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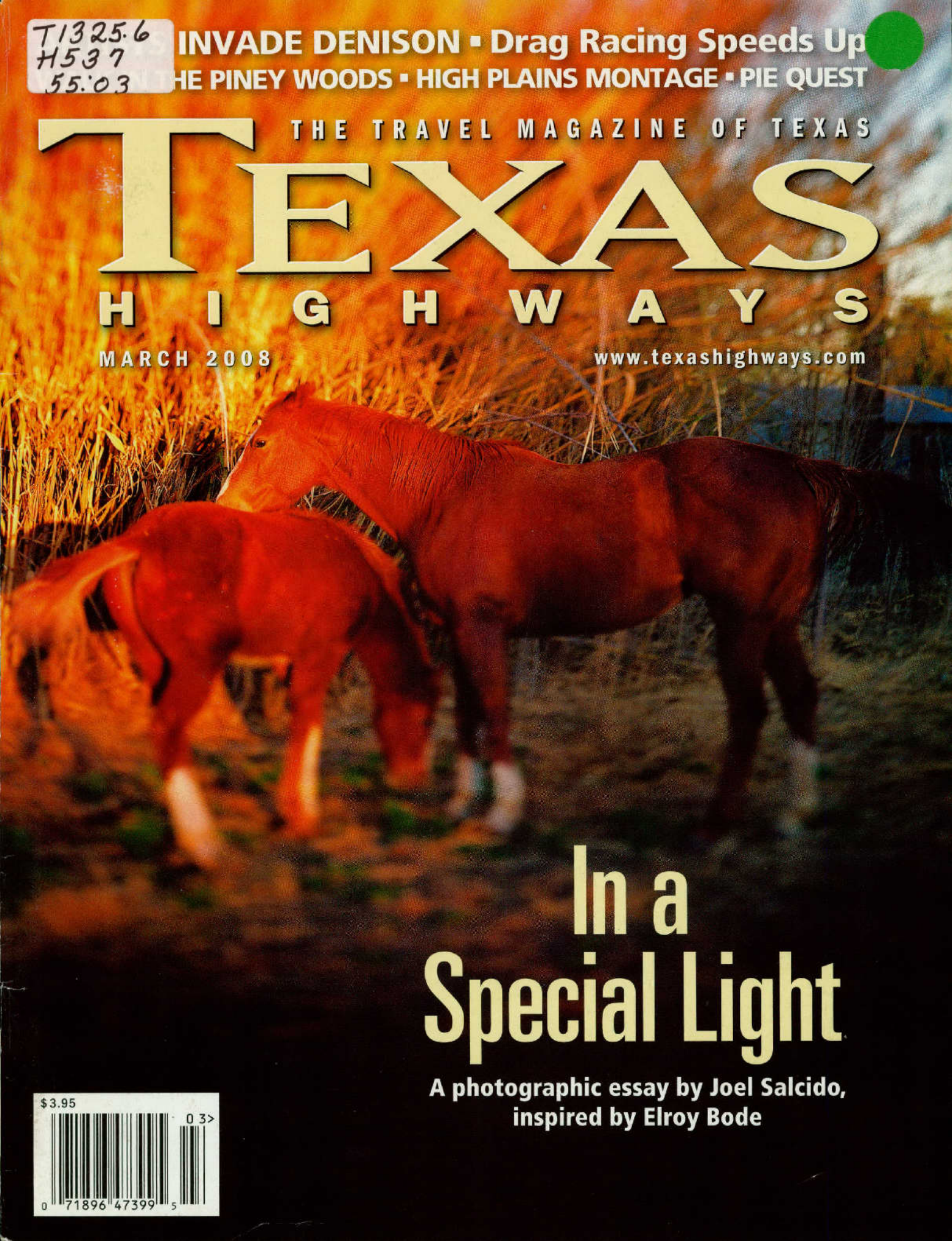
THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE OF TEXAS

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MARCH 2008

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In a Special Light

A photographic essay by Joel Salcido,
inspired by Elroy Bode

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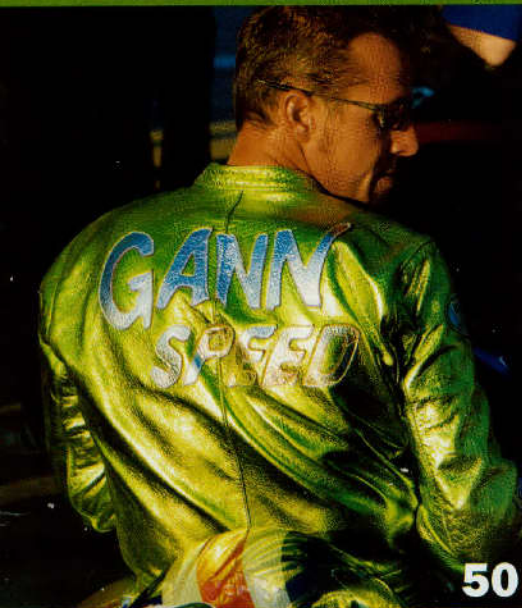
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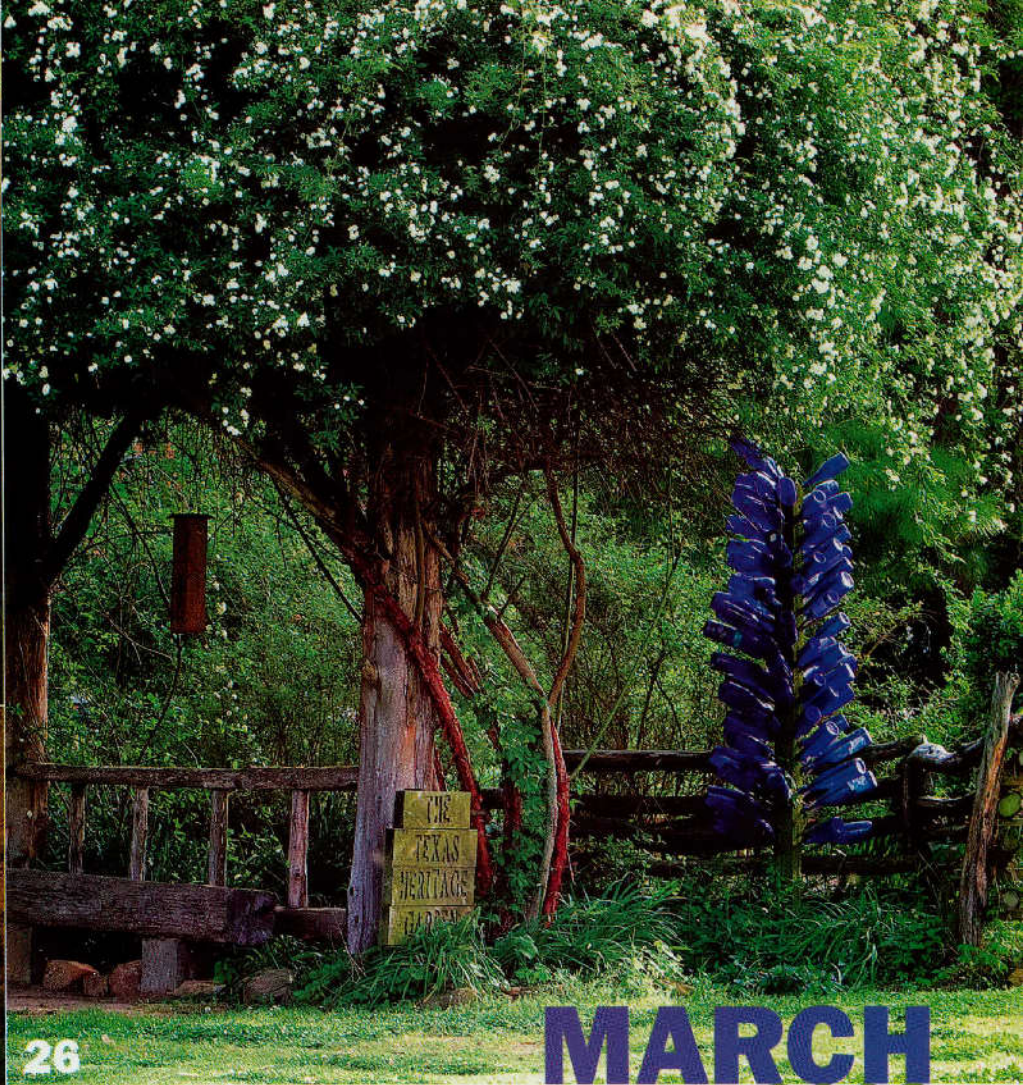
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MARCH 2008

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BY SHEILA SCARBOROUGH, PHOTOGRAPHS BY J. GRIFFIS SMITH

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ABOUT OUR COVERS FRONT: A pastoral scene in Clint captures the "small-town late-afternoon-ness" described by Elroy Bodé in his story about this West Texas community. *Photo* © Joel Salcido. (To order a print of this photograph, see instructions at left.) BACK: Combinations of light play up the faded beauty of Muleshoe's old Wallace Theatre. A California couple bought the theater several years ago with plans to renovate it. *Photo* © Artie Limmer.

PHOTOS: TOP LEFT: J. GRIFFIS SMITH; OTHERS: © RANDY MALLORY

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© E. DAN KLEPPER

Just a few of the tens of thousands of sandhill cranes that stop off at the Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge each winter.

WHY MULESHOE? It's a fair question. By way of an answer, I'll explain that we were in the midst of planning the article "High Plains Montage" that starts on page 34 when I received an e-mail from writer **E. Dan Klepper** telling me he was planning the long drive to the **Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge** from his home in faraway Marathon. Earlier that day, he had called the refuge and learned that 40,000 sandhill cranes had flown in from the north not long before.

I couldn't wait to see the photographs. This image of cranes returning to the preserve's saline lakes at day's end gives you a feel for the High Plains. And it provides a perfect example of why we love to explore in and around Texas towns.

Muleshoe (population 4,900) compares to many of the state's small towns—it's not easy to plan it as a destination, but is clearly worth some exploring once you're there. In this case, you'd look for regional ranching history—including the story of the legendary XIT spread—that comes to life at the local Heritage Center. There you'll learn that the town of Muleshoe was so named because it grew up near the Muleshoe Ranch loading pens. As writer **Gerald McLeod** says, "where the cattle trails met the iron rails."

Discovering Texas' out-of-the-way secrets demands only a little extra time from a curious traveler motivated by an anticipation of what surprise might lie just around the next corner. There's usually a personable character you'll be glad you met—and often a meal you'll remember. Then there's the completely unexpected, like a wildlife refuge and 40,000 or so sandhill cranes.

The lure of such surprises keeps us on the road. The possibility of a glimpse into the soul of a place will keep us coming back. Writer **Elroy Bode** made regular pilgrimages to the village of **Clint** to enjoy the feel of the town, and his story inspired **Joel Salcido's** photo essay in this issue.

It's yet another example of why we like to explore.

Charles J. Lohrmann, Editor

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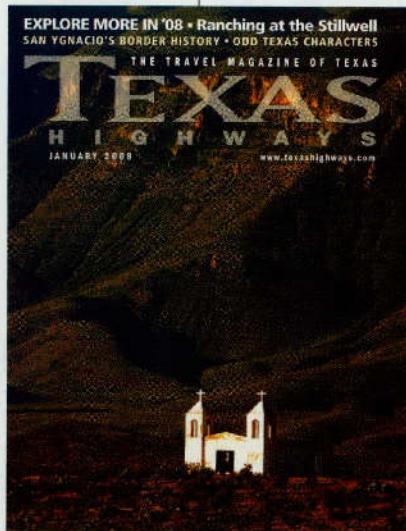


GO TEXAN.

All's Well at Stillwell

WE ENJOYED Dale Weisman's article on Hallie's Country [January] very much. On a trip to Big Bend [years ago] we stopped at her store and were given the key to her museum, which we really enjoyed. Miss Hallie did so many things and the museum painted a beautiful picture of her life. When we returned the key, we were informed that Miss Hallie would like to see us. We were led to a back room of the store where we had a wonderful visit with her. It was just like she knew us. She was in her early 90s at the time.

UEL AND DOTTIE TUTT
Colleyville



YOU HAVE ruined my husband's best-kept secret! We opened up the January issue, and there was a picture of the old ranch house where he camps when he goes to Black Gap

Wildlife Management Area. He has been going there for many years, driving his 1981 Jeep all the way from Smithville, for his rejuvenation vacation. I was only allowed to go once (!), and it was breathtaking and so very peaceful—only the sounds of nature. So if my husband doesn't come back rejuvenated this year, someone is gonna hear about it! Love the magazine,

and the photos are always so wonderful.

BRENDA WAMPLER
Smithville

From Creek to Sea

GREAT to have Reggie Ugwu's piece on Katherine Anne Porter in Speaking of Texas [January].

The item stated that she was a native of [and buried in] Indian Creek. So, where is Indian Creek? No map in my possession shows it.

WILLIAM THOMSON
Pasadena, California

ED. NOTE: Glad you enjoyed Reggie's item. Indian Creek is in southern Brown County, in the Panhandle Plains region.

MY UNCLE Frank Rushing was the model for one of Katherine Anne Porter's characters in the book *Ship of Fools*. He was awarded a scholarship as a young engineer at Westinghouse allowing him to study at the university of his choice. He selected one in Germany. To study the German language, he took a slow passage from our east coast to Germany via Veracruz, where Ms. Porter and her male companion boarded. They became friends, and when they arrived in Germany, my uncle loaned money to Ms. Porter. To his surprise, she later repaid the loan. They stayed in touch until her death. Uncle Frank is 101 and living in Dallas. Lee Marvin played the "Texan" in the movie version of *Ship of Fools*. He was nothing like the mild-mannered, intellectual Frank Rushing.

KELLY RUSHING
Houston

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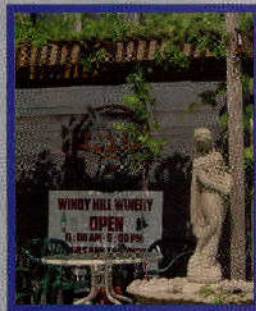
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A Star Was Born

REGARDING "Greetings From Groesbeck" [January]: You didn't mention Groesbeck's native son, actor Joe Don Baker.

LEANA JO HOVER
Prescott Valley, Arizona

ED. NOTE: A good add, Leana. Baker, who was born in Groesbeck in 1936, is probably best known for his role as Sheriff Buford Pusser in the 1973 classic *Walking Tall*.

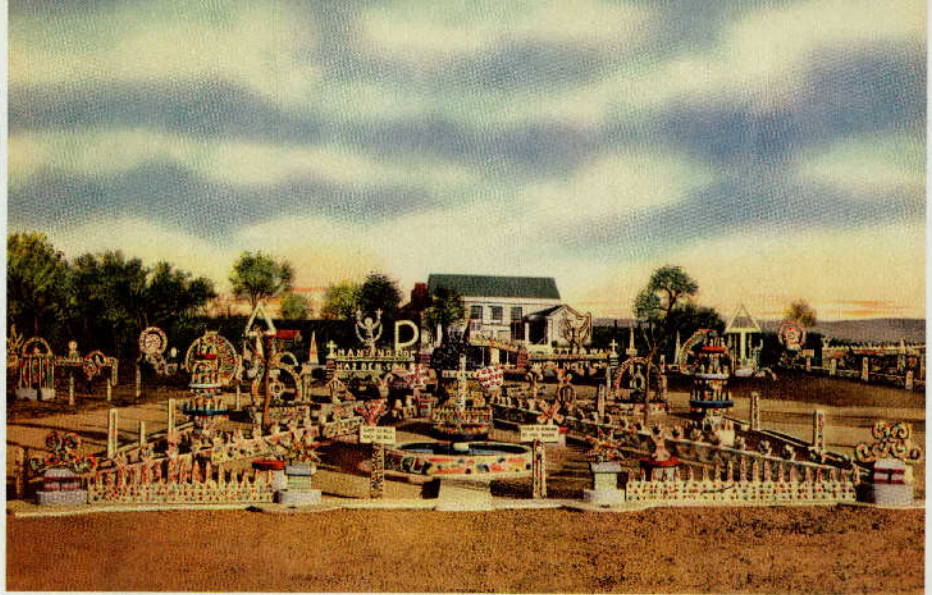
Panhandle Fan

THANKS for the Clarendon coverage [January]. It's one of my favorite towns in the state.

JAY RILEY
Pampa

Just the Right Shoe

CONCERNING the article about Ralph Sanders and "Jerry" the bull ["Maverick Mystery Tour," January]: The New York World's Fair opened in 1939. Ralph and Jerry did begin their journey

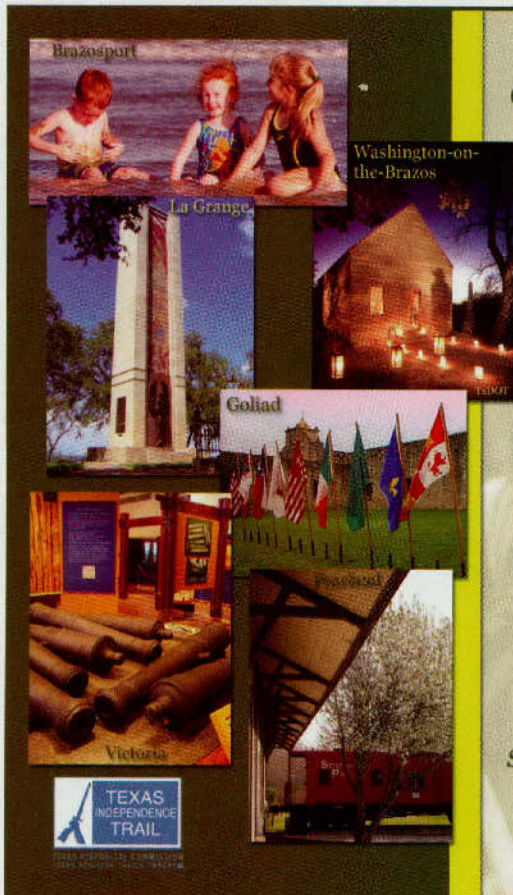


Our excerpt of Gene Fowler's new book, *Mavericks: A Gallery of Texas Characters*, in January included a postcard from Ray's Ornamental Gardens in Stephenville, "a mecca for lovers of the unusual and the bizarre." Editor Charles Lohmann has another card from Ray's (above), given to him by his late mother (who served as mayor of Stephenville).

from Brownsville, but by the time they got to Pharr (about 40 miles), Jerry's hooves were in bad shape. They had to stop and stay in a big mule barn. Someone noticed Jerry had been shod with horseshoes, not with shoes split like his hooves. John Buchheit, my granddad, had learned the blacksmith trade in Germany and had shod oxen there. He asked to have a look

at Jerry's hooves and [once the hooves healed] made the proper split shoes and shod him. Ralph and Jerry were off to New York! Granddad then made shoes for future use and sent them ahead to Ralph. That's why Jerry and Ralph made it!

JOE MAC JONES
Buda



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Los Corralitos

I READ with interest Penelope Warren's story on San Ygnacio [January]. Regarding the mention of Los Corralitos: In 1999, the National Ranching Heritage Center (NRHC) in Lubbock broke ground to construct a replica of that same Los Corralitos for our 16-acre museum and historical park. Although we had always moved the actual historical building to the park for restoration, interpretation, and preservation, relocating the real Los Corralitos was impossible.

Los Corralitos, built around 1780 near Laredo not far from the Rio Grande, represents the genesis of ranching in Texas. It was a fortified house, with gunports, one door, no windows, and a deep secret.

It protected the family within its walls from Indian attacks and marauders from across the river. ... As the attacks diminished, the family built a traditional house nearby. And what did they do with Los Corralitos, the highly fortified building? They dug up the dirt floors and buried their dead family members there, knowing no one could disturb the graves.

When it came time for the NRHC to move Los Corralitos to Lubbock, we learned about the graves—and we didn't disturb the building. The walls of the original Los Corralitos continue to shelter their dead by the Rio Grande.

The NRHC [www.depts.ttu.edu/ranchhc] is a museum and historical park comprised of 47 authentic historic structures representing the evolution of cattle ranching in America. That is, 46—plus one replication.

MARSHA PFLUGER
Associate Director, NRHC
Lubbock

Corrections:

In January's Talk to TH, the letter from Bonnie Huston in "TH Gets Around" should be attributed to Alice Jones. Thanks to Bonnie for bringing the error to light, and bravo to Alice for helping our troops. Also, thanks to A.W. Mohle, Jr., for letting us know about a typo in January's For the Road: In the "Map Quest" item, the date for the map that predicted the Texas Revolution should be 1835, not 1845.

WRITE OR E-MAIL: Talk to TH, Texas Highways, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009; fax 512/486-5879; e-mail: letters 05@texashighways.com. Web site: www.texashighways.com. Though we are unable to print every letter, we just might select yours to appear in the magazine—whether you send us kudos or criticism. We reserve the right to edit letters.

