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# Texas Highways

THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE OF TEXAS

## Port Arthur's Mardi Gras

**PLUS »**

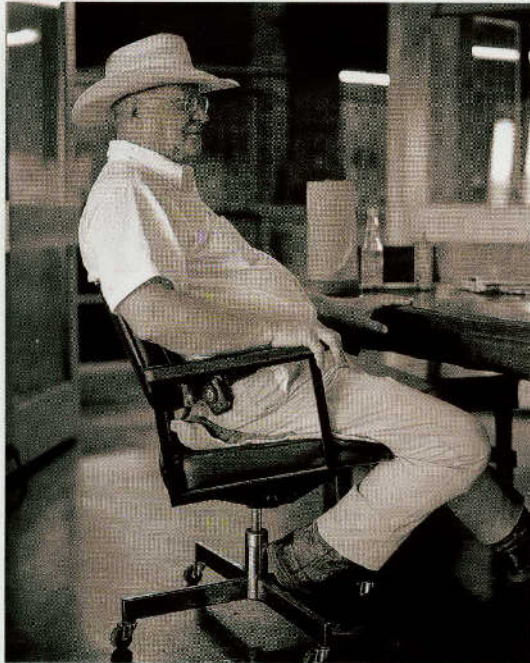
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**Fredericksburg's  
Cabernet Grill**

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© WYATT MCSPADDEN

For years, Rick Schmidt ruled his own barbecue universe at Kreuz Market. After he retires this month, he'll have more time to travel with his wife, Evelyn, in their new RV.

## End of a Barbecue Era

**T**HE PHRASE “end of an era” is wildly overused, but occasionally it rings true, and this is one of those times. Big Rick Schmidt is retiring from Kreuz Market in Lockhart. But wait! Before you jump in the car for one final trip to this shrine of Central Texas barbecue, you can rest easy knowing that Rick’s son, Keith, long the general manager of the operation, is officially taking the helm. So that cavernous, smoky pit room will sizzle comfortably for years to come.

But Rick won’t be riding herd on the place from his favorite table as he has since Kreuz moved into the new building 10 years ago. That was after the much-discussed family clash that resulted not only in Kreuz moving, but also in another barbecue mecca, Smitty’s, appearing in the old Kreuz building downtown. And, as much as I enjoy Kreuz, there is nothing like the original smoke-darkened front hallway of Smitty’s where you can still see a couple of the original tables to which knives were chained.

I’ve joined my friends Wyatt McSpadden and John Morthland on pilgrimages to Kreuz for many years. In idle conversation, we’ve imagined an absurdist religion based on Rick controlling the Universe from a secret (and non-existent) panel hidden in his favorite table. That was years after we made the transition from the old location, full of trepidation that the barbecue from the new pits wouldn’t measure up. That was before Rick made the declaration that the best pits were lined with steel anyway and the age of the pit had absolutely no bearing on the quality of the final barbecue. It’s the smoke and the consistent process—and Roy Perez as pit boss—that make the difference.

And it’s appropriate that out of an ending a beginning arises. Last month we initiated a new column in *Texas Highways*: TH Daytripper with Chet Garner (you’ll find it on the back page). And, appropriately for this issue, Chet visits Lockhart, makes a stop at Kreuz (for one of four meals) and hits the high point about the barbecue wars.

This is making me hungry for one of Kreuz pork chops!

Charles J. Lohrmann, Editor

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**Save the Date!**

Communities across the state host homegrown festivals throughout the year. Join the fun in 2011.

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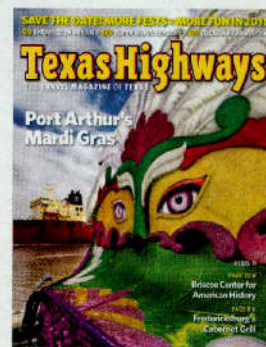
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### About Our Covers

**FRONT:** A ship in the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway passes the Majestic Krewe of Aurora's float as it lines up along the Port Arthur seawall for a Southeast Texas Mardi Gras parade. **Photo by Kevin Stillman**

**BACK:** A popular feature of Pearland's Winterfest, snow-tubing draws visitors from surrounding communities and beyond. **Photo © Brianne Thoen**

### Photographic Prints Available

Some images in this issue, including the front cover, are available as prints in two distinctive formats. For more information, call toll-free 866/962-1191, or visit [www.texashighwaysprints.com](http://www.texashighwaysprints.com).

## Go, Gorillas!

I really enjoyed the “Home Field Vantage” story on Texas football fields [November 2010]. Although the town of Trent [west of Abilene] plays six-man football, it sports a beautiful field of artificial turf. At the time the field was installed, Trent’s was the only six-man school in the state to have such a luxury. Trent also has a new school building with a sign that amuses motorists on Interstate 20: “Home of the Gorillas.”

**ROYA. JONES II**  
Abilene

## Perfect Timing

As I looked at “Four for Fall” in the November issue, I could only think that I would like to travel to each of those places to enjoy the autumn leaves. It would be really nice if each of the photos came with the date that they were taken so that I could arrive in fall-color “primetime!” This would be a nice addition to spring flower photos, as well.

**JOHN HALSELL**  
Mineral Wells

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** We agree that timing seasonal travels can be tricky! Unfortunately, adding dates to the photos may not prove helpful, as optimal viewing times vary from year to year. When possible, we include expert predictions on when seasonal foliage and/or blooms will be at their peak. And we list other things to do in the area, in case nature doesn't cooperate! Your best bet is to contact the destination directly for periodic updates.

## CONTACT TH

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

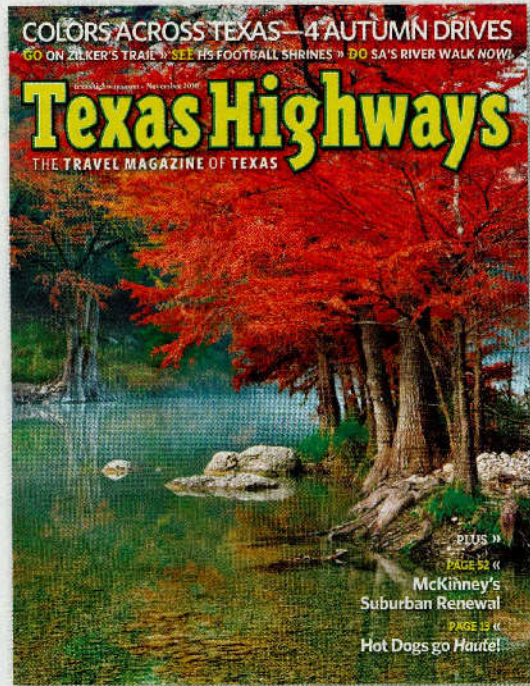
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“TH always has interesting articles and beautiful pictures. I even go back and read the old issues!”

—ELIZABETH HART,  
TH Facebook Fan

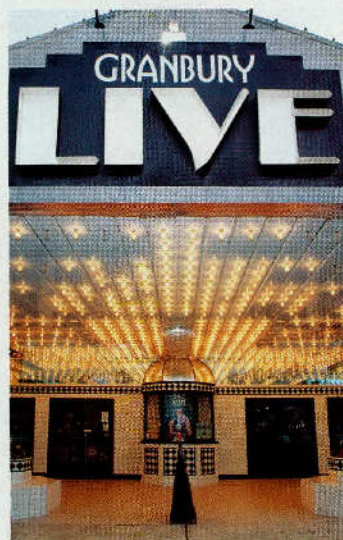


## The True Texan

Regarding September's “True, Texas”: I was born in the real True, Texas. True was a flourishing town with a theater, drugstore, blacksmith shop, sawmill, cotton gin, post office, grocery store,

school, bank, and churches. Now there is just a cemetery and pastures all around. I was raised on a farm nearby at Fort Belknap outside of Graham. It is still the best place to live!

**CORA ELDRIDGE**



TH READER RECOMMENDATION

## Oldies But Goodies

WE WENT to see '50's Class Reunion at Granbury Live in Granbury, and we loved the show. We've attended shows at Granbury Live since 1999, and the performers in the current cast are excellent. Every singer is exceptionally talented, and words can't describe Mike Echols and his fantastic fiddle-playing. If you like oldies, the shows are like going back in time.

**MARTHA TUCKER, Irving**

Granbury Live is at 110 N. Crockett St.; 800/989-8240; www.granburylive.com.

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# Postcards

➔ INSIDE: TEXAS WINES STAR AT A HILL COUNTRY RESTAURANT...8 EASTLAND'S VERSATILE SPIRIT...10



**Do!**

Check out the Cowboys Stadium art collection

A Texas-size TV screen at High Velocity sports bar in San Antonio guarantees fans great views of the action.

## Get Your Game On!

*Sports bars are more than just taps and TVs* Text by **ANTHONY HEAD**

**A**LTHOUGH I GREW UP IN INDIANA, where basketball reigns supreme, I'm now a Texan and a committed football fan. My conversion wasn't painful because I've always liked watching big games at sports bars. With the crowd's upbeat energy and plenty of beer and food, it's the next best thing to being there.

On February 6, when Super Bowl XLV comes to Arlington's Cowboys Stadium,

there may be no better sports bar in the state in which to celebrate than nearby Humperdink's. One of five locations around the Metroplex, it sits within a mile of the stadium. With a 45-foot ceiling overhead, it certainly lives up to its billing as "Arlington's Tallest Bar." Humperdink's isn't big enough to hold the estimated 150,000 football enthusiasts descending on Arlington in February, but it's a start.

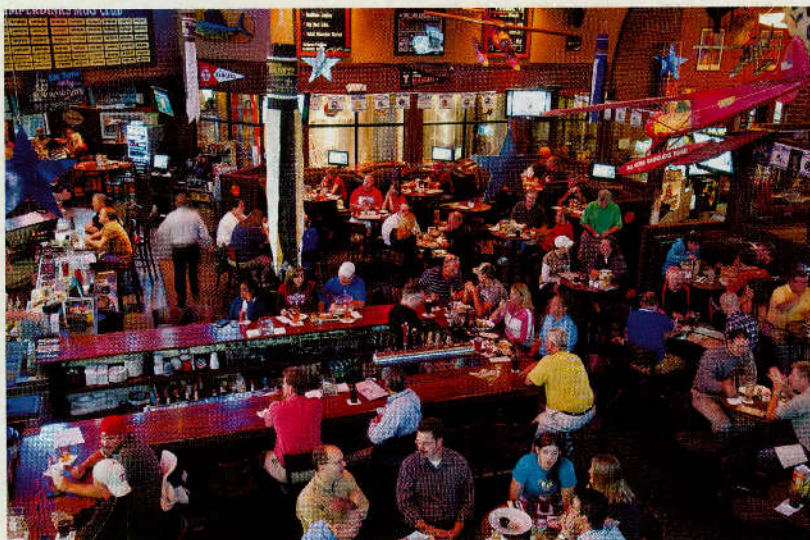
Sitting at the main bar, I'm joined by Humperdink's manager, Emanuel Harrison. "This place is going to be crazy the whole week leading up to the game," he says. "We're already getting phone calls from fans trying to reserve a stool. We're planning to open up extra seating areas to maximize as much space as possible." No matter where fans sit, they won't miss any action because dozens of televisions

hang prominently throughout the space.

With an emphasis on the quality of its cuisine, Humperdink's is actually more of a sports restaurant than a sports bar. The menu of burgers, steaks, and seafood is built to go with the selection of craft brews from the on-site brewery. My favorite of the bunch, the Big Red IPA, tastes well-rounded and is quite food-friendly; it goes especially well with the turkey melt or any of the other sandwiches offered.

Even though the Cowboys will not make it to the big game, Dallasites will be revved up for the action. "All of Dallas is already super-excited about the Super

Expect Super Bowl frenzy at Humperdink's, just a mile from Arlington's Cowboys Stadium.



With the crowd's upbeat energy and plenty of beer and food, it's the next best thing to being there.

Bowl," says Cynthia Hobbs, a bartender at Frankie's Sports Bar and Grill in the Uptown region. "We'll be getting people from all over the Metroplex for the game. This place is going to be a madhouse."

With scores of compact TVs, big-screen TVs, giant-screen TVs, wall-sized TVs, high-def and plasma TVs, Frankie's makes it hard to miss any of the action. The beer, too, comes in dozens of varieties, many from around the world, with plenty of Texas greats like Shiner Bock and Real Ale Brewing Company's Fireman's #4 Blonde Ale.

Frankie's also demonstrates how sports bars have evolved to become much more than just taps and TVs. The place feels comfortable, like a neighborhood tavern, but with very little beer signage or neon. The granite-topped bar has hooks underneath for purses, and there are several

different rooms for dining on upscale versions of bar food, including wings (more than a half-dozen varieties), nachos (with steak strips), and burgers (the half-pound Colt Burger is topped with apple-

smoked bacon and Maytag blue cheese).

Hobbs says the raw bar's popularity proves that sports fans love seafood, too. The Super Bowl Brunch is sure to be a winner: In addition to sandwiches, eggs, and waffles,

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**Go!**  
Plan to see a bronze pour at the gallery's April show



The gallery displays sculptures by Bill Worrell, such as *Mystery, Power, Energy*, a monumental work cast next door.

## Fireside Gallery

*A Bastrop foundry showcases sculpture and more in its new space*

**FOR SOME 30 YEARS, THE DEEP IN THE HEART ART FOUNDRY IN BASTROP** has assisted artists in creating works from bronze plaques to monumental sculptures, all the while building a client list that now includes internationally acclaimed sculptors such as Gil Bruvel, Tom Tischler, Bill Worrell, and Clayburn Moore. Last August, the foundry debuted a 2,400-square-foot gallery that showcases not only its clients' sculptures but also a broad selection of their two-dimensional works, including landscapes and portraits. Visitors enjoy spotting limited-edition prints by French sculptor Gil Bruvel with the same fantasy themes as his intricate metal works. Bruvel, who now lives in Wimberley, also creates functional and public art in the same vein.

After viewing the art inside the gallery, visitors can move to the sculpture garden, which features 10 to 15 monumental pieces, including a life-size mermaid, a deer, and a pair of baby elephants. "On Saturday, you can also tour the foundry and see how the sculpture is cast and finished," says gallery director Jamie Howard. "Tours can last 20 minutes to two hours, depending on how many questions you have."

Led by Howard or one of her staff, the tours are free and offer a fascinating introduction to casting using the lost-wax method. The gallery offers bronze-pour demonstrations twice a year, during the gallery shows in April and November. Call 512/321-7894; [www.fireside-gallery.com](http://www.fireside-gallery.com). —Nola McKey

Frankie's build-your-own Bloody Mary Bar will be piled high with several mixes, plenty of shrimp, pico de gallo—the works.

In contrast, High Velocity, at the JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Country Resort & Spa, resembles a gallery space. Colorful Texas-team logos and sports-themed paintings cover the walls, and high ceilings and polished surfaces frame the 250-seat restaurant. It's also super-charged throughout with high technology; a 12-foot-high by 120-foot-long TV screen dominates the space above the bar.

High Velocity offers 24 beers on tap, including another of my Texas favorites, Rahr & Sons Blonde Lager. Its crisp flavor tastes great with game-day favorites, such as Texas-style chili and nachos with barbecue brisket, smoked cheddar, and jalapeños. High Velocity's game plan makes use of many fresh, high-quality ingredients to appeal to families as much as football fanatics.

For anyone who thinks the best football food ever invented—pizza—should be left

up to the experts, the place to go is Nick's Place Italian Sports Bar & Pizzeria in Houston. Nick's features an old-school sports-bar ambience: It's a bit dark inside, and the place is usually filled with friendly regulars. It's also loaded with TVs and great beer. Tableside service is typically laid-back, but the staff take their sports seriously and they mean business when it comes to pizza. Mozzarella, parmesan, provolone, and ricotta top the Quattro Formaggi; bacon, beef, ham, pepperoni, and sausage crowd the "I Got Your Meat" pizza; and just about every combination with and without vegetables is available in-between.

