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MARCH 2007

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IT WAS tempting to leave this page blank. Words cannot express the void we feel without editor Jack Lowry, who died on December 22. And no tribute seems worthy of a man of Jack's intellect and caliber.

Many of you may not know that this champion of Texas was actually born (on September 17, 1951) and raised in Caracas, Venezuela, where his father, Leo Lowry, worked for Creole Petroleum. Jack would sometimes regale us with tales of his eventful childhood, including encounters with the occasional capybara or anaconda. He studied and traveled throughout the world before his adventurous spirit brought him to Texas in the 1970s. His biculturalism, beautiful command of Spanish (his first language), and knowledge of world history and events were awe-inspiring.

Jack joined *TH* as an associate editor in 1984, became managing editor in 1986, and editor-in-chief in 1992. It was his beautiful command of English that shone from his many memorable stories over the years—among our readers' favorites, a series on Native Americans in 1991. Last year alone, he wrote an introduction to our excerpt of the book *Passionate Nation* (March), and stories on San Antonio's Witte Museum (April), our beaches and the Texas Folklife Festival (June), canoeing and kayaking (July), the Highland Lakes (August), "Big Splurge, Big Bargains, Big Bend" (September), and his annual, and always popular, "Looking Back" retrospective on the year in December. And we could always count on his insights, wit, and wisdom on this page. Jack's editorial credo? Love and respect thy reader. And he did.

It was Jack's beautiful command of the magazine that brought *TH* to a new level of excellence. As for his staff, we thrived under his guidance and inspiration. There are a lot of good managers in the world, but very few true leaders. Jack was one.

The outpouring of love and support has been an incredible source of comfort to



Texas Highways Editor Jack Lowry, 1951-2006.

COURTESY LEN SOBEL

but it was long enough to appreciate his skills in writing and editing—and to realize what a fine person he was.

Jack's family—his wife, Dawn, and his children, Rachel, Marshall, and Sarah—to whom he paid special tribute in last June's *Up Front*. And it has comforted his *TH* family, too. *TH* founder Frank Lively recalls, "On the day before he died, Jack called to thank me for hiring him. He said it was 22 years ago when I invited him to join the staff. I retired in 1990, so I only had the privilege of working with Jack for a little more than 5 years,

"In the past 17 years, Jack and I often had lunch together, discussed the magazine business, and had a lot of laughs (not related to business). I already miss those times."

Rosemary Williams, former *TH* managing editor and our longtime friend, eloquently eulogized Jack at a memorial service held in January at Westcave Preserve, west of Austin. "Jack might have been quiet and self-effacing, but he couldn't hide the fact that he was a brilliant and talented man. He was a creative writer and an incisive editor. And he was a citizen of this world whose grasp of the social and political scene took my breath away. [He was] beautiful in the realm of his spirit; his unwavering love for his family and friends; his willingness to accept each of us as we are and to love us in spite of ourselves."

Reader Jay Trainor of Georgetown wrote, "Jack's death is a loss for all Texans." And longtime photographic contributor Robert Mihovil of Galveston said, "Jack was a great person, family man, and boss and will be missed for years to come. The way he treated his staff is reflected in the way his staff treats freelancers like myself. A lot of folks will think that his legacy will be *Texas Highways*, but actually it will be all the people that produce *Texas Highways*."

And rest assured, his vision and spirit will live on in these very pages. *Vaya con dios, El Jefe y nuestro amigo.... —From the TH Staff*

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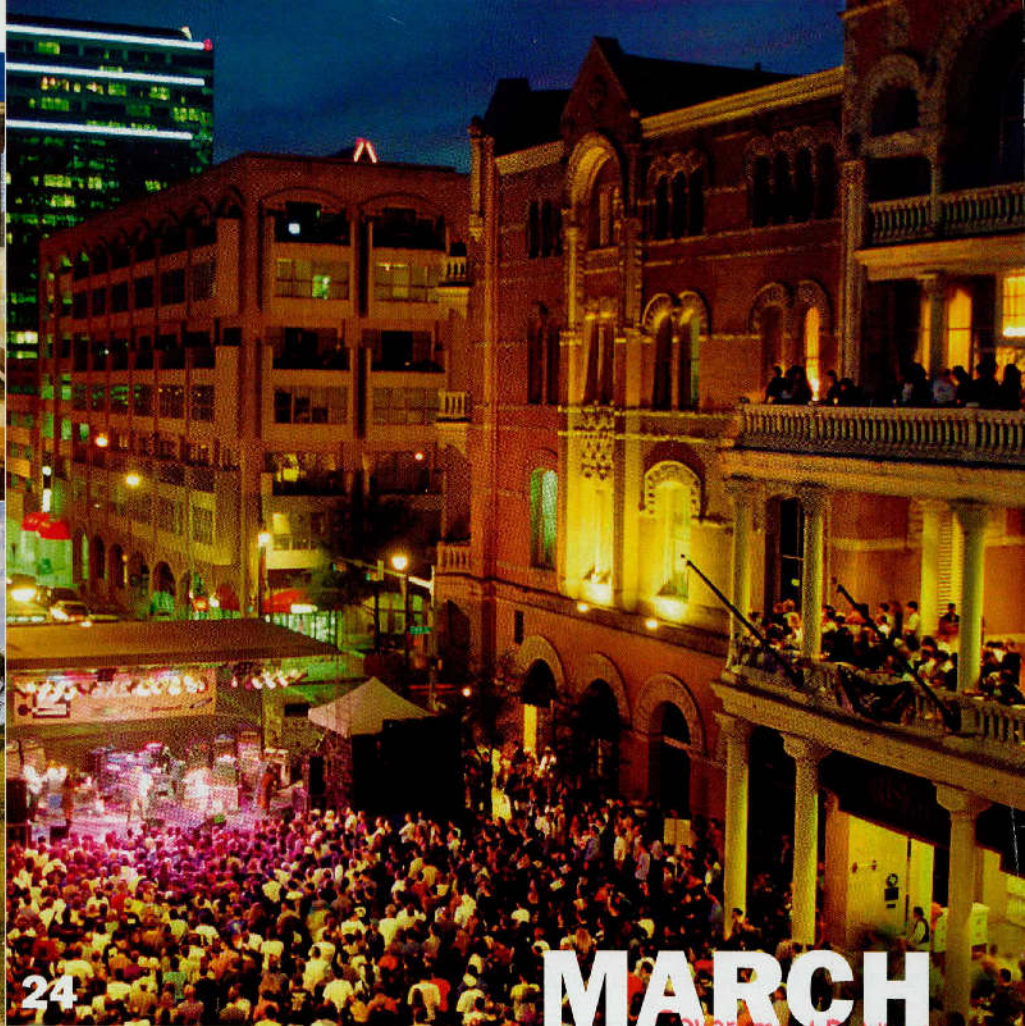




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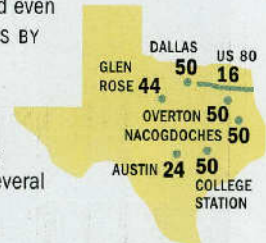
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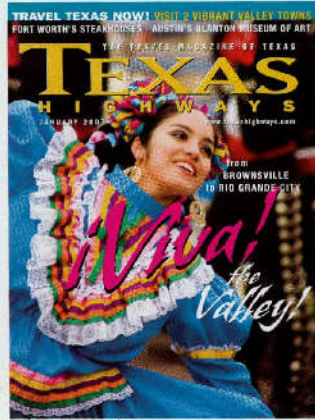
ABOUT OUR COVERS FRONT: Few people would describe the armadillo as cute and cuddly, so perhaps it's a good thing that the state's official small mammal has a thick skin. For a roundup of other state symbols, turn to page 36. *Photo © Sean Fitzgerald.* BACK: The late "Mayan Lou" Colburn, a longtime employee of the Mayan Dude Ranch near Bandera, sported an enviable Texas "grill." And that's the tooth! *Photo © Arthur Meyerson.*

FEATURES

- 16 RELICS OF A ROADWAY: OLD HIGHWAY 80** A photojournalist's 160-mile trek from Waskom to Mesquite along historic US 80 yields pastoral scenes, a wealth of diversions, and a few surprises. STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY RANDY MALLORY
- 24 TWENTY YEARS AND COUNTING: SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST** An Austin writer contrasts the city's first South by Southwest festival with the musical phenomenon it is today. Film and interactive media have joined the party. BY MICHAEL CORCORAN
- 28 ARTHUR MEYERSON: MORNING, NOON, AND NIGHT** Award-winning Texas-born photographer Arthur Meyerson turns the lens on his home state. A portfolio of his work reveals a knack for finding, seeing, and capturing exciting and seemingly exotic images. INTRODUCTION BY MICHAEL A. MURPHY
- 36 LONE STAR SYMBOLS** Most Texans know about the bluebonnet, pecan, and mockingbird, but the list of state symbols has mushroomed in recent years. Our photo feature provides a refresher course. INTRODUCTION BY NOLA McKEY
- 44 FOSSIL RIM WILDLIFE CENTER** At a sprawling preserve near Glen Rose, visitors can spot rhinos and cheetahs, "talk to" giraffes and zebras, and even stay overnight in lodgings on site. BY MELISSA GASKILL, PHOTOGRAPHS BY COURTNEY PERRY
- 50 HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?** In a quest to develop beautiful but Texas-tough plants, Texas A&M horticulturists have come up with a number of superstars, which are on display in several public gardens. STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAROL BARRINGTON



■ **PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINTS AVAILABLE** The images on the front cover, page 36, and page 65 are available as prints in two distinctive formats. To order, call toll-free 866/962-1191, or visit www.magazineprints.com.



Beautiful Bridges

I ENJOYED Jennifer Nalewicki's article "Bridging Texas" [January]. I have crossed some of [the bridges shown] and never realized how beautiful they were, since when crossing one you can only see the supports.

The Percy Pennybacker Bridge [in Austin] is my favorite picture in the article. That would convince anyone what a beautiful place Texas is.

ELMER GOLDEN
Cincinnati, Ohio

Postscript

I WAS very interested in Randy Mallory's postcards article, "Wish You Were Here" [January]. One postcard on page 19 is a photo of Plennie L. Wingo. I don't think you can tell from the photo, but Plennie wore glasses with small side mirrors that allowed him to see what was behind him. Although I never met Plennie, he

was a frequent topic of conversation in my wife's family. My wife Beverly's great-aunt Lettie Nevada Taylor was married to Plennie's brother Aubrey Leigh (Hap) Wingo. Lettie and Hap were longtime residents of Archer City.

The novelty postcard on pages 21 and 22 featuring Carl Palmer's Sinclair Service Station at Eighth and Lamar in

Wichita Falls also brought back memories. My wife was born in Wichita Falls, and my family moved there in 1950. It was interesting to note that the [station's] phone number had just one digit as a prefix. It was sometime in the late 1950s that we got a three-digit prefix.

I have never received a copy of TH that I did not enjoy. Keep up the good work!

FRED AND BEVERLY DOWNS
Manvel

Remembering Granger

THANK YOU for Will Van Overbeek's article on Granger [January]. My mother was born and

raised in Texas but left at 21 to start married life with her new husband in Oregon. From the time I was six months old, we would drive from Oregon to visit my grandparents in Holland, Texas, and would spend two weeks visiting relatives in Holland, Granger, and Bartlett.

Reading the story was like returning to my childhood. The picture of the cotton field brought back memories of visiting my grandparents' farm with uncles, aunts, and many cousins on a hot Sunday afternoon in June.

I-35 made sleepy little towns of Holland, Granger, and Bartlett. Articles like yours bring them back to life again. Thank you for that.

MARY RENFROW
Milwaukie, Oregon

I THOROUGHLY enjoyed your story on Granger, my hometown. I was raised there in the '30s...graduated class of '41. It brought back great memories of tooling around town in my Model T, playing high school football, swimming in the nearby creek, etc.

Granger was a great country town when cotton was king. There must have been a half-dozen cotton gins [in the area] in those days. A number of the grand old buildings on Davilla Street are gone now.

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My father, Briscoe Davis, was a civil engineer who built the bridge on the street to the school. On the school grounds is a memorial to the men and women from Granger who lost their lives serving in the wars of the 20th Century.

ROY BRISCOE DAVIS
Bullard

I REALLY was excited to read about "Saint Dan" Martinets in your article on Granger. When

I was a child, my family shared a duplex and our lives with Dan. Your article, as wonderful as it was, could never capture the amazing spirit that Dan is, but I'm so glad that it at least gave everyone else somewhere to start!

JENNIFER WATSON GRIMES
Dallas

Mighty Big Men

THANK YOU for Gene Fowler's article on Sam Harris of Farmersville [Speaking of Texas, January]. This gentle giant was my great-grandfather. You mentioned in the story that he ordered his

coffin early in life, but here's a note of interest for you: It took 17 men to carry it to the grave site.

My grandfather Lester Harris weighed in at a little over 500 pounds. All of Sam's boys were large men, but not quite his size.

JEANETTE DYER COOK
Denison

Ahoy There!

I REALLY enjoy reading *Texas Highways*. Your December issue ["Looking Back at '06"] had a picture of a nuclear sub and Texas' Tall Ship *Elissa* in the background. I think the sailing vessel might be the U.S. Coast Guard training ship *Eagle*, which I've been aboard. I know it was in Galveston the same day. No problem, I was just wondering. Thank you!

J.B. SHEPHERD
(A FORMER COAST GUARDSMAN)
Liberty

ED. NOTE: *Thanks for writing, J.B. The Coast Guard's Eagle and the Texas Seaport Museum's Elissa, both historic barques, do look similar from a distance, but senior editor Ann Gallaway, who has covered Elissa, confirms that the sailing vessel in the photo is indeed the 1877 Elissa.*

Crying Over Memphis

YOUR LIST of Texas town songs [December] didn't include "Memphis, Texas." My granddaughter Carrie Rodriguez, with Chip Taylor, wrote this song for my hometown. (Chip also wrote "Wild Thing" and "Angel of the Morning.") While they were on a tour of England, it was requested in three different towns. I find it passing strange that a song about Memphis, a little place just down the road from Amarillo, would be so popular in England. Carrie told me that in Ireland, it made an old woman on the front row cry.

FRANCES NAIL
Austin

Holland Hellos

THANK YOU for your magazine. I have been to Schulenburg (which I love), San Antonio, Big Bend, Langtry, Fort Clark, and Houston. Texas is real friendly. Greetings to all the nice towns, and all the best in 2007.

JOKE AND KEES BONTE
Barendrecht, Holland

WRITE OR E-MAIL: Talk to TH, *Texas Highways*, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009; fax 512/486-5879; e-mail: letters05@texashighways.com. Web site: www.texashighways.com. Though we are unable to print every letter, we just might select yours to appear in the magazine—whether you send us kudos or criticism. We reserve the right to edit letters.

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For THE ROAD

THIS MONTH'S TOP PICKS AND PLACES

Golden Year

IN 2007, THE HARRY RANSOM HUMANITIES RESEARCH CENTER AT THE University of Texas at **Austin** celebrates its 50th anniversary. Through July 29, an exhibition there called **The American Twenties** explores the decade's cultural and social milestones with more than 400 items, including books, posters, paintings, and photographs. How did people remember wartime?

What was happening in Hollywood? What sorts of changes were taking place with women and wages? And what about the American farmer, the urbanized black population, and the upswing in Chinese immigration? The Ransom Center addresses these themes and more. Call 512/471-8944; www.hrc.utexas.edu.

PLEASED TO GREET YOU

WITH A CITY AS LARGE AND MULTIFACETED as Houston, it's nice to have an insider's perspective on what to do and what to see when

you visit. If you're interested in sculpture, for example, wouldn't it be great if you could spend the afternoon with someone who's similarly enthusiastic? That's the clever thinking behind the new **Houston Greeters** program, which matches Houston volunteers with visitors who have parallel interests. Modeled after the successful Big Apple Greeter program in New York City, Houston Greeters boasts a rapidly expanding crew of volunteer residents whose hobbies include golfing, shopping in Rice



The Charleston and other improvisational dances swept the country in the 1920s.

Village, touring ethnic groceries, jogging along the bayou, sailing on Galveston Bay, salsa dancing, and touring Houston's multicultural houses of worship. What does all this personal attention cost you? Not a cent—the program is free. Call 713/GREETER; www.houstongreeters.org.

MADEIRA, M'DEAR

SAM HOUSTON (1793-1863), THE FIRST regularly elected president of the Republic of Texas, was no angel. Rebellious, ambitious, charismatic, and imaginative, with a taste for women and alcohol, Sam often celebrated with (among other things) a glass of Madeira, the fortified wine that originated in Portugal. He'd be pleased, probably, to learn about a Texas winery that makes this hardy, historic beverage today.

Haak Vineyard and Winery, a family-owned operation in Santa Fe, a small town in Galveston County halfway between Houston and Galveston, introduced the state's first Madeira in November 2006. Try it—and many of the winery's other offerings—during daily tastings and tours. And mark your calendar for May, when owners Gladys and Raymond Haak start hosting parties at the vineyard every Sunday afternoon through November. Bring lawn chairs and a picnic (or buy a casual dinner on site), enjoy live music, and set a stress-free mood for the week. Says Gladys: "It's great for the whole family. The kids can even play Frisbee in the vineyard." You can't get more unfussy than that. Call 409/925-1401;

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TYPECAST

DURING AUSTIN'S POPULAR SOUTH BY Southwest (see story, page 24), musicians, filmmakers, artists, and other creative rebels turn the Capitol City into an invigorating circus. Take a breather at the **Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum**, and check out these rebels of a different stripe—the hardworking, modern-day cowboys and cowgirls depicted by photographer Robb Kendrick. Robb uses a 19th-Century method called tintype (the images are actually produced on metal) to give the images a special patina and emotional heft. *Revealing Character: Robb Kendrick's Texas Tintypes* (through April 15) features 66 tintypes taken throughout the state. (See *Texas Highways*, December 2005, for a sampling.) Call 512/936-8746; www.thestoryoftexas.com.

IN STYLE

CLEAN LINES, STARK INTERIORS, MONOchromatic colors—ho hum. At least that's what interior designer Dorothy Draper (1889-1969)



Dorothy Draper (1889-1969) adored embellishment.

thought. While architect Frank Lloyd Wright called her an "inferior desecrator," anti-Minimalist Dorothy Draper was a celebrated style-setter in the 1930s, '40s, and '50s, emblazoning offices, restaurants, hotels, hospitals, homes, and even an airplane interior with eye-popping colors, elegant flourishes, oversize prints, and exotic furnishings. Through May 31, **The Women's Museum in Dallas** salutes the "duchess of decorating" with a flamboyant exhibition called *In the Pink: The Legendary Life of Dorothy Draper*. Along with scenes from her famous design locations (she designed the penthouse at the historic Dallas Stoneleigh Hotel, for example), *In the Pink* includes personal photography, original furniture, and artifacts such as Dorothy's signature birdcage chandelier. Call 214/915-0860; www.thewomensmuseum.org.

Also in Dallas, the **Meadows Museum** celebrates the legacy of *another* trailblazer in the

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world of design, Spanish fashion designer Cristóbal Balenciaga (1895-1972), whose graceful garments revolutionized women's fashion from the 1930s-'60s. (Some of Balenciaga's evening gowns, for example, were inspired by the dresses of flamenco dancers—tailored so that the slightest movement would send the skirts swirling.) *Balenciaga and His Legacy: Haute Couture from the Texas Fashion Collection* includes more than 70 of Balenciaga's creations, plus some 20 dresses and accessories by designers Oscar de la Renta, Emanuel Ungaro, Hubert de Givenchy, and André Courrèges. A complementary show, *Boleros y Mantillas: Icons of Spanish Fashion from the Meadows Collection*, further examines Spain's influence. Both exhibitions close May 27. Call 214/768-2516; www.meadowsmuseumdallas.org.

TECHNOLOGY CHANGES EVERYTHING

IF TECHNOLOGY KEEPS CHANGING AT THE pace it has been in the past few years, we'll soon be carrying around dime-size computers synced up to any and every database we can think of. Want to watch a movie or read a book? No need to leave the house—just download it. Whether you find that scenario fascinating or frightening, odds are you'll enjoy visiting the **20th Century Technology Museum** in Wharton, which presents a century's worth of advancing technology in an 1888 jailhouse (talk about your historical context).

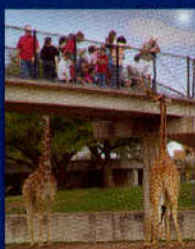
Among the museum's hundreds of items on display are radios, televisions, phonographs, video games, telephones, projectors and cameras, washing machines, farm equipment, typewriters and computers, and even a few home-built airplanes, one of which was built by a local farmer from scavenged parts. All items are arranged chronologically, so you can see the advancement of, say, an icebox to a modern refrigerator. Don't miss the 1904 medical device that claimed to cure everything from cold feet to flatulence with a blast of electric shock. It's somehow comforting to know that some things never change. Call 979/282-8810; www.20thCenturyTech.com.

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ARTHUR TRACY LEE

In October 1854, Captain Arthur Tracy Lee, with a company of the Eighth U.S. Infantry, was ordered to help establish Fort Davis in the mountains of Texas' Big Bend country. On first seeing the site, Lee called it "beautiful beyond description." Awed by the dramatic beauty of the deep red rock chasms and the palisades of volcanic rock towering over Limpia Creek, Lee set about to paint these scenes in watercolor. The paintings are among the earliest known pictures of West Texas and are important to our understanding of frontier life in the 1800s.



A man of varied talents, U.S. Army officer Arthur Tracy Lee (1814-1879) paid homage to Fort Davis in this watercolor, one of many such images he created while stationed in far West Texas. In 1976, Texas A&M University Press published a book of Lee's frontier-Texas paintings.

Arthur T. Lee, born in Northumberland, Pennsylvania, in 1814, studied art in Philadelphia under the noted English-born portrait painter Thomas Sully. Also a talented poet, musician, historian, essayist, and landscape architect, Lee served many years as a capable U.S. Army officer. An acute observer of human nature, he championed those he felt were mistreated. For example, in his many published songs and poems, he criticized the way the U.S. government treated the Indians. His commanding officer at Fort Davis frequently punished and jailed Lee for his outspoken ways; yet Lee served honorably at Fort Davis and other Texas forts for more than 12 years, in a military career that lasted some 27 years.

When the Civil War began in 1861, Lee traveled home to join the Union side. He was severely wounded at Gettysburg in 1863 and retired from active duty in early 1865, but was retroactively promoted to colonel a year after the war's end. Later, he served as supervisor/director/governor of the Soldiers' Home in Washington, D.C. He continued to paint after retiring and moving with his wife, Margaret, to

Rochester, New York, in 1872. Arthur Lee died in Rochester in 1879.

—Elizabeth W. Lewis, Houston

THE WRIGHT STUFF

Jane Long has been called the Mother of Texas (she claimed to be the first English-speaking woman to bear a child in Texas), but Sam Houston gave the title to Margaret Theresa Robertson Wright. During the Texas Revolution, Margaret lived near the Spanish presidio at Goliad. On March 27, 1836, more than 340 Texian prisoners were executed on order of Mexican General Santa Anna, an event called the Goliad Massacre. Twenty-eight Texians escaped and hid in the woods near Margaret's house. Margaret got word to them to leave notes in a hollow tree telling her what food or medicine they needed. She would hide the items in her water pail for them to pick up. She continued helping the men until they were well enough to rejoin their units.

