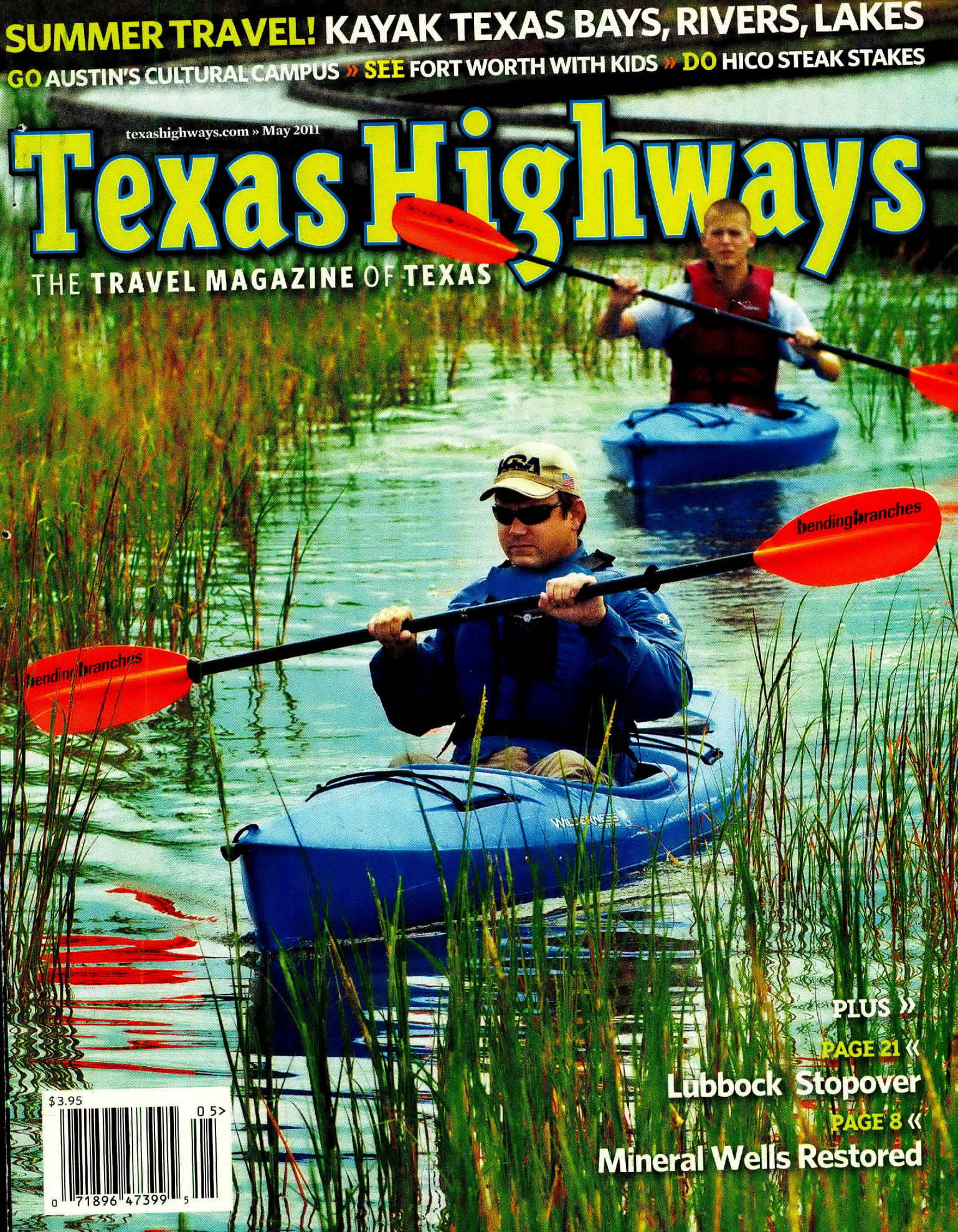


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texashighways.com » May 2011

# Texas Highways

THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE OF TEXAS



PLUS »

PAGE 21 «

**Lubbock Stopover**

PAGE 8 «

**Mineral Wells Restored**

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This painting of a Standard station in Amarillo was inspired by artist Ed Ruscha's fascination with automobiles and driving the open road. Ruscha embarked on his first road trip — from Oklahoma to California—in 1956.

## The Art of the Road Trip

**T**HE TEXAS ROAD TRIP is certainly not extinct, but such expeditions just as certainly do not cross the same landscape as when Ed Ruscha painted *Standard Station, Amarillo, Texas*, in 1963. The painting is included in the exhibition of his work—titled *Road Tested*—at The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth. The Modern's Chief Curator, Michael Auping, interviewed Ed Ruscha, and explains that Ruscha and his friend Mason Williams blasted out of Oklahoma City in 1956, driving Ruscha's 1950 Ford sedan all the way to Los Angeles. Because the pair of adventurers followed Route 66, their pilgrimage took them through Amarillo. Hence, the painting of the Standard station.

"I think a lot of the images that Ed would use in his art were formed by that drive," Auping explains, "the long horizons, the pumpjacks, and the gas stations. Ed made the Standard Station into a pop icon the same way Andy Warhol made the Campbell's soup can into a pop icon."

The Ruscha exhibition closes on April 17, but the Modern is always a wonderful and inspiring destination. Not only because the Modern is fabulous, but also because of the other museums nearby, including the Kimbell Art Museum, the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, and the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History.

In this issue, *TH* features another cultural district, Austin's Cultural Campus, which includes four University of Texas museums and the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum. A visit to the museums becomes a walking tour of the University campus and the Capitol neighborhood, so plan to make it a part of your next trip to Austin.

With the summer months coming up, we all start thinking about getting out of town, perhaps like Ed Ruscha. In describing that decades-ago road trip, Michael Auping says, "There was certainly a sense of adventure and possibly even a slight sense of danger. In those days, a gas station appeared like a tiny metropolis. There was always an old guy and a young guy working there, a peanut machine, and a soda machine with Orange Crush and Coca-Cola. Today," he adds, "the sense of adventure is still there, and I'd say kids might feel a similar sense of wonder when they pull in to today's super stations, where you can get anything you want."

I hope that sense of road trip adventure still rings true. And that's "adventure" with a capital "A."

*Charles J. Lohrmann*

Charles J. Lohrmann, Editor

IMAGE CREDIT: ED RUSCHA, STANDARD STATION, AMARILLO, TEXAS, 1963, OIL ON CANVAS, 65 X 124 INCHES (165.1 X 314.9 CM), COLLECTION HOOD MUSEUM OF ART, DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, HANOVER, NH

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COVER STORY

# 26

## Paddle Texas

Kayak trails offer a way to enjoy nature from a new perspective—from the surface of one of Texas' bays, bayous, or rivers.

Text by **MELISSA GASKILL**

Photographs by **KEVIN STILLMAN**



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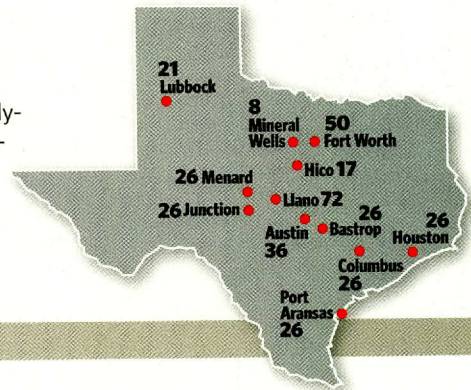
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A walking tour of five diverse museums—four of them on the University of Texas campus and a fifth between UT and the State Capitol—explores art, history, literature, natural sciences, politics, photography, and more.

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Text by **KITTY CRIDER**

Photographs by **ROBERT W. HART**

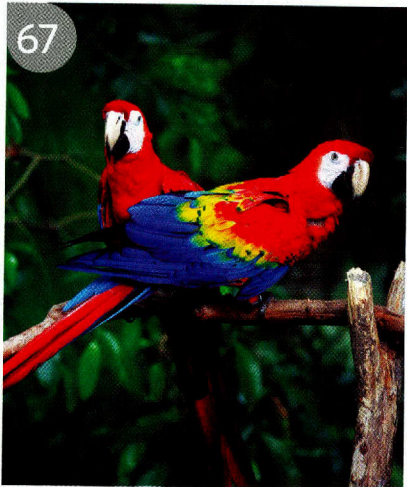




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### About Our Covers

**FRONT:** Kayakers paddle among the marshes of Matagorda Bay, near the mouth of the Colorado River at Matagorda Peninsula, one of the state's prime birding areas. **Photo by Kevin Stillman**

**BACK:** A series of etched-glass panels piques the interest of passersby at the Harry Ransom Center, one of five museums that make up Austin's new "Cultural Campus." **Photo by Michael Amador**

### Photographic Prints Available

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

# galveston island



## Join Galveston Island for the 25th Annual AIA Sandcastle Competition



For the 25th year, Galveston Island's East Beach will showcase some of the best in sandcastle artistry as the annual American Institute of Architects Sandcastle Competition returns June 4. Come see how piles of sand are transformed into imaginative sculptures as teams of architects, designers and engineers take their tools to the beach. This year, more than 60 teams have their eyes and shovels set on winning the prestigious Gold Bucket Award and you can witness the action! Visit [www.aiasandcastle.com](http://www.aiasandcastle.com) for details.

## Family Fun on Galveston Island

Trying to satisfy the entire family can be an exhausting job for even the most veteran of vacation planners – but the stress stops on Galveston Island. This unique beach-town, just 50 minutes from Houston, has entertainment and attractions that will please mom, dad and the kids.

For starters, the entire family can enjoy fun on the beach. Galveston Island has 32 miles of beaches where you can splash, relax or surf. Out on the water, you can dolphin watch on the island's popular harbor tours or go sailing or fishing.

For adventure, kids of all ages will have a blast exploring the pyramids of Moody Gardens or Schlitterbahn Galveston Island Waterpark while the island's rich history can be explored at museums and attractions like Bishop's Palace, Moody Mansion, Lone Star Flight Museum, Pier 21 Theater showing *The Great Storm* or even upon the 1877 Tall Ship ELISSA.

After family fun together, mom will love the island's fabulous spas and historic downtown shopping district while dad can take his clubs to the beautiful Moody Gardens Golf Course or the Galveston Country Club.

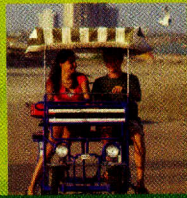
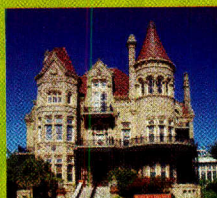
Lodging in Galveston accommodates every budget and length of stay. Plan a week in one of the island's beach houses and condos or take a quick escape in a hotel or historic bed and breakfast.



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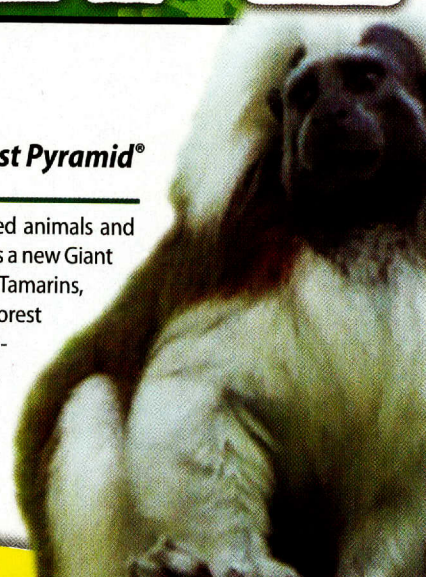


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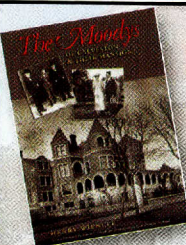
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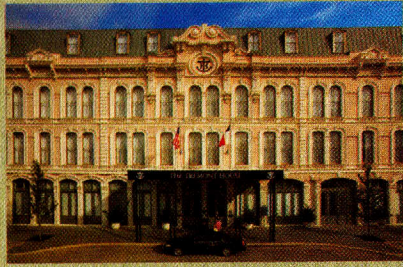


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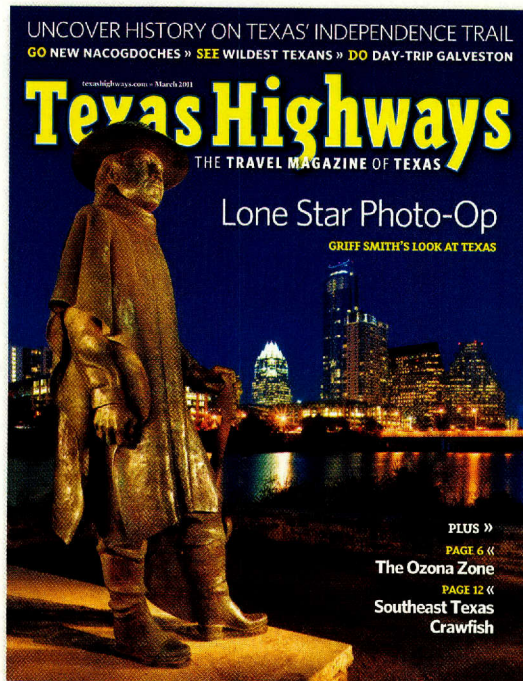


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I became a Facebook fan to rave about the March issue! *TH* gets better and better—thanks for 12 years of enjoyment!