Even by sports bar standards, Nick's is in a league of its own. On February 6, fans can plan on a full day of pre-game shows and seemingly endless game-day analysis, because Nick's will open at 9 a.m., a full 13 hours before kickoff. You can even have a breakfast pizza with eggs, ham, bacon, cheddar cheese, mushrooms, red onion, and bell pepper.

Whether or not a Texan team will be playing in the Super Bowl this year, when it comes to good food, good beer, and good times, Texas sports bars have already won the game. **TH**

### Texas Sports Bars

**Humperdink's**, 700 Six Flags Dr., Arlington (and other locations), 817/640-8553; [www.humperdinks.com](http://www.humperdinks.com).

**Frankie's Sports Bar and Grill**, 3227 McKinney Ave., Ste 102, Dallas (and other locations), 214/999-8932; [www.frankiesbar.com](http://www.frankiesbar.com).

**High Velocity** (at the JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Country Resort & Spa), 23808 Resort Pkwy., San Antonio, 210/276-2500; [www.jwsanantonio.com](http://www.jwsanantonio.com).

**Nick's Place Italian Sports Bar & Pizzeria**, 2713 Rockyridge Dr., Houston, 713/780-8338; [www.nicksplacehouston.com](http://www.nicksplacehouston.com).







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## Come to the Cabernet

*Fredericksburg's Cabernet Grill brings Texas wines to the forefront*

Text by **CLAUDIA ALARCÓN**

Chef Ross Burtwell looks to the Hill Country for produce, cheeses, and meats, which he pairs with Texas wines.



**See!**

More on Texas wine:  
[texashighways.com/thtaste](http://texashighways.com/thtaste)

**S**TATEWIDE, TEXAS HAS SEEN A SURGE IN WINERIES IN THE PAST decade; from 46 in 2001 to almost 200 in 2010—and the Hill Country has proven especially fruitful for the industry. On the 32-mile stretch of US 290 between Johnson City and Fredericksburg alone, you'll find 10 wineries that excel with different grapes and styles. Each winery offers tours, public events, and tasting opportunities, but they also work together in an organization called the 290 Wine Road to promote the area as an important wine-producing region.

So when I heard about the Cabernet Grill, a Fredericksburg restaurant whose wine list is dedicated entirely to Texas wines, I was intrigued—and pleased. After all, I've spent the last 25 years working in various aspects of the culinary industry, from food service to wine sales, and I enjoy exploring Texan wines. When I learned that the Cabernet Grill is the on-site restaurant of the Cotton Gin Village, a bed-and-breakfast on the outskirts of Fredericksburg on Texas 16, my husband, Will, and I booked a cabin and made plans to explore the Cabernet Grill menu—no after-dinner driving required!

Accommodations here consist of seven mid-1800s-era log cabins surrounding a limestone courtyard. Named after the rivers of Texas, the cabins have wood-burning fireplaces and

**The menu at Cabernet Grill changes seasonally, and often includes game dishes such as venison and quail.**

plenty of charm. Curtain holders made of ox harnesses, punched-tin sconces, and log-frame beds contribute a frontier vibe, but full kitchens, Jacuzzi bathtubs, and satellite TV offer 21st-Century comfort.

For his menu at the Cabernet Grill, chef and owner Ross Burtwell looks to the surrounding areas for produce, cheeses, and meats: quail from Lockhart, wild game from Broken Arrow Ranch in Ingram, cheeses from throughout the Hill Country. The result is a creative menu of gussied-up Texas classics like chicken-fried rib-eye with green chile gravy and enchiladas made with Black Diamond buffalo meat, all paired (if diners wish) with Texas wines.

Burtwell credits serendipity with his coming into the culinary arena. Back in the 1980s, he told us, he read a story in *Texas Highways* about chefs Stephan Pyles and Dean Fearing, the pillars of the trendy Southwest cuisine movement. He was so inspired by the story that he decided to pursue a career in cooking. After an apprenticeship at the American Culinary Federation's Chef Society in Dallas, he attended culinary school and worked in various restaurants before opening the Cabernet Grill in 2002.

At first, his wine list incorporated a few of the most popular Texas wines interspersed with well-known labels from elsewhere. Slowly, he began the transition to today's 100% Texas wine list. "Our wine sales went up 28% the first month we made the switch," says Burtwell. "We currently serve nearly 85 vintages from 20 different Texas wineries. When tourists come in for dinner they tell us that since they are eating Texas cuisine, they want to drink Texas wine."

I asked Chef Burtwell to pair our dinner with the wines of his choice. What followed was an inspired meal that showcased his prowess in the kitchen and his passion for Texas wines. To start, he served a ramekin of warm goat cheese with rosemary, garlic chives, and sun-dried tomatoes, accompanied by jalapeño-stuffed fresh figs wrapped in wild boar bacon, with glasses

of McPherson Viognier, a full-bodied yet fruity wine that is an excellent alternative to the ubiquitous Chardonnay. Next, Burtwell paired his outstanding pecan-crust crab cake with Grape Creek Pinot Grigio; crisp and refreshing, the wine displays tropical overtones that matched the dish beautifully. To accompany the venison sausage-stuffed quail with roasted fig jam and scalloped potatoes, he chose the Flat Creek Super Texan, a Sangiovese blend that is one of his favorites.

Yet another standout, Inwood Estates' Tempranillo, was perfect with the rosemary-garlic grilled beef tenderloin and grilled asparagus. A trio of desserts fit for a king arrived with the surprise of the evening, small glasses of straw-colored Dotson Cervantes Muscat Canelli. Drinking this was pure bliss, like sipping the nectar out of a honeysuckle blossom.

Burtwell has spent a considerable amount of effort training his service staff. That way, when customers ask, they can

make educated recommendations. To supplement their knowledge, he takes his staff on regular wine-tasting trips throughout the region. "We talk to the winemakers, tour their vineyards and fields, and taste their wines. We like to share their wine-making stories and knowledge whenever we can," he says.

Visiting wineries is a fun and educational experience, but if you want to dine and learn all in one place, try the Cabernet Grill. You can taste two, three, four different wines, then walk just a few steps to your cozy cabin. Highly recommended! **TH**



## Come See The World's BEST!

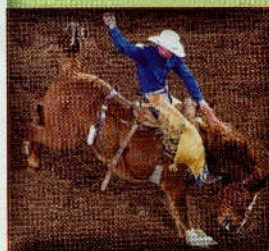


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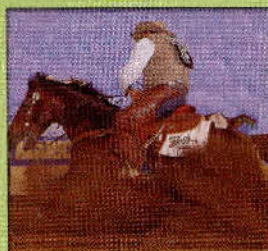


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## Boomtown Legacy

*Eastland restores its identity*

Text by **CHARLES LOHRMANN**

The buildings themselves seem more typical of the 1920s and 1930s than of today.



**Do!**  
Who was Old Rip? Find out at [texashighways.com/weekender](http://texashighways.com/weekender)

**L**IKE MANY SMALL TOWNS THAT PREDATE (AND SURVIVE) A nearby interstate highway, Eastland lives with a split personality: The first side of Eastland—the interstate-based personality—works hard to please the through-traveler who chooses the recognized brand of restaurant and lodging in order to simplify fast-and-often-long road trips.

Eastland's other personality, rather history-minded, with its home in the original town square that lies about a mile north of Interstate 20, presents itself as both modest and somewhat more complicated. This personality comes across as more richly textured, and asks (actually demands) that visitors set aside a little extra time to experience a touch of the town's character.

Eastland definitely defines itself as a destination where the touch of the past becomes a working component of the present. This region of the state first enjoyed boom-time prosperity during decades past, with mining activity and oilfield wealth stimulating the economy. Those days are only memories, but the buildings (and more renovation plans) live on.

On this visit, my first stop is The Eastland Hotel, an historic building that housed hotels in its past incarnations and most recently came back to life in the 1990s with the guidance and patience of owners Mike and Anne Zoellick. The Zoellicks, who live on the third (and top) floor of the hotel, continue to renovate and restore features of the brick

Even though it no longer rents rooms, Eastland's Connellee Hotel welcomes guests to the lobby, now home to the local visitor center.

building. Now, the hotel's first two floors offer nine rooms, each named for a Texas town or city. The rooms are spacious and furnished in a style typical of the early decades of the 20th Century. I'm checking in on a warm summer afternoon, and the public areas of the hotel are not air-conditioned. But the air conditioning works efficiently in the rooms, and I'm soon relaxed in the Burnet room. After catching up with a couple of business calls, I take a few minutes to scan the view of the downtown streets from my second-story window.

Even though there are cars passing in the streets and people going about their business along the sidewalk, the buildings themselves seem more typical of the 1920s and 1930s than of today. I'm immediately caught up in an imaginary scenario that starts with the town as it used to be, and I'm wondering what passersby I'd see in such a setting.

I've planned this trip to join a local group that is celebrating the completion of an historic preservation plan for the town, and a reception is scheduled in the afternoon. So I have a couple of hours to stroll around the square and inventory the changes since my last visit.

This afternoon's reception is set for the lobby of the now-restored Connellee Hotel, just around the corner from The Eastland Hotel. The eight-story, 100-room Connellee originally opened for guests during the boom years of the late 1920s. The lobby of the building, with its checkerboard tile floor, vintage reception desk, and comfortable lounge areas, is home to the Eastland Visitor Center and the Eastland Community Foundation. The eighth floor penthouse is called the roof garden because it features windows on all sides that offer a panoramic view of the surrounding countryside.

One of the disappointments for me on this trip is that I won't be able to watch a film in the Majestic Theatre, a fully restored movie palace complete with deco-style murals on the theater walls. Because it was first built as the Connellee Theater for performances—it sits just

around the corner on Lamar Street, next to The Eastland Hotel—the Majestic also serves as a venue for performances and special events. The green room back stage is a retro-haven, and the marquee out front a festival of neon. The Majestic invites movie-goers for Friday through Monday evenings, but my last night in town will be Thursday.

For me, a trip to Eastland is an indulgence in simple pleasures, such as a driving tour of the neighborhoods and a stop to take in the long view from the high school parking lot. If time permits, I'll drive over to Mary's in Strawn for the much-applauded chicken-fried steak. Or cruise around the backroads of the county. But I'm also happy with a quiet and relaxing stroll around the square.

One of the aspects of The Eastland Hotel that I enjoy most, particularly on warm evenings, is the pool. Set in a walled courtyard, the pool offers a quiet late-night swim, and with the crescent moon

and accompanying stars overhead, I feel like I'm safely ensconced in a quiet oasis.

The next morning, I catch up with a few folks at Louise's Café on the square, a crowded local favorite. It's rare that I take time for a classic breakfast, so I enjoy the boisterous room where townsfolk come and go, sharing news of friends and neighbors, and making me feel like I fit right in. *TH*

## Eastland

Find out more about Eastland, including the Majestic Theatre, by visiting the Eastland Community Foundation offices in the Connellee Hotel, 254/631-0708; [www.eastlandfoundation.com](http://www.eastlandfoundation.com).

The Eastland Hotel, 112 North Lamar St., Eastland, 254/629-8397; [www.theeastlandhotel.com](http://www.theeastlandhotel.com).

Find Majestic Theatre showtimes at 254/629-1322, or arrange for a tour by calling 254/629-2102 (you'll probably have to leave a message).

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2011

# Save the Date!



## Parades in Port Arthur, Polka in Ennis— Small-town Festivals Amp Up the Fun

Text by NOLA McKEY

### AS YOU'RE WEIGHING POTENTIAL

New Year's resolutions, here's one you may not have considered: *Resolve to have more fun in 2011.* It's a worthy goal, and doesn't require depriving yourself or winning the lottery to accomplish. A good place to start is by heading to one of the hundreds of homegrown festivals hosted by small towns across the state. There's something for everyone, from parades and pageants to live music and demolition derbies. Here's a sampling of community celebrations to whet your appetite for Texas-sized fun in the months ahead.



PHOTO: KEVIN STILLMAN



© BRIANNE THOEN

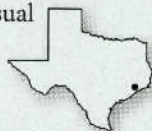
LEFT: Todd and Brandy Kieschnick, the 2010 king and queen of Krewe Moni Ami, throw beads to onlookers during the Royalty March at Port Arthur's Southeast Texas Mardi Gras. ABOVE: Kids of all ages enjoy the snow at Pearland's Winterfest.



ABOVE: Raymond Dlabaj dances with his granddaughters at one of three Czech fraternal halls that offer nonstop music during the National Polka Festival in Ennis. RIGHT: A krewe member enjoys interacting with the crowd during Port Arthur's Mardi Gras.

### Winterfest, Pearland, January 29.

Winter festivals aren't unusual on the Gulf Coast, but if you start with the premise that such an event should involve snow, the organizers of Pearland's Winterfest come off as, well, a tad optimistic. Never fear; the Parks and



Recreation Department in this fast-growing town south of Houston orders 200,000 pounds of snow each year prior to the event and then piles it up in Independence Park in two "snow-tubing hills"—one 11 feet high and the other six feet high (for kids age five and younger). It's a great way for families to kick off the year together,



but you don't have to have a kid in tow to enjoy a wild slide down the slope; plenty of adults join the fun on their own. The Parks and Rec folks even provide the inner tubes.

Besides playing in the snow, the lineup includes musical entertainment on three stages, a Recycle Snowman Contest, carnival rides and games, rock climbing, arts-and-crafts booths, dancing horses, and a petting zoo. New this year: a Sports Zone with 3-on-3 basketball and dodge ball and volleyball tournaments. All the traditional festival foods are on hand, from sausage-on-a-stick to funnel cakes (check out the fried Twinkies). Call 281/412-8900; [www.pearlandparks.com](http://www.pearlandparks.com). *In case of bad weather, check the website for updates.*

### Texas Independence Day Celebration, Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site, February 26-27.

This Washington County park always hosts a celebration the weekend closest to March 2, but since 2011 marks the 175th anniversary of Texas' Declaration of Independence from Mexico, this year's event promises extra pizzazz. It's fitting, since the General Convention that gave rise to that declaration—and eventually, the Republic of Texas—met at this site. The program includes a re-creation of key moments during the convention, as well as numerous living-history presentations—black powder-firing demonstrations, a drill competition with various militia groups, an 1830s military camp—that bring alive the sights and sounds of those turbulent times.

Other highlights include a play about the convention presented by the Navasota Theatre Alliance, an exhibit on the lives and contributions of the 59 signers of the Declaration, recognition of their descendants, and the unveiling of a collaborative Independence Day-themed painting by numerous local artists. Add demonstrations of period crafts from blacksmithing to tanning, musicians playing mid-19th-Century music, and food and craft vendors, and you've got the basics for the state's premier 175th-anniversary

celebration. Call 936/878-2214, ext. 224; [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/washington\\_on\\_the\\_brazos](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/washington_on_the_brazos).

### Southeast Texas Mardi Gras, Port Arthur, March 3-6.

If you love a parade, you'll adore this colorful Port Arthur celebration—it boasts seven of them. The Courir du Mardi Gras Parade—a particularly Cajun tradition that involves masked riders stopping at sites along the route in search of ingredients for making gumbo, and



KEVIN STILLMAN



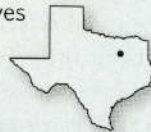
ends with a *fais do-do* (dance) in downtown Port Arthur—kicks off the event on Thursday. Krewe-sponsored parades featuring beautifully decorated floats take place Friday and Saturday nights. The Krewe Royalty March on Saturday afternoon offers visitors a chance to see elaborate, one-of-a-kind costumes (members of some two dozen krewes participate), and compete for some of the best "throws" (beads and other trinkets) at the festival. A Motorcycle Showcase Parade, a Munchkin Parade (children's parade), and a Motor Parade (anything that rolls) round out the lineup.

