehuacana Cloudywing—the only example of this Mexican species ever seen in the United States. The excitement was over the top!”

Rickard and his wife, Ginny, moved from Houston to the Valley several years ago because of his passion for butterflies. In the winter months, he meets dozens of Winter Texans who also love these sprightly insects. “I enjoy sharing information and helping people find butterflies,” he says, “especially people who are new to the area. They get really excited when they see species they haven’t seen before.”

The Old Hidalgo Pumphouse garden not only attracts birders and butterfly aficionados, but serves as a gathering place for both Hidalgo residents and visitors from Mexico. They enjoy taking family photographs amid the colorful flowers and swirling butterflies. A large amphitheater hosts dance groups, music events, and summer movies, too.



ABOVE: Sunlight showcases the jewel-like colors of a Malachite. RIGHT: A trio of Queens captures a photographer’s attention.

To order a print of the Malachite photograph, call 866/962-1191, or visit www.texashighwaysprints.com.



The Estero Llano Grande State Park, in nearby Weslaco, boasts another outstanding butterfly garden. This 200-acre park, because of its shallow lakes, ponds, woodlands, and thorn forest, offers one of the most habitat-diverse areas in the Valley. Birders often crowd the visitor center deck, which overlooks one of the ponds. And the entrance walkway and adjacent paths are lined with



shrubby blue sage, Texas lantana, and cenizo, plants that attract hummingbirds and butterflies alike.

Park Interpreter John Yochum leads the butterfly walks. “We’ve recorded more than 150 species,” says Yochum, “including three relatively uncommon species that are plentiful here year round—the Potrillo Skipper, Mazan’s Scallopwing, and Mexican Bluewing. I credit our plantings of common velvet burr with attracting the first two; the adelia we have is responsible for the Mexican Bluewing.”

According to Yochum, the park makes a concerted effort to attract more butterfly species by developing varied wildscapes throughout the property. “One of the things we’re doing is adding native plants that provide both larval foodplants and nectar sources, such as tropical milkweed and crotons,” he says.

Since the park opened for visitors in 2006, it has become known as a good site for spotting butterfly rarities, such as the Ruby-spotted Swallowtail, Bromeliad Scrub-Hairstreak, Blue Metalmark, Tailed Aguna, and Double-dotted Skipper.

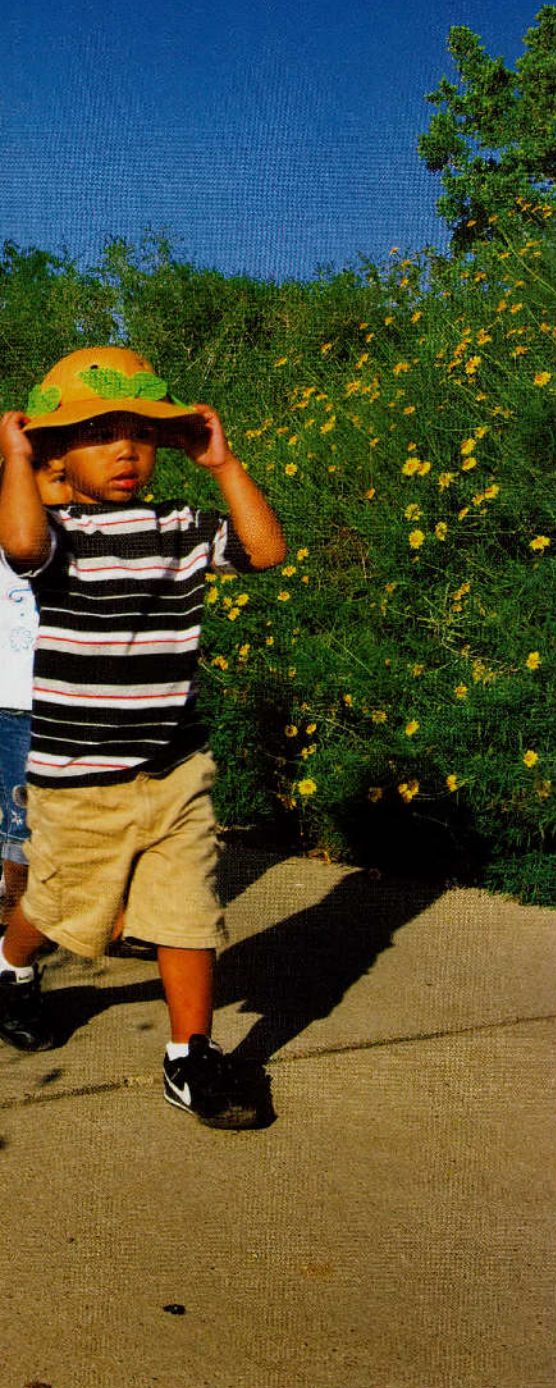
Because of its shallow lakes, ponds, woodlands, and thorn forest, Estero Llano Grande State Park offers one of the most habitat-diverse areas in the Valley.



The Falcon State Park garden proves the old adage that if you provide flowering plants, butterflies will appear.

Butterfly seekers also flock to Falcon State Park, where longtime volunteer Fran Bartle established a one-acre, densely-planted butterfly garden in 2006. That first year it attracted more than 150 species, two of which had never been spotted before in the United States: Spot-celled Sister and East-Mexican White-Skipper. My wife, Betty, and I were fortunate to see both species on the same day. Their presence created a frenzy among area butterfly enthusiasts; folks drove in from all over South Texas. But the highlight that day was the tiny, green Telea Hairstreak; dozens of photographers captured it as it perched on croton flowers. Before appearing in the Falcon garden, it had been recorded in the United States only once, decades earlier.

Some of the other surprise species that have been found in the garden include Strophius Hairstreak, Lacey's Scrub-Hairstreak, Banded Patch, Eight-spotted



Butterfly Fever

THE VALLEY'S many butterfly gardens attract thousands of visitors annually. Local butterfly enthusiasts comb the gardens regularly for new and unusual species. They immediately forward news of each discovery to others in their network and post the most exciting finds at tx-butterfly@listserve.uh.edu.

Budding butterfly watchers will find the **South Texas Nature Tourism website** (www.southtexasnature.com) helpful. Also, see David and Jan Dauphin's website (www.the.dauphins.net). Both sites contain a variety of information on birding and butterflying in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Chambers of commerce throughout the Valley offer the full-color "**Bird and Butterfly Map of the Lower Rio Grande Valley**," a handy guide to all the sites mentioned in the story and dozens of others. To obtain a copy, call the Rio Grande Valley Partnership at 956/968-3141.

Ro Wauer's 2004 book *Butterflies of the Lower Rio Grande Valley* offers descriptions and photographs of 300 butterfly species. His 2006 book *Finding Butterflies in Texas* includes details about popular butterfly sites throughout the state.

Longtail, and Evan's Skipper. This site proves the old adage that if you provide flowering plants, butterflies will appear.

Although Bartle has moved away from the region, staff and other volunteers maintain the butterfly garden, which now includes walking trails and interpretive signs. A kiosk at the entrance offers information about butterflies and the plants that attract them.

The 100-acre National Butterfly Center near Mission, owned and operated by the North American Butterfly Association, ranks as the largest and most productive of all the Valley butterfly gardens—both in

terms of numbers and diversity. Established in 2004, the site features an impressive hackberry woodland and 30 acres of butterfly gardens. "On many days, you can see tens of thousands of individual butterflies," says NABA founder Jeff Glassberg.

The site has already attracted almost 200 species. It's one of the best places in the Valley to find such eye-catching species as the Silver-banded Hairstreak, Red-bordered Metalmark, Red-bordered Pixie, Crimson Patch, White Peacock, Guava Skipper, and Two-barred Flasher. And on the right day, visitors may spot such rarities as the Four-spotted Sailor, One-spotted Prepona, Broad-tipped Clearwing, and Turquoise Longtail, each of which was seen here for the first time in the United States.

Beginning this month, staff and volunteers will plant some 100 new gardens, with each garden designed for a specific butterfly. For example, the Giant Swallowtail garden will contain native plants such as baretta and mountain



LEFT: An outing at Edinburg Scenic Wetlands World Birding Center, another butterflying site in the Valley. ABOVE: A Zebra Heliconian.



To order a print of this photograph, call 866/962-1191, or visit www.texashighwaysprints.com.

“On many days, you can see tens of thousands of individual butterflies,” says NABA founder Jeff Glassberg.

torchwood, caterpillar foodplants for Giant Swallowtails, as well as Giant Swallowtail nectar sources, such as scarlet sage.

“The center’s goals involve public education, as well as scientific research and conservation of butterflies and their habitats,” says Glassberg. The new Visitors Pavilion, which opens on October 28, will house interpretive exhibits on butterfly biology and such topics as “Butterflies and Human Culture” and “Why Care About Butterflies?” Docents will also lead walks through the gardens.

All of the butterfly gardens found in the Lower Rio Grande Valley offer excellent opportunities for observation and photographs. They act as butterfly magnets, drawing in not only common species but also those rarities that make the Lower Rio Grande Valley gardens such a truly magical area of Texas. **TH**

*A retired biologist and naturalist with the National Park Service, **RO WAUER** says the Lower Rio Grande Valley is the single best butterflying region in North America. Nature photographer **LARRY DITTO** was thrilled to witness the spectacle of Queens numbering in the thousands at Falcon State Park’s butterfly garden last October.*

➔ TH ESSENTIALS



Lower RGV Butterfly Gardens

THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY lies in extreme South Texas along the Rio Grande. The four gardens covered in the story are accessible from US 83, which runs east to west in the Valley; contact information for the gardens follows.

Old Hidalgo Pumphouse, 902 S. Second St., Hidalgo. Call 956/843-8686; www.worldbirdingcenter.org.

Estero Llano Grande State Park, 154A Lakeview Dr., off FM 1015, in Weslaco. Call 956/565-3919; www.worldbirdingcenter.org.

Falcon State Park, on the shores of International Falcon Reservoir, about 15 miles north of Roma. The butterfly garden is across from the park's recreation hall. Call 956/848-5303; www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

National Butterfly Center, about 4 miles southwest of downtown Mission, off the Old Military Highway. Call 956/583-9009; www.naba.org.