—KAY WILLIAMS TURK,  
TH Facebook Fan



where all the history of Nacogdoches began, as travelers and famous people stopped there on the way to other historical places and events in Texas.

**KATHERINE CRAWFORD**  
Tyler

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Along with various incarnations as a private residence, trading post, church, jail, and saloon, the circa-1791 Old Stone Fort was also the site of four revolutionary actions. The structure, rebuilt in 1936 on the SFASU campus with stone from the original, is now a historical museum; 936/468-2408; [www.sfasu.edu/stonefort](http://www.sfasu.edu/stonefort).

More  
TH Talk at [www.texashighways.com/talk](http://www.texashighways.com/talk)

## True Griff

Had to see *TH* Photography Editor Griff Smith's exhibit at Sam Houston Memorial Museum. I've never seen a show where each picture was absolutely

amazing. What talent, and what a great place for the exhibit to be—the Sam Houston Memorial complex was so fun! As a reader who hangs on every word, I thank you for the great weekends I've had so far because of your magazine.

**BRANDY ALEXANDER**  
TH Facebook Fan

Please, please, travel *Griff Smith's Texas* around the state. Griff—thanks for all you've done for Texas!

**JIM BROKENBEK**  
TH Facebook Fan

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Griff Smith's *Texas* will remain at Huntsville's Sam Houston Memorial Museum through June 30, 2011 ([www.shsu.edu/~smm\\_www/](http://www.shsu.edu/~smm_www/)). Stay tuned to *TH* for details on future venues!

## Historic Hotspot

I enjoyed reading Jennifer Babisak's article on Nacogdoches [March]; Kevin Vandivier's photos were fantastic. Also, don't miss the Stone Fort Museum on the Stephen F. Austin State University campus, housed in a replica of the building

## Ford's Influence

Gene Fowler's article on O'Neil Ford [Speaking of Texas, January] reminded me of the 35 years I enjoyed teaching in the Ford-designed Agnich Science Building at Greenhill School in Addison. The building, with its central courtyard complete with a massive live oak tree, was a constant reminder of our Southwest heritage. The physics lab, my home, stayed largely unchanged through two major building remodels. When I retired, the school honored me with a plaque just outside the lab, designating it the "Skip Kilmer Physics Lab," and I am proud that my name is associated, however tenuously, with an artist like Mr. Ford.

**SKIP KILMER**  
Carrollton

## TH READER RECOMMENDATION

### A+ Breakfast in CC

**WE HAD** breakfast at **Andy's Country Kitchen** in **Corpus Christi**. I am not a fan of blueberry muffins, but I was eating theirs before I knew what they were—they were that good. They offer the usual breakfast menu, along with Tex-Mex items. Two toy trains run a track around the perimeter near the ceiling. We had to wait for a table on a Sunday morning, but it was well worth it.

**K. SMITH, Marquez**

*Andy's Country Kitchen* is at 5802 S. Staples; 361/993-0251; [www.andyskitchen.com](http://www.andyskitchen.com).

## CONTACT TH

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

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05  
11

# Postcards

INSIDE: GRILLS GONE WILD IN HICO...17 SEE LUBBOCK IN A WHOLE NEW LIGHT...21



**Do!**

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## Well, Well, Mineral Wells!

Everything old is new again in this Palo Pinto County burg Text by GENE FOWLER

**A SIMPLE POSTCARD INSPIRED ME TO** embark on an unexpected journey. In the early 1980s, I chanced upon a colorful postcard of Mineral Wells' Crazy Water Hotel, depicted in its 1930s heyday. Curious about the town's history, I did some research. It wasn't long before I had developed a healthy obsession with Texas' once-booming spa towns, where celebrities and common folks alike gathered to

"take the waters." The ritual of quaffing and immersing one's mortal vessel in heavily-mineralized water was regarded up to the 1940s and '50s as nature's remedy for conditions ranging from sluggishness to insanity. The Palo Pinto County town of Mineral Wells, in particular, became known as the happy spot "Where America Drinks Its Way to Health," due to the high mineral content of its water,

some zesty promotional campaigns, a picturesque setting in a valley of small hills, and several elegant resort hotels.

Some 10 years after I found the postcard, Texas Christian University Press published my book *Crazy Water—the Story of*

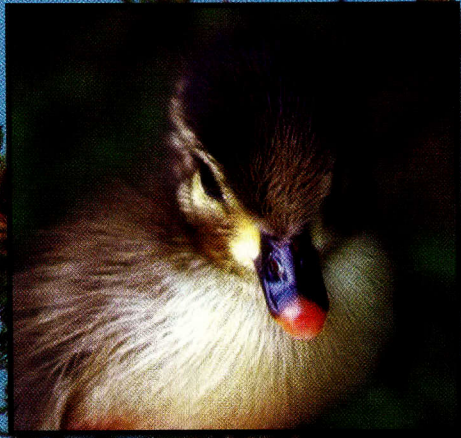
Reflections of past and future grandeur: The Baker Hotel, which has been closed since the early 1970s, awaits restoration in Mineral Wells.

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Shangri La Botanical Gardens and Nature Center is a program of the Nelda C. and H.J. Lucher Stark Foundation.

# Postcards

*Mineral Wells and Other Texas Health Resorts.* The book's 20th anniversary seemed a good time to revisit the town once billed as "The South's Great Health and Pleasure Resort" and "The Convention City of Texas."

The potential restoration of the Baker Hotel—which closed in the early 1970s and now looms over the small town like a romantic, colossal ruin—is the biggest

news. Built in 1929 in an opulent style described by Palo Pinto County historian John Winters as "Spanish Colonial Revival, Commercial Highrise," the 14-story, 450-room hotel offered a grand ballroom, a gymnasium, a lavish swimming pool and spa, and a rooftop garden and dance floor. Despite the Great Depression, a massive advertising campaign during the 1930s and 1940s kept

the health-and-glamour resort filled with movie stars, politicians, oil tycoons, and "regular" folks.

On past tours of the hotel's interior, I've imagined former guests like actress Marlene Dietrich sipping mineral water in the 18,500-square-foot "drinking pavilion," heavyweight champ Jack Dempsey soaking his wounds in the medically supervised bathing facilities, and Clark Gable knocking down pins in the bowling alley. In the haunting, faded glamour of the once-

With restoration comes rebirth—not just for the Baker Hotel, but for Mineral Wells and for the county.

grand ballroom, I've envisioned my late father on the bandstand, where he often stood in life, leading his dance orchestra as elegant revelers drifted across the floor.

The Baker has changed hands several times since it closed, with each new owner announcing elaborate restoration plans. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1982, and four years later, a group of Georgia investors attempted to turn the hotel into a Texas-history theme park, with plans for each floor to represent a different era of the state's past. That plan never materialized, but the current group of developers is taking a more realistic approach. Chad Patton, a member of the Baker Development Team with Bernstein Global Wealth Management, details a \$55 million financial arrangement involving city tax-increment financing districts, Section 108 HUD loans, and other elements. "We still need to find a guarantor for the \$25 million HUD loan," he tells me, "but we've been in talks with several key investment groups and we're very optimistic."

Jeff Trigger with [continued on page 13]

**Willkommen**  
to Fredericksburg.  
Now get lost.

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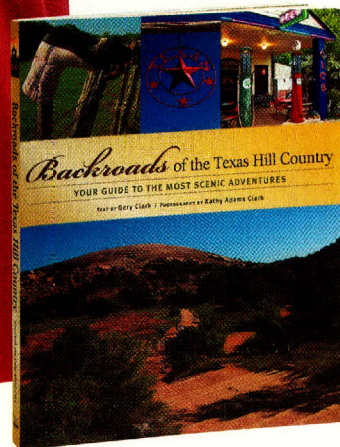
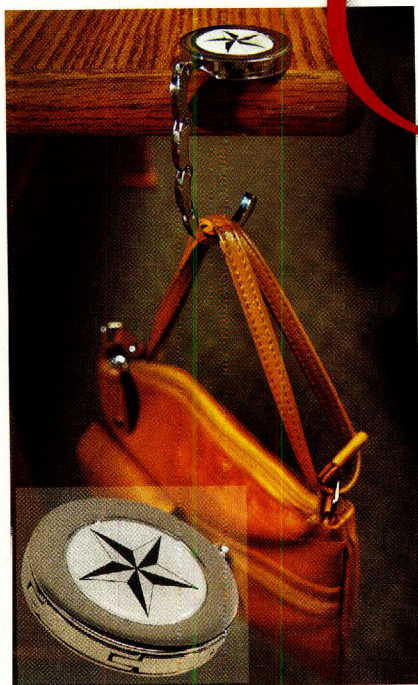
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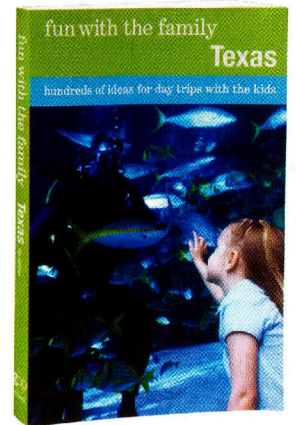
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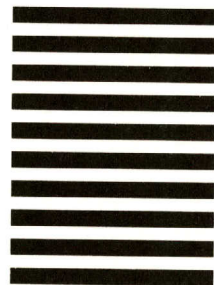
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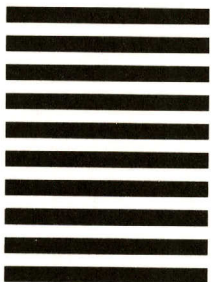
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continued from page 101

La Corsha Hospitality—the Austin firm that rejuvenated the Stoneleigh and Adolphus hotels in Dallas, the Driskill in Austin, and the St. Anthony in San Antonio—plans to guide the hotel's operations. "We hope to make the Baker a four-star destination resort," says Trigger. "Much of the revenue stream will come from special events, meetings, and weddings—but we also want to bring back the spa tradition, with mineral water baths indoors and out."

Austin filmmaker and Mineral Wells native Kevin Pruitt is documenting the hotel's history and potential restoration in a forthcoming movie called *Ballad of the Baker*. "The interest and excitement people have shown about the hotel is incredible," says Pruitt. "Nearly 8,000 people 'like' the Baker on Facebook. Everyone has a story, and I want to keep

You can visit the Famous Mineral Water Company for a free sample of Crazy Water.



those stories alive. With restoration comes rebirth—not just for the hotel, but for the town and for the county."

Until the storied hotel reopens, you can admire menus, brochures, postcards, and

other Baker artifacts at the Famous Mineral Water Company. While there, belly up to the antique bar and sample the town's original Crazy Water. Named for its alleged cure of a mentally unstable woman in the

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# Postcards

1880s, the water served at the Famous Mineral Water Company is delivered in four different strengths of mineral content.

Just south of the old Crazy Water Hotel (now a retirement home) on Oak Street, the eclectic Witschorke's Antiques and Collectables displays and sells vintage brochures, postcards, pictures, bottles, laundry bags, and other Baker Hotel memorabilia. Across the street from Witschorke's, the year-old Brazos Market and Bistro upholds local tradition by stocking Crazy Water and Eventide, a springwater bottled in adjacent Parker County. "The menu for our health-conscious lunches changes daily," says proprietor Susan Wallace, "and we make our food fresh every morning." The day I had lunch at the bistro, the chicken-and-artichoke casserole and the tomato-basil soup were delicious. "The cowboy casserole is also very popular," adds Wallace. "It's a blend of lean beef and turkey with hominy, green chiles, and fire-roasted tomatoes."



The market features Texas products like Javataza coffee, from a company that imports beans from Costa Rica and roasts them at its Grandview headquar-

ters; loose-leaf teas from Zhi Tea Company in Austin; and chocolates from Hico and Fredericksburg.

**An easygoing, health-conscious vibe permeates the Brazos Market and Bistro, where the menu changes daily.**

While Wallace describes the bistro's ambiance as a blend of retro and modern, another recently opened local attraction offers something *really* old, like 300 million years old: Mineral Wells Fossil Park.

Located west of town in the former borrow pit for an old city dump, the fossil park offers a seemingly endless supply of fossilized marine life from the Pennsylvanian Age. According to the park website, visitors can find crinoids, echinoids, brachiopods, pelecypods, bryozoa, corals, trilobites, and even primitive sharks' teeth. You don't even have to dig—the fossils are right on the ground.

"The amazing thing about Mineral Wells Fossil Park," says Dallas Paleontological Society member Lee Higginbotham, "is that you can actually *keep* what you find." The society was instrumental in convincing the city to establish the park last year and kicked in \$7,000 to help prepare the site for visitors. "We think this is the best way to get kids interested in science," adds [continued on page 16]

*Loose Your Heart to the Hills*  
Celebrate the 40th anniversary of these upcoming 2011 events!