The Mardi Gras festival grounds offer

Don't know how to polka? The festival's friendly atmosphere makes it easy to nab a partner who will be glad to show you the steps.

For a comprehensive list of statewide festivals, visit [www.traveltexas.com](http://www.traveltexas.com), click on "Events," and search for "Festivals."

**National Polka Festival, Ennis, May 27-29.** With 13 live bands playing in three Czech fraternal halls (as well as downtown), this Ellis County festival lives up to its billing, attracting some 50,000 participants annually. The focus is on dancing—there's even a King & Queen Dance Contest (Czech costumes encouraged)—but the lineup also includes a Czech-themed parade (one of the largest of its kind in the world), a 5K and 10K Polkafest Run, a Horseshoe Fest Tournament, a Polka Pictures Photo Contest, a kolache-eating contest, arts and crafts, food vendors (look for kolaches and the ultimate *klobase-on-a-stick*), and a country-music concert on Saturday night. On Saturday and Sunday, a children's area downtown offers pony rides, a petting zoo, a rock-climbing wall, a bounce house, carnival games, face-painting, and sand art.



Wearing colorful Czech folk costumes, Don Blake and Harriett Adams compete in the King and Queen Dance Contest.

All the dancing naturally calls for food and refreshment, and there's plenty on hand. Besides the food vendors downtown, each fraternal hall offers such items as barbecue beef and *klobase* (sausage), parsley potatoes, sauerkraut, pork roast, dumplings, and green beans, plus kolaches and other Czech pastries. A free shuttle bus offers rides from one hall to another, if you want to check out another band. Don't know how to polka? The friendly atmosphere makes it easy to nab a partner who will be glad to show you the steps. **Call 972/878-4748 or 888/366-4748; [www.nationalpolkafestival.com](http://www.nationalpolkafestival.com).**

a slew of other family-friendly attractions: street entertainers, pony rides, a petting zoo, a Great Cats exhibit (lions, tigers, and more), a carnival, and 10 concerts featuring zydeco, hip-hop, and Texas country musicians (Justin Moore, Kevin Fowler, and Wayne Toups & ZeDaCajun confirmed for this year). The food booths alone are worth the trip—look for crawfish etouffée, gumbo, pistolets, and crab balls, as well as fajitas, corn dogs, and a long list of other foods on a stick. **Call 409/721-8717; [www.mardigras.portarthur.com](http://www.mardigras.portarthur.com).**

### International Friendship Festival, Eagle Pass, March 18-27.

Started in 1962 by the Eagle Pass Chamber of Commerce as a way of celebrating the city's bonds with its neighbors in northern Mexico, the International Friendship Festival continues today with the same mission. It features a parade with some 150 entries, including several drum and bugle corps, gymnastics groups, and other participants from Mexico; a carnival; baseball



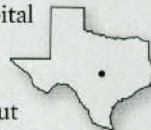
tournaments and other sporting events; and Noches Mexicanas, a three-day celebration with food, live music, and varied entertainment. While most of the activities take place in the downtown area, one of the highlights of the event—the “Abrazo” ceremony—is held at the Texas-Mexico borderline of International Bridge I, a two-lane bridge with pedestrian walkways. The ceremony involves a friendly embrace between authorities from Eagle Pass and their counterparts in Piedras Negras, followed by a reception hosted by the Eagle Pass-Piedras Negras International Good Neighbor Council. (The sister cities take turns hosting the event.)

Noches Mexicanas, which draws 4,000 to 6,000 people each evening, runs Thursday through Saturday of the second weekend (March 24-26). The “Abrazo” ceremony takes place March 25. **Call 830/773-3224; [www.eaglepasstexas.com](http://www.eaglepasstexas.com).**

### Bluebonnet Festival, Burnet, April 8-10.

The “Bluebonnet Capital of Texas” throws a three-day party each April that features not only flowers, but planes, trains, and automobiles. Commemorative Air Force pilots reenact an aerial battle using original World War II aircraft. The *Hill Country Flyer* steam train makes a roundtrip to Austin each day, allowing festival-goers to enjoy a leisurely ride through the countryside at the height of wildflower season. And more than 100 antique and classic cars go on display at a local park.

The fun also includes two parades (one features a float transporting Miss Bluebonnet and her court, the other kids and their pets), a “shoot-out” and Wild West show, a carnival, children's games, a 5K fun run, weiner-dog races, rubber ducky races, a demolition derby, live music, and a street dance. Hundreds of vendors offer unusual gifts, including hand-painted bluebonnet apparel and bluebonnet photography, and the usual festival food. On Sunday, a chuck-wagon breakfast and cowboy church round out the lineup. **Call 512/756-4297; [www.burnetchamber.org](http://www.burnetchamber.org).**





Days

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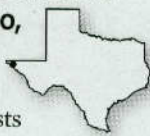
A cowboy rides in the saddle-bronc event at the TCRA Rodeo, one of many events held during Perryton's Wheatheart of the Nation Celebration each August. PHOTO: KEVIN STILLMAN



After attending the Texas Independence Day Celebration at Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site, festival-goers can tour the Barrington Living History Farm and experience farm life in the 1850s.

### First Thanksgiving Conference & Celebration, San Elizario,

April 29-May 1. When Spanish explorer Juan de Oñate and a group of colonists reached the Rio Grande near present-day San Elizario on April 30, 1598, after a grueling, months-long journey across the Chihuahuan Desert, they held a celebration of thanks that



predated the Pilgrims' gathering by more than two decades. Today, the San Elizario Genealogy & Historical Society and the El Paso Mission Trail Association mark the occasion with a reenactment of what they call the First Thanksgiving in the American Southwest. (Debate continues as to when and where the first Thanksgiving in America was held.)

The event features presentations by

historians and other scholars about cultural aspects of the region. Native Americans, including representatives of the Piro, Manso, and Apache nations, also relate verbal histories. After a luncheon, a celebration begins with indigenous Native American dancing and flamenco dancing. The event culminates with a reenactment of the original Thanksgiving presented by local residents. It portrays the struggles



PHOTO: J. GRIFFIS SMITH

of Spanish soldiers and colonists making their way across the desert; formally taking possession of the region in honor of King Philip of Spain; and then feasting with Native Americans on wild duck, fish, corn, chiles, and other foods.

Other aspects of the event include entertainment by mariachi, ranchera, and rock musicians; arts and crafts; and displays of artwork by professional artists. On Sunday,

**Since 2011 marks the 175th anniversary of Texas' Declaration of Independence from Mexico, this year's Texas Independence Day Celebration promises extra pizzazz.**



STAN A. WILLIAMS

Kids line up at one of the Barbarian Festival booths to race remote-controlled cars on a mini-track.

### Barbarian Festival (June 11) and Robert E. Howard Days (June 10-11), Cross Plains.

The hometown of Robert E. Howard (1906-1936), the creator of "Conan the Barbarian," honors him with two events each June. The Barbarian Festival—a community event that is actually quite civilized—features live music, an antique/vintage car show, an antique-tractor show, a vocal-talent contest, arts and crafts booths, festival food from turkey legs to funnel cakes, kids' rides and games, and a petting zoo. Organizers say this year's event, which will be held in Treadway Park, promises extra excitement, as it takes place during the city's year-long 100th-anniversary celebration. **Call 325/669-0329; [www.barbarianfestival.net](http://www.barbarianfestival.net).**



Robert E. Howard Days, an annual celebration of Howard's writings, marks its 25th anniversary this year. Based at the author's boyhood home, which has been restored as a museum, the gathering features two days of panel discussions, a dinner with a keynote speaker, tours of the museum, and bus tours to several area sites mentioned in his writings. The event regularly draws more than 200 devoted Robert E. Howard fans (17 states and five foreign countries were represented last year). **Call 254/725-4993; [jehanke@aol.com](mailto:jehanke@aol.com).**

the celebration continues with a *charreada*, which includes roping and horsemanship exhibitions. In addition, several art galleries in San Elizario host open houses throughout the weekend. **Call 915/851-9997; <http://elpasomissiontrail.com>** (click on "Events").

### Fourth of July Celebration & Parade, Comfort, July 4.

According to local historian Anne Stewart, the fledgling town of Comfort celebrated its first Independence Day two days early. "The Goldbeck brothers [who operated the



town's first mercantile] had ordered beer to be shipped to their store on 7th Street in downtown Comfort for the big day," she wrote in a 2004 story for *The Comfort News*. "Due to the good weather and trail conditions, the oxen wagons arrived two days early. The town's cannon sounded the emergency; good beer would go flat if kept over until the day for which it was intended, July 4, 1855. Good citizens all, the men of Comfort stepped up and helped consume the kegs' contents. Good beer was not to be wasted in a good German town on the frontier of German West Texas."

Since then, Comfort has continued to celebrate Independence Day with enthusiasm. Red, white, and blue bunting and U.S. flags drape the exterior of many downtown buildings, and an old-fashioned, patriotic parade features floats, classic cars, antique tractors, and people and their pets. After the parade winds through the historic downtown, it ends at Comfort Park, where a barbecue dinner awaits. Other attractions include arts and crafts vendors, an antique-tractor display, live music by a local band, a "moon bounce," and carnival-style games. **Call 830/995-3131; [www.comfortchamberofcommerce.com](http://www.comfortchamberofcommerce.com).**

### Wheatheart of the Nation Celebration, Perryton, August 13-21.

Perryton residents honor the founding of their town with a wide-ranging festival that kicks off with a music event followed by softball, volleyball, and golf tournaments, a community worship service, and a downtown block party. And that's just the first week. The final weekend boasts even more activities, some of which qualify as "events within events." The Saturday-morning lineup alone includes a free breakfast (cooked outdoors in Dutch ovens), a 5K race, a Family Fun 1-Mile Walk, an Old-Timers Reunion (honoring those who have lived in Perryton more than 50 years), an oral history presentation, and a parade that's billed as the largest in the Panhandle (it boasts 12 high school marching bands). The Museum of the Plains also hosts Pioneer Day at the Museum, which features a full roster of games and entertainment itself.

With a WRCA Jr. Ranch Rodeo, a TCRA Rodeo, an antique-car show, a demolition derby, a carnival, children's games, a bounce house, pony rides, wagon rides, arts and crafts booths, and food vendors (check out the homemade pies), there's truly something for everyone at this Panhandle celebration. **Call 806/435-6575; [www.perryton.org](http://www.perryton.org).** TH

Senior Editor **NOLA MCKEY** admires the Czech spirit embodied in the National Polka Festival, which even includes a Polka Mass on Sunday.



Sagrado Corazón Danzantes from the local Sacred Heart Catholic Church take part in Comfort's Fourth of July parade.

PHOTO: KEVIN STILLMAN







# Life OF Bryan

NEW ENERGY REVITALIZES A BRAZOS COUNTY DOWNTOWN

*Text by* **BRADY DYER**

*Photographs by* **J. GRIFFIS SMITH**

**I**'VE BEEN ON A QUEST TO EXPLORE as many parts of the state as I can, and on a recent warm morning, I drove into the quiet downtown of Bryan for a weekend getaway. The seed had been planted last spring, when I attended a museum conference in College Station, Bryan's twin city to the south. I didn't make it to Bryan on that trip, but I heard intriguing things about the city—its charming downtown, burgeoning nightlife, and rich history. And I learned of revitalization efforts, which have resulted in the restoration of many of the buildings and a reinvigoration of central city businesses.

**LEFT:** The Old Bryan Marketplace offers eclectic treasures from throughout the world. **ABOVE:** The recently renovated La Salle Hotel dates to 1928 and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



**T**he contemporary history of Bryan goes back to the early 19th Century, when settlers came to farm the fertile Brazos River Valley. Thanks to a thriving agricultural industry, during the 1920s and '30s Bryan became an important railroad stop between the Gulf Coast and northern markets. In addition to commercial travelers, students and their families traveled through Bryan on their way to a small railroad station outside of A&M University known as “College” station. After World War II, with the decline of railroads as a means of travel, Bryan’s affluence began to wane. But in the 1990s, local business leaders began renovating spaces in the downtown area—beginning with the Old Bryan Marketplace, a sprawling shopping destination in the city’s former railroad-docking warehouse, and the seven-story La Salle Hotel, a beautifully restored

railroad hotel that dates to 1928. Today, the La Salle, along with more than 50 structures throughout town, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The hotel’s elegant interior—with its soft lighting, rich hues of plum and evergreen, fresh flowers arrangements, and comfortable seating—invites guests to sit and enjoy the lobby in spare moments. Restored and renovated in 2000 (and again in 2010) after decades of alternative uses, the hotel still boasts some of its original decor, including the black-and-white terrazzo lobby floor and Art Deco touches in the elevators. The friendly staff takes seriously their role of welcoming guests to the city, offering suggestions of what

ABOVE: At Catalena Hatters, brothers Travis (left) and Scott Catalena custom-mold straw and felt hats for customers. RIGHT: A portrait of Frida Kahlo at the Old Bryan Marketplace awaits a home.



The **Old Bryan Marketplace** opened in 1996 and **inspired** other **REVITALIZATION** efforts downtown.

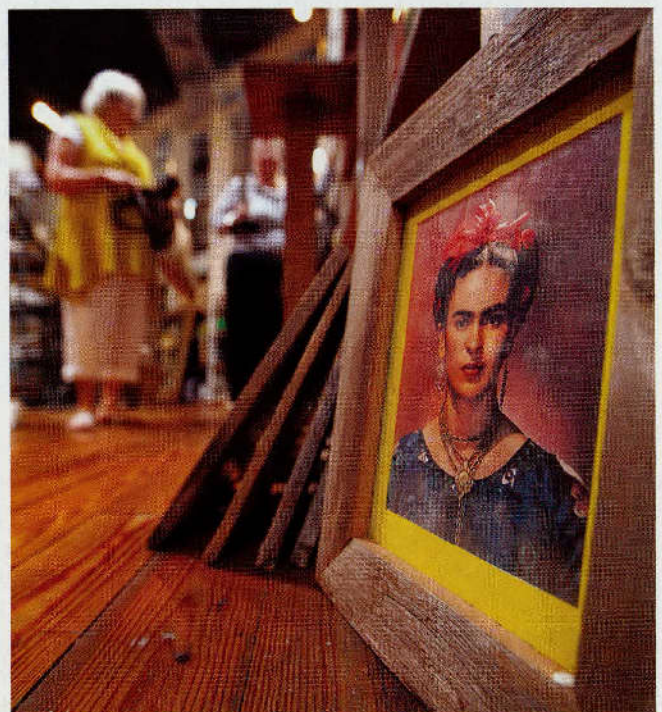
The rambling marketplace feels strangely intimate as you move through each space; it's almost like being at the home of someone who has traveled the world, picked up interesting objects along the way, and now wants to share them with visitors. I marveled at the eclectic collection of decor, including large-scale maps, architectural drawings, and handmade pottery from Italy. The marketplace also carries linens, candles, fine writing papers, and items for the kitchen and bathroom; I lingered over a collection of soaps and lotions whose scent reminded me of the ocean.

Hungry for lunch, I settled into a seat at Madden's Casual Gourmet, which occupies a spot in the north corner of the building. Exposed brick walls and wide, plank floors create a calming respite for shoppers and diners. Chef Peter Madden offers a menu with a variety of tempting entrées, but eventually I decided on the sesame-seared tuna with a tangy wasabi aioli—perfectly cooked and delicious. For dessert, I chose one of the restaurant's popular "Dessert Minis"—a sliver of cheesecake that was the ideal lunchtime portion.

**R**energized, I visited the Carnegie History Center, which lies across the street from the La Salle Hotel, on Main Street. If genealogy or architectural history piques your interest, this beautiful neoclassical building should be on your short list of places to visit. In 1902, philanthropist and steel magnate Andrew Carnegie made a proposition to cities across the country: If the city would maintain a library, he would provide funds to build one. Bryan, like 31 other communities in Texas, took him

to do and where to eat. From my room on the seventh floor, large windows presented a wide view of the city's attractions—including the red-brick Carnegie History Center, and to the right and left, Main Street, the heart of downtown Bryan.