Events

NABA will hold its **biennial meeting** at the National Butterfly Center in conjunction with the **Texas Butterfly Festival**, October 28-31. The lineup includes speakers, book-signings, field trips, and banquets. The cost to attend both events is \$250. Contact the center for details. The Mission Chamber of Commerce will offer butterfly-related family activities at the center on October 30. Call 956/585-2727; www.missionchamber.com (click on "Texas Butterfly Festival").

Lodging

Many lodgings in the Lower Rio Grande Valley cater to nature lovers, including the following:

Alamo Inn, at 801 Main St. in Alamo, has an excellent nature book shop. Call 956/782-9912; www.alamoinnsuites.com.

Casa de Palmas Renaissance, at 101 N. Main St. in McAllen, is a historic hotel in the center of town. Call 956/631-1101; www.renaissancehotels.com/mfebr.

El Rocio Retreat, at 2519 S. Inspiration Rd. in Mission, offers fine accommodations close to the National Butterfly Center. Call 956/584-7432; www.bedandbreakfast.com/texas-mission-el-rocio-retreat.html.

Indian Ridge B&B, at 209 W. Orange Grove Rd. in Mission, is on a 20-acre property and has an excellent butterfly garden. Call 956/519-3305; www.indian-ridge-bb.com.

La Borde House, a hotel built in 1899 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is at 601 E. Main St., in downtown Rio Grande City. Call 956/487-5101; www.labordehouse.com.

LEFT: A White Peacock. BELOW: A friendly Malachite thrills a visitor at the Old Hidalgo Pumphouse butterfly garden.







GHOSTS of Galveston

GLOWING ORBS, RATTLING DOORS, AND OTHERWORLDLY ENCOUNTERS ENHANCE THE ISLAND INTRIGUE.

Text by **DAN OKO** *Photographs by* **SARAH KERVER**

IN THE 19TH CENTURY, TRAGEDIES WASHED over Galveston as regularly as the tides: deadly fires, yellow-fever epidemics, and hurricanes. Anecdotally, this legacy of destruction left Galveston one of the nation's most haunted cities. Even for travelers without a taste for the macabre, the wide range of said-to-be-haunted sites offers a fascinating glimpse into Galveston's colorful

LEFT: Darkness falls on Broadway Cemetery, where Galveston Historical Foundation leads "Spirits of the Past" tours every October. The first burial here took place in October 1839. **ABOVE:** Brown family mementos adorn the 1859 Ashton Villa mansion.

GHOSTS of Galveston

past. In fact, I've come to the Island to learn more about local history, largely by looking for ghosts.

I'M AMONG A GROUP OF TOUR-GOERS CRUISING aboard the *Seagull II*, a 50-foot motorcraft that Galveston Historical Foundation (GHF) uses for field trips—including Haunted Harbor Tours—each October, just in time for Halloween. As the autumn sun edges toward the horizon, we pass the shrimp boats that comprise Galveston Island's fishing flotilla known as the Mosquito Fleet. With their nets hanging loose, there is something gauzy and ghost-like in the appearance of these vessels.

Anchored on the Island's east end, the Mosquito Fleet occupies a spot on the harbor not far from where legendary pirate Jean Lafitte first settled on Galveston in 1817. Having been chased out of Louisiana around his 40th birthday, Lafitte was one of the first Europeans to call Galveston home, and his followers numbered in the hundreds. Some say Lafitte's ghost still haunts the Island.

Pirate legends represent just one aspect of Galveston's spooky past. In addition to the harbor tours, each October GHF offers cemetery visits and explores the spooky side of the 1859 Ashton Villa mansion. The Island also has its own dedicated "ghost man" in Dash Beardsley, who guides paranormal



and history walks along The Strand year round. During this trip, I discover that even my hotel—the luxurious Hotel Galvez—has its share of ghosts.

Back on board the *Seagull II*, GHF guide Brandon Ragan narrates the pirate Lafitte saga to 20 or so rapt passengers, including photographer Sarah Kerver, two or three families, and a group of area middle-school

LEFT: Seven named cemeteries between 40th and 42nd streets form Broadway Cemetery. "Each marker is a piece of Galveston and Texas history," says GHF's Denise Alexander.

students. Historical reports say Lafitte was a tall, handsome fellow. On Galveston, he built an outlaw township called Campeche (pronounced "com-peachy") and required all who lived there



Each October, GALVESTON HISTORICAL FOUNDATION OFFERS A NUMBER OF SPOOKY TOURS, SUCH AS THE HAUNTED HARBOR TOUR ABOARD THE SEAGULL II AND CEMETERY VISITS.

To order a print of this photograph, call 866/962-1191, or visit www.texashighwaysprints.com.

to swear a loyalty oath. According to Ragan, in 1821, Lafitte complied with U.S. Navy demands that he and his crew depart American waters, but not before he burned the village, including his home, the Maison Rouge, to the ground. In a time-bound mystery, Lafitte and his men left Galveston never to be heard from in Texas again. To this day, historians debate his fate—and the fate of his treasure.

“Nobody knows what happened,” says Ragan, noting that treasure hunters still come to Galveston to search for booty, while ghost hunters show up looking for the pirate king. “Galveston is one of the most haunted cities in America,” Ragan wraps up. “Some people even say the Walmart is haunted.” On foggy

nights, he adds, mysterious floating lights have appeared on the water: Some say the orbs are the ghost of Jean Lafitte.

Like Lafitte, Rebecca Brown—known as Miss Bettie—the mistress of Ashton Villa, was a larger-than-life Galveston resident. Brown died in 1920, but according to local legend, she looks after the family property on Broadway Street from beyond the grave. Her father, James Moreau Brown, a successful businessman, began building the two-story, Victorian-style Ashton Villa, with its 14-foot ceilings and crown molding, in 1859. In

ABOVE: Aboard the *Seagull II* (at left), guides regale passengers with tales of pirate Jean Lafitte and eerie happenings around Galveston Harbor.

Miss Bettie DIED IN 1920, BUT ACCORDING TO LOCAL LEGEND, SHE LOOKS AFTER ASHTON VILLA FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE.

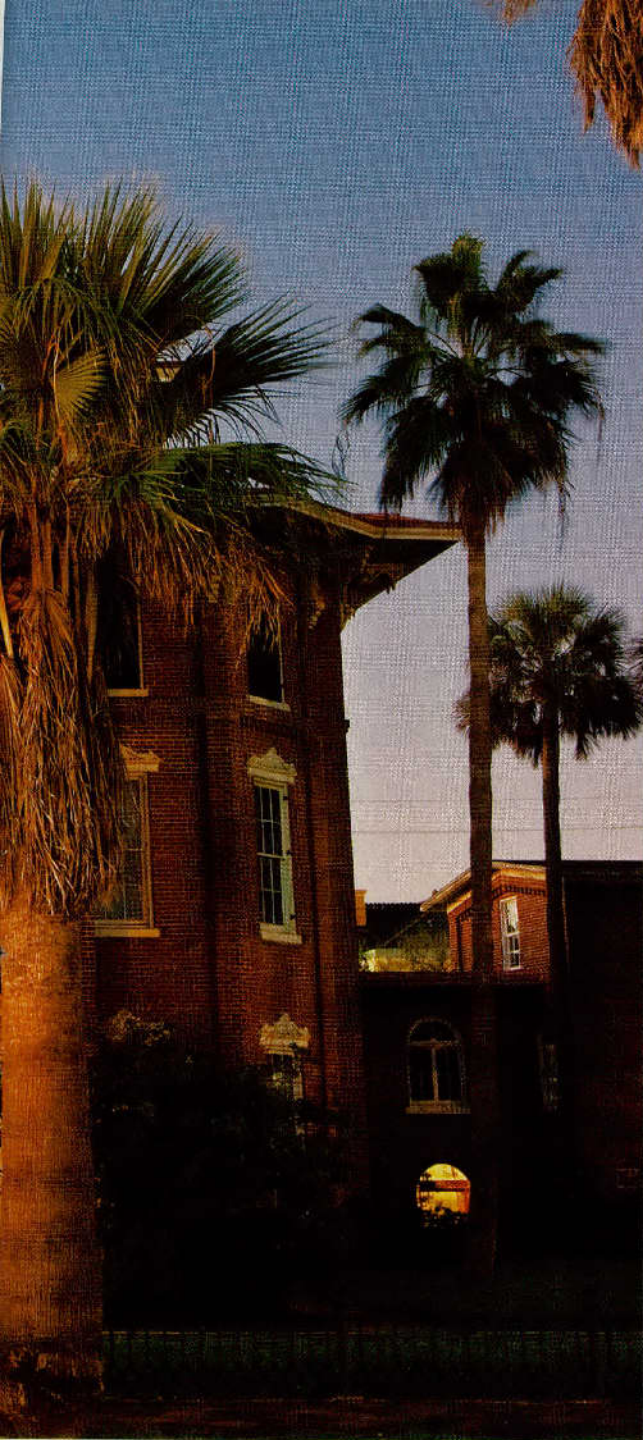


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ABOVE AND FACING PAGE: Mysteriously crinkled coverlets and an antique box that locks on its own number among the spine-chillers at Ashton Villa. Visitors have reported visions of Miss Bettie Brown's ghostly figure at the top of the stairs.

1861, Brown finished building his handsome house, reportedly the first brick mansion constructed in the state of Texas. The third of five children, Bettie lived there until her death. Born during a corseted time for upper-class women, Bettie nonetheless was a strong-willed figure. She raised eyebrows as an independent globetrotter, sailing to exotic destinations such as India, Japan, and China, and she never married. Miss Bettie was also a serious artist, often painting pictures of young women in contemplative moments. Her colorful paintings still decorate the villa.