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FOR THE ROAD

THIS MONTH'S TOP PICKS AND PLACES

An Abundance of Fun

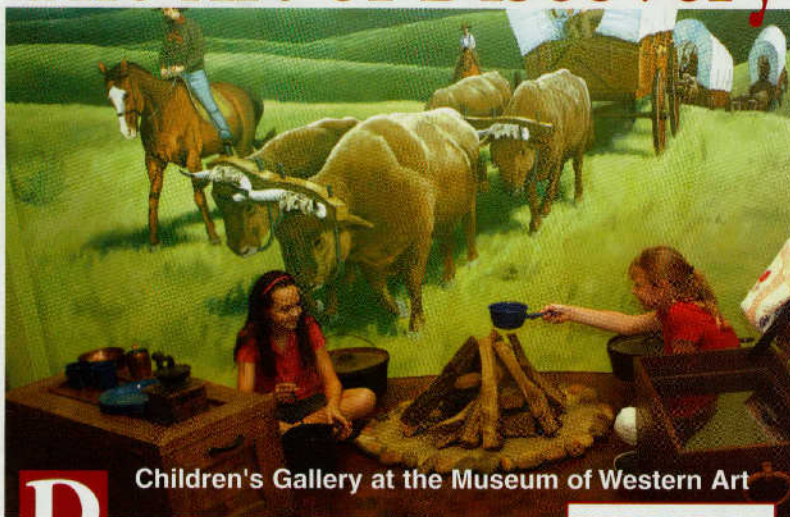
WE HAVE A PROBLEM WITH HOUSTON THIS MONTH, but it's a good problem: There's so much going on in March that it's tough to recommend just one event. Here's the short list: **Discovery Green**—a former asphalt swath turned urban park, complete with a lake, gardens, oak-lined paths, restaurants, and theatrical space—has its public preview party on March 1. And March 3-22, the **Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo** brings bull-riders, barrel-racers, and steer-wrestlers to Reliant Stadium along with popular performers such as Faith Hill (with her man Tim McGraw) and Fergie. Elsewhere in town, the **Museum of Fine Arts, Houston**, opens *Pompeii: Tales from an Eruption* (March 2-June 22), the **Bayou City Art Festival** takes over Memorial Park (March 28-30), salsa dancers shake it for the **4th Annual Texas Salsa Congress** (March 14-16),



© ZHUANG XUEBEN

FOTOFEST2008, held in Houston through April 20, focuses on photography from China. Photographer Zhuang Xueben (1909-1984) took this image, *Young Tibetan Noble Girl*, in 1936 in the Gansu province of Western China.

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and the 74th Annual Azalea Trail (March 7-9) celebrates spring's riot of heirloom flowers.

But throughout the months of March and April, there's one event you'll encounter most everywhere you go, and that's FotoFest's 12th Biennial, **FOTOFEST2008-CHINA 1934-2008**. Every other year, FotoFest—an international, Houston-based photographic arts and education organization—selects a theme and invites more than 100 spaces, galleries, museums, retail venues, and corporate spaces to show the work of artists from across the globe. FOTOFEST2008 presents 10 new exhibitions (more than 1,000 images) by Chinese photographers, along with works by other artists that illustrate the complementary theme of "Transformations." The Chinese images will range from historical shots taken as early as 1934 to contemporary, mixed-media pieces created this year. Along with the many exhibitions, a fine print auction, a symposium on 20th-Century Chinese photography, numerous professional workshops, and a film series will also shed light on the state of photography in China.

You can download a map to exhibition locations at www.fotofest.org, or you can pick one up at art spaces throughout town. —L.M.

ON THE WATERFRONT

OF THE SIX HIGHLAND LAKES IN CENTRAL Texas—Lake Buchanan, Inks Lake, Lake LBJ, Lake Marble Falls, Lake Travis, and Lake Austin—the upper reaches of Lake Buchanan are the most peaceful. Perhaps that's why bald eagles nest in trees along its shores and islands in winter and early spring. Here are two options to see them.

If you'd like to relax in climate-controlled comfort, sipping coffee while you take in the beauty of the Colorado River canyons, reserve a spot on a tour led by **Vanishing Texas River Cruise**, which offers guided excursions through prime eagle-watching territory from November through March. In March, you're likely to see recently fledged eaglets, as well as pelicans, egrets, herons, and terns.

If you're up for some exercise, however, and want to get closer to the water and the birds, look up **Lake Buchanan Adventures**, a kayak outfitter that offers guided river treks and rents vessels to independent folks who want to explore on their own. For example, a half-day adventure might include paddling up to **Fall Creek Vineyards** (about two miles each way) for a wine-tasting and a picnic. And it's four miles each way to the lake's headwaters, a "challenging, but doable paddle," says Lake Buchanan Adventures owner Tom Clark. "But you don't have to go that far to see eagles. The best place to see them is at Garrett Island, in the canyon area, which is three miles from our dock," he says.

Both companies have their headquarters near Burnet at **Canyon of the Eagles Lodge & Nature Park**, which offers upscale accommodations and dining, campsites and RV hook-ups, 14 miles of hiking trails, and an observatory. For information about the Vanishing Texas River Cruise, call 800/474-8374; www.vtrc.com. For more about Lake Buchanan Adventures, call 512/756-9911; www.lakebuchananadventures.com. And to learn about Canyon of the Eagles, call 800/977-0081; www.canyonoftheeagles.com. —L.M.

INDEPENDENT SPIRIT

HERE IN THE TEXAS HIGHWAYS OFFICES, we regularly receive correspondence from readers who tell us how proud they are to be Texans. They name their dogs Alamo and their sons Austin and Dallas. They send us songs and heartfelt poems about Texas' beauty. They wear T-shirts emblazoned with the state's flag, literally wearing their affection for Texas on their sleeves. And we've heard from more than one proud father who brought Texas dirt to the maternity ward in other states, thus ensuring their kids are born on Lone Star soil.

Do other states in the Union inspire such ardent devotion? We're biased, of course, but we doubt it. If you've been too shy to profess your love, consider joining one of the many statewide celebrations of **Texas Independence Day**, March 2. That should get you in the spirit.

One of the state's most elaborate celebrations of Texas independence takes place March 1-2 at **Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site**, a 293-acre park between Navasota and Brenham, along the Brazos River. This is where, 172 years ago on March 2, Texas declared independence from Mexico.

During the event, you might think you're in 19th-Century Texas. Reenactors will portray period craftsmen, settlers, and members of the Texian Army; banjo and fiddle players will entertain with music of the era; and storytellers and historians will interpret events of this revolutionary period. And on March 1, the park's **Star of the Republic Museum** unveils a new exhibit, *Audubon's Creations: His Texas Legacy*, a series of mammal engravings by naturalist John Audubon, who made several trips to Texas in the 1830s and 1840s. You can see the exhibit through August 31.

All admission fees are waived for the celebra-

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FOR THE ROAD

tion. For more details, call 979/878-2461; www.birthplaceoftexas.com. —L.M.

A SENSE OF PLACE

THROUGH AUGUST 3, THE HARRY RANSOM Center in Austin focuses on the cities, landscapes, and communities that shaped the writers of the Beat Generation from the early 1940s to the mid-1960s. *On the Road with the Beats* features more than 250 items drawn from the Ransom Center's collections, including letters, notebooks, first editions, sound recordings, and the first 48 feet (!) of Jack Kerouac's scroll manuscript of *On the Road*, which will be on view March 7 through June 1.

Locales such as New York, San Francisco, Mexico City, Tangier, Calcutta, and Paris figure prominently into the works of the Beats, so "Place, travel, and motion were a natural way to frame the Ransom Center's holdings," says exhibition curator Molly Schwartzburg. Schwartzburg also chose to highlight certain themes—jazz and marriage, for example—in the exhibition. For insight into one disillusioned view of romance, for example, don't miss Gregory Corso's funny and unsettling poem "Marriage." Call 512/471-8944; www.hrc.utexas.edu. —L.M.

SOUL POWER

BEAUMONT RARELY FAILS TO AMAZE visitors. After all, it has museums galore (more than 20 at last count), nightclubs and live music, historic homes, luxurious and low-key lodgings, outdoors attractions such as alligator-viewing by airboat or kayak, and fine (and funky) restaurants too numerous to count. (If you want fantabulous Cajun food without going all the way to Louisiana, you'll find your meal ticket in the Beaumont-Port Arthur area.) And while those of you with delicate constitutions may wither here in the steamy summer months, March is just about ideal for a Beaumont adventure.

If you come here partly for the eatin', you'll appreciate your smart thinking if you visit on March 7-8, during the **National Soul Food Cookoff Competition**, held in the Beaumont Civic Center. Five categories—meat, vegetable, dessert, bread, and miscellaneous—bring contestants from throughout the South, who vie for cash prizes. (Entry fees go toward college scholarships, a nice bonus.) Here's your chance to

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GREEKS AND ROMANS RETURN

WHEN THE MUCH-ANTICIPATED LENORA and Walter F. Brown Asian Art Wing of the San Antonio Museum of Art opened in 2005, the museum—already known for its vast collection of Latin American art—could finally display its

1,500-strong collection of artwork from Asia, including antiquities dating back 6,000 years. The only trouble was that the museum had put its impressive Greek and Roman holdings in storage during construction.

On March 2, though, the museum will reopen its galleries of Greek, Etruscan, and Roman artworks. Some pieces haven't been seen since 2002. "We've done a lot during the reinstal-



This Greek ceremonial vase, which depicts a woman flanked by mourners, dates to ca. 350-340 B.C.

GIFT OF GILBERT M. DENMAN, JR.

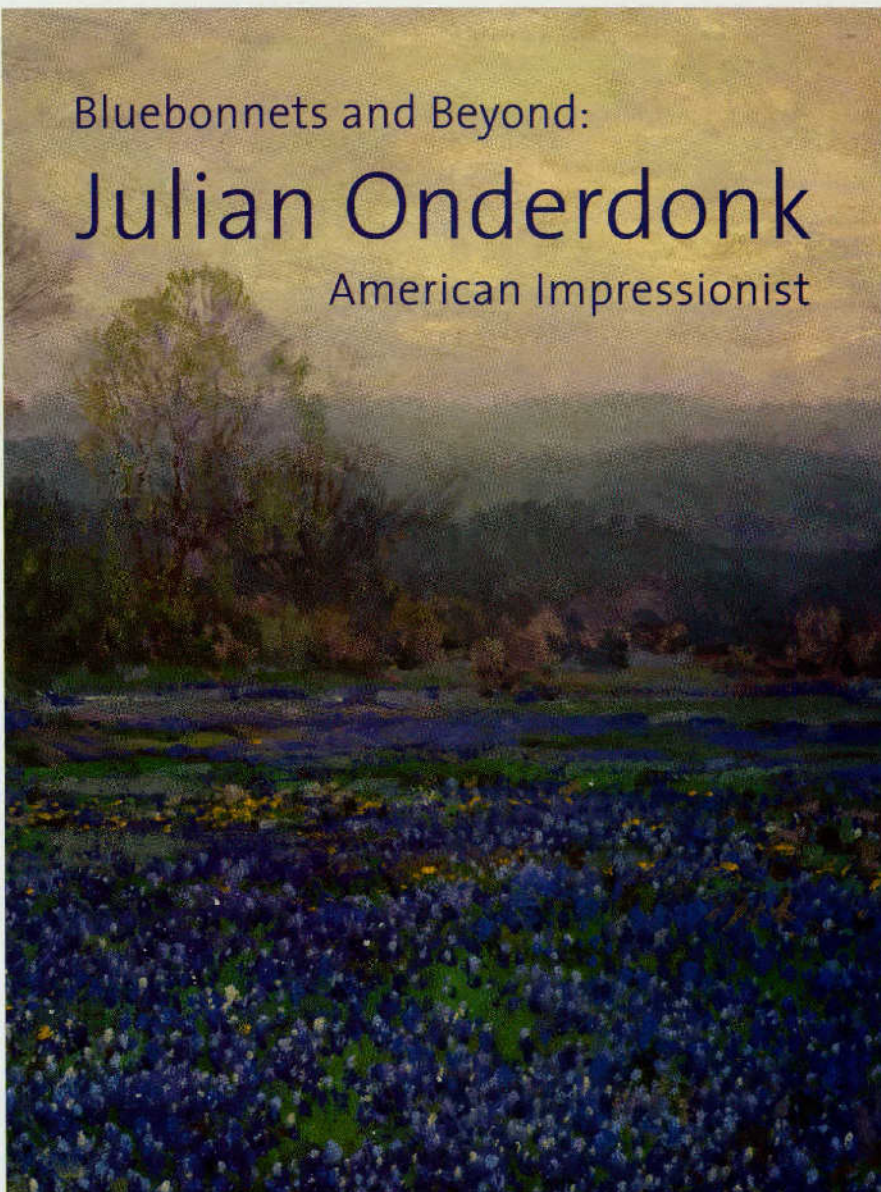
to make the artworks approachable," says curator Jessica Powers. "The earliest materials date to 3,000 B.C.,

give or take, and the latest material is from A.D. 400. And since we realize that many people may not know a lot about those periods, we've added better maps, introduced thematic aspects of the cultures, and explained different parts of Greek and Roman life," she says.

"The pieces can be very revealing," Powers says. "Take the Roman sculptures," she says. "You can walk up to them and be face-to-face with these ancient faces. They have a variety of facial expressions and hairstyles, and you'll see a range of ages."

Also, she notes, the Greeks didn't drink wine straight. So those large (continued on page 12)

Bluebonnets and Beyond: Julian Onderdonk American Impressionist



OPENS MARCH 23

Bluebonnets and Beyond celebrates the work of Julian Onderdonk, a great artist and native son. Christened "The Bluebonnet Painter," Onderdonk transformed the Texas landscape, creating indelible images of the Lone Star State.

Bluebonnets and Beyond: Julian Onderdonk, American Impressionist is organized by the Dallas Museum of Art. The exhibition is sponsored by Hibbs-Hallmark & Company and Federal Title, Inc., members of the Texas-based Heartland Security Insurance Group.



Additional support is provided by Bank of Texas, by Valero, through a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts, and by The Donor Circle membership program through leadership gifts of the Gay and Lesliann Fund for Dallas. Air transportation provided by American Airlines.

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The Dallas Museum of Art is supported in part by the generosity of Museum members and donors and by the citizens of Dallas through the City of Dallas/Office of Cultural Affairs and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

Julian Onderdonk, *Untitled (Field of Bluebonnets)* (detail), n.d., oil on canvas, Dallas Museum of Art, bequest of Margaret M. Ferris, 1993.153.

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Art of the Snapshot

THROUGH APRIL 27, THE AMON CARTER Museum in Fort Worth showcases nearly 200 anonymous photographs in the exhibition *The Art of the American Snapshot, 1888-1978*. Organized by the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., this is the first major exhibition to examine the evolution of snapshot imagery in America. "There's an immediacy and innocence to snapshot photography, a focus on the moment," says exhibition curator John Rohrbach. "This is a fascinating show because it's filled with questions—who are these people and what were they doing? It's like looking at the family album without the turmoil of emotional context." Call 817/738-1933; www.cartermuseum.org. —L.M.



Use your imagination as you explore the exhibition *The Art of the American Snapshot, 1888-1978*.

ATTENTION, SHUTTERBUGS! Inspired by the exhibit at the Amon Carter, we'd love to see your favorite snapshot (recent or vintage) of friends and family on vacation in Texas. Are you fishing at Lake Conroe? Boarding a cruise ship in Galveston? We may run them in a future story on travel snapshots in Texas. Please include as much information as you can, and provide your e-mail address or phone number in case we have questions. *Do not send originals, as we can't return them. Digital files are fine.* Send to Texas Snapshots, Box 141009, Austin, TX 78714-1009, or e-mail images to letters05@texashighways.com.



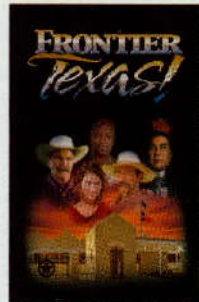
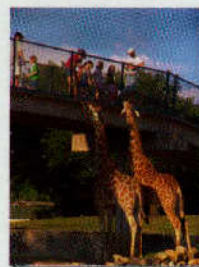
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- ★ Step back into time at Buffalo Gap Historic Village
- ★ See artists in action at The Center for Contemporary Arts
- ★ Book time for the National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature
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(continued from page 11) vases—"they're called kraters, and they're almost as big as a keg," Powers says—"were used to mix wine with water."

Learn more by calling 210/978-8100; www.masuseum.org. —L.M.

BLUEBONNETS?

AT PRESS TIME IN JANUARY, WE CAN'T SAY whether 2008 will be a good season for bluebonnets. It doesn't *look* promising: In much of the state, rainfall has been scarce during the vital winter months. But being glass-half-full types of people, we like to think we'll doubly appreciate those scrappy and wily flowers who do make it this year. (And forgive us for anthropomorphizing the state's flower.)

A handful of towns across Texas will celebrate the season in March and April with driving tours and festivities, including **Mason** (with its annual **Bluebonnet Country Driving Tours**, March 1-April 31; www.masontxoc.com) and **Fredericksburg** and surrounding communities (with the **Texas Hill Country Wildflower Trail**, March 1-April 31; www.tex-fest.com). Wildflower season comes a little later in the northern parts of the state, so stay tuned. —L.M.

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THE GIFTED GUNSLINGER

It's unclear exactly how many people Ben Thompson killed during his colorful life as a gambler, soldier, desperado, and saloon owner, but he was definitely not a man that even the most famous outlaws of the Old West wanted to come up against in a fast-draw contest. Born in 1843, Thompson moved to Austin from England at a young age with his family. As a teenager, he learned that gambling could be a profession and that killing a man was an effective way to win an argument—whether it be a dispute over questionable card playing, a stolen mule, or the honor of a woman.

During the 1860s, Thompson served in the Confederate Army, often relying on his gun to end disagreements with his fellow soldiers. After the Civil War, he spent several years at the Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville for murdering his brother-in-law. Following his release, he ran gambling houses and worked as a hired gun across the South and Midwest.

By the late 1870s, the gunslinger moved back to Austin and opened the Iron Front Saloon. So what did Austinites do with a desperado that was as sanguinary as he was fearless? They elected him city marshal, of course. (It's believed that he won by default after shooting the incumbent, Captain Edward Creary, according to the book *Tales of Bad Men, Bad Women, and Bad Places*, by C.F. Eckhardt.) Thompson excelled in law enforcement, that is, until he committed yet another murder.

This time the victim was Jack Harris, owner of the Vaudeville Variety Theater in San Antonio. Harris claimed that Thompson rigged a card game in his favor. Hearing none of it, he shot Harris in the heart. Thompson was tried and acquitted of murder, but his days as a lawman were over. In 1884, demonstrating more bravado than brilliance, he walked straight into an ambush at the



Born in England in 1843; Ben Thompson moved to Texas, where he gained a reputation as a ruthless gunman.

Vaudeville and was killed at the age of 41 by some of Harris' associates. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Austin.

—Amber Novak, Austin

COME FLY WITH ME

Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." Those words by astronaut Neil Armstrong mark one of the most significant of all aviation feats. Thirty-six years prior, another great aeronautical accomplishment took place when Texas an Wiley Hardeman Post became the

first person to fly solo around the world.

Born in Van Zandt County in 1898, Post saw his first airplane at a county fair when he was a teenager. He immediately decided he would one day learn to fly. In 1919, he paid \$25 to ride in an open-cockpit biplane, but found the experience uneventful. Five years later, the thrill seeker parachuted out of an airplane operated by the "Texas Topnotch Fliers," a barnstorming troupe, and was hooked. While making subsequent flights and jumps, he made his first solo flight in 1926, according to the National Air and Space Museum.

Desperate for money, Post worked in the Oklahoma oilfields, but within months, an accident cost him an eye. Fortunately, he earned enough workers' compensation to purchase a used airplane, in which he gave rides and taught flying lessons. This was how he met Mae Laine. The couple soon decided to get married, but faced opposition from Laine's parents, so they eloped—by plane, of course—to Oklahoma.

In 1930, Post purchased a plane called the *Winnie Mae*, which he piloted during the Los Angeles-Chicago air derby. He won. He later joined Australian navigator Harold Gatty in a flight around the world in a then-astounding 8 days, 15 hours, and 51 minutes. In 1933, Post shattered that time when he completed the first solo flight around the world in just 7 days, 18 hours, and 49-and-a-half minutes.

In 1935, humorist Will Rogers called on Post to fly him to Siberia in a new hybrid Orion-Explorer airplane. On August 15, upon takeoff, the engine abruptly quit and the plane crashed. Both men, to use the words of Post's brother Gordon, "flew into eternity."

The *Winnie Mae* and the world's first pressurized flight suit, which Post helped develop, are on display at the National Air and Space Museum in Virginia.

—Steven Schwartzman, Austin

Spotlight on DRIPPING SPRINGS

Things to do in Drippin'

DECADES AGO, IF SOMEONE HAD asked me: "What's there to do in Dripping Springs?" I would have shrugged and said, "Beats me." I thought of Dripping Springs as just a place to zip through on the way to parts west. That was back when "Drippin,'" as the locals call it, was still primarily a ranching community where talk at the coffee shop revolved around the goats that grazed the area's rocky terrain, and where the feed store was almost as busy as the grocery. Over the years, as most of the ranches became residential developments, Drippin' evolved into a bedroom community for Austin commuters. Despite continuing urban

sprawl, Drippin' still has small-town charm with shops, galleries, bed and breakfasts, locally owned eateries, and nearby Reimers Ranch Park, an ideal spot for mountain biking and rock climbing. But what draws me to Drippin' is its active arts community.

Last March, my husband, Carl, and I drove over to Drippin' for the Sculpture Challenge, an annual competition and exhibition of sculptures by Texas artists. Originated by artist Philip Hoggatt in 2006, the event takes place on the grounds of Hoggatt's business, Carved Stone. Hoggatt welcomed us to his beautiful showroom—a modern building that looks centuries old thanks to hand-hewn rockwork and carpentry—and told us, "It's more fun out here meeting interesting people than back there in my workshop grinding on rocks."

Hoggatt comes from a long line of masons, but in the late 1980s, he said, he started to find his own style of working with stone. "Southwestern University in Georgetown was renovating their old library," he said, "and I started making planter boxes out of dis-



Richard Heinichen set up his first rainwater-collection system to avoid using the extremely hard local water. Today, Heinichen's business, Tank Town, helps people harvest rainwater themselves.

carded slabs of rock." Today, he specializes in carving bookends, lamp bases, candle holders, clocks, and other decorating accessories.

Outside the showroom, we paused to enjoy the Spanish classical music of John "Solo Vato" Castruita, a 12-string guitarist from Austin, then studied the sculptures in the competition. They ranged from Jim Lovejoy's Indian effigy of sleek onyx emerging from a polished granite base to Mike Bond's grinning gargoyle perched on a cedar stump. The winning sculpture that

FOR MORE about Dripping Springs' arts community, see www.artistsofdripping.com. The **Sculpture Challenge** takes place March 1; www.sculpturechallenge.com.