During a gubernatorial campaign speech in Victoria more than 20 years later, Sam Houston said that for her courage in aiding the revolutionary

forces, Margaret Wright deserved to be called the Mother of Texas.

—Mary G. Ramos, Dallas

STEPHEN CRANE AT THE ALAMO

On March 5, 1895, Stephen Crane arrived in Galveston, his first stop in Texas on a journalistic tour for a newspaper syndicate. Just days before, in New Orleans, the writer had completed the final revisions of his second (and last) novel, *The Red Badge of Courage*, and sent them off to his New York editor. Crane was sufficiently well known—at age 23—for the Galveston *Daily News* to comment on his arrival: "Mr. Crane is regarded as one of the brightest and most entertaining special writers of the day."

Crane moved on to San Antonio, a city he found more interesting than mercantile Galveston. He visited the Alamo, long a symbol of courage and sacrifice, but, Crane recognized, an icon already overworked by other writers. As he wryly observed in his dispatch, "Literary aspirants of the locality...begin on the Alamo. Statistics show that 69,710 writers have begun at the Alamo."

While acknowledging the heroism of Travis, Crockett, Bowie, and others, Crane seemed more intrigued by the Alamo's lone deserter, Moses Rose (see *Speaking of Texas*, March 2003). Perhaps with his just-completed novel in mind, Crane wrote, "There is a strange inverted courage in the manner in which [Rose] faced his companions with this sudden and short refusal in the midst of a general exhibition of supreme bravery. 'No,' he said. He bade them adieu and climbed the wall. Upon its top he turned to look at the upturned faces of his silent companions."

Crane's stay in Texas was brief, but two years later, he would recall his departure from the state by train in the opening scene of one of his most famous short stories, the Texas tale "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky." Stephen Crane died of tuberculosis in 1900.

—David Latimer, Austin

Spotlight on A TEXAS PRIMER

KEVIN STILLMAN



Since 1519, Texas has been governed by six nations, hence the six flags—from right to left, Spain, France, Mexico, the Confederate States of America, the Republic of Texas, and the United States of America.

Texas Independence Day

ON MARCH 2, 1836, WHEN TEXAS WAS STILL PART OF Mexico, 59 delegates gathered at Washington, Texas, to sign the Texas Declaration of Independence. The fierce battles that ensued—including the fall of the Alamo on March 6; the massacre of Texian soldiers by order of Mexican General Antonio López de Santa Anna on March 27; and finally, the decisive Battle of San Jacinto, led by Major General Sam Houston on April 21—established

Texas as an independent nation. Texas remained sovereign for nearly 10 years, until December 29, 1845, when the Lone Star State became part of the United States.

On March 2, 2007, numerous events statewide commemorate Texas Independence Day. (See the “Events Calendar” link at www.texashighways.com to find a celebration near you.) Take a moment to toast Texas with

these words, written by the late historian Joe B. Frantz:

“To Texas.... Joyous and sparkling, Evergreen when it rains, enduring in drought; Timeless, endless in boundaries, exciting; Home to the adventurous of yesterday and today; With shrines from the past and space and spirit for the future. To Texas. Everlasting in the hearts of your people!”

NO, MY FRIEND, IT'S NOT A TYPO

MOST OF Y'ALL KNOW THAT THE WORD “Texas” apparently comes from the Caddoan word for friendship, *tejas*—hence Texas’ much-deserved reputation as “The Friendship State.”

But “Texian”? Hold your horses, and don’t rust up your spurs, partner. That’s no typo. According to the Texas State History Association’s splendidly searchable *Handbook of Texas Online* (www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook), “the term Texian is generally used to apply to a citizen of the Anglo-American section of the province of Coahuila and Texas or of the Republic of Texas.” The term was replaced (in general usage anyway) after Texas was annexed to the United States in 1845, but since Republic of Texas President Mirabeau B. Lamar had used it to foster patriotism during Texas’ independence (1836-1845), some Texans called themselves Texians well into the 1880s. Might still.

A BANNER HISTORY

THE TEXAS STATE FLAG, WITH ITS FIVE-pointed star on a sea of blue, and two bold stripes of white and red (with the white always on top, please!), is, in fact, the 1839 national flag of the Republic of Texas. (As with the U.S. flag, red represents bravery; white, purity; and blue, loyalty. Preservationist Adina de Zavala, best known for her courageous actions in preventing the Alamo from being razed in the early 20th Century, suggested that the star’s five points represent fortitude, loyalty, righteousness, prudence, and broadmindedness.)

And while we’re used to thinking that six flags have flown over the state, the reality is that there have been more than that, given that some countries didn’t have standard banners at the



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time or modified them to avoid confusion on the battlefield. But that's nitpicking: Since 1519, when Spain—the first European nation to claim what is now Texas—raised its flag on Lone Star soil, Texas has been governed by six nations: Spain, France, Mexico, the Republic of Texas, the Confederate States of America, and the United States of America.

During Spain's reigns, 1519-1685 and again 1690-1821, at least two versions of the Spanish flag flew above Texas soil. Both designs incorporated emblems of León and Castile, or the lion and castle. A simple version probably flew at Spain's first settlement in Texas, Ysleta Mission, founded in 1681 at present-day El Paso. Take note: That's more than a century-and-a-half after Hernán Cortez arrived in the New World; Texas was a desolate place back then. After 1785, Spain's flag depicted a lion and a castle on a shield surmounted by a crown.

France staked its claim here in 1685 with the arrival of French nobleman René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, who founded his doomed settlement, Fort St. Louis, a few miles inland from Lavaca Bay. Shipwreck, disease, hostile Indians, and eventually, La Salle's assassination squelched France's future in Texas. When Spanish soldiers arrived in 1689, they found the fort in shambles. Regarding the flag: In the 1680s, according to the Texas State Library, France did not have one official flag, so it's unclear which

design La Salle might have carried. For the 1936 Texas Centennial Exposition, the white flag scattered with golden fleurs-de-lis was adopted as the flag of Texas under French rule.

Under Mexico from 1821-1836, Texas flew the familiar green-white-and-red-striped flag emblazoned with an eagle and snake, both images from pre-Columbian mythology. As a republic, Texas adopted the famous Lone Star flag, and on joining the Union in 1845, it became the 28th star in the United States of America's Stars and

Stripes. Then, 16 years after Texas joined the Union, in 1861, the American Civil War erupted, and Texas joined the Confederate States of America. The Confederacy, in fact, had three national flags, including the controversial

Union Jack design, but the first Confederate flag to fly in Texas was the simple Stars and Bars—a blue field with a circle of seven stars, alongside horizontal stripes of red and white. In 1865, of course, Texas rejoined the Union, and Old Glory has topped flagpoles—flapping proudly alongside the Lone Star flag—ever since.

For more on Texas flags and Texas history, see the *Texas Almanac's* online sesquicentennial edition at www.texasalmanac.com, or the Web site of the Texas State Library, www.tsl.state.tx.us. Also, you can order Texas flags (as well as flags from around the world) in a wide range of prices from San Antonio's Dixie Flag Company; www.dixieflag.com. —LORI MOFFATT

While we're used to thinking that six flags have flown over the state, the reality is that there have been more than that.

Notes on a Song

IN 1929, FORT WORTH SONGWRITERS WILLIAM J. MARSH AND GLADYS YOAKUM Wright won a state-song contest sponsored by the Texas Legislature with their jaunty "Texas, Our Texas." A tad of trivia: After Alaska became a state in 1959, Mr. Marsh changed "Largest" to "Boldest" in the third line. (If you'd like to hear the music, log on to Lone Star Junction at www.lsjunction.com, and click on "Songs of Texas.")

TEXAS, OUR TEXAS

Texas, Our Texas! All hail the mighty State!
Texas, Our Texas! So wonderful so great!
Boldest and grandest, Withstanding
ev'ry test;
O Empire wide and glorious, You stand
supremely blest.

[CHORUS]

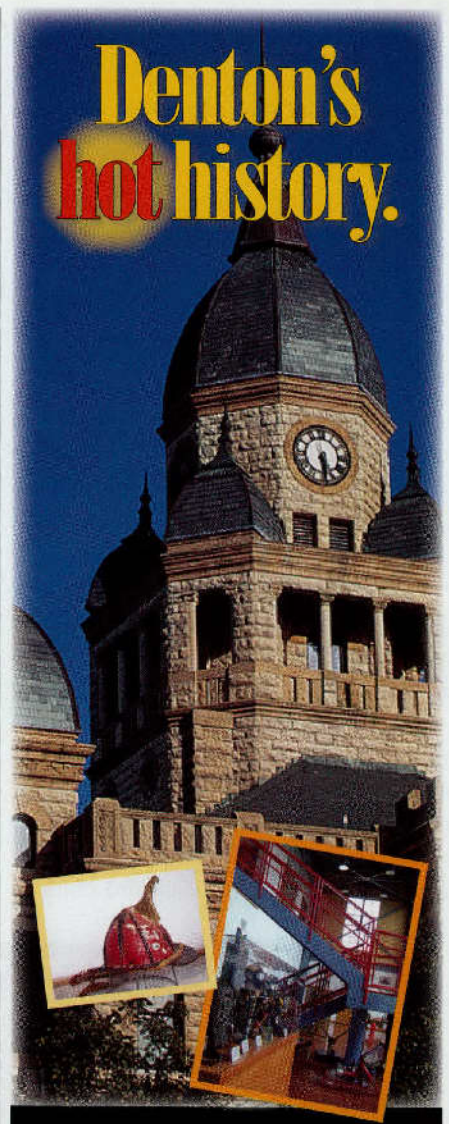
God bless you Texas! And keep you brave
and strong,
That you may grow in power and worth,
thro'out the ages long.
(Sing twice.)

Texas, O Texas! Your freeborn single star,
Sends out its radiance to nations near
and far.

Emblem of freedom! It set our hearts aglow,
With thoughts of San Jacinto and glorious
Alamo. [to chorus]

Texas, dear Texas! From tyrant grip now free,
Shines forth in splendor, Your star of destiny!
Mother of heroes! We come your children
true,
Proclaiming our allegiance, our faith, our love
for you. [to chorus]

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THE BEST-SMELLING PLACE IN MARBLE FALLS

Brothers Bakery

BY MARY G. RAMOS

STEP THROUGH Brothers Bakery's front door just about any morning, and take a whiff. I'll bet it puts a big smile on your face. The tantalizing aromas may originate from trays of muffins fresh out of the oven—perhaps carrot spice, lemon poppyseed, or raisin bran.

Or maybe they're from the light-as-a-feather Danish pastries with cream cheese or cherry filling. Or possibly the savory kolaches stuffed with sausage and cheese.

Ever-so-delicate croissants and sinfully yummy cinnamon rolls invite you to get a cup of gourmet coffee from the thermos pots in the corner, take a seat at one of the tables, and try them on the spot.

And that's just for starters. If you just happen to be in the neighborhood between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., you can get generous sandwiches on your choice of bread, freshly made salads, and homemade soups. Tomato-basil and chicken

tortilla soups are always offered, plus a changing daily special. From the number of customers lining up just before noon the day I was there, it was obvious that a lot of locals make it a point to "just happen to be in the neighborhood" at lunchtime.

All the baked products at Brothers Bakery, with one or two tiny exceptions, are made on site.

"We buy only a couple of specialty items elsewhere—labor-intensive products like petit fours, which have elaborate



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL A. MURPHY

The days begin early for Brothers Bakery chef/owner Ryan LeCompte Malamud. Ryan offers pastries, breads, and coffee all day six days a week, and lunch from 11 to 3.

icing, for instance," says Ryan LeCompte Malamud, Brothers' owner and chef. "Everything else we make here. We use no preservatives or mixes. Everything is made from scratch."

Brothers Bakery is the fulfillment of Ryan's long-time dream. He was born in New Orleans 31 years ago, but, as the saying goes in Texas, he got here as quick as he could. The family moved to Georgetown when he was five years old.

Ryan says he has always been interested in food. One of his earliest memories is of cooking with his grandparents, and the smell of dark-roasted coffee and beignets on a Sunday morning.

His first jobs, while he was still in high school, were in restaurants: Café on the Square in Georgetown, which has since closed, and Walburg Mercantile, a restaurant in nearby Walburg owned by a German master chef.

Ryan went to the CIA straight out of high school—no, not *that* CIA. This was the prestigious Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, where he earned a culinary arts degree in 1997. (If the TV series *Cooking Secrets of the CIA* shows up in your TV schedule, you might spot Ryan lurking in the background in several of the episodes.) His courses included baking, and he says that the wonderful smells of baking breads, cakes, and pastries "got me hooked."

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A collection of vintage kitchen appliances provides a whiff of nostalgia to accompany the mouthwatering aroma of baked goods.

So in 2000, he went back to the CIA—this time the Greystone campus in the Napa Valley—to earn a baking and pastry degree.

Before and after his CIA stints, Ryan traveled extensively in western Europe,

BROTHERS BAKERY is at 519 N. US 281 (southeast corner of US 281 and 6th St.) in Marble Falls. Hours: Mon-Fri 6:30-4, Sat 7:30-3. Lunch is served Mon-Sat 11-3. Pastries and coffee are available all day. Call 830/798-8278; www.brothersbakery.com.



visiting bakeries mainly in France, Spain, and the Netherlands, soaking up ideas and techniques—and eating lots of wonderful breads and pastries. Returning to Texas, he was determined to open his own bakery. The only question was where.

He worked in Austin for a gourmet grocery store and for a catering and baking company until he finally decided on Marble Falls, because of the vitality of the town, which has about 5,500 permanent residents. In recent years, Marble Falls has acquired a number of upscale restaurants for its increasingly sophisticated local and visiting diners, but it had no scratch bakery.

In 2002, Ryan opened Brothers Bakery (so named to include, and honor, his brother, Kurt, of New Orleans) on US 281, the main highway through town. And he has been creating those wonderful aromas ever since.

Besides the retail bakery and lunch counter, Brothers offers catering services and has

a growing wholesale business that provides baked goods to fine-dining restaurants and resort hotels in the area. “And,” Ryan adds, “wedding cakes are a specialty of ours.”

Although Brothers features a wide selection of enticing sweets, Ryan says that he is primarily a “bread guy.” Bakers’ racks just behind the front counter hold artisanal breads. Rustic loaf, sourdough, and baguettes are baked daily; other varieties vary

with the day of the week. Some days, Ryan might offer multigrain, home-style white, or rye; on other days, you might be able to score kalamata olive-rosemary, honey-whole wheat, or challah.

The sourdough at Brothers Bakery is a Hill Country original, made from a starter based on Fredericksburg peaches. Ryan says it’s delicious for making ham sandwiches, but I can’t wait to try it for French toast.

Ryan’s six employees are cross-trained. “With a small staff,” says Ryan, “they all have to be able to do all the jobs.” They all pitch in to mix and shape the doughs, make sandwiches and salads, serve lunches, work the front counter, and even clean up.

Looking around the bakery, you see no hint that the comfortable space was once occupied by a cosmetics boutique. The walls hold an ever-changing assortment of work from several local artists. One of those is Ryan’s mother, Paulette Malamud, whose exquisite flower and nature photographs cover part of one wall.

Tables and chairs fill the middle of the room, augmented by a banquette along one wall. Dining *(continued on page 58)*

We hear “Remember when...” almost as often as “Howdy.”

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Sketches of Paint Rock

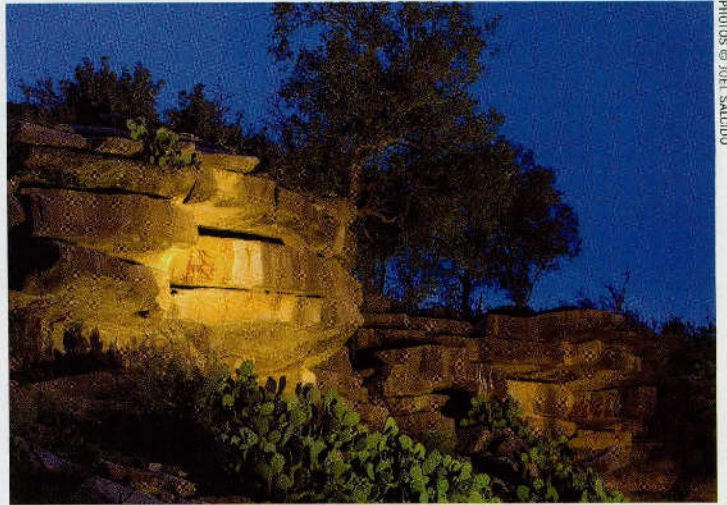
BY MELISSA GASKILL

PEOPLE first passed near the present town of Paint Rock, in the rolling hills 30 miles east of San Angelo, perhaps a dozen millennia ago. The paintings they left behind would, centuries later, give the place its name, and they are one of the reasons—along with the scenery, local artisans, and easy pace—that folks stop for a while today.

One of the major rock art sites in Texas and a premier Central Texas site is a rock bluff a few miles north of town. The bluff, which is peppered with paintings, provided early peoples a natural shelter from winter winds and summer sun.

Here, beside the Concho River, approximately 300 different cultures lived for some 12,000 years, and they left hundreds of images in shades of black, white, yellow, and, most commonly, red. To create the red, the painters carried heavy hematite rocks—iron ore—some 100 miles to this

area, ground them down, and mixed the resulting powder with animal fat. They painted a variety of subjects, from handprints and human figures to birds, suns, and various symbols. Some of the images mark, with astonishing accuracy, the summer and winter solstices, which were important seasonal events for these natives.



PHOTOS © JOEL SALCIDO

Centuries ago, Paint Rock's now-famous limestone bluff provided an ideal canvas for pictographs. There are well over 1,000.

Rock overhangs helped preserve the paintings, as did later owners of the land.

"There are about 1,500 images on the bluff," says Kay Campbell, whose grandfather D.E. Sims first saw the paintings in 1870. "Some of them had already been vandalized when my grandfather found them, so he decided to purchase the land

PAINT ROCK, seat of Concho County, is part of the Central Texas Hills & Rivers Region, www.texashillsandrivers.org. (Click on "Concho County," then on "Paint Rock".) The area code is 325.



and protect them. I'm here to protect them now because he told me to. I've never touched one."

Kay and her husband, Fred Campbell, provide guided tours of the painted rocks. The walks begin in a small building on the Campbell Ranch where Kay demonstrates how to make red paint and then draws on her arm with a red-tipped finger. She lets visitors handle genuine artifacts from the site, such as a hematite rock worn smooth from years of grinding. The former art teacher also hands out a guide she and her husband wrote and illustrated that examines possible meanings of the paintings. The image of a canoe, for example, could represent an actual boat seen on the Concho River, or a burial practice. A shaded

MISS TEXAS USA

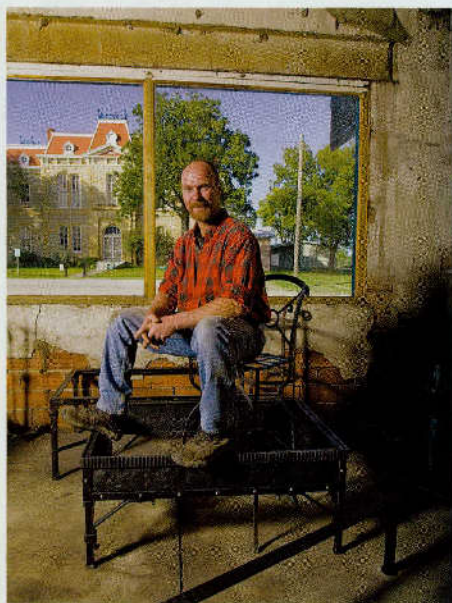
She came, she saw, she conquered and.. she enjoyed!

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Peace and quiet runs deep in the hills of Paint Rock, and it's a shame not to soak up as much of it as possible.



Randy Kiser, owner of Kiser Iron Works, operates his shop across the street from the Concho County Courthouse.

circle may portray a solar eclipse. A turtle within a circle is likely a solstice symbol.

Kay's lively narration weaves the history of the area with that of the Plains natives as her audience strolls along the bluff. A flock of turkeys often forages in the distance, and a bright vermilion flycatcher may perch on one of the pecan trees scattered along the river bottom. Birdwatching is another reason to visit Paint Rock.

In addition to saving the paintings, Grandfather Sims also brought the first sheep to Concho County, which reigned as the nation's leading sheep-producing county until 1988. The Campbells still raise sheep and Angora goats, as do many of their neighbors, for their wool and hair. At the main intersection in town, Ingrid's Custom Hand-Woven, Inc. takes advantage of the region's abundant supply of those raw materials. Area rugs of all sizes are hand-loomed here using spools of wool spun around a string of jute, which results in durable, reversible rugs. Colorful specimens line the walls and form willy-nilly stacks around the rustic shop. Owner Reinhard Schoffthaler stays busy on custom orders for rugs up to 12 feet wide and any length, in any of 76 solid

or pastel colors. "Our custom heathers are quite popular," he says. "We can create endless combinations by blending together solid colors in different amounts, depending on the decor someone is trying to match." The rugs feel extremely soft to bare feet, and small ones of about two by three feet cost less than \$40.

It's a short walk from Ingrid's to the 1886 Concho County Courthouse, designed by F.E. Ruffini, who also created the Blanco County Courthouse in Blanco and the Millett Opera House in Austin. County Judge Allen Amos, whose office is in the building, gives tours to folks who drop in, if he isn't busy. "It's a beautiful and functional little courthouse, and there aren't many of this Second Empire style," he says. The



Fred Campbell feeds his herd of Angora goats at Campbell Ranch, home to one of Texas' prime pictograph sites.

second-story courtroom stretches all the way across the building, and before central air and heat were installed, Amos recalls, birds, butterflies, and even an occasional squirrel would come through the open windows when court was in session. Today, he performs a fair number of weddings in the spacious room.

South of the courthouse, in a cavernous shop called Kiser Iron Works, blacksmith Randy Kiser creates iron beds, custom hardware, fireplace screens, and other decorative and functional pieces for clients all over the country. His funky, one-of-a-kind wine-stoppers shaped like leaves and obelisks make fun keepsakes of a visit.

That's the extent of the hustle and bustle in Paint Rock. In fact, peace and quiet runs deep in *(continued on page 58)*



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RELIQS *of a* RO



In October 20, 1926, Colonel Ed Fletcher steered his automobile eastward from San Diego, California, resolute to reach Savannah, Georgia, in record time. The land developer's stunt was geared to drum up

support for a transcontinental driving route to San Diego, even though road trips were considered "something of a sporting proposition." Indeed, most roads were narrow dirt lanes, slippery when wet.

Fletcher's race with destiny ran along part of the Dixie Overland Highway, one of 250-plus "named trails" of the 1920s.

With more families buying cars (Model T Fords sold for \$300), business associations, such as the Dixie Overland Highway Association, laid out routes of intercon-

necting local roads through member towns. Signs painted on poles, barns, and even rocks offered meager driving directions.

After a breakneck (though relatively uneventful) coast-to-coast escapade—including an all-day drive across Texas—Fletcher made his 2,535-mile trip in record time, reaching Savannah on

October 23 in a little over 71 hours.

That same year, federal and state officials rolled out a national plan, long in the making, for a numbered U.S. highway system. Much of the Dixie Overland Highway became part of the new US Highway 80.