Since the mid-1970s, Galveston Historical Foundation has looked after Ashton Villa and opened it for tours. Today, restoration work continues to repair the flood damage caused by Hurricane Ike in 2008. Miss Bettie and her little sister Mathilda lived through their own flood disaster in 1900, when the great storm that killed 6,000 people on the Island washed through the ground floor of the home—the doors and windows had been opened to allow the house to withstand the massive waves blowing across the Island. During my visit, a pencil line drawn by workers on the stained walls showed where nearly three feet of water inundated the mansion



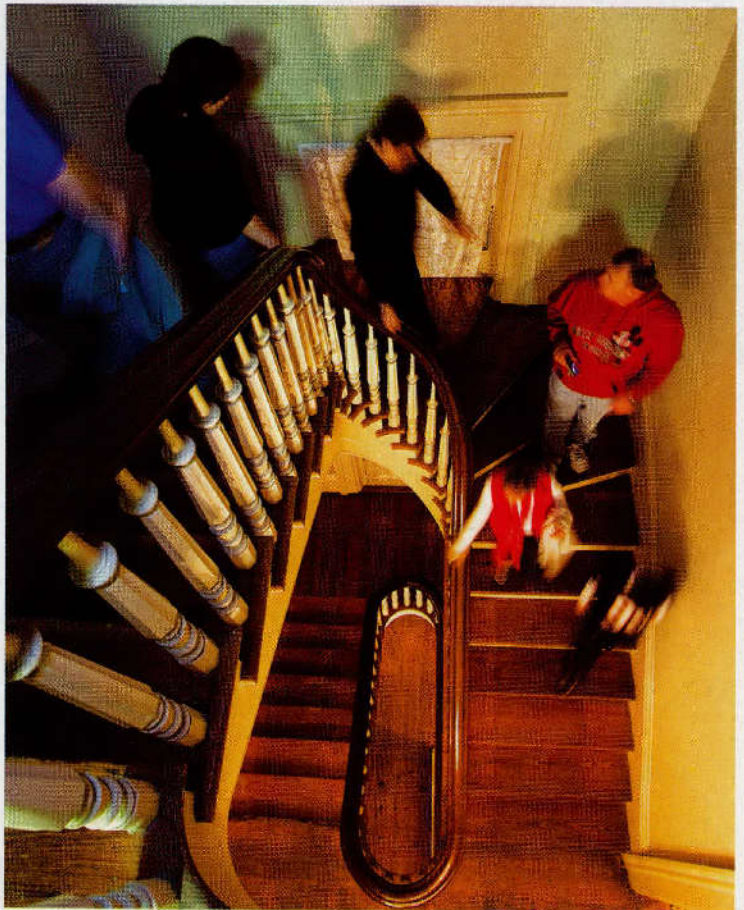
visitors regularly report seeing a figure resembling Miss Bettie at the top of the stairs.

From the villa, I make my way to the Broadway Cemetery. The aged gravestones, some marble, some mossy, some guarded by angel sculptures, offer clues to the city's past, including the 1900 hurricane and the Civil War. Established in 1839, the cemetery has seven sections; these reflect the community's diversity, with Jewish, Catholic, Greek, and Protestant areas. I arrive on an off day for a GHF tour, but I locate the graves belonging to some famous figures. These include the author of the Texas Declaration of Independence, George Campbell Childress, who committed suicide in 1841; and Lieutenant Edward Lea, a Union sailor killed at the Battle of Galveston in 1862. In an interesting twist, Lea died in the arms of his long-estranged father, a Confederate major, who reportedly also fought in the bloody battle.

Though Jackie Hasan, the concierge at Hotel Galvez, does not work for GHF, I would nominate her as an honorary guide. When it comes to ghost stories and the recently renovated, 224-room hotel—built in 1911 and preparing for its upcoming centennial gala—Hasan is a

from Hurricane Ike. The first-floor furniture had been shipped to specialists in Michigan for cleaning and fixing.

GHF does not endorse the notion that Miss Bettie haunts Ashton Villa, but during the Halloween tours, foundation guides supply evidence that a ghost could exist. There is Miss Bettie's souvenir box, for instance, purchased in the Middle East during one of her trips more than a century ago—it mysteriously locks and unlocks on its own. The catch? No living person possesses a key to the box, which can be scrutinized on the second floor. Also upstairs, frequently straightened coverlets on one of the beds appear wrinkled as if by a person sitting on them, though caretakers prevent any visitor from doing so. Most extraordinarily,



I discover THAT EVEN MY HOTEL—THE LUXURIOUS HOTEL GALVEZ—HAS ITS SHARE OF GHOSTS.



To order a print of this photograph, call 866/962-1191, or visit www.texashighwaysprints.com.

ABOVE AND FACING PAGE: Haunted tours of the 1911 Hotel Galvez include the especially spooky fifth floor. Guests look for orbs and ghosts in the hotel's historical photos and in their own snapshots.

veritable encyclopedia. She can tell you who has seen ghosts at the Galvez, when, and where.

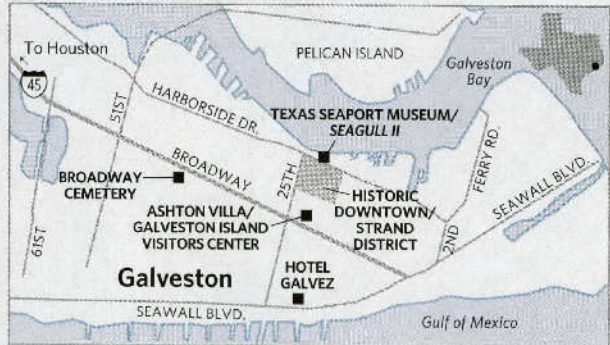
Notable signs of haunting include rattling doors in restrooms, and strange sounds emanating from rooms on the fifth floor, where Hasan says the ghost of a young bride-to-be still awaits her fiancée lost at sea. Hasan's stories confirm yet again to visitors that on Galveston Island, the spirits of the dead-and-gone almost always linger nearby. Not that everybody who comes looking for ghosts will find them. "You have to be open to them," Hasan explains. "Or you won't feel them."

Though I do not witness anything otherworldly on this trip, the roster of past Galvez guests from President Franklin D. Roosevelt to singer Frank Sinatra leaves me breathless. Architecturally, the hotel, with its spotless picture windows overlooking promenades lined by swaying palms and the luxurious courtyard with swimming pools and whirlpools, makes a strong impression as well. If I were a ghost, I'd seek bay breezes too. **TH**

Since moving to Houston last year, DAN OKO has been enjoying uncovering the hidden history of the Gulf Coast, though he says he still prefers using his laptop to a Ouija board for fact-checking. SARAH KERVER witnessed mysteriously slamming doors while touring the Hotel Galvez.



TH ESSENTIALS



Galveston's Haunted Places

GALVESTON HISTORICAL FOUNDATION offers a variety of haunted happenings in October. Haunted Harbor Tours aboard the *Seagull II* take place at 4 p.m. Oct. 15-16 and 22-23 and at 4 and 5:30 p.m. October 29-31. The *Seagull II* departs from the Texas Seaport Museum (Pier 21 at Harborside Dr.); purchase tickets inside. "Are We Haunted?" Tours of Ashton Villa (2328 Broadway St.) take place at 5 p.m. Oct. 15-16, 22-23, and 29, and at 3 and 5 p.m. Oct. 30-31. "Spirits of the Past" Broadway Cemetery Tours (between 40th and 42nd streets) take place at 6:30 and 8 p.m. Oct. 29-31. For more details, contact GHF at 409/765-7834; www.galvestonhistory.org.

Dash Beardsley's Ghost Tours of Galveston can be enjoyed year-round. The 2-hour walking tour of The Strand leaves from the Railroad Museum at 123 25th St. No reservations necessary for public tours. For tour dates, departure times, ticket prices, and other information, including details on the new Secret Society Cemetery Tour, call 409/877-1794; www.ghosttoursforgalvestonisland.com. Private tours are also available; call 832/892-7419.

In addition to guest tours, the **Hotel Galvez & Spa** (2024 Seawall Blvd.) offers the public a Thursday-evening haunted tour (includes dinner) with Jackie Hasan through October. Tickets are offered through the gift shop; ticket holders receive a 20 percent discount at the hotel's Bernardo's Restaurant. The hourlong exploration leaves at 5:30. Call 409/765-7721; www.wyndham.com/hotels/GLSHG/main.wnt.

For information on Galveston events, attractions, restaurants, and lodging, contact the **Galveston Island Convention and Visitors Bureau**, 2328 Broadway, 888/GAL-ISLE; www.galveston.com/cvb.







[Tyler Made]

Historic neighborhoods, homes, and gardens remain traditional Tyler's stock and trade

Text and photographs by **RANDY MALLORY**

From where I sit, a picture-window perch in my home's sunroom within Tyler's 76-block Azalea District, a distinctive sense of tradition prevails.

I can see old oaks lording over homes of diverse styles and sizes. The houses—mostly built in the early 20th Century—line red brick streets like architectural books on a shelf: a brick Victorian mansion here, a wood-frame Craftsman house there.

The venerable neighborhood embodies an old-fashioned ambiance that trendy “New Urbanism” developments aspire to emulate.

This time of year, I revel in autumn's metamorphosis. Oaks cloak themselves in shades of gold and bronze, sweet gums turn reddish-purple, and a looming bald cypress drops a blanket of rust-colored, needle-like leaves.

A couple of blocks away on Chilton Street, a decades-old Japanese ginkgo tree shimmers with a yellowish glow that aspens would envy. Homeowner Billy Barham, glad for passersby to pose

LEFT: Elissa Mallory and Lola stroll by a blazing Japanese ginkgo tree at Chilton Street and Lindsey Lane—a popular spot for fall photos. RIGHT: Downtown hangout Rick's draws diners with steaks, seafood, and live music. The “Tyler” neon comes from a former theater around the corner.