For information about Dripping Springs, call 512/858-4740; www.drippingsspringstx.org.



day was Del Valle sculptor Martin Fry's miniature replica of a Hill Country ranch home featuring 11 kinds of stones, plus live bonsai trees and a flowing stream. Fry used rose quartz to

make the windows, local limestone to fashion the fireplace and front-porch rocking chair, and hundreds of Mexican beach pebbles to adorn the cabin's ex-

terior. The scene even included sheep carved from Cordova Cream limestone.

The Sculpture Challenge whetted my appetite for further exploration of Dripping Springs' arts community. So, I returned to Drippin' later, with my friend Sandy Yolland, to tour the studios of sculptor Gary Thompson, ceramicist Melodie Greider, and Roberta Wesley and her daughter-in-law, Julie Speir.

Thompson, the metal artisan at Lonesome Sage Longhorn Ranch, forges copper and brass into yuccas, cactus, agave, and other plants, incorporating them into accessories like lamps and mirrors. Recalling his early days moonlighting out of a one-car garage, Thompson said, "I was so poor back then I couldn't afford the copper, so I used Crisco cans." When you're an artist, you find a way.

North of town, Melodie Greider welcomed us to her Stick Horse Studios, where she creates intricate mosaic murals for homes and public spaces. As we thumbed through Greider's portfolio, Sandy and I were fascinated by pictures of her "poolscape"—underwater scenes of fish



Wayne Rossi creates metal sculptures at D.S. Iron Works.

and aquatic plants that add a "wow!" factor to a ho-hum pool. For the Domain, Austin's newest upscale shopping center, Greider created 25 tile mosaics, which are inlaid into the limestone walls that border landscaping beds.

Roberta Wesley and Julie Speir showcase their artwork at Wesley Gallery, the starting point for the Artists of Dripping Springs' Spring Studio Tour. Speir creates art glass, from brightly colored serving pieces to dangly earrings in iridescent shades. Wesley looks to nature for inspiration: Eagles soaring above a mountain lake and a horse nursing a colt are just two of the scenes she has captured in her realistic paintings.

Drippin' still has small-town charm with shops, galleries, bed and breakfasts, locally owned eateries, and nearby Reimers Ranch Park.

More than 40 artisans live and work in Dripping Springs, so I figure I have lots more to explore. And heading home, I discovered that art in Dripping Springs isn't limited to galleries or studios. I smiled at the sight of Richard Heinichen's Tank Town, where a row of rainbow-colored water tanks helps spread the word about rainwater collection. You can buy Heinichen's "Cloud Juice" at Drippin' restaurants and throughout the greater Austin area, or you can pick up a case on site at Tank Town.

Just the other day, someone asked me, "What's there to do in Dripping Springs?" I just grinned and asked, "How much time do you have?"

—BY MAXINE MAYES, PHOTOS ©TOM WILLIAMSON

ON THE FARM For some insight into life in Dripping Springs more than 150 years ago, visit the **Dr. Pound Pioneer Farmstead Historical Museum**, which preserves the home of Dr. Joseph Pound and his wife, Sarah. Built in 1854 of hand-hewn cypress and oak logs, the Pound house is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Most of the home's original furnishings and artifacts still remain, including a medicine cabinet full of instruments and "potions," a canvas ceiling, a mattress filled with cotton bolls, a kerosene chandelier in the parlor, and an innovative indoor-outdoor water cistern, which allowed the Pounds access to water from the dining room. Call 512/694-0874; www.drpoundpioneerfarmstead.com.

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NOTEWORTHY CULINARY JOURNEYS

BY CHARLES LOHRMANN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOM WILLIAMSON

The Magic of Meringue

CAN A SYMMETRICALLY SCULPTED meringue exert hypnotic power over humans? After an hour of watching folks yield to temptation in the Koffee Kup Family Restaurant in Hico, I'm ready to answer that question in the affirmative. As I enjoyed a late lunch one fall afternoon, I observed several unsuspecting customers as they entered the front door of the café. They first scanned the room, and, when their eyes fell on the pie case behind the cash register, stopped. Each one then turned slowly and approached this three-pies-wide shrine, staring intently at the frothy masterpieces.

As if under a spell, each—while holding their gazes on the golden mounds—then asked, “What kind of pies do you have?” In each case, the waitress dutifully recited the litany, “Chocolate meringue, lemon meringue, coconut meringue. . . .” But I'm convinced the words were not important, because the listeners stood firmly in the thrall of the meringue itself.

And who could blame them? Even if meringue does not have supernatural powers, it offers a magical texture, mysteriously ephemeral taste, and pleasing shape. It's important to note that the Koffee Kup deplores the peaked, wavy meringue in favor of the smooth, rounded shape. Each school has its devotees, but the spherical profile, particularly when completely intact, has symmetry going for it if nothing else.

In fact, I recommend that any group entering the Koffee Kup simply skip the notion of the conventional meal and proceed directly to the most important matter at hand. Select a meringue pie—



Pie is what you're there for, and there's no reason to delay the indulgence.



coconut is the best choice for my money—and request the appropriate number of utensils. When the pie arrives on the table, all participants should, following an anticipatory moment of silence, immediately plunge their forks into the meringue. Why postpone this rare sensory pleasure for something so prosaic as

lunch or dinner? Or even breakfast. Pie is what you're there for, and there's no reason to delay the indulgence, whether it's early morning or after sunset.

On the other hand, if you are bound by convention to order a meal, that need can be happily satisfied, but there's the risk that the edge of anticipation will be dulled. If you're not a worshiper at the meringue shrine, pity on you. Even though the Koffee Kup offers alternatives in the form of cream pies and fruit pies, there can be no delight more pure than the coconut meringue. At the Koffee Kup, it outdistances both chocolate and lemon. There is a caramel meringue, but that flavor is hyperbolic. And I can't imagine why anyone would consider peanut butter meringue, but there it is on the menu. There are no answers for some questions.

If you're determined to actually eat a meal before you eat dessert, I can tell you there are regulars who testify to the café's excellence. The place seems to always be busy, so I try to target my meals for slightly after the typical rush—but if your arrival coincides with a herd of motorcyclists or a slew of traveling sports fans in team colors, you'll have to take your chances.

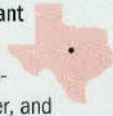
Meringue takes center stage at Hico's Koffee Kup. TOP: Even though the chocolate meringue pie looks good, and the banana-blueberry cream has its advocates, both take a back seat to the coconut meringue, which looms in the background. The highway sign, above, gets it right.

As I pondered the pie choices, I absent-mindedly studied the Koffee Kup's overall menu, which has evolved over three decades. There's a typical range of breakfast offerings (served all day except 11-2), plus enchiladas, nachos, chicken livers, speciality burgers, and onion rings that looked dangerous on their own. I counted up to 150 unusual salt-and-pepper shaker sets locked in two glass-fronted displays on the wall.

I was feeling carnivorous (the Koffee Kup menu was not designed with vegetarians in mind) so I quickly ordered the eight-ounce rib eye. In this case, the wise course is to ask for medium—not rare. My expectations were endangered by the chopped iceberg salad, but the steak turned out to be an excellent choice, arriving with a plate of light and crunchy

THE KOFFEE KUP Family Restaurant

stands at the intersection of US 281 and Texas 6 in Hico. The complete menu—breakfast, lunch, dinner, and pies—is posted online at www.koffeekupfamilyrestaurant.com. Hours: 6 a.m.–9:30 p.m. every day except Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Call 254/796-4839.



french fries. The yeasty rolls were amazing, and I had to ask the waitress to wrap them to go. And, in this case, I got the pie to go as well. It's important to know that the Koffee Kup offers a specially engineered to-go container, designed to keep the four-inch-high meringue intact—no small feat. I ended up having the chocolate pie for supper a few hours later. And the apple pie for breakfast the next morning, along with the yeast rolls and honey.

When you visit the Koffee Kup (and you will), the food will all be good enough. Maybe better than good. But you probably won't be able to take your mind off that meringue.

Despite a longtime adherence to the philosophy of wavy meringue, CHARLES LOHRMANN now believes in the smoothly sculptured meringue as defined by the Koffee Kup. And he's a better person for it.

TOM WILLIAMSON recently moved back to Austin from Hong Kong and is pursuing photography on Texas soil. He says many events in Hong Kong focus on food, but none of the intriguing dishes he saw there could prepare him for the Koffee Kup's amazing pies.

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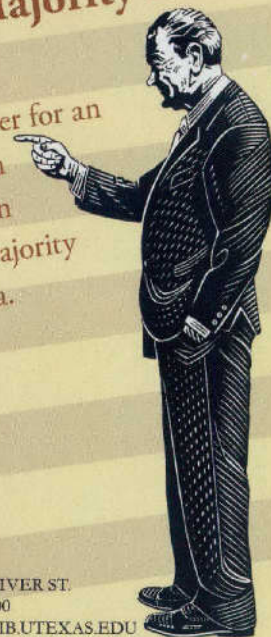
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CLINT

in a special light

photographic essay by Joel Salcido

inspired by Elroy Bode's *In a Special Light*



AFTER LIVING A YEAR in a Spanish village, I discovered my profound appreciation for small-town life. Towns like Clint continue to be a refuge for me from urban living. I believe author Elroy Bode understands that well. While making these photographs, I read his short story about Clint every morning and evening as inspiration for creating my own poetry. —JOEL SALCIDO

FACING PAGE: "... WHEN I CAME TO THE OPEN SPACE OF THE COTTON FIELDS I STOOD FOR A LONG TIME ...", WRITES BODE. ABOVE: A HORSE AND COLT ARE AT HOME IN CLINT'S AGRARIAN SETTING.

CLINT

in a special light



ABOVE: WHETHER ON A DWELLING OR A PICNIC TABLE, RICH SOUTHWESTERN COLOR UNDER A BLUE SKY INFORMS CLINT'S PLAINTIVE TAPESTRY. RIGHT: DEPUTY COURT CLERK SUSANA RODRIGUEZ (LEFT) AND TOWN CLERK FABIOLA OCHOA HELP RUN THIS WEST TEXAS COMMUNITY OF 900-PLUS RESIDENTS.

Text from *In a Special Light*, by Elroy Bode, ©2006. Reprinted by permission of Trinity University Press.

I TOOK MY WEEKLY LATE-AFTERNOON DRIVE DOWN TO CLINT. I could see the Clint water tower as I turned off the interstate from El Paso and went down into the Lower Valley. The cotton and alfalfa fields, the distant mountains in Mexico, the desert space—they began to work their late-afternoon chemistry on me. I passed farmhouses, lone cottonwoods, canals. The farm-to-market road had a worn, comforting shine, like the skin of an elephant.

At the park across from the Catholic church, I stopped beneath a row of elms and read for a while. I liked to do that: just sit in my car and read and drink coffee from the thermos on the front seat and now and then look out the window. Boys were throwing a ball around in the park. Roosters crowed in a nearby yard. The faint smell of barbecue was in the air.

I began my walk through the neighborhood. At the side of the churchyard a man filled plastic jugs from the church water fountain and put them into the back of his pickup. Across the street the old man and his wife were sitting, as usual, on their front porch in straight-back wooden chairs, watching the man fill the jugs to take to his home in a nearby *colonia*. The porch seemed to give them their daily life: shade in the morning, sun in the afternoon, the cars that drove slowly past, the sparrows in the tall churchyard trees. They nodded to me as I walked by. We were familiar sights to each other.

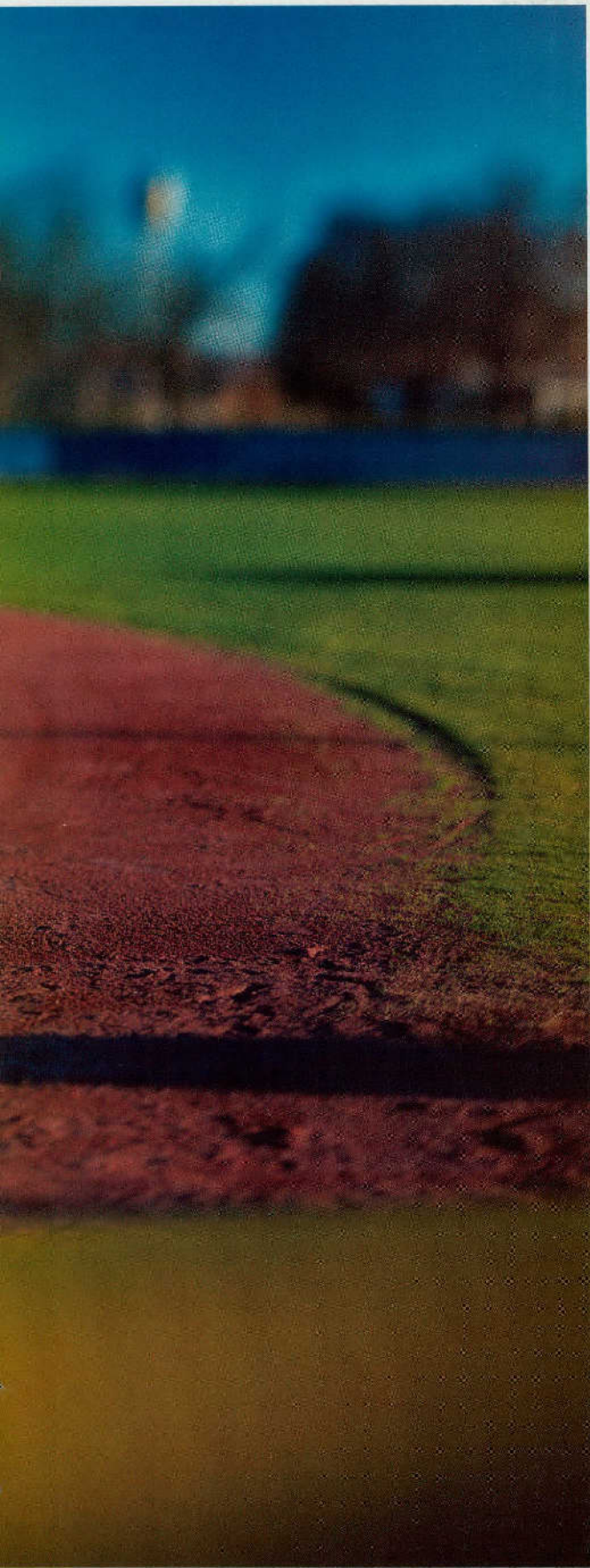




CLINT HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL COACH JANELLE GODWIN AND CATCHER SUSY ESPARZA (IN BACKGROUND) WARM UP AT THE BALLPARK.

CLINT

in a special light



A CHINABERRY TREE SERVES AS A BIRDHOUSE SUBDIVISION.

I passed the Clint houses and their small yards, and it was as if they belonged to me, as if I had earned the right to incorporate them into my own life because I took such satisfaction in seeing them there week after week: the dogs behind their fences, the Virgin Mary decorations beside the front doors, the small boys chasing each other around chinaberry trees, the trucks in the driveways with their Dallas Cowboys stickers in the rear windows.

On the street that led north out of town, doves were sitting on the telephone wires—orderly, like members of a club, facing west and the lowering sun. I kept walking, past pens of horses and sheep, and when I came to the open space of the cotton fields I stood for a long time, once again feeling that I should make a pronouncement of some kind in the presence of such a wideness



A CLINT RED CHILE VENDOR HOLDS SHOP NEAR THE TOWN'S WATER TOWER.




CLINT MAYOR DALE T. REINHARDT INVITES YOU TO COME VISIT THE HISTORIC MISSION TRAIL.

of sky, such a stretching out of the land. I wanted to be equal to such spaciousness. But I was not, had never been, and I was forced, once more, to turn around, empty of any kind of summing up.

I walked back into Clint—to the yards and gardens, the shade trees, the silent houses and silent windows, the side streets and long-abandoned stores. I sank into small-town late-afternoon-ness. I stood at a street corner as the sun rays angled in from the horizon and lit up carpet grass in one yard, cast long shadows across the sidewalk in another. I remained there—waiting, receptive, as if I had lost something important in just such a place long ago and, if I remained still and unobtrusive, I might catch a glimpse of it again, might manage to reclaim it and let a puzzling, incomplete part of me finally become whole.

—ELROY BODE

APACHE Chief Victorio, Texas Ranger James B. Gillett, Pat Garrett, Billy the Kid, Pancho Villa, Johnny Cash, and Jack Kerouac are but a few of the many historic notables who have passed through this small West Texas farming (cotton, corn, chile) community of nearly 1,000, on Texas 20 just off I-10, about 20 miles southeast of El Paso. **For more information on Clint**, contact Town Hall, 200 N. San Elizario Rd.; 915/851-3146.



march

gladness

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS

BY RANDY MALLORY

MENTION STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY in Nacogdoches, and I think of towering pine trees. The East Texas school was, after all, carved out of a loblolly forest in the 1920s, and the college mascot is a lumberjack.

Pines still cover the campus in a canopy of green, but last spring my mind turned to the other side of the color chart, to a riot of reds, pinks, and purples I experienced in the university's Ruby M. Mize

Azalea Garden.

The eight-acre azalea garden, the state's largest, is the springtime star of three gardens on campus. LaNana Creek flows between the azalea garden and the SFA Mast Arboretum, an 11-acre themed horticultural garden. A few blocks north sits the Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 40 acres of forest

habitat. All three form a living laboratory for students, visitors, and the nursery and landscaping industry.



FACING PAGE: A trail at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center offers easy access to a fertile creek-bottom ecosystem, with its ferns, pitcher plants, and violets. ABOVE: Spiderwort grows in the forest's sunny openings.

■ To order a print of the forest trail photograph (facing page), call 866/962-1191, or visit www.texashighwaysprints.com.



THE MIZE AZALEA GARDEN'S mile or so of paved walkways meander beneath pines, pecans, and Southern sugar maples ... the perfect verdant backdrop for a dizzying display of Mother Nature's eye candy.

The garden is also the heart of the annual Nacogdoches Azalea Trail, which features a 20-mile driving route flush with spring color. Masses of magenta and mauve. Oodles of orange and apricot. Scads of scarlet and crimson. Snow-white blooms contrast with loads of lavender

AZALEAS headline the garden's spring floral show, but a supporting cast of other bloomers keeps color alive year-round.

and lilac—the school's colors are purple and white! Collectively, the azaleas seem to set the woods ablaze with color.

Dedicated in 2000, the garden is named for Ruby M. Mize, one of the first local azalea gardeners and mother of the garden's key benefactor, Dorothy Wisely. It now boasts 6,500 azaleas laid out in 46 numbered beds. The vast majority are evergreens, native primarily to Japan and Southeast Asia. Many have been hybridized or crossbred to enhance features such as color, size, shape, and hardiness. The garden also features more than 230 deciduous azalea plants, called "natives" because they're indigenous to North America.

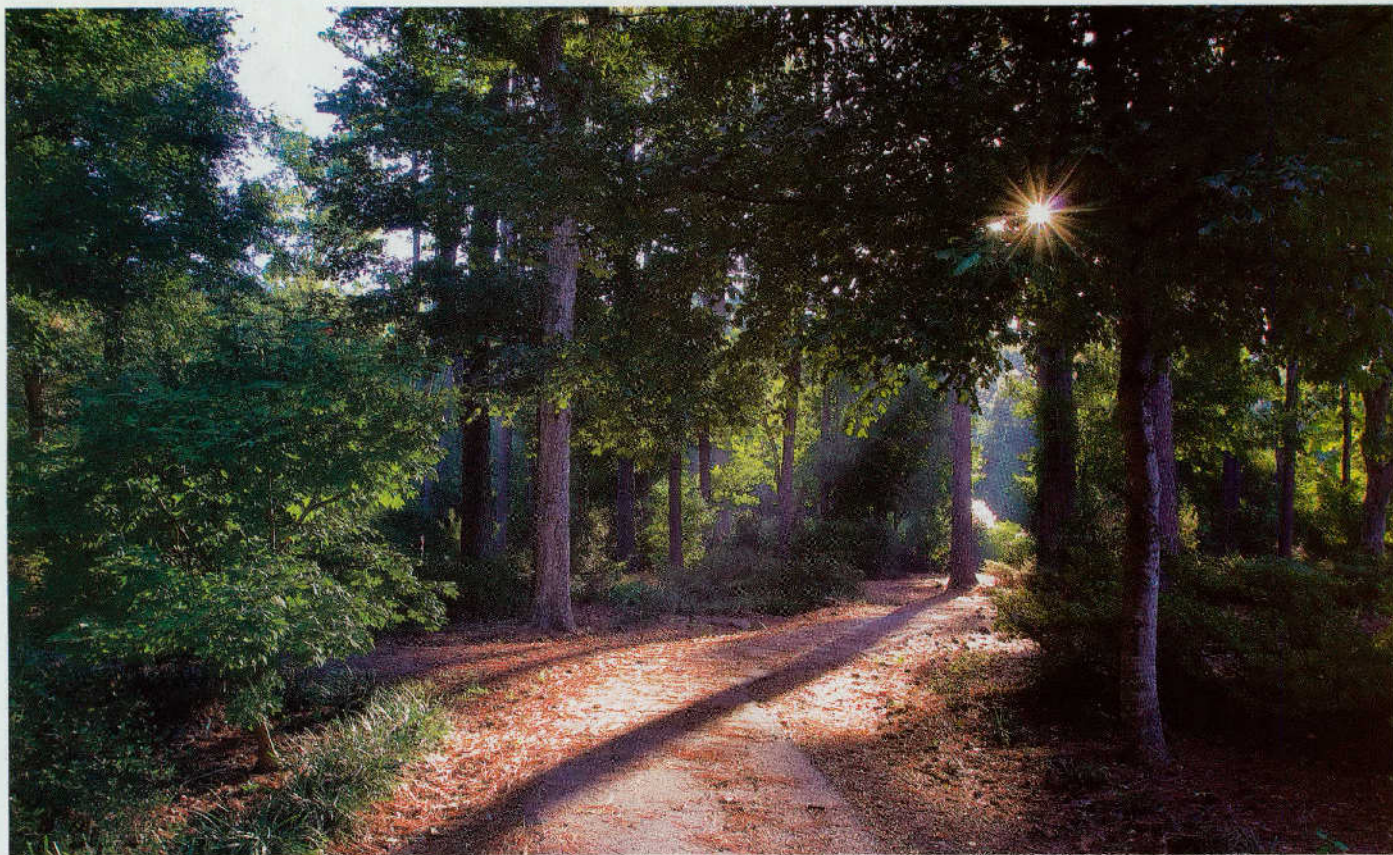
The azalea has long been a Southern garden favorite. The SFA azalea garden

Many hues of native and hybrid azaleas congregate under the shade of canopy pines in the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden, which also features hydrangeas, camellias, and Japanese maples.









plays a vital role in evaluating which ones thrive in Nacogdoches' climate zone. Staff acquire plant cuttings and seeds from various sources in the United States and abroad, grow them in SFA greenhouses, and then evaluate their performance in the garden.