**T**hanks to advice from the La Salle staff, I set out for the Old Bryan Marketplace, catty-corner from the hotel. Dating to 1906, the 22,000-square-foot building has had many incarnations—as a railroad warehouse, hardware store, and even a Plymouth-DeSoto dealership. It had fallen into disrepair when current owner Kay Conlee bought the building in 1995 and began renovations. The marketplace opened in 1996, and its success helped inspire other revitalization efforts downtown.



up on his offer. Designed by F. E. Giesecke, Professor of Architecture at Texas A&M, Bryan's library features beautifully crafted Corinthian capitals, arched windows, an original pressed-tin ceiling, and carefully balanced proportions. The library opened in 1903. It holds an expansive genealogical collection, historical documents, photographs, maps, and periodicals from Bryan, College Station, and the Brazos Valley region.

**D**own Main Street from the Carnegie History Center, another historic building houses Catalena Hatters, which has created traditionally crafted felt hats since 1983 for customers the world over. Even if you are not in the market for a new hat, a visit here quickly turns into an impromptu education in the time-honored trade of custom hat-making. Behind the counter, Travis Catalena, who runs the shop with his brother, Scott, steamed a hat into shape for a customer—slowly turning the hat at different angles. Though you'll find some "finished" cowboy hats on the shelves, most of the hats here have yet to be custom-molded, and still feature wide, flat brims and spherical tops. A world map covered with thumbtacks hangs on the

wall behind the register. "That's our market," Travis said proudly. He told me a story of two men traveling separately in Ecuador who instantly recognized the custom work of each other's hats. The gentlemen had someone snap a photo, and then mailed it to the Catalena family with regards from the Equator.

Next, I walked a few blocks to The Village, a café and art gallery that serves coffee, beer, wine, and light fare made with locally sourced produce, meats, cheeses, and eggs. The cafe also offers an all-Texan wine and beer menu, hosts regular live music, and features the work of area artists on the walls. Wednesday and Saturday nights are Salsa Nights, and as the dance floor filled up, I joined about 20 other people—a mix of first-timers and the more-experienced—to learn the basics. While I appreciated the instructor's encouraging demeanor, my feet remained uncooperative. Taking a break, I sat down to cool off with a glass of sangria and strike up conversation with my neighbors. They shared some of the things that go on in Bryan, like "First Fridays," a monthly open-house involving downtown shops, restaurants, and bars. Among the many restaurants they recommended was Caffé



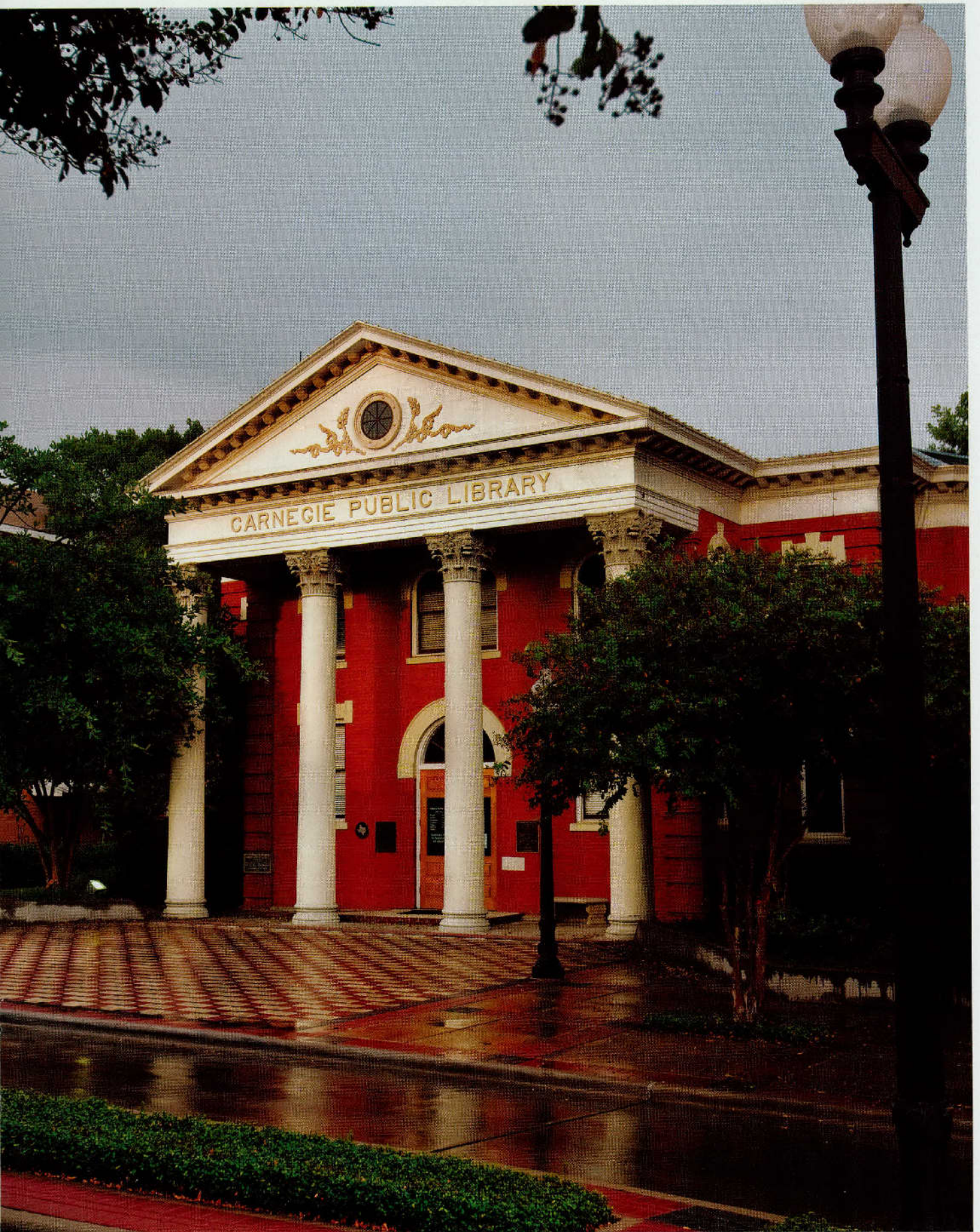
## Save the Queen!

I LEARNED about the community's efforts to restore the Art Deco **Queen Theater** on Main Street, a visual centerpiece in town since 1939. The "Save the Queen" effort, led by the Downtown Bryan Association, is raising money to purchase the theater and restore it as a multipurpose venue. The building's signature crown was removed in late 2010 for restoration. To learn more, call 979/822-4920; [www.downtownbryan.com](http://www.downtownbryan.com).

More than  
50 STRUCTURES  
throughout town  
are *listed* in the  
**NATIONAL** Register  
of **Historic** Places.

LEFT: Ongoing efforts to restore the iconic Queen Theater have united Bryan residents. RIGHT: The 1903 Carnegie Library now houses the Carnegie History Center.

To order a print of the Carnegie Library photograph, call 866/962-1191, or visit [www.texashighwaysprints.com](http://www.texashighwaysprints.com).





My new friend  
shared with me the  
unofficial slogan  
for the city: "It's  
**WHERE THE ADULTS**  
come to play."

Capri, which features contemporary Italian cuisine, a nice wine selection, and desserts such as a classic tiramisu. I made a mental note to try it on my next visit.

**O**n the way back to the La Salle, I stopped in at Revolution, an eclectic bar hidden away off Main Street. I knew I was in the right place when I saw a mural inspired by Van Gogh's *Starry Night* overlooking a courtyard filled with people talking and laughing. Revolution serves as a gathering spot for people to unwind, check out a new band, and exchange stories. I saw many familiar faces here, including Cassie Baker, one of the bartenders at the La Salle hotel lounge. A native of Bryan, Cassie grew up here, went away for college, and has now returned.



## TH ESSENTIALS



## Downtown Bryan

BRYAN and its sister city, College Station, are in central Brazos County, 100 miles east of Austin and 90 miles northwest of Houston. For information about restaurants, lodging, and attractions, contact the Bryan-College Station Convention and Visitors Bureau, 715 University Dr. East, College Station, 979/260-9898 or 800/777-8292; [www.visitaggieland.com](http://www.visitaggieland.com).

### Lodging

The **La Salle Hotel**, now managed by Magnolia Hotels, is at 120 S. Main St. Call 888/915-1110 for reservations, or 979/822-2000 to reach the hotel directly; [www.lasalle-hotel.com](http://www.lasalle-hotel.com).

### Restaurants

**Caffé Capri** is at 222 N. Main St. Call 979/822-2675; [www.theplaceforitalian.com](http://www.theplaceforitalian.com).

**Madden's Casual Gourmet** is at 202 S. Bryan Ave., within the Old Bryan Marketplace. Call 979/779-2558; [www.prmaddens.com](http://www.prmaddens.com).

**Revolution Cafe & Bar** is at 211-B Main St. Call 979/823-4044.

**The Village** is at 210 W. 26th St. Call 979/703-8514; [www.thevillagedowntown.com](http://www.thevillagedowntown.com).

### Shopping

The **Old Bryan Marketplace** is at 202 S. Bryan Ave. Call 979/779-3245; [www.oldbryanmarketplace.net](http://www.oldbryanmarketplace.net).

**Catalena Hatters** is at 203 N. Main St. Call 800/976-7818; [www.catalenahats.com](http://www.catalenahats.com).

### Attractions

The **Carnegie History Center** is at 111 S. Main St. Call 979/209-5630; [www.bcslibrary.org](http://www.bcslibrary.org).

**Messina Hof Winery** is at 4545 Old Reliance Rd. Call 979/778-9463; [www.messinahof.com](http://www.messinahof.com).

We chatted about the changes in Bryan and the city's growing art and music scene, and she shared with me the unofficial slogan for the city: "It is where the adults come to play."

"Growing up, no one wanted to come to Bryan, and there wasn't much to do. I never used to be proud of my hometown," Cassie said with a smile. "But I am now." **TH**

**BRADY DYER** of Austin enjoys writing about art, culture, and music. Photography Editor **J. GRIFFIS SMITH** grew up in nearby Caldwell, and remembers watching *Romeo and Juliet* at the Queen Theater.

On Wednesday and Saturday nights, the dining room of The Village transforms into a dance floor for the restaurant's popular Salsa Nights. *Olé!*

# The Power of Evidence

*AT THE BRISCOE CENTER's holdings in Bonham, Uvalde, and Winedale (as well as in Austin), history comes to life across the state*

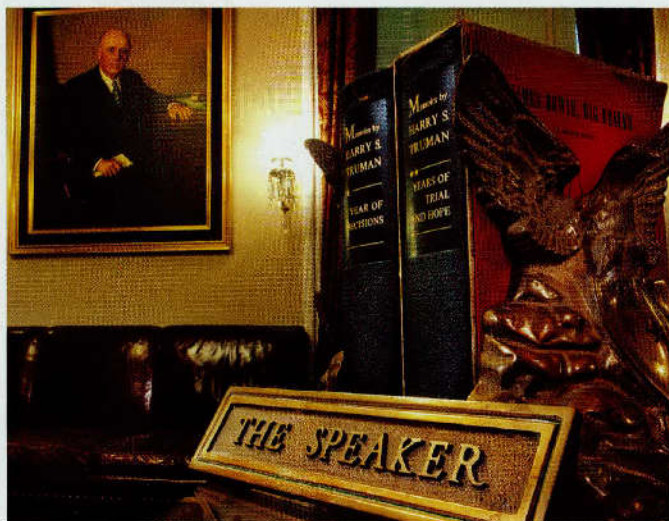
*Text by* CHARLES LOHRMANN







COURTESY DOLPH BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY, UT AUSTIN

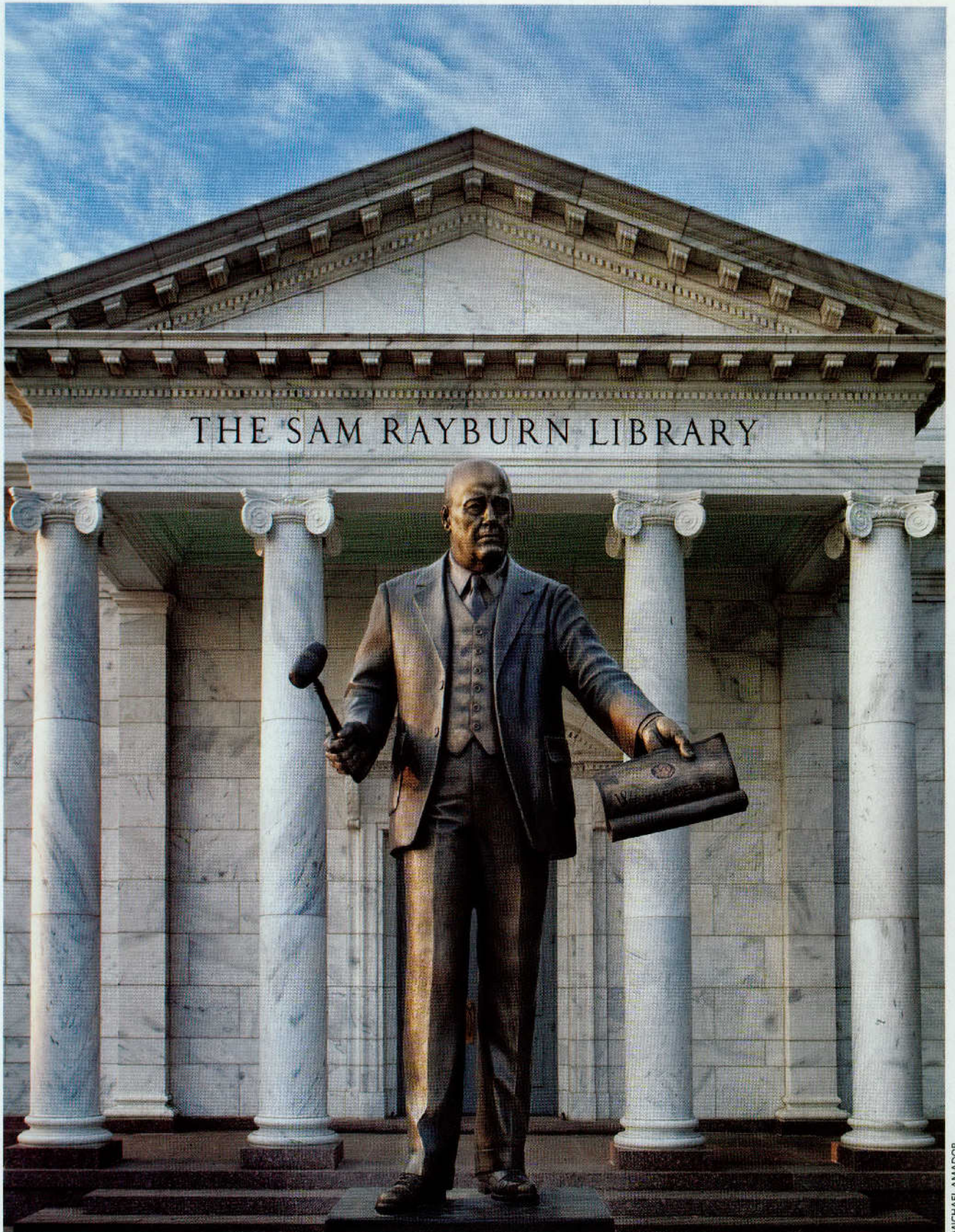


MICHAEL AMADOR

“... The word “evidence” imparts a sharper, more immediate edge to the (Briscoe Center’s) mission...”