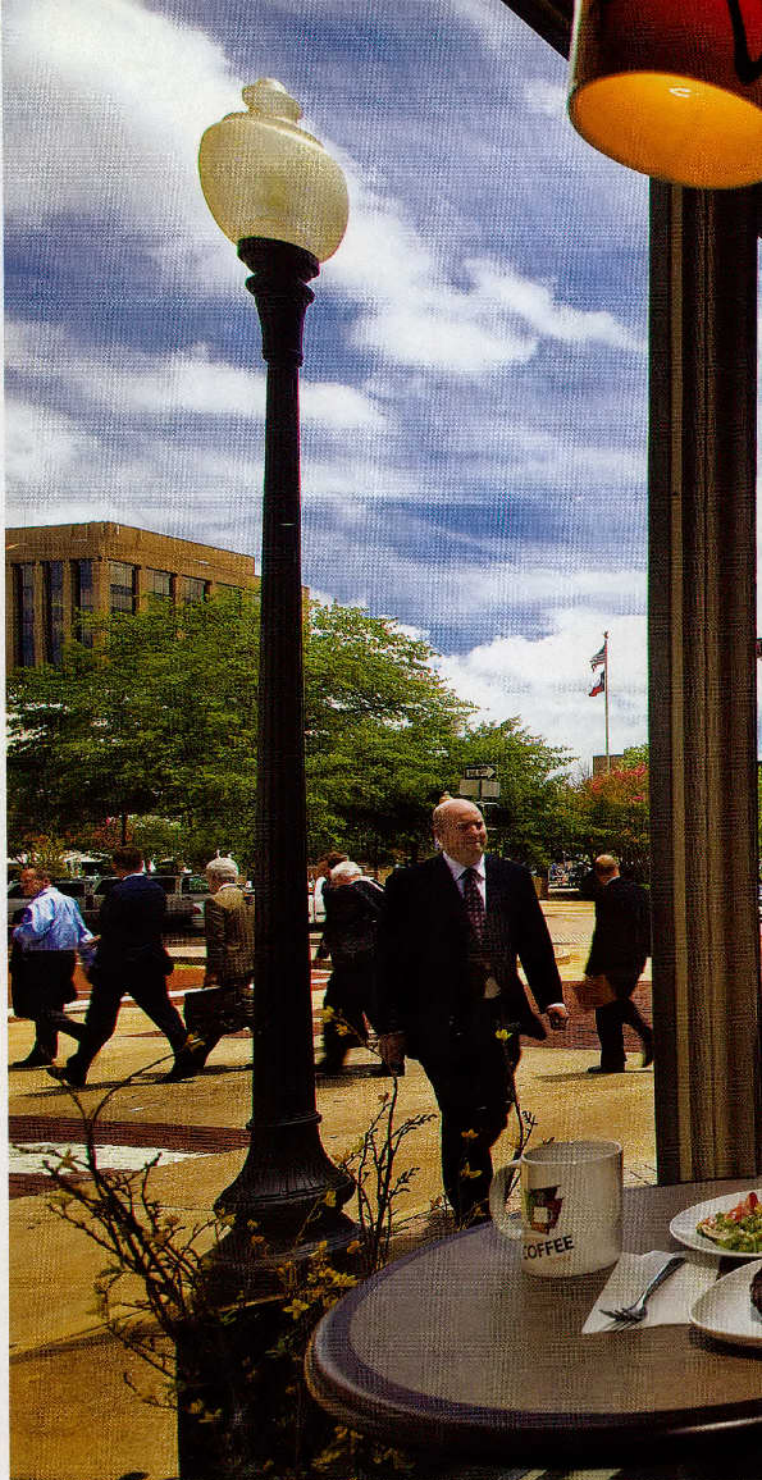
[Tyler Made]

for photos beneath his beloved ginkgo, suggests that they not wait. After an early freeze one year, the slow-growing, 30-foot tree shed its golden locks in a single day.

Most who live in Tyler's historic neighborhoods love sharing their surroundings. So much so, that locals regularly fling open front doors and garden gates for historic homes and gardens tours.

The largest garden in the city, the 14-acre Tyler Municipal Rose Garden dates to 1952 and welcomes visitors year round. It takes center stage each October when eye-popping roses—38,000 bushes and 500 varieties—look their best during the annual Texas Rose Festival (October 14-16, 2010). Since 1933, the festival's elaborate parade, Rose Queen's tea and coronation, and rose show have paid homage to a rose-growing heritage born of disaster.

A century ago, droughts, freezes, and disease devastated the area's peach orchards, and farmers turned to roses. By the 1950s, some 200 growers in the Tyler area raised half the nation's roses. Only a handful of growers remain, but local processors still ship much of America's commercial rose crop, even though it's grown mostly in Arizona and California. The Tyler Rose Museum, at the Rose Garden, uses historical photos and videos to tell the story of the growers who made Tyler roses famous. The 7,500-square-foot museum also boasts Rose Festival memorabilia and hand-sewn, bejeweled Rose Queens' costumes dating to 1935.



ABOVE: Noel Quinata enjoys a break and the view of Tyler's historic square at Downtown Coffee Lounge. LEFT: The IDEA Garden showcases plants that grow well in the acidic soils of northeast Texas.

Each year I stroll the Rose Garden's Technicolor rows of neatly labeled bushes, and pause at its fountains and reflecting pool. I was delighted recently to rediscover another horticultural gem tucked in a back corner of the garden.

"I call it the garden beyond the roses," Sue Adee tells me at the IDEA Garden (IDEA is an acronym for Innovate, Demonstrate, Educate, and Apply). She's one of the Smith County Master Gardeners who hold seminars and nurture the 650 plant varieties packed into this 10,000-square-foot horticultural bonanza. "There's color in the garden just about all year," Adee says. "We want to show the wide

Downtown's courthouse square sports several noteworthy new venues—such as the Gallery Main Street and the Downtown Coffee Lounge—housed in structures saved by historic preservation efforts.



range of plants that can succeed in home gardens.”

In the last few years, Tyler has added roses to street medians and parks. These roses are among landscaping plants tested and recommended by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service as “Earth-Kind.” That means these plants grow well in a variety of soils, while thriving with minimal fertilizer, pesticides, and watering.

Last year the city also opened the Chamblee Rose Garden as the anchor of an all Earth-Kind botanical garden on the nine-acre grounds of the 1859 Goodman-LeGrand Home and Museum. Forest-green iron fences and native red-rock pillars surround the garden's 120 rose bushes.

Goodman family heirlooms such as a grandfather clock from the Colonial era, fine silver and china, books, paintings, and photographs

fill the restored Classical Revival mansion (open for tours and special events), which stands as the northern gateway to historic downtown.

Downtown's courthouse square sports several noteworthy new venues—such as the Gallery Main Street (juried shows of area artists) and the Downtown Coffee Lounge (aromatic coffee drinks and fresh-baked goods)—housed in structures saved by historic preservation efforts.

The best view of the historic square is from the new rooftop lounge at Jakes Tyler. This popular eatery (steaks and seafood) fills three levels of a 1904 building that once housed a men's clothing store. From the rooftop here, you can see the sun set behind the 15-story Art Deco Peoples National Bank (now Tyler Towne Centre), designed by noted Houston architect Alfred C. Finn. When built in the 1930s, it was among Texas' tallest



Rose City Rambling

HAD YOUR FILL of Tyler's fantastic homes and gardens? Check out my other Rose City favorites:

Don't miss the midway, entertainment, and livestock of the 95th annual **East Texas State Fair**, Sep. 23-Oct. 3, 2010, at the fairgrounds, 2112 W. Front St., 903/597-2501; www.etstatefair.com.

History buffs, head downtown to the 1904 Carnegie Library, home of artifacts and genealogical records at the **Smith County Historical Society Museum & Archives**, 125 S. College Ave., 903/592-5993; www.smithcountyhistoricalsociety.org. A few blocks away, watch freight trains and peruse railroad memorabilia at a 1905 depot housing the **Cotton Belt Depot Museum**, 210 E. Oakwood St., 903/533-8057. Nearby, treat the kids (or grandkids) to a lively time at **The Discovery Science Place** (a top 25 science center in the U.S. for kids according to *Parents Magazine*), 308 N. Broadway Ave., 903/533-8011; www.discoveryscienceplace.org. The courthouse square echoes with Texas roots music Oct. 9, 2010, at the City of Tyler Main Street Program/Heart of Tyler, Inc.'s **Texas Music Fest series concert**, 110 W. Erwin St., 903/593-6905; www.heartoftyler.com.

Revisit Civil War history at **Camp Ford Historical Site**, located on US 271 one mile north of Loop 323, where a reconstructed cabin recalls the largest Confederate prisoner of war camp west of the Mississippi River. Call 903/592-5993. Other Old South attractions include the **Dewberry Plantation**, 14007 FM 346 W., 903/825-9000 (www.dewberryplantation.com), and **Roseland Plantation**, 2601 Texas 64 W., 903/849-5553 or 866/ROSELAND (www.roselandplantation.com), which also boasts a bed and breakfast.

Stop at the **Tyler Museum of Art**, 1300 S. Mahon Ave., 903/595-1001; www.tylermuseum.org. Catch a performance at the University of Texas at Tyler's **Cowan Fine & Performing Arts Center** (3900 University Blvd., 903/566-7424; www.uttyler.edu/cowan).

See the animals—such as black-footed penguins, white tigers, black rhinos, and African elephants—in natural-setting exhibits at the **Caldwell Zoo**, 2203 Martin Luther King Blvd., 903/593-0121; www.caldwellzoo.org. Walk or bike with wildlife on 13-plus miles of hilly trails at **Tyler State Park**, 789 Park Rd. 16 and FM 14 N., 903/597-5338. For a pleasant in-town walk, try four miles of new wheelchair-accessible hike-and-bike trails starting at **Rose Rudman Trail**, 450 Shiloh Rd.; call 903/531-1370.

—Randy Mallory



buildings. The Great Depression didn't affect Tyler nearly as much as other parts of the nation. The East Texas Oil Field had blown in, and oilmen opened offices in the Peoples Bank tower and constructed homes in then-new neighborhoods.

The homes still recall those boom days along 100 blocks of the city's three largest National Register-listed historic

The annual Azalea & Spring Flower Trail winds some 10 miles through Tyler's vibrant neighborhoods. These pink blossoms sprawl over a wall at East 2nd and Roseland.



While Tyler's annual Rose Festival held in October features an elaborate parade and Rose Queen's tea, the Azalea & Spring Flower Trail welcomes thousands of visitors to view residents' homes and gardens.

neighborhoods—the Azalea, Brick Streets, and Charnwood districts.

My wife, Sallie, and I often walk or bike through these side-by-side neighborhoods. We stop at Brady's Coffee for a medium-roast brew and chit-chat with the regulars. Or we drop by Bruno's, a traditional Tyler favorite for Italian food since 1976, for hand-tossed pizza and antipasto salad. And, we frequently enjoy the Azalea District's lovely, eight-acre Bergfeld Park.

Thousands of out-of-towners experience Tyler's historic neighborhoods during the annual Azalea & Spring Flower Trail (March 25-April 10, 2011). Two well-marked driving routes wind 10 scenic miles past homes and gardens gussied up in spring color.

A must-see stopover during the Azalea Trail lies at the corner of Dobbs Street and College Avenue. That's where the owners of three contiguous houses—owned by the Davis, Pyron, and McGuire families—let visitors meander through their lush, manicured gardens.

The best view of the historic square is from the new rooftop lounge at Jakes Tyler. This popular eatery fills three levels of a 1904 building that once housed a men's clothing store.