As a result, the garden acts as a genetic bank for azaleas, says Buddy Lee, a noted hybridizer from Independence, Louisiana, and past president of the Azalea Society of America. "Demand for azalea color is up, so plant professionals look to Nacogdoches to help decide which ones will do best in their areas," he says.

Lee was the first to hybridize the patented Encore azalea, known for multi-seasonal blooming. I happened upon some of his handiwork in the garden's Bed 28. 'Autumn Sunset' is the same azalea I recently planted in my backyard in Tyler. The evergreen hybrid promises orange-red blossoms spring, summer, and fall.

A native hybrid called 'Aromi Sunrise' caught my eye from a sunny spot at the base of a pine. Its clustered tangerine blooms swayed in the wind like tiny cheerleaders'

pom-poms. I recognized another showy native, the Piedmont or Hoary Azalea. I had seen its long, tubular pink flowers at Wild Azalea Canyons in Newton County. And the unusual "Spider Azalea" sported long, narrow lavender petals with dark purple speckles. It reminded me of lilies I'd spotted along East Texas roadsides.

Azaleas headline the garden's spring floral show, but a supporting cast of other bloomers keeps color alive year-round, says azalea garden coordinator Barbara Stump.

From May to August, some 240 hydrangeas display large, showy blue, pink, and red blooms; from October to February, 300-plus camellias glow with white, coral-pink, and purple-red flowers, sometimes streaked red and white. Spring through fall, the leaves of 200 Japanese maples take center stage in shades of yellow, gold, red, and orange. "Some maples undergo a series of color changes," Stump adds, "such as *Acer palmatum* 'Tsuma gaki,' which has soft yellow-green leaves with persimmon-red tips in the spring, deep green in the summer, then crimson red in the fall."

WALKWAYS
meander beneath
pines, pecans, and
Southern sugar
maples ... the perfect
verdant backdrop
for a dizzying display
of Mother Nature's
eye candy.

FACING PAGE: Yellow Lady Banks Roses cascade down a cedar arbor in the Texas Heritage Garden (at the Mast Arboretum), where nearly 60 varieties of plants represent East Texas cottage gardens of the 1830s. ABOVE: Pine needles blanket paved pathways through the eight-acre Mize Azalea Garden.



SFA MAST ARBORETUM

Color is not everything at the gardens of SFA. Learning about plant diversity is. In 1985, longtime horticulture professor Dr. Dave Creech and his students planted a half-acre shrub and color garden beside the Agriculture Building as a landscaping class project. Steady expansion, boosted by a couple of major endowments, has grown the SFA Mast Arbore-

tum to 11 acres of plants grouped in 20 theme gardens. Its collection of some 7,500 plants includes native trees and creeping vines, exotic tropicals, and ornamental grasses, plus conifers and cacti. Named for local supporters Adlai and Patricia Mast Jr., the arboretum also hosts ongoing tours and educational programs, plus an annual spring sale of plants grown by SFA students and volunteers.

The arboretum, like the azalea garden, is not a meticulously planned place. "We'd rather plant than plan," says Dr. Creech, now arboretum director. Rather than a design garden, it's more of a botanical encyclopedia, where 500 new varieties are evaluated in the ground each year. "We have one of the most diverse gardens in the state," Dr. Creech explains.

According to Southern folklore, bottle trees, like this one (on the right) in the Mast Arboretum's Texas Heritage Garden, are said to protect their surroundings by trapping evil spirits inside. Blue bottles supposedly work the best, as the brilliant color attracts more spirits.

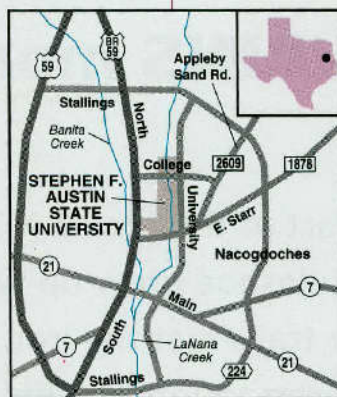


essentials GARDENS OF SFA

THE RUBY M. MIZE AZALEA GARDEN and the **SFA Mast Arboretum** sit on a 19-acre area on the east side of Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches. Free parking is available on the south side of SFA's Johnson Coliseum (College St. at University Dr.). Garden guides available at garden entrance just south of the parking lot. Hours: dawn to dusk daily.

Entrance: free. Arboretum guide maps are available in the SFA Agriculture Building on Wilson Dr. The **Pineywoods Native Plant Center** is at 2900 Raguet St., with guides available along the trail.

EVENTS include lectures (held the 3rd Thu. of the month) on plant selection and breeding, and the annual Easter egg hunt at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center (Mar. 22). On Apr. 12, the



annual Garden Gala Day Plant Sale offers many varieties of Texas-tough plants raised by SFA horticulture students and volunteers. For more information on SFA's gardens and events call 936/468-1832; <http://arboretum.sfasu.edu>.

The **Nacogdoches Azalea Trail** (Mar. 15-31, 2008; www.nacogdochesazaleas.com) features a 20-mile

driving trail through residential neighborhoods and the SFA Mize Azalea Garden. Events include an azalea plant sale (Mar. 15) on the downtown square, and an Azalea Symposium (Mar. 29). For details and a driving guide, call the Nacogdoches Convention & Visitors Bureau, 888/653-3788; www.visitnacogdoches.org. For tours of the gardens, contact the SFA's horticultural education office, 936/468-1832.

center occupies 40 acres that once belonged to Stephen W. Blount, signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence. Bald cypress, palmetto, and cattails in a wetland section made me think I was in the Big Thicket instead of a bustling college town. In a drier, upland area, I encountered white dogwood blossoms, red buckeye, and prickly-pear cactus—as well as locals out for an after-work walk.

The trail winds past the restored 1930s mansion of Edward and Mamie Blount Tucker. The home's flowerbeds serve as a satellite demonstration garden for the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin. The garden grows 100 native East Texas species, including the endangered Texas Trailing Phlox.

Rescuing, researching, and reintroducing endangered and threatened Piney Woods species remain key

goals of the Native Plant Center, which opened in 2000.

Heading back to the azalea garden, I thought about the diversity of plant life I'd seen at SFA's gardens. Here, the bond between people and plants seemed alive and well—both for professionals studying the latest hybrids and for green-thumb wannabes, like me, simply out for a blast of color on a warm spring day. ★

RANDY MALLORY, who lives on a red-brick street along Tyler's famed Azalea Trail, is delighted to live so close to Nacogdoches and SFA's fabulous azalea garden.

PINEYWOODS NATIVE PLANT CENTER

For a wilder look at native Texas flora, I ventured north on LaNana Creek Trail, which runs three miles from downtown to the Pineywoods Native Plant Center. En route, I passed the SFA Children's Garden, which sports a timber-frame pavilion, small water garden, and 75 kinds of butterfly-friendly perennials and woody plants.

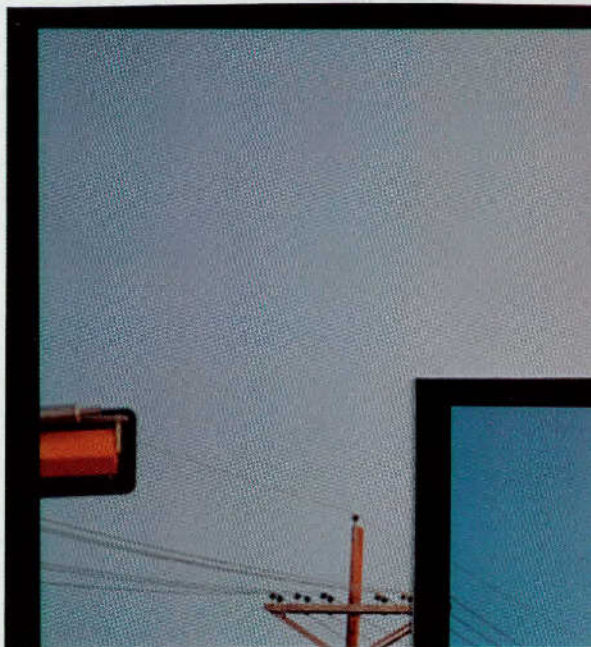
LaNana Creek Trail joins the Native Plant Center's two miles of trail. The



Maisi Kennedy, with her appropriately colored bike and helmet, strolls the Mize Azalea Garden with Margaret Bowlin (her grandmother) and Juana McCann.

HIGH PLAINS montage

ONCE part of the famed XIT Ranch, Muleshoe grew up where the cattle trails met the iron rails. Here you can tour remnants of area ranches, have your picture taken under the "World's Largest Mule Shoe," and eat some of the best Mexican food around.





PHOTOGRAPHER ARTIE LIMMER'S UNUSUAL TECHNIQUE INVOLVES CREATING A PUZZLE WITH MULTIPLE PHOTOGRAPHS, EACH OF WHICH IS INTERESTING ALL BY ITSELF. HE SAYS, "WHEN YOU PUT ALL THE IMAGES TOGETHER, IT MULTIPLIES THEIR IMPACT AND GIVES YOU A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON THE SUBJECT."

US 84 stretches diagonally across

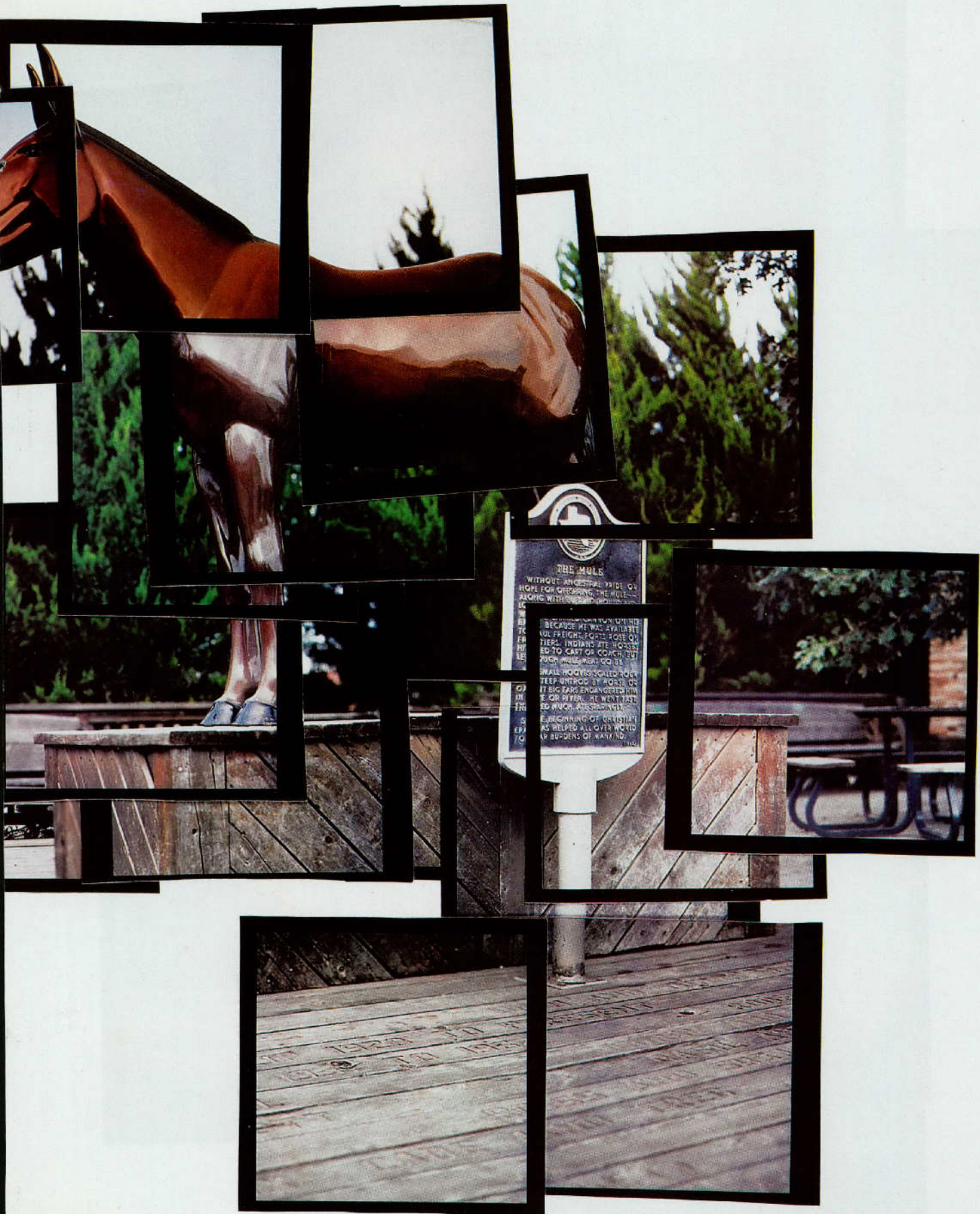
the middle of the Llano Estacado like a long rope of blacktop pulled tight from horizon to horizon. Today, cotton fields line long stretches of the four-lane highway, but when settlers began arriving in the area a little more than a century ago, the countryside was a treeless prairie as far as the eye could see. Even now, the small towns that occasionally rise from the plains seem like oases of trees and houses.

One such oasis is Muleshoe, at the intersection of US 84 and US 70, in northern Bailey County. While the town of 4,900 might not seem like a tourist destination, it offers a surprising mix of history and whimsy. Once part of the famed XIT Ranch, Muleshoe grew up where the cattle trails met the iron rails. Here you can tour remnants of area ranches, have your picture taken under the “World’s Largest Mule Shoe,” and eat some of the best Mexican food around. A 15-minute drive takes you to a 6,449-acre wildlife refuge that attracts as many as 250,000 migratory sandhill cranes each winter.

Muleshoe lies in what was the southern section of the XIT, which originated in the early 1880s and stretched 220 miles down the western edge of the Panhandle. By the early 1900s, the ranching syndicate was selling off its vast holdings, and two Michigan buyers, Edward K. Warren and his son Charles, who had made their fortune manufacturing corset stays and buggy whips, established the Muleshoe Ranch—originally some 40,000 acres—in present-day Bailey County. The ranch ultimately reached into four counties and encompassed 150,000 acres; at one time, it boasted some 10,000 head of cattle. The town of Muleshoe, named for the ranch, sprang up at the livestock-loading pens east of the ranch headquarters in 1913,



THE MOST-photographed object in town is the fiberglass National Mule Memorial, better known as “Ol’ Pete,” the only monument to the mule in the country.



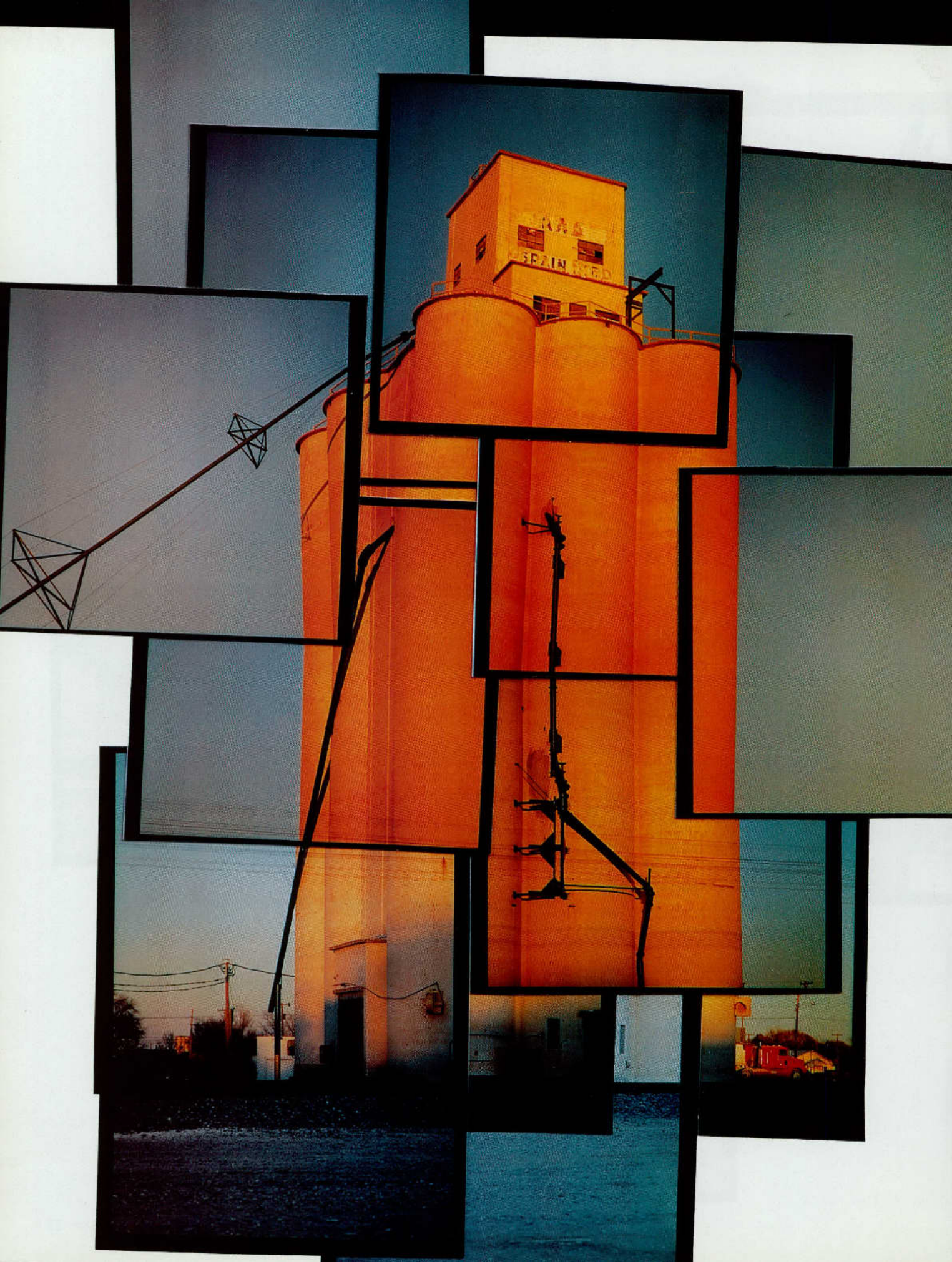
THE MULE
WITHOUT ANCESTRAL PRIDE OR
HOPES FOR OVERTAKING THE MULE
ALONG WATER COURSE

BECAUSE HE WAS AVAILABLE
FOR FREIGHT, PEOPLE ROSE ON
THE INDIAN STEEP HILLS
TO CAST OR COVER THE
MULE MEAT COALS

SMALL ROCKS CALLED ROCK
TEEP INTRODUCED HORSE
IT BIG EARS ENDANGERED HIM
E OR RIVER, HE WENT FAST
ED MUCH ASSUMINGLY

THE BEGINNING OF CHRISTIAN
RE BELIEFS ALL OVER WORLD
A BUDDEN OF WAKING

1923 IN TEXAS
1923 IN TEXAS
1923 IN TEXAS
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1923 IN TEXAS



IF YOU COULD climb to the top of one of the grain elevators that line the highway on the outskirts of town, you could, on a clear day, see 15 to 20 miles of uninterrupted horizon. The locals like to joke, "It's so flat around here that you can see into tomorrow."

when the Pecos and Northern Texas Railway cut across the plains from Lubbock to Clovis, New Mexico. Muleshoe became the county seat when Bailey County was organized in 1917.