That inaugural class of U.S. highways also included US 66, which ran from Chicago to Los Angeles. By the early 1970s, legendary Route 66 was bypassed by modern four-lane highways. But Highway 80, America's first all-weather, coast-to-coast route, still exists... at least its eastern half. US 80 makes a 900-mile beeline from Dallas' eastern city limit at

Story and photographs by Randy Mallory

Side-road surprises abound along historic (and new) stretches of US 80. Clockwise, from top left: road signs in downtown Mineola; Graham's Edgewood Market in Edgewood (seasonal produce, plus local honey and homemade ice cream); Marshall's restored 1912 Texas & Pacific Depot (now a museum and Amtrak passenger depot); an old Sinclair service station at the retro Dixie Motel in Gladewater; and Gladewater's Glory Bee Baking Company (owners Bill and Susan Morgan have their eyes on the pies).



ADWAY

Old Highway 80



Mesquite to the Atlantic Ocean at Tybee Island, Georgia. (By the early 1990s, the western half of US 80 had been replaced by Interstates 8, 10, 20, and 30.)

I've driven US 80 many times past rolling woodlands and quaint downtowns...not to mention strip centers, trailer parks, and pumpjacks. This is, after all, the blue collar of the East Texas Oil Field, once the world's largest puddle of black gold.

Decades of realignments and bypasses shifted US 80 away from the original

Cindy's New Waskom Cafe. Their new menu retains home-cooked favorites, such as chicken-and-dumplings and roast beef, enjoyed by generations of passersby.

West of Waskom, I take FM 134 (Old 80) north to Jonesville, where T.C. Lindsey & Co. remains the quintessential general store turned tourist destination. The business was established in 1847; the current building was built in the early 1920s by brothers Tom and Sam Vaughan. The late "Mister Sam" loved to

built a hilltop plantation (reportedly identical to Jefferson Davis' Mississippi mansion) and gave land for a cemetery, which still stands beside the historic home (open for tours; see Essentials). In the graveyard, fine statues by German-born Texas artist Frank Teich adorn 19th-Century monuments. The famed "Weeping Angel" monument rises over the grave of Will Scott Youree, whose 1904 death was memorialized by the construction nearby of a Victorian chapel that is still used for funerals.

Decades of realignments and bypasses shifted US 80 away from the original route. So what's left of Old 80? That's an engine-revving proposition for someone like me, who actually likes getting lost.

route. So what's left of Old 80? That's an engine-revving proposition for someone like me, who actually *likes* getting lost. (The unexpected sometimes brings wonderful surprises!)

So I set off on a 160-mile westward sojourn from Waskom, where US 80 enters Texas at the Louisiana line, to Mesquite, where it becomes I-30. My goal: to ferret out remnants of the venerable roadway's past.

The task was simpler than expected, thanks to "roadies" who compare old and new maps to trace historic highways. Directions in hand (from www.bygonebyways.com), I begin at the Texas-Louisiana line.

They could've used the same pole to mark the state line and the Waskom city limit, since they're only a few yards apart. A half-mile west, Old 80 (Waskom Avenue) slants off US 80 and parallels a railroad track through town. Many downtown buildings date from the 1920s and still face Old 80...but not the New Waskom Cafe.

When it opened in 1929, the café did face Old 80, but a realignment a few years later put the highway at the back door. To attract road-weary patrons, the owners jacked up the joint (some say with people still inside) and rotated it 180 degrees. Cindy and Guy Gibson bought the eatery last year and renamed the place

recount the day in May of 1934 when robbers Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow drove by en route to Louisiana and the police ambush that would kill them. "[Mister Sam] kept the news account in the front showcase, hoping to start conversations about Bonnie and Clyde," recalls "Miss Syble" Elliott, who has worked at the store since 1957.

Old 80 turns west at FM 1998 and passes the picturesque Scottsville Cemetery. In 1840, town namesake W.T. Scott

As FM 1998 rejoins US 80 in Marshall, I find a mother lode of historical sites. At North Washington Street, I go a couple of blocks north of US 80 to the Ginocchio National Historic District, which stretches along a working rail line. The neighborhood of historic homes surrounds the 1896 Ginocchio Hotel, home of the Harrison County Historical Museum.

A beautiful and rare stairway made of "curly" pine greets me in the old hotel



A vintage photo displayed at T.C. Lindsey & Co. in Jonesville shows former co-owner, the late T.W. Vaughan, taking an inventory of mule harnesses. At right, Greggton Antique Mall in Longview boasts "East Texas' Largest Collection of Militaria." Facing page, White Oak Road between Big Sandy and Gladewater is a scenic oil-top drive that once formed part of the original US 80 route.







Now a B&B, the 1918 Lott Home (above), a Texas Historic Landmark and also listed in the National Register, is just a stroll away from downtown Mineola's antique and specialty shops and art galleries. Below, this abandoned, one-lane iron bridge lies on old Highway 80 (now CR 3810) near Hallsville.

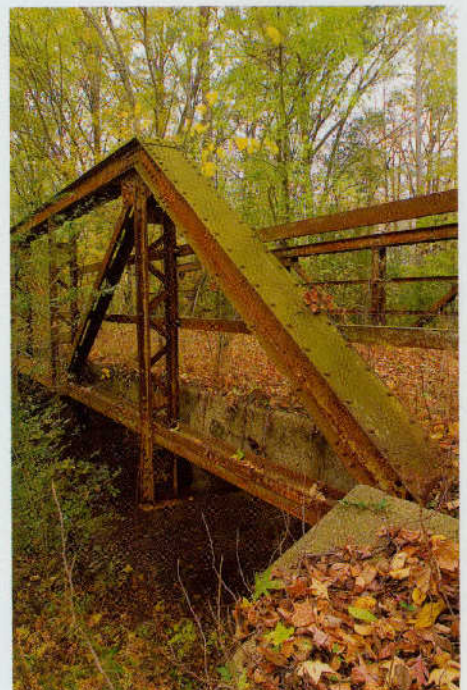
lobby. A few researchers are busy in a large genealogical and local-history library to my right. A small but professional exhibit hall to my left showcases the museum's permanent collection, which ranges from Caddo Indian relics to a Japanese flag captured at Iwo Jima during World War II.

The old hotel was erected atop a special foundation with supports drilled 10 feet into the ground. When a freight train rumbles by, I understand why. Across the tracks is the restored 1912 Texas & Pacific depot, now the Amtrak station for the *Texas Eagle's* daily runs between Chicago and Los Angeles. The depot sports a small gift shop and a railroad museum with photos from the golden age of steam locomotives.

Through downtown, Old 80 meets the courthouse square at Houston Street. Towering over the square is the 1901

Harrison County Courthouse, a Renaissance Revival masterpiece restored outside and being restored inside. Big-city-style eateries have sprung up on the square, including OS² Restaurant & Pub (entrées range from Veracruz-style tilapia to tenderloin medallions in Béarnaise sauce) and R & R Bakery & Coffee Shoppe (fresh pastries, coffees, and cappuccinos).

Near the square, I tour the Starr Family State Historic Site, the ancestral home of James Harper Starr, a local physician, Republic of Texas treasurer, land agent, banker, and namesake of Starr County in South Texas. In 1870, the Starr family built Maplecroft mansion, centerpiece of today's historic site, which is filled with 150 years of Starr family furnishings and photos. I overnight on-site in the quaint and cozy Rosemont Cottage, a bed and breakfast in the remaining wing of the



family's original 1830s home (the rest of the house was dismantled in 1914 after a lightning strike).

Old 80 (West Houston Street) exits downtown and passes other historic homes, in varying states of repair, and an abandoned but striking 1925 red-brick icehouse. The street becomes FM 3379, which feeds back into US 80 a few miles west.

A few miles east of **Hallsville**, a vintage iron bridge marks the Old 80 route. I park where CR 3810 once intersected US 80 (the county road's western terminus is now closed to traffic). Then I push through overhanging vines to view the one-lane bridge. It's a great spot to imagine the Model T days of car travel.

I stay on US 80 west to **Longview** and stop for spicy crawfish étouffée at Johnny Cace's Seafood & Steak House. Italian immigrant John Cace Sr. opened the

restaurant in 1949, and it's been a Cajun-food favorite since.

Nearby, I detour south on North Teague Street through the Nugget Hill Historic District, which boasts elegant Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, and Spanish Revival homes and buildings (none open for tours).

On the west side of Longview, a sign at the Greggton Antique Mall catches my eye: "East Texas' Largest Collection of Militaria." Owners Gene and Danny Martin showcase the expected range of antiques, but also an unexpected museum's worth of World War II and other military memorabilia. A large room of the mall once comprised the museum of the local wing of the Commemorative Air Force. The mall now maintains the exhibits, which contain service relics ranging from vintage uniforms and weapons to wartime letters.

At **Gladewater**, I notice a four-story office and apartment building constructed in the early 1950s by wealthy oilman T.W. Lee. The top floor still has the Art Deco studio (no longer used) of the pioneering country-radio station KSIJ, where an unknown Elvis Presley hung out after live radio shows. A more public legacy of Lee and his wife, Helen, beckons just south of town (off US 271) at Mrs. Lee's Daffodil Garden, 35 splendid acres of flowers open for public tours each February and March.

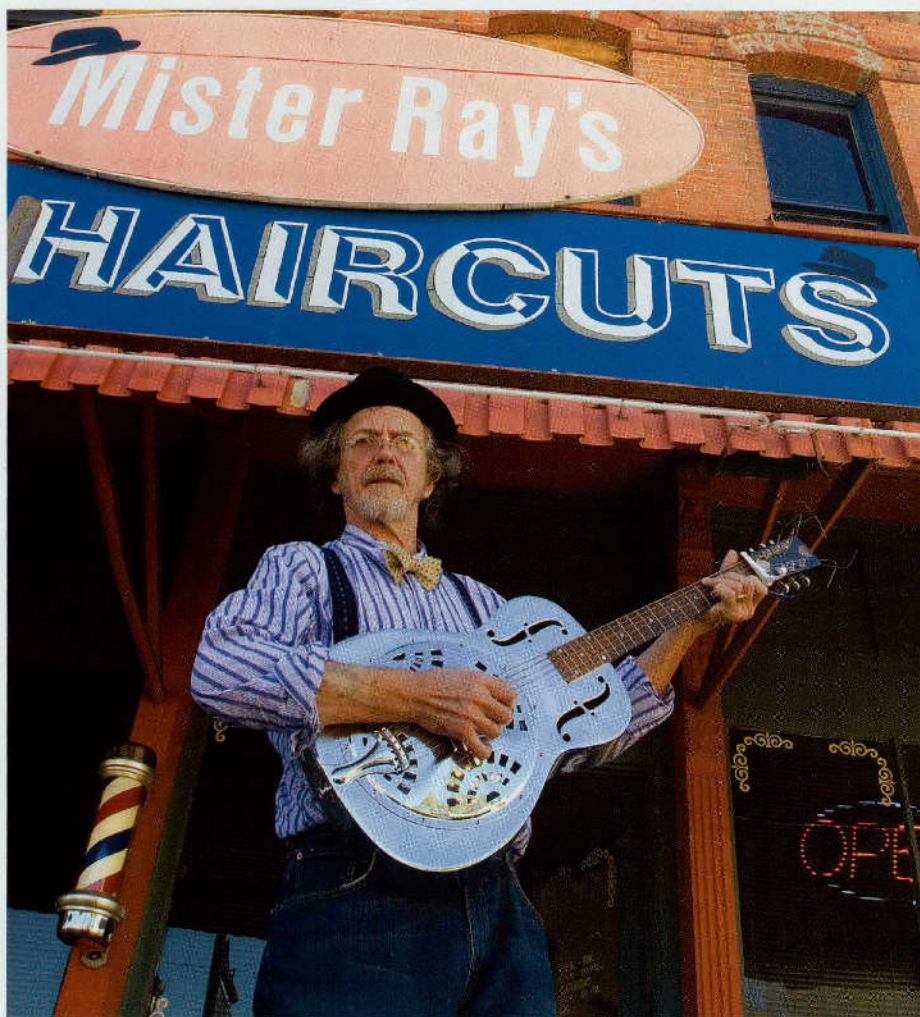
After the 1980s oil bust, Gladewater morphed into the Antique Capital of East Texas. I peruse a couple of downtown's 20 or so antique shops, then grab coffee and a pastry at Glory Bee Baking Co. Upstairs in the former 1930s furniture store, bakery owners Bill and Susan Morgan also operate the Honeycomb Suites bed and breakfast.

What a luxury to wake up with the aroma of fresh-baked "sticky buns," cinnamon rolls, and hot coffee rising from below! The luscious notion lingers as I search for the longest East Texas stretch of Old 80. I take US 271 north to Gay Avenue and head west until it becomes White Oak Road, a narrow country lane that roller-coasters for 15 miles up hills, down bottomlands, and beneath a canopy of trees.

White Oak Road becomes East Grove Street in **Big Sandy** and connects with Texas 155. One block south, I rejoin US 80 heading west and encounter "Family World." This aging recreation center was built in 1929 on a small lake built to supply water to steam trains. Amtrak and other trains still skirt the lake, and the old skating rink now hosts twice-weekly senior citizens' dances.

My Old 80 directions take me on side trips at Big Sandy (Texas 155 north to Quitman Road, west to FM 2659, then south to US 80) and at Hawkins (CR 3419 north to CR 3400, then west to US 80). At the community of Hoard (also known as Democrat), I leave US 80 and take FM 1801 (Old 80) into **Mineola**.

I recall that Mineola was supposedly named for a railroad official's daughter, Ola, and her friend, Minnie. To tout its past, the bustling burg is turning its 1937



Good music and a new do. Barber-musician Ray Moore plays a lick at his shop, Mister Ray's Million Dollar Haircuts, in Grand Saline.

post office into a historical museum, where the reproduction of a Depression-era transportation mural is complete. The town has also given its depot a vintage makeover, restoring it to its 1906 roots. Besides welcoming Amtrak, the station features first-class displays of railroad memorabilia. While waiting for the train, passengers can relax in a quaint gazebo or check out a new rose test garden nearby. Across the tracks, next to the old Beckham Hotel, LouViney's Cellars & Bistro, a winery based in Winnsboro, now serves its own varietals and other Texas wines along with a limited but diverse bistro menu.

After a delightful night's sleep at Mineola's Lott Home Cottages, I awaken to a dazzling sunrise and stand stupefied (but with camera at the ready) in the front yard of the Lott Home, a two-story, Prairie School-style mansion built in 1918. At Kitchens Hardware & Deli downtown, I fill up on a huge country breakfast (sausage and eggs, home-style biscuits and gravy, and steaming grits), then I'm off.

Just east of **Grand Saline** on US 80, I spy cedar furniture and cedar signs at Dove Creek Cedar. Owners James Wigington and his fiancée, Kathy, are wrapping up a project so they can head to the justice of the peace and get married! After glancing at James' finely-crafted dressers, beds, and tables, I wish the couple "a happy life" and head into Grand Saline via Old 80 (Frank Street).

In downtown, I happen upon a dapper fellow in bow tie and bowler hat beside a barber pole outside Mister Ray's Million Dollar Haircuts. Proprietor Ray Moore turns out to be as much musician as hair stylist. Barber chairs in his kitschy shop share space with musical instruments and a vintage jukebox blaring Jimi Hendrix guitar riffs.

Back on US 80, I stop by the Salt Palace Museum. The exterior of the local museum and visitor center is faced with salt blocks that gradually dissolve in the rain, requiring periodic replacement. The blocks come from one of the nation's largest salt domes, mined by the Morton Salt Company just south of town. After a lick of the wall for good

luck, I grab lunch at Don's Dairy Bar, a classic drive-in. Don Latham's Mexican dishes are tempting, but I choose an old-fashioned cheeseburger and a savory apple fried pie.

Whenver I'm in **Edgewood**, 10 miles west of Grand Saline on US 80, I visit the Edgewood Heritage Park Museum. Volunteers lovingly preserve the historical village's dozen-plus historic structures, including the Gilliam gas station and store, which served motorists during the 1920s on Old 80.

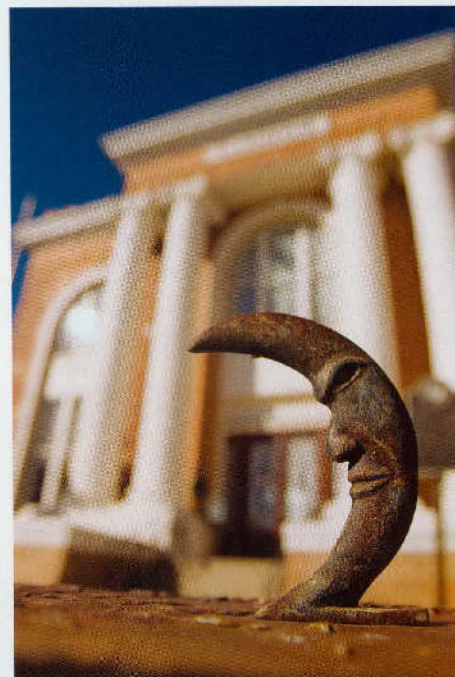
On new 80 in Edgewood, I find produce, plants, and pastries in ample proportions at two family operations.

The Stephen and Susan Pyle family cranks out an array of cheesecakes and muffins, plus gourmet coffee, at Pine St. Bakery & Tea Room. The bakery and the three-room Garden's Edge Bed & Breakfast share a converted 1940s house. The family also sells native Texas plants in a garden, and handcrafted items in a 1920s shack-cum-gift shop.

At Graham's Edgewood Market, the families of Ronnie Graham (Jr. and Sr.) lay out an aromatic spread of seasonal fruits and vegetables. Three years ago, they took over a stand open here since the 1940s and added a few extras, such as home-

made ice cream and home-style canned goods (don't miss fruit cobbler in a jar!).

On my way to **Wills Point**, the Bluebird Capital of Texas, I begin noticing bluebird boxes on fences along US 80. Locals promote the species via thousands of those roadside nesting boxes, and they host the annual Bluebird Festival (set for April 14, 2007). A stroll beside downtown's red-brick street leads



A sundial (top) sits in front of the Terrell Heritage Museum, housed in the town's historic Carnegie Library (at 207 N. Frances St.; 972/524-6082). Above, a former cotton gin on Old 80 (now FM 688, or Broad Street) in Forney today features a gift shop and women's apparel boutique.

essentials HIT THE ROAD ON US 80



past the 1848 Wills Cabin (the wooden cabin of town namesake William Wills), the Rose Monument (an impressive structure in the middle of the street), the Bluebird Cafe (known for burgers and Mexican food), and the 1926 Majestic Theatre (one of the state's oldest cinemas). A bright red caboose on US 80 stands near the 1934 Texas & Pacific depot, which now houses a local-history museum.

By the time US 80 reaches Terrell, I've left the Piney Woods behind. An aging neon sign saying "Iris" grabs my attention in this blackland-prairie town, so I step into what's now Books and Crannies. Proprietress Gayle Harris tells me that the former Iris Theater, which dates to 1925, showed films for 75 years before she renovated it into a used-book store. To honor its cinematic past, Gayle added a 34-seat theater where she shows free classic films twice monthly.

A few blocks west, I rub elbows with locals at the Yellow Rose Cafe. When it opened in 1936, the hangout boasted a drive-up awning and waitresses on roller skates. Owner Beth White now dishes up as much Mexican food as she does country standards like chicken-fried steak. "We still get old-timers in their eighties coming in and reminiscing about coming here when they were young," she says.

At Forney, I peel off US 80 onto Old 80 (FM 688, or Broad Street). Just before I reach FM 548, I spot a new state historical marker by a row of crape myrtle trees. The marker chronicles the Dixie Overland Highway, including Colonel Ed Fletcher's 1926 adventure.

Near downtown, I pass the old Co-Op Cotton Gin. It's the last of a half-dozen gins on the highway that Fletcher surely passed on his cross-country race. The old gin now houses a gift shop and women's apparel boutique called Groovy's.

I return to modern US 80, its traffic flowing like a river, and remember something else I read on the historical marker. In the old days, the pavement west of Forney played out, and the Dixie Overland Highway became a dirt road sloping steeply into the flood plain of the East Fork of the Trinity River. That stretch was

called the Forney Gap because wet weather made it all but impassable.

Before I know it, US 80 merges into Interstate 30, and Old 80's western reaches vanish into the mists of memory. But I'm still thinking about Colonel Fletcher roaring out of Dallas headed east, hell-bent for the history books. I guess conditions were dry when Fletcher got to the Forney Gap, because he did, after all, complete his coast-to-coast gambit in record time.

I end my search for Old 80 grateful

845-2448; www.honeycombsuites.com); Family World (601 W. Broadway St., 636-5557).

MINEOLA Historic Depot Plaza & Railroad Museum (115 W. Front St., 569-6944); Transportation & History Museum (114 N. Pacific St., 569-6944); LouViney's Cellars & Bistro (121 E. Commerce St., 569-1493; www.louviney.com); The Lott Home Cottages (311 E. Kilpatrick St., 569-0341; www.lotthomecottages.com); Kitchens Hardware & Deli (119 E. Broad St., 569-2664).

GRAND SALINE Dove Creek Cedar (2802 US 80, 962-4345); Mister Ray's Million Dollar Haircuts (118 E. Frank St., 962-6525); Salt Palace Museum (100 W. Garland St., 962-5631); Don's Dairy Bar (914 W. Garland St., 962-4239).

EDGEWOOD Pine St. Bakery & Tea Room and Garden's Edge Bed & Breakfast (708 E. Pine St., 896-2535); Graham's Edgewood Market (203 S. Main St., 896-1900); Edgewood Heritage Park Museum (N. Houston at Elm St., 896-1940).

WILLS POINT Wills Cabin (2nd at Commerce St.); Rose Monument (Commerce at N. 4th St.); Bluebird Cafe (124 W. North Commerce St., 873-4342); Majestic Theatre (136 W. North Commerce St., 873-8140); Wills Point Depot Museum (210 W. South Commerce St., 873-8626); Bluebird Festival, Apr. 14, 2007; www.willspointbluebird.com.

TERRELL Books and Crannies (209 W. Moore Ave., 972/563-5481); Yellow Rose Cafe (807 W. Moore Ave., 972/524-6204).

FORNEY Groovy's, in the old Co-Op Cotton Gin (201 E. Broad St., 972/552-1565).

that road trips these days aren't as daring as Colonel Fletcher's. But I'm also glad that Highway 80 (old and new) still recalls a time when traffic flowed less like a river and more like an intermittent stream, full of stops and starts...and plenty of unexpected (and sometimes wonderful) surprises. ★

Longtime contributor RANDY MALLORY wrote and provided photographs for our January story on the Blanton Museum of Art.



SXSW XXI

TWENTY YEARS AND COUNTING



© JOHN CARICO

BY MICHAEL CORCORAN



© AMBER NOVAK

SOUTH BY

TWENTY YEARS IS A LONG TIME, but I remember just about everything about the first day of South by Southwest, Austin's now-legendary music, film, and media conference. March 12, 1987, was one of the worst days of my life even though no one died. My girlfriend

of about two years and I were having a rough go, so when she overshot the hotel by a few blocks and made me get out there, I knew we were done. When the love was young, she would've circled back—a thousand times. Later that day, writer Joe Nick

Reckless Kelly performs at La Zona Rosa during SXSW, Austin's popular international music, film, and interactive conference and festival. Insets, left to right, Lyle Lovett, Joss Stone, and Meters guitarist Leo Nocentelli with Cyril Neville of the Neville Brothers have all shared their artistry at SXSW.

