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**DEPARTMENT TOURIST BUREAUS** continued to serve *Texas* visitors at record levels in February.....8.8% more than a year ago.....and the 190,299 easily surpassed the previous February high of nearly 150,000 in 1979.....*Winter Texans* at the *Valley* bureau near *Harlingen* numbered more than 41,000.....but the greatest increases in a comparison with February 1981 occurred at *Gainesville*, 33.3%; *Laredo*, 32.7%, and *Orange*, 29.0%.....not included in the February bureau total is the number of visitors served at the *Capitol* because of fluctuations occurring during legislative session years and off-session years.....the nearly 20,000 assisted there brings the February total to well over 200,000.

**THE LATEST COPY** of the *Official Texas Highway Travel Map* includes NOAA weather radio (NWR) information.....a

fact noted by **Robert Cole**, chief of meteorological services for NOAA's *Southern Region* in *Fort Worth*.....**Cole** wrote, "We remain grateful to your department for its continued support for the the NWR program by having weather radio receivers available in the *Texas* tourist and information centers for use by the traveling public".....and expressed his pleasure at having the NWR information on the maps.

**TRAVEL & INFORMATION** Division Director **Tom Taylor** met with District Engineer **Ray Lindholm** at the *Paris* district in mid-February.....to discuss relocation of the *Denison* tourist bureau when *US 75* is realigned.

A **NEW** *Capitol Guide* brochure has been produced by the division.....although the casual viewer won't be able to distinguish it from previous versions.....the pictures are new but only slightly different.

**MOST TRAVEL INDUSTRY** observers feel that the recent devaluation of the *Mexican* peso will affect *Texas* and all the *U. S.* since it will increase the cost of out-of-*Mexico* vacations.....but the observers believe that the devaluation will make that nation an attractive vacation spot.....a late February quote reflected pesos closing at 45 to the dollar.....although some travel agencies believe *Mexican* shopkeepers will raise prices, others disagree.....**Richard Dayoub**, an owner of *Buck Rogers Travel Service* in *El Paso*, said that with *Mexico's* sagging tourism, shopkeepers there will be "very careful" not to overcharge vacationers.....bank officers in *El Paso* advised those embarking on a *Mexican* vacation to take *U. S.* traveler's checks in dollars for exchange there.....and, above all, not to pay with credit cards since a delayed billing might find the vacationer settling up at a less favorable rate of exchange.

**DAN YOUNG**, manager of *USTS* regional/state/city affairs, wrote to say he is leaving as the new *U. S. Travel & Tourism Administration* changes direction.....**Young**, a long-time friend of the *Texas* travel industry, has accepted a position with the export promotion arm of the *Department of Commerce*.

**CONCRETE** is already being poured for the three-level *Don D. Harrington Petroleum Wing* at the *Panhandle-Plains Museum* in *Canyon*.....and construction of the 75,000-square-foot addition could be completed within a year.....meanwhile, the search is on for "1,001 things," according to **Don Abbe**, assistant to **Bobbie Weaver** who is curator of history at the museum.....**Weaver** said he had found one element missing when he visited the handful of petroleum museums in the nation—the human element.....and he said that is what they want to show at the new wing.....along with honest-to-goodness equipment used from the 1900s on.

A **FUTURE LAKE** on the *Palo Duro Creeks* near *Spearman* is the number one project for the *Tulsa* district of the *Corps of Engineers*.....a report on the project, which would create a lake comparable to *Lake Meredith* according to one of four plans being considered, will go to the *Corps'* regional office in *Dallas*.....if approved there, the project outline would go to the *Secretary of the Army* and thence to *Congress* for funding.....the proposed \$60 million lake would be 9.5 miles north of *Spearman* in *Hansford County*.....it would provide municipal water supplies for several communities, a water recreation area and flood control.

**APRIL 17** is the date for the official dedication of the *National Cowgirl Hall of Fame* in *Hereford*.....*Western Heritage* honorees will be inducted at the 1:30 p.m. ceremony.....and the third annual benefit ball, the *Rhinestone Roundup*, will be held that evening.

**IF WACO** and the *Texas Aeronautics Commission* have their way, more than 750,000 people will visit the city for eight days in the spring of 1984.....the attraction would be a biennial aerospace exposition at the old *James Connally AFB* about nine miles northeast of *Waco*.....the exposition, conceived by *TAC* Director **Clay Wilkins** and being coordinated by a businessmen's task force in *Waco*, would be aimed at the education of visitors concerning the variety of *Texas* aerospace activities—military, commercial and private.

**SIX FLAGS'** new ride, to debut this spring, is called the *Texas Cliffhanger*.....and **Bruce Neal** describes it as "like stepping off the top of a nine-story building".....the ride's initial phase is an elevator-like trip to the top of a 128-foot tower.....followed by a 10-second pause to allow riders to enjoy the scenery (or contemplate the forthcoming drop).....the terminal phase ends with riders flat on their backs—according to advance press notices.

**STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

**TWO U.T. ARCHAEOLOGISTS** have discovered what is thought to be the oldest existing cabin in the state.....in *Rusk County*.....working under the *Texas Historical Commission*, **Jack Jackson** and **Henry Moncure** were on an annual search for *Rusk County* artifacts and historical buildings when they found the cabin in the brush in the north-eastern area of the county.....the exact location is being withheld to thwart vandalism until the *THC* can move the cabin.....it has been documented that the cabin is that of **Thomas Jefferson Walling**, built in 1841.....**Walling** was in the *Battle of San Jacinto*.....previously considered the earliest cabin was one built in 1843 near *Glenfawn* in south *Rusk County*.

**COUNTERPOINT** to the often-seen sign in businesses, "*Se Habla Espanol*," is a bright red-and-white bumper sticker "*In New Braunfels, Sprechen Wir Deutsch*".....also being displayed in several stores and restaurants in the city, *New Braunfels'* winter visitors from northern states have found them popular souvenirs.

**A GUIDED TRAM** tour is in operation on weekends at the *Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge* near *Alamo* in the *Rio Grande Valley*.....four trips of seven miles each are scheduled each Saturday and Sunday through April 11.....during that time, only bicycles and those walking will be permitted on refuge roads on weekends.....adults can take the 90-minute tour for \$2, children for \$1.

**HOUSTON** and *Arizona* are sinking according to satellite data.....geophysicist **Ronald Brooks** says the drop has been up to 12.5 feet in some *Arizona* areas.....and as much as 7.5 in *Houston*.....**Brooks** says the sinkage is caused by the population explosion that has placed huge demands on the underground water supply in areas where the drop has occurred.....early satellite data showed parts of *Houston* to be rising—but it turned out that downtown skyscrapers were reflecting the satellite's beams and giving false readings.

**WESLACO AREA CofC** merges with the *Weslaco CofC* next month.....**Jim Luck**, appointed Feb. 1, is the exec VP and manager.....the *Weslaco Area CofC*, known previously as the *Mexican-American CofC*, grew out of the *North-side Merchants Association* which became active in 1975.

**AROUND THE BUREAUS**—An antique *Eclipse* windmill will greet 1982 visitors at the *Judge Roy Bean Visitor Center* in *Langtry*.....it was located in *Shamrock* in far *North Texas*.....if you come across a copy of "*Unknown America*" by **Andrew H. Malcolm**, you'll see a picture of a windmill on the jacket cover—and in the background stands **Jack Skiles**, supervisor of the *Langtry* facility.....an emergency at the *Waskom* bureau on Feb. 20 kept the staff after hours.....when a young woman visitor had a miscarriage in the rest room.....**Counselors Melissa Heard** and **Diane Foster** assisted a nurse, who fortunately was in the bureau at the time.....the counselors called for an ambulance and spent anxious moments calming the by-then seriously ill woman.....the nurse complimented her counselor aides.....**Laredo Bureau Supervisor Leo Garza** heard many travelers tell of being caught in snowstorms which hit the northern U. S.—so many, he has become convinced there'll be a large increase next year in the number of northerners visiting *Texas*.....**Vicky Gonzales** has replaced **Counselor Estela Sanchez** at the *Laredo* bureau.....**Gina Hendon** is a new counselor at *Waskom* in place of **Gina Britt**.

**BOX SCORE** — The busy counselors at the **Orange** bureau continued to serve an average of 1,000 tourists a day.....but the 31,000-plus served there was overshadowed by the 41,000-plus *Winter Texans* stopping at the **Valley** bureau.....the 190,299 total for February means 1982 has started out with two months of record numbers stopping at *DHT* tourist information bureaus.

Bureau	Month Total Visitors	Variation*	Year Total Visitors	Variation*	Bureau	Month Total Visitors	Variation*	Year Total Visitors	Variation*
Amarillo	7,668	+ 7.6%	14,997	+ 0.6%	Orange	31,080	+29.0%	63,228	+25.3%
Anthony	18,861	+ 9.6%	37,590	+ 9.1%	Texarkana	17,010	-13.1%	36,771	- 8.1%
Denison	9,741	0.0%	20,136	- 3.0%	Valley **	41,280	+ 2.9%	74,136	+ 6.4%
Gainesville	17,544	+33.3%	38,529	+36.1%	Waskom	18,105	+ 8.5%	35,895	+ 0.01%
Langtry	7,221	+ 2.2%	13,242	- 0.8%	Wichita Falls	9,234	- 1.3%	18,357	- 6.7%
Laredo	12,555	+32.7%	24,135	+26.4%	<b>Bureau Totals</b>	190,299	+ 9.6%	377,016	+ 8.8%
Capitol	19,944		42,333		Austin Office (mail, phone, walk-ins)	11,679	-46.8%	24,580	-35.7%

\*Compared to last year



STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS  
AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION  
TRAVEL AND INFORMATION DIVISION  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701

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