PHOTO BY SUSAN ROADS

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# Texas Makes History

*Celebrate 175 years of independence from Mexico*

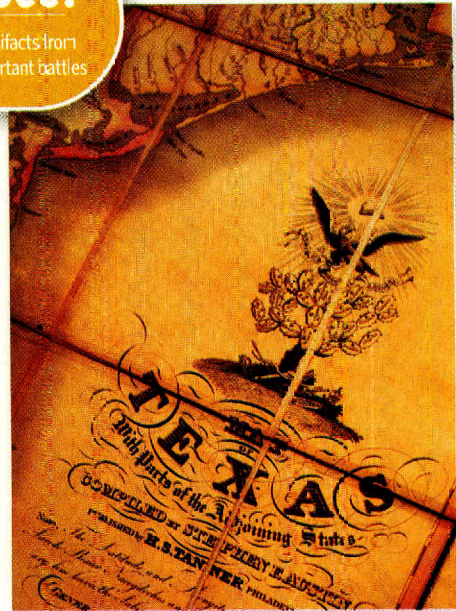
**THIS YEAR—2011—MARKS THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF TEXAS' INDEPENDENCE** from Mexico, freedom won on April 21, 1836, after the definitive battle of the Texas Revolution at San Jacinto. In commemoration and celebration of this important milestone, the Houston Museum of Natural Science is departing from its usual repertoire of minerals, malacology, dinosaurs, and other scientific concerns to present *Texas! The Exhibition*, a survey of artifacts and Texana dating to the early years of Spanish exploration. More than 100 pieces, some of which have never been on public display, will come from guest curator J.P. Bryan's *Torch Collection*.

Items in the show include artifacts from the 1685 shipwreck of *La Belle*, one of the ships in French explorer René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle's fleet; a rare copy of Stephen F. Austin's 1830 "Tanner map" of Texas and surrounding states; the 1830 decree granting Mexican citizenship to James Bowie; the cannon believed to be Gonzales' famous "Come and Take It" cannon; a rare printed broadside of Colonel William Barret Travis' "Victory or Death" letter from the Alamo; "Battle Flag #4," which flew at the Battle of San Jacinto; and one of the most complete collections of Republic of Texas money ever assembled.

*Texas! The Exhibition* will appear at the museum through September 5 and then travel to other venues across the state. See [www.hmns.org](http://www.hmns.org). —Lori Moffatt

See!

Artifacts from important battles



Based on notes by Stephen F. Austin, this map of Texas and adjoining states was published in 1830 by cartographer Henry Schenck Tanner of Philadelphia.

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## Postcards

continued from page 141 Higginbotham. "At the fossil park, every kid finds something from the floor of the ocean that covered Texas 300 million years ago and they get to pick it up and take it home!"

At Mineral Wells Fossil Park, the fossils are visible on the ground. No digging necessary.

If I'm lucky enough to still be on the planet in 20 years, I look forward to re-visiting the fossil park, checking into the Baker Hotel, and raising a glass of Crazy Water to toast the successful melding of history and progress—and to one of the most interesting towns in Texas. As it says on lamppost banners throughout downtown, "Keep Mineral Wells Crazy!" <sup>TM</sup>



### Mineral Wells

For information about Mineral Wells and area attractions, including Lake Mineral Wells State Park and Clark Gardens Botanical Park, contact the **Mineral Wells Area Chamber of Commerce**, 800/252-6989; [www.mineralwellstx.com](http://www.mineralwellstx.com).

To view an extended preview of Kevin Pruitt's upcoming documentary *The Ballad of the Baker*, see [www.bakerhotelmovie.com](http://www.bakerhotelmovie.com). Follow details about the hotel's restoration on the Baker's Facebook page.

**Famous Mineral Water Company**, 940/325-8870; [www.famouswater.com](http://www.famouswater.com).

**Witschorke's Antiques and Collectables**, 940/452-1831.

**Brazos Market and Bistro**, 940/468-2702.

**Mineral Wells Fossil Park**, 940/328-7803; [www.mineralwellsfossilpark.com](http://www.mineralwellsfossilpark.com).

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# High Stakes in Hico

*More than 100 grill masters compete in the Texas Steak Cookoff each May*

Text by **CELESTINA BLOK**

**I**MMEDIATELY SMELL THE FAMILIAR AROMA OF WOOD smoke as I hop out of the pickup—my husband, Josh, and my mom and dad just a few steps behind. It's 1:30 p.m. on a Saturday, and Hico's annual Texas Steak Cookoff is in full swing. Though we're parked a couple of blocks outside Hico's historic downtown, I can hear the hearty laughter of cooks behind their prized fire pits and the stage announcer reminding spectators to visit local shops and artisans' booths.

On the third Saturday of each May, more than 5,000 visitors descend on the tiny town of Hico (where residents will tell you that Billy the Kid, living as "Brushy Bill," spent his final years) for the Southwest's largest steak-cookoff. There's a category for celebrity chefs, but most of the participants enter the Backyard Chef Competition. Some 90 teams—with names like Grillin' Gang and The Mistakes—set up their outdoor kitchens along the shop-lined streets. They're here to catch up with friends, play a game or two of washers, and claim bragging rights for grilling the best rib-eye steak in Texas. Cash prizes range from \$250 to \$2,500.

After exchanging our \$25 tickets for wristbands, we begin making our way down Pecan Street. The space between the competitors' booths and the sidewalk creates a grill-lined pathway that provides easy access to samples and small talk with the cooks. I know from previous experience that lines start to form at these booths just before 5 p.m., when wristband-wearers can choose which team they'd like to grill their rib-eye dinners. With more than three hours to go, we've got plenty of time to mosey about, check out the town, and chat with the chefs about their grilling techniques. "I rub a little olive

**Backyard chefs compete for cash prizes up to \$2,500 at the cookoff; celebrity chefs vie for a gold-and-silver belt buckle.**



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## Taste



oil on the meat before I put on the seasonings," one cook tells me. "It helps them stay on better."

The crowd—a diverse mix of locals and out-of-towners, parents pushing strollers, and college kids—swells as my family and I continue down the street. We find booths still offering up goodies from the Hors D'oeuvres Competition that took place that morning, including pulled pork served with made-from-scratch barbecue sauce, chunks of homemade beef jerky, and fire-roasted ears of corn slathered with butter and sprinkled with a peppery mix of spices.

At each booth, onlookers get a glimpse of the chef's hallowed grill—some short and wide, some tall and flashy. With the first two rounds of judging already complete, many competitors have already finished cooking. Those still in the running are doing their prep work—spraying the surface of the grill with water to maintain a consistent temperature and massaging their steaks with rubs and oils—and perhaps love—as if encouraging the marbled meat to do its best.

Loudspeakers announce that the Quebe Sisters Band is about to take the stage, and soon, harmonious Western Swing melodies fill the air. The maze of

booths ultimately leads us to the Texas wine-tasting tent, which requires a separate \$20 ticket. A volunteer hands me a souvenir glass and a punchcard good for eight tastes from area wineries. The owner of nearby Bluff Dale Vineyards pours me a sample of chilled White Cliff, a slightly sweet table wine, and I rejoin my family, who are chatting with two lively couples from Houston. We raise our glasses together, toasting to a great time.

"This is awesome," one of the Houstonians tells me. "We get to talk to participants and hear their stories and learn their recipes. I would gladly drive four hours back here for this again."

Backtracking, my family and I head to the booth we've chosen for our steak-dinner stop. My rib-eye arrives medium-rare, as requested, and a voice over the loudspeaker directs steak-holders to a second line for salads and baked potatoes. The rows of long tables and chairs under the dining tent are filled, but we find a bench outside an antiques shop, and we finally cut into our steaks. Mine's juicy and simply divine. The best in Texas? I'm not sure, but the announcer is

Spectators sample sausage prepared for the Hors D'oeuvres Competition earlier in the day.

about to let everyone know whose was: "Winner of the \$2,500 grand prize ... winner of the Hico, Texas, rib-eye steak cookoff contest ... ladies and gentlemen, let's give a big hand for Pica Piedras!"

When I catch up with Wes Gentry of Coleman, the chief cook for the Pica Piedras team, he's standing by the loudspeakers, and the Doug Moreland Band

After the nationally televised *Food Network Challenge* featured the 2008 competition, the cookoff's popularity soared.

is playing its rendition of Jerry Jeff Walker's rowdy sing-along "Sangria Wine."

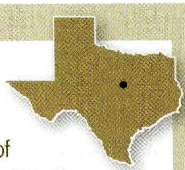
"How'd you do it?" I yell.

"I can't believe it," he shouts back, smiling and shaking his head. "I changed the seasonings this year, the marinade, everything. And I cooked the steak less time—just six minutes, very hot." And then a barrage of high-fives interrupts him.

Competitiveness aside, these backyard chefs clearly have a ball. Walking back to the antiques shop to reconnect with my family, I ponder the idea of creating a grilling team of our own. **TH**

## Texas Steak Cookoff

Hico is at the crossroads of US 281, Texas 6, and Texas 220. The **Texas Steak Cookoff** takes place May 21, 2011, on the town square. To purchase tickets or obtain more information, call **254/485-2020**, or visit [www.texassteakcookoff.com](http://www.texassteakcookoff.com). For information about Hico, call **254/796-4620**, [www.hico-tx.com](http://www.hico-tx.com).



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13 • Family Fish Out—Ethel Lee Tracy Park  
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28 • "Art Cars"—Nave Museum

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## Taste

# Texas Wines: Five to Try

*One food writer's shortlist  
of favorite Texas wines*

**A FORMER WINE AND SPIRITS REPRESENTATIVE**, Austin food writer Claudia Alarcón holds definite opinions. When she covered Fredericksburg's Cabernet Grill, whose wine list consists entirely of Texas wines, for our January issue, we asked her to name a few of her Lone Star favorites. Here's her response.

**Do!**

Tell us your top Texas wines at [letters05@texashighways.com](mailto:letters05@texashighways.com)

**Flat Creek Estate's Super Texan.** A play on Italian Super Tuscans, this Sangiovese blend is rich, spicy, and leathery, but very food-friendly. A perfect match for grilled meats.

**Alamosa Wine Cellars' Scissortail.** A classic Rhone blend of Roussanne, Viognier, and Marsanne, it has great minerality and loads of fresh fruit flavors.

**McPherson Cellars' Rosé of Grenache-Syrah.** Another Rhone blend produced with 100% Texas-grown Grenache and Syrah. Bright cherry and plum flavors, with a dry finish. Ideal with Texas barbecue.

**Fall Creek Vineyard's Caché.** A refreshing blend of six white varietals, beautifully balanced to offer tropical fruit and citrus flavors, plus fresh acidity. Delicious with any seafood.

**Inwood Estates Vineyards' Tempranillo-Cabernet.** Inwood's Tempranillos are true to varietal characteristics, refined, and thoroughly enjoyable. Excellent with game dishes.

Learn more about wine at several wine festivals this month, including **Fredericksburg's Hill Country Wine & Music Festival** (830/456-2259, [www.hillcountrywineandmusic.com](http://www.hillcountrywineandmusic.com)); the **Rockport Festival of Wine & Food** (866/729-2469; [www.texasfestivalofwines.com](http://www.texasfestivalofwines.com)); and **San Antonio's Culinaria** (210/822-9555, [www.culinariasaa.com](http://www.culinariasaa.com)).

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## A Fresh Take on Lubbock

*There's more to this South Plains city than meets the eye*

Text by **HELEN BRYANT**

**D**URING THE FOUR YEARS MY DAUGHTER MIRANDA WAS EARNING her degree at Texas Tech University, I wore a path up US 183 and US 84 between Austin and Lubbock. I spent a lot of weekends in the friendly city, and I thought I knew all there was to know about Lubbock.

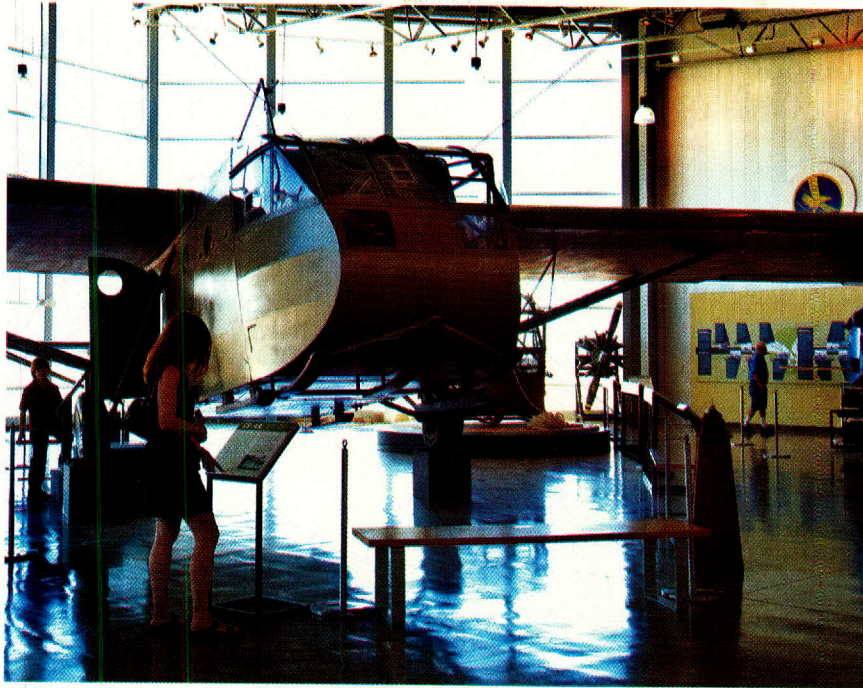
I did not.

Sure, Miranda took me to the plentiful pizza and burger joints, and we visited the city's best-known attraction, Buddy Holly Center, a small museum chronicling the history of the Lubbock native and rock-and-roll legend. The center displays two of Holly's guitars as well as the glasses he was wearing when he was killed along with Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper in a 1959 plane crash.

