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LIONS AND TIGERS AND ELEPHANTS will surround St. Nick this year at Foley's 35th annual Thanksgiving Day parade in Houston. This year's parade theme is a colorful salute to the 100 years of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus. Parade grand master will be the celebrated **Gunther Gebel-Williams**, billed as the world's greatest animal trainer. Wearing priceless costumes from the circus museum in Sarasota, FL, Foley's employees will join circus acts in bringing Santa Claus to Houston. The store hosts an annual clown school to teach employees how to apply make-up and perform like real clowns during the parade. Famous real circus clowns will also participate. The hour-long parade will be televised starting at 9:45 a.m. This year's extravaganza includes floats and giant helium-filled balloons, a far cry from the one-float event that marked Foley's first Thanksgiving parade in 1950.

"WAGONS HO!" soon will be heard again as the Texas Wagon Train Association's historic wagon train circles Texas for six months during 1986. The journey will cover over 2,800 miles during the first half of 1986 to commemorate Texas' Sesquicentennial birthday celebration. The wagons will form up at Sulphur Springs in northeast Texas on Jan. 2, 1986, and travel southward to Lufkin, Houston and west to Austin. Subsequent legs of the route will include Corpus Christi, San Antonio, San Angelo, Fort Stockton and El Paso. The creaking caravan will loop back through Odessa-Midland, Lubbock, Armarillo, Abilene and Wichita Falls, finally arriving in Dallas-Fort Worth on July 3. The association is looking for trail riders, cowboys, cowgirls and teamsters to participate in the historic event. For additional information contact Ms. **Jan France** at P.O. Box 323, Sulphur Springs, 75482 or call (214) 945-2504.

A DRIVE IS ON to enlist Texas nonprofit associations in planning the state's 1986 Sesquicentennial celebration. Over 2,000 associations of varied interests have been contacted and more than 300 have indicated they will become involved and join the 50 already sanctioned. Any nonprofit organization that would like to participate should write **Quentin McGown**, Program Development Officer, Texas 1986 Sesquicentennial Commission, P.O. Box 1986, Austin, 78767 or call (512) 475-1986.

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE Department officials have announced that brand-new Brazos Bend State Park, formerly known as the Hale Ranch site, is open for visitation. Covering nearly 5,000 acres of Brazos River bottoms and live-oak woods, the unusual park is accented by oxbow lakes and marshes populated with some formidable specimens of the American alligator. Other wildlife includes white-tailed deer, coyotes, Russian boar, shore and wading birds, and migratory waterfowl. Facilities include 120 picnic sites, 35 campsites, 42 multiuse campsites, 14 screened shelters, 20 primitive campsites, and a large group-dining hall. The entrance is on F.M. 762, approximately 28 miles southwest of Houston. For reservations or additional information contact the park superintendent by mail at Route 1, Box 849, Needville, 77461 or by calling (409)553-3243.

LLOYD BOOTHE, OF THE LAND ACQUISITIONS

Division of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, recently confirmed the purchase of 976.75 acres and the potential purchase of another 677 acres in south Liberty County. But don't start loading your camping gear just yet. The state park that just opened south of Houston (above) was first announced in 1976. The new Liberty County park will be in an area known as the Davis Hill Salt Dome. The announcement quieted rumors that had been circulating concerning the eventual pupose of the land. Local speculation cited everything from a Disneyland-type development to a massive hazardous waste disposal site and the announcement of the new park silenced the speculation. County Judge **Dempsie Henley** said, "We will welcome...them (the park) to the area, and this will be a fine addition to our county."

"WE TAKE TOURISM FOR GRANTED," said Texas A&M researcher **Carlton Van Doren**, "but in spite of an inflationary economy and two energy crises over the last decade, we are riding the crest of a (travel) spending spree that is without precedent in the world." He noted that tourism's underutilized potential can be attributed to its fragmented nature. "The industry is out there in bits and pieces that aren't working together as cohesively as they could be," he said. "Additional research could help pull the pieces together, but that will take time and additional support." Authorities currently estimate that Texas tourism employs 284,000 people and generates an annual income of some \$14 billion. Expansion of the industry could take up slack from Texas' declining petroleum production and soften the tax burden for all Texas citizens.

AN ESCAPE from today's hustle and bustle is offered in Marathon at the Gage Hotel, in an atmosphere of the early 1920s. "We try to project the feeling of being in the past, when staying in a hotel was a place to rest and meet other people," says **Rita Martini** of the restored Gage Hotel. "We don't offer what other hotels do. I guess 'unique' is as good a word as any. We really do go back in time." The historic landmark was built in the late '20s by **Alfred Gage**, a West Texas rancher and banker. Purchased by **J.P. Bryan** of Houston in 1982, the charmingly restored hostelry is once again serving travelers in the far reaches of West Texas.



STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

TRAVEL AND INFORMATION DIVISION • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701



FEDERAL WILDERNESS areas in Texas will be almost doubled thanks to a bill passed in the U.S. Senate. The bill, already approved by the House, will put 34,000 acres of forestland under wilderness designation. "It will be the only federally protected wilderness area that's within reach of the majority of the state's residents," said Rep. **John Bryant** (D-Dallas) the bill's sponsor. Before the additional legislation was passed, the only wilderness area in the state was in remote Guadalupe Mountains National Park. Under the new wilderness bill, five sections of land in four East Texas national forests will be protected from commercial timber cutting and development. Ten million Texans live within a five-hour drive of at least one of the five wilderness areas. President Reagan is expected to sign the bill.

A NEW VISITOR SITE: Five acres of rural land near Brenham have been transformed into a re-created Old West town, the dream of **Ray Winkelmann**. An authority on historical restoration, **Winkelmann** is a lecturer and consultant on the subject, as well as an action-oriented entrepreneur in the Texas tradition. He located ancient homes and buildings from a wide area, moved them to the Washington County site, restored and furnished them to the appearance of a century ago. Plank sidewalks front a general store, the Jezebel Saloon, Scallywag Emporium, and the Stage Stop Restaurant. Gift and antique shops, an old-fashioned ice cream parlor, trail rides, barbecue and chili cookoffs are among forthcoming features planned at the "town" appropriately named Winkelmann, Texas. The visitor site, four miles east of Brenham on U.S. 290, is open regularly.

THE NEW East Texas Group Tour Manual is out and it's bigger, more complete and more colorful than last year. The manual introduces motorcoach operators to East Texas and assists them in packaging and selling bus tours. The 72-page format includes calendars of East Texas events for 1985 and 1986, and five sample itineraries. The accepted rule of thumb in figuring tour revenue is \$2500-\$3500 per night, per city, for each motorcoach with some 44 people. The manual is distributed through membership of NTA, ABA and to unaffiliated tour operators, bus operators, and travel agents. It's another outstanding product of the East Texas Chamber of Commerce, **Howard W. Rosser**, tourism director. For additional information write: Celso Harper, Group Travel Coordinator, East Texas Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 1592, Longview, Texas 75606, or phone (214) 757-4444.

THE DECEMBER ISSUE OF *Texas Highways* magazine features food for the holiday season. Up in Old City Park in Dallas we'll show you how to prepare a banquet by cooking over an open fire. For those who prefer modern appliances, we've adapted the recipes. Over at Eilenberger's Bakery in Palestine, we'll tell you how a German immigrant began his fruitcake business. The bakery's fruitcake and pecan cake have won international awards for excellence. The Panhandle-Plains Museum in Canyon will be highlighted, as well as a candlelight tour of old homes and a church in Sam Houston Park, Houston. December's *Texas Highways* personality feature covers a character who looks like Wild Bill Hickock, runs a trading post, and can spin a yarn with the best of 'em. Last but not least, this issue will tell you how to make the best of Christmas poinsettias and maintain their beauty into 1985.

BOX SCORE - Denison visitor totals are up again this month and they can thank the construction on Oklahoma highways (that temporarily closed rest room facilities) for the influx. Laredo showed a drop in January-to-date figures that was due mostly to a change in regulations controlling purchase of truck permits. A complete bureau-by-bureau tabulation follows.

Bureau	Month Total Visitors	Variation*	Year Total Visitors	Variation*	Bureau	Month Total Visitors	Variation*	Year Total Visitors	Variation*
Amarillo	13,464	- 3.5%	121,455	- 4.6%	Orange	27,837	-15.1%	327,966	- 1.7%
Anthony	15,756	- 17.6%	173,535	-17.1%	Texarkana	26,082	+14.6%	231,975	- 3.7%
Denison	15,972	+19.1%	150,204	+17.3%	Valley	18,060	+ 2.1%	237,582	-10.8%
Gainesville	15,111	-18.4%	169,410	- 7.0%	Waskom	24,168	+11.6%	233,649	- 0.8%
Langtry	5,571	+ 7.9%	73,008	- 2.9%	Wichita Falls	12,543	- 6.4%	128,265	- 0.8%
Laredo	11,802	- 2.1%	152,517	+ 2.0%	Bureau Totals	186,366	- 2.2%	1,999,566	- 3.7%
Capitol	30,492	+ 2.7%	374,793	+ 7.5%	Austin Office (mail, phone, walk-ins)	6,813	- 0.8%	83,240	+ 0.8%

*Compared to last year



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