Patoski, a good friend who managed the True Believers at the time, jumped in my face because I had printed that the band was looking for a new drummer before they had a chance to tell the old drummer. This was before “my bad” was coined, so I didn't know what to say. At the conference itself, I was on a panel called “Whither Rock?” with too many critics and half as many mics, and every time I thought I had something to say, someone beat me to it, so I just sat there like a big dolt. Then, musician Daniel Johnston's manager stood up and asked me to defend the journalistic eth-



Free outdoor shows are a SXSW tradition. Here, a huge throng on Brazos Street and the historic Driskill Hotel's balconies enjoys a festive evening of live music.

nonchalance can become magnified at the festival. During these four days every year, Austin becomes the center of the music universe, and with that comes a heightened sense of expectation.

SXSW was once a giddy secret, like a favorite fishing hole or the knowledge that a certain vending machine treats pennies like dimes. Folks would come here from the northern metropoli and feel like they'd just stepped into heaven. The weather's usually sunny and in the seventies, plus we've got Mexican breakfasts that can cure hangovers. The word spread, slowly at first, but then like a chant: "Let's go down to Austin and use that friendly little town for all it's worth!"

There was even a time when it wasn't a cliché to call SXSW "Spring Break for the music industry." I came up with that one around year eight, and now whenever I refer to it like that, folks look at me like I'm the laziest observer on the planet. OK, how 'bout "Mardi Gras where you keep your receipts"?

Roland Swenson, who has been helming this movable beast since late 1986, when he convinced his bosses at *The Austin Chronicle* that Austin would be the per-

fect place for a regional version of NYC's New Music Seminar, realized that his baby was getting huge during its 10th anniversary. Swenson was standing at the corner of 7th and Brazos streets, watching a crowd of more than 8,000 disperse following a free outdoor concert by Iggy Pop.

The horde splintered wildly in all directions, and in the midst of all that, a guy in a white car pulled up and asked him, "Could you tell me how to get to South by Southwest?" That was a dumb question 10 years ago, but it would be ridiculous today, when simply being in Austin in mid-March is being at SXSW.

Daytime parties were once exotic little gatherings to be sought out and cherished. Last year, I received more than 100

SOUTHWEST



© JOHN CARRICO

ics of reporting on his client's mental condition—Daniel had checked into the State Hospital for a short stay—and I just mumbled something about not wanting to talk about it, and I could feel my cheeks burning.

This was not my gentle, laid-back hometown. SXSW, which could be called AXTF because it's Austin times 25 (with bands; celebs; music, media, and film professionals; and fans from all over the world), brings out the best in people, but it can also bring disappointment. Things that folks might normally treat with a *laissez-faire*



© MARY SLEED

Andrew Stockdale of the Australian band Wolfmother rocks the house during a SXSW appearance, helping to catapult the trio to worldwide acclaim.



[CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT] Above, the band Zola Turn performs a SXSW set at the Hotel San José on South Congress Avenue. Director Quentin Tarantino greets fans at a SXSW film event. New York hip-hop stars the Beastie Boys promote their film, *Awesome; I [expletive deleted] Shot That!* The Hot 8 Brass Band brings their New Orleans jazz and funk to Austin's 6th Street.

invitations to parties happening everywhere, from the French Legation (see *Speaking of Texas*, February 2007) and a boat on Lake Austin to downtown punk clubs and friends' backyards. International registrations have soared, and the music industry has embraced SXSW as a relatively affordable, grassroots way of promoting artists. There's just so much going on that you'll miss more cool events than you'll attend. And now there are hundreds of bloggers to describe what you weren't hip enough to know about.

the pivotal years were 2001 and 2002. At the almost exact midpoint was that horrific event that happened in New York and Pennsylvania, and at the Pentagon. The year 2001 found SXSW getting its hip card punched for real, with such bands as the Strokes, White Stripes, Coldplay, Death Cab For Cutie, My Morning Jacket, Mogwai, and New Pornographers playing the various downtown shot bars and discos that are converted into live-music venues every mid-March. It's not like SXSW had suddenly gotten cool, but

SXSW IS STILL A REGIONAL FESTIVAL, BUT NOW THE REGION IS PLANET EARTH.

Going in, you know that you simply cannot see or hear everything you'd like to. That takes a lot of pressure off. In the early years of SXSW, we all ran around like crazy people, knocking on hotel doors at three in the morning because we heard there was a party going on. "Oops, sorry, didn't mean to wake you."

These days, you just get on an elevator and follow the crowd. Where's South By Southwest? You're soaking in it.

Looking back on the past 20 festivals,

2001 was the year that garage bands from the United Kingdom finally outnumbered Nashville singer-songwriters.

Then 9/11 happened. The industry fell into a funk. SXSW registrations dropped in 2002, though not as badly as expected. That year, I kept running into folks from New York whom I hadn't expected would be here, and they all said basically the same thing: "We need this." And not just New Yorkers; everyone did. SXSW became a place for recharging, where you could fall



© AMBER NOVAK



© AMBER NOVAK



in love with live music all over again. In 2003, the festival was stronger than ever, and it's been rolling on ever since.

The fest is unchanged at its core, though. It's still bands playing in front of people who love music—or, yes, who could help their careers. It's still Austin playing host, only now the bands are coming from farther away than Louisiana, Oklahoma, and wherever the Chickasaw Mudd Puppies were from. SXSW is still a regional festival, but now the region is planet Earth. The first festival directory was photocopied pages stapled in the corner. Wristbands were \$10. There were 700 registrants, 172 acts. The biggest bands were Austin bands. But you could see the potential. (By comparison, the 2006 conference witnessed 10,800 registrants and 1,493 acts.) With dozens of



[CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT] Singer/pianist Norah Jones makes a huge impression at SXSW. Big Chief Monk Boudreaux and The Meters' George Porter Jr. present The Wild Tchoupitoulas/Mardi Gras Indian tradition of New Orleans. Amanda Palmer of Boston's Dresden Dolls connects during a set at Stubb's Bar-B-Que. The Flaming Lips, Oklahoma's pride and joy, create quite a buzz with their avant-garde music and theatrical show.

nightclubs in walking distance from each other and a reputation as a listeners' town, Austin seemed built for a major conference based on live music. Someone just had to flip the switch. Even in its earliest configuration, you knew this thing could really grow. But nobody could've

predicted that the entire music industry would descend upon us, dark and thirsty, like grackles with credit cards. Early on, the Irish kid from MTV's second season of *The Real World* was considered a VIP, while 2005 found Jessica Simpson hanging out virtually unnoticed.

In 1987, the thought that a band like last year's Arctic Monkeys would play SXSW the week after appearing on *Saturday Night Live* was as unlikely as produce warehouses on Austin's East Side hosting red-carpet parties.

Even as the festival has gone from a quaint, roots-rock shindig to a youth cultural explosion, the truth remains that SXSW harbors an incredible buzz.

Bands obsess over their

showcase slots like neurotic children. Publicists work around the clock, seizing every opportunity to promote their artists. Shy people become invisible. You don't schmooze, you lose.

AFTER 20 straight years of going to SXSW—the past 14 covering the fest daily—I'm going to take it easier this year. C'mon, I'm 51 years old. Just as club owners will say they do two months of business in four days, I swear I age two months every mid-March. But I also cram in two months of life every time SXSW comes to town. For four days, the music industry comes down here to play and work. This is when our minor league team gets called up to the big leagues. This is Austin's time to shine. Flip the switch. ★

MICHAEL CORCORAN is a staff writer for the *Austin American-Statesman*, where a slightly different version of this piece first appeared.

SXSWXXI: WHO'S NEXT



MARCH 9-18, 2007, marks SXSW's 21st season. Featured speakers this year will include rock legend Pete Townshend of The Who (above), former Talking Head David Byrne, noted record producer Joe Boyd, and distinguished singer/songwriter Rickie Lee Jones. Well over 1,000 acts will perform at more than 60 venues citywide. The interactive portion of the conference takes place March 9-13. Film activities take place March 9-17. The music (the event's original genesis) happens March 14-18. Several free shows—often among the very best—don't require a badge, cover charge, or admission fee. Contact SXSW, Box 4999, Austin 78765; e-mail: sxsw@sxsw.com; <http://2007.sxsw.com>.



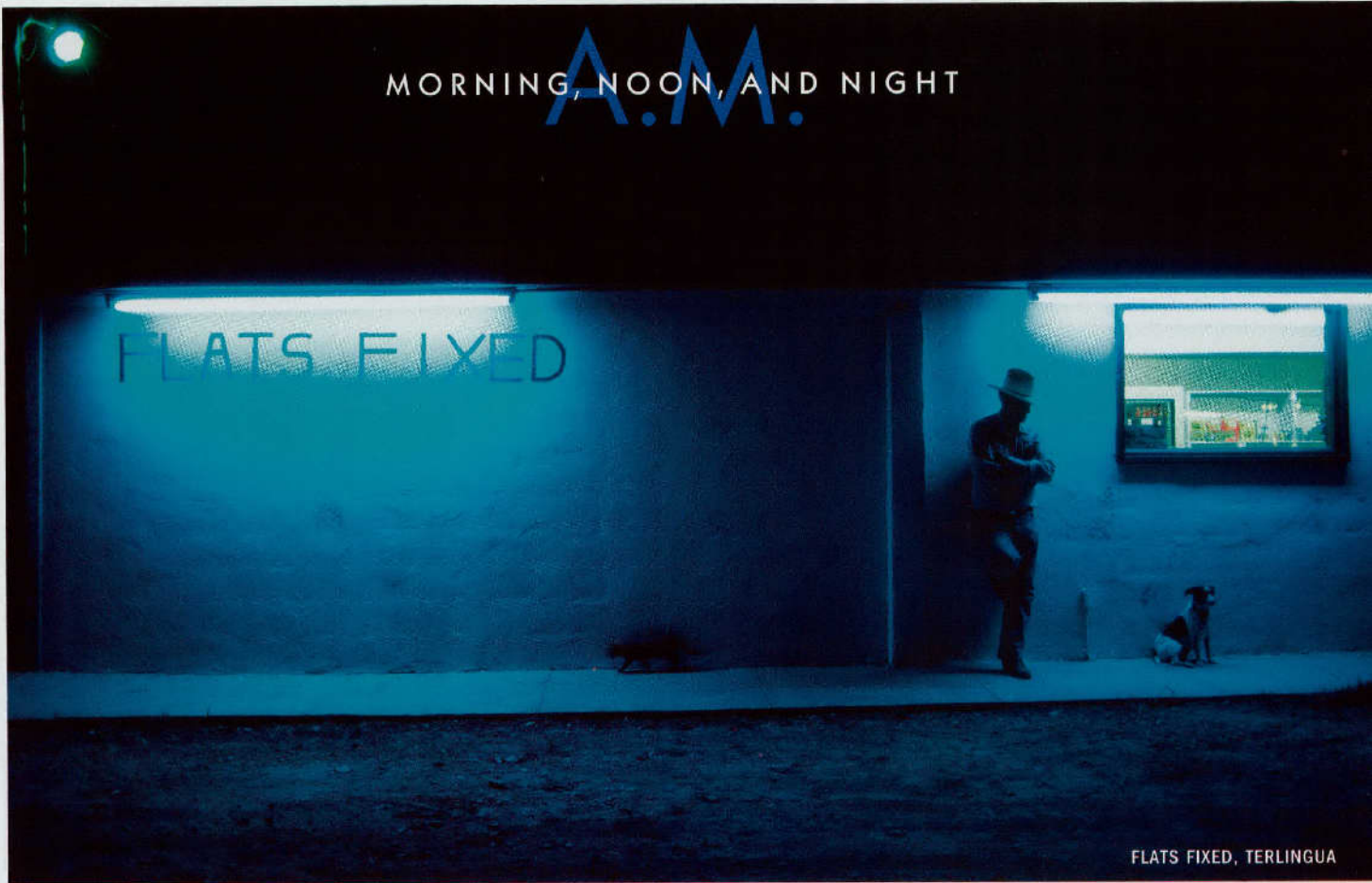
Lines can be long, and club capacity small, especially for big-name acts. Here, fans queue up at The Parish during SXSW.



ARTHUR MEYERSON

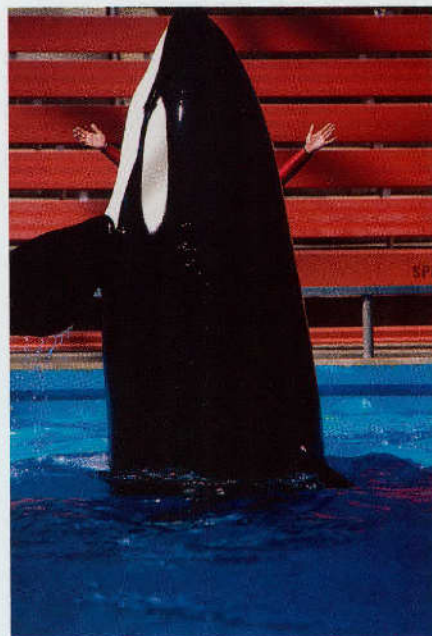
MORNING, NOON, AND NIGHT
A.M.



MORNING, NOON, AND NIGHT
A.M.

FLATS FIXED, TERLINGUA

FIRST BECAME AWARE of the photographic artistry of Arthur Meyerson in the 1980s, when I began seeing his photographs—some of them award winners—in numerous publications. His images stood in a league of their own, sometimes colorful and bold, sometimes soft and compelling, yet always captivating. The subject matter varied, ranging from urban, nature, and oil-field landscapes to candid portraits of people, and more. ■ Arthur's knack for finding, seeing, and capturing on film seemingly exotic and exciting images has led him on a lifelong journey taking photographs all over the world for a multitude of clients. But even with a growing number of out-of-state assignments, Arthur has always made time to turn his camera on his native state. ■ Born and raised in Houston, Arthur headed north to the University of Oklahoma to study journalism, graduating in 1971. "I only took one photo class, Photojournalism 101, but that's where the magic began," he says. ■ He returned to Houston to pursue work in the advertising field, and after meeting some photographers doing commercial jobs, decided that that was the field for him. "I was in the right place at the right time," Arthur says. "The oil industry was booming, and there were a lot of art directors and advertising agencies looking for commercial photography." ■ He says he is largely self-taught. "I found people whose work I admired, and moved my work in that direction." He cites photographers who inspired him, like Edward Weston, "for helping photography become recognized as art"; Henri Cartier-Bresson, "for his geometric moments"; Irving Penn, "for his stylish and elegant images"; Jay Maisel, "for his vivid use of color"; and Ernst Haas, whom Arthur considers his mentor. "I always set benchmarks

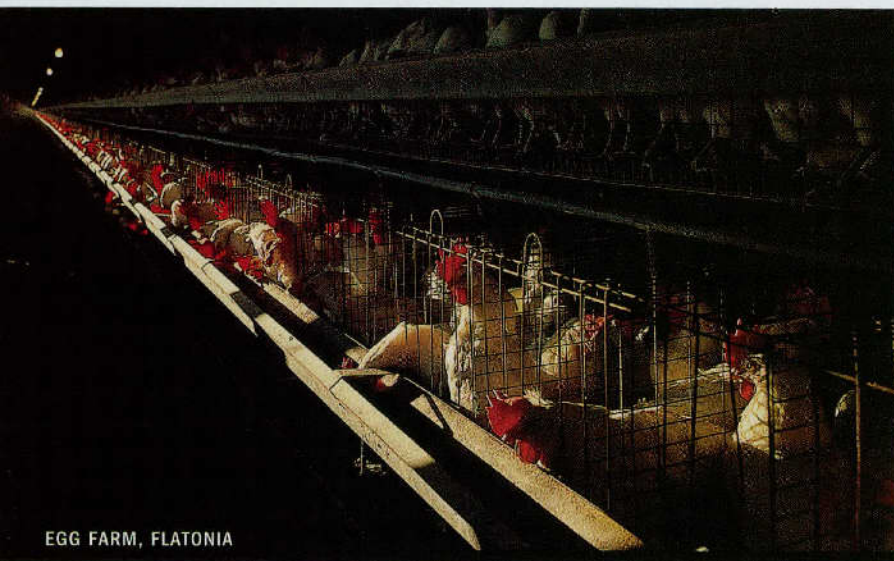
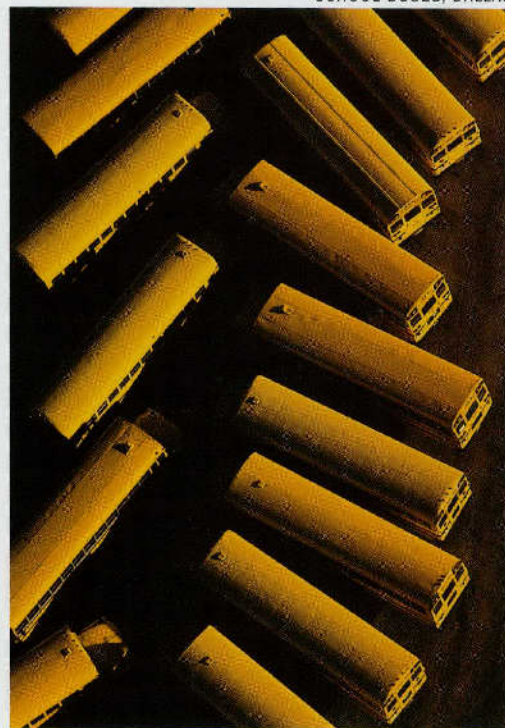


SEAWORLD SAN ANTONIO

I wanted to reach, and when I reached them, I found I'd already set new ones," he says. "It's all about making images, of course, but more importantly, you have to have a vision. That's the important thing." ■ *Texas Highways* art director Jane Wu and I have been talking about running a portfolio of Arthur's Texas work for almost a decade now. We managed to convince him to shoot Texas beaches for our June 2002 issue, and the town of Refugio for our July 2003 issue. And now, we're very proud, and pleased, to present a small sampling of his huge collection of delightful Texas imagery. We believe you, too, will think the wait has been worthwhile.

—MICHAEL A. MURPHY

SCHOOL BUSES, DALLAS



EGG FARM, FLATONIA



FOGGY LANDSCAPE, BRENHAM



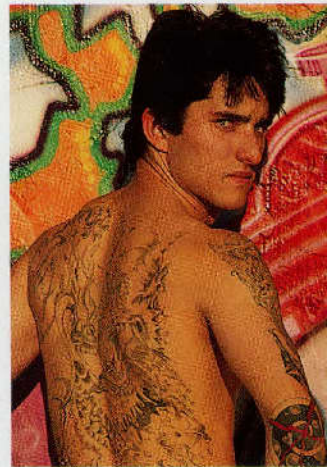
MORNING, NOON, AND NIGHT

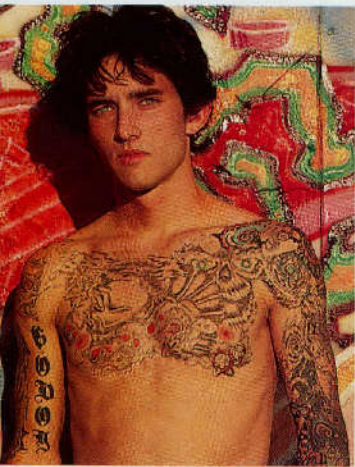
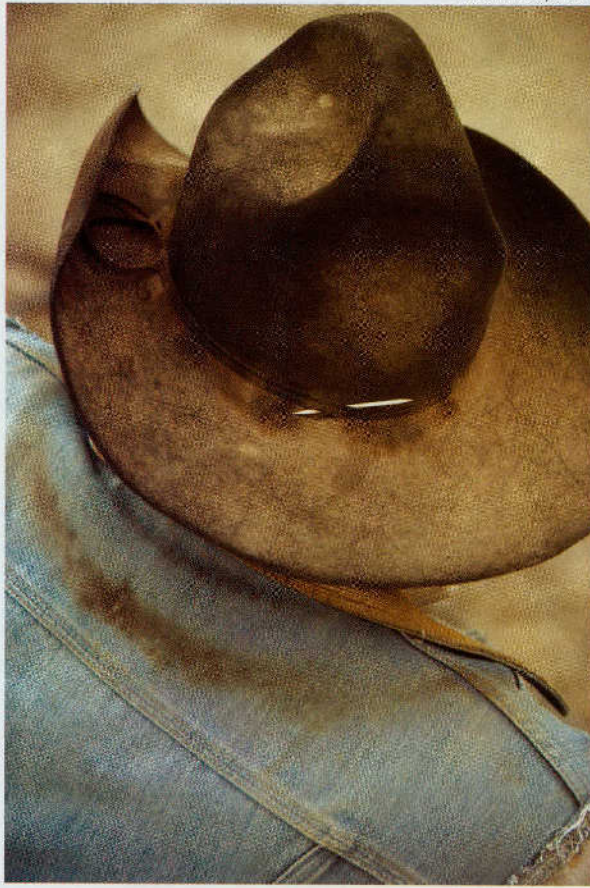


FROZEN COTTON, BROWNFIELD



RAINDROPS AND PINE NEEDLES, HOUSTON





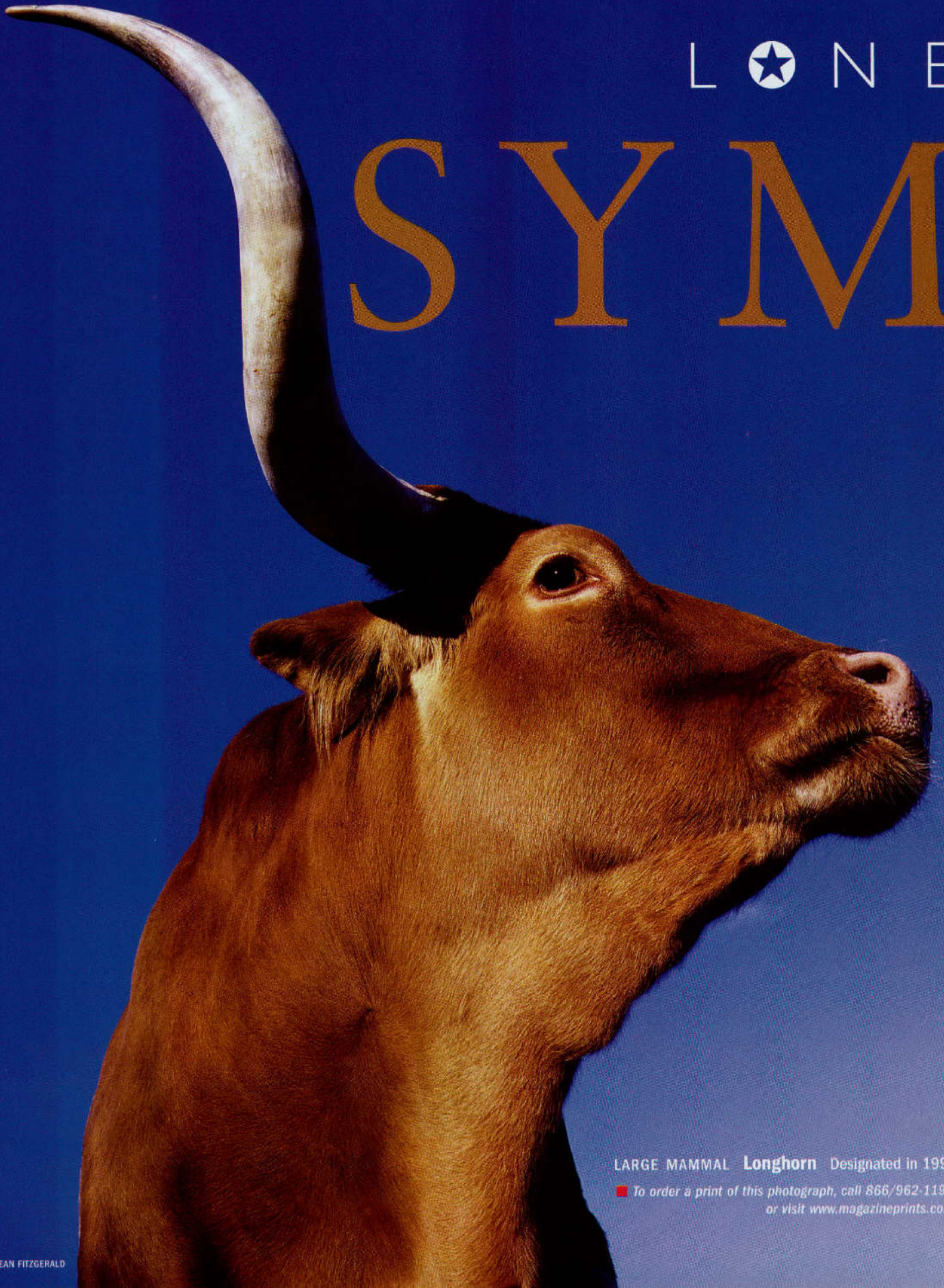
TATTOOED TWINS, DALLAS



STATE FAIR, DALLAS

L ★ N E

SYM



LARGE MAMMAL **Longhorn** Designated in 1995

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

S T A R

B O I L S



RODEO © FRED LABOUNTY; COTTON © SHARRA LOVELADY



© ROLF NUSSBAUMER

- FIBER AND FABRIC **Cotton** 1997
- SPORT **Rodeo** 1997
- FLOWER **Bluebonnet** 1901 AND 1971
- SMALL MAMMAL **Armadillo** 1995

uick, what do *pan de campo*, Texas purple sage, and the celebrated vessel *Elissa* have in common? If you don't know, you obviously weren't paying attention during the last legislative session. All three were designated official state symbols in 2005 by the 79th Texas Legislature (state bread, native shrub, and tall ship, respectively).