But since Miranda's graduation, I've found there's even more to Lubbock, including sophisticated dining, a new conference center with chic hotel rooms, and a couple of other truly unusual museums.

Let's start with the American Wind Power Center, the world's largest collection of vintage windmills. Sitting

Visitors at the American Wind Power Center marvel at the Flowerdew Hundred Postmill, whose huge wheel turns grinding stones even as the entire structure pivots into the wind.



within miles of vast West Texas wind farms, the museum's 28 acres showcase 62 windmills outdoors and 112 inside a corrugated-steel barn.

If you think you know what a windmill looks like, think again: Some stand tall and slender; others crouch like hulking houses. A few boast two heads of blades. Others sport huge, tailfeather-like vanes that keep them pointed into the wind. It all depends on what that particular windmill was designed to do—pump water, grind grain, or, in the case of some of the newer ones, generate energy.

The museum isn't affiliated with Texas Tech, but it was the brainchild of the late faculty member Billie Wolfe, who traveled the world photographing windmills. In 1993, she found a collection of 48 windmills in Nebraska and persuaded the owner, Don Hundley, to sell them to her. That same year, she had them moved to Lubbock,

where they became the basis of a growing collection. The museum opened in 1997.

The barn's mass of windmills in-

cludes one built in the late 1800s, with a very complicated-looking gear system that enabled it to saw wood, grind grain, and pump water. Then there's a green, low-to-the-ground Texas Pattern Eclipse from South Texas, whose 25-foot blades pumped 30 gallons of water a minute for cattle in the early 1900s.

Outside, Executive Director Coy Harris proudly showed me a recent acquisition—the Flowerdew Hundred Postmill, a working model of a post windmill typically used in England around 1100 A.D. This 1978 model resembles the first grain-grinding windmill in the United States, built in Virginia in 1621.

It features a four-bladed wheel 60 feet in diameter. As we walked up a wooden staircase and entered the house-like structure—two stories tall and 15 feet above the ground—that holds the machinery, Harris explained that

when wind of 15 mph or more hits the tail vane connected to two steel wheels beneath the staircase, the wheels roll on a concrete circle track and rotate the large building into the wind. (It wasn't windy the day I visited, so the windmill stayed still. Good thing, since I was walking around inside it.)

The Silent Wings Museum tells the story of World War II glider pilots whose dangerous missions put them literally at the mercy of the wind.

Next to it, we walked into the base of the 165-foot-tall, humming, modern Vestas V47 wind turbine, whose 155-foot blades provide power for the Wind Power Center. In a typical year, it generates 10 times what's needed, and the center sells the excess to Xcel Energy, a regional power company. (When winds are calm, it buys some back.)

Before I left, I dropped by the patio at the back of the museum and found Texas Tech University architecture instructor La Gina Fairbetter putting the finishing touches on a huge—34 feet by 172 feet—

**ABOVE:** A restored Waco CG-4A glider. **RIGHT:** The Silent Wings Museum inspires respect for the American glider pilots of World War II.



mural chronicling Texas' windmill history. It has taken her years, many of them spent on a forklift platform, to create this colorful painting.

From the windmill museum, I drove on to visit a museum illustrating the power of wind in wartime. Located between Lubbock Preston Smith International Airport and Interstate 27, several miles northeast of downtown, the Silent Wings Museum tells the story of World War II glider pilots whose highly dangerous missions put them literally at



the mercy of the wind, as well as unforeseen forces and obstacles on the ground. For example, during the Normandy Invasion, glider pilots crash-landed in fields, some hitting hedgerows whose height had been misgauged by reconnaissance, others striking pole-like structures placed there by German troops.

After watching a short film on glider pilots, I entered a hangar-like gallery containing aircraft used by glider pilots during World War II. The pilots' story unfolds with timelines and artifacts, including a restored CG-4A glider and pieces of a British Horsa glider that's being restored. Outside, near the entrance, the museum displays a Douglas C-47—the plane that towed U.S. Army

Café J's dessert menu includes chocolate mar-  
quise silk torte (above) and Madagascar-vanilla  
crème brûlée. A chocolate  
martini works, too.

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**See!**

Nine historic murals in San Angelo

## Standout City

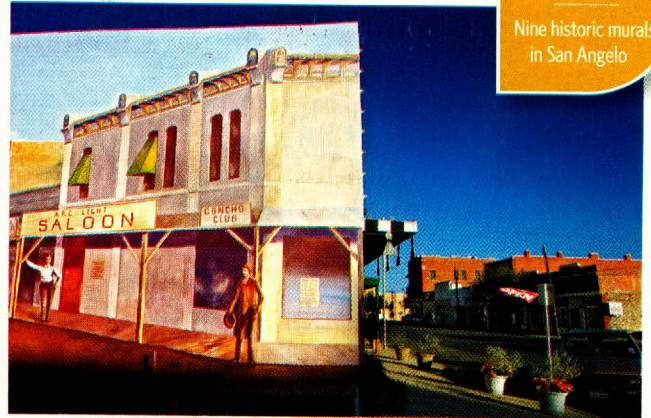
*San Angelo nets historic preservation awards*

### AS AMERICANS CELEBRATE NATIONAL PRESERVATION

Month in May, San Angelo basks in the glory of winning not one, but two, recent preservation awards. In February, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named this West Texas city one of America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations for 2011. It's the only Texas location on the list. A month earlier, San Angelo garnered a Preserve America award, one of 11 cities across the nation to do so (Laredo also won an award).

Stephanie Meeks, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, notes that San Angelo's "Old West past" and its commitment to preserving such sites as Fort Concho (a frontier fort established in 1867), along with its "vibrant artistic present" were factors in the city's selection as a distinctive destination.

Brenda Gunter, president of Downtown San Angelo's board of directors, says one of the reasons San Angelo fared so well in the competition is that it's a city of contrasts. "We have a wealth of historic sites, but we also have a fabulous fine arts museum, civic theater, symphony orchestra, and ballet company," she explains.



"When you add in our setting, with the beautiful Concho River flowing through downtown, we're truly a surprise to most people."

Gunter notes that winning the Preserve America award makes San Angelo eligible to apply for a range of historic preservation grants. She adds, "Both awards will act as catalysts for bringing more heritage tourism to the city."

—Nola McKey

**A mural in downtown San Angelo allows observers to compare a 1908 rendition of South Chadbourne with a present-day view of the same street.**

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Air Force gliders during World War II.

Admission to the museum is free if you've already bought a \$5 ticket to the Buddy Holly Center, and it's a good way to spend a few hours before you turn in your rental car. Of course, if you have more time, you should also tour the Museum of Texas Tech University and the adjacent National Ranching Heritage Center, as well as Lubbock Lake National Historic Landmark, an archeological preserve north of campus.

I was staying overnight, so I checked in at the new Overton Hotel and Conference Center, across University Avenue from the campus, where a new residential-commercial development with diverse shops and restaurants has arisen in the past few years. I liked this large hotel and its friendly staff. My contemporary room offered a flat-screen TV, a single-serve coffee pot, lots of mirrors (including a full-length version, an amenity often forgotten in business hotels), and a small fridge beneath a long desk with free WiFi for my laptop. I enjoyed a glass of wine in the convivial bar in a lobby

festooned with tributes to Buddy Holly and Texas Tech's Red Raiders.

My new favorite restaurant sits at the southern end of the Tech campus: the vine-covered Café J, an upscale, but still moderately priced restaurant whose global dinner offerings range from cured salmon and sesame-crusted tuna appetizers to fluffy, hand-rolled gnocchi in a piquant pesto sauce. Art-adorned, brightly painted walls break the restaurant into several rooms, providing an intimate dining experience with well-chosen, reasonably priced wines. At lunchtime, I went with thin, buttery crepes stuffed generously with spinach and artichokes and topped with a roasted-bell pepper cream sauce.

Of course, there's always a chance you'll want to have a classic burger, and if that's the case, take a seat at a wooden booth or linoleum-topped table across University Avenue from Tech at Spanky's, where you'll find the juiciest hamburgers in town.

Whether you're visiting a Tech student, driving through to New Mexico or Colorado, or just tooling around the High Plains, you'll find Lubbock offers a lot more than you imagined. **TX**

## Lubbock

For more information, contact the **Lubbock CVB** at 800/692-4035 or 806/747-5232; [www.visitlubbock.org](http://www.visitlubbock.org).

**Buddy Holly Center**, 1801 Crickets Ave., 806/775-3560; [www.buddyhollycenter.org](http://www.buddyhollycenter.org).

**American Wind Power Center**, 1701 Canyon Lake Dr., 806/747-8734; [www.windmill.com](http://www.windmill.com).

**Silent Wings Museum**, 6202 N. I-27, 806/775-3049; [www.silentwingsmuseum.com](http://www.silentwingsmuseum.com).

**Overton Hotel and Conference Center**, 2322 Mac Davis Ln., 888/776-7001 or 806/776-7000; [www.overtonhotel.com](http://www.overtonhotel.com).

**Café J**, 2605 19th St., 806/743-5400; [www.cafejlubbock.com](http://www.cafejlubbock.com).

**Spanky's**, 811 University Ave., 806/744-5677; [www.spankys.com](http://www.spankys.com).

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# Paddle Texas

*Whether you travel with a guide or on your own, versatile and streamlined kayaks offer an intimate encounter with Texas bays, bayous, and rivers*

Text by **MELISSA GASKILL**

Photographs by **KEVIN STILLMAN**

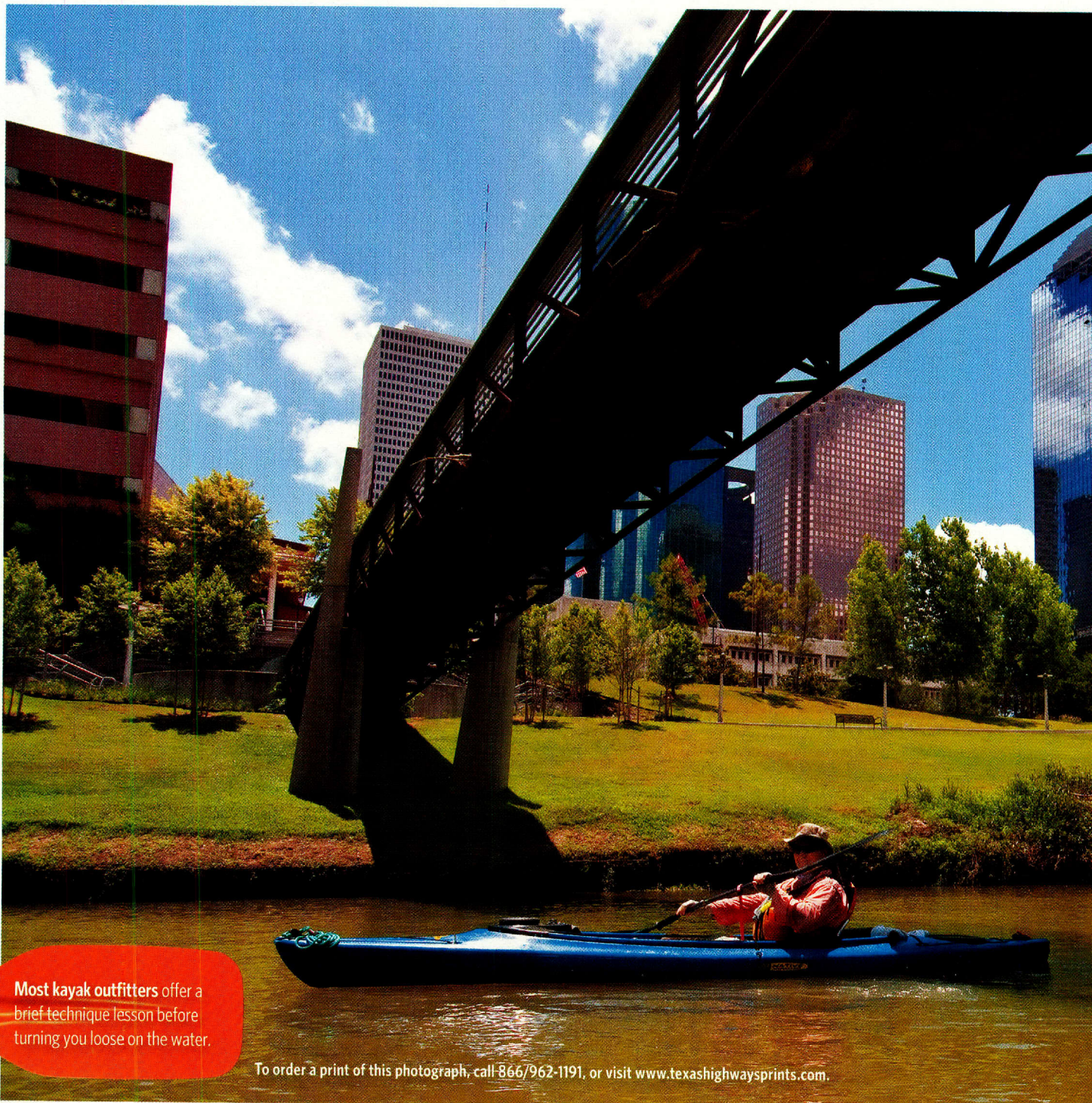


Glide trips. Paddlers on the Lighthouse Lakes Trail, a series of four loops through the estuaries and seagrass flats between Aransas Pass and Port Aransas, enjoy up-close views of birds and other wildlife. One trail leads to the 1857 Lydia Ann Lighthouse.