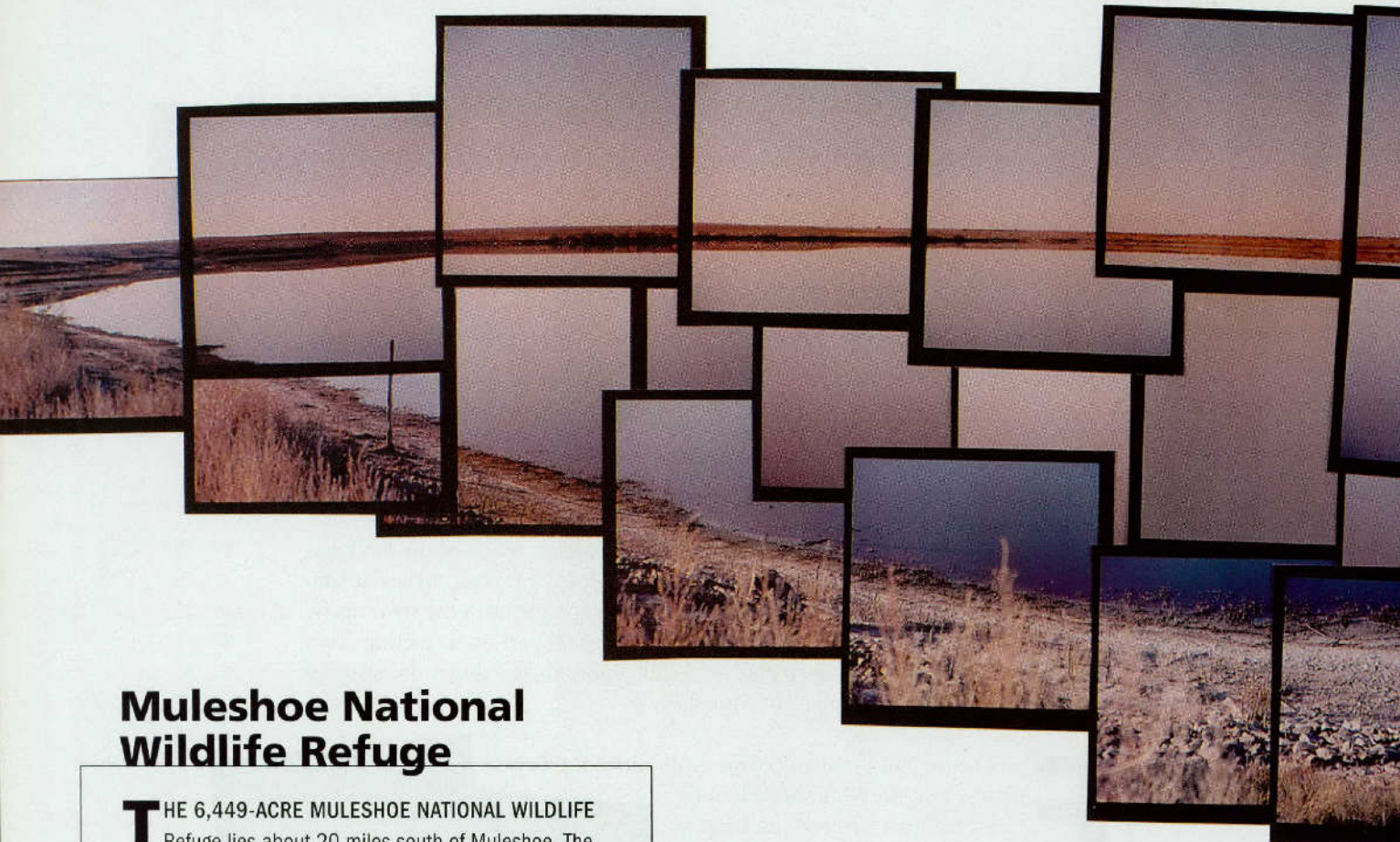
As ranch families continued to subdivide their holdings, much of the land was parceled off to farmers who cultivated fields of potatoes, corn, peas, soybeans, sunflowers, and milo. One of the largest soybean-processing plants in the state sits by the railroad tracks near the center of town. Cattle are still part of the picture: Two feedlots are based here, and over the last decade, more than a dozen dairies have moved to within a 15-mile radius of Muleshoe.

For a better understanding of the evolution of the Texas plains, visit the Muleshoe Heritage Center. Most afternoons hostess Dolores Harvey is on hand to show visitors the six historic buildings that have been moved to the site. A tour of the complex is like a walk on a timeline.

The center originated in 1983 with the acquisition of the old Santa Fe Railroad Depot, which for nearly 70 years had served as the community's link to the outside world. When the depot closed in 1982, the railroad donated the red-and-white building to the town with the stipulation that it be moved from the end of Main Street, where it had anchored the business district since 1914. The county provided land on the west side of town for what would become the Heritage Center, and townspeople worked together to move the depot to the new site and restore it. The building was opened to the public in 1987.

The heart of the center's collection is the L-shaped Muleshoe





Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge

THE 6,449-ACRE MULESHOE NATIONAL WILDLIFE Refuge lies about 20 miles south of Muleshoe. The first of 21 wildlife refuges in Texas to be established by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, it was created by executive order of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1935.

From September to March, the refuge's three saline lakes serve as the winter home for one of the largest groups of sandhill cranes in the Midwest. Preserve manager Harold Beierman estimates that more than 150,000 sandhill cranes wintered at the refuge in 2006. The numbers fluctuate depending on weather conditions; as many as 250,000 of the large, gray birds have been counted some years.

These long-legged birds, which have a six-foot wingspan and a "red cap," spend their winter days scavenging through plowed fields and then roost at the lakes. At least 321 other species of birds, including golden and bald eagles and whooping cranes, also visit the refuge.

The lakes have nearly three times more salinity than cattle can tolerate. "That might be why the government found a willing seller," says Beierman with a chuckle. The land and the water aren't good for farming, but the spring and summer grasses are excellent forage for cattle, and windmills and native springs provide fresh water for wildlife such as mule deer, bobcats, badgers, skunks, coyotes, porcupines, and prairie dogs.

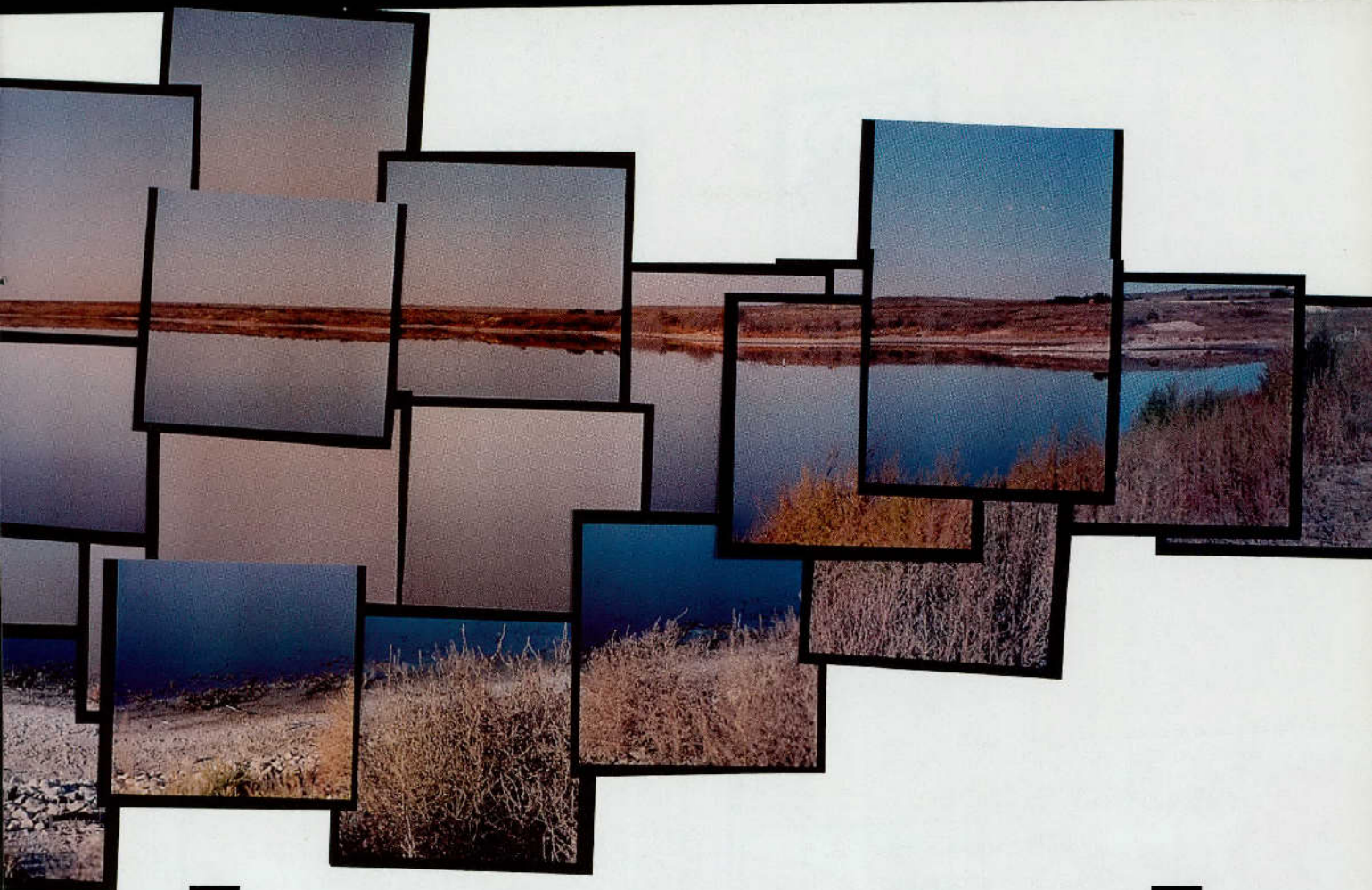
Ranch Cookhouse and Bunkhouse, which dates to 1897 and the XIT days. The same dinner bell that called the cowboys to eat sits atop a pole in front of the building. Back then, four large rooms and a kitchen served as home to a dozen cowboys. A long table with benches on either side reminds visitors of the cowboys' austere surroundings.

"The furnishings bring our buildings to life," says Harvey, noting that the majority of the clothes, tools, and furniture—all original or authentic to the period—were donated by area families.

The center boasts two other structures from the cowboy era—the early 1900s foreman's house from the Figure 4 Ranch and the 1915 Janes Ranch headquarters. The latter boasts an extra-large Hoosier cabinet in the kitchen, two period bathtubs, and two pedestal sinks. The basement duplicates John Janes' original office, complete with a fireplace and the original coal-fired furnace and walk-in safe.

Another gem—the tiny, two-story Virginia City Hotel—recalls the days when trainloads of prospective buyers came to inspect the farm plots created by the breakup of the large ranches. With less than 900 square feet, the hotel could accommodate only eight cots upstairs; the first floor offered a small dining room and a modest real estate office. "It reminds me of a doll house," says Dolores.

Even though more than 200 plots were sold, the land venture collapsed in 1913, after three years of extreme drought. Vir-



**THE REFUGE's three saline lakes serve
as the winter home for one of the largest groups
of sandhill cranes in the Midwest.**

ginia City, about 20 miles south of Muleshoe, became a ghost town. A local cowboy sneered that Virginia City's biggest crop was "suckers." The hotel was recycled as a ranch headquarters and a residence before being moved to the Heritage Center.

A log cabin, originally built near Shawnee, Oklahoma, about 1870, rounds out the major collection. Other structures include windmills, a pump house, a granary, and the "World's Largest Mule Shoe." The 27-foot-tall monument was built as an Eagle Scout project to greet visitors to the Heritage Center. Few visitors can resist having their picture taken under it.

The most-photographed object in town, though, is the fiberglass National Mule Memorial, better known as "Ol' Pete," the only monument to the mule in the country. The life-size, long-eared statue was erected in 1965, and was paid for with donations that came from around the world. Among the contributions was 25 cents sent by a former muleskinner in Russia. In January 2000, Pete made the trip to Washington,

D.C., rode in the presidential inaugural parade, and reigned over the martini and cigar bar at the Black Tie & Boots inaugural ball.

Across the street from Pete, you'll see Carolyn's Christmas Creations, a year-round shopping destination that offers a treasure-trove of antiques, furniture, and art. Because Christmas is Carolyn's favorite time of year, she keeps the mega-gift store stocked with thousands of Christmas ornaments.

One of the most unusual souvenirs in town—*faux* mule shoes—comes from Muleshoe Metal Art, which specializes in cowboy cutout signs and metal sculpture. A few years ago, co-owner Larry Puckett was fooling around in his blacksmith and machine shop and fashioned some metal lawn ornaments for his wife, Cheryl. She started selling them on e-Bay and placed a few out by the highway. The couple soon opened a showroom in an old warehouse next door, and now Cheryl helps create the merchandise, which includes garden art, wall hangings, and fireplace screens. One of their most popular items is a jalapeño cooker that comes with a recipe for stuffed jalapeños. *(continued on page 61)*



416 West Gallery

Shackelford.

416 WEST

9020x

MIXED MEDIA

ON DENISON'S MAIN STREET

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY RANDY MALLORY



PAINT A PICTURE OF A QUIANT NORTH TEXAS TOWN of, say, 23,000 people. Draw a quintessential Main Street lined with historic structures. Brush in a dozen or so art galleries and artists' studios, some with artsy loft apartments. Oh, just for fun, sketch a winery, several eateries, antiques shops, specialty stores, and an old train depot and railroad museum. That's the spittin' image of Denison's flowering arts district.

Local artist Doug Meyerscough painted the four sides of Denison Pawn with murals, including this west-side series of panels representing some of Denison's artists and their galleries.

DENISON HAS LONG BEEN A jumping-off point for outdoors enthusiasts enjoying nearby Lake Texoma. Increasingly, art buyers (especially from the Dallas/Fort Worth area) come for art and attractions compressed into seven stroll-friendly blocks.

Paintings, sculptures, glassworks, photography, ceramics, and mixed-media creations represent traditional and contemporary styles. Galleries showcase works from more than 100 local, regional, and national artists. Hometown and visiting artists also lead workshops that teach painting techniques to budding artists who come from around the region.

Downtown struts its artistic stuff this month with the annual Spring Fine Art Tour of studios and galleries. Galleries also periodically host new art shows and meet-the-artist receptions to keep the local scene fresh and unpredictable.

On a recent downtown stroll, I discovered that when it comes to art, this small town has big ideas.

Main Street is lined with two-story, turn-of-the-20th-Century brick buildings. Bright booster banners bearing reproductions of local art flap from antique-style



The Pat Waymon Gallery showcases Western-inspired works like William Churchill Jr.'s wooden sculpture *Prairie Wind*.



lampposts. Galleries and studios commingle with antiques emporiums, a coffeehouse, and down-home eateries. Add several specialty shops—women's apparel, garden decor, a sports outfitter, books, and a batik boutique. Complete the picture with Homestead Winery and the historic Rialto Theater, which stages live music shows.

My art stroll down Main Street began in the 400 block, where the bronze face of Apache leader Geronimo beckoned to me

from a window at The Pat Waymon Gallery. The sculpture was the work of North Texas artist George Cadell. Studying the wizened gaze, I noticed a metal tear running down Geronimo's face—presumably a symbol of collective sorrow. The realism of Western and landscape art runs rampant in Waymon's gallery. A painting by Dalhart Windberg depicts Longhorns in a mountain scene, while a Xiang Zhang painting shows mounted cowboys in cor-



RECENT DOWNTOWN STROLL, I DISCOVERED THAT
WHEN IT COMES TO ART, THIS SMALL TOWN HAS BIG IDEAS.

als. A sculpture by William B. Churchill Jr. depicts a saddle that looks like leather but is carved from a single piece of mahogany. Around the corner, Waymon operates an art school, where she and visiting artists offer workshops year-round.

Across the street, I wandered into Old Katy Glass Works, where artist-owner Mike Williams creates Japanese and Art Deco-style windows, doors, lamps, and other pieces made of colored and reflective

glass. I particularly liked his landscapes that showed mountains and rivers framed in the foreground by trees and flowers, all glistening in richly colored glass. Williams was one of the first artists to set up shop downtown more than a decade ago. "I caught the spirit of making art in such a leisurely setting," he says.

Williams' gallery showcases eclectic works of several artists. A striking piece by local artist Keith Hartline shows the

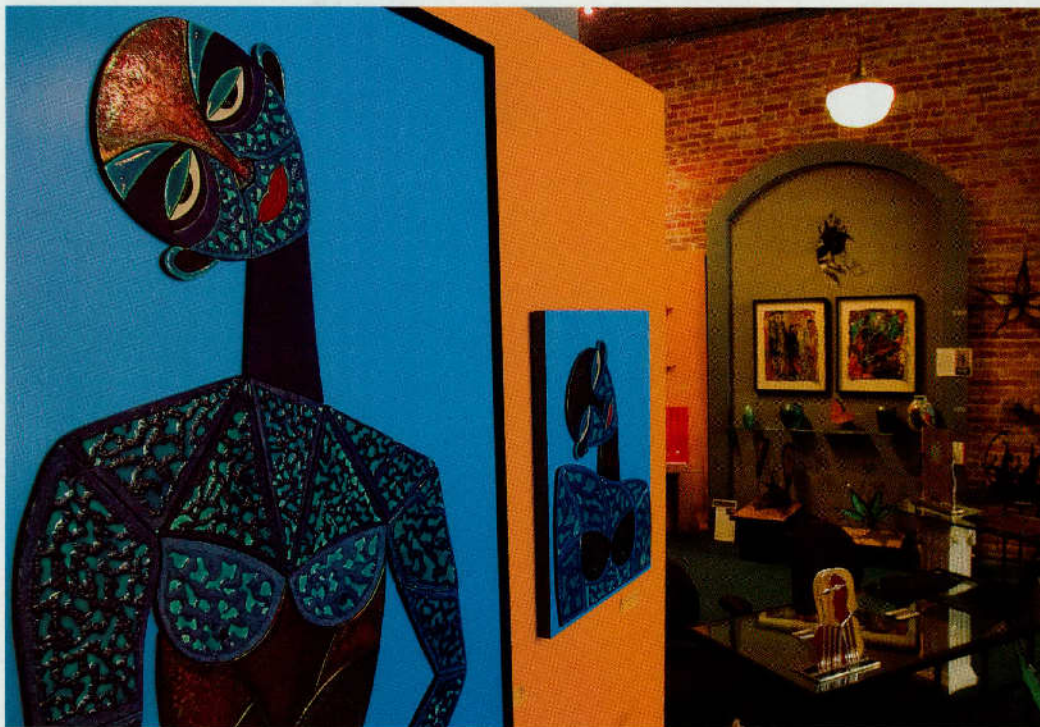
At 416 West Gallery, artist Barbara Elam showcases her creations alongside those of other artists. Elam also offers classes in printmaking, photography, and other media.

stylized figure of a woman in turquoise and black with her head tilted to the right. At first, the work, titled *Attitude*, looks like a vivid acrylic painting, but it's actually a mosaic of glazed ceramics.

The invitingly odd metal sculptures of

“WE DID ART INSTALLATIONS

LIKE FILLING AN ENTIRE ROOM AT
THE KATY DEPOT WITH BOIS D’ARC
APPLES. WE WANTED SOMETHING
DIFFERENT THAN YOU’D EXPECT
IN A SMALL TOWN.” —Steve O. Black



Mike Williams' Old Katy Glass Works features decorative pieces fashioned from colored glass, including these two cut-glass pieces by local artist Keith Hartline.

Chance Dunlap tickled my fancy, too. Biology meets sci-fi in his *Cabinet of Curiosities* series, where Dunlap fabricates metal into invented plants or animals, giving them scientific Latin names. Then he places them in glass jars and “preserves” them in mineral oil as if they were rare species. His *Specimen Box* series displays fictional flying creatures whose moth-like wings are pinned inside shadow boxes. “I take scrap metal that had a past life and rescue it from meltdown by giving it a new consciousness,” Dunlap explains.

Next, I zigged across Main Street to 416 West Gallery, where artist-owner Barbara Elam, a former professor of printmaking, showed her *Slipping and Sliding* series of original prints. Each one features a woman’s slip flared as if dancing. “I named each piece after a famous female dancer of the 1940s,” Elam says.

From there, I zagged across the street to an 1880s former dry goods store. That’s where Shelley Tate Garner was completing a triptych in her Artplace Gallery (where she also frames artwork and offers class-

es). Garner cuts clear acrylic sheets into three shapes, adds bright acrylic colors on the back, then folds and wrinkles each piece by applying heat. Her “acrylic on acrylic” technique illuminates a concept from abstractionist Mark Rothko, which Garner painted on her studio wall: “Art is an adventure into an unknown world, which can only be explored by those willing to take the risk.”

At Mary Karam Gallery, I perused what artist-owner Mary Karam calls her “organic works,” action photographs of bears and other wildlife. Karam changes what’s on display regularly, but during my visit I admired large-scale photos by California native Robyn Raggio. One photo zooms in on the curved, chrome bumper and rusted hood of a 1950s Plymouth sedan, turning its front into a whimsical face. Another shot catches the crest of an ocean wave infused with light from a golden sunset. The lustrous water glows as if glass.

Karam’s gallery also spotlights the unusual work of Lewisville artist M.D. Davis, who paints limestone slabs with images she saw in lower Pecos River pictographs. Her work re-creates ancient Texas cave paintings into wall art, tables, and room screens.

At the eastern end of Main Street lies the historic Katy Depot, which houses the Red River Railroad Museum and the studio of longtime local artist Alfred Robinson. Robinson was out, but around the

corner, on Houston Street, I strolled into Denison’s largest and newest art spot, Mystic Studio & Gallery.

Owner-artist Joni Beamish opened her ceramics studio last fall in a 20,000-square-foot warehouse built in the 1880s as a rail-side coffee roaster. Her cavernous space echoed with soft Japanese flute music and the scent of burning incense. A third sense—vision—engaged when I eyed Beamish’s mystical platters, bowls, sinks, lamps, and sculptural pieces. Glazes of teal green, barn red, and cobalt blue



At Studio 406, Donna Finch Adams focuses on the mythology of women.



danced across works made from slabs of clay impressed with patterns, then curled at the edges.

Back on Main, at Studio 406, I finagled a tour of the artful digs of artist Donna Finch Adams, which are open by appointment. Adams and her husband, R.E., turned an 1882 business college and doctor's office into a loft apartment, studio, and gallery.

I was fascinated by Finch Adams' mixed-media *Stories in a Box*. She pastes collages of photos and print—provocative bits and pieces that form social commentaries—inside cigar boxes, then uses an iron to work in hot colored beeswax. “Each box tells a moralistic and humorous story,” she says. One of her wall-sized acrylic paintings showed smooth stones, hands, and female faces intertwined in the roots of a massive tree—all tinted blood red. “This came from a German myth about planting a tree over a grave,” Finch Adams explains. “When the roots grow into the body, the person becomes free. I like exploring the mythology of the female found throughout history.”

After years as a college art professor at several universities in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, Finch Adams retired and moved to Denison to make art. But she was lured out of retirement and now teaches at Denison's Grayson County College, the last stop on my art tour.

On campus, I looked up Steve O. Black, art professor and chair of Fine Arts and Humanities. Black also manages the college's 2nd Floor Gallery, which exhibits student art and juried shows. He came to town 13 years ago, joining a growing cadre of artists intent on stirring things up.

“We did art installations like filling an entire room at the Katy Depot with bois d'arc apples,” Black says with a smile. “We wanted something different than you'd expect in a small town. We're still not afraid to take chances with art.”