For the record, when these newly minted icons, along with four others, joined the familiar ranks of bluebonnet, pecan, and mockingbird, they brought the total number of symbols to 53 and the number of categories to 50. (Two of the categories address the state flower, and some of them have multiple symbols.) No wonder the list gets a little fuzzy.

Nonetheless, it's an important list, for the items on it become part of Texas lore and legend forevermore, and therefore subject to much spirited debate and dispute. Diana Houston, assistant director of information services at the Texas State Library, whose job it is to track state-symbol designations, says it's common for people to call her office and ask the staff to resolve arguments.

"Sometimes, you can hear the ice tinkling in their glasses in the background," she says, "and you know they've been discussing this topic for a long time."

How does Texas stack up against other states when it comes to state symbols? Diana says it's difficult to come up with a comprehensive list of symbols for each state, but Texas has "an amazing variety." Indeed, the list of Lone Star symbols ranges from Blue Lacy (state dog breed) to Texas blue topaz (state gem), and from Longhorn (state large mammal) to lightning whelk (state shell).

For all the Texas-trivia lovers out there, here's a photo-driven refresher course in Texas symbols that includes the years they were designated. For a complete list, go to www.tsl.state.tx.us/ref/abouttx/symbols.html. —NOLA McKEY

LONE STAR
SYMBOLS

PEPPER **Jalapeño** 1995



ELISSA © KATHY ADAMS CLARK; JALAPEÑOS © ROBERT MIHOVIL



TALL SHIP **Elissa** 2005

FISH **Guadalupe Bass** 1989



© LEFTY RAY CHAPA



© FRED HIRSCHMANN





© LAURENCE PARENT



© ROBERT MIHOVIL



MICHAEL A. MURPHY

SHELL **Lightning Whelk** 1987

GRASS **Sideoats Grama** 1971



FRUIT **Texas Red Grapefruit** 1993



© SHARRA LOVELADY

GRAPEFRUIT © ROBERT MIHOVIL



PASTRIES **Sopapilla** (above)
and **Strudel** (not shown) 2003

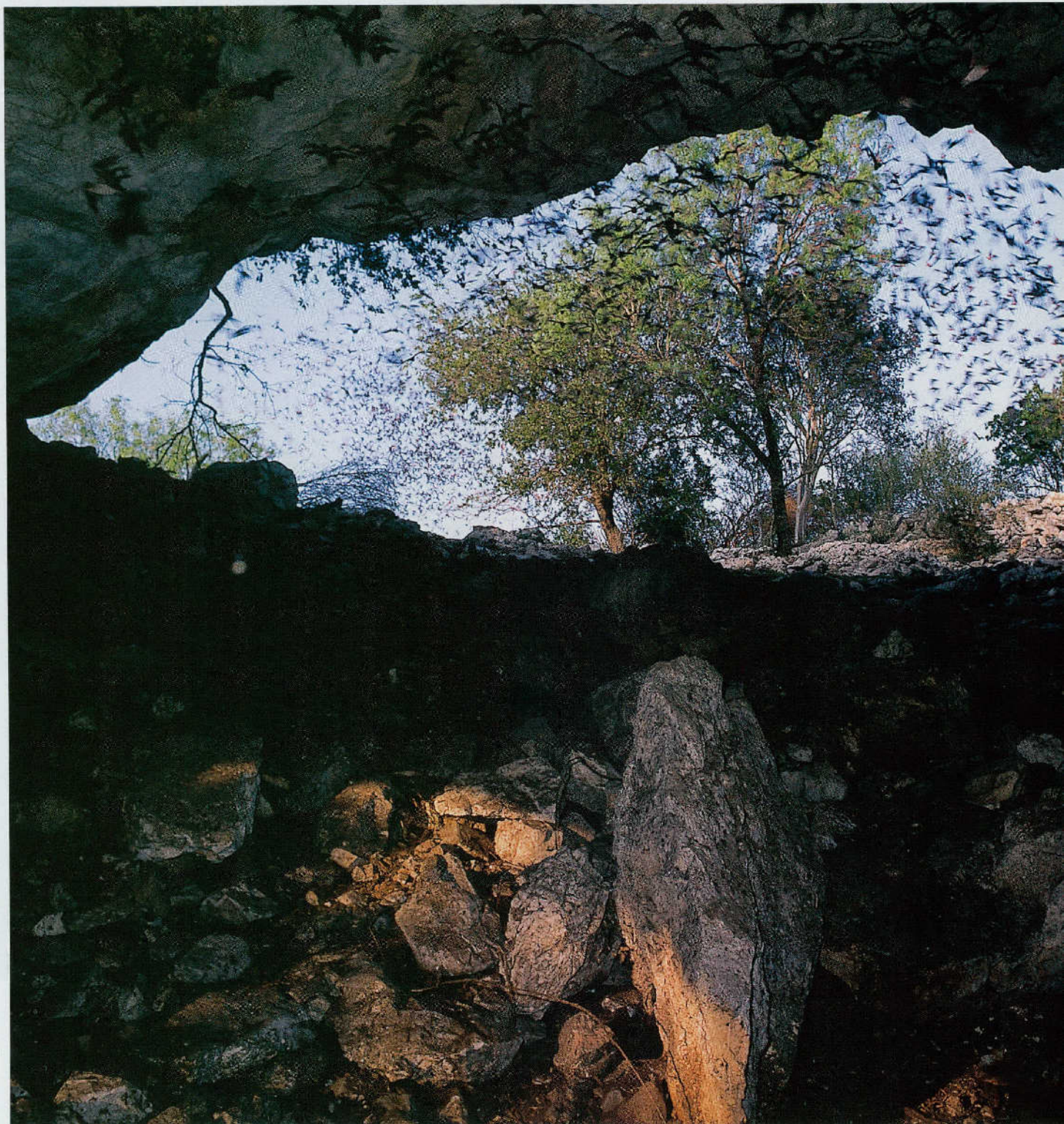


BIRD **Mockingbird** 1927

NATIVE SHRUB **Texas Purple Sage** 2005

LONE STAR
SYMBOLS

FLYING MAMMAL **Mexican Free-tailed Bat** 1995





REPTILE **Texas Horned Lizard** 1993



DOG BREED **Blue Lacy** 2005



INSECT **Monarch Butterfly** 1995



SHIP **U.S.S. Texas** 1995



FOSSIL RIM

Wildlife Center

A watering hole glows in the early-morning sunlight, which renders the grassy slopes and scattered trees a particularly vibrant green. A long-legged sandhill crane stands motionless on the opposite shore, then a sturdy, spiral-horned addax emerges from the trees, followed by another, and another. The only sounds are trees rustling in the breeze and the distant call of birds.

This could be the wild African savannah, but I'm actually about 50 miles southwest of Fort Worth, near Glen Rose, at Fossil Rim Wildlife Center. This sprawling facility participates in worldwide efforts to preserve species at risk. People help fund that work by visiting for tours, bedding down at Fossil Rim's Lodge, or spending a couple

Do you know where the wild things are? At Fossil Rim, of course, where more than 50 species roam 1,500 acres west of Fort Worth. Clockwise from above left, a male red deer bellows for a mate, a gregarious sable antelope requests a car-side snack, and a pair of cheetahs show their sweet and snarly personalities. Facing page: No two zebras are identical. Because lions (the zebra's main predators in Africa) are color blind, the stripes serve as camouflage in tall grasses.

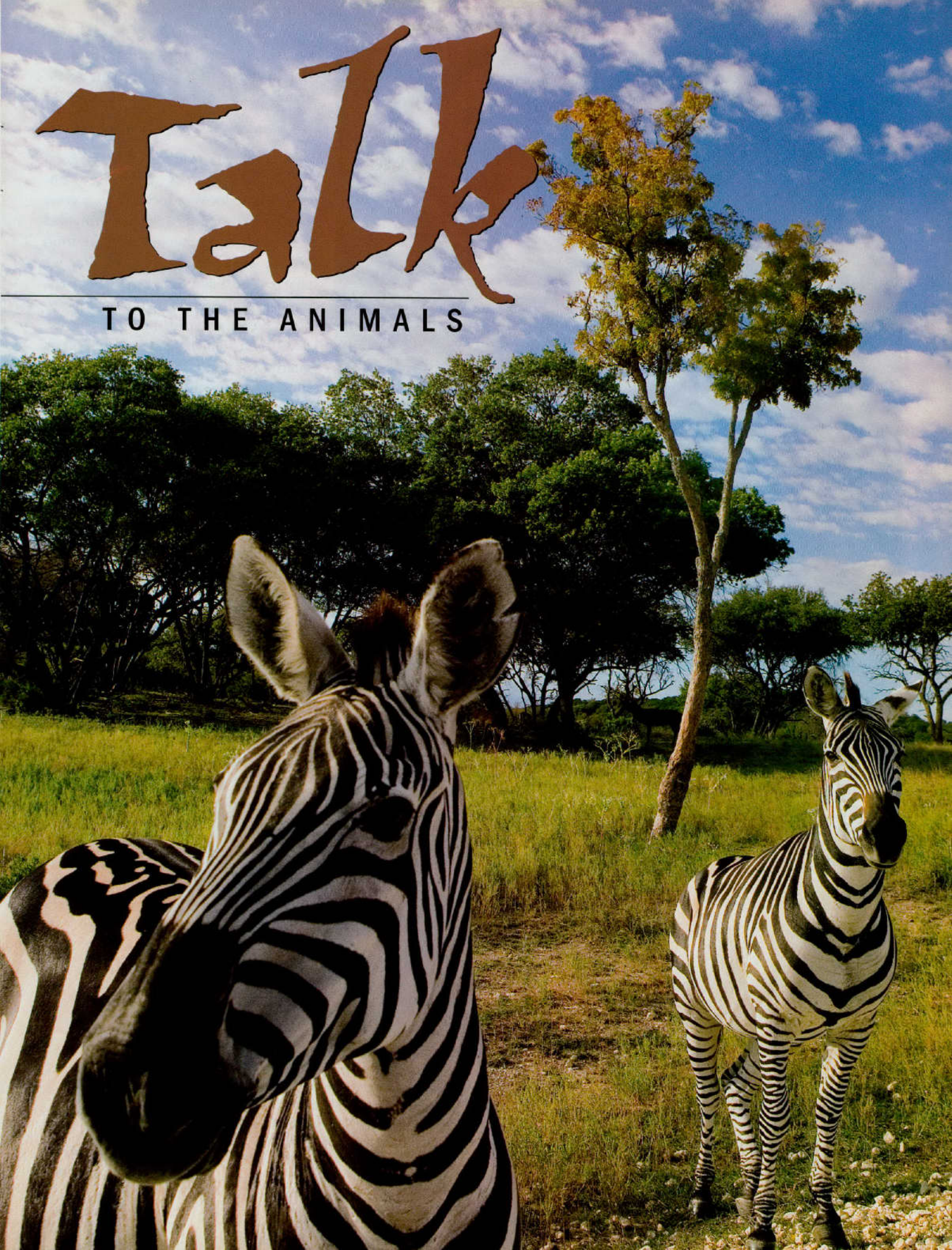
BY MELISSA GASKILL



PHOTOGRAPHS BY
COURTNEY PERRY

Talk

TO THE ANIMALS





of nights in faux tents—actually canvas-covered cabins with twin beds, air conditioning and heat, and a private bath—as I recently did with two of my children.

We weren't considering good works when we unpacked, just looking forward to a good time. We accomplished both. Surrounded by fields of exotic animals and far from obvious signs of modern-day life, we spent a quiet night in our cozy quarters, roused at sunrise by a cacophony of bird calls. Over a generous breakfast buffet, we watched animals such as wild turkeys, waterbucks, and axis and native white-tailed deer through the glass walls of the dining room. Properly sated, we climbed into the back of an open, safari-style vehicle for a behind-the-scenes tour. The thoroughly knowledgeable guide regaled us with facts about the animals, like which ones were born at Fossil Rim and how those who weren't got here, how cheetahs like the high ground, and the way a prominent white ring around each waterbuck's rump helps the young ones keep up in thick brush. The tour swung through the Intensive Management Area, 400 acres closed to the public for the more-reclusive animals, where we glimpsed lean wolves and gazed upon lounging cheetahs. Then our driver made a lively dash around the rest of the property, partly following the self-guided-tour route but often veering into

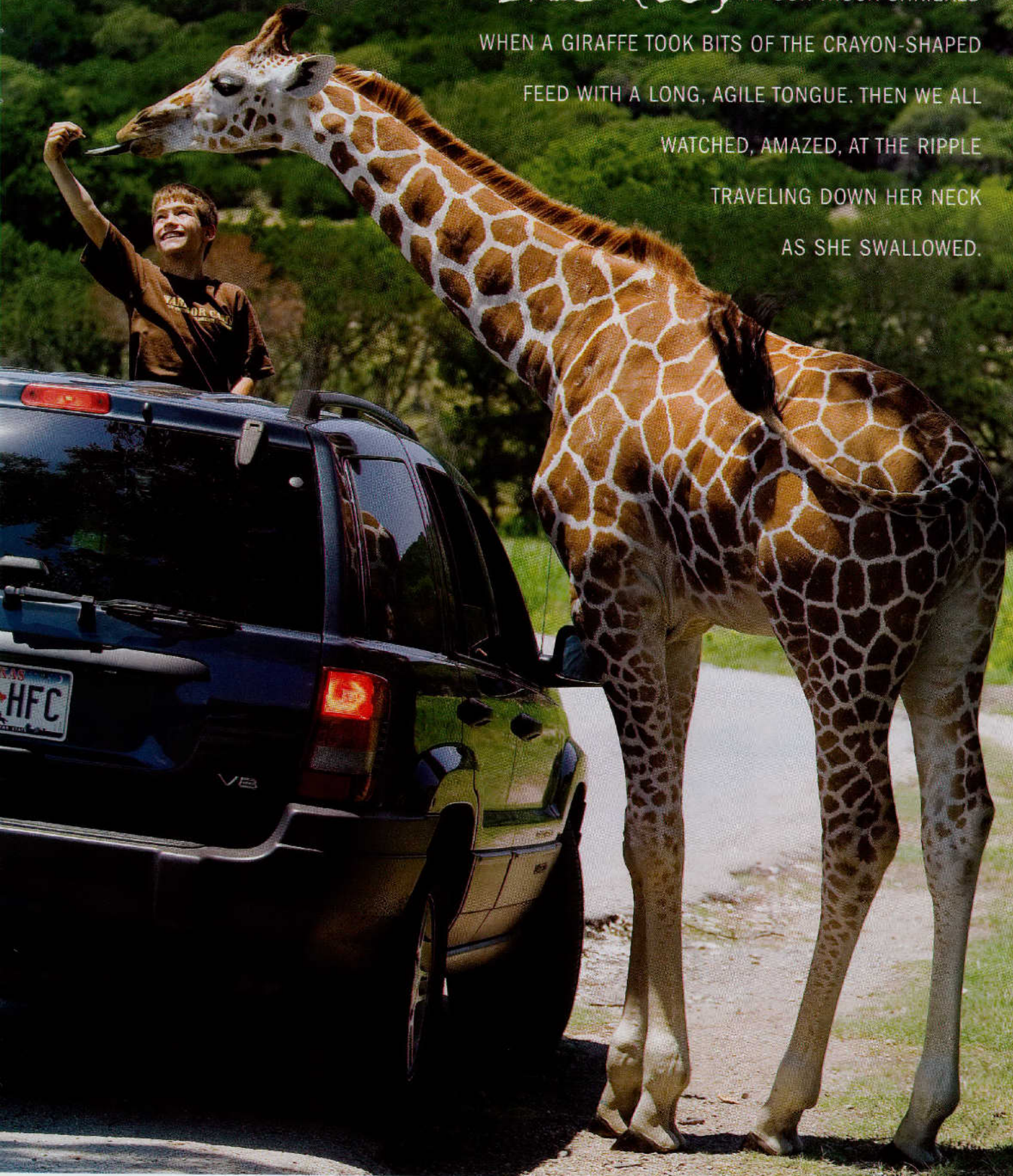
uncharted territory, always armed with generous helpings of feed—a healthy alfalfa mix. The kids in our truck shrieked when a giraffe took bits of the crayon-shaped feed with a long, agile tongue. Then we all watched, amazed, at the ripple traveling down her neck as she swallowed. The slimy lips of a European red deer elicited disgusted faces even as every-



Aoudad sheep, also known as Barbary sheep, are found wild in the arid mountains of northern Africa. They're so acclimated to desert life that they can get all the moisture they need from their food. A crashing success: The rhino-breeding program at Fossil Rim has produced 11 babies. Virtually extinct in the wild, the scimitar-horned oryx can conserve water by modifying its body temperature to avoid sweating.

The kids

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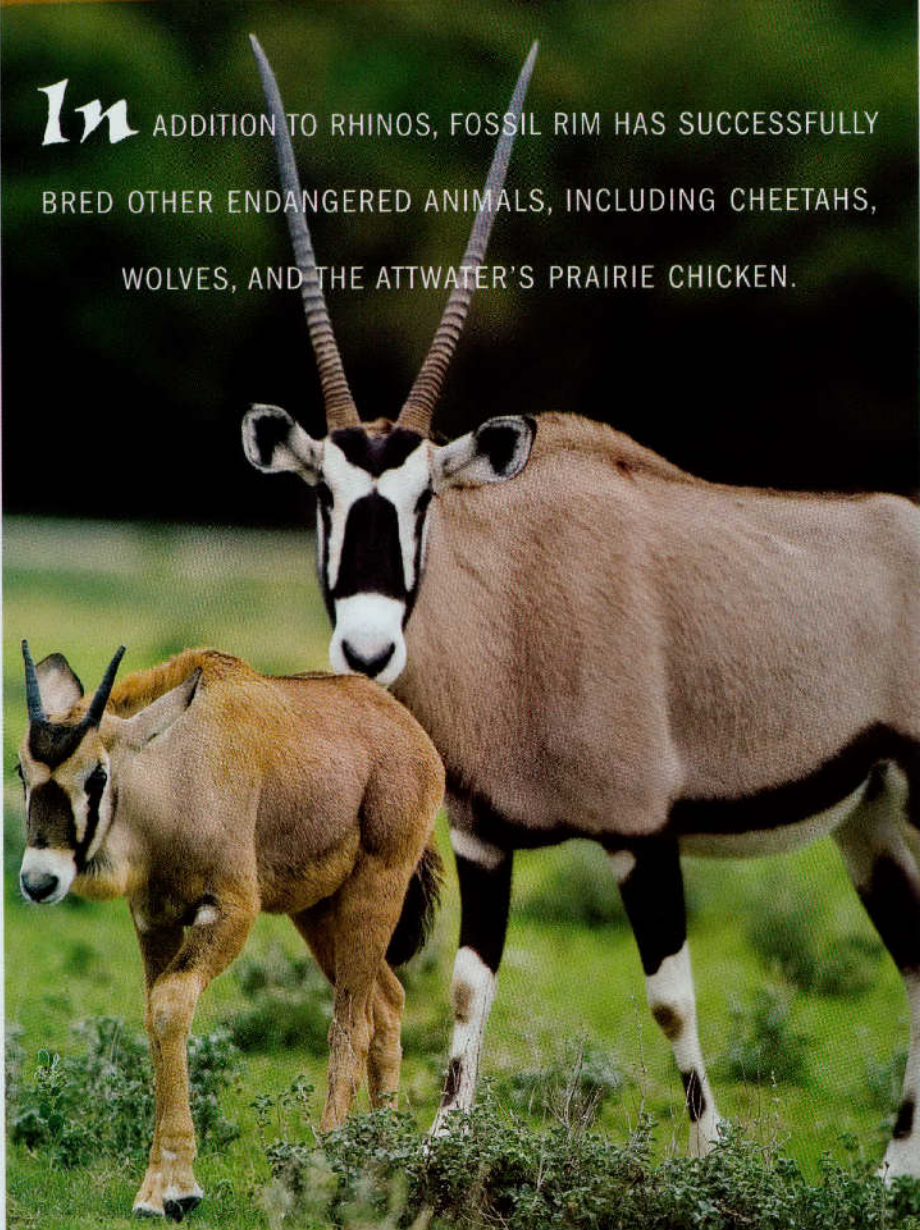
one kept clamoring for more. We marveled at the gorgeous markings (and pushy demeanor!) of the zebras. We fed axis deer, waterbucks, aoudad sheep, and an ostrich, whose manners rivaled those of the zebras (she's been known to steal entire feed cups and even jewelry). We also got a good look at many other creatures, including stately Arabian and scimitar-horned oryx, addax, and massive gemsbok. We felt as though we had taken a tour of Africa in a matter of hours.

Then our driver wheeled behind some nondescript buildings and stopped near a heavy steel fence fortified with pipes too big for my hand to fit around. Behind them, we saw an old rhinoceros parked like a dusty gray pickup. This, we learned, was Marvin, a white rhino with an impressive history. Rhinos, it turns out, were integral to the beginnings of Fossil Rim more than three decades ago.

Fossil Rim began in the 1970s as Waterfall Ranch, a private wild-game spread owned by businessman Tom Mantzel. Tom began raising endangered Grevy's zebras, black rhinos, and other species as his interest in conservation grew. In 1986, two years after the ranch changed its name and opened to the public for tours, Fossil Rim was approved to participate in the American Zoo and Aquarium Association's Species Survival Plans, which coordinate the management of breeding of animals at accredited zoos and wildlife centers in the United States. In all, 11 black and white rhinos have been born at Fossil Rim—quite a feat.