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



Thousands of miles of coastal shoreline, 3,700 named streams, and 15 major rivers in Texas all beg to be explored, and kayaks offer a great way to do so. I first boarded a kayak about a decade ago, and have since used one of these versatile craft to explore all over Texas and beyond. Easy to paddle and maneuver, kayaks put you right on the water, the better to see what lives in and on it.



Most kayak outfitters offer a brief technique lesson before turning you loose on the water.

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



Most people get the hang of paddling smooth water and gentle rapids in a matter of minutes. If you'd like to see Texas' natural wonders from a new perspective, try kayaking. You can take a guided trip, or head out on your own to explore one of the more than two dozen official coastal and inland Texas paddling trails—or anywhere the water beckons. Here are a few of my favorite destinations.



## Buffalo Bayou Paddling Trail HOUSTON

This trail starts at Texas 6 and follows the bayou 26 miles to Allen's Landing in downtown Houston. That's too far to complete in one day, but nine access points make it possible to choose paddles ranging from 15 minutes to a few (or many) hours.



On a warm spring day, my husband, Corey, and I put in at Woodway Memorial Park, a tiny parking area with a narrow trail to the water at Loop 610 and Woodway, for about seven miles of paddling. The first half of the trip, we could hardly tell that the bayou bisects one of the country's largest cities. Tall willow, pine, and sycamore trees lined the sandy banks, and we spotted more than a dozen great and little blue herons, a pair of hawks circling in the blue sky, cardinals, turtles sunning on thick logs, and two-foot gar splashing at the surface. Except when we passed directly under roads, we heard nothing but the water, breeze, and birds. The second half became more obviously urban, with views of manicured lawns, apartment buildings, and finally, the gleaming Houston skyline, quite an impressive sight from our bayou-level vantage point.

The trail stops at Allen's Landing, a complex of historic buildings named for the land-speculating Allen brothers, who laid out the original city grid oriented to the waterway in the 1830s. Intrepid paddlers can continue eight more miles to the Houston Ship Channel turning basin.

Buffalo Bayou Partnership and Bayou

Houston's 26-mile-long Buffalo Bayou Paddling Trail affords a new perspective on Texas' largest city.

Preservation Association, along with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, collaborated to create this trail. The Buffalo Bayou Partnership offers monthly trips that include kayaks, a guide, and shuttle back to your car. Another option: Buffalo Bayou Shuttle Service, which offers both guided tours and shuttle service for you and your kayak. You can arrange pick-up downtown to the put-in and leave your car at Allen's Landing.

Alternatively, if you're with a group and are interested in renting 10 boats or more, North Lake Conroe Paddling Company (which offers individual kayak rentals for Lake Conroe and Spring Creek) can arrange a trip on the bayou, too.

**Post-paddle refreshment:** Splurge on a steak at downtown's Strip House (713/659-6000, [www.striphouse.com](http://www.striphouse.com)), or toast the day's adventures at the venerable La Carafe Wine Bar, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (713/229-9399).

**Rest up at:** Hotel Icon, two blocks from Allen's Landing ([www.hotelicon.com](http://www.hotelicon.com), 713/224-4266), or the Four Seasons Hotel, two blocks from Discovery Green (713/650-1300, [www.fourseasons.com/Houston](http://www.fourseasons.com/Houston)).

## Lighthouse Lakes Trail ARANSAS PASS/PORT ARANSAS

This is the first official paddling trail in Texas, established by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in 1999. The Lighthouse Lakes Trail consists of four loops that explore the black mangrove estuaries, sloughs, and seagrass flats between Aransas Pass and Port Aransas. The loop trails range from about one mile to almost seven miles long. One trail leads to the 1857 Lydia Ann





The first half of the trip, we could hardly tell that the bayou bisects one of the country's largest cities.

Lighthouse on North Harbor Island. Wander the maze of mangroves and get close to great blue herons, egrets, pelicans, and other resident birds; or fish for flounder, red drum, and spotted sea trout. Lucky paddlers might even merit a dolphin escort across the channel.

Take along a copy of the photo map, available on the trail's website or from local outfitters, along with a compass or GPS, as it's easy to get turned around in the maze of channels and mangroves. The trails are bordered by Aransas and Lydia Ann channels, South Bay, and Corpus Christi Bayou, so you won't end up in Mexico, but a missed turn could mean a long paddle back. If you'd like a guide, you can take a four-hour eco-tour of the trails with Slowride Guide

Services in Aransas Pass, which also offers fishing excursions in the area. A company called Coastal Bend Kayak also offers guided trips in the area.

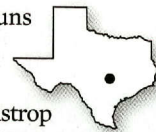
If you prefer to embark on your own, launch at the trailhead park on Texas 361, near Offshore Adventures at Crabman Marina in Aransas Pass, which rents kayaks. (Island Surf & Kayak Shop in Port Aransas does, too.)

**Post-paddle refreshment:** A hearty Stoper Burger at Port Aransas Brewing Company, a few blocks from the ferry landing. Call 361/749-2739; [www.portabrewing.com](http://www.portabrewing.com).

**Rest up at:** The 1886 Tarpon Inn in Port Aransas is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Call 361/749-5555; [www.thetarponinn.com](http://www.thetarponinn.com).

## El Camino Real Paddling Trail COLORADO RIVER, BASTROP

This Colorado River trail runs roughly six miles, about a two- to three-hour paddle, from Fisherman's Park in Bastrop to the Tahitian Village subdivision just past the railroad bridge. I made this trip with fellow kayak aficionado Paula Baker, renting kayaks at Rising Phoenix Adventures, which shuttled us to the put-in. Once on the green river, we passed a few houses, crossed under the Loop 150 and Texas 71 bridges, then passed a waterfall on the east shore. At that point, signs of civilization slipped away for a while. We enjoyed a constant escort of dragonflies (some of which hitched the occasional ride), turtles, herons, and fish. A number of wooded islands split the river, and trumpet vines decked with bright red flowers covered thick trees on the bank. A few fun but easy rapids spiced up the route.



The takeout is a small, shady swim beach popular with locals. It makes a pleasant place to wait for shuttle pick-up, and the ride back to the outfitter's office takes about 10 minutes. Rising Phoenix Adventures also will shuttle you and your own kayak to the put-in and from the take-out for \$25 per boat.

**Post-paddle refreshment:** Piled-high burgers at the Roadhouse, on Texas 21 across from the entrance to Bastrop State Park (and just a few minutes from Rising Phoenix). Call 512/321-1803; [www.roadhousebastrop.com](http://www.roadhousebastrop.com).

**Rest up at:** Sleeping cabins (shared restrooms and running water in common campground) at LCRA's South Shore Park on Lake Bastrop. For reservations, call 512/389-8900; for information, call 800/776-5272; [www.lcra.org/parks/developed\\_parks/southshore.html](http://www.lcra.org/parks/developed_parks/southshore.html).

ABOVE: Fishing for largemouth bass, catfish, and Guadalupe bass rewards kayakers on the scenic San Saba River. RIGHT: On some stretches of the Buffalo Bayou Paddling Trail, you may find it hard to believe you're in Houston.



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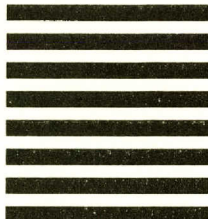
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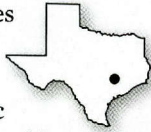


**Rest assured:** On Texas' generally tranquil waterways, it's very difficult to tip a kayak.

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

## Columbus Paddling Trail COLORADO RIVER, COLUMBUS

This 6.5-mile route stretches from Business 71 under the North River Bridge to Beason's Park, which has picnic tables, restrooms, and free parking (in case you provide your own shuttle service).



we almost ran aground, but in general the current kept us moving at a leisurely pace. Dozens of egrets, great blue herons, killdeer, and terns lined the shore, and turtles sunned on exposed logs and rocks. Paddlers can fish for alligator gar, carp, channel catfish, Guadalupe bass, and sunfish along this trail.

The put-in is behind Howell Canoe Livery, which rents equipment and provides shuttle service from the take-out. Proprietor Frank Howell uses an aerial photograph to give an overview of the trail, including landmarks to look for. If you have your own kayak, you can put-in here for \$10 and Howell will shuttle your car to the take-out.

**Pre-paddle refreshment:** All-you-can-eat buffet at Schobel's Restaurant, on Business 71 just off Interstate 10 in Columbus. Call 979/732-2385; [www.schobelsrestaurant.com](http://www.schobelsrestaurant.com).

**Rest up at:** Waldhutte cabin, a secluded B&B between La Grange and Columbus. Call 979/247-4802; [www.centraltexascabin.com](http://www.centraltexascabin.com).

## Lucky Lighthouse Lakes Trail paddlers might even merit a dolphin escort across the channel.



Kayaking 101  
at [texashighways.com/webextra](http://texashighways.com/webextra)

LEFT: Matagorda Bay Nature Park, a 1,600-acre LCRA preserve on the Matagorda Peninsula, offers guided kayak tours along a two-mile trail in East Matagorda Bay; call 979/863-2603. ABOVE: Coastal Bend Kayaking offers guided treks of the Lighthouse Lakes Trail and other Gulf Coast destinations.



Bring along a dry-bag to store your camera and snacks; you're sure to get splashed as you paddle.

## San Saba and South Llano rivers

The 100-mile-long San Saba River springs from the ground near Fort McKavett, and flows through rocky rapids, under towering oaks and pecans, and past wide pastures. The river doesn't have an official paddling trail, but perhaps it should. My family has enjoyed day-long paddles on this pristine waterway half-a-dozen times, and even though



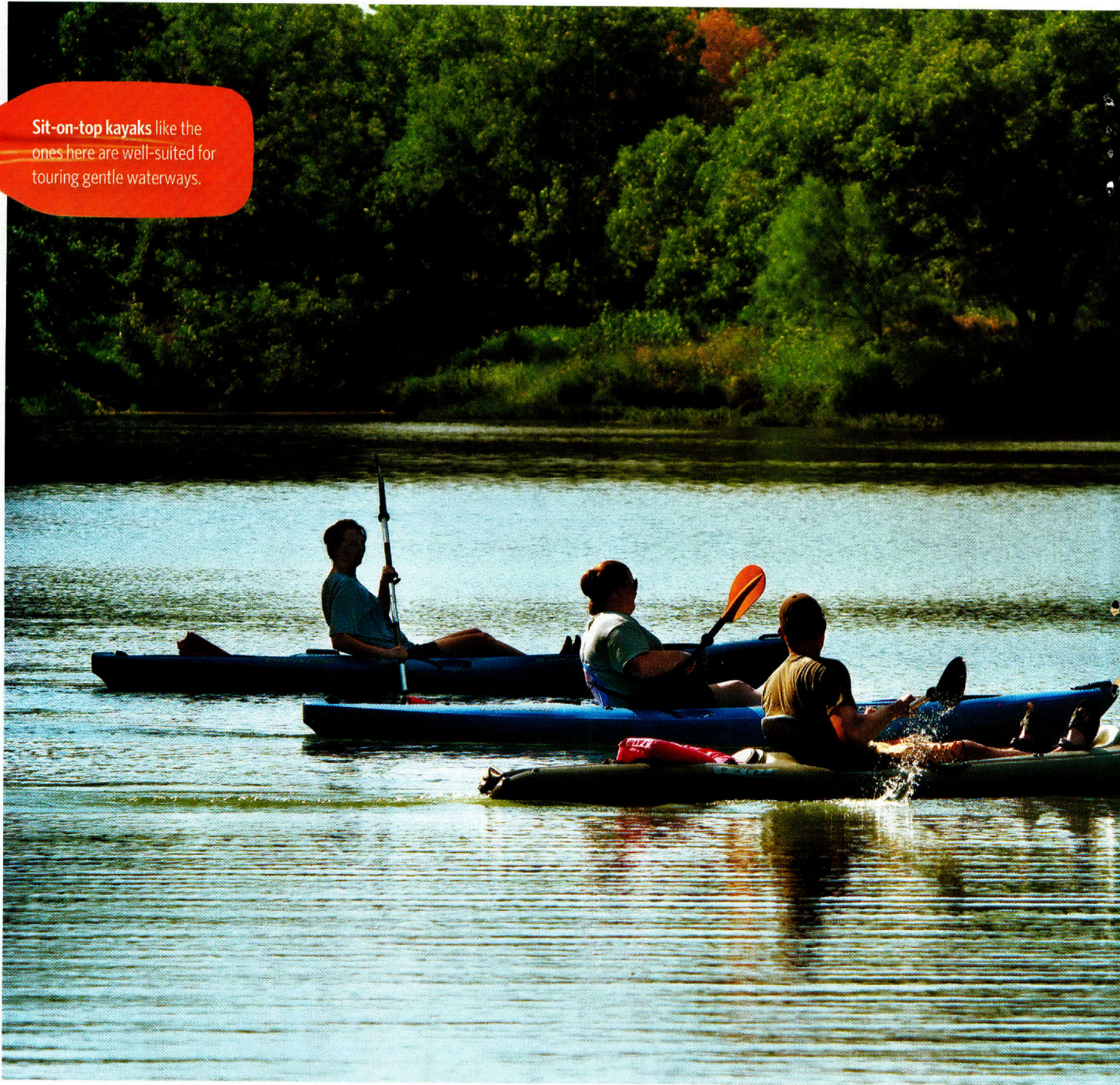
part of me hates to share the secret, here's our route. From Menard, drive US 190 west about eight miles, turn left on Bois D'Arc, and put in at the bridge for a six- to eight-hour paddle to the dam at Merand City Park. (Time varies depending on flow on the river and how much you fish and dawdle.) Catch-and-release fish for largemouth bass, catfish, and the official state freshwater fish, Guadalupe bass. We enjoy the fun little rapids, quiet pools, and scenic stretches.