ABOVE: This private garden on College Street impressed 2010 Azalea Trail-goers with its formal hedges, water features, and statuary. LEFT: The new rooftop lounge at Jakes Tyler overlooks the courthouse square.

Banks of pink, red, and white azaleas line rock walkways and footbridges, while white and pink dogwood blossoms offer colorful contrast in dappled shade under tall pines and oaks.

Azalea Trail visitors get a look *inside* a handful of well-gardened historic homes during the annual Spring Homes Tour, held in late March or early April. “People in the historic neighborhoods devote so much effort to their properties,” says Historic Tyler executive director Janie Menegay. “They really want people to see the architecture and learn the history.”

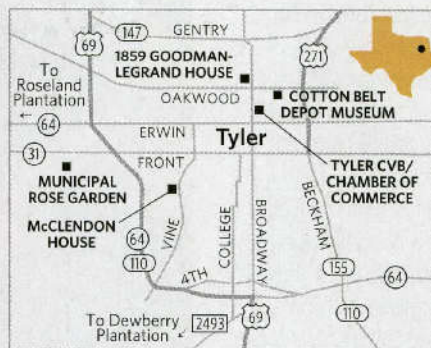
Year round, the 1878 McClendon House presents refined architecture and history. One family—descendants of Texas State Supreme Court justice M. H. Bonner—lived in the Eastlake Bracketed house for more than a century. The judge gave land for a house to his eldest daughter, Mattie Bonner, who married attorney Harrison Whitaker. The newlyweds obtained Victorian-style mantles, light fixtures, and furniture from New York City. The McClendon House was such a cultured gathering place that Texas Governor R. B. Hubbard, a family friend, described it as “like living on Fifth Avenue.”

Mattie’s younger sister, Annie, and her husband, Sydney McClendon, later bought the house and raised nine children there. Their best-known child was White House correspondent Sarah McClendon—famous for her grilling of presidents at press conferences. A preservation group restored the mansion and opened it to the public in 1988.

Each Saturday evening in October, the McClendon House offers guided Spirit Tours. (It’s also open during the Azalea Trail, for special events, and by appointment.) The McClendon House has its share of ghost stories, but this not-so-spooky annual affair actually features local actors portraying Sarah and other influential McClendon family members.

[continued on page 60]

TH ESSENTIALS



Tyler

FOR HOMES & GARDENS information, an historic landmarks guide, and other tourist tips, call the **Tyler Convention and Visitors Bureau** at 903/592-1661 or 800/235-5712; www.visitt Tyler.com. For information on downtown events and attractions call the **Heart of Tyler Main Street Program**, 903/593-6905; www.heartoftyler.com.

Gardens and Tours

The **Tyler Municipal Rose Garden** and **Tyler Rose Museum**, 420 Rose Park Dr., hosts the 77th annual **Texas Rose Festival** Oct. 14-16, 2010. Call 903/597-3130; www.texasrosefestival.com.

The **Smith County Master Gardeners** present **seminars** on Oct. 5 and Nov. 2 (2010) in the Tyler Municipal Rose Garden’s IDEA Garden. On Oct. 9, 2010, the group holds a **conference and plant sale** in Harvey Hall, 2000 W. Front St., next to the Rose Garden. On May 7-8, 2011, the master gardeners host their annual Home Garden Tour. Call the Smith County Extension Office, 903/590-2980; <http://grovesite.com/mg/smg>.

The **LeGrand Park & Garden**, 624 N. Broadway, hosts gardening **seminars** on Oct. 15-16, 2010, Tyler’s “**Old Rose**” **open house** at the 1859 Goodman-LeGrand House and Museum on Oct. 16, 2010, and **Victorian Christmas** on Dec. 9, 2010. Call 903/531-1286.

The **McClendon House**, 806 W. Houston, hosts Spirit Tours each Sat. night in Oct. Call 903/592-3533; www.mcclendonhouse.net.

The 52nd annual **Tyler Azalea & Spring Flower Trail** takes place Mar. 25-Apr. 10, 2011. Call the CVB at 800/235-5712.

The 31st annual **Historic Tyler on Tour** (tour of historic homes) takes place Mar. 25-27, 2011. Call Historic Tyler, 903/595-1960; www.historictyler.org.

Chamblee’s Rose Nursery, 10926 US 69 N., 800/256-7673; www.chambleeroses.com.

Restaurants

Downtown Coffee Lounge, 200 W. Erwin St., 903/266-9192.

Jakes Tyler, 111 E. Erwin St., 903/526-0225; www.jakes Tyler.com.

Brady’s Coffee, 309 W. Rusk St., 903/596-0508; www.bradyscoffee.com.

Bruno’s Pizza, 1400 S. Vine St., 903/595-1676.

Other Attractions

Bergfeld Park, 1510 S. College Ave., 903/531-1370.

Gallery Main Street, 110 W. Erwin St., 903/593-6905.

More home gardens go on display each May, when the Smith County Master Gardeners hold an annual Home Garden Tour, featuring numerous area gardens.

My favorite stop last year was the funky hideaway of Jim and Ann Powell. Footpaths ramble past 90-plus varieties of trees, shrubs, vines, and ground covers, plus colorful annual and perennial plants such as hostas, Mexican heather, Indigo, and daylilies. Interspersed throughout are eclectic recycled items that the Powells call “artistic junk.” A rusty wheelbarrow overflows with red and pink begonias. Yard rakes stand on end, their metal tines painted blue, red, and yellow like blooms. A cluster of decorated plates and pans rise from a worn-out bed frame as an offbeat “flower bed.”

“It’s fun showing off the garden,” Jim Powell tells me near a row of birdhouses fashioned after rickety shacks. “Visitors



Spring blooms create a fairy-tale setting along Mockingbird Lane in the Azalea District.

seem so interested and friendly, it’s like having neighbors drop by.”

That attitude might just be the best Tyler tradition of all. 🌸

Writer-photographer RANDY MALLORY lives on a brick street in a 1930s oil-boom house in the heart of Tyler’s Azalea District.

Texas Highways

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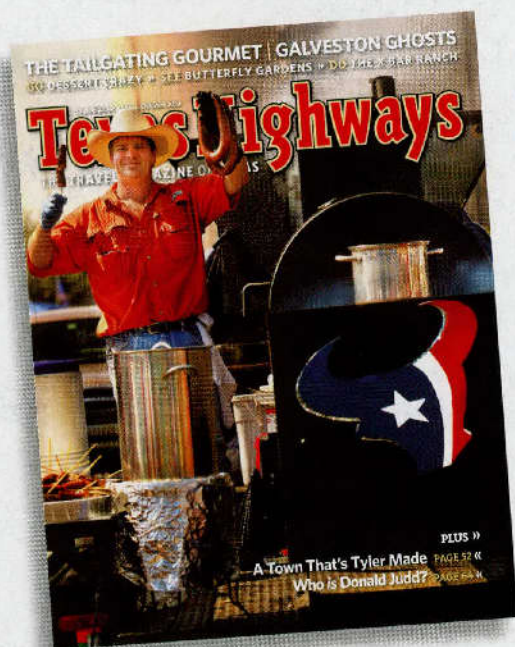
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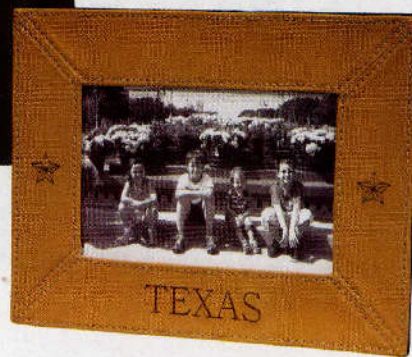
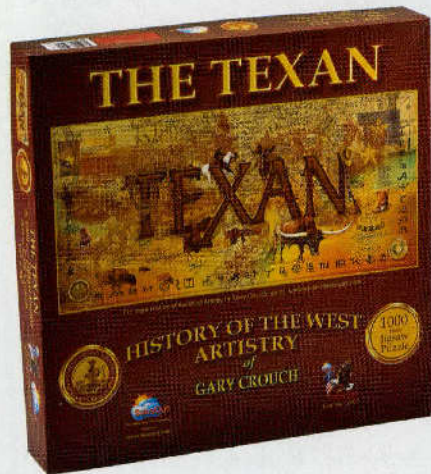
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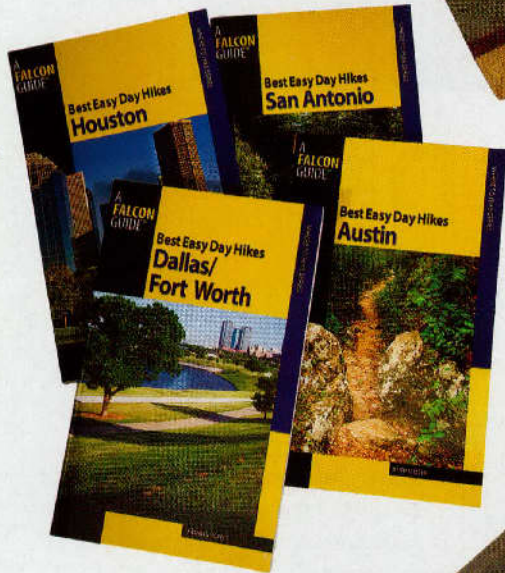
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cal industry; Syn... in April... Morgt... Piney Po... 1,879); S... Austin (1... de Plac... Sprin... (11,076)... stall center... medical c... West Unive... (\$2,891)... Parts of Friendswood City, Pearland, Stafford at Addicks, Atief and Kin now within the city limits of