Duly impressed, we heeded warnings not to get our hands between Marvin and his fence, and we reached in to touch his hide—thick and hard as dried mud. He seemed to like this, leaning into the pipes and closing his tiny eyes. Back on the drive, we stopped to admire seven additional rhinos resting in their large corral—collectively called a “crash,” an

In ADDITION TO RHINOS, FOSSIL RIM HAS SUCCESSFULLY BRED OTHER ENDANGERED ANIMALS, INCLUDING CHEETAHS, WOLVES, AND THE ATTWATER'S PRAIRIE CHICKEN.



Native to southern Africa, gemsbok (top) are well adapted to life in Texas. Horns begin growing on both male and female calves immediately after birth. Fossil Rim developed a breeding program for the endangered Attwater's prairie chicken (above), which once numbered in the millions in Texas. Overnight guests at Fossil Rim can stay in the luxurious Lodge or rough it in air-conditioned “tents” at the Foothills Safari Camp (right).





About midway through the nine-mile Scenic Wildlife Drive, the Overlook Cafe offers a spot to stretch your legs, have lunch, shop for gifts, and enjoy the spectacular view.

apt term, given their six-foot, 6,000-pound frames.

The guided tour took about two-and-a-half hours, leaving us the afternoon to complete the self-guided driving tour at our leisure. Cars follow a paved road snaking through the property, and you encounter abundant wildlife to watch, feed, and photograph. Animals tend to be more active in the morning (and hungrier than after a day of nonstop feeding), so the staff recommends an early arrival.

About halfway through the drive, the Overlook Cafe offers food and drink, along with a gift shop and a spacious deck that does, indeed, overlook the hills and pastures. While we enjoyed a snack, hummingbirds entertained us as they hovered above feeders. Nearby, a tidy petting zoo populated by goats, tortoises, and tropical birds provided a chance to touch more animals. An adjacent picnic area offers a shaded spot for those who pack their own lunch.

In addition to rhinos, Fossil Rim has successfully bred other endangered animals, including cheetahs, wolves, and the Attwater's prairie chicken. This breeding success depends in part on the fact that each individual animal, say a blackbuck antelope or a wildebeest, has roughly 400 acres to roam and the option of hanging out with the herd or wandering away for a little quiet time. The animals also graze and forage naturally, rather than relying completely on a feeding schedule. The presence of many animals of a species allows individuals to choose among a number of

potential mates, which more closely resembles conditions in the wild. The results speak for themselves: In addition to the successful rhinoceros-breeding program, for example, the cheetah-breeding program has produced more than 100 cubs since its inception in 1986.

In 1987, conservationists and philanthropists Jim Jackson and Christine Jurzykowski bought the ranch and quickly expanded its conservation efforts. A few years later, they renamed the ranch Fossil Rim Wildlife Center and converted it to a nonprofit organization. The original homestead became the sumptuous five-room Lodge complete with a den, decks, and a pool, and in the early 1990s, the Foothills Safari Camp opened its air-conditioned "tents" to visitors desiring a slightly more rustic experience.

While thousands of people like my family and me enjoy the attractions, Fossil Rim's core business remains conserving threatened wildlife species and breeding

them so they may someday be reintroduced into the wild, says executive director Dr. Pat Condy. Pat's previous titles include director of the Johannesburg Zoo, researcher in Antarctica, and biologist with the national parks system in Zimbabwe. At Fossil Rim, he oversees more than 50 species, 15 of which are classified as endangered or are managed under a Species Survival Plan. The center focuses on species appropriate to the Texas climate and this landscape—primarily ungulates, or hoofed animals—but many of the residents were chosen specifically to attract and educate visitors, says Pat. People who see and learn about nature and wildlife, and act differently as a result, help this little ranch have a big impact on the world of wildlife conservation.

So, even as you sit back and relax on the covered porch of your tent, the shady patio at the Lodge, or the Overlook Cafe deck, you're doing your part to ensure that these wild animals amaze future generations, too. ★

Writer MELISSA GASKILL of Austin enjoys exploring the state with her family. Look for her upcoming feature on great Texas hikes.

COURTNEY PERRY is a freelance photojournalist living in Dallas. Her Web site, www.courtneyperry.com, illustrates the breadth of her work.

essentials GO WILD!

FOSSIL RIM WILDLIFE CENTER is 3 miles southwest of Glen Rose, which is 55 miles southwest of Fort Worth. From US 67, turn south on County Rd. 2008 (look for the Fossil Rim sign), and drive about a mile to the entrance. Fossil Rim opens daily.

The **Scenic Wildlife Drive** is a self-guided, 9-mile drive in your own vehicle. Admission: Weekends during high season (Mar-Oct), \$20.95 ages 12-61, \$18.95 age 62 and older, \$15.95 ages 3-11, free age 2 and younger. High-season weekday admission costs \$17.95, \$15.95, and \$12.95. During low season (Nov-Feb), admission costs \$14.95, \$10.95, and \$8.95. Admission discounted 50% on Wed. except in Mar.

Guided, 2½-hour **Behind-the-Scenes Conservation tours** take place daily at 10 and 2 by reservation. Cost: \$45 per person, which

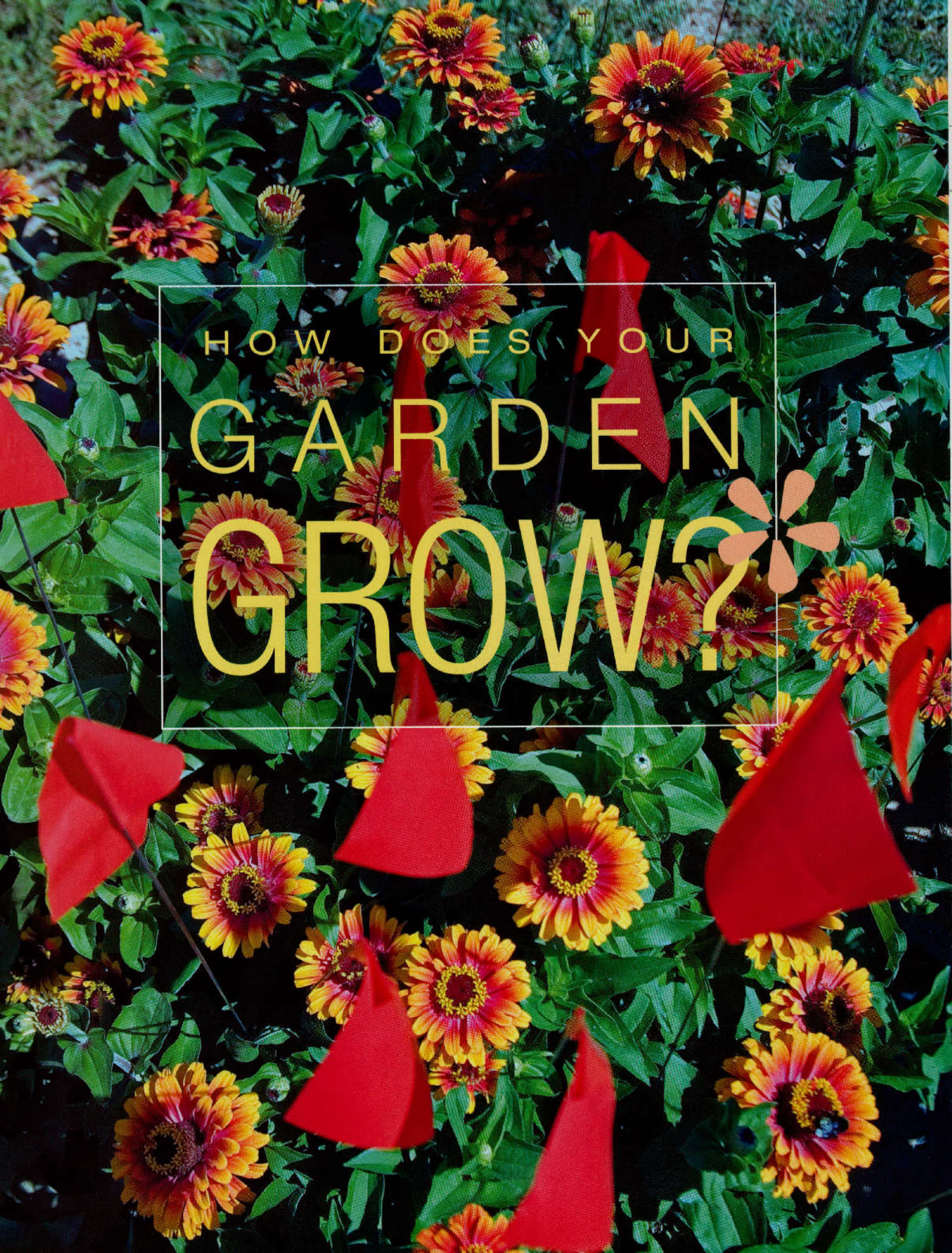


includes feed and same-day admission to the self-guided Wildlife Drive.

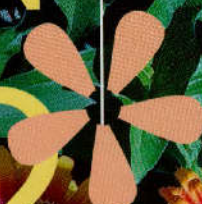
Guided 75-minute **Family Tours** take place by reservation on weekends, holidays, and during Spring Break. Cost: \$30 per person, including feed and same-day admission to Wildlife Drive.

All-day **Adventure Tours**, which include lunch at the Overlook Cafe, can be arranged Tue-Sun. Cost: \$295 per person (3-person maximum).

Fossil Rim also offers **bicycling tours, feeding tours, and special events** throughout the year, along with **overnight stays** at The Lodge (rates \$150-\$300) and at the Foothills Safari Camp (rates \$175-\$200). Write to 2155 CR 2008, Glen Rose 76043; 254/897-2960 or 888/775-6742; www.fossilrim.org.

A vibrant garden scene featuring numerous flowers with yellow, orange, and red petals and dark centers. The flowers are surrounded by lush green foliage. Several bright red fabric petals are scattered throughout the garden, some appearing to be in motion. A white rectangular border frames the central text.

HOW DOES YOUR
GARDEN
GROW?



Why are all these people wandering,
HEADS DOWN, AROUND A NORTHEAST TEXAS MEADOW ON A HOT
JUNE MORNING, CARRYING LONG WIRES TOPPED WITH RED FLAGS?
IS IT A MOLE HUNT? SOME NEW CHALLENGE GAME?



STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS
BY CAROL BARRINGTON

NO, IT'S A PUBLIC FIELD DAY at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station based in Overton, and the furrowed rows of this colorful test area display close to 600 new varieties of ornamental plants. When you find one you like, you mark it with a wired flag, and within an hour the winners begin to stand out. Last spring's

favorites included a new trailing petunia bred to thrive in the hot sun and a zinnia the color of glowing-hot coals.

Apart from drip irrigation and weeding, no mollycoddling has gone on during the six to nine weeks between planting and Field Day. These test plants either survive every challenge the quixotic northeast Texas climate dishes out, or they don't. That's the point.

It's all part of a quest for beautiful but Texas-tough plant genetics. Officially known as the East Texas Bedding Plant Pack and Garden Performance Trials, Overton's Field Day was started in 1994 by Dr. Brent Pemberton, a research horticulturist with the local Texas A&M Agricultural Experiment Station. "In late fall, invitations to participate are sent to commercial seed companies throughout the country," he explains. "They pay a fee to enter their newly developed but untested seed in our trials, and we receive 200 to 400 entries for the spring trials alone."

If successful, those pretty posies translate into serious money.

"The bedding-plant production industry in northeast Texas is concentrated in nearby Cherokee County," notes Dr. Pemberton, "and has an annual wholesale value of more than \$80 million. This

With A&M SUPERSTARS *and other* GLORIOUS BLOOMS

Zowie! No, that's not our comment, that's the name of a new zinnia variety (facing page) demonstrated at Field Day at the Texas A&M Agricultural Experiment Station in Overton. On Field Days—Overton's next one is on June 28—the public can vote on their favorites using red flags as shown here. Above, the author's husband, Gene Barrington, inspects field-test snapdragons at the Dallas Arboretum. At top, the hand behind the hibiscus gives an idea of this spectacular bloom's size.



A general view of last spring's Field Day in Overton reveals rows and rows of colorful zinnias and other flowers.

is a significant part of the \$500 million value of the ornamental-plant industry in this region, and of the \$1.2 billion value for the entire state." Recognizing this vested interest in Overton's field-trial results, regional agricultural interests donate fertilizer, growing media, and containers to help defray the research station's expenses. A second set of trials in late fall focuses on cool-weather plants, and similar trials also are held in spring at the Dallas Arboretum and the Texas A&M Dallas Agricultural Research and Extension Center. Such comprehensive, triple-test plantings reveal which bedding plants can't even survive changes in site conditions just 150 miles apart.

The few plants that grow well in both Overton and Dallas then move into the "North Texas Winner's Circle," a cooperative marketing venture of those three testing facilities. Those plants also generally join other newbies as Texas Superstar contenders, a second testing program

conducted by horticulturists statewide at various Texas A&M University (TAMU) research facilities and at assorted public and commercial-nursery sites. Bottom-line criteria include uniformity of plants, hardiness, tolerance for extremes of soil and weather, resistance to disease, showy blossoms, and strong structure. Those with high marks in all categories become candidates for the Texas Superstar marketing label and program.

WILL THESE TEXAS-TOUGH PLANTS grow anywhere in the state? Some will. Those that won't are marketed specific to one or more of Texas' eight cold-hardiness zones, as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"Depending on the type of plant, it takes three to five years of testing and top performance to gain the Superstar label," notes Dr. Wayne Mackay, a professor and research horticulturist at A&M's Dallas research facility. "When we have a

winner and it can be produced in sufficient numbers for commercial sales, we then market it via the Coordinated Education in Marketing Assistance Program (CEMAP). This partnership between the landscape industry and TAMU's agricultural experimental stations and extension services very effectively publicizes the new plants and gets them to the consumer."

In addition to seed from commercial interests, new plant prospects come from "anywhere we can find them," laughs Dr. Mackay. "We look for 'survivors' in botanical gardens, abandoned-home sites, old cemeteries, natural wooded areas—just about anywhere and everywhere things grow. A few come to us as 'pass-alongs,' plants that people bring in to an A&M field research facility."

Finding a future winner comes down to chance, curiosity, and sharp eyes. For example: Every day, on his way to work as director of research and development

at Lone Star Growers in south San Antonio, horticulturist Greg Grant would pass a single superior example of esperanza (also known as yellow bells) growing like crazy in an unpretentious yard near US 90 and Zarzamora Street. Recognizing a bootstrapper when he saw it, he introduced the plant into the TAMU/CEMAP program, where it developed mega-status as Gold Star Esperanza.

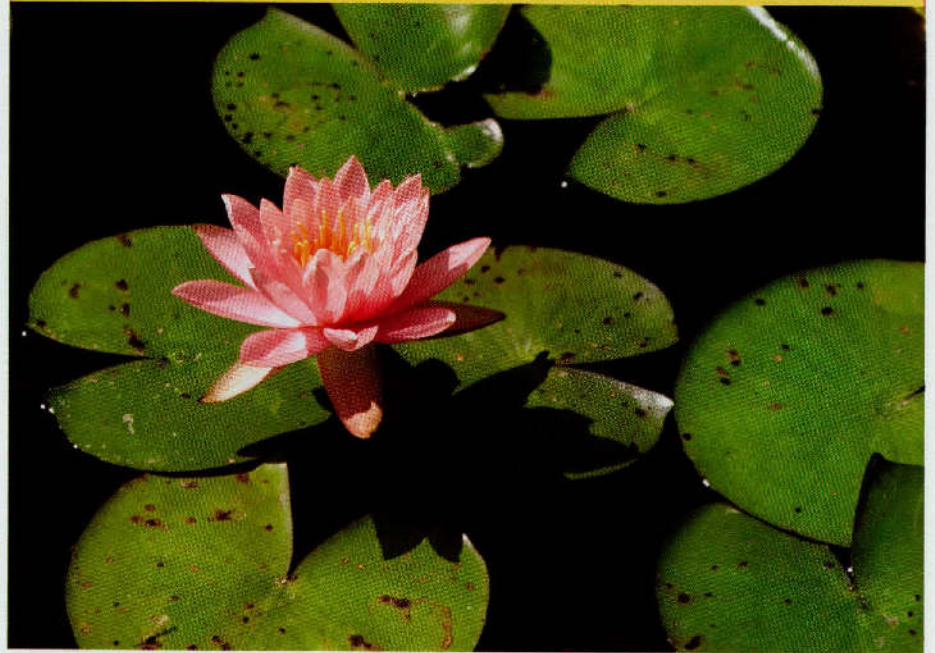
Another prime example of a serendipitous “find,” the new Texas Gold Columbine originated as a rare wildflower found only in scattered, shady pockets of moisture along a few remote waterways of the Big Bend country. Thanks to subsequent cultivation in the Superstar program, it’s now a spectacular, shade-blooming perennial for all state regions except the Rio Grande Valley and the Panhandle.

Esthetics aside, this is big business. Of the nearly four dozen Texas Superstar plants that have debuted since the program’s inception in 1989, four became million-dollar sellers for the Texas nursery industry within four years of their introduction (Satsuma Mandarin Oranges, Gold Star Esperanza, Perennial Hibiscus, and Belinda’s Dream Rose).

The Texas Maroon (deep red) and Barbara Bush (lavender) bluebonnets also share the new-plant spotlight. Both primarily owe their glory as million-dollar bedding plants to Dr. Jerry Parsons, a

We look FOR ‘SURVIVORS’ IN BOTANICAL GARDENS, ABANDONED-HOME SITES, OLD CEMETERIES, NATURAL WOODED AREAS—JUST ABOUT ANYWHERE AND EVERYWHERE THINGS GROW. ”

—Dr. Wayne Mackay



This pink water lily is one of 2,500 plant specimens at the Texas A&M Horticultural Garden in College Station. Students manage and maintain the garden’s 10 acres. A spring sale takes place April 14, with many plants selling for as little as two dollars.

professor of horticulture at Texas A&M Cooperative Extension in San Antonio—and therein lies a story.

Dr. Parsons’ dream was to re-create the Lone Star flag entirely with the state flower, bluebonnets, to celebrate the 1986 Texas Sesquicentennial. As he now notes: “This seemingly simple proposal and the efforts expended to make it a reality have involved thousands of people, created a multimillion-dollar agricultural industry, generated more positive publicity for Texas A&M than the Aggie football team, and is still producing products and wildflower knowledge with no apparent end in sight.”

Known as the bluebonnet colorization project, and specifically aimed at produc-

ing a true red bluebonnet (blue and white already existed), the work started in spring 1985, when Dr. Parsons activated literally thousands of eyes in the search for the exceedingly rare pink-color variant of the familiar blue bluebonnet. Only four locations were found statewide, and when the seed harvested from those finds was planted the following year, only 12 percent produced pink blooms—not a promising start.

Careful and persistent breeding within the species *Lupinus texensis* has since paid off, however. Texas Bluebonnets now come in six hues, including a true red, and all now are Superstars available at commercial nurseries.

Payoff: While Dr. Parsons missed his own 1986 deadline, his dream of a Texas flag composed of appropriately colored bluebonnets now blossoms every spring at Wildseed Farms near Fredericksburg and in various public and private gardens throughout the state. Also note: Cross-



Jamboree Light Blue, a new trailing petunia, gains another vote on Field Day. If the plant makes its way successfully through several trials, it could become another so-called Texas Superstar, a plant highly adapted to Texas growing conditions.



Dr. Brent Pemberton, director of the TAMU (Texas A&M University) demonstration garden in Overton, stands among recent Texas Superstar candidates.

pollination was not involved in the development of the new bluebonnets. In Dr. Parsons' words: "A&M will allow no sexual hanky-panky going on with the state flower."

CURIOS ABOUT WHAT'S IN THE Superstar pipeline? As the state's primary testing site, the TAMU Horticultural Garden in College Station shows off candidates throughout the year. Visitors, including weekend picnickers, are always welcome, plus you can help

with the weeding and other garden chores on Tuesday and Thursday mornings if you're so inclined.

"Our plants have to contend with College Station's heavy clay soil and salty water, and we never spray anything, because we are looking for disease-resistance," comments Garry McDonald, one of the experimental garden's on-site research associates. "The winning plants here have to do well in the average gardener's care. Right now we're working on a deep red crepe myrtle and a new

Development

OF THE NEW BLUE-

BONNETS DIDN'T INVOLVE
CROSS-POLLINATION. AS DR.
JERRY PARSONS SAYS, "WE
WILL ALLOW NO HANKY-PANKY
WITH THE STATE FLOWER."

series of cold-hardy oleanders, but all this takes water, a precious commodity during our hot Central Texas summers."

Irrigation water and rainwater are continuously captured and recycled here, with a small water garden the refreshing result. "The pond is our 'canary in the coal mine'—when the fish don't do well, we know the water quality needs attention," laughs Garry. "There's also a steady stream of people, particularly children, who come here just to feed the koi."

A visit to the two previously mentioned testing sites in Dallas illustrates extremes of gardening. The demonstration area at TAMU's Research and Extension Center north of downtown illustrates the common "stick it in the ground and then ignore it" approach. In contrast, the test gardens at the Dallas Arboretum a few miles south benefit from abundant TLC—beautiful beds of proper planting materials and great management. Plants that thrive under both conditions truly earn their star status.

A fourth test site worth visiting, the Mast Arboretum at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, functions as a plant cradle. Among its progeny, 24 of which are credited to horticulture researcher Greg Grant, are four of the most popular Texas Superstars: the Texas Lilac Vitex, the Blue Princess Verbena, the Laura Bush Petunia, and the aforementioned Gold Star Esperanza. Also known throughout the south for its collections of Japanese maples, azaleas, and hydrangeas, Mast Arboretum welcomes visitors daily and hosts two plant sales annually.

GROWING PAINS?

Plagued with a recurring “black thumb”? More likely, it’s a serious case of wrong plant, wrong place. For a cure, check with your local county agricultural extension offices for Master Gardener advice; many operate test/demonstration gardens full of information and ideas. Regional public gardens also can lead you down that elusive primrose path to success. Try <http://arboretum.sfasu.edu/texasgardens/index.htm> for locations of public gardens in more than 30 towns and cities throughout the state, seven of which follow. Most not only test plants for local suitability, they also nicely showcase the survivors.

World-famous for its 14 acres of fabulous roses, the **Tyler Municipal Rose Garden** also has a charming, very compact IDEA (for Innovate, Demonstrate, Educate, and Apply) demonstration area tucked into the southeast corner of its park-like property. Loaded with more than 90 examples of lesser-known plants that prosper in northeast Texas, this award winner is a project of the Smith County Master Gardeners. Signs and handouts complement displays on composting, mulching, and water-wise landscaping techniques. Hours: Mon-Sat 8-5, Sun 1-4. Admission: Free. At 420 Rose Park Dr.; 903/531-1213; www.cityoftyler.org.

Focused exclusively on the flora of the Chihuahuan Desert, the **Chihuahuan Desert Gardens**, part of the University of Texas at El Paso, shows 640 species of plants in a large demonstration garden on the grounds of El Paso’s Centennial Museum. Principal areas represented here are West Texas, southern New Mexico, and the Mexican states of Coahuila and Chihuahua. This botanical wonder specializes in the use of regional natives for landscaping purposes. Hours: Daily dawn to dusk. Admission: Free. At 500 W. University Ave. (corner of University and Wiggins Rd.); 915/747-5565; www.museum.utep.edu.