Great blue herons nesting in tall sycamores along a few stretches of the river make a hard-to-miss racket.

Guided kayak and fly-fishing trips with Peacemaker River Outfitters in Junction start near the river headwaters at Talbot Lake, with options ranging from one- to eight-hour trips.

Peacemaker and several other outfitters in Junction provide rentals and shuttle service for paddles along the scenic and mostly gentle South Llano River, too.

**Sit-on-top kayaks** like the ones here are well-suited for touring gentle waterways.



The 100-mile-long San Saba River flows through rocky rapids, under towering oaks and pecans, and past wide pastures.

Options include putting it at Boone's Crossing on US 377 for a five- or six-hour paddle to South Llano River State Park, with great fishing and sand bars for swimming and relaxing.

**Post-paddle refreshment:** Save room for dessert at Side Oats Café and Bakery in Menard. Call 325/396-2069; [www.sideoatscafe.com](http://www.sideoatscafe.com).

**Rest up at:** The two-bedroom Cool River Cabin on the Native American Seed farm, near Junction. Call 800/728-4043; [www.seedsources.com](http://www.seedsources.com) (click on "ecotourism").





ABOVE: Kayakers ply the waters of Matagorda Bay Nature Park. LEFT: The placid stretches of the 100-mile-long San Saba River offer multiple opportunities for reflection.

## ➔ TH ESSENTIALS

# Paddling Texas

THE TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT currently offers 26 designated paddling trails throughout Texas, with more trails to come. Find trail information and maps at [www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us). Click on "fishing and boating" and then on "paddling trails."

### **Buffalo Bayou Paddling Trail, Buffalo Bayou, Houston**

**Buffalo Bayou Partnership** offers monthly guided paddles on Houston's Buffalo Bayou. Call 713/752-0314; [www.buffalobayou.org](http://www.buffalobayou.org).

**Buffalo Bayou Shuttle Service** offers guided tours, kayak rentals, and a shuttle service for trips on Buffalo Bayou. Call 713/538-7433; [www.bayoushuttle.com](http://www.bayoushuttle.com).

**North Lake Conroe Paddling Company** offers kayak rentals and shuttles for excursions on Buffalo Bayou for groups who need 10 boats or more; the company also offers individual and group rentals for kayak trips on Lake Conroe and Spring Creek. Call 936/203-2697; [www.nlpc.com](http://www.nlpc.com).

### **Lighthouse Lakes Trail, Aransas Pass/Port Aransas**

**Slowride Guide Services** in Aransas Pass offers guided tours of the Lighthouse Lakes Trail, plus kayak rentals and boat delivery to the water if you don't need a guide. Call 361/758-0463; [www.slowrideguide.com](http://www.slowrideguide.com).

**Offshore Adventures** (at Crabman Marina in Aransas Pass, two miles before the Port

Aransas ferry crossing) offers kayak rentals for the Lighthouse Lakes Trail. Call 800/567-5132; [www.portaransasadventures.com](http://www.portaransasadventures.com).

**Island Surf and Kayak Shop** at Port Aransas offers kayak rentals. Call 361/749-0822.

**Coastal Bend Kayak** offers a number of kayaking and fishing outings from along the Texas Gulf Coast. 361/557-7003; [www.coastalbendkayaking.com](http://www.coastalbendkayaking.com).

### **El Camino Real Paddling Trail, Colorado River, Bastrop**

**Rising Phoenix Adventures** offers kayak rental and shuttle service for trips on the Colorado River Paddling Trail through Bastrop. Call 512/677-2305; [www.risingphoenixadventures.com](http://www.risingphoenixadventures.com).

### **Columbus Paddling Trail, Colorado River, Columbus**

**Howell Canoe Livery** offers kayak rentals and shuttle service for the Columbus Paddling Trail on the Colorado River. Call 979/732-3816; [www.howellcanoe.com](http://www.howellcanoe.com).

### **San Saba and South Llano rivers, Junction/Menard**

**Peacemaker River Expeditions** in Junction offers kayak rentals and guided paddles on the San Saba and South Llano rivers. Call 325/446-6899.

You can find other outfitters at [www.junctiontexas.net](http://www.junctiontexas.net).

These paddling trips make rewarding day excursions or weekend getaways, and as seasons and conditions change, each visit reveals something different. I'll see you on the water! **TH**

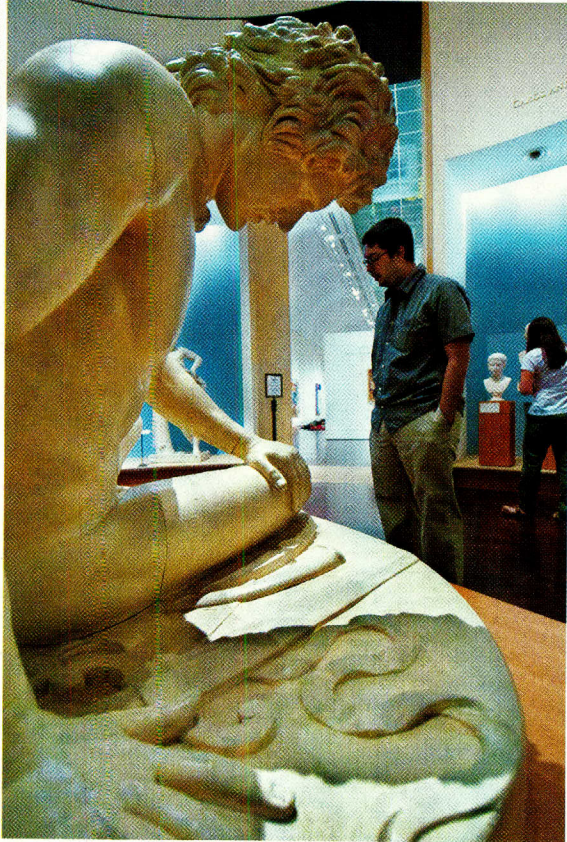
*Outdoorswoman and avid kayaker MELISSA GASKILL relishes any opportunity to explore Texas' rivers and waterways. Staff photographer KEVIN STILLMAN says, "Kayaking was great, but wear long pants so your shins don't get sunburned!"*



# Austin's Cultural Cam



PHOTOS: STAN A. WILLIAMS

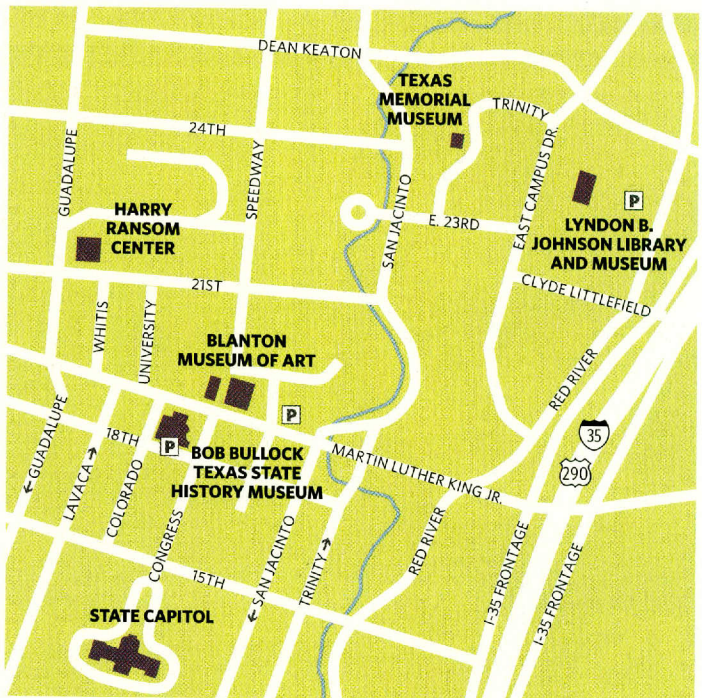


**I**F A COLLECTION IS GREATER THAN THE sum of its parts, then a collection of museums, that is to say, a collection of collections, might really be something special. That's what Austin is discovering with its newly designated Cultural Campus, five different museums within walking distance of one another. Four of the museums—the Blanton Museum of Art, the Harry Ransom Center, the LBJ Library and Museum, and the Texas Memorial Museum—are on the University of Texas campus; the fifth museum, the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, sits just across Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard from the Blanton, between the UT campus and the State Capitol.

Although each of the individual museums is excellent in its own way, none could,

LEFT: The Blanton Museum of Art collections offer classical and contemporary work. RIGHT: The Littlefield Fountain marks the University's South Mall, which leads to the landmark UT Tower.

Designed as a **walking tour**, the Cultural Campus is best explored **combining two or three** of the museums and thinking of them as **parts of a whole**.





**The UT Tower** is  
open for tours. [www.  
utexas.edu/tower](http://www.utexas.edu/tower)



PHOTOS: STAN A. WILLIAMS



### The Harry Ransom

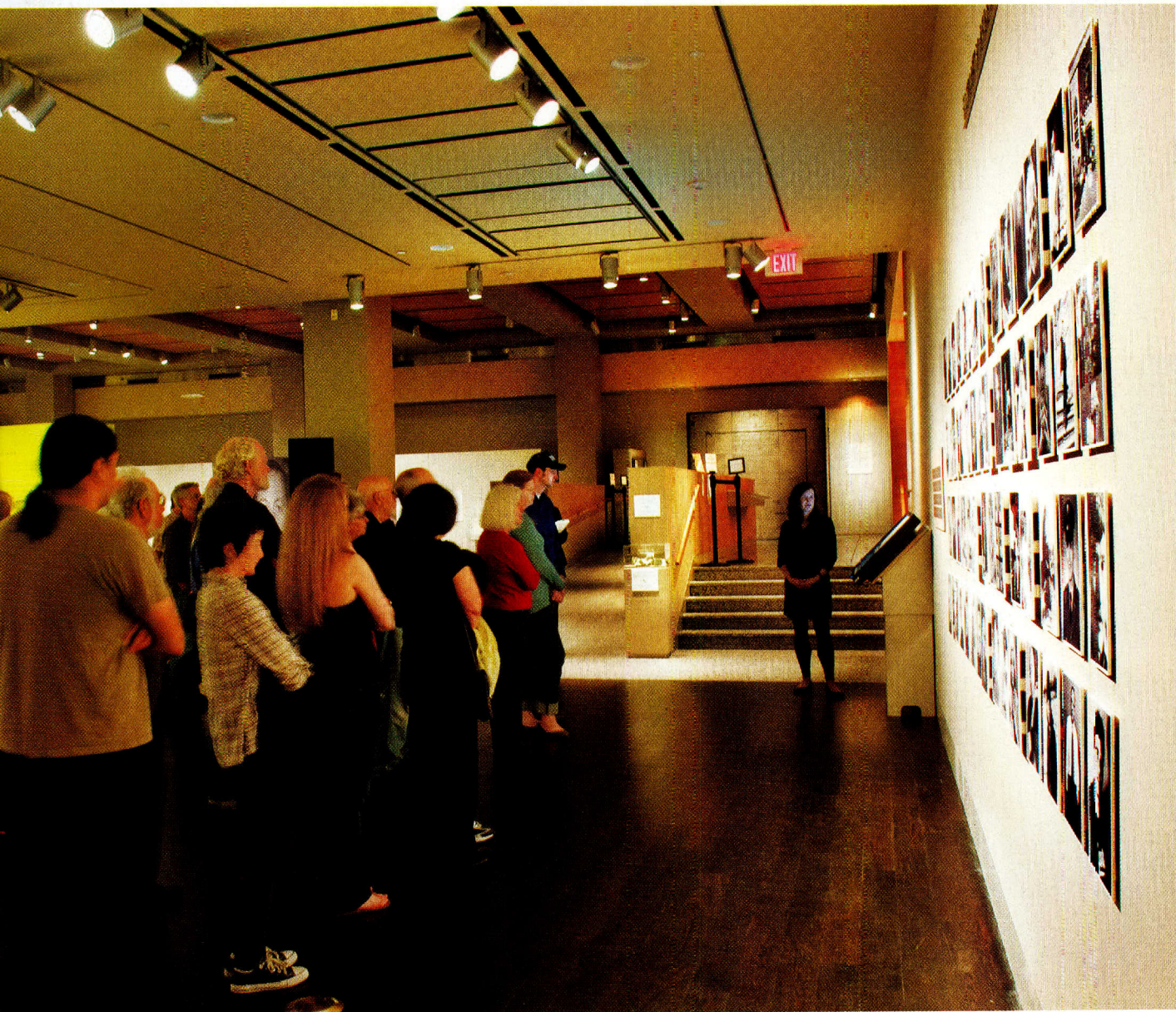
**Center's** reading room offers researchers the opportunity to inspect original correspondence and documents.

on its own, create the buzz of a true museum district. The notion of creating a synergistic and momentum-building collaboration among the institutions popped up from time to time over the years, but didn't actually take hold. That has changed, thanks, in part, to two enterprising marketing directors, Timothy Dillon at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum and Kathleen Brady Stimpert at the Blanton. Dillon, who recently moved from Chicago, proposed that the institutions collaborate on cross promotion, something he'd observed museums accomplishing successfully in Chicago. The Cultural Campus began to take specific shape after a series of formative conversations that underscored the options available for museum-goers. This is designed as a walking tour of the University, Stimpert explains. "We want people to realize that they can come here for movies, shopping, and cafés," adds Dillon, "not just the museums."