**I**N A MEETING AT AN ORNATE, HIGHLY patinated, conference table in the oldest building on the University of Texas at Austin campus, it’s natural that the topic is history. Don Carleton, Executive Director of the Briscoe Center for American History, discusses the challenges of overseeing a collection with four very different facilities in multiple locations around the state. I’m particularly curious that Carleton emphasizes the word “evidence” as he characterizes the Center’s holdings. To me, it seems slightly dramatic to use the word in this context. After all, isn’t evidence what attorneys use to prove, or substantiate, a legal case?

ABOVE: Bonham’s Rayburn Museum houses an exact replica of the Speaker’s Washington office. LEFT: There’s no mistaking Rayburn’s powerful presence, here flanked by Lloyd Bentsen and John Connally, each on his way to national prominence.



MICHAEL AMADOR

To order a print of this photograph, call 866/962-1191, or visit [www.texashighwaysprints.com](http://www.texashighwaysprints.com).

# The Power of Evidence

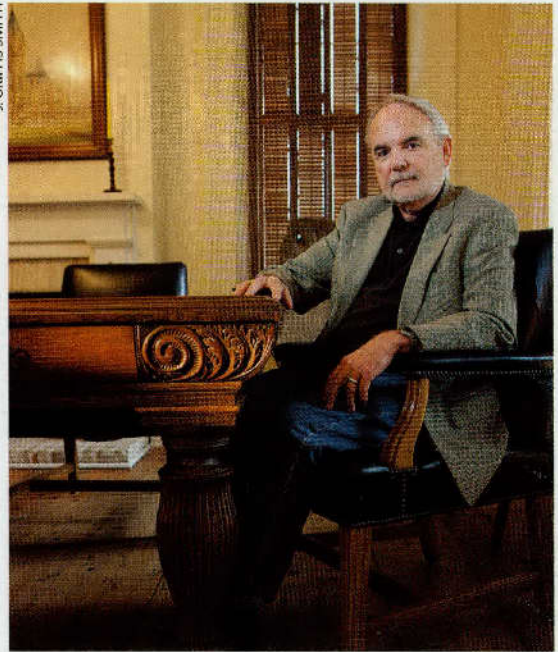
THE BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY

As I consider it, though, it becomes apparent that the word “evidence” imparts a sharper, more immediate edge to the mission of evaluating the thousands of objects and documents in the still-growing collection of the Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin. It’s not a stretch to say that considering historical artifacts as evidence, even as evidence in a case, is essential to making history more relevant to students and bringing history to life for the everyday amateur.

On this particular autumn morning, Carleton and I, along with the Center’s associate director for communications, Erin Purdy, are literally surrounded by historic evidence. We’re seated at the oak conference table at which John D. Rockefeller and his colleagues gathered to formulate the decisions that directed Standard Oil, later to become Exxon (the Exxon-Mobil historical collection resides in the Briscoe Center’s holdings). Across the spacious room sit the imposing roll-top desk used by Texas Governor James Stephen Hogg and the capacious chair that accommodated the portly man (Hogg’s papers reside in the Briscoe Center’s collection, too). And we’re inside the Nowotny Building (which houses the Center’s administrative offices), on the east side of the UT campus near Interstate 35 and Martin Luther King Boulevard, which once served as the headquarters for George Armstrong Custer when he was stationed in Texas after the Civil War. The evidence definitely demands center stage.

So, I wonder, when the researchers are surrounded by historic evidence such as this, is there a tendency to get lost in the past and lose perspective on the present? Before I can ask the question, Carleton gestures to a line of more than two dozen books (all published within recent memory) standing on a nearby table, and explains that the Briscoe Center played a role in development of each one. And a documentary titled *When I Rise*, which explores the career of African American mezzo-soprano Barbara Smith Conrad (produced by the Center with Carleton as executive producer), is earning acclaim at film festivals around the country.

J. GRIFFIS SMITH



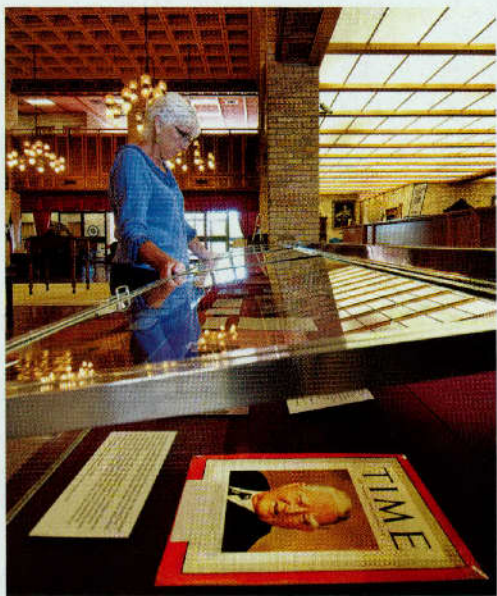
Don E. Carleton, Executive Director of the Briscoe Center for American History, seated at John D. Rockefeller’s Standard Oil conference table, now in the Briscoe Center’s collection.

“... Perhaps no one maintained a national perspective better than Sam Rayburn ...”

OPPOSITE PAGE: Captured in bronze, Speaker Sam Rayburn beckons passersby to visit his library and museum, located on Sam Rayburn Boulevard (US 56) in Bonham.

# The Power of Evidence

THE BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY



Find a temporary display of John Nance Garner memorabilia at Uvalde's First State Bank (while the John Nance Garner Museum is undergoing repairs).

The Briscoe Center's holdings include the Sam Rayburn Library in the North Texas town of Bonham; the John Nance Garner home in Dolph Briscoe's hometown of Uvalde; and the historic preservation project of Winedale, initiated by Houston-based philanthropist Miss Ima Hogg (daughter of Governor Hogg), who purchased the Central Texas property and donated it to the University in the 1960s (following significant expansion). The Center's main archive resides in the Sid Richardson Building adjacent to the LBJ Library at the University of Texas at Austin.

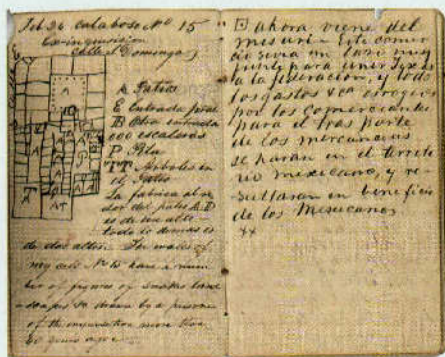
The Center itself crystallized its current identity when former governor Dolph Briscoe, long a patron and



Garner, an avid baseball fan, received this World Series pass (on display in Uvalde's First State Bank) from the American League's Boston Braves.



## Briscoe Center's Top 10



Stephen F. Austin's prison diary, a record from his years of captivity in Mexico City during the 1830s.

Briscoe Center Executive Director Don Carleton suggests the following collections as the most significant:

■ **Bexar Archives** Preserve the military, civil, and political life of Texas and the state of Coahuila y Texas from 1717-1836.

■ **Stephen F. Austin Papers** The official records of Moses Austin and son Stephen F. Austin, who carried out his father's plan for the coloni-

zation of Mexican Texas.

■ **José Enrique de la Peña ("Alamo Diary") Papers** A 680-page memoir written by a Mexican army officer who gives a vivid eyewitness account of the Mexican army's campaign to suppress the Texas Revolution.

■ **Natchez Trace Collection** Materials documenting the history of the Lower Mississippi River Valley from 1760 to the 1920s.

■ **Miss Ima Hogg Material Culture Collection** Includes most of Winedale's historic structures and period furnishings, which document the influence of German settlement and culture in south-central Texas.

■ **Exxon Mobil Historical Collection** An estimated 4 million documents, 1.5 million photographs, 4,000 artifacts, and 30,000 moving image and sound recordings that document the history of Exxon Mobil Corporation.

■ **Flip Schulke Photograph Collection** More than 500,000 images. Schulke

photographed national and international figures such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., President John F. Kennedy, Fidel Castro, and Muhammad Ali.

■ **Dolph Briscoe Papers** Documents both the public and private careers of Dolph Briscoe, rancher, oilman, banker, civic leader, and governor of Texas.

■ **Joyce Gross Historical Quilt Collection** Contains more than 170 examples of American quilting and an extensive and rare archive of 20th-Century quilting history.

■ **Walter Cronkite Papers** Cover the noted CBS newsmen's long career as one of the nation's most respected journalists.

DIARY COURTESY DOLPH BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY, UT AUSTIN

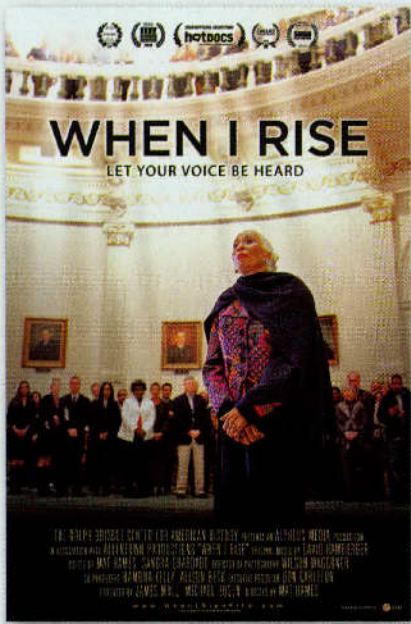


informal advisor, endowed the Center with \$15 million. Once the endowment was in place, the University of Texas Regents voted to name the Center for Briscoe. Even though the Center has gained recognition among scholars and historians for many years, the addition of the name “Briscoe” gave it a more “Texas” personality. Of course, maintaining a national perspective is something powerful Texans have done well for decades. Perhaps no one did that better than Sam Rayburn.

Rayburn set his political career in motion by getting elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1912 (after three terms in the Texas House), and then earned a national name as he repeated that accomplishment more than 20 times. In the days when the seniority system was

Housed in the former vice president’s Uvalde residence, the John Nance Garner Museum is currently closed for renovation. The home was named a National Historic Landmark in 1972.

**“ ... John Nance Garner’s home has been transformed into a museum, with renovations underway ... ”**



## Briscoe Center Documentary

HISTORY RESIDES where powerful forces collide, and sometimes those forces mold individuals by casting them into situations with an implicative sweep that whirls them into international prominence. Such is the story told in the Briscoe Center's documentary, *When I Rise*, which follows the career of Barbara Smith Conrad, a talented African-American music student who enrolled at the University of Texas in 1956, the first year African-American undergraduates were allowed to enter the University.

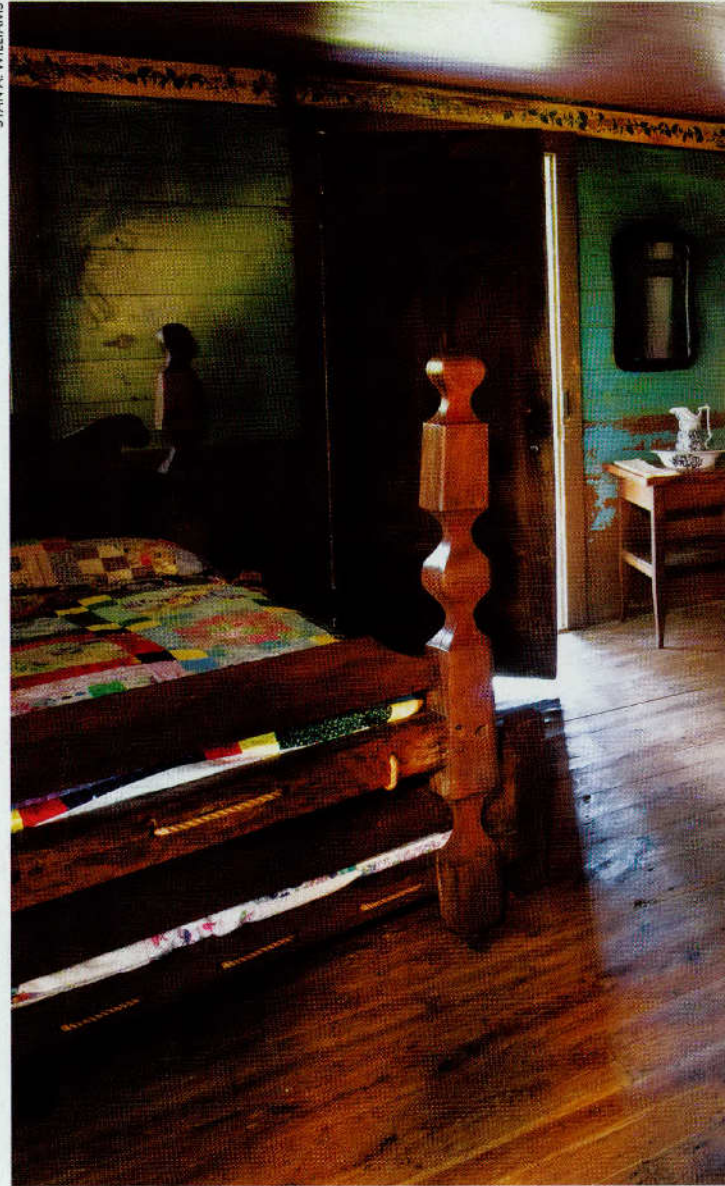
The next year, Conrad earned a starring role in a University opera production. Before rehearsals were complete, the story of a black female student starring opposite a white male student spread into the halls of power, and officials denied Conrad the starring role she had earned. The story drew national attention and prominent African-Americans came to Conrad's defense and aid.

Even though she was offered opportunities to transfer to any institution she wanted, Conrad chose to stay at the University of Texas. Ultimately, she became a major international opera star and has been proclaimed a Distinguished Alumnus of UT, where an endowed scholarship has been established in her honor. To see a clip and read more background, visit [www.whenirisefilm.com](http://www.whenirisefilm.com).



IMAGES COURTESY DOLPH BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY, UT AUSTIN

STAN A. WILLIAMS



more strictly observed than it is today, Rayburn's reelections helped imbue him with a level of power impressive by any standard.

He served as Speaker of the House of Representatives for 16 years. He worked directly with eight presidents, and, as would be expected, worked closely with generations of fellow Texans, including John Nance Garner, and was a mentor to Lyndon Johnson. And he enjoyed at least one fishing trip with Dolph Briscoe. The library collection in Bonham includes a quirky photo of Rayburn fishing in Florida. Jacqueline Kennedy jotted a quick note to the effect that "no fish is safe" and her husband, the President, added, "and neither is the Congress."

# The Power of Evidence

THE BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY



LEFT: As she oversaw the restoration of the McGregor House interiors, like this bedroom, Miss Ima Hogg chose to use only furniture made by Texas craftsmen.

Although its scale is modest, the limestone Classical Revival building that houses the Rayburn Library sits majestically above a spacious lawn that slopes down to US 56 (Sam Rayburn Drive) on the western side of Bonham. A bronze likeness of Rayburn stands in front of the building as if gesturing for passersby to stop in. Once inside, visitors stroll past walls of black marble and the white marble speaker's rostrum (which stood on the House floor from 1857

RIGHT: The design for this green, rose, and pink lotus pattern quilt, made by Bertha Stenge, is based on a popular mid-19th Century pattern. This quilt also was exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago.

QUILT COURTESY DOLPH BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY, UT AUSTIN



# The Power of Evidence

THE BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY

to 1950) to see a chandelier from the White House, a marble fireplace from the U.S. House of Representatives, and Rayburn's library.

Almost across the state, in Uvalde, John Nance Garner—as vice president under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt—held sway for many years. Like Rayburn, Garner ascended to the speaker-ship where he built his own national reputation. He joined the Franklin Roosevelt ticket in 1932 as vice president and remained in that office until the election of 1940, after which he left public office once and for all. He returned to Uvalde and, with the agreement that he could continue residing on the property, bequeathed his rambling brick home to the town of Uvalde in 1952. Now transformed into a museum, the home moved under the University's umbrella in 1999.