In Denison, Black isn't alone. In two short days, I'd met many artists whose work expresses their love of art and the creative process—even (or maybe especially) in a small town. ★

Writer-photographer RANDY MALLORY of Tyler hopes more Texas towns will nurture the cultural and economic advantages of art in their communities.



The picturesque 400 block of West Main Street boasts many of Denison's galleries, as well as the Rialto Theater, which hosts live entertainment. FACING PAGE: Artist Chance Dunlap creates fictional creatures out of metal, looking to nature for inspiration. See Dunlap's work at Old Katy Glass Works.

essentials DENISON ART TOUR

DENISON is 75 miles north of Dallas on US 75. Most of Denison's galleries and studios are on the 100 East through 600 West blocks of Main St. in downtown.

The annual **Spring Fine Art Tour** of studios and galleries is March 29-30, 2008. On May 3, 2008, the **Denison Arts & Wine Renaissance** will be held, along with a tour of artists' loft apartments downtown. Denison also hosts an annual **Fall Fine Art Tour** (Nov. 1-2, 2008), complete with art talks and demonstrations. For more information, contact the Denison Area Chamber of Commerce, 313 W. Woodard St.; 903/465-1551; www.smalltownbigart.com.

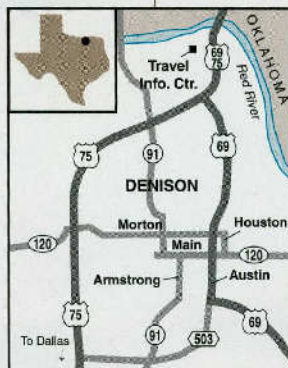
GALLERIES

The Pat Waymon Gallery, 430 W. Main St.; 903/465-2008; www.patwaymongallery.com.

Old Katy Glass Works, 427 W. Main St.; 903/465-6460; www.oldkatyglassworks.com.

416 Gallery West, 416 W. Main St.; 903/463-0416; www.416westgallery.com.

Artplace Gallery, 413 W. Main St.; 903/327-8180; www.artplacegallery.com.



Mary Karam Gallery, 404 W. Main St.; 903/465-3703; www.marykaramgallery.com.

Mystic Studio and Gallery, 110 S. Houston Ave.; 903/327-8246; www.mystic-studio.com.

2nd Floor Gallery, Grayson County College; 6101 Grayson Dr. (TX 691); 903/463-8662; www.grayson.edu.

STUDIOS (studios are often open by appointment only)

Donna Finch Adams, Studio 406, 406 W. Main St.; 903/464-9644.

Alfred Robinson, 101 E. Main St., Ste. 105; 903/819-5502.

Keith Hartline, 427 W. Main St.; 903/465-6460.

ATTRACTIONS

Rialto Theater. Main Street Showcase musical variety show, 424 W. Main St.; 903/463-1690.

Red River Railroad Museum, 101 E. Main St., Ste. 120; www.redriverrailmuseum.org.

Homestead Winery, 220 W. Main St.; 903/464-0030; www.homesteadwinery.com (also houses Devolli's Italian Restaurant; 903/463-3800).



Great



Balls

of

Fire



Texas *Drag Racing*

BY SHEILA SCARBOROUGH PHOTOGRAPHS BY J. GRIFFIS SMITH

Two roaring, missile-like machines streak down a 1,320-foot strip of pavement—side by side, just a few feet apart—in a quarter-mile acceleration test of pure power. Less than a minute later another pair launches from a standing start, and rockets down the same course. Slick professional teams buzz with activity alongside shoestring mom-and-pop operations. Everyone feels the need for speed. Thundering engines, one winner, one loser, no whining—that’s professional drag racing in Texas.

Two nitro-fueled Funny Cars blaze down the track during the NHRA Fall Nationals at Texas Motorplex between Ennis and Waxahachie.

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



he motor, still smoking-hot from its last run down the strip, is swarmed by mechanics who yank out parts and pistons all the way down to the engine block. Then, with swift efficiency, they systematically rebuild it to race again.

Dallas native and Texas A&M graduate Brandon Bernstein's sleek, pointy Top Fuel dragster is 25 feet long, weighs more than 2,000 pounds, and is bright red with his primary sponsor's Budweiser logo prominently displayed. Brandon's job is to hang onto that nitromethane-fueled rocket, keep it in a straight line, and beat whoever is in the opposing lane to the finish. He says, "I just loved it from the second that I started. Everybody loves the speed of these cars. They love to come to the track and watch us go 330-plus [mph]."

Texas hosts two major National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) drag races every year, plus hundreds of smaller events at tracks all over the Lone Star State. The Spring Nationals in March are a seagull's flight from the Gulf of Mexico at Houston Raceway Park in Baytown, and the Fall Nationals in September blast across rolling farmland south of Dallas, at the Texas Motorplex in Ennis. Both are televised on ESPN2, but racers insist that there is no substitute for seeing the flaming action in person.

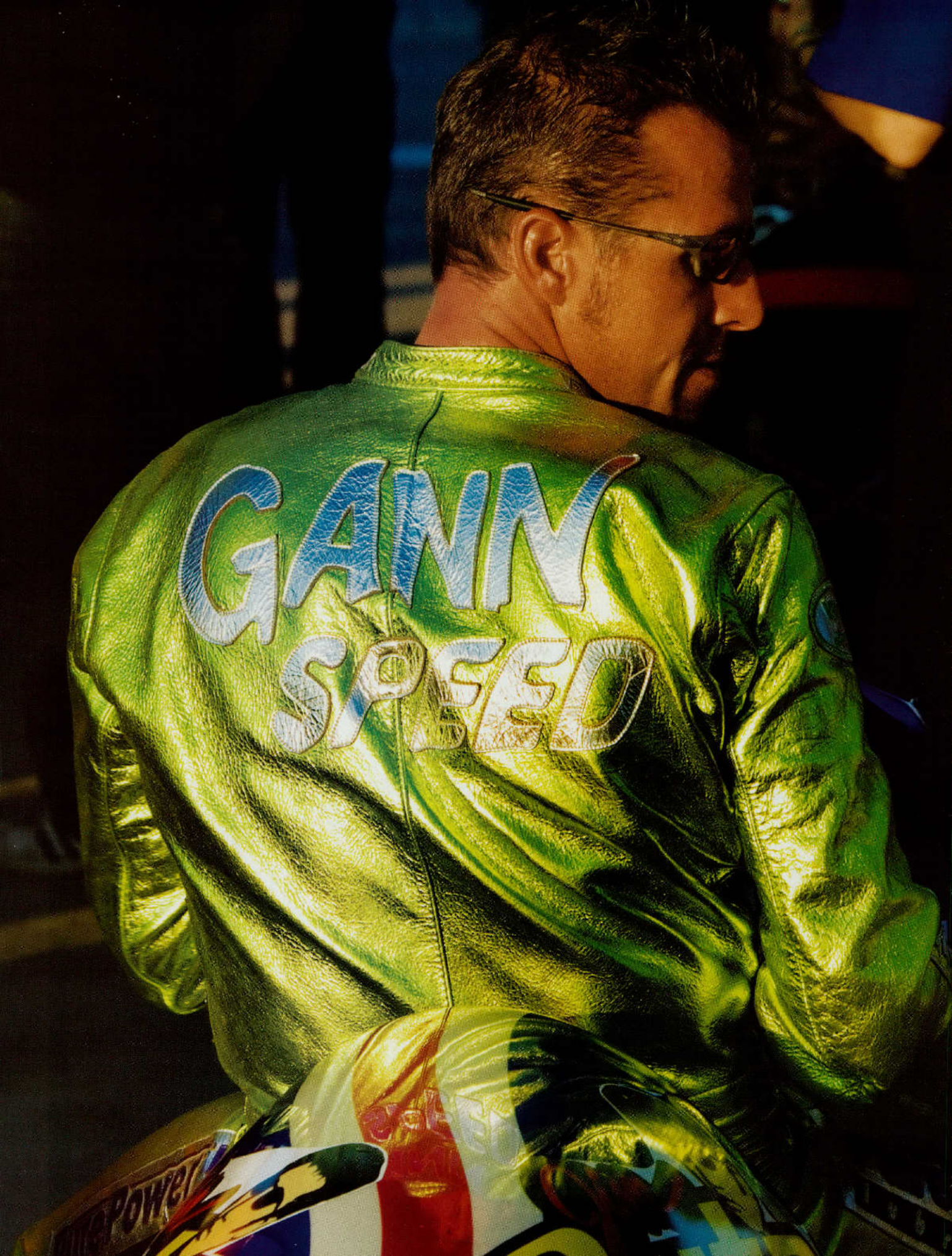
"It's a sensory overload," says Brandon. "Your eyes are going to water, your ears are going to pound, your body's gonna literally shake, but it's going to be the biggest adrenaline rush you've ever experienced. TV does not do it justice; you have to physically be here. Once you get people here, they're hooked for life."

Brandon always has the boss looking over his shoulder; the team owner is his father, the 1980s and '90s drag-racing legend Kenny Bernstein, originally from



ABOVE: Check under the hood. A crew makes starting-line adjustments at the Texas Motorplex. At right, nitro fuel-burning Funny Cars frequently hit speeds of over 300 mph during their quarter-mile blasts.





GANN
SPEED

“**I**’s a sensory overload,” says Brandon Bernstein. “Your eyes are going to water, your ears are going to pound, your body’s gonna literally shake, but it’s going to be the biggest adrenaline rush you’ve ever experienced.”



Lubbock. Kenny raced in the Funny Car category during the 2007 season, but is now out of the cockpit and running the team full time.

Funny Cars are dragsters with a hinged carbon-fiber car-like top that closes over the chassis and driver, though there’s nothing funny about a 2,400-pound beast with a supercharged 500-cubic-inch TFX aluminum hemi V-8 block that hits 300 mph. Yes, drag racers love to throw around technical specs and numbers.

Translation: big engine goes fast.

What makes drag racing different from other sporting events? Kenny says it’s “the pit,” or open garage area, where teams completely disassemble and rebuild their car or motorcycle engines between competition rounds, often in less than 75 minutes. The motor, still smoking-hot from its last run down the strip, is swarmed by the team’s gloved mechanics who yank out parts and pistons all the way down to the engine block. With swift efficiency, they systematically rebuild it to race again. It’s a carefully choreographed dance of engineering wizardry, and any fan is allowed to stand at the pits and watch the action.

“That’s the thing about our sport,” says Kenny. “[Fans] can come into our locker room. You can come right up to the ropes and watch the crew work on a race car, and get [driver] autographs in most cases, too.”

At the high-profile national events in Baytown and Ennis, a festive atmosphere prevails. There are tented rows of automotive goodies

LEFT: In his metallic lime green racing leathers, Pro Stock Motorcycle racer Shawn Gann makes a Ricky Bobby/*Talladega Nights* fashion statement. ABOVE: A crew member yells to a driver over the thunderous, mega-decibel din of a dragon-esque dragster.



to poke and prod—carburetors, valves, spark plugs, camshafts, shiny new oil pans, even chromed engine blocks. Team merchandise haulers and the “Nitro Mall” feature luridly colored souvenirs, usually with some sort of flame or smoke graphic. Virtual-reality race simulators offer visitors a danger-free chance to experience a Funny Car for themselves.

Drag racing collects a cross-section of

enthusiasts because a variety of people compete, including Hispanics, African Americans, and women.

Houston’s Erica Enders races in the Pro Stock category (“factory hot rods” that are gasoline-powered) but her fame extends beyond Texas because of the 2003 Disney Channel movie *Right on Track*, about her racing family. Enders started her driving career at Houston Raceway

Park in the NHRA’s Junior Drag Racing League. The program allows kids ages 8-17 to race half-scale dragsters on eight different tracks around Texas.

Yes, that’s drag racing well before kids are old enough for a driver’s license.

“When I started driving, I was in third grade; nobody else [drove] and they said, ‘You do *what!*!’” says Enders, now 25. “But the guys thought it was cool and my



A race weekend at Baytown or Ennis means a grandstand full of loyal drag-racing fans paying top dollar for the best views down the quarter-mile strip.



friends would come out and watch. I've been driving for 15 years now ... I have over 5,000 runs in a Junior dragster and a lot of them were here [at Houston Raceway Park]. Home field advantage!"

Enders, a Texas A&M marketing ma-

TOP LEFT: A Top Fuel dragster launches from the starting line with a fiery burst at Houston Raceway Park during the NHRA Spring Nationals in Baytown. ABOVE RIGHT: At Ennis' Texas Motorplex, dedicated fans atop RVs value their excellent vantage point, including proximity to Jumbotron close-ups.

a day at the Races

HOT RODDERS have always tested their cars on back roads, but more formal drag-racing competition was born in Southern California in 1951, when the National Hot Rod Association was founded by Wally Parks (who died in 2007 at age 94). Today, the NHRA is the world's largest promoter of professional drag racing, with a total prize-money payout of more than \$3.2 million across all pro competitions, record-breaking attendance in 2007, and an expanded race schedule in 2008. About 30,000 fans fill the Texas race facilities on a national-event weekend. Adult **ticket prices** vary based on day and seating area; they range from single-day admission of about \$35-\$50, to nearly \$200 for a Saturday/Sunday two-day ticket. You'll pay more for a reserved seat. Admission for kids runs from \$10-\$24; age five and under are usually free.

For newcomers, the Friday of a race weekend is probably the best day to attend. It is less crowded, all of the different classes will run qualification rounds to make it into final eliminations, and the pro classes do some evening runs when it's cooler. The darkness ensures a spectacular show from the nitro car flames.

Arrive as early as possible to park closer to the track, and plan on dealing with a lot of traffic when it's time to leave. Be prepared for the noise with double hearing protection (foamies/inserts plus ear muffs) and don't forget hearing protection for your children. Wear sunglasses, a hat, and sunscreen. Don't forget to visit the pits during a few of the rounds and watch the engine rebuilds.

The NHRA Web site has detailed "Day at the Drags" info: www.nhra.com/basics/dayatdrags.html.

Want to race yourself?

Check with your local track for Junior Drag Racing League programs, "Street Legal" nights, Test 'n' Tune, and bracket racing.

—SHEILA SCARBOROUGH

Pro Stock driver Erica Enders' career began with the Junior Drag Racing League at Houston Raceway Park in Baytown.



COURTESY WWW.ENDERSRACING.COM

For, draws a gaggle of young female fans to her pit. At 6 on Friday night of a race weekend in Baytown, about 20 grinning little girls with smiling parents wait for her, pointing and squealing, "That's her car!" When she appears with her Sharpie, the crowd magically doubles, and then cameras and cell phones go up in the air for photos. Some ask her to sign their pink, sparkly "Girls Rule" T-shirts and Junior Dragster helmets. After her next qualification run down the track, her team returns to the Enders Racing area, and she helps push the car into the pit for its manic engine rebuild, signs more autographs, and then rolls up and packs the parachute that helps stop her ride at the end of a race.

Bikers enjoy the Pro Stock Motorcycle category, where Harley-Davidson, Buell, and Suzuki bikes hit speeds above 180 mph. San Antonio's Peggy Llewellyn thrilled the Ennis fans when she won the 2007 Fall Nationals motorcycle race on her powerful Buell; she's the first African-American woman to win a national NHRA event.

Off the track, Llewellyn spends time at her father's garage. "My Dad was a racer. I also keep up my Web site, I'm raising my eight-year-old niece, and I have a workout program—the bike leaves hard and has a lot of torque, so I have to be in shape for that."

Drag-racing professionals have some pretty flashy decorated haulers (some with chrome spinners for their 18-wheelers) but much of the track's real estate is occupied by the more modest tents and vehicles of non-professional racers, or the "Sportsman" class. The numerous Sportsman categories give the average Joe or Jane a chance to race their favorite heap without resorting to illegal street racing, and the best drivers can win money to sustain their hobby.

James Thompson Jr. owns a Dr Pepper distributorship in Vernon, and drives the "Pepper Express" Top Alcohol Dragster (the fastest Sportsman class). His father was a stock car racer. Thompson knows that stock car racing and NASCAR are very popular in Texas, but he says, "there's a big difference



Being cool at the track, both literally and figuratively, always makes an impression.

between that and drag racing. With us, you can get right up close, one-on-one. It's personal. NASCAR fans do come look and see, and some of them like it a lot better. They can't believe the power, the vibration."

His crew members comprise a varied group; one owns a tire dealership, another is retired military. They compete in five or six races a year, for the love of the sport, and to get away from work. "We aren't here for the money," Thompson admits. Race winners take home a few thousand dollars (about \$8,000 if they win a divisional championship) but they spend a lot to keep a car maintained, buy fuel, and travel to events.

A race weekend at Baytown or Ennis means a grandstand full of loyal drag-racing fans paying top dollar for the best views down the quarter-mile strip. Count

on a packed RV-parking area right next to the track.

Tray Rogers of Arlington says, "I've been coming to this for 23 years; I was here for the groundbreaking of the track [at Ennis]. It was \$4 million to build it, and that's 23 years ago! An all-concrete track means fast, powerful runs."

"There are about 50 of these RV spots available, and I'd guess that maybe 65 percent of the people here will go up to [Fort Worth's Texas Motor Speedway] to watch NASCAR races as well," says Rogers. "I come here to see friends, just as much as racing."

He gestures at his large, well-appointed RV below (we are standing on his vehicle's roof). "I think we're on spaces #8 and #9—someone could offer me \$50,000 for rights to these spots and I wouldn't sell."

You can't buy years of camaraderie and companionship.

Other people at the track see motorsports, including drag racing, as a business proposition. There's a lot of money involved: A gallon of nitro fuel is about \$17, a Pro Stock Harley-Davidson bike or Top Fuel dragster will run you \$200,000, and a pair of rear-wheel tires for a Funny Car

VROOOM!

Houston Raceway Park, 2525 FM 565, Baytown, 281/383-RACE; www.houstonraceway.com. The NHRA O'Reilly Spring Nationals are scheduled for March 28-30.

Texas Motorplex, US 287 South, between Ennis and Waxahachie, 972/878-2641; www.texasmotorplex.com. The NHRA O'Reilly Fall Nationals are scheduled for Sep. 18-21.

For additional information, visit www.nhra.com.



cost \$1,100 (and they're only good for three-four runs down the strip).

Texas business owner David Powers of Houston owns both David Powers Homes and a very successful two-dragster Top Fuel team, so he appreciates the symbiotic relationship between teams and sponsors in raising the hundreds of thousands of dollars that it costs to bankroll just one race car.

"Motorsports is a very hot industry; it has really grown," says Powers. "People who sponsor these cars, which is really what makes [racing] possible, recognize the true value ... the broader the audience, the greater the opportunity ... to broaden their reach in a more affordable way. On Sunday [final-elimination race day] it's just wall-to-wall people out here."

Powers sees the appeal of high-speed action every time he brings other business partners to a race event in Texas.

"What I find is that when you start working with sponsors, sometimes they're

just interested in the business-to-business relationship and what they're going to get back, but it doesn't take two races before they're calling me and saying, 'How're we doing? How're we doing?' So, they've become fans."

Powers smiles as he looks over at the men, women, and kids crowded around his dragsters. "It's a friendly group of people, from all walks of life," he says. "You see a variety of people all getting along and having a great time, and I think that's what's good about it."★

SHEILA SCARBOROUGH has been writing and blogging about drag racing since her first race, the venerable Florida Gatornationals in 2006. She likes the homey atmosphere in Baytown and is impressed by the all-concrete speed palace in Ennis.

Once staff photographer GRIFF SMITH got over the noise issue, he found the drag-racing scenes at Baytown and Ennis to be "pretty amazing, unlike anything I've ever witnessed, and when the cars whoosh down the track, one of the biggest rushes I've ever experienced."

TEXAS HIGHWAYS

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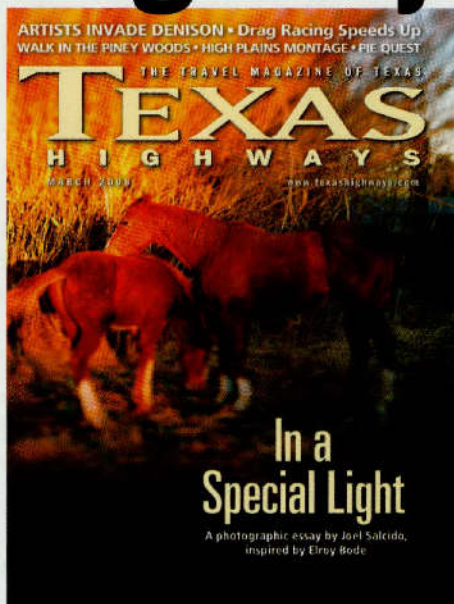
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A5C82

HIGH PLAINS montage

(continued from page 41)

If you like peppers but prefer them chopped, try Leal's Mexican Restaurant, which has been serving spicy dishes in Muleshoe since 1957. Jesse and Irma Leal moved from the Rio Grande Valley to Muleshoe when Jesse Leal took a job as bookkeeper for a local produce company. Because so many Mexican workers were in the area doing contract work on local farms, the couple saw a need for traditional Mexican food. Instead of buying a house, they bought a tortilla-making machine and opened a tortilla factory and modest café on the east side of town. The business grew, and it's now a chain of six restaurants, each individually owned by Leal family members. The retail arm of the company ships Leal's chips and hot sauce around the world.

The combination dinners on the menu are such a regional tradition that they're

named in honor of family and friends. Irma's Special, a chile relleno-enchilada-taco combination plate, is the cofounder's personal recommendation. The Joe Rhodes Special is named for the owner of a local boot store, who ordered the same meal every day. Former mayor Victor Leal, who owns the restaurants in Muleshoe and Amarillo, says, "It was easier to write 'Joe's Special' on the ticket than 'burrito topped with Mexican stew and jalapeños on the side.'"

Partly because it's on US 84 and partly because of the large number of farm and ranch workers in the area, Muleshoe has developed a culinary tradition of sorts. In addition to Leal's, the Dinner Bell Restaurant has earned its share of fame, thanks in part to Lubbock musician and artist Terry Allen, who raves about the chicken-fried steak served there. Pancakes, biscuits and gravy, omelets, and tacos star in the morning menu, while an all-you-can-eat buffet closes out the day.