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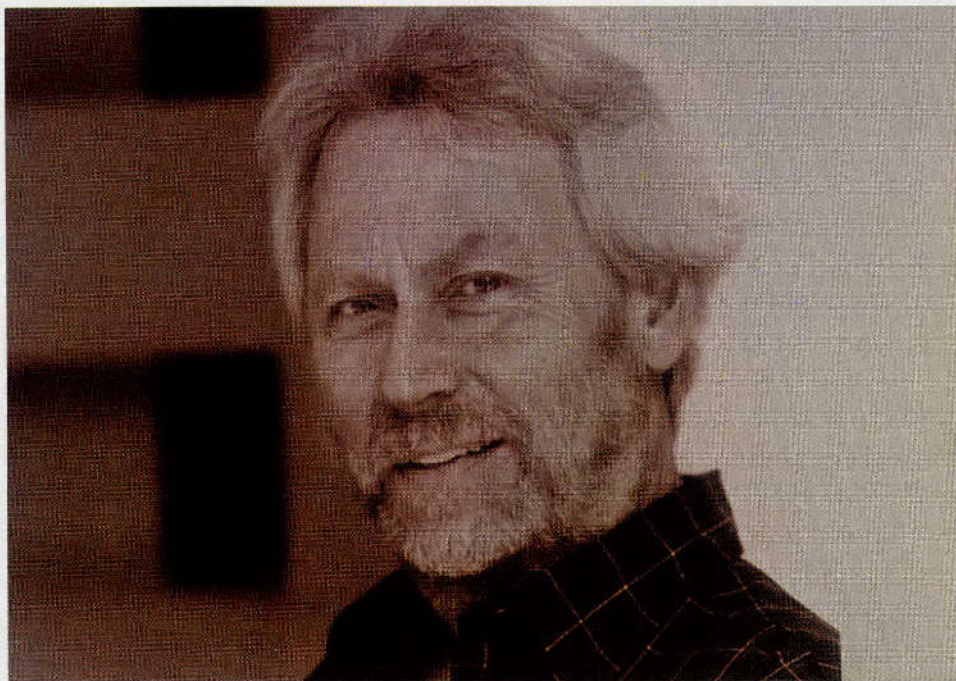
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Donald Judd

*Thinking outside
(and inside) the box*

Text by **GENE FOWLER**

Captivated by West Texas' stark beauty, sculptor Donald Judd settled in Marfa in the 1970s. The international art world soon took notice.



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DEAR MOM, VAN HORN TEXAS. 1260 POPULATION. NICE TOWN BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY MOUNTAINS LOVE, DON."

Thus telegraphed a young soldier, heading west by bus from Alabama to Los Angeles, bound for Korea, on December 17, 1946. For the first time, Don Judd's discerning eye beheld the stretch of Texas west of the Pecos.

A quarter-century later, Donald Judd (1928-1994) returned to this landscape as a leading figure of the international art frontier. Art historians say that Judd's deceptively simple boxes, rectangular panels, ramps, and other geometric abstractions had a profound effect on the course of modern sculpture. The Chinati Foundation and the Judd Foundation, the art-world outposts created in Marfa to preserve permanent installations of Judd's and other artists' work, attract increasing numbers of contemporary art enthusiasts from around the globe today, 16 years after the sculptor's death.

"Marfa," explains longtime Marfa resident and *Big Bend Sentinel* editor Robert

Rather than calling his style “minimalism,” Judd described his work as “the simple expression of complex thought.”

Halpern, “is a town that got to reinvent itself, thanks in part to Donald Judd. We still have our ranching culture, but now we’re also a vibrant art, music, film, and literary community.”

Born in his grandparents’ Missouri farmhouse in 1928, Donald Clarence Judd moved with his parents several times as a child, as his father’s executive position with Western Union required frequent relocating. The artist attributed his lifelong shyness to this

relative nomadism. In the early 1940s, living in Dallas, Judd evinced his future exacting nature when he created a World War II bonds poster in school.

His teacher wanted him to add text to the poster, but young Don argued that it would ruin his design.

After high school graduation in Westwood, New Jersey, and two years of military service in Korea, where he constructed prefabricated homes, Judd studied art and philosophy at the College of William and Mary in Virginia and the Art Students League of New York. Never shy about expressing his strong opinions, he worked as an art critic in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Declaring that painting and representational art were “finished,” he began making his distinctive sculpture in the ‘60s. Judd often insisted that what mattered in a work of art were its own formal qualities—shape, color, surface, and volume.

As Judd’s star rose in the art world, however, so did his dissatisfaction with the traditional gallery and museum

system. Though he continued to maintain residences in New York and Switzerland—and to create and exhibit some work in metropolitan art centers—in 1971, the artist lit out from Soho to El Paso. He headed east into the Chihuahuan Desert and the Trans-Pecos mountains. Holing up in the Presidio County seat of Marfa—a town previously known as the location of the sprawling Texas oilfield movie *Giant*, starring Rock Hudson, Elizabeth Taylor, and James Dean—Judd began acquiring real estate. This he transformed into living space, studio space, and spartan temples for the permanent placement of works of art. By the time of his death in 1994, the artist owned a former wool and mohair warehouse, an abandoned supermarket, a former bank, an old hotel, and other structures. On the edge of town, the ragged barracks, hangars, artillery sheds, and gymnasium of a defunct Army base, Fort D.A. Russell, were adapted for reuse as museum space.

Divorced from his wife, dancer Julie Finch, he raised his children, Rainer Yingling Judd and Flavin Starbuck Judd (named for artist friends Yvonne Rainer and Dan Flavin) in Marfa and on his three area ranches, Las Casas, Casa Perez, and Ayala de Chinati. Together, the ranches sprawled over 40,000 Trans-Pecos acres that Judd sought to save from future development.

Judd’s 100 boxes of mill aluminum, eternally enshrined in the restored artillery sheds, where light plays across the metal surfaces in surprising ways, caused many West Texans to scratch their heads. So did the 15 groupings of large concrete

Do!

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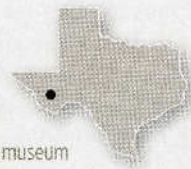
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Visitors to Marfa's Chinati Foundation (tours by appointment only) can view hundreds of works by Donald Judd and other artists. The Judd Foundation offers tours of Judd's home and studios.

Site-Specific Judd

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WORKS AND LEGACY OF DONALD JUDD, devote a day to touring Marfa's **The Chinati Foundation/La Fundación Chinati**, a contemporary art museum housed in numerous structures on the 340-acre site of the former Fort D.A. Russell. Open to the public since 1986, the museum was conceived to exhibit the work of Judd, John Chamberlain, and Dan Flavin, but has since expanded to include works by other modern and contemporary artists. The Chinati Foundation is accessible Wednesday through Sunday by reserved guided tour only; tours begin at 10, break for lunch, and resume at 2. Thursday through Sunday at 3:45, the Foundation also offers tours of the artillery sheds, where you can see 100 of Judd's works in mill aluminum. Call 432/729-4362; www.chinati.org.



The Judd Foundation, whose mission is to maintain and preserve Donald Judd's permanently installed living and working spaces, libraries, and archives in New York and Texas, offers tours by reservation only of Judd's residence in Marfa (La Mansana de Chinati—informally known as "The Block") and downtown Marfa studio spaces. (Judd Foundation ranches are not available for public tours.) For information, email marfatours@juddfoundation.org.

—Lori Moffatt

blocks, placed on Chinati grounds. One European critic observed in the blocks the "unassailable nobility of Egyptian pyramids"; another likened the works to the ancient installation at Stonehenge.

The artist's cantankerous yet refined sensibility could make him seem an unapproachable presence. But he did make local friends, such as Frank Bash, then director of the nearby McDonald Observatory. "Don was unpretentious and shy," says Bash. "When I first met him, I had no idea how famous he was. At the annual Chinati open house in October, he could usually be found sitting on the tailgate of his pickup, off by himself, watching the festivities."

Bash invited the artist to join the observatory's Board of Visitors. "He later showed me a catalog for one of his European exhibitions," Bash continues, "and it listed his membership on the board as one of his proudest accomplishments."

Diagnosed with lymphatic cancer in late 1993, Donald Judd died in New York City on February 12, 1994. He was laid to rest at Las Casas, his ranch on the Rio Grande.

Asked why he chose the Trans-Pecos by *Houston Chronicle* art critic Patricia C. Johnson in 1993, Judd spoke of the area's natural beauty, then added with a grin: "Besides, this is the Old West. I grew up reading J. Frank Dobie." **TH**

EVENTS > HAPPENINGS

Happy Fall, Y'all!

TURN OVER A NEW LEAF AND CELEBRATE all that is fall at the 9th annual **Autumn Days in Ennis Fall Festival**, Saturday, October 16, downtown from 10-5. This free event offers the cream of the harvest with pumpkins, pony rides, a petting zoo, and arts and crafts. For the grown-ups, don't miss the delicious food, Czech heritage, antiques shopping, and live entertainment. Other Ennis enticements include the Historic District, Bluebonnet Park, Lake Bardwell, the Ennis Public Theatre, the Railroad Museum, Galaxy Drive-In, Texas Motorplex, and more. See www.visitennis.org, or call 972/878-4748.



October Events

BIG BEND COUNTRY

DEL RIO: Fiesta de Amistad Arts & Crafts Fair October 23-24. Greenwood Park. www.drchamber.com 830/775-3551

EL PASO: Chopin Music Festival Concerts October 2, 23. Chamizal National Memorial Theatre. www.elpaso-chopin.com 915/584-1595

FORT STOCKTON: Old Fort Day October 16. 432/336-2400

MARATHON: Marathon 2 Marathon October 16. www.marathon2marathon.net 432/386-4500

MIDLAND: AirSho October 8-10. www.airsho.org 888/945-3008

MONAHANS: Model Airplane Fly-In October 22-24. www.monahans.org 432/943-2187

ODESSA: Harvest Arts & Crafts Fair October 29-31. Ector County Coliseum. 432/366-5237

PECOS: Reeves County Fall Fair & Livestock Show October 1-2. www.pecostx.com 432/445-2406

WICKETT: Bluegrass Festival October 1-3. 432/943-3135

GULF COAST

ANGLETON: Brazoria County Fair October 15-23. www.bcfa.org 979/849-6416

BEAUMONT: Dinosaur Day October 30. www.texasenergy.museum.org 409/833-5100

BROWNSVILLE: Latin Jazz Festival October 8-10. www.brosociety.org 956/831-9590

CLEAR LAKE AREA: Ballunar Liffoff Festival October 8-10. NASA/Johnson Space Center. www.spacecenter.org 281/488-7676

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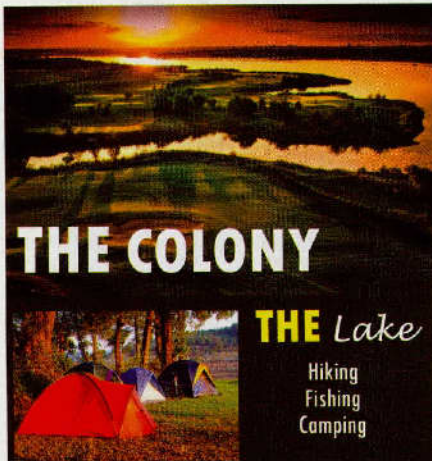
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CLUTE: Harvest Fun Fest October 28. Municipal Park. 979/265-8392