Dedicated to the many beautiful plants that with care can thrive in the hot, windy, and semiarid/drought conditions found in the Caprock Transition zone of West Texas and the Panhandle regions, the **Texas Tech University Greenhouse and Horticultural**

Gardens in Lubbock welcomes visitors. Master Gardeners, students, and volunteers usually are on-site to answer questions. Bonus here: Both Monarch and Fritillaria butterflies arrive in Aug., form their cocoons on the sides of the greenhouses, and hatch in mid-Sep. Hours: Gardens open daily during daylight hours; greenhouses open daily 8-5 Sep-Apr; 7:30-4:30 May-Aug. Admission: Free; donations welcome. At Main and Indiana streets on the TTU campus; 806/742-2856. Additional plant information for this area is available at www.txsmartscape.com.

Exhibits at the 33-acre **San Antonio Botanical Garden** range from tropicals in a handsome glass conservatory to a simulated 1,200-mile walk, called the Texas Native Trail, through plantings related to three regions of the state: Hill Country, Piney Woods, and South Texas Plains. You’ll also find beautiful formal and old-fashioned gardens, a café, and a gift shop. Hours: Daily 9-5; closed Christmas and New Year’s days. Admission: \$6, \$4 age 60 and older, students, and military, \$3 ages 3-13. At 555 Funston at N. New Braunfels Ave.; 210/207-3250; www.sabot.org.

The challenges (salt and wind) of gardening along the central Texas coast form the crux of the **South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center** in Corpus Christi. In addition to beautiful demonstration landscapes and flower exhibits, visitors also explore native habitat and natural wetlands via trails and boardwalk. A good place to come for native-plant and -tree information. Spring garden and plant sale each Apr. (Apr. 14, 2007). Hours: Tue-Sun 9-5. Admission: \$4, \$3.50 age 65 and older, \$1.50 ages 5-12, free age 4 and younger. At 8545 S. Staples; 361/852-2100; www.stxbot.org.

Dedicated to increasing the knowledge of South Texas flora and fauna, the **Valley Nature Center** in Weslaco’s Gibson Park is the only facility of its kind in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Considered an urban nature



A figure fashioned from pots stands at the entrance to the Lou Cashion Memorial Garden in the TAMU Horticultural Garden in College Station.

park, this nonprofit focuses on native plants, offers a 3/4-mile walking trail through the exhibits, and has 140 species available for sale in its native-plant nursery (one-gallon plants, \$5). Hours: Tue-Fri 9-5, Sat 8-5, Sun 1-5; closed Mon and major holidays. Admission: \$3, \$2.50 age 55 and older, \$1 age 12 and younger. At 301 S. Border Ave.; 956/969-2475; www.valleynaturecenter.org.

Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens near Humble protects and, in many ways, enhances 300 acres on the western edge of the Big Thicket, a major component of the East Texas Piney Woods. Located on the banks of Cypress Creek in northwest Harris Co. (Greater Houston area), this is the region’s largest collection of native and cultivated plants—you can stroll here for hours and still see only part of the collection. The March Mart plant sale (Mar. 23-24, 2007) gives visitors a chance to inexpensively acquire strong plants not usually found in area nurseries. Hours: Daily 8-5 in winter; in summer, Mon-Sat 8-7, Sun 10-7. Admission: Free; donations appreciated. At 22306 Al-dine Westfield Rd.; 281/443-8731; www.hcp4.net/merc. —CAROL BARRINGTON

THE 10-ACRE TAMU Horticultural Garden in College Station offers 2,500 plant specimens in 30 planting areas, representing assorted climate zones, with paths, benches, and a shaded area. Come early for the 2007 spring plant sale (\$2-\$20), Apr. 14, 8-2. Follow signs from the intersection of Hensel Dr. and Texas Ave. (Texas 6 Business). Hours: Daily dawn to dusk; groups and guided tours by advance arrangement. Write to TAMU Horticultural Gardens, College Station 77843-2134; 979/845-3658; www.hortgarden.tamu.edu.

The 10-acre **Mast Arboretum** at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches is on the campus, adjacent to the intramural athletic fields on Wilson Dr. Annual events include a lecture series, seminars, and 2 plant sales (Apr. 14 and Oct. 6, 2007, 9-2); most plants \$3-\$7; specialty plants may cost more. The arboretum includes the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden (spectacular in spring) and the Pineywoods Native Plant Center. Write to 13000 SFA Station, Nacogdoches 75962; 936/468-3705 or 468-1832; <http://arboretum.sfasu.edu>.

The 66-acre **Dallas Arboretum** anchors the southeast corner of White Rock Lake, east of downtown. Developed on the grounds of 2 beautiful private estates, this urban oasis hosts the Southwest's largest spring floral display. More than 700 varieties of plants are tested year round in 2 trial gardens; ask for directions upon arrival. *Field Day 2007 (industry only)* is June 27. Hours: Daily 9-5; closed Thanksgiving,



Christmas, and New Year's days. Admission: \$8, \$7 age 65 and older, \$5 ages 3-12, free age 2 and younger. Parking: \$5. At 8525 Garland Rd. Mailing address: 8617 Garland Rd., Dallas 75218; 214/515-6500; www.dallasarboretum.org.

THE FOLLOWING 2 demonstration gardens welcome weekday visitors and groups; please call in advance, and register at the administration building's reception desk upon arrival (free; closed weekends and holidays). All have Superstar as well as experimental plantings. The best months for color are Mar-June. For directions, maps, and other specifics, check the appropriate Web site.

TAMU Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Overton is 25 miles east of Tyler. Write to 1710 N. FM 3053, Overton 75684; 903/834-6191; <http://overton.tamu.edu>. Feb-Mar best time to see fall/winter trials. *Field Day 2007 is June 28 (open to industry and general public; no need to call ahead to attend)*.

Texas A&M Dallas Agricultural Research and Extension Center is at 17360 Coit Rd., Dallas 75252; 972/231-5362; <http://dallas.tamu.edu>. Late June the best time to view displays.

FOR DETAILED INFORMATION about Texas Superstars, go to www.texassuperstar.com. Also check TAMU Extension's www.plantanswers.com, one of the most widely used horticultural Web sites in the world.

WHAT NEW SUPERSTARS ARE DEBUTING this year? This spring will welcome two trailing petunias, Tidal Wave Silver and Tidal Wave Cherry, both of which first won honors at Overton's Field Day and then went on to become North Texas Winner's Circle plants; a multicolored, edible ornamental pepper called NuMex Twilight; two delightful water lilies, Texas Dawn and Star of Siam; a new broccoli called Green Magic (sensibly not named for noted broccoli-hater George H.W. Bush); and the luscious SunPride Tomato. All should soon be available in local commercial nurseries.

Hot Tip of the Tongue: Each pueblo in northern New Mexico has its own traditional hot peppers, the seeds of which were collected by New Mexico State Uni-

versity breeders and developed into new varieties such as NuMex Twilight. TAMU horticulturists noted its "edible ornamental" qualities and found it to be Texas-tolerant. Taste-test this new pepper with caution; pretty it is, but mild it is not.

Thanks to such cooperative, statewide research and marketing, Texas gardeners also now grow oaks from Texarkana to El Paso and enjoy hibiscus blossoms bigger than dinner plates, with more horticultural treats to come. Considering that the Lone Star State displays climate and soil conditions as diverse and challenging as those of some continents, that's definitely rising to a Texas-size challenge. ★

A longtime *Texas Highways* contributor, photojournalist CAROL BARRINGTON wrote about Texas Nature Conservancy sites in the January 2005 issue.

TEXAS HIGHWAYS

READER SERVICE GUIDE TO ADVERTISERS

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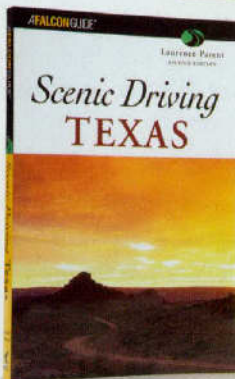
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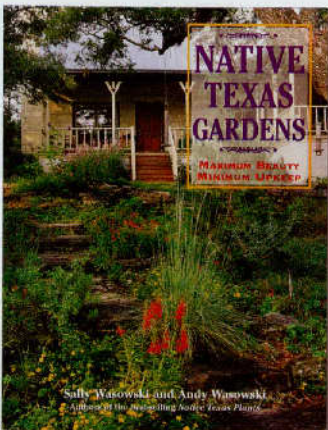


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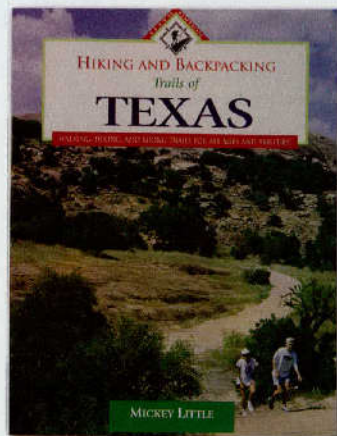
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NATURE EVENTS IN McAllen, Texas

Texas Tropics Nature Festival

March 29 - April 1, 2007

Monterrey Birding Festival

March 25 - March 28, 2007

Wild Walk

October 4 & 5, 2007



Call the McAllen Chamber of Commerce at
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on any of these events.



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- ★ Gregg County Historical Museum
- ★ R.G. LeTourneau Museum
- ★ Party in the Pines 2007
- ★ Historic Black Gold Trail



Longview Convention & Visitors Bureau
410 N. Center St. Longview, TX 75801
903-753-3281
www.VisitLongviewTexas.com

TOP Tables

(continued from page 13)

counters, with tall stools facing the busy highway, fill the windows on either side of the front door.

And the chess set that sits on one of those window counters? "I brought that set in last July so the staff could play chess in their spare time," says Ryan a bit ruefully. "We had so little spare time that one game between me and Marian Lively, the bakery manager, took three months to complete."

As Old World as handmade breads seem to be, Brothers Bakery is up-to-the-minute technologically: Wireless Internet access is available for anyone toting a laptop.

But there is also a whiff of nostalgia: Atop walk-in coolers behind the front counter perches a collection of small kitchen appli-

ances, including several Mixmasters, the famous electric mixer-on-a-stand that was once a cherished machine in middle- and upper-class kitchens. "That one," says Ryan, pointing to a really old Mixmaster, "belonged to my grandmother. And the avocado one over there was my mother's—from the '60s, of course. I've been collecting them over the years, and I'm hoping to eventually put in a kitchen-appliance museum."

When I ask Ryan what he considers the most satisfying part of running a bakery, he replies without hesitation: "Making people happy," he says, "and I like knowing that what I make is healthy, too. It's something I enjoy doing, and it puts a smile on people's faces."

Judging from the smiles on the faces of the customers I saw, he must be very satisfied indeed.

MARY RAMOS, former editor of the *Texas Almanac*, wrote about Wildwood Bakery in June 2006.

Just PASSING Through

(continued from page 15)

these hills, and it's a shame not to soak up as much of it as possible. A perfect spot to do just that is Dry Hollow Hideaway, a guesthouse of native stone encircled by a 12-foot-wide porch on Charles and Nancy Becker's 700-acre ranch. You can drop a line in either of two lakes on the property, hike, ride bikes, or just watch the birds 'til the stars come out.

If you're headed to or from Paint Rock on US 87 around lunchtime, or on a Friday or Saturday evening, watch for the turnoff to the village of Melvin, where you'll find the Jacoby Cafe. From a stool at the counter, you can watch the cook grill a steak from Angus cattle raised right here on the Jacoby Ranch. In addition to rib eye, T-bone, sirloin, and KC steaks complete with all the fixin's, the café serves chicken-fried steak, two-fisted hamburgers, and fried catfish. Top it all off with a slice of chocolate, coconut, or pecan pie, if you have room. (Before dinner, you can browse the attached feed store, Jacoby Feed & Seed, where the Jacoby family sells its grains and custom livestock feeds and a

hodgepodge of merchandise like bird feeders and horse halters.)

But if you can't get to the café this time, make a mental note for the next trip. Because chances are, just like those early Americans, you'll want to pass through Paint Rock again.

MELISSA GASKILL of Austin also wrote this month's story on Fossil Rim, which begins on page 44.

THINGS TO SEE Paint Rock Excursions, located on the Campbell Ranch, is $\frac{3}{4}$ mile north of Paint Rock on US 83, on the west side of the Concho River. Open most days, appt. preferred. Call 732-4376; www.paintrockpictographs.com. Tours: \$6, \$3 students grades K-12. Group rates available, arranged in advance (minimum \$15).

Concho County Courthouse, 152 N. Roberts Ave. Call 732-4321; www.co.concho.tx.us/ips/cms.

PLACES TO SHOP Ingrid's Custom Hand-Woven, Inc., 141 S. Roberts Ave. Call 800/752-8004; <http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~llama/ingrid>.

Kiser Iron Works, 151 E. Moss St. Call 732-4740.

PLACES TO EAT Jacoby Cafe (attached to Jacoby Feed & Seed), 101 N. Main St., Melvin (between Brady and Eden just off US 87). Hours: Mon-Thu 8-2, Fri-Sat 8-2 and 5-9. Call 800/329-2080; www.jacobyfeed.com.

WHERE TO STAY Dry Hollow Hideaway, 7 miles west of Paint Rock on Texas 380. Call 325/732-4272; www.dryhollowhideaway.com.

March



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

SEND FUTURE EVENT INFORMATION TO: *Texas Events Calendar*, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009; fax: 512/486-5879; e-mail: trv-tec@dot.state.tx.us

LISTING DEADLINES: Spring (Mar., Apr., May) Dec. 1; Summer (Jun., Jul., Aug.) Mar. 1; Fall (Sep., Oct., Nov.) Jun. 1; Winter (Dec., Jan., Feb.) Sep. 1

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

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

FOR A QUARTERLY, MORE DETAILED SCHEDULE OF events, write for a free copy of the *Texas Events Calendar*, Box 149249, Austin 78714-9249. For an online listing of events, go to www.texashighways.com.



BIG BEND COUNTRY

- 1-3**
EL PASO
Cirque Dreams Jungle Fantasy
915/544-8444 or
800/714-5331
- Malena Cano
915/772-3905
- 1-4**
EL PASO
Sigo de Oro
Drama Festival
915/532-7273
- 2**
EL PASO
McDuffie Dutton Kirshbaum
Chamber Music String Trio
915/833-9400
- Vienna Boys Choir
915/532-3776
- 2-4**
ODESSA
Alone Together
432/550-5456
- 2, 4**
ODESSA
La Bohème
432/580-3177
- 3**
DEL RIO
Urban Cowboy
830/775-0888
- EL PASO
U.S. Hot Rod
Monster Jam
915/544-8444
- 6-Apr 28**
ODESSA
Quilting Corner
432/333-4072
- 8-11**
DEL RIO
Bassmaster Elite Series
830/775-3551
- 9-10**
ODESSA
West Texas Relays
432/333-7890
- 11**
EL PASO
Glenn Miller Orchestra
915/544-2022
- 15-17**
ODESSA
Odessa College NIRA Rodeo
432/561-8978
- 16**
DEL RIO
St. Patrick Day Rally
830/775-3551
- 16-Apr 7**
EL PASO
The Importance of
Being Earnest
915/532-1317
- 16-Apr 22**
ODESSA
Prairie Fire Ceramics
432/552-2290

- 18**
EL PASO
Cirque Dreams Jungle Fantasy
915/544-8444 or
800/714-5331
- Malena Cano
915/772-3905
- 21**
DEL RIO
FLW Outdoors
Fishing Event
830/775-3551
- 23-24**
EL PASO
El Paso Symphony Orchestra
915/532-3776
- 23-25**
EL PASO
Ballet Folklórico
Paseo del Norte
915/849-0668
- 24-25, 31-Apr 1**
ODESSA
My Emperor's New Clothes
432/550-5456
- 29**
EL PASO
Jesus Christ Superstar
915/544-8444 or
800/714-5331
- 29-31**
PRESIDIO
Lionhorn Cattle Drive
432/229-3416
- 31**
ODESSA
Flower Market
432/550-9696
- Midland-Odessa
Symphony & Chorale
432/563-0921

GULF COAST

- 1**
BEAUMONT
Texas Energy Museum's
Blowout 2007
409/833-5100
- 1-3**
BAY CITY
(began Feb 28)
Matagorda County
Fair & Rodeo
979/245-2454
- 1-4**
FULTON
Oysterfest
361/463-9955
- 1-12**
HOUSTON
(began Jan 29)
Two Visions or A Matter of Fact
713/395-3301
- 1-18**
HOUSTON
(began Feb 27)
Houston
Livestock Show & Rodeo
832/667-1000
- 1-22**
NASSAU BAY
(began Feb 15)
National Society of Artists
Juried Exhibition
281/335-7777

- 2**
LAKE JACKSON
Trout Fishing in America
979/230-3156
- 2-3**
BAYTOWN
Blythe Spirit
281/424-7617
- 2-4**
BEAUMONT
Sesame Street Live
409/951-5400
- HOUSTON
Houston Ballet
713/227-2787
- River Oaks Garden Club
Azalea Trail
713/523-2483
- 2-3, 9-10, 16-17**
BEAUMONT
Beaumont Community Players
Bargains
409/842-4664
- 3**
EDNA
Texas Independence Day
Program
361/782-5718
- GALVESTON
Opera Stars
Frederica von Stade
and Samuel Ramey
800/821-1894
- Sea Turtle Saturday
281/444-6204
- HUMBLE
NatureFest
281/446-8588
- LAKE JACKSON
Nature Day
979/292-0100
- ROSENBERG
Railroad Festival
281/633-2846
- VICTORIA
Victoria Symphony
361/576-4500
- 3-4**
SOUTH PADRE ISLAND
Spring Break Jam Car Show
956/761-3000
- VICTORIA
Victoria Ballet Spring Gala
361/572-ARTS

- 4**
BEAUMONT
Lamar University Jazz Bands
409/880-8149
- GALVESTON
The Rob Landes Trio
Plays Gershwin
800/821-1894
- SANTA FE
Greek Festival
409/925-1401
- SOUTH PADRE ISLAND
Kids Pedal-N-Dash
Duathlon
956/451-1500
- 5**
BROWNSVILLE
UTB/TSC Master Chorale
956/882-8247



- 5-25**
SOUTH PADRE ISLAND
College
Spring Break
956/761-3000
- 6**
BEAUMONT
Lamarissimo
409/880-8144
- 7-8**
HOUSTON
Spring Thing
Market
713/465-3467
- 8-11**
BROWNSVILLE
International
Art Show
956/542-0941

- 8, 10-11, 16-18**
HOUSTON
Madame Butterfly
713/227-2787
- 9**
VICTORIA
Country Opry
361/552-9347
- 9-10**
BEAUMONT
Main Street's
Classic Film
Festival
409/838-2202
- EL CAMPO
Barbecue
Cookoff
979/541-5833

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9-11 SEABROOK Coastal Photo Workshop 866/611-4688	18 GALVESTON St. Patrick's Day Bike Parade 409/737-1222
9-18 KEMAH Spring Break Celebration 281/338-9880	LA PORTE Fords of the '50s Car Show & Picnic 281/479-2431 or 599-7920
10-11 BROWNSVILLE Air Fiesta 956/541-8585	22 BEAUMONT Go for the Gold 409/832-3432
13 BEAUMONT <i>Cirque Dreams Jungle Fantasy</i> 409/838-3435	Lamar University Concert Bands 409/880-8144
13-25 HOUSTON <i>Seven Brides for Seven Brothers</i> 713/558-TUTS or 888/558-3882	22-Apr 15 HOUSTON <i>Cirque du Soleil's Corteo</i> 800/678-5440
16 WHARTON U.S. Army Field Band & Soldiers' Chorus 979/532-0404	22-24, 29-31 HOUSTON <i>Don Giovanni</i> 713/861-5303
17 LA PORTE <i>Battleship Texas Hard Hat Tour</i> 281/479-2431	23 BROWNSVILLE UTB/TSC One O'Clock Jazz Band 956/882-8247
17-18 SEABROOK Lucky Trails Marathon 832/423-7451	23-24 VICTORIA Quilt Guild Show 361/574-9869
	23-25 HOUSTON Bayou City Art Festival 713/521-0133

23-25, 30-Apr 1 BROWNSVILLE <i>Victor/Victoria</i> 956/542-8900
24-25 NURSERY Antique Truck & Tractor Show 361/578-8484
26 HOUSTON Houston Chamber Orchestra 713/315-2525
26-Apr 1 HOUSTON Shell Houston Open 281/454-7000
29-31 BEAUMONT <i>Cinderella</i> 409/892-0169
KINGSVILLE International Isabel Sciouti Piano Competition 361/592-2374
29-Apr 1 GALVESTON Featherfest 409/392-0841 or 888/425-4753
PORTLAND Windfest 361/643-2475
30-Apr 1 CORPUS CHRISTI Festival of the Arts 361/882-3416
PORT ARANSAS Texas SandFest 361/949-9531 or 800/452-6278
31 CLEAR LAKE AREA Crawfish Festival 281/488-7676
DEER PARK Easter Egg Hunt 281/478-2050
EL CAMPO Hodge Podge Day 979/543-2713
PEARLAND Easter Eggstravaganza 281/652-1673
31-Apr 1 HOUSTON Bayou City Cajun Fest 281/890-5500
H-E-B Children's Festival 713/522-9723
ROSENBERG Spring Fling Car Show 713/774-2945
TOMBALL German Heritage Festival 281/379-6844 or 713/829-7116



Movie director Mira Nair will speak about her career and new film, *The Namesake*, at Arts & Letters Live, March 2, at the Dallas Museum of Art.