**W**HEN COMPARED to the Rayburn Library and Museum or the John Nance Garner Museum, Winedale's rural setting strictly proclaims pastoral serenity through its collection of buildings, furniture, and decorative arts amassed by Miss Ima Hogg. In addition to those collections, the 225-acre Winedale encompasses a village of historic buildings,

RIGHT: Winedale's McGregor House was built in 1861 by a physician and land speculator (Gregor McGregor) and finally sold to Miss Ima Hogg in 1968.



LEFT: During the restoration of the McGregor House parlor, wallpaper was designed from period fragments, and a period carpet was custom-loomed.





PHOTOS ON THIS SPREAD: STAN A. WILLIAMS

acquired and renovated under Miss Ima's watchful eye. Even though she drew acclaim as a philanthropist, Ima Hogg was not without political power of her own, inherited in part from her father but also embellished by her own powers of persuasion and influence.

Even though it continues to develop as a museum and history center, Winedale also serves as the home of the University's Shakespeare at Winedale festival, which is a project of the University's College of Liberal Arts. The Shakespeare festival, which celebrated its 40th year in 2009, draws crowds for its performances during July and August.

**“ ... Winedale's rural setting strictly proclaims pastoral serenity... ”**



## Shakespeare at Winedale

EVEN THOUGH Shakespeare at Winedale is not a program of the Briscoe Center for American History, the summer performances allow visitors to develop a new appreciation for the historic buildings and period furnishings that are part of the Briscoe Center's holdings. Professor James B. Ayres founded these performances 40 years ago, and their success rests on the premise that Shakespeare's plays bring the most complete enjoyment (and understanding) through performance. And preferably a performance at which the audience is close to the performers. That's certainly the case in the converted 19th-Century barn that serves as a theater at Winedale.

Established through the UT Department of English in the College of Liberal Arts, Shakespeare at Winedale has expanded into a year-round program. Summer students set aside two months in this rural setting, studying and performing three plays during their stay. These days, a spring semester version of the course takes place in Austin but offers performances at Winedale. And, for aspiring actors between 10 and 16, there's Camp Shakespeare in which the youngsters learn and play Shakespeare for two weeks during the summer.

For more information about attending a performance of Shakespeare at Winedale, go to [www.shakespeare-winedale.org](http://www.shakespeare-winedale.org).



ABOVE: Even though it is named for the Wagner family, which lived within for 80 years, the Wagner House was built in the mid 1800s by Samuel K. Lewis.

Back in Austin, the Briscoe Center's Austin archives take in 85,000 linear feet of collections (which means the boxes would stretch more than 16 miles) and its archival boxes hold amazing evidence at every turn.

I get the chance to tour the archives with Associate Director Brenda Gunn as my guide. Gunn brings out a well-constructed archival box and withdraws a battered journal. Turns out this journal was kept by William Barrett Travis, and on its pages he tells of his day-to-day business dealings, such as receiving \$1 in payment of a debt, and issuing a \$100 note for a piece of property.

Gunn opens another archive box and carefully extracts a slim, postcard-sized book bound in tan moleskin. The book is

# The Power of Evidence

THE BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY



so light that it seems almost to float, and I have to admit that I felt a little lightheaded when she told me this was Stephen F. Austin's prison diary, the diary he kept while incarcerated in Mexico City 175 years ago. We share one passage in which Austin describes landscapes drawn on the walls of the cell he occupied, and he explains that these drawings were made by a prisoner during the Mexican Inquisition 60 years earlier.

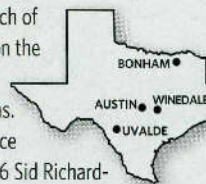
Although the Briscoe Center is not a lending library, the archives are open to the public for research. Once visitors check in at the front desk, they work with an archivist or other staff member to request materials, which are then delivered to the reading room for review.

In a massive collection like this one, which is actually made up of thousands of separate collections, there's simply no telling what sort of undiscovered evidence a diligent researcher can uncover. **TH**

## ➔ TH ESSENTIALS

### The Briscoe Center for American History

INFORMATION on each of the sites is available on the Briscoe Center website at [www.cah.utexas.edu](http://www.cah.utexas.edu). The main reference desk is located in 2106 Sid Richardson Hall, Unit 2, 2313 Red River, **Austin**, 512/495-4532.



**The Sam Rayburn Library and Museum**, 800 W. Sam Rayburn Dr. (US 56), **Bonham**, 903/583-2455. Also, the **Sam Rayburn House** (including Rayburn's 1947 Cadillac), operated by the Texas Historical Commission, is located 1.5 miles west of the Rayburn Library and Museum, 890 W. US 56, **Bonham**, 903/583-5558; [www.visitsamrayburnhouse.com](http://www.visitsamrayburnhouse.com).

**The John Nance Garner Museum** is currently closed for renovation, so check the Center's website or call 830/278-5018 for information. The First State Bank of **Uvalde** offers a John Nance Garner exhibit in its main lobby at 200 E. Nopal St.

**Winedale**, 3738 FM 2714, **Round Top**. Tours are by appointment only. Call 979/278-3530 to arrange a tour.

*TH Editor CHARLES LOHRMANN highly recommends each of the Briscoe Center sites, and is looking forward to visiting the THC's Rayburn House in Bonham when Rayburn's 1947 Cadillac is back in place after restoration.*

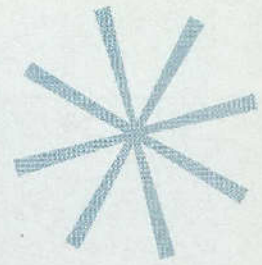
# snow day



IN VAN HORN

A landscape photographer revels in a West Texas winter storm.





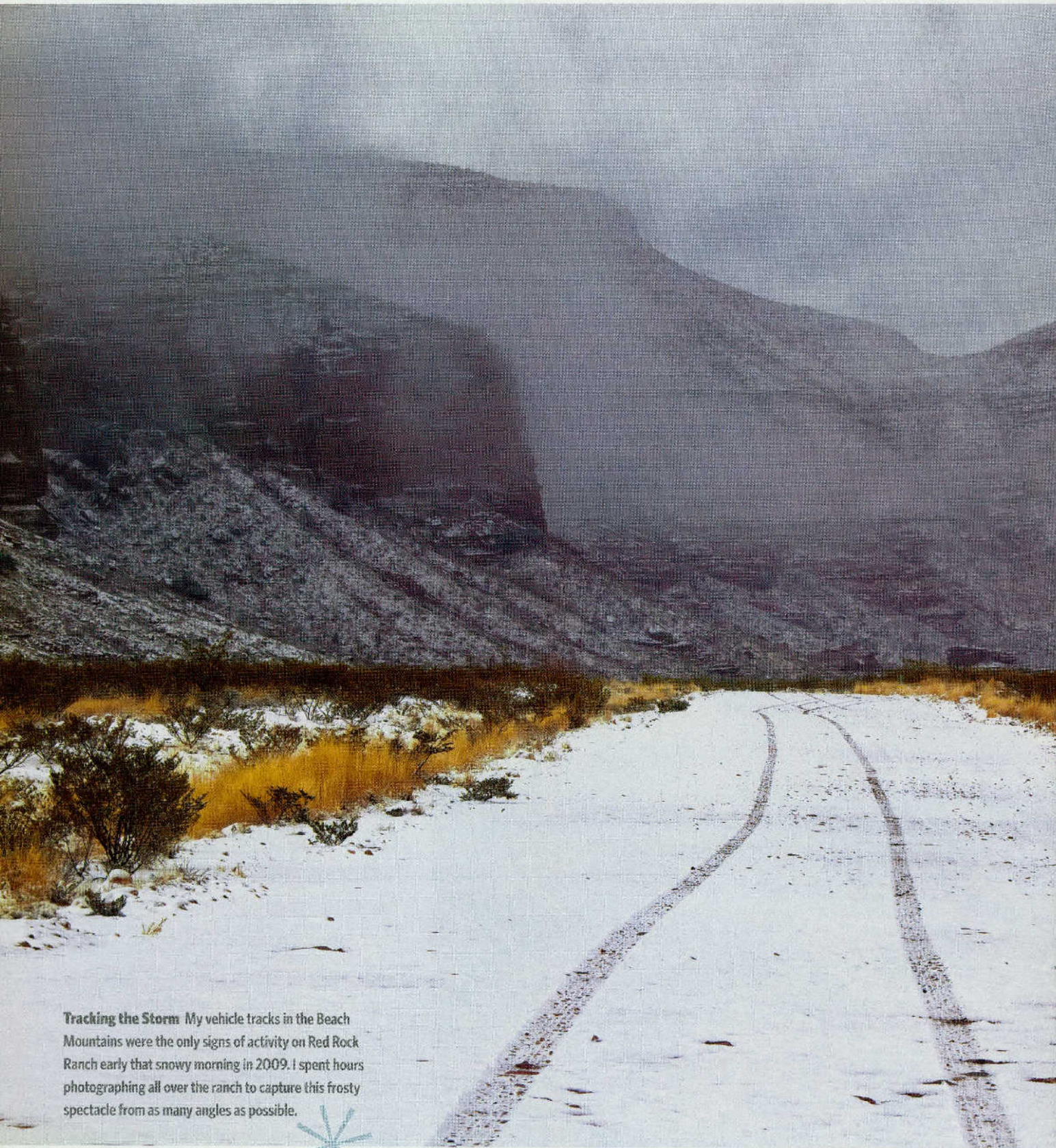
Text and photographs by **LAURENCE PARENT**



**a**s a professional photographer specializing in Southwestern landscapes for more than 20 years, I've crisscrossed the state countless times to capture Texas vistas in the specific light of various seasons. One of the rarest scenes in West Texas is a snowy one. Even when they're forecast, snowstorms often refuse to materialize in this desert and mountain region. Usually, when I get word of a snowstorm, I make a frantic, last-minute drive or jump on a flight due west—often after the flakes are already falling. And often by the time I get there, the snow has melted away.

But I enjoyed a snowy stroke of luck last winter. Right after Christmas, my wife, Patricia, and I packed up the car, and along with our young twins, drove west from our home in Wimberley to visit family in New Mexico. By the time we got to Van Horn some 450 miles into our trip, daylight was

**El Capitan Wonderland** On a stopover in Van Horn in 2009, I rushed outside well before dawn to photograph El Capitan's snow-draped courtyard in the soft glow of the hotel's exterior lights. The 1930 hotel recently underwent a \$3 million renovation.



**Tracking the Storm** My vehicle tracks in the Beach Mountains were the only signs of activity on Red Rock Ranch early that snowy morning in 2009. I spent hours photographing all over the ranch to capture this frosty spectacle from as many angles as possible.





fading and heavy clouds had formed. Rather than drive on to El Paso for the night as planned, we decided to stay put.

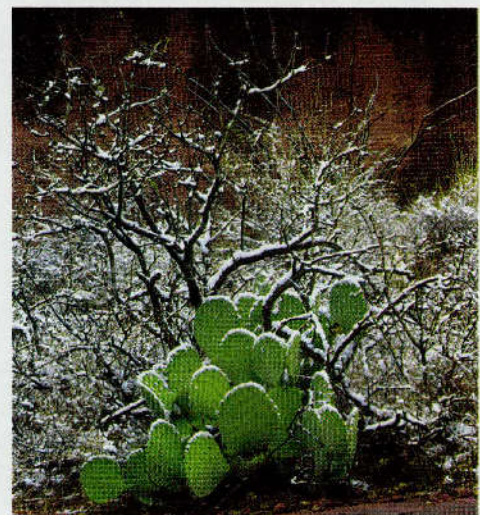
I called Darice McVay, an old Van Horn friend, and she advised, "Stay at the Hotel El Capitan. They've done a tremendous job renovating it."

Designed by El Paso architect Henry Trost, the two-story Hotel El Capitan opened in 1930 as a cattleman's hotel and stopover for travelers on the Texas and Pacific Railway. In the 1970s, the old hotel in the center of town became a bank. In 2008, Joe and Lanna Duncan, owners of Hotel Limpia in Fort Davis and Hotel Paisano in Marfa, purchased the property and began a \$3 million renovation. The hotel reopened the next year and even exceeds its original grandeur, with 38 rooms and suites. A restaurant and bar debuted last spring.

Upon arriving at the hotel, I admired the adobe-style exterior and the lobby, with its Spanish-

#### **A Study in Wintry Contrasts**

The snow coating the prickly pears and shrubs didn't last long. It snowed five times that winter; all of the moisture led to bountiful spring blooms in 2010.



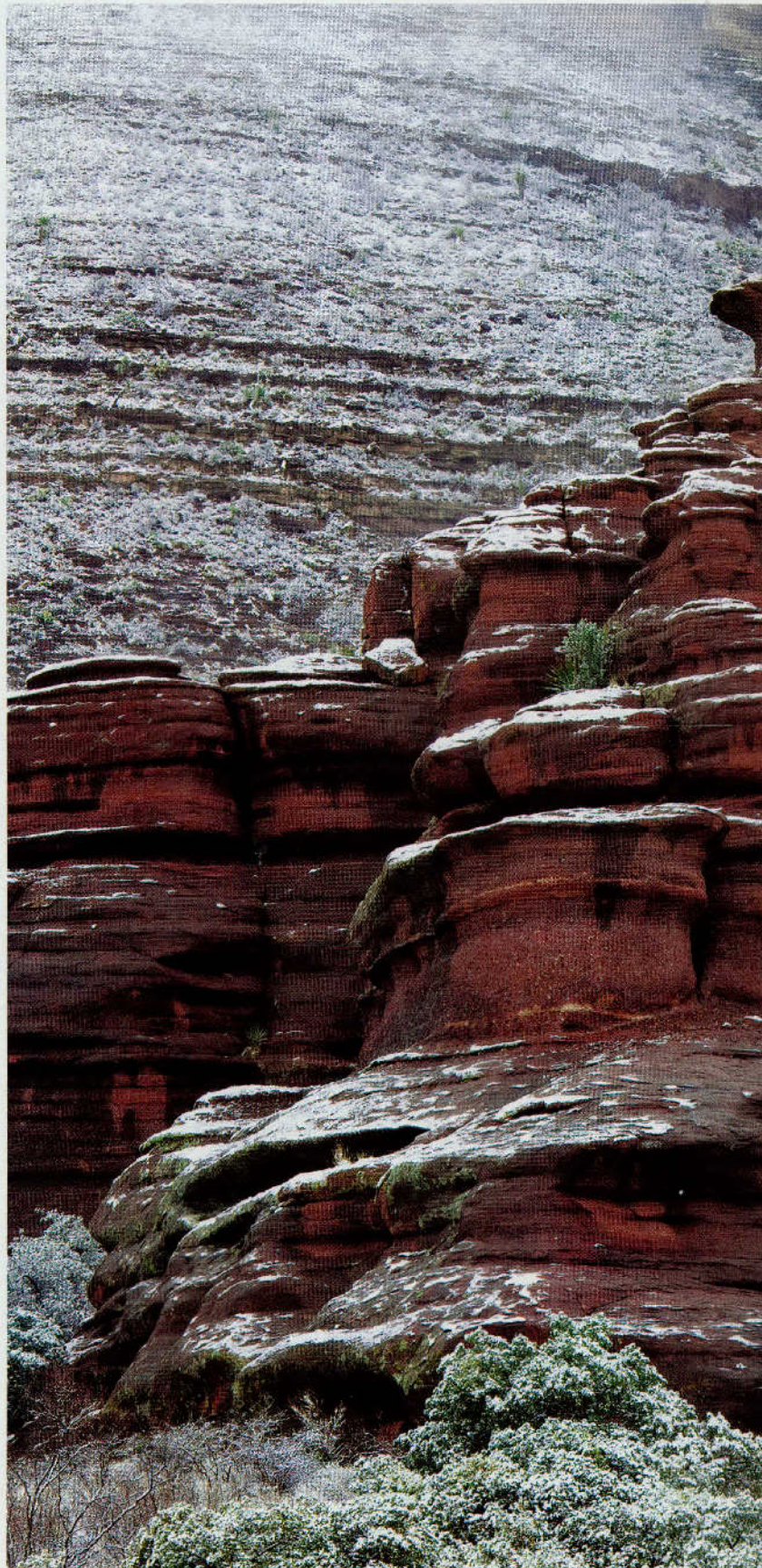
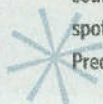
— hacienda decor featuring plentiful tile and wrought iron, and exposed ceiling beams. I wasn't sure how the large moose head hanging on the wall fit in, but I appreciated the Chihuahuan Desert humor.