CORPUS CHRISTI: Bayfest Art Festival October 1-3. www.bayfesttexas.com 361/887-0868

CORPUS CHRISTI: South Texas Wine & Herb Festival October 16. www.stxbot.org 361/852-2100

CYPRESS: Bridgeland Howl-O-Ween Fest October 30. www.bridgeland.com 281/304-5588

EL CAMPO: Prairie Days Festival October 2. Alamo Park. www.elcampochamber.com 979/543-2713

FREEPORT: Fall Festival October 29. www.freeport.tx.us 979/233-6061

GALVESTON/PORT ARANSAS: Harvest Moon Regatta October 21-23. www.harvestmoonregatta.com 281/474-2511

GALVESTON: Island Oktoberfest October 22-23. www.firstlutherangalveston.com 409/762-8477

HOUSTON: Houston Ballet October 1-3. www.houstonballet.org 713/227-2787

HOUSTON: Komen Houston Race for the Cure October 2. Sam Houston Park. www.komen-houston.org 713/783-9188

HOUSTON: Greek Festival October 7-10. www.greekfestival.org 713/526-5377

HOUSTON: Fire Fest October 9. www.houstonfiremuseum.org 713/524-2526

HOUSTON: Bayou City Art Festival Downtown October 9-10. www.bayoucityartfestival.com 713/521-0133

HOUSTON: Bayou City Shrimp Festival October 9-10. Traders Village. www.tradersvillage.com 281/890-5500

HOUSTON: Wings Over Houston Airshow October 23-24. Ellington Airport. www.wingsoverhouston.com 713/266-4492

HOUSTON: Houston Symphony October 28-31. www.houstonsymphony.org 713/224-7575

KEMAH: Boo on the Boardwalk October 1-31. www.kemahboardwalk.com 281/334-9880

NEEDVILLE: Harvest Festival October 15-16. www.needvillefest.com 979/793-4030

ORANGE: Orchid Festival October 2-9. www.shangrila gardens.org 409/670-9113

ORANGE: Scarecrow Festival & Autumn Fair October 26-November 27. www.shangrilagardens.org 409/670-9113

PORT ARANSAS: MustangFest October 1-3. Island Moorings Marina. www.mustangfest.org 210/399-7500

PORT ARANSAS: Centennial Celebration October 16. www.portaransasmuseum.org 361/443-4683

PORTLAND: Boo Fest October 30. Municipal Park. 361/777-3301

QUINTANA: Ghosts of the Gulf Coast October 30. 979/864-1541

ROCKPORT: Seafair October 8-10. www.rockportseafair.com 361/729-6445

SAN BENITO: Conjunto Music Festival October 22-24. www.cityofsanbenito.com 956/361-0110

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND: Seafood & Music Festival October 1-2. http://southpadreseafoodandmusicfest.com

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND: SPI Bikefest October 8-10. www.spbikefest.com 956/668-7484

VICTORIA: Dia de los Muertos: A Celebration October 22-November 28. Nave Museum. www.visitvictoriatexas.com 361/575-8227

VICTORIA: South Texas Farm & Ranch Show October 29-30. 361/582-0024

WEST COLUMBIA: Harvest Festival October 23. www.visitvarnerhoggplantation.com 979/345-4656

WHARTON: Wine & Arts Fair October 9. www.whartontexas.com

WINNIE: Texas Rice Festival October 1-3. Winnie-Stowell Park. www.texasricefestival.org 409/296-4404

HILL COUNTRY

AUSTIN: Austin City Limits Music Festival October 8-10. www.acfestival.com 888/512-SHOW

AUSTIN: Texas Book Festival October 16-17. www.texasbookfestival.org

AUSTIN: Austin Film Festival October 21-28. www.austinfilmfestival.com 800/310-FEST

BANDERA: Cowboys on Main October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30. www.frontiertimesmuseum.com 800/364-3833

BOERNE: Harvest Moon Celebration October 30. 830/249-7277

BURNET: Fort Croghan Day October 9. www.fortcroghan.org 512/756-8281

COMFORT: Scarecrow Invasion October 15-November 2. www.comfortchamberofcommerce.com 830/995-3131

DRIPPING SPRINGS: Wild West Fest October 23. 512/858-4725

FREDERICKSBURG: Oktoberfest October 1-3. Marktplatz. www.oktoberfestinfbg.com 830/997-4810

FREDERICKSBURG: Texas Mesquite Art Festival October 8-10. Marktplatz. www.texasmesquiteassn.org 830/997-8515

FREDERICKSBURG: Monarch Butterfly Celebration October 16-17. www.wildseedfarms.com 830/990-8080

GRUENE: Music & Wine Fest October 8-10. www.gruene musicandwinefest.org 830/606-1601

GRUENE: Texas Clay Festival October 23-24. www.texas clayfestival.com 830/629-7975

HUTTO: Olde Tyme Days October 9-10. Farmers' Co-op. www.olde tyme days.com 512/759-4400

KERRVILLE: Kerr County Fair October 22-24. www.kerr countyfair.com 830/257-7704

KYLE: Kyle Fair & Music Festival October 14-17. Gregg-Clarke Park. www.kylefair.com 512/262-3939

LLANO: Chuck Wagon Cookoff & Heritage Day Celebration October 16-17. www.llanochamber.org 325/247-5354

NEW BRAUNFELS: Wurstfest October 29-November 7. www.wurstfest.com 830/625-9167

ROUND ROCK: Fall Fun Festival October 28. Old Settlers Park. www.roundrocktexas.gov

PANHANDLE PLAINS

ABILENE: Tejas Storytelling Association Tumbleweed Festival October 22-23. 325/794-4463



TH SPOTLIGHT

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GRAMMY-WINNING SINGER-SONGWRITER Shakira (pictured here at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa) brings her international Tour of Worldly Delights to seven Texas cities this month, kicking off with **Dallas** on October 1 and finishing a swing through the Lone Star State in **El Paso** on October 13. In between, Shakira will perform in **San Antonio**, **Corpus Christi**, **Laredo**, **Houston**, and **Hidalgo**. The charismatic singing and dancing sensation takes fans on a Latin-pop adventure with highlights from throughout her recording career. From humble beginnings in South America to stratospheric success in the Latin music genre, Shakira's star power truly dazzles. For tickets and information, go to www.ticketmaster.com or www.shakira.com.

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October 29-30. 254/673-8677

ALBANY: Fort Griffin Living History Days October 9-10.
www.visitfortgriffin.com 325/762-3592

BUFFALO GAP: Fall Festival and Parade October 24.
325/572-3365

CANADIAN: Fall Foliage Festival October 16-17. www.canadiantx.com 806/323-6234

EASTLAND: Ripfest October 2. www.eastlandchamber.com 877/265-3474

GRAFORD: Possum Fest Barbecue & Chili Cookoff
October 2. www.possumkingdomlake.com 940/779-9200

HASKELL: Run on the Brazos Motorcycle Rally October
8-9. http://haskelltxchamber.com/run_on_the_brazos.asp
940/864-2477

LUBBOCK: Heritage Halloween October 30. www.nrhc.com 806/742-0498

MINERAL WELLS: Clark Gardens Fall Festival
October 2. www.clarkgardens.com 940/682-4856

MINERAL WELLS: Crazy Water Festival October 9.
www.crazywaterfestival.org 940/325-8870

PLAINVIEW: Running Water Arts & Crafts Festival
October 15-17. Ollie Liner Center. 806/293-1057

POST: Old Mill Trade Day October 2. www.postcitytexas.com 806/495-3461

POST: Tom Butler Memorial Bronc Riding October 16.
www.tombutlermemorial.com 806/596-4632

SAN ANGELO: Archaeology Fair October 9. www.fortconcho.com 325/657-4444

SAN ANGELO: Roping Fiesta October 29-31. www.ropingfiesta.com 325/653-7785

PINEY WOODS

CENTER: East Texas Poultry Festival October 7-9.
www.shelbycountytxchamber.com 936/598-3682

CONROE: Cajun Catfish Festival October 8-10. <http://conroecajuncatfishfestival.com> 936/539-6009

GILMER: East Texas Yamboree October 20-23. www.yamboree.com 903/843-2413

HENDERSON: PRCA Rodeo October 14-16. www.hendersontx.us 903/658-1858

JASPER: Fall Festival October 2. www.jaspercoc.org
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NACOGDOCHES: Pineywoods Fair October 13-17. www.nacexpo.net 936/564-0849

RUSK: Pioneer Heritage Festival October 2. www.RuskChamber.com 903/683-4242

SAN AUGUSTINE: Sassafras Festival October 29-30. www.sanAugustinetx.com 936/275-3610

TEXARKANA: Taste of Texarkana October 19-20. www.harvesttexarkana.org 903/701-2641

TYLER: East Texas State Fair October 1-3. www.etstatefair.com 903/597-2501

TYLER: Rose Festival October 14-16. www.texasrosefestival.com 903/597-3130

PRAIRIES AND LAKES

ADDISON: Worldfest October 23-24. www.addisontexas.net 800/233-4766

ATHENS: Fall Festival October 9. East Texas Arboretum. 903/675-5630

BASTROP: Halloween Festival October 31. www.bastropdba.com

BELLVILLE: County Fair October 13-17. www.austincountyfair.com 979/865-5995

BENBROOK: Heritage Fest & Cowboy Roundup October 16. www.cityofbenbrook.com 817/249-6087

BURLESON: Founders Day October 9. 817/447-3522

CAMERON: Arts & Crafts Fair October 2. City Park. www.cameron-tx.com 254/697-4979

CHAPPELL HILL: Scarecrow Festival October 9-10. www.chappellhillmuseum.org 888/273-6426

CLEBURNE: Taste of Cleburne October 5. www.cleburnechamber.com 817/645-2455

CUERO: Turkeyfest October 8-10. www.turkeyfest.org 361/275-6351

DALLAS: State Fair of Texas 2010 September 24-October 17. Fair Park. www.bigtex.com 214/565-9931