And even though an in-depth exploration of all five museums makes for a daunting day's undertaking, some combination of the five individual destinations is guaranteed to match with the most divergent group interests. Combining two or three of the museums and thinking of them as parts of a whole experience adds up to a satisfactory expedition. And you can create your own sequence of events.



ABOVE: The Harry Ransom Center holds world-class collections of photography, literature, film archives, and rare books. RIGHT: Ransom Center exhibits include authors' manuscripts and ephemera.



**ABOVE:** Visitors can join docent-guided tours of the Ransom Center's exhibits. Film screenings and lectures by visiting authors are open to the public.

One of the practical determining factors, parking, will take you to one of three starting points: the University parking garage near the Blanton, the garage beneath the Bullock, or the lot behind the LBJ Library. The next practical concern, eating, requires you to consider that the Blanton and the Bullock both operate restaurants. Arrange a visit to one of those museums to coincide with your dining schedule.

If you consider winding up your tour with the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, you can also start your cultural campus tour by parking in the garage beneath the Bullock History Museum and walking directly across the street to the Blanton Museum of Art.

The Blanton entrance hall leads to ground-floor exhibit galleries and a grand staircase that ascends to the beautiful second-floor exhibition space. The UT collection includes more than

17,000 works of art: ancient art and European paintings as well as modern and contemporary art. Expect a variety of exhibits, with something different every time you visit. One recent installation included video portraits by experimental theater artist Robert Wilson. Watching these video portraits is like watching very, very slow movies or fast paintings. You wait quite a while for the black panther to twitch its ear.

Leaving the Blanton building's lobby, you can pick up a card that displays a map for the Cultural Campus. Along with the map, the brochure offers a brief description of each of the five participating institutions. Take the card along as your guide and cross the open courtyard to the Blanton's administration building, where the museum operates its gift shop along with a sleek, contemporary café befitting an art museum.

If you choose to remain in motion, walk half a block west on Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, and take a right turn at the first corner onto University Avenue, where you'll find a



fine view of the University of Texas Tower and the monument-lined Main Mall beyond the Littlefield Fountain, designed by Italian sculptor Pompeo Coppini. The tower and fountain are renowned as two of the campus' most famous landmarks.

A left turn in front of the fountain and moments later, you're looking toward the building that houses the Ransom Center. The building dates to the 1970s, but the San Antonio firm of Lake+Flato directed an extensive renovation within the last decade. Now, the ground-floor public spaces are visible through large windows, all etched with an enchanting collection of photographs, drawings, and text from the Ransom collections.

Even with the addition of the beautiful windows, the building resembles a huge, seven-story vault. The vault comparison is appropriate because the Ransom Center holds one of the largest archives of rare books, manuscripts, photography, film, art, and items relating to the performing arts. Founding





The Blanton's installations create an interplay of color and form.



**BELOW FAR LEFT:** The Blanton's grand staircase leads to exhibit galleries.

**LEFT:** The Blanton's permanent collection, along with traveling international exhibits, make art approachable and relevant.

director Harry Ransom acted on the notion of acquiring the collections, archives, and papers of living writers. In essence, the Ransom Center effectively cornered the 20th-Century market, so that today a biographer or historian writing about an English novelist will likely undertake a pilgrimage to Austin and the Harry Ransom Center to conduct original research.

On the ground floor, the Ransom Center mounts exhibitions from its collection of 45 million items. The Center owns one of the 48 existing Gutenberg Bibles, and the two-volume Bible, bound in polished calfskin, awaits visitors in its permanent display. Johannes Gutenberg revolutionized printing in the 1450s and helped spread knowledge by printing volumes using moveable type, an innovation that would make books and literacy relatively common. Just a few steps away, you can see the first photograph, *View from the Window at Le Gras*, displayed in an airtight steel and Plexiglas case. The photograph was taken by Joseph Nicéphore Niépce, circa 1826, and holds a prominent place in the Ransom Center's fabled Gernsheim Collection of photography.

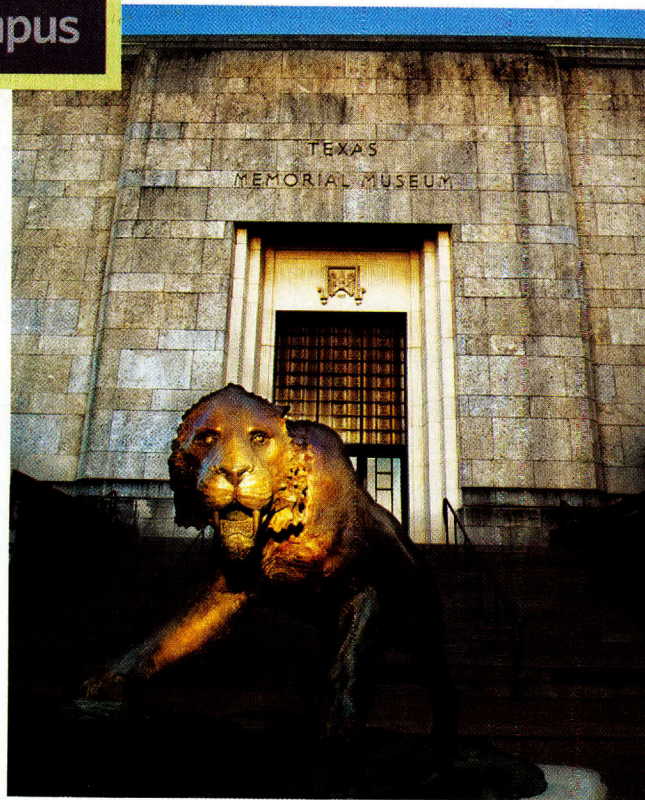
The Ransom Center's reading room, on the second floor, opens to those interested in seeing personal letters, original documents, and photographs first-hand. With appropriate identification and after an orientation session, it is possible to request and personally examine typewritten and annotated manuscripts from the likes of Norman Mailer, James Joyce, Tennessee Williams, and Ezra Pound.

Once you're acquainted with the Ransom Center, retrace your steps for a couple of blocks and cross Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard to the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum.

By comparison, this museum seems more contemporary. You'll notice that the domed museum building references the State Capitol just a few blocks south down Congress Avenue. When you walk into the four-story rotunda with its massive granite



**BELOW LEFT:** Tours explore the Blanton's permanent collection. **ABOVE:** Yoga in the Galleries opens the museum collection to an alternative experience of art.



PHOTOS: STAN A. WILLIAMS

staircase, your experience is of the gleaming metal, glass, and stone surfaces that define the building.

The Bullock's stated mission is to engage the widest possible audience, and to that end, the museum offers entertainment along with history. As an exhibition-only museum, the Bullock does not hold collections nor does it employ curators. But the Bullock does boast the only IMAX movie theater in Austin, which shows everything from *Tron* or *Avatar* to The Rolling Stones concert film, *Shine a Light*. In a separate "4-D," three-screen special-effects theater (called the Texas Spirit Theater), viewers feel their seats shake and experience the spray of water while viewing *Wild Texas Weather*. In addition to its theaters, the museum operates a café and gift shop, both located on the ground floor off the rotunda.

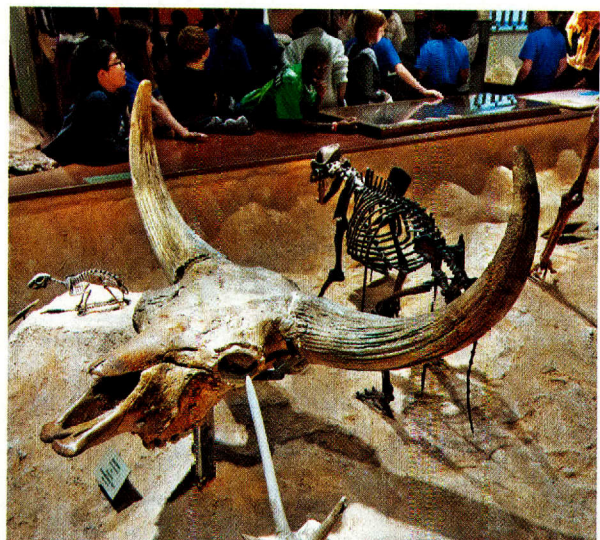
At the back of the rotunda, three floors of interactive exhibits tell *The Story of Texas* (see page 48). This area of the museum is dark and cave-like, an appropriate atmosphere for storytelling. Most of the exhibits appear to be lighted from within rather than above. The first floor is dedicated to *Encounters on the Land*, "first meetings between Native Americans and European explorers." Because the museum tells the story of the geo-political entity of Texas, its narrative begins with the arrival of Europeans and does not venture far into the pre-contact story of Native Americans.

The second floor, *Identity*, recounts how Texas became a nation, then a state. The third floor, *Creating Opportunity*, has exhibits dedicated to ranching, oil, and technology. If you sit

ABOVE: A sabre-toothed cat guards the Texas Memorial Museum, which houses the Natural History Collection. RIGHT: Students learn how scientists unearth the mysteries of extinct creatures.



**The Texas Memorial Museum** fascinates naturalists with exhibits of now-extinct creatures.





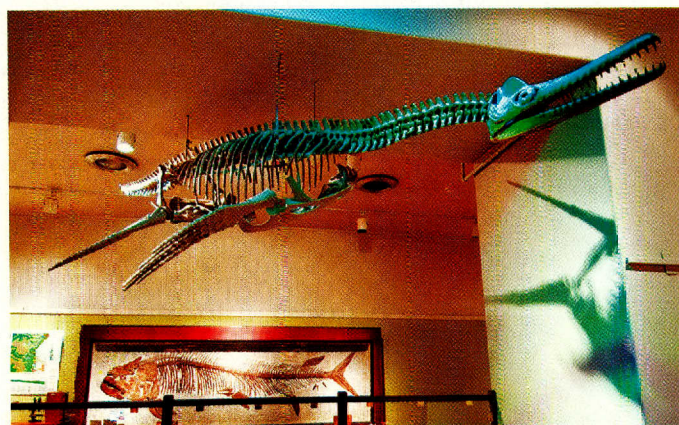
down in the Oil Tank Theater, one of several mini-theaters scattered throughout the exhibits, you'll hear the unmistakable voice of Walter Cronkite describing the impact of oil on Texas.

The exhibits are fun and engaging, and children seem to love the place. If you combine a visit to the Bob Bullock History Museum with an hour or so in the Blanton and a stroll through the Harry Ransom Center, you can put together a full museum experience contained within a couple of city blocks. But there's more.

The next two member-museums in the Cultural Campus—the LBJ Library and Museum and Texas Memorial Museum—await across the University campus. If you choose to walk through the campus, you can survey the monuments and public

spaces along the way. If not, the LBJ Library's large parking lot is free and easily accessible from Red River Street.

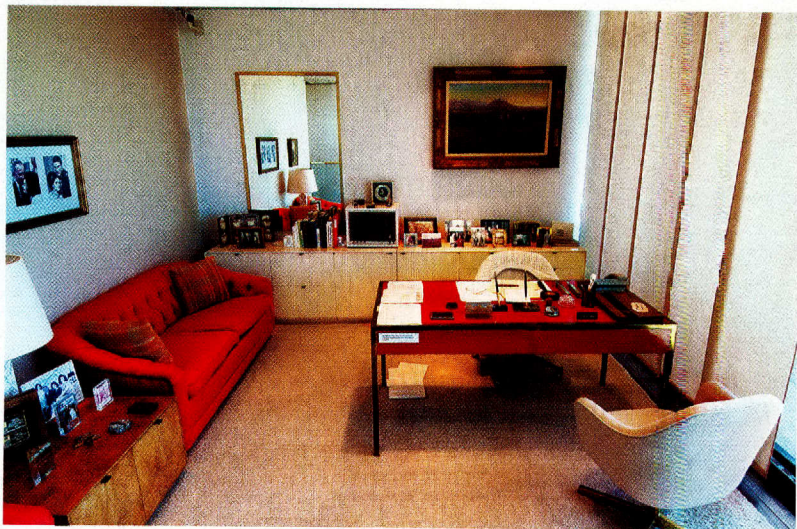
BELOW LEFT: A visit to the Texas Memorial Museum is like taking part in a scientific expedition to a remote excavation site. RIGHT: See skeletons of huge swimming creatures with flippers like whales that once lived in Texas waters.