For lunch, La-Tea-Da Tea Room at-

tracts spurs-wearing cowboys as well as ladies-who-lunch with its chicken-salad sandwiches and pasta salads topped off with a piece of pie for dessert.

Muleshoe has weathered the winds of change while preserving reminders of its past. As the sunset ignites the plains with its orange glow, the evening sky softens into shades of blue. Pinpoints of light pop out along the horizon like a string of pearls, and overhead, constellations sparkle like diamonds. The stars at night are big and bright in Muleshoe. ★

Austin writer GERALD E. McLEOD thanks Alice Liles for the grand tour of Muleshoe. Liles and her family lived in the Janes Ranch headquarters from 1980-1981, before it was moved to town.

Lubbock photographer ARTIE LIMMER shot more than 300 images of Muleshoe for this story. He thought the grain elevators were especially interesting. He says, "They are so powerful and prominent that the light really plays off them in the evening."

essentials MULESHOE

MULESHOE is on US 84, about 68 miles northwest of Lubbock and 100 miles south of Amarillo. For more information, contact the Muleshoe Chamber of Commerce at 115 E. American Blvd., at the intersection of US 84 (American Blvd.) and US 70, 806/272-4248; www.muleshoe.org.

ATTRACTIONS

The **Muleshoe Heritage Center** is at 2000 W. Ash, on the western outskirts of town off US 84. Hours: Mon-Fri 1-5 and weekends by appointment. Call 806/272-5873.

The **National Mule Memorial** is at the intersection of US 84 and US 70 (on the grounds of the chamber).

Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge is about 20 miles south of Muleshoe off TX 214. There's a small primitive campground and picnic area that offer tables, fire rings, and restrooms, but precious little shade. Two short hiking trails lead to wildlife-viewing stations. Firebreak roads cut through the native shortgrass prairie and make excellent hiking paths. Six miles of dirt road along the western



and northern fence lines offer a panoramic view of the refuge. Admission to the refuge and camping are free. For more information, call 806/946-3341 or 806/674-6369, or visit www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/txrefuges.html.

ANNUAL EVENTS

The Dusty Rhodes Arena, just east of the city limits on US 84, is the site of 2 well-attended team-roping events. The local Rotary Club hosts the **Muleshoe Rotary Team-Roping** on Labor Day weekend; call 806/272-5871. The Muleshoe Roping Club hosts the **Memorial**

Day Weekend Team-Roping; call 946-7363.

The Muleshoe Heritage Center hosts the annual **Tour de Muleshoe**, a 10-mile, 40-mile, or 100-K bicycle ride, the Sat. before Father's Day (June 14, 2008). The ride begins at the Bailey County Coliseum, where a Kids Bicycle Rodeo takes place during the ride and bicycle-tour participants enjoy a free spaghetti lunch afterwards. Call 806/272-3487 or 806/272-5873; www.tourdemuleshoe.com.

A **July 4th** event includes a parade, a mule-shoe-pitching contest, a softball tournament, and fireworks. Contact the chamber for details.

SHOPPING

Carolyn's Christmas Creations, 106 E. American Blvd., 806/272-5911; www.visitcarolyns.com.

Muleshoe Metal Art, 224 W. American Blvd., 806/272-7572 or 800/687-4417; www.muleshoe-metalart.com.

Art Loft/Très Chic (home decor

and furnishings and gifts), 1529 W. American Blvd., 806/272-3485.

Something Special Gifts (home decor and gifts), inside Western Drug, at 1411 W. American Blvd., 806/272-3106.

DINING

La-Tea-Da Tea Room, 104 E. American Blvd., 806/272-7760.

Dinner Bell Restaurant, 2103 W. American Blvd., 806/272-4080.

Leal's Mexican Restaurant, 1010 W. American Blvd., 806/272-3294; www.myleals.com. (Other locations in Plainview, Amarillo, Henrietta, and Clovis, NM.)

Kuka's Burritos, 924 W. American Blvd., 806/272-3776.

Taqueria Guadalajara, 1201 W. American Blvd., 806/272-4333.

Panda Chinese Buffet, 1820 W. American Blvd., 806/272-8999.

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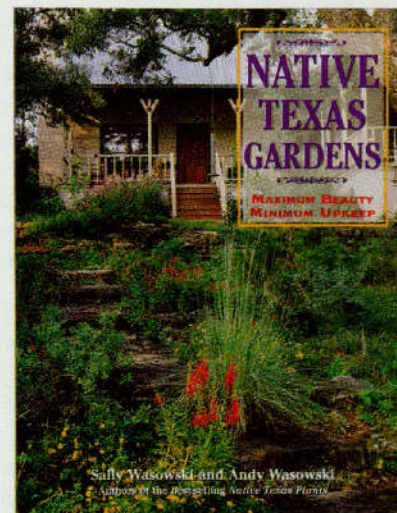
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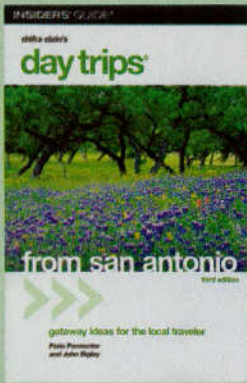
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Just PASSING Through

RESTORATION OF
A DALLAS LANDMARK

Old Red

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY RANDY MALLORY

AS I MANEUVER through southbound traffic along I-35E, I'm keeping one eye on the Dallas skyline. Just ahead, the 50-story Reunion Tower marks the western edge of downtown like a giant, gleaming pushpin. As I zip on the elevated freeway past the American Airlines Center sports arena and its posh neighbor, the W Dallas-Victory Hotel, I take in a fine view of Dealey Plaza, hands-down the city's most famous historical spot.

There's the former School Book Depository (now the Sixth Floor Museum), where Lee Harvey Oswald lurked on that fateful day in 1963. And the triple underpass of Commerce, Main, and Elm streets, the route of President Kennedy's motorcade. I also spy the 1915 Dallas Criminal Courts Building, where Jack Ruby was tried in 1964 for shooting Oswald.

Amid that panorama of familiar landmarks, something new rises from the plaza—an ornate clock tower crowning



Dallas' Old Red, revived with the clock tower restored, holds its own amidst the swirl of downtown traffic.

the castle-like 1893 Dallas County courthouse. The tower is back in view after a 90-year absence. I ease off the freeway for a closer look at the majestic, fairy-book building borne anew following a \$40 million renovation. The red building that once housed the county offices is now home to the new Old Red Museum of Dallas County History and Culture.

Old Red is the fifth courthouse (and sixth public building) to occupy this site on a bluff overlooking the Trinity River. The building dominates a block of land originally donated by John Neely Bryan, who founded Dallas in the 1840s. Unlike most

19th-Century Texas courthouses, the first Dallas County courthouse was built on the corner of two crossing streets (Main and Houston), rather than in the center of an adjacent block of land. This move was not to avoid creating a town square, but to preserve the town founder's cornfield.

Over the decades, four courthouses were built, and each disappeared into flames. The 1893 courthouse incarnation that we see today is a four-story, brick-and-stone edifice adorned by round turrets, arches, and windows. The building's designer, Arkansas architect M.A. Orlopp, employed the Richardsonian Romanesque style to symbolize the ambitions of Dallas, at the time the state's largest town, poised for growth on the edge of the frontier.

Blocks of rusticated blue-gray granite comprise the first-floor and window trim. Red sandstone forms upper floors and the massive clock tower, hence the nickname "Old Red." Interior embellishments—an ornate cast-iron staircase, granite wainscoting, two elevators, and six courtrooms—are rare for early Texas courthouses.

The 20th Century was not kind to Old Red. In 1919, amid fears of structural weakness, the landmark tower was taken down and the intricate clockworks dis-

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The ornate clock tower crowning the castle-like 1893 Dallas County courthouse is back in view after a 90-year absence.

mantled. As county offices expanded, interior renovations and new walls accommodated air conditioning as they masked the original interior's opulent charm. The county built a new courthouse on another site in the 1960s, and by the mid-1980s, all government offices had relocated.

The noble building—once proclaimed as the “grandest temple of justice in the Southwest”—stood vacant.

Beginning in 2001, Dallas County officials tapped public and private funds to restore the grand building inside and out. Lacking

original plans or drawings, project architect James Pratt of Dallas relied on early photographs to get him started, and watched for telltale signs of original features and colors as crews peeled away layers of material added over the years.

Now that the building is restored, Old Red is the perfect place to tell the sweeping story of Dallas County. As Pratt explains, “This was a public project in 1893

that showed Dallas at its best, when courthouses and law and justice were very important. In size and intent, Old Red ranks second only to the State Capitol in its attempt to be an important building.”

From a vantage point a half block away, I take in a full view of the restoration's literal

and figurative crowning accomplishment: the clock tower. Old Red's clock tower once more rises nine stories, replete with period clockworks and a 4,500-pound bell—just as it was first constructed. Heraldic, reptilian sculptures called wyverns are positioned around the base of the

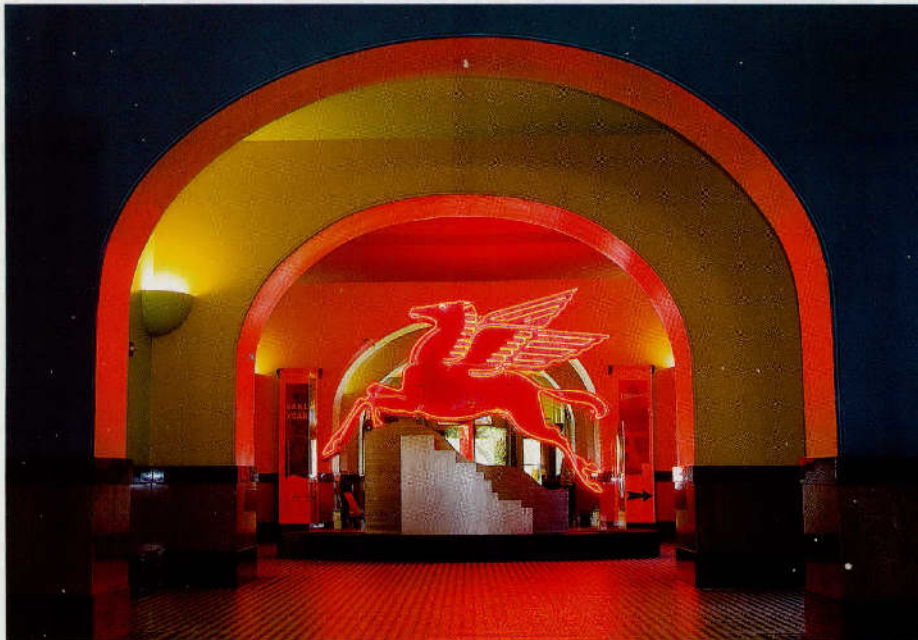
tower like dragons standing guard.

These days, Old Red's first floor houses the museum, which not only summarizes Dallas County history, but also documents the story of the courthouse's construction and restoration. You will also find a museum gift shop and a Dallas Tourist Information Center—the perfect starting point for a walking tour of the nearby landmarks.

Dominating the first-floor hallway is a

THE OLD RED MUSEUM of Dallas County History & Culture, 100 S. Houston St.

in downtown Dallas. Hours: Daily 9-5; closed Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Admission: \$8, \$6 age 65 and older, \$5 ages 6-15; free age 5 and younger. Call ahead for groups of 20 or more. Guided tour daily at 2. Call 214/745-1100; www.oldred.org.



The Mobil Pegasus, a Dallas icon, now grabs the attention of visitors to Old Red. The building's interior—complete with ornate cast-iron staircase and granite wainscoting—is restored to its 1893 grandeur.



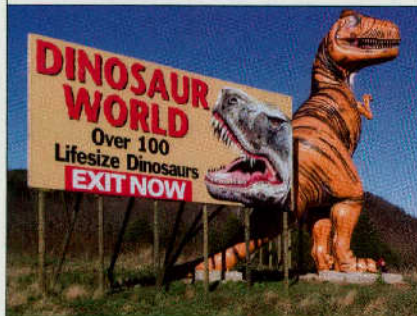
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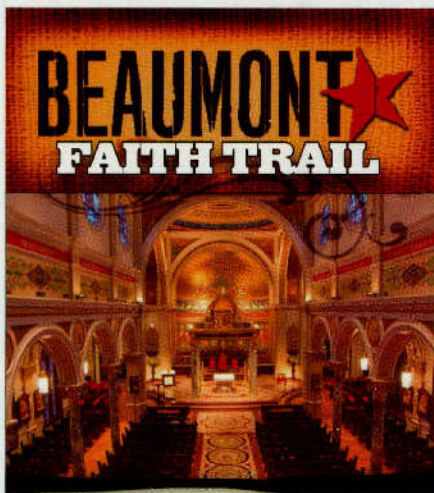
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Just PASSING Through

huge, winged Pegasus near the grand staircase. Built as a sign for the Magnolia Petroleum Company’s exhibit at the 1939 New York World’s Fair, the glowing red- neon horse later topped a service station at Buckner and Garland.

I admire the craftsmanship of the ornate staircase—each tread engraved with a Lone Star—then catch the daily 2 p.m. building tour. Everywhere you look, original colors revive the eccentricities of the Victorian Age in pastels such as avocado green, sky blue, and salmon pink. The fourth floor houses a ceremonial courtroom and meeting spaces, and the third floor has offices. The second floor boasts

a Children’s Learning Center where youngsters model vintage clothing, play old-fashioned games, and explore history and culture in flip books and computer stations.

The second floor also houses four former courtrooms transformed into the museum’s primary chronological galleries. A short video introduces each of the four eras—titled *Early Years* (prehistory-1873), *Trading Center* (1874-1917), Big “D” (1918-1945), and *World Crossroads* (1946-present). Concise information panels and captioned vintage photographs hit the historical highlights: how settlers survived the frontier; how railroads, automobiles, and airplanes accelerated commerce; how cotton, oil, banking, and technology made Dallas an economic powerhouse; and how a diverse population coped with more than a century of constant change.

Interactive displays liven up the historical record with both audio and video. One display describes the wild celebration (and barbecue dinner for 7,000) that met the arrival in July 16, 1872, of the first train to

Dallas. Another discusses the creation of a “Little Mexico” on McKinney Avenue by immigrants fleeing the Mexican Revolution of 1910. Yet another recalls the music of Deep Ellum, an African-American district of the 1920s where early blues legends such as Blind Lemon Jefferson gained fame.

Throughout the museum, period artifacts (on loan from a number of sources, including the Dallas Historical Society) make historic events seem even more per-



Old Red’s ornate clock tower once more presides over the intersection of Main and Houston streets in downtown Dallas.

sonal. Here is a ceremonial pipe of Texas’ last Comanche chief, Quanah Parker, and there is the family Bible of town founder John Neely Bryan. Here is a rolling pin used by slaves, and there is a note handwritten by Texas Governor Francis Lubbock calling for more troops to serve the Confederacy. Here is a sod-busting plow that first turned prairie into farmland, and there is the first integrated

computer circuit, built in 1958 by Texas Instruments engineer Jack Kilby.

The Old Red Museum doesn’t avoid the difficult subjects in the Dallas County story. One exhibit, for instance, describes the mob lynching in 1910 of Allen Brooks, an African-American who was tossed out of a second-floor courtroom in this very courthouse and later hung a short distance away. Another exhibit plays a firsthand video account of John F. Kennedy’s assassination as observed from one of Old Red’s balconies.

Old Red not only houses history, it is history. Prominent among nearby historical treasures—Dealey Plaza, the JFK Memorial, the replica of an 1840s log cabin known as the John Neely Bryan log cabin, the 1916 Union Station, and the historic West End—the fully-restored Old Red promises to remain Dallas’ premier 19th-Century public landmark.

RANDY MALLORY of Tyler felt a sense of history upon hearing the bells of Old Red’s restored clock tower toll, the same as they did 90-plus years ago.

March



WELCOME TO THIS MONTH'S sampling of events from throughout the Lone Star State.

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

BECAUSE OF SPACE LIMITATIONS, we can't list every event we receive. Please note that dates sometimes change after we go to press. You may want to confirm a particular event by calling the number listed with the festivity or by contacting the local chamber of commerce or convention and visitors bureau.

FOR INFORMATION ON ANY DESTINATION IN TEXAS: Call 800/452-9292 toll-free from anywhere in the U.S. or Canada, between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Central Time. A professional travel counselor at one of the Texas Department of Transportation's Travel Information Centers will answer your Texas travel questions, provide routing assistance, send brochures (including the official *Texas State Travel Guide* and map), and advise you of any emergency road conditions.

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1

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1-2

ALPINE
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1-8

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(began Feb 15)
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1-31

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1-Apr 27

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2

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5

EL PASO
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5-8

EL PASO
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Drama Festival
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6-20

MIDLAND
Midland Arts Association
Spring Show
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www.museumsw.org

7

DEL RIO
First Friday Art Walk
830/775-0888

7-Apr 13

ODESSA
West Texas Shooters
Photography Exhibit
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8

DEL RIO
Main Street Market
830/774-8558

8

EL PASO
Pacific Coast Horns
915/544-2022

8-22

FORT DAVIS
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13, 15

EL PASO
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presents *Il Trittico*
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14-15

ODESSA
West Texas Relays
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16

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20-21

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27-29

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28-30

ODESSA
tick...tick...BOOM!
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29

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1-2

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1-9

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1-2, 6-9

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1-28

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2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15

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3-22

HOUSTON
Houston
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www.rodeo-houston.com

5

HOUSTON
Pat Metheny Trio
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5-6

HOUSTON
Spring Thing Market
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www.chapelwood.org

5-8

HOUSTON
Ranching & Wildlife Expo
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6-9

FULTON
Oysterfest
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6, 8-9, 14-16

HOUSTON
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7

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7

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7-8

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Día del Mariachi
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7-9

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7-31

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8-9

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9

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11

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12

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13

CORPUS CHRISTI
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14

ORANGE
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14-16

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14-15, 21-22, 28-29

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15

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15

ORANGE
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Whooping Crane Strut
361/729-2213

SURFSIDE BEACH
St. Patrick's Day Parade
979/233-9161

15-16

SEABROOK
Lucky Trails Marathon
832/423-7451 or
866/611-4688
www.seabrooktourism.com

16

VICTORIA
Settlers Day
361/576-2189
www.victoriaseeniors.org

17-22

KEMAH
Spring Break Celebration
281/338-9880
www.kemahboardwalk.com

21

ORANGE
City Easter Egg Hunt
409/883-1011

22

EDNA
Easter Egg Hunt
361/782-5718

GALVESTON

Aeros
409/765-1894 or
800/821-1894
www.thegrand.com

KINGWOOD

Picnic on the Park
713/289-0819
www.picniconthepark.com

PALACIOS

Market Days
800/611-4567
www.palacioschamber.com

22-23

BROWNSVILLE
Bunny Corral
& Eggcellent Easter
956/546-2177
www.gpz.org

KEMAH

Easter Weekend
281/334-9880
www.kemahboardwalk.com

24

HARLINGEN
Gypsy
956/216-5990

25

ORANGE
Blast
409/886-5535
www.lutcher.org

25-Apr 6

HOUSTON
The 25th Annual
Putnam County Spelling Bee
713/558-TUTS or
888/558-3882
www.tuts.com

27

GALVESTON
Galveston Symphony
Orchestra
800/821-1894
www.thegrand.com

28

LAKE JACKSON
Lake Jackson
Historical Museum
65th Anniversary Celebration
Exhibit Opening
979/297-1570

28-29

KINGSVILLE
Texas A&M-Kingsville
Jazz Festival
361/593-2803
www.tamuk.edu/music

VICTORIA

Quilt Guild of Greater Victoria
Quilt Show
361/574-9869

28-30

CORPUS CHRISTI
Corpus Christi
Festival of the Arts
361/826-3410
www.ccparkandrec.com

HOUSTON

Bayou City
Art Festival
713/521-0133
www.bayoucityartfestival.com

TOMBALL

German Heritage
Festival
281/379-6844
www.tomballsistercity.org

29

HOUSTON
McCoy Tyner Trio
713/524-5050
www.dacamera.com

KEMAH

Corvette Show
281/338-9880
www.kemahboardwalk.com

LAKE JACKSON

Symphony Orchestra
979/233-1726

ORANGE

Art in the Park
409/883-1011

PASADENA

Armand Bayou Nature Center
Marsh Mania
281/474-2551
www.abnc.org

ROCKPORT

Coastal
Classic Auto Show
361/961-1181
or 949-6820

WEST COLUMBIA

Varner-Hogg Plantation
Celebration
979/345-4656

30

HOUSTON
Czech SpringFest
713/349-0500

LAKE JACKSON

Texas A&M
Singing Cadets
979/230-3156

HILL COUNTRY

1

AUSTIN
Soloduo
512/300-ACGS
www.austinclassicalguitar.org

BOERNE

Chuck Wagon Cookoff
& Heritage Gathering
830/249-6007
www.agmuseum.org

KERRVILLE

African Children's Choir
830/896-9393
www.kpas.org

LUCKENBACH

Texas Independence Day
Celebration
830/997-3224
www.luckenbachtexas.com

ROUND ROCK

Daffodil Festival
512/255-4030
www.rrdaffodilcapitaltx.us

1-2

AUSTIN
Texas State Arts Festival
512/441-9015
www.roadwayevents.com

UVALDE

Oklahoma!
830/278-4184

1-15

AUSTIN
(began Feb 29)
71st Star of Texas
Fair & Rodeo
512/919-3000
www.rodeoaustin.com

INGRAM

(began Feb 29)
Kitchen Witches
830/367-5120
www.hcaf.com

1-Apr 30

MASON
Bluebonnet Country
Driving Tours
325/347-5758
www.masontxccc.com

1-May 31

FREDERICKSBURG
Texas Hill Country
Wildflower Trail
866/839-3378
www.tex-fest.com

2

AUSTIN
80th Annual
Zilker Park Kite Festival
512/448-KITE
www.zilkerkitefestival.com

KERRVILLE

Symphony of the Hills
830/792-7469
www.symphonyofthehills.com

4

AUSTIN
Pat Methery Trio
512/472-5470 or
866/443-8849
www.austintheatre.org

6

BLANCO
Texas Star Trail Riders
512/478-2184



Jazz guitarist Pat Metheny tours Texas with his trio March 4 (Austin), March 5 (Houston), and March 6 (Fort Worth).