We later met Darice for dinner at Van Horn's landmark restaurant, Chuy's, opened in 1959 by Jesus "Chuy" and Marylou Uranga. Chuy died in 2008, but his son and wife carry on the family tradition of serving topnotch Mexican and American food.

As the clouds thickened and the temperature dropped, we enjoyed a Tex-Mex meal (I recommend the chicken enchiladas, topped with verde sauce). According to Darice, snow was in the forecast. Past experience would have made me skeptical—this was the Texas desert after all—but this winter, snow had been falling all over the state in exceptional amounts.

Just in case the snow actually came, I asked Darice for permission to shoot the Precambrian sandstone terrain on her Red Rock Ranch the next morning. She offers guided tours of the ranch, which lies just outside of town. The red sandstone and pinnacles look more like Utah than West Texas. Although it's desert country, the bare rock funnels enough extra water into several narrow canyons to foster the growth of cottonwood, hackberry, and oak trees. Massive, dark red cliffs tower over a movie set that looks like a ghost town.

**Castles in the Sandstone** Snow dusting the sandstone hoodoos of Red Rock Ranch reminded me of southern Utah in winter. Only a few spots in North America feature natural Precambrian exposure such as this.







To order a print of this photograph, call 866/962-1191, or visit [www.texashighwaysprints.com](http://www.texashighwaysprints.com).





**Ocotillo Chill** Ocotillo, lechuguilla, and other desert plants awaited the return of the sun.

I also found cottonwood, hackberry, and oak trees growing in narrow canyons.



The next morning, I rose ahead of my family well before dawn and peeked out the window. Snow! I yanked on some clothes, grabbed my gear, and dashed outside to photograph the snow-covered hotel patio and surrounding frosty palm trees. I checked in with my wife and children before heading out to Red Rock Ranch. The twins were getting dressed much faster than on a school morning, and as I drove off, they were running outside to play in the snow.

Snow blanketed the roads, the desert plants, the movie set, and the ranch's interesting rock formations. I raced around, shooting as fast as possible. The arid and rough-hewn landscapes, typically bathed in warm tones of red and yellow during sunny and hot weather, had become layered in a cooler, wintry light that

**Snow Show** The ruins of Anton Chico, a set from the television series *Dead Man's Walk* (prequel to *Lonesome Dove*), were almost lost in the stark, rugged landscape. The set is one of the stops on a driving tour of the ranch.



To order a print of this photograph, call 866/962-1191, or visit [www.texashighwaysprints.com](http://www.texashighwaysprints.com).





cast soft-edged shadows and illuminated the elements much more gently.

“It was like white cotton candy everywhere,” Darice said later. “Even the greasewood bushes looked like giant snowballs. We had five snows last winter, so we then had fantastic spring flowers because of all the moisture.”

As the sun warmed the day, the snow turned into slush, and I reluctantly packed my gear and drove back to Van Horn. My kids were tired, happy, and full of stories about their morning adventure. They had played in snow only one other time in their young lives. And this time it was in Texas! ❄️

*Laurence Parent hopes to capture photos of snowfall in other areas of Texas this winter. His latest book is Death in Big Bend (Iron Mountain Press, 2010).*

➔ TH ESSENTIALS

## Van Horn

VAN HORN is on Interstate 10, 120 miles east of El Paso. For information, contact the Van Horn Convention Center and Visitors Bureau at 866/424-6939; [www.vanhorn-texas.org](http://www.vanhorn-texas.org). Following is contact information for sites in the story.



**Hotel El Capitan**, 100 E. Broadway, 877/283-1220; [www.hotelescapitan.net](http://www.hotelescapitan.net).

**Red Rock Ranch**, Darice McVay, 305 W. Broadway, 800/735-6911; [www.redrockranchtours.com](http://www.redrockranchtours.com).

**Chuy's Restaurant**, 1200 W. Broadway, 432/283-2066; [www.chuys1959.com](http://www.chuys1959.com).



**Peak Performance** Heavy clouds and mist cloaking the Beach Mountains slowed the melting of the snow, allowing more time for me to photograph.

To order a print of this photograph, call 866/962-1191, or visit [www.texashighwaysprints.com](http://www.texashighwaysprints.com).

## A Celebration of Place

*Architect O'Neil Ford championed regional design, craftsmanship, and the simplicity of lasting materials*

Text by **GENE FOWLER**



**E**XCITING, ECCENTRIC, AND PARADOXICAL, San Antonio and O'Neil Ford were a good match." So observed art-and-architecture historian Mary Carolyn Hollers George in her 1992 book, *O'Neil Ford, Architect*. Ford moved to the Alamo City from Dallas in 1939 to restore the historic neighborhood of La Villita, and his architectural footprint in that city—and many others in Texas—remains strong. In 1974, National Council on the Arts officials proclaimed O'Neil Ford (1905-1982) himself a National Historic Landmark.

Ford achieved that distinction partly by creating architecture inspired by the vernacular structures of 19th-Century Texas. "O'Neil's philosophy was simple," explains architect and Ford colleague Carolyn Peterson. "He believed in designing buildings to take advantage of the natural setting and orienting them in a

way that made the most of shade and breeze."

"And for all his love of simple, straightforward, native materials," adds colleague Roy Lowey-Ball, "O'Neil was also a modernist."

Born Otha Neil Ford in Pink Hill in 1905, Ford moved with his parents, Bert and Belle Ford, to nearby Sherman around 1908; a younger brother and sister soon joined the family. After Bert died in 1917, Belle moved the family to Denton, where she operated a boarding-

*"Architecture is scale and proportion," O'Neil Ford liked to say. "The rest is decor."*

house. Otha went to school and worked odd jobs, and he dreamed of becoming an architect, inspired by area barns and the Romanesque Denton County Courthouse. In 1923, a year before his high school graduation, Otha visited Del Rio, Eagle Pass, Piedras Negras, San Antonio, Castroville, and other towns on a camping trek with his uncle. As architectural historian David Dillon observed in his 1999 book, *The Architecture of O'Neil Ford—Celebrating Place*, the pair viewed "a body of native

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Those who knew him say his sense of humor remained intact even as his celebrity grew.

architecture that few Texas architects had ever seen, much less appreciated.”

Though Otha managed two years at North Texas State Teachers College—where his name morphed into the jauntier O’Neil—family finances limited his formal architectural education to a course from the International Correspondence Schools.

In 1926, Ford moved to Dallas to work for architect David Williams, who shared his interest in vernacular architecture. Williams’ apartment, dubbed “the Studio,” hosted an art crowd that included painter Jerry Bywaters and other members of “the Dallas Nine.” During their six-year partnership, Williams and Ford made more architectural pilgrimages to

the Hill Country and the border. David Dillon wrote that a home Ford designed for Frank Murchison of San Antonio in 1937 was Ford’s “first serious attempt at combining modernism and the Texas vernacular,” exemplified, for instance, in the “wide breezeway adapted from the traditional Texas dogtrot.”

In 1938, Ford and partner Arch Swank achieved recognition with the Little Chapel-in-the-Woods at Texas Woman’s University in Denton, which they modeled after an 1850s church in New Mexico. Ford projects were often family affairs: In 1938, he also built a home on San Jose Island for oilman Sid Richardson, and enlisted his brother to craft furniture from drift- [continued on page 54]

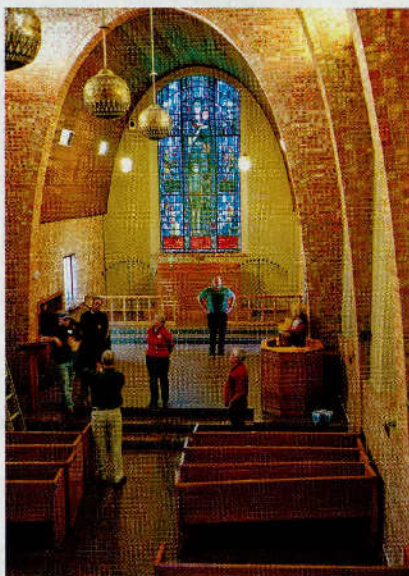
## O’Neil Ford’s Public Architecture

RESIDENCES AND BUSINESSES designed by O’Neil Ford exist throughout Texas.

Some of the most accessible include structures throughout the campus of **Trinity University in San Antonio** (at US 281 and Mulberry, three miles north of the Alamo), where it’s easy to get a sense of Ford’s affinity for simple lines and parabolic archways. Some campus standouts are Laurie Auditorium, the Parker Chapel, and the Ruth Taylor Theater; the latter boasts Ford’s signature brick buttresses and circular masonry cutouts. See [www.trinity.edu](http://www.trinity.edu).

Also in San Antonio, visit **La Villita** ([www.lavillita.com](http://www.lavillita.com)), which dates to the 1700s and was the site of Mexican General Santa Anna’s cannon line in the Battle of the Alamo. Restoration of La Villita in 1939 brought Ford to San Antonio from Dallas.

One of O’Neil Ford’s most famous structures is the **Little Chapel-in-the-Woods** in Denton ([www.twu.edu](http://www.twu.edu)), a non-denominational place of worship on the campus of Texas Woman’s University. —Lori Moffatt



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wood and his mother to weave upholstery.

Decades later Ford observed that, when Mayor Maury Maverick Sr. brought him to San Antonio to revive La Villita, the project and the city “changed the whole direction of my life.”

In 1940, Ford married dancer Wanda Graham, and her family home, Willow Way, served for a time as his firm’s offices. Ford’s many projects in San Antonio and South Texas—including restoration of San Antonio’s 1749 San Fernando Cathedral and preservation work on the city’s chain of Spanish missions—enlarged the Ford mystique.

Beginning in the late 1940s, Ford’s designs gave the campus of Trinity University its linear, modern look. When the architect showed up an hour late for a meeting with a \$600,000 donor for the university’s theater building, the insulted philanthropist decided to withdraw the gift—until Ford uncorked a spellbinding monologue about the planned temple

of performance. Enchanted, the donor wrote a check for \$1.5 million.

In the last decade or so of his life, Ford became such a colorful fixture of the Alamo City cultural scene that the Beauregard Café offered an O’Neil Ford Special, a burger on a wheat bun, served with a Shiner beer. Those who knew him say his sense of humor remained intact even as his celebrity grew. When he received the National Historic Landmark designation in 1974, Ford quipped, “Does this mean I can never be altered?”

The architect died in 1982 following a coronary bypass procedure. The Happy Jazz Band, a River Walk stalwart, played at his funeral. Tributes and honors have continued in the years since, often with a strong shot of honesty about his prickly brilliance. “He was affable, irascible, and he never lacked for words,” says Roy Lowey-Ball. “He was larger-than life, yet he was a humanist through-and through.” **TH**

## Texas Highways

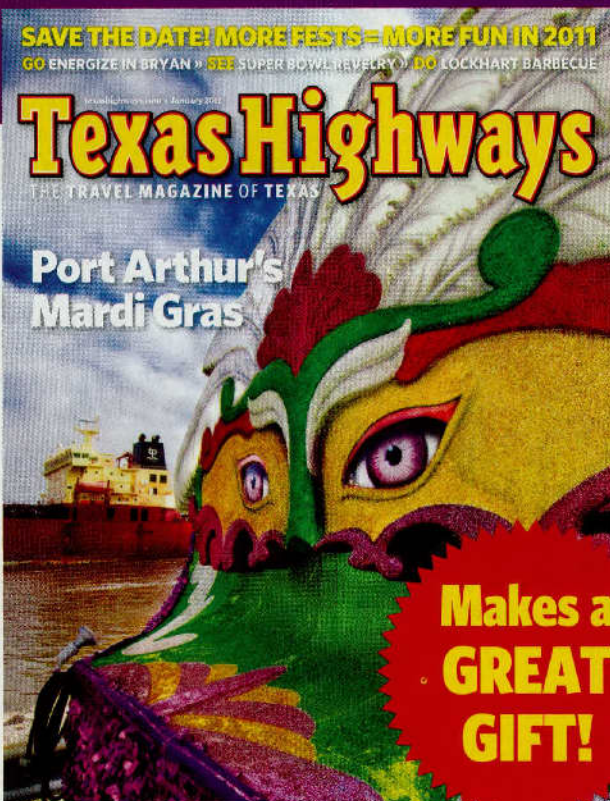
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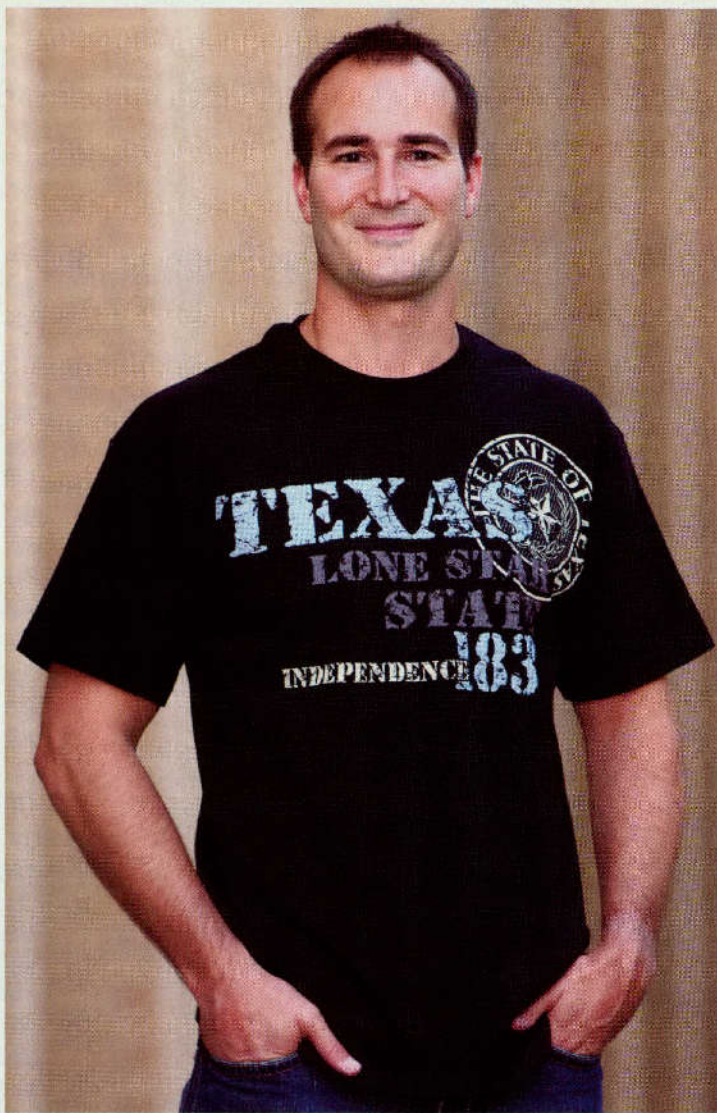
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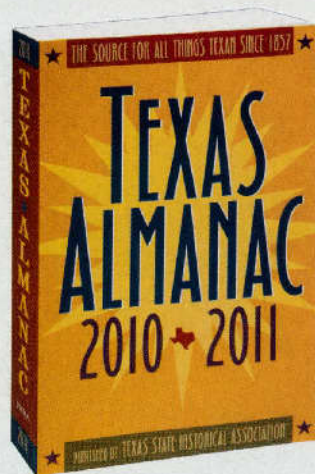
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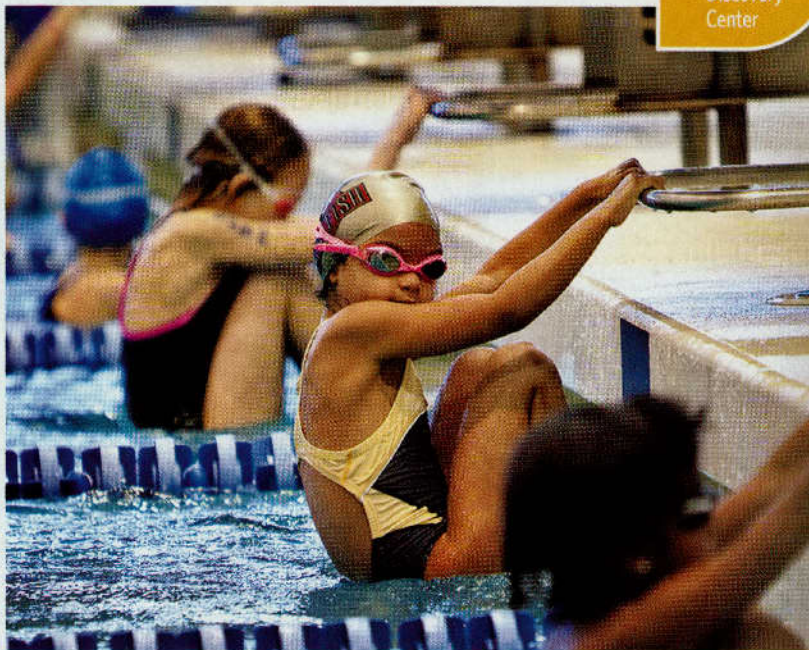
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## January Events