1-3 AUSTIN UIL Girls Basketball State Championships 512/477-6060	4 AUSTIN A. Mozart Fest Concert 512/371-7217	10-11, 17-18, 24-25 CASTROVILLE Bluebonnet Walk 210/274-6909 or 830/931-3837
1-25 AUSTIN (began Feb 15) <i>The Lion King</i> 512/471-1444	Classical Guitarist Sharon Isbin 512/329-6753	10, 17, 24, 31 BANDERA Cowboys on Main 800/364-3833
KERRVILLE Guadalupe Watercolor Show 830/895-2911	Zilker Park Kite Festival 512/448-5483	16-18 FREDERICKSBURG Trade Days 830/990-4900 or 210/846-4094
2-3 KERRVILLE Schreiner University Choir Dinner Theater 830/792-7417	NEW BRAUNFELS Texas A&M University Singing Cadets 830/627-0808	17 NEW BRAUNFELS Historic Homes Tour 830/629-2943
LAMPASAS Stitches in Time Needle Art & Quilt Show 512/556-2224	6 BLANCO Texas Star Trail Riders 512/478-2184	17-18 ANDICE Craft Fair 254/793-9438
2-4 AUSTIN Chocolate Festival 512/637-0479 or 800/834-3498	6-7 KERRVILLE Glenn Miller Orchestra 830/896-9393 or 895-5727	AUSTIN African Violet Show 512/365-1818
3 BEND Wild Cave Exploration 325/628-3240	7 AUSTIN Global Percussion Masters 512/329-6753	Artisans Festival 512/292-4200
BLANCO Texas Author's Day Celebration 830/833-1218	8-10 AUSTIN UIL Boys Basketball State Championships 512/477-6060	18 BURNET Devil's Waterhole Canoe Tour 512/793-2223
BOERNE Chuck Wagon Cookoff & Heritage Gathering 830/249-6007	8-24 INGRAM <i>Smoke on the Mountain</i> 830/367-5120	18-19 KERRVILLE Trinity Irish Dancers 830/896-9393 or 895-5727
LUCKENBACH Texas Independence Day Celebration 830/997-3224 or 888/311-8990	9-10 UVALDE Quilt Show 830/278-9571	20 AUSTIN UT Chamber Singers 512/477-6060
3-4 AUSTIN Texas State Arts Festival 512/441-9015	9-18 AUSTIN SXSW Music, Film, and Interactive Conferences & Festivals 512/467-7979	22 MASON Country Opry 325/597-2119
3, 17, 31 BRACKETTVILLE Wild Cave Tour 830/563-2342	9-24 AUSTIN Star of Texas Fair & Rodeo 512/919-3000	24 AUSTIN Classical Guitarist Paul Galbraith 512/300-ACGS

HILL COUNTRY
1 KERRVILLE Symphony of the Hills 830/896-9393

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- Barnard Mill Art Museum
- Brazos & Paluxy Rivers
- Creation Evidence Museum
- Dinosaur Valley State Park
- Fossil Rim Wildlife Center
- The Promise
- Somervell County Museum

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24
DRIPPING SPRINGS
 Home & Garden Show
 512/633-0139

FORT MCKAVETT
 West Texas Heritage
 & Living History Day
 325/396-2358

NEW BRAUNFELS
 Gartenfest
 830/629-2943

STONEWALL
 Kite Day
 830/644-2252

25
AUSTIN
 Capitol 10,000
 512/445-3598

GRUENE
 Live Music at Gruene Hall
 830/629-5077
 or 606-1601

KERRVILLE
 Bach Birthday Celebration
 830/895-3710

ROUND ROCK
 Inline Skate Marathon
 512/218-5540

29
NEW BRAUNFELS
 Founder's Day Celebration
 830/708-2832

29-Apr 1
AUSTIN
 Texas Hill Country
 Wine & Food Festival
 512/542-WINE

30-Apr 1
AUSTIN
 Jerry Jeff Walker's
 Birthday Bash
 866/443-8849

MARBLE FALLS
 Bluebonnet
 Blues & Fine Arts Festival
 830/798-1041

31
AUSTIN
 Louisiana Swamp Romp
 & Crawfish Festival
 512/441-9015

CANYON LAKE
 Rio Guadalupe Music Fest
 877/746-7238

31-Apr 1
ELDORADO
 Elgoatrod
 325/853-3678

FREDERICKSBURG
 4-Wheel Jamboree Nationals
 317/236-6515

Historic Rural Schools
 Open House
 830/997-8655

NEW BRAUNFELS
 Spring Walkfest
 830/625-6330

PANHANDLE PLAINS

1-3
ABILENE
The Miracle Worker
 325/674-2787

WICHITA FALLS
*I Love You,
 You're Perfect,
 Now Change*
 940/322-5000

1-3, 9-10
ABILENE
Oscar & Felix
 325/673-6271

2
AMARILLO
 Art Walk
 806/352-7262

LUBBOCK
 First Friday Art Trail
 806/762-8606

2-3
ABILENE
 Circus Gatti
 325/677-4376

2-4
SWEETWATER
 Big Country
 Cutting Horse Show
 325/235-3484

3
ABILENE
 Philharmonic Concert
 325/677-6710 or
 800/460-0610

SAN ANGELO
 First Saturday
 Old Chicken Farm
 Art Center
 325/653-4936

San Angelo
 Symphony
 325/658-5877

3-4
ABILENE
 Home & Garden Show
 325/698-4232
 or 676-6211

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

6
WICHITA FALLS
 Taste of the Town
 940/322-8686

8
ABILENE
 Artwalk
 325/677-8389

The Classical Mystery Tour's
 Twist & Shout
 325/677-6710 or
 800/460-0610

WICHITA FALLS
 Kemp Center for the Arts
 Presents Neil Sperry
 940/767-2787

9-11
SWEETWATER
 Brisket/Chili/
 Salsa/Dessert
 Cookoff
 325/235-5488

10
WICHITA FALLS
 Team Roping
 940/716-5500

12
ABILENE
Camelot
 877/858-0300

12-14
ABILENE
 American Southwest
 Conference
 Basketball Tournament
 325/793-4650

13-21
ABILENE
 Cutting Horse Bonanza
 325/677-4376

13-Apr 7
BIG SPRING
 Heavenly Skies Art Show
 432/267-8255 or
 866/430-7100

16-18
SHAMROCK
 St. Patrick's Day Celebration
 806/256-2501

17
AMARILLO
 Michael Martin Murphey
 & Friends
 806/378-3096

WICHITA FALLS
 Wichita Falls Symphony
 940/723-6202

17-18
BIG SPRING
 Big Spring Powwow
 432/263-3255 or
 866/430-7100

18
SAN ANGELO
 Chamber Music Series
 325/653-3333

23-25
ABILENE
 Barrel Racing
 Extravaganza
 325/677-4376

24
SAN ANGELO
 Trail Ride
 325/656-4323
 or 896-2056

24-25
ABILENE
Sleeping Beauty
 325/675-0303
 or 676-9609

27-31
ABILENE
The Foreigner
 325/670-1405

30-31
AMARILLO
 Amarillo Symphony
 806/376-8782

WICHITA FALLS
The Mousetrap
 940/322-5000

The Sound of Music
 940/723-9037

31
ABILENE
 Philharmonic
 Chocolate Fest
 325/677-6710

31-Apr 1
ABILENE
 Original Team Roping
 325/677-4376

WICHITA FALLS
 Arts & Crafts Show
 940/237-1510

PINEY WOODS

2
CONROE
 Richard Thompson
 936/441-SHOW

2
HUNTSVILLE
 General Sam Houston's
 Birthday
 & Texas Independence
 Celebration
 936/294-1832

3-4
LONGVIEW
 Train Show
 903/753-9512

Zonta Antique Show
 903/753-8103

**3-4, 10-11, 17-18,
 24-25, 31-Apr 1**
WHITEHOUSE
 Four Winds
 Renaissance Faire
 903/839-5271

10
LONGVIEW
 Longview Symphony
 903/236-9739

16-Apr 1
TYLER
 Azalea &
 Spring Flower Trail
 800/235-5712

17
JASPER
 Azalea Festival &
 Trail
 409/384-2762

17-31
NACOGDOCHES
 Azalea Trail
 888/653-3788

20
TEXARKANA
 All That Jazz
 903/702-4992

22-24
NACOGDOCHES
 PRCA Rodeo
 936/564-0849

23-24
LIBERTY
 Liberty Jubilee
 936/336-3684

23-Apr 1
CONROE
 Montgomery County
 Fair & Rodeo
 936/760-3631

24
LINDEN
 Texas Music Awards
 903/756-8944

NACOGDOCHES
 Volkswagen Show
 936/569-7821

24-25
TYLER
 Historic Tyler on Tour
 903/595-1960

WOODVILLE
 Festival of the Arts
 409/283-2272

27
LUFKIN
 Taste of Lufkin
 936/462-3707

QUITMAN
 Carson & Barnes
 Three-Ring Circus
 903/763-2701

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Cedar Park Convention & Visitors Bureau

30
CONROE
 Conroe Symphony
 936/760-2144

30-Apr 7
HUNTSVILLE
 Walker County Fair
 936/291-8763

31-Apr 1
THE WOODLANDS
 Spring Home & Garden Show
 832/274-3944

PRAIRIES AND LAKES

1-4
DALLAS
 (began Feb 27)
 Twelve Angry Men
 214/421-5678

1-4, 8-10
ATHENS
 I Hate Hamlet
 903/675-3095

1-11
ADDISON
 Out of the Loop Festival
 800/233-4766

ARLINGTON
 (began Feb 23)
 Oz!
 817/275-7661

1-4, 15-18, 22-25, 29-31
DALLAS
 Dallas Symphony Orchestra
 214/692-0203

1-31
FLATONIA
 Parade of Quilts
 361/865-3920

WEIMAR
 Parade of Quilts
 979/725-9511

2
DALLAS
 Arts & Letters Live:
 Mira Nair
 214/922-1219

GONZALES
 Texas Independence Day
 Celebration
 830/672-6532

SEGUIN
 Toast to Texas
 830/379-4833 or
 800/580-7322

2-3
ARGYLE
 Bluegrass Festival
 940/464-7434

DALLAS
 Texas Independence Day
 Music Festival
 214/823-3966

2-4
ATHENS
 Team Roping
 903/677-6354

DALLAS
 North Texas Irish Festival
 972/943-4624



On March 2-5, College Station's Olsen Field hosts the Domino's Pizza Aggie Baseball Classic, featuring Texas A&M, Saint Louis, New Mexico, and defending NCAA champion Oregon State.

2-5
COLLEGE STATION
 Domino's Pizza
 Aggie Baseball Classic
 979/845-2311 or
 888/992-4443

2-4, 9-11
SHERMAN
 The Secret Garden
 903/892-8818

2-12
LA GRANGE
 Texas Star Trail Ride
 512/413-9431
 or 517-8478

2-25
DALLAS
 Sleeping Beauty
 214/740-0051

3
ATHENS
 Fly Fish Texas
 903/676-2277

CEDAR HILL
 Trail Walk
 972/291-3900

COLUMBUS
 Sentimental Journey
 Orchestra
 979/732-8385

CORSICANA
 Corsicana Opry
 903/872-8226

DALLAS
 Classical Pianist
 Alexander Kobrin
 214/768-2787

ELGIN
 Market Day
 512/263-2512

FARMERSVILLE
 Farmers Market
 972/784-6846

LA GRANGE
 Barbecue Fly-In
 979/242-4056

RICHARDSON
 The Lennox International
 Young Artists Competition
 Winners
 972/234-4195

3
ROUND TOP
 The Chiara String Quartet
 979/249-3129

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

WAXAHACHIE
 Tin Roof Tango
 972/938-0404

3-4
DALLAS
 Texas State
 Daffodil Show
 214/515-6500

WASHINGTON
 Texas Independence Day
 Celebration
 979/878-2214

3-4, 9-10
CLIFTON
 The Cemetery Club
 254/675-2278

4
BRYAN
 Messina Hof
 Winemaker's Birthday Bash
 979/778-9463

WEIMAR
 Antique Appraisal Affair
 979/725-9511

4, 11, 18, 25
BRENHAM
 Farmers Market
 979/836-9466

5
GIDDINGS
 Country Music Monday
 979/542-2932

6
FORT WORTH
 Fort Worth
 Symphony Orchestra Gala
 with Renée Fleming
 817/665-6000

7-11
DALLAS
 Hamlet
 214/768-2787

7-Apr 1
DALLAS
 Fences
 214/522-8499

8
DALLAS
 TheatreWorks USA
 214/880-0137

9-10
DALLAS
 Noche Flamenca
 214/768-3129

Savor Dallas
 866/277-7920 or
 888/392-7705

IRVING
 Dallas Divas!
 972/252-2787

10
BRENHAM
 Home & Garden Festival
 888/273-6426

CLEBURNE
 Lawn & Garden Show
 817/793-4625
 or 866-2268

COLUMBUS
 Stafford Opera House
 Dinner Theater
 979/732-5135

CORSICANA
 Gospel Music at
 Martin's Music Hall
 903/872-8226

FLATONIA
 Market Day
 361/865-3920

McKINNEY
 Second Saturday
 on the Square
 972/548-7830

RICHARDSON
 Plano Symphony Orchestra
 972/473-7262

10-11
BELTON
 Arts & Crafts Show
 512/441-7133

CAT SPRING
 Antiques & Garden Show
 979/865-5618

10-11
FORT WORTH
 Dolly Johnson
 Antique Show
 254/622-2858

10-Apr 8
LOCKHART
 Renaissance Fair
 512/358-4490

10-Apr 15
DALLAS
 Dallas Blooms
 214/515-6500

10-May 5
COLUMBUS
 Art & Architecture
 979/732-8385

11
ATHENS
 Henderson County YMCA
 Triathlon
 903/264-9622

12
ATHENS
 Best in Texas
 Barrel Racing
 903/677-6354

16-17
DALLAS
 Festival of Black Dance
 214/743-2440

16-18
FORT WORTH
 Fort Worth Symphony
 Orchestra
 817/665-6000

16-22
DALLAS
 James & the Giant Peach
 214/740-0051

16-31
IRVING
 An American Daughter
 972/252-ARTS

17
BELTON
 Texas Western Swing
 Fiddling Showcase
 254/939-8390

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WWW.CI.CLEBURNE.TX.US

17
CHAPPELL HILL
Head of the Hills
Bicycle Ride
979/836-3659

DUBLIN
St. Patrick Day Festival
254/445-3422
or 485-1637

GAINESVILLE
Frank Buck's
Birthday Celebration
940/727-9097

LA GRANGE
Best Little Art Show
in Texas
979/968-8701

WAXAHACHIE
Ellis County Master Gardener
Lawn & Garden Expo
972/825-5175

WEST
VFD Barbecue Cookoff
254/826-3570

17-18
ATHENS
Paint Horse Show
903/677-6354

18
DALLAS
Chamber Music
at the Nasher
214/692-0203

19
STEPHENVILLE
Classical Pianist
Davide Cabassi
254/968-9634

20
FORT WORTH
Say Goodnight, Gracie
817/212-4280

20-25
DALLAS
My Sweet Potato Pie
214/743-2440

22-25
FORT WORTH
Simply Sinatra
817/665-6000

23
DALLAS
Arts & Letters Live:
Richard Ford
214/922-1219

23-24
FORT WORTH
TCU Jazz Festival
817/257-7640

ROUND TOP
Herbal Forum
979/249-3129

23, 25
DALLAS
Meadows Symphony
Orchestra
214/768-2787

23-25
LA GRANGE/AUSTIN
Get Your Guts in Gear
Bicycle Ride
718/875-2123

23-25, 30-Apr 1
GRAPEVINE
A Day Out with
Thomas the Tank Engine
214/428-0101 or
866/468-7630

24
ATHENS
Henderson County
Performing Arts
Music Series
903/675-3095

BELLVILLE
Spring Creek
Bluegrass Festival
979/865-3407

CEDAR HILL
Bird Walk
972/291-3900

DALLAS
Dennis Miller
214/373-8000

Trumpeter John Holt
214/922-1200

GRANBURY
Brazos River Music Fest
817/578-8778

WEATHERFORD
North Texas GospelGrass
866/772-5633

24-25
GRANBURY
General Granbury's
Birthday Celebration
800/950-2212

SALADO
Gospel Festival
254/947-5100
or 947-9205

WASHINGTON
True Texas Women
936/878-2213

24-25, 31-Apr 1
PALESTINE
Texas
Dogwood Trails Celebration
903/723-3014 or
800/659-3484

25
CORSICANA
Spring Garden Tour
903/874-2015

SEGUIN
Mid Texas Symphony
830/372-8089 or
800/580-7322

26
DALLAS
Pinocchio
214/743-2440

HAMILTON
Spring Fling
254/372-4618

26-Apr 1
ATHENS
Henderson County
Livestock Show
903/677-6354

26-Apr 14
GREENVILLE
Bunny Hop Easter Tour
903/455-2651

28-31
ROUND TOP
Round Top Antiques Fair
979/249-4042

28-Apr 7
WARRENTON
Antique Show
979/249-3141

28-Apr 8
LA GRANGE
Antique Show
979/249-4042

29-31
ADDISON
North Texas Jazz Festival
800/233-4766

PALESTINE
Dulcimer & Old-Time Music
Festival
903/723-1914

29-Apr 1
DENTON
Texas Storytelling Festival
940/387-8336

30
BELLVILLE
Austin County Crawfish Boil
979/865-3407

DALLAS
Meadows Wind Ensemble
214/768-2787

GRAND PRAIRIE
Jerry Lee Lewis
214/373-8000 or
972/647-5700

McKINNEY
The Amazing Kreskin
972/542-0002

30-31
DALLAS
Comedy Night at the Muse
214/743-2440

30-Apr 1
DALLAS
Texas Ballet Theater's
Mozart at the Majestic
877/212-4280

FORT WORTH
TCU Spring Dance Concert
817/257-7615

30-Apr 1
TEMPLE
Temple Jazz Festival
254/298-8590

30-Apr 7
ROUND TOP
Antique Show
979/968-9209

31
BURTON
Hilltop Ride
979/289-3752

DECATUR
Main Street Easter
940/627-2741

DENISON
Arts & Wine Renaissance
903/464-4452

McKINNEY
Comedian Laura Bartlett
972/542-0002

MIDLOTHIAN
Easter Egg Hunt
972/723-8600

ROCKWALL
Easter Egg Hunt
972/771-5733

SEGUIN
Main Street Trade Day
830/401-2448 or
800/580-7322

WACO
Race for the Cure
254/405-2518

31-Apr 1
DENISON
Spring Art Tour
903/465-1551

31-Apr 21
CLIFTON
Viewpoint
Art Show
254/675-3561

SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

1-3
FALFURRIAS
(began Feb 28)
Brooks County Fair
361/325-3333

2-3
LAREDO
Border Olympics
956/795-2200

4
LAREDO
Laredo
Philharmonic Orchestra
String Serenade
956/326-2654

9-11
COTULLA
Wild Hog Cookoff
830/879-2326 or
800/256-2326

9-18
MERCEDES
Rio Grande Valley
Livestock Show
956/565-2456
or 968-2102

11
SAN ANTONIO
Irish Heritage Day
210/342-5334

16
SAN ANTONIO
Dyeing o' the River Green
210/227-4262

16-25
EAGLE PASS
International
Friendship Festival
830/773-3224 or
888/355-3224

17
EAGLE PASS
Simplemente Lara
830/773-3224 or
888/355-3224

18
SAN ANTONIO
St. Patrick's Day Parade
210/227-4262

22-24
THREE RIVERS
Live Oak County Fair
361/786-3254

24
WESLACO
Texas Rio Grande Valley
Onion Festival
888/968-2102

29
SAN ANTONIO
Savor the Arts
210/224-1848

31
ALICE
Dia del Mariachi
361/664-2981

THREE RIVERS
Salsa Festival
361/786-4330

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Readers RECOMMEND...

TIPS FROM OUR READERS

ALFREDO'S Mexican Restaurant near Lampasas is definitely a noteworthy place to eat. My husband and I like "Alfredo's Plate" (a combination platter that includes tacos, enchiladas, chile con queso, and guacamole), but any of the other combination plates, enchilada plates, or fajitas will please any Mexican-food lover. They have a large selection of weekday lunch specials, too. Owner Alfredo Suarez uses only quality ingredients in his food. The service and food are well worth the hour drive for our weekly Mexican-food fix.

RICHARD AND MARILYN CURTIS, *Bertram*
Alfredo's Mexican Restaurant is 6 1/2 miles east of Lampasas at 8190 E. US 190; 512/556-4447.

WE WERE in Hudson Oaks [east of Weatherford] recently and ate at **Boo Ray's of New Orleans**. Their Cajun food was great. We tried the mesquite-grilled chicken stuffed with shrimp and crab.

LUCILLE KEITH, *Fort Worth*

Boo Ray's of New Orleans is at 3039 Fort Worth Hwy. (US 180); 817/599-6266.

MY WIFE and I travel Texas regularly and are always looking for restaurants with special local flavor. Imagine our pleasant surprise when we found such a place in our hometown of **McKinney**. Located just off the square, **Coffee N Cream** serves gourmet coffee, pastries, and Blue Bell Ice Cream. The decor is in keeping with the style of the town's many historical buildings (many of which date to the late 1800s), the staff is warm and friendly, and the shop is equipped with wireless Internet. It's truly a great place to visit with others, or to while away an hour by watching passersby outside. We love it!

DON AND BARBARA RENSHAW, *McKinney*
Coffee N Cream is at 120 W. Louisiana St.; 972/542-6767.

THE ROOSTER Andrews Chicken Sandwich at **Ruby's BBQ** in Austin is a sublime masterpiece. Don't believe me? Try one. And while you're at it, sample their black-bean-and-chicken tacos and another house specialty, Ruby's Home

OVER Christmas, I tried a new product made in Austin called **Sticky Toffee Pudding**. Really buttery and delicious! It also comes in three other flavors—English Lemon Pudding, Molten Chocolate Baby-Cake, and Sticky Ginger Pudding. Yum.

SABRINA O'CONNOR,
Austin

Sticky Toffee Pudding Company products are sold at Central Market

and Whole Foods stores Texas-wide. Order by phone at 512/472-0039, or online at www.stickytoffeepuddingcompany.com.



The Sticky Toffee Pudding Company's signature product (above) is a "scrumptious, moist cake made with fresh dates, espresso, and vanilla in a buttery toffee sauce."

Fries (pan-fried with rosemary, bell peppers, onions, and mushrooms). Heavenly!

R. GORDON-ROBERTS, *Dallas*

Ruby's BBQ is at 512 W. 29th St.; 512/477-1651; www.rubysbbq.com.

I WAS passing through **Burnet** last week and ate at **Spokes**, a relatively new restaurant. I had a huge pork-rib plate with a stuffed potato, large salad, and a bowl of peach cobbler that could compete in any county fair. Durn-it Burnet, you locals need to patronize this place and keep it in business, because the food was way upscale, delicious, nutritious, and reasonably priced.

CANDICE DUCOIN, *Round Rock*

Spokes is at 635 Texas 29 West; 512/756-4100; www.spokesburnetexas.com.

MY SIDEKICK and I are big men: 12 feet 10 inches, 570 pounds all told, and we are forever on a quest for the perfect chicken-fried steak. Not so long ago, we traveled throughout the Pacific Northwest in search of chicken-fried steak superior to the ones we currently enjoy at the **Hitchin Post Steakhouse Restaurant** in **Ozona**. We did not find such a steak during our travels.

JOHN F. VAUGHAN, *San Angelo*

The Hitchin Post Steakhouse Restaurant is at 1301 Sheffield Rd.; 325/392-5280.

I WOULD like to tell you about a store/restaurant in **Wills Point** owned by Scott and Terri Davenport called **Robertson's Hams/The Red Barn**. Upon entering the building, you will be greeted by friendly people who treat customers like family. A few years back, the Davenports added a great country restaurant that offers an all-you-can-eat shrimp and catfish buffet. Scott is the cook, and what a cook he is! His food is served fresh and hot and includes shrimp, fried catfish, pinto beans, coleslaw, potato salad, and more. The desserts are made from scratch and are out of this world! Scott makes the best apple and peach cobblers and bread pudding. There is an ice-cream machine as well. You can enjoy your meal indoors or outside on a picnic table. Afterwards, you can visit the country store and choose from their selection of well-known Robertson's Hams. This place is well worth the stop!

ELISA BRYAN, *Deer Park*

Robertson's Hams/The Red Barn is on I-20 at FM 47, Exit 516; 903/873-8645; www.robertsonsham-willspoint.com.

Next month... We'll have a wild time with our annual **wildflower-photo spectacular**, a story on top **motorcycle rides**, and a **TH Moment** with **Kris Kristofferson**. Keep turning the pages for a photographic slice of the quiet life in **Quanah** and the gastronomic excitement at **Houston's Grand Wine & Food Affair**.

IF YOU KNOW OF A NOTEWORTHY LONE STAR ATTRACTION, RESTAURANT, EVENT, OR PRODUCT, WRITE OR E-MAIL: Readers Recommend, *Texas Highways*, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009. E-mail: letters05@texashighways.com. Space constraints prevent us from publishing every suggestion we receive. We reserve the right to edit items. Because we're unable to check out every item, and because hours vary and details can change, please call ahead for more information.



© LAURENCE PARENT

window on
TEXAS

EARLY-MORNING SUNSHINE, filtered through a light fog, bathes a stand of live oak trees in Hays County in an eerie light.

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