6-30
KERRVILLE
Guadalupe Watercolor Show
830/895-2911
www.kackkerrville.com

7-8
BRACKETTVILLE
Fort Clark Springs Festival
830/563-2493
www.fortclark.com

CONCAN
Frio Freedom Fest
830/232-6625

LAMPASAS
Stitches-In-Time Needle Art
512/556-2224

7-16
AUSTIN
South by Southwest
Multimedia Conference
512/467-7979
www.sxsw.com

8
GEORGETOWN
Market Day
512/868-8675
www.downtowngeorgetownassociation.com

STONEWALL
A Guided Bike Tour
of the LBJ Ranch
830/868-7128
www.nps.gov/ljjo

8-9
BOERNE
Market Days
830/249-5530
www.mainstreetinboerne.com

9
AUSTIN
Jesse Cook
512/329-6753
www.oneworldtheatre.org

11-12
KERRVILLE
Peter Pan
830/896-9393
www.kpas.org

14-15
AUSTIN
Austin Symphony
512/476-6064
www.austinsymphony.org

14-16
BANDERA
Spring Break Trail Ride
830/796-4413
www.hcsnap.org

FREDERICKSBURG
Trade Days
830/990-4900 or
210/846-4094
www.fbgtradedays.com

15
NEW BRAUNFELS
Historic Tour of Homes
830/629-2943
www.nbconservation.org

STONEWALL
Centennial Kite Day
830/644-2252

15-16
GRUENE
Old Gruene Market Days
830/832-1721
www.gruene market days.com

16
KERRVILLE
Bach Birthday Celebration
830/895-3710

21
AUSTIN
Boney James
512/329-6753
www.oneworldtheatre.org

21-22
KERRVILLE
Easter Fest
on the Guadalupe &
Chili/Barbecue Classic
830/792-8094 or
800/221-7958
www.kerrvilletexascvb.com

Original Team Roping
806/499-3584
www.otrc.net

21-23
KERRVILLE
Hill Country
Easter Bike Tour
800/221-7958
www.tmbra.org

22
KERRVILLE
Easter Run/Walk
Classic
830/257-7300
www.kerrvilletexascvb.com

NEW BRAUNFELS
Gartenfest
830/629-2943
www.nbconservation.org

STONEWALL
Easter at the
Sauer-Beckmann
Living History Farm
830/644-2252
www.tpwd.state.tx.us/
park/lbj

22-30
HONDO
Shooting Star Museum
Bluebonnet Walk
830/931-3837
www.hondochamber.com

27
MASON
Country Opry
325/347-5758
www.massontxoc.com

27-29
KERRVILLE
Round Up 2008
830/896-2553
www.museumof
westernart.org

28-30
MARBLE FALLS
Bluebonnet Blues &
Fine Arts Festival
830/798-1041
www.bluebonnetblues.com

SONORA
Vernon West Memorial
Invitational Team Roping
325/387-2880
www.sonoratx-
chamber.com

29
AUSTIN
Austin Civic Chorus
512/719-3300
www.chorusaustin.org

29-30
SABINAL
Wild Hog Festival
830/988-2010

30
AUSTIN
Austin American-Statesman
Capitol 10,000
512/445-3598
www.cap10k.com

Love is a Circle
512/476-5775
www.conspirare.org

PANHANDLE PLAINS
1
POSSUM KINGDOM
Mardi Gras
Bourbon Street on the Brazos
888/779-8330
www.possumkingdom
lake.com

SAN ANGELO
San Angelo Symphony
325/658-5877

1-2
BIG SPRING
Gem & Mineral Show
432/263-4662 or
866/430-7100

SAN ANGELO
CASI Texas Independence Day
Celebration
325/947-8753

1-30
CANYON
Panhandle-Plains Invitational
Western Art Show
806/651-2244
www.panhandleplains.org

7
AMARILLO
First Friday Art Walk
806/352-7262

LUBBOCK
First Friday Art Trail
806/762-8606
www.ffat.org

George Strait
806/770-2000 or
800/735-1288
www.georgestrait.com

13
ABILENE
Artwalk
325/677-8389

14-15
SAN ANGELO
Concho Valley
Bluegrass Festival
325/653-7030

14-16
SHAMROCK
St. Patrick's Day Celebration
806/256-2501

15-16
COLORADO CITY
Railhead Trade Days
325/728-3403
www.coloradocity
chamberofcommerce.com

22
ELECTRA
Easter Egg Hunt
940/495-3577
www.electratexas.org

QUANAH
Easter Egg Hunt
940/663-2222

24
ABILENE
Broadway in Abilene
presents Cats
800/585-3737

29-30
ABILENE
Original Team Roping
325/677-4376

SAN ANGELO
Cowboy Celebration
325/656-4323
or 949-4757

HISTORIC MAIN STREET ASSOCIATION

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2008

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Live Blues, Pianorama, Paint the Town
Plein Air Painting Event, Large-Scale
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Pianorama

Tejano Blues

The Bands

Chris Holzhaus
Texas Johnny Brown.
W. C. Clark
Eric Tessmer
Larry Lange
& the Lonely Knights
Dianna Greenleaf
& The Blue Mercy Band
Earl Gilliam
Homemade Jamz
Omar & The Howlers
Anson Funderburgh
& The Rockets
Whitey Johnson
Bells of Joy
Maylea Thomas Band
Texana Dames
Los Flames
with Ruben Ramos
Zac Harmon
Kaz Kazanoff
& The Texas Horns

Crawfish

Gumbo

Paint The Town

TEXAS Events March

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Fort Davis
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Tour the Gardens
Enjoy the Mountains
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- ★ Hiking & Biking
- ★ Wineries
- ★ Golfing
- ★ Lake Activities
- ★ Texas Cave Conservancy
- ★ Family Events & Festivals



**CEDAR
PARK**

Cedar Park Convention
and Visitors Bureau
600 North Bell Boulevard
Cedar Park, Texas 78613
512.401.5006



PINEY WOODS

1

TEXARKANA
Cat on a Hot Tin Roof
903/792-4992
www.trahc.org

1-2

HENDERSON
(began Feb 29)
The Lion in Winter
903/657-2968

1-Apr 20

WHITEHOUSE
Four Winds Renaissance Faire
903/839-5271
www.fourwindsfaire.com

2

HUNTSVILLE
General Sam Houston's
Birthday &
Texas Independence Day
Celebration
936/294-1832

WOODVILLE

Toast to Texas Independence
409/283-2272

8

CROCKETT
Jesse Cook
936/544-4276
www.pwfaa.org

MARSHALL

Main Street Second Saturday
Festival
903/935-4417
www.marshalltxchamber.com

13-15

CONROE
Young Texas Artists
Music Competition
936/756-7017
www.youngtexasartists.org

MARSHALL

Marshall Pro Rodeo
903/935-3121
www.marshalltxchamber.com

14-Apr 6

TYLER
Azalea & Spring Flower Trail
800/235-5712
www.tylerezaleatrail.com

15

JASPER
Azalea Festival
409/384-2762
www.jaspercocc.org

JEFFERSON

St. Patrick's Day Celebration
& Irish Stew Cookoff
903/665-2672
www.jefferson-texas.com

TYLER

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels
903/566-7424
www.cowancenter.org

15-16

DIBOLL
Tamale Festival
936/829-4888
www.cityofdiboll.com

15-31

NACOGDOCHES
Nacogdoches Azalea Trail
888/653-3788
www.nacogdochesazaleas.com

21-22

SAN AUGUSTINE
Blooms on Ayish Bayou
936/275-3610
www.sanaugustinetx.com

WOODVILLE

Festival of the Arts
409/283-2272

22

CONROE
Sounds of Texas Music
Series
936/441-7469
www.the-sounds-of-texas.com

GILMER

Easter Egg Hunt
903/843-2413
www.gilmerareachamber.com

24

TEXARKANA
Blast!
903/792-4992
www.trahc.org

25

CONROE
Conroe Symphony
936/760-2144
www.conrosymphony.org

26

TYLER
Gypsy
903/566-7424
www.cowancenter.org

28-29

LIBERTY
Liberty Jubilee
936/336-3684
www.cityofliberty.org

TYLER

Main Street
Flower Market
903/593-6905
www.heartoftyler.com

WOODVILLE

Western Weekend
Rodeo & Parade
409/283-5192

28-Apr 6

CONROE
Montgomery County
Fair & Rodeo
936/760-3631
www.mcfca.org

29-Apr 6

HUNTSVILLE
Walker County
Fair & Rodeo
936/291-8763
www.walkercountyfair.com

PRAIRIES AND LAKES

1

DALLAS
Porgy & Bess
214/565-1116

Texas Independence Day
Music Festival
214/823-3966

1-2

ARLINGTON
(began Feb 29)
Neil Sperry Garden Show
817/459-5000
www.arlingtonccc.com

1-2

CANTON
(began Feb 28)
First Monday Trade Days
903/567-6556
www.firstmondaycanton.com

DALLAS

(began Feb 29)
North Texas Irish Festival
972/943-4616
www.ntif.org

WASHINGTON

Texas Independence Day
Celebration
936/878-2214
www.birthplaceoftexas.com

1-9

DALLAS
(began Feb 8)
Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding
214/217-1536
www.dallassummermusicals.org

1-2, 7-9

SHERMAN
(began Feb 29)
Anne of Green Gables
903/892-8818

1, 7-8, 14-15,

21-22, 28-29

GRANBURY
Granbury Live
817/573-0303 or
800/989-8240
www.granburylive.com

2

SEGUIN
Toast to Texas
830/379-4833

2, 7-9, 14-16

CLEBURNE
Man of La Mancha
817/625-2455
www.carnegieplayers.com

6

FORT WORTH
Pat Metheny Trio
817/212-4280 or
877/212-4280
www.basshall.com

6-16

ADDISON
Out of the Loop Festival
800/233-4766
www.addisontexas.net

7-8

ARGYLE
Argyle Bluegrass Festival
888/557-6499
www.argylebluegrassfestival.com

GRAPEVINE

Chocolate Festival
972/574-4420
www.grapevine-texasusa.com

IRVING

Dallas Divas!
972/252-ARTS
www.irvingartscenter.com

7, 9, 12, 15

DALLAS
Fosca
214/565-1116

8

ANDERSON
Stagecoach Day
936/873-2633
www.birthplaceoftexas.com

ATHENS

Fly Fish Texas
903/670-2222
www.flyfishtexas.org

Triathlon

903/677-2001

BELTON

Texas Western Swing
Fiddling Showcase
254/939-8390
www.texaswesternswing.com

COLUMBUS

Dinner Theater
Beehive, the '60s Musical
979/732-5135
www.columbustexas.org

DALLAS

Dallas Bach Society Concert
214/320-8700
www.dallasbach.org

8-9

CAT SPRING
Antiques Show
979/865-5618

8-Apr 13

DALLAS
Dallas Blooms
214/515-6500
www.dallasarboretum.org

9

PLANO

Schütz's St. Matthew Passion
214/320-8700
www.dallasbach.org

12

FORT WORTH
Arlo Guthrie
817/212-4280
www.basshall.com

14-16

FORT WORTH
Fort Worth Symphony
817/665-6000
www.fwsymphony.org

15

DUBLIN
St. Patrick's Day Celebration
254/445-3422

FORT WORTH

Cowtown Goes Green
817/625-9715
www.stockyardsstation.com

ROUND TOP

Percussion Festival
979/249-3129
www.festivalhill.org

SEGUIN

Noche de Gala
830/303-7147 or
800/580-7322

15-16

WACO

Bicycle Outback Race
254/772-2453
www.keepwacowacko.com

15-23

ARLINGTON
Spring Break Out!
817/530-6000
www.sixflags.com

16

DALLAS
Greater Dallas
Youth Orchestra Wind
Symphony
214/528-7747
www.gdyo.org

16-23

FRISCO
Dr Pepper Dallas Cup
214/705-6700

17

DALLAS
Simply Ballroom
214/670-3600

GAINESVILLE
Frank Buck's Birthday
940/668-4539
www.frankbuckzoo.com

18

DALLAS
Classical Guitarist
Carlos Pérez
214/670-3320

POTTSBORO
Circus
903/786-6317
www.pottsborchamber.com

19-22

GRAND PRAIRIE
Riverdance
214/373-8000 or
972/647-5700
www.nokialivedfw.com

20

DALLAS
Jigul Thunder Drums of China
214/670-3600

21-22

BONHAM
Bluegrass Festival
903/367-7229

DALLAS
Amy Grant with the
Dallas Symphony Orchestra
214/692-0203
www.dallassymphony.com

LOCKHART
Tolbert
Texas State Chili Cookoff
512/398-2818
www.lockhartchamber.com

21-23

SALADO
Easter Pageant at Tablerock
254/947-5465
www.focsalado.org

22

EUSTACE
Easter Egg Hunt
903/425-2332

Full Moon Canoe Tour
903/425-2332

PALESTINE
Cars of Palestine Car Show
903/729-8183
www.carsofpalestine.com

22-23, 29-30

PALESTINE
Texas Dogwood Trails
Celebration
903/729-8067 or
800/659-3484
www.visitpalestine.com

24-29

DECATUR
Wise County Youth Fair
940/627-3341
www.wcyouthfair.org



Country music star Sara Evans plays the Majestic in Dallas on March 29.

27-29

DALLAS
Dallas Symphony Orchestra
214/692-0203
www.dallassymphony.com

PALESTINE
Old-Time Music
& Dulcimer Festival
800/659-3484
www.visitpalestine.com

TEMPLE
Temple College Jazz Festival
www.templejc.edu

28-29

BASTROP
CCC 75th Celebration
512/389-46651

LOCKHART
Rites of Spring
512/398-2818
www.lockhartchamber.com

ROUND TOP
Herbal Forum
979/249-3129
www.festivalhill.org

WASHINGTON
True Texas Women
936/878-2213
www.birthplaceoftexas.com

28-30

DALLAS
Dracula
877/828-9200
www.texasballettheater.org

PLANO
Heart of Texas
Arts & Crafts Show
903/217-8082
or 217-8081
www.heartoftexasshow.com

28-Apr 12

IRVING
The Unexpected Guest
972/252-ARTS
www.irvingartscenter.com

28-Apr 20

FORT WORTH
Crowns
817/338-4204
www.jubileetheatre.org

29

ATHENS
Classic Car Show
903/675-5630

BONHAM
Garden, Lawn & Home Expo
903/583-7453

DALLAS
Sara Evans
214/880-0137

DENISON
Arts & Wine Renaissance
www.cityofdenison.com
903/465-1551

LULING
Meet the Authors
830/875-1922
www.oilmuseum.org

29-30

DENISON
Spring Art Tour
www.denisontexas.us

GRANBURY
General Granbury's
Birthday Celebration &
Bean, Rib & Brnsket Cookoff
817/573-5299
www.hgma.com

SALADO
Wildflower Art Show
254/947-5040
www.salado.com

29-Apr 5

BURTON
La Bahia Antiques Show
979/289-2684

29-May 3

DALLAS
Neil Young's Greendale
214/747-5515
www.undermain.org

30

DALLAS
Mark O'Connor Trio
214/670-3600

LULING
Celebration of Life & Music
830/875-3214
www.celebratetom.com

30

SEGUIN
Mid-Texas Symphony
830/372-8089 or
800/580-7322
www.mtsymphony.org

31

HAMILTON
Home & Garden
Spring Fling
254/386-8258
or 386-4975

31-Apr 6

DALLAS
Speed Week at
SpeedZone Dallas
972/247-RACE

SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

1

FALFURRIAS
(began Feb 27)
Brooks County Fair
361/325-3333

SAN ANTONIO
International Games
Festival
512/454-2991
www.adventuremas.com

**1, 5, 8, 12, 15,
19, 22, 26, 29**

WESLACO
Bird Walks
956/565-3919
www.worldbirdingcenter.org

4

BEEVILLE
San Antonio Symphony
866/722-2838
www.sasymphony.org

6

PHARR
A Taste of the Valley
956/787-1481
www.pharrchamber.com

7-16

EAGLE PASS
International Friendship
Festival
830/773-3224 or
888/355-3224

MERCEDES
Rio Grande Valley
Livestock Show
956/565-2456
www.rgvlivestockshow.com

8

GOLIAD
Market Day
361/645-3563
www.goliadcc.org

9

EAGLE PASS
Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan
830/773-3224 or
888/355-3224

16

SAN ANTONIO
St. Patrick's Day Parade
210/227-4262

San Antonio Brass
210/733-7169

29

SAN ANTONIO
Dianne Reeves
210/224-9600

Jazz Meets Classical
210/227-0123

Salado

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for everyone...
all year long.



8th Annual Wildflower
Art Show,
Mar. 29th & 30th, 2008

For more
information
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Salado Tourism
254-947-8634
or salado.com



McALLEN

McAllen International
Birding Festival
April 6-17, 2008

Great Outdoors Nature Series
October 2007 - March 2008

Fall Birding Festival
October 1-13, 2008

Wild Walk Outdoor Adventure
October, 2008

For registration information, please contact
McAllen Chamber of Commerce

1-877-MCALLEN

www.mcallencvb.com

Readers RECOMMEND...

TIPS FROM OUR READERS

FABULOUS burgers await at **Hays City Café** near **Wimberley**. It's an ordinary-looking convenience store with one side being a café, but the food (especially the hamburgers) is anything but ordinary. It is some good Texas back-road eatin'.

DAVID MORALES, *Wimberley*

Hays City Café is at FM 150 and FM 3237, between Kyle and Wimberley; 512/847-0564.

I THOUGHT *Texas Highways* readers might want to know about **Taco Fish** in **El Paso**. I was there recently, and had a fish taco with rice and beans—it was mighty good. Bon appétit!

GREG CARSON, *El Paso*

Taco Fish is at 7500 N. Mesa St.; 915/833-9061. In addition to tacos and enchiladas, the restaurant serves such unexpected fare as octopus, marlin, and rompopo, a Mexican egg-nog served at the end of each meal.

WHEN MY family and I visited **Bryan**, we spotted a packed restaurant called **Papa Perez Mexican Cuisine** and decided to give it a try. The prices were reasonable, the food was phenomenal, and you have to see the stuffed avocado [called the "Golden Egg," since it's the size of a goose egg] to believe it. The staff made us feel like we were part of the family.

JOHN A. NECHMAN, *Houston*

Papa Perez Mexican Cuisine is at 201A S. Main St.; 979/775-7272.

I HAPPENED to run across one of the best restaurants in **Round Top**: **Chef Pasquale's Steak and Seafood**. It is housed in an old country

MY HUSBAND and I have stayed twice at a wonderful place in **Spice-wood**: **Villa Stellata**.

The bed and breakfast is away from Austin, but not too far if you want to go out to eat. It's gorgeously appointed, has a swimming pool, plenty of wildlife, and at night you can see an incredible sky full of stars. There's an outdoor kitchen, plus

lots of comfy chaises to snuggle in (several fit two people). We absolutely loved our stay. The owners [L.C. and Mallonee Mellenger] are friendly and interesting people, too.

JULIE KIES, *Austin*

Villa Stellata is on CR 411, just northeast of Texas 71. For directions, call 830/693-4269; www.chanticleerlogcabin.com. Other accommodations on the Mellenger's property include Dal Nonno and Villa Celeste.



Once a farmhouse, Villa Stellata has been transformed into a cozy B&B furnished with two king-size beds, a Jacuzzi, and a gas-log fireplace.

home on the same block as the historic Moore's Fort [a twin blockhouse built in 1828 in La Grange and later moved to Round Top]. The ambiance is warm and inviting, with oil paintings and vintage chairs and tables. Better than anything, though, is the food and service. The steak and seafood are exceptional, and nightly specials run the spectrum of continental cuisine. The bread and salad dressings are made fresh, and they don't serve any of that out-of-the-freezer-and-into-the-deep-fryer food here. Be prepared for the freshest of dining, and save room for the crème brûlée.

NANCY BERG, *Houston*

Chef Pasquale's Steak and Seafood is at 109 Bauer Rummel Rd.; 979/249-5044; www.chefpasquales.com.

THE BEST barbecue place I've ever been to is **Texas Pride Barbecue** in **Adkins**. It's inside a former Sinclair service station, and has antiques and memorabilia on display both inside and out. The barbecue is wonderful, and the atmosphere and nostalgia are pure Texas. Behind the restaurant is a pavilion that seats more than 1,000 people for Saturday concerts starring Johnny Bush, Moe Bandy, and other musicians. Fish-fry night [every Friday] is my favorite. It's a great place to take the whole family. I truly recommend that you check out this one-of-kind, family-fun time warp to the 1950s.

TARA SCHMIDT, *San Antonio*

Texas Pride Barbecue is at 2980 E. Loop 1604; 210/649-3730; www.texaspridebbq.net.

IF YOU KNOW OF A NOTEWORTHY LONE STAR ATTRACTION, RESTAURANT, EVENT, OR PRODUCT, WRITE OR E-MAIL:

Readers Recommend, *Texas Highways*, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009. E-mail: letters05@texashighways.com. Space constraints prevent us from publishing every suggestion we receive. We reserve the right to edit items. Because we're unable to check out every item, and because hours vary and details can change, please call ahead for more information.

Next month... Wildflowers, wildflowers, and more wildflowers! Plus, we'll have a strumming good time at the **Ukulele Festival in San Antonio**, fly by the **World Birding Center at Roma Bluffs**, and visit **Wharton**, home of award-winning author and playwright **Horton Foote**.



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window on
TEXAS

GALVESTON BREAKERS Photographer Maryanne Gobble captured this time exposure of waves crashing over the Galveston Seawall breakers (on Seawall Blvd. just west of 89th St.) during her first-ever visit to the Texas coast.

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