### BIG BEND COUNTRY

**DEL RIO: Winter Visitor Appreciation Party**  
January 20. Del Rio Civic Center. 830/775-3551

**EL PASO: Chamber Music Festival** January 6-31.  
[www.eppm.org](http://www.eppm.org) 915/833-9400

**FORT STOCKTON: Pecos County Livestock Show**  
January 8-9. Pecos County Coliseum. 432/336-2541

**MONAHANS: Taste of Monahans** January 17.  
[www.monahans.org](http://www.monahans.org) 432/943-3418

**VAN HORN: Culberson County Stock Show** January 15-16.  
<http://culberson-tx.tamu.edu> 432/283-8440

### GULF COAST

**BAYTOWN: Chili When It's Chilly Cook-off** January 7-8.  
281/422-8359

**BROWNSVILLE: Farmers' Market** January 1, 8, 15, 22, 29.  
[www.brownsvillefarmersmarket.org](http://www.brownsvillefarmersmarket.org)

**CORPUS CHRISTI: South Texas Botanical Gardens Winter Lecture Series** January 5, 12, 19, 26. [www.stxbot.org](http://www.stxbot.org) 361/852-2100

**EDNA: Snow Day & Winter Carnival** January 22.  
[www.brackenridgepark.com](http://www.brackenridgepark.com) 361/782-7272

**GALVESTON: Lost Bayou Historic District Walking Tour** January 19. [www.galvestonhistory.org](http://www.galvestonhistory.org) 409/765-7834

**HARLINGEN: Jackson Street Market Days** January 8.  
956/423-4041

**HOUSTON: St. Joseph Medical Center's Ice at Discovery Green** January 1-17. [www.discoverygreen.com](http://www.discoverygreen.com) 713/434-7465

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**PEARLAND: Winterfest** January 29. Independence Park. www.pearlandparks.com 281/652-1673

**ROCKPORT: Gospel Music Festival** January 7-9. www.rockportgospelfest.org 361/790-1105

**SOUTH PADRE ISLAND: Annual Polar Bear Dip** January 1. Boomerang Billy's Beach. 800/767-2373

## HILL COUNTRY

**AUSTIN: Martin Luther King Jr. March & Festival** January 17. www.mlkcelebration.com

**BANDERA: Cowgirl Round-up & Show-deo** January 1. Hill Country State Natural Area. www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/hillcoun 830/796-4413

**BLANCO: Blanco Trade Days & Farmers' Market** January 1. Yett Park. www.blancotradedays.i8.com 830/833-4460

**FREDERICKSBURG: Windows on Texas Music Festival** January 14-16. www.texasrebelradio.com 830/997-2197

**KERRVILLE: Hill Country Cowboy Breakfast** January 14. Courthouse Square. www.kerrvilletx.gov 830/459-6525

**LUCKENBACH: Luckenbach Blues Festival** January 29. www.luckenbachtexas.com 830/997-3224

## PANHANDLE PLAINS

**ABILENE: Winter Spectacular Cutting** January 3-13. Taylor County Expo Center Coliseum. 325/677-4376

**AMARILLO: First Friday Art Walk** January 7. www.amarilloartists.com 806/353-5700

**SAN ANGELO: Celebration of Champions & World's Greatest Horseman** January 27-Feb. 6. 325/653-7785

**SEMINOLE: Trade Days** January 21-23. www.seminoletradedays.com 432/758-0807

## PINEY WOODS

**JEFFERSON: Quilts on the Bayou** January 21-23. Jeffersonian Institute. www.jeffersonquiltshow.com 903/665-7311

**LIBERTY: Liberty Opry** January 8, 15, 22, 29. www.libertyopry.com 936/336-5830

**LIVINGSTON: Alabama-Coushatta Children's Powwow** January 29. www.alabama-coushatta.com 936/239-0771

**TYLER: Violinist Joshua Bell** January 27. www.cowancenter.org 903/566-7424

**WINNSBORO: Third Friday Arts Festival** January 21-22. The Depot. 903/850-1662

## PRAIRIES AND LAKES

**ARLINGTON: AT&T Cotton Bowl** January 7. Cowboys Stadium. www.attcottonbowl.com 888/792-BOWL

**ATHENS: Cowgirl Get-Together** January 21-22. Cain Center. 903/677-0775

**CUERO: Rawhide Riders Annual Old Chisholm Trail Ride** January 29. 361/275-2112

**DALLAS: NFL Experience** January 27-Feb. 7. Dallas Convention Center. www.norhtexassuperbowl.com

**FORT WORTH: Stock Show & Rodeo** January 14-Feb. 5. Will Rogers Memorial Center. www.fwssr.com 817/877-2420

**FRISCO: Cirque du Soleil: OVO** January 28-Feb. 13. www.cirquedusoleil.com/ovo

**GARLAND: Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade & Extravaganza** January 15-16. www.garlandtxnaacp.org 972/381-5044

**IRVING: Zestfest** January 28-30. www.irvingconventioncenter.com 817/306-4386

**PLANO: Star Wars Fan Days** January 29-30. Plano Centre. www.scifiexpo.com 972/941-5840

**ROUND TOP: Winter Antiques Show** January 15-16. Big Red Barn. www.roundtotexasantiques.com 888/273-6426

**WACO: Texas Circuit Finals Rodeo** January 6-8. Heart O' Texas Fair Complex. www.hotfair.com 254/776-1660

## SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

**GOLIAD: Los Pastores** January 8. Goliad State Park. 361/645-3405

**LAREDO: Washington's Birthday Celebration** January 20-Feb. 20. www.wbcalaredo.org 956/722-0589

**MISSION: Texas Citrus Fiesta** January 15, 27, 29. www.texascitrusfiesta.net 956/585-9724

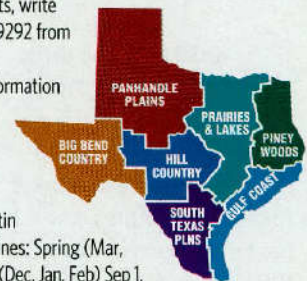
**SAN ANTONIO: Boat & RV Show** January 27-30. The Alamodome. www.saboatandrvshow.com 512/481-1777

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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.



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CHET GARNER is the host of *The Daytripper* travel show on PBS; [www.thedaytripper.com](http://www.thedaytripper.com).

# Link In To Lockhart

**IT'S OFFICIAL.** A while back, the Texas Legislature settled the debate over which town deserves the overall crown for best 'cue: Lockhart (designated "Barbecue Capital of Texas" in 1999). I made a trip to our smoky capital on a meaty mission—to try every barbecue restaurant in town.



**10:30 a.m.** Too early for barbecue? Not in Lockhart. I kicked off my day at the oldest, most-storied joint in town—**Kreuz Market** (pronounced "Krites"), which has been around for more than 100 years and started as a meat market and grocery store.

Kreuz still does things the old-fashioned way, and they've posted the rules. Rule Number 1: No Sauce. Kreuz believes good meat doesn't need sauce. Rule Number 2: No Forks. You've got your fingers. Rule Number 3: No Kidding.

After passing down a long hallway, I reached the pit room, where an apron-clad lady waited expectantly behind the counter. Without thinking, I spoke. "A half-pound of fatty brisket, a sausage ring, and a couple of pork ribs." It wasn't until after I finished my plate of moist and delicious meat that I realized I didn't even think of sauce.

**11:30 a.m.** I drove up the street to **Smitty's Market**, just off the courthouse square, where the smoky rooms hide an even

smokier past. Before it was Smitty's Market, it was Kreuz Market for more than 75 years. In the 1980s, Edgar "Smitty" Schmidt sold the Kreuz business to his sons, but when he passed away, he left the building to his daughter. The siblings couldn't agree on lease terms, so Kreuz moved just down the street, and the sister opened her own joint and named it "Smitty's."

Family feuds can make for a rather spicy past, but it still comes down to the meat. Turns out that perfectly smoked barbecue by any name tastes just as sweet.

**1:00 p.m.** After two lunches, it was time for a break, so I headed to the **Caldwell**

**County Museum**, housed inside the 1909 Caldwell County Jail. The ground floor has been converted into a museum with photos and

artifacts about area history. On the upper floors, visitors can tour a labyrinth of old cells and read the original graffiti of folks who weren't in town for the barbecue.

**2:00 p.m.** My next stop, **Chisholm Trail Bar-B-Que**, is the BBQ baby of Lockhart, as it has only been around since 1978. The owner cut his chops (so to speak) working for one of the other places in town. The rules at Chisholm Trail are different, starting with

its cafeteria-style line serving more sides than I cared to count—and offering utensils! While Chisholm Trail does serve items like fried catfish and chicken-fried steak, it is still a full-fledged

barbecue joint. One bite of the meat puts any arguments otherwise to rest.

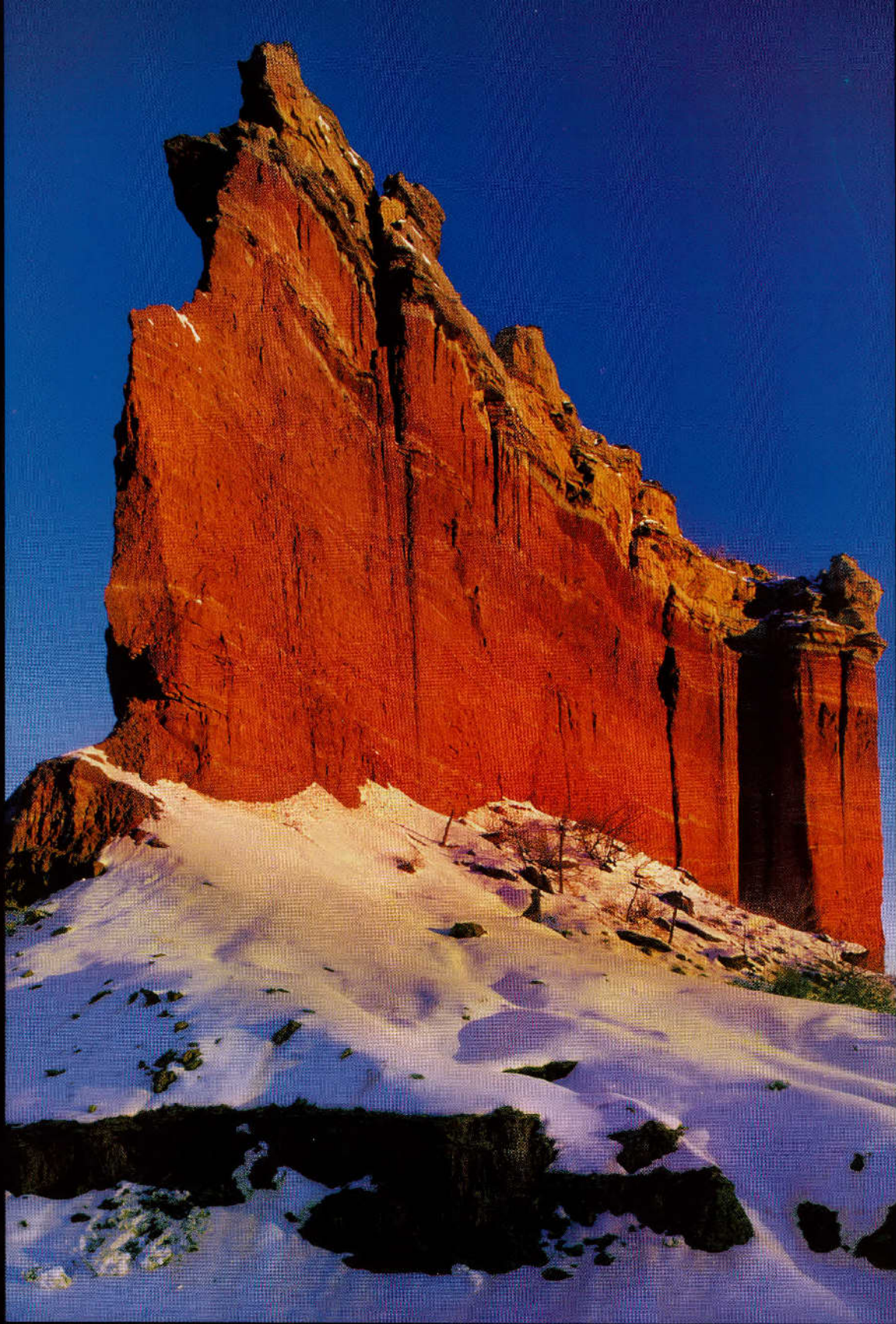
**3:00 p.m.** After my third lunch, I headed to

**Lockhart State Park.** The highlight of the park is a nine-hole golf course built in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The park also offers a great shaded hiking trail along the running waters of Clear Fork Creek.

**6:30 p.m.** I capped off my 'cue quest at **Black's Barbecue**, which calls itself the oldest major barbecue joint in Texas continuously operated by the same family. Instead of regular sausage, I went for the jalapeño-cheese variety. And instead of pork ribs, I went for a single big-as-my-femur beef rib. Both were incredibly delicious, and I was incredibly full.

**TEXANS TALK** (and argue) about barbecue a lot, and someone will usually bring up the little town of Lockhart. From now on, when someone asks, "Have you ever eaten there?" I can proudly say, "Why, yes, I have, and I even have the stretch marks to prove it." So, whether you follow my footsteps or forge your own path, I hope to see you on the road. **TH**

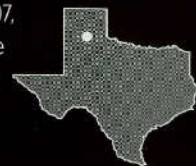
The **City of Lockhart** website has a listing of local barbecue joints; [www.lockhart-tx.org](http://www.lockhart-tx.org). Also contact the **Lockhart Chamber of Commerce**, 512/398-2818; [www.lockhartchamber.com](http://www.lockhartchamber.com).



## Window on Texas

Photograph by **WYMAN MEINZER**

**BUTTE IN WINTER** A striking formation meets deep-blue sky along Texas 207, near Lake Mackenzie in Briscoe County. More geological intrigue awaits on the drive north, a fitting prelude to Palo Duro Canyon. For details about Palo Duro Canyon State Park, call 806/488-2227; [www.palodurocanyon.com](http://www.palodurocanyon.com).



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