DALLAS: Dallas Symphony Orchestra October 1-3, 14-16, 21-24, 29-30. Meyerson Symphony Center. www.dallas-symphony.com

DALLAS: Fiesta Latinoamericana October 10. www.dfwinternational.org/fiestalatioamericana 214/744-6642

EDOM: Festival of the Arts October 16-17. www.edomfestivalofthearts.com 903/852-6175

ELGIN: Hoge Festival October 23. www.elgintx.com 512/281-5724

FORT WORTH: Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra October 8-10, 29-31. Bass Performance Hall. www.fwsymphony.org 817/665-6000

FORT WORTH: Red Steagall Cowboy Gathering October 22-24. www.stockyardsstation.com

FRISCO: Lone Star Storytelling Festival October 8-9. www.lonestarstories.org 972/292-5669

FRISCO: Arts Festival October 23-24. Pizza Hut Park. www.friscoarts.org 972/668-5180

GLEN ROSE: Fossilmania October 29-31. www.glenrosenetexas.net 888/346-6282

GONZALES: Come & Take It Festival October 1-3. www.gonzalestexas.com 830/672-6532

GRANBURY: Harvest Moon Festival October 23-24. www.granburysquare.com 817/573-5299

GRAND PRAIRIE: Fall Indie Fest October 7-10. www.fallindiefest.com 972/237-8108

GRAPEVINE: Butterfly Flutterby October 16. www.grapevinetexasusa.com 800/457-6338

HICO: Sesquicentennial Celebration October 1-2. http://hico-tx.com 800/361-HICO

HONEY GROVE: Davy Crockett Festival October 2. www.honeygrovechamber.com 903/378-7211

KAUFMAN: Scarecrow Festival October 23. www.kaufmanchamber.com 972/932-3118

LULING: Catfish Cookoff & Rubber Duck Race October 16. www.zedlermill.com 830/875-3214

MADISONVILLE: Texas Mushroom Festival October 23. www.texasmushroomfestival.com 936/348-3592

MANSFIELD: Historic Mansfield Music Festival October 15-16. www.historicmansfield.net 817/276-4228

MCKINNEY: Family Fall Festival October 23. www.visitmckinney.com 214/544-1407

MESQUITE: PumpkinFest October 16. www.oldtownmesquite.org 972/216-6260

MOUNT VERNON: Countryfest October 9. www.visitmtvernontx.com 903/537-4365

PALESTINE: Wonder Fall Oktoberfest October 30. www.palestinechamber.org 903/729-6066

PLANO: Plano International Festival October 2. www.planointernationalfestival.org 214/495-7838

PLANTERSVILLE: Texas Renaissance Festival October 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31. www.texrenfest.com 800/458-3435

ROYSE CITY: FunFest October 16. 972/636-5000

SAINT JO: Scarecrow Festival October 23. www.saintjochamber.com 940/759-4518

SALADO: Heritage Days Weekend October 23-24. www.saladoheritagedays.com 254/947-8634

SEGUIN: County Fair and PRCA Rodeo October 6-10. www.visitseguin.com 830/379-6477

SEGUIN: Pecan Fest Heritage Days October 22-24. www.visitseguin.com 800/580-7322

SOUTHLAKE: Oktoberfest October 1-3. www.southlakechamber.com 817/481-8200

WACO: Heart O' Texas Fair & Rodeo October 8-16. HOT Fair Complex. www.hotfair.com 254/776-1660

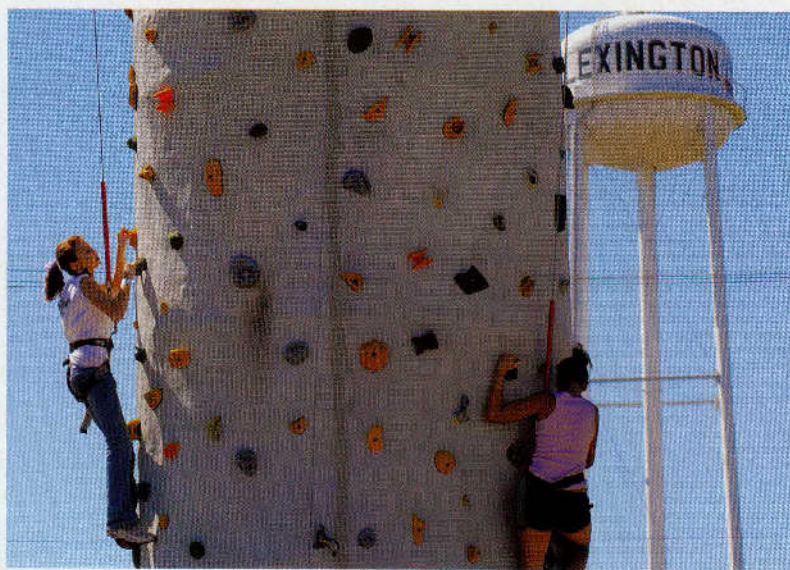
WACO: Wine & Food Festival October 16. Indian Spring Park. www.wacohumanesociety.com 254/754-1454

WEATHERFORD: Lone Star Loop 1,000/El Camino Real Tour October 14-17. www.lonestarloop.com 817/401-5558

WHEELLOCK: Pioneer Days Festival October 23. www.wheelockcivicassociation.org 979/828-4627

WHITNEY: Pioneer Days October 2. www.lakewhitneychamber.com 254/694-2540

YORKTOWN: Western Days—Ziegfest October 15-17. www.yorktowntx.com 361/564-2661



➔ TH SPOTLIGHT

Choc-Full of Fun

ON OCTOBER 16, THE SWEET-TOOTHED will gather in Lexington for the **Chocolate Lovers Festival**. The temptations start with a Gourmet Chocolate Pancake Breakfast and continue with other culinary delights in Chocolate Alley. Participants can put their skills to the test in a 5K Fun-Run, and in baking, pie-throwing, pie-eating, and ice cream-eating contests. Two Fear Factor contests for ages 10-18 include physical challenges, as well as eating chocolate-covered insects. Other kids' activities include pony rides, a petting zoo, rock-climbing, and the Mobile Dairy classroom. Music, arts and crafts, and food vendors round out the fun. Call 979/773-4337; www.lexingtontexas.com.

SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

BEEVILLE: Western Week Celebration October 14-17. www.westernweek.org 361/362-3290

FLORESVILLE: Peanut Festival October 5-9. www.floresvillepeanutfestival.org 830/393-6664

SAN ANTONIO: Oktoberfest San Antonio October 1-2, 8-9. www.beethovenmaennerchor.com 210/222-1521

SAN ANTONIO: International Accordion Festival October 15-17. www.internationalaccordionfestival.org 210/865-8578

SAN ANTONIO: Artesanos del Pueblo: A Celebration of Folk Art October 22-23. www.loscompadres.org 210/922-3218

SAN ANTONIO: Founders Day October 23. The Alamo. www.sanantoniofoundersday.org

WESLACO: Spooky Science Fair October 30. www.worldbirdingcenter.org 956/565-3919

Want more? Go to the Events Calendar at www.texashighways.com.

For a free printed copy of an even more detailed, quarterly schedule of events, write to Texas Events Calendar, Box 149249, Austin 78714-9249. Or, call 800/452-9292 from anywhere in the U.S. or Canada, between 8-6 Central.

For Texas travel questions, call 800/452-9292 to reach a TxDOT Travel Information Center, where a professional travel counselor will provide routing assistance, advise you of any emergency road conditions, and send brochures (including the official Texas State Travel Guide and map, accommodations guide, and quarterly Texas Events Calendar).

Send future event information to: Texas Events Calendar, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009; fax: 512/486-5879; e-mail: trv-tec@dot.state.tx.us. Listing deadlines: Spring (Mar, Apr, May) Dec 1; Summer (Jun, Jul, Aug) Mar 1; Fall (Sep, Oct, Nov) Jun 1; Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb) Sep 1.



www.TexasMushroomFestival.com

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Dance

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TH READER RECOMMENDATION

High Marks in Brenham

WE RECENTLY ate at the **Southern Flyer**, a '50s-style diner at the Municipal Airport in **Brenham**. There were three in our party—we all ordered something different, and everyone was more than pleased. The atmosphere was fun with waitresses dressed in poodle skirts and saddle oxfords, and there was a working '50s jukebox with all the old tunes.

SUE HOOKER, Franklin

Southern Flyer Diner is at 3001 Aviation Way; 979/836-5462; www.southernflyer.com.



restaurants. We're not suggesting that everyone become a vegan, but rather enriching the variety of travel topics we offer to TH readers.

Pacific War Museum

I thoroughly enjoyed reading Joe Sherfy's piece on the expanded National Museum of the Pacific War in your July issue. The success of this museum is an example of a unique public/private partnership for historic preservation and economic development. Legislation passed in 2005 authorized the Texas Historical Commission to contract with the Admiral Nimitz Foundation for the administration and operation of the museum. Since that time the museum has expanded into a dynamic, world-class facility attracting visitors of all ages. The Texas Historical Commission is honored to be part of preserving these important artifacts and helping to tell the story of Texas' and the nation's role in the Pacific Theatre during World War II.

MARK WOLFE, Executive Director
Texas Historical Commission

just to read where vegans should eat.

ROSEMARY BRIZENDINE
TH Facebook Fan

Publishing meatless information is not taking anything away from the meat or cattle industry. It merely presents another food option; we know consuming fruits and vegetables is part of a healthy diet. I enjoy meat but once in a while I like to skip it.

CIELO CHIC
TH Facebook Fan

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Thanks to everyone who responded to our story on vegan*

CONTACT TH

We want to hear from you! Send feedback and recommendations to: *Texas Highways*, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009. E-mail: letters05@texashighways.com. We reserve the right to edit items. Because we're unable to check out every recommendation, and because hours vary and details can change, please call ahead for more information.

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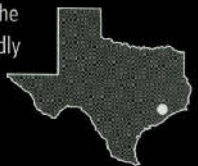
PHOTO: J. GRIFFIS SMITH



Window on Texas

Photograph by **THERESE TUSA**

TRANSITIONAL MONARCH The translucence of this monarch chrysalis at the Houston Arboretum & Nature Center indicates that the emergence of the boldly marked butterfly inside is imminent. For more information about the center and its butterflies, call 713/681-8433; www.houstonarboretum.org.



To order a print of this photograph, call 866/962-1191, or visit www.texashighwaysprints.com.



WILLIS