The LBJ Library, like the Ransom Center, is an immense, vault-like structure. Inaugurated in 1971, it is one of only 13 existing presidential libraries in the United States. The exhibition on the main floor (the building's third floor) delineates a

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timeline of President Johnson's life and presidential administration, contextualized and illustrated with photographs, videos, tape recordings, and music. A black Lincoln Continental limousine parked under a flight of stairs seems an imposing reminder of presidential power and, to those who remember November of 1963, an ominous reminder of what's to come—the national tragedy that swept Johnson into the White House. When you stop in front of a photograph of Lady Bird Johnson, you hear a recording of her voice, and sense the pain she feels as she recounts how Friday, November 22, 1963, seems forever defined by the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The LBJ Library and Museum includes the office where Lady Bird Johnson worked post-presidency.

The timeline steers you through Johnson's presidential triumphs—the passage of the Civil Rights Act, the Great Society legislation, and the War on Poverty—to the Vietnam War, which was Johnson's personal downfall and divided the country for decades to come. Presumably operating on the principal of

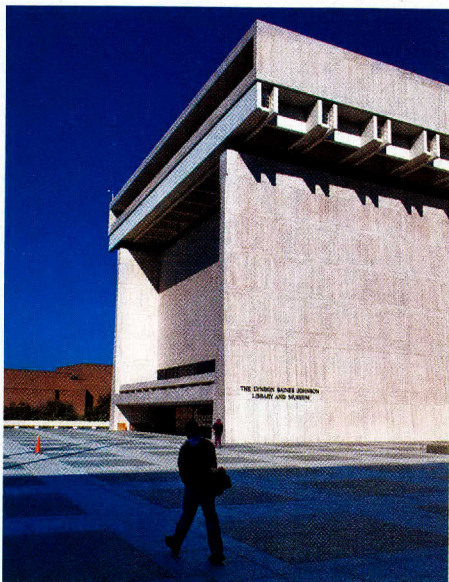
The LBJ Museum building appears like a massive vault, but one with grand views of the University campus.



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

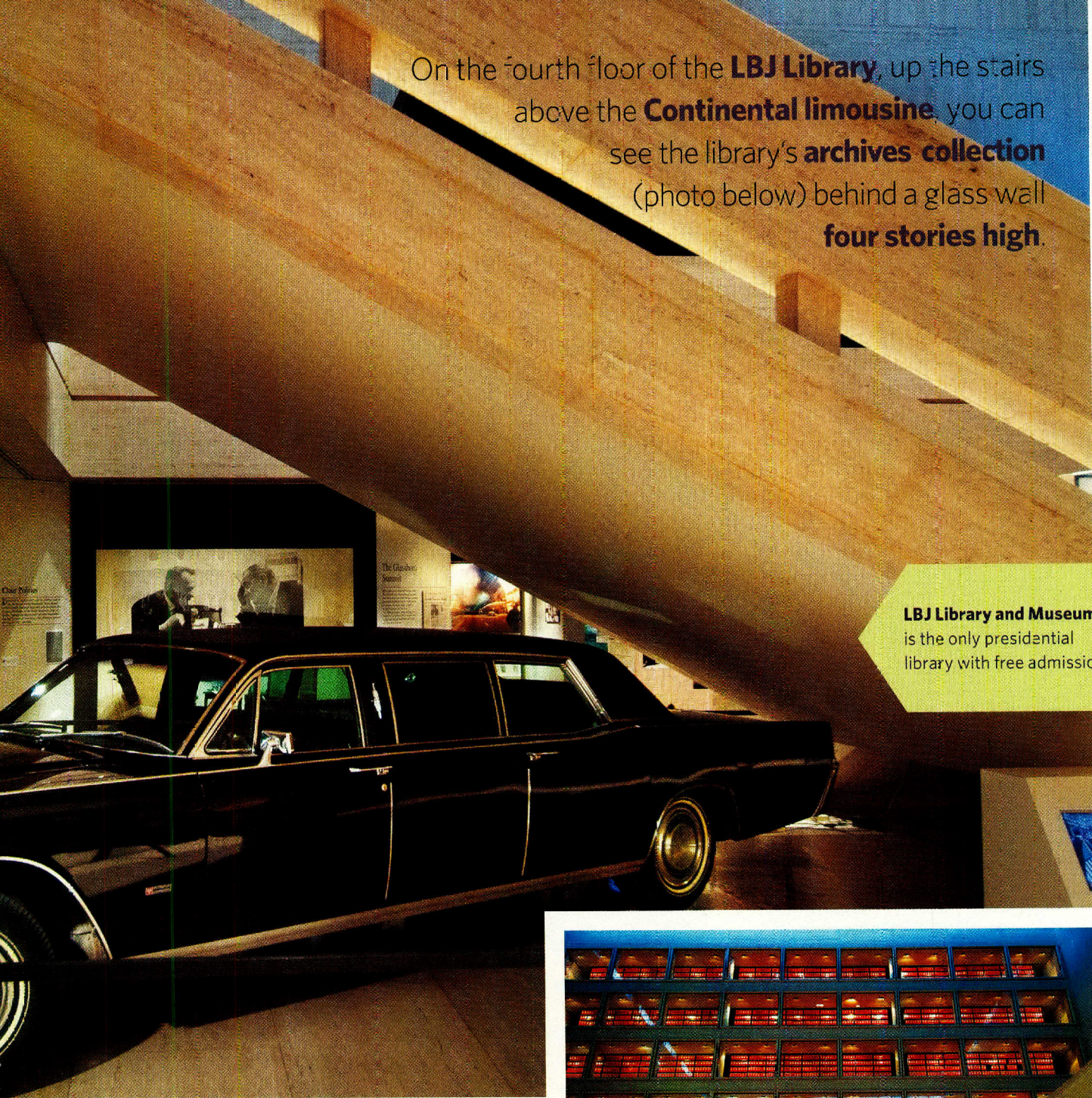
“leave 'em laughing,” the last exhibit of the timeline—*LBJ's Humor*—features an animatronic figure of Johnson, dressed in boots and a Stetson, leaning on a white rail fence. If you sit down on a black leather sofa facing the mannequin, the mannequin begins to move slowly, lip-synching recordings of Johnson recounting his favorite stories.

On the fourth floor, up the stairs above the Continental limousine, you can see the library's archives collection behind a glass wall four stories high. This repository includes 45 million pages of documents in acid-free red storage boxes, each identified with a gold presidential seal. Before leaving, be sure to take an elevator to the



PHOTOS: STAN A. WILLIAMS

On the fourth floor of the **LBJ Library**, up the stairs above the **Continental limousine**, you can see the library's **archives collection** (photo below) behind a glass wall **four stories high**.



**LBJ Library and Museum** is the only presidential library with free admission.

10th floor, where you'll find a seven-eighths-scale re-creation of the Oval Office as it appeared during Johnson's Administration, complete with three television screens allowing the then-major networks to play simultaneously.

Outside, the sweeping plaza surrounding the LBJ Library offers a grand view of the oak-dotted museum grounds, an imposing fountain, and the UT campus with the Darrell K. Royal Memorial Stadium. According to UT legend, plans

ABOVE: LBJ's Lincoln Continental limousine symbolizes a different era of presidential power. RIGHT: Four floors of archives inside the library hold millions of documents.



to move the stadium off campus were scrapped once Royal pointed out to LBJ that, during every home game, tens of thousands of football fans would sit for hours looking at the President's library and museum.

Follow your Cultural Campus map on an easy and pleasant



**Bob Bullock Texas State  
History Museum** presents  
feature films in Austin's  
only IMAX theater.

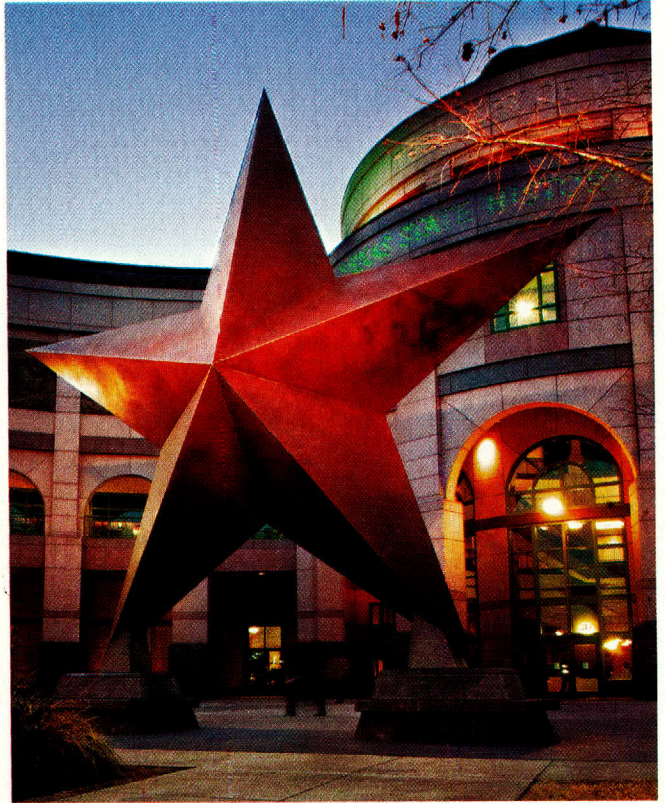
walk just a few blocks west to the Texas Memorial Museum, which houses the Natural Science Center. A newly installed, larger-than-life sculpture of a sabre-toothed cat guards the main entrance to the museum building. The 1930s Art Deco building, a project of the Texas Centennial, is the most architecturally refined and beautiful building on this cultural campus tour. President Franklin Roosevelt is said to have pushed the button that set off the excavation blast when he visited Austin by train.

The four floors of exhibitions that make up the Natural Science Center collection feel timeless; there is not much that's high-tech or interactive about the displays, yet the museum was named Austin's best for children by Nickelodeon. And it's easy to understand why. Mother Nature and Father Time are hard to top. One enters the building on the second floor—The Great Hall—lined with cases of gems, minerals, and fossils. Soaring several feet above the floor is a Texas Pterosaur, one of the most famous finds in the history of paleontology and the largest living creature to ever take wing.

Downstairs, you find dinosaurs, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians that roamed present-day Texas during prehistoric time, along with a working paleontology lab. The third-floor Hall of Texas Wildlife preserves the museum's earlier natural history collection of dioramas depicting predators and prey, such as a puma eating a deer while coyotes stand watching. The fourth floor is dedicated to biodiversity and evolution. Outside and just a few steps north of the museum sits a small structure that encloses a set of dinosaur tracks excavated from the limestone bed of the Paluxy River near Glen Rose.

And that's a wrap on the quick tour of Austin's, and the University's, Cultural Campus. It's an imposing collection of collections in which you can experience fine art, thousands of years of natural history, centuries of the state's history, impressive documents of literary history, and a decisive chapter of the nation's history, within the space of a few hours and by means of a leisurely stroll. **TH**

LEFT: The Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum tells the story of Texas through its exhibits. BELOW: An Alamo facade the day after the battle.



A 35-foot-high star symbolizes the Lone Star State as it welcomes visitors to the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum.

➔ **TH ESSENTIALS**

## Austin's Cultural Campus

OF THE FIVE MUSEUMS taking part in the Cultural Campus plan, the Blanton Museum of Art and the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum charge admission; the others are free.

**Harry Ransom Center**, 301 W. 21st St. (21st and Guadalupe), 512/471-8944; [www.hrc.utexas.edu](http://www.hrc.utexas.edu).

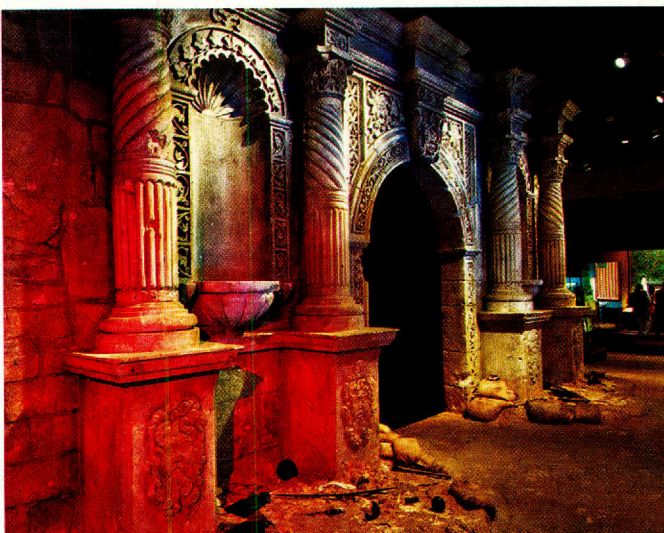
**Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum**, 1800 N. Congress Ave. at Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., 512/936-8746; [www.thestoryoftexas.com](http://www.thestoryoftexas.com).

**The Blanton Museum of Art**, Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. at Congress (200 E. MLK), 512/471-7324; [www.blantonmuseum.org](http://www.blantonmuseum.org).

**LBJ Library and Museum**, 2313 Red River St., 512/721-0200; [www.lbjlibrary.org](http://www.lbjlibrary.org).

**Texas Memorial Museum**, Texas Natural Science Center, 2400 Trinity, 512/471-1604; [www.utexas.edu/tmm](http://www.utexas.edu/tmm). (Note that the Texas Memorial Museum is scheduled to close between June 20 and October 8, 2011, for renovations.)

PHOTOS: STAN A. WILLIAMS





# Fort Worth

*When three generations meet in Cowtown, the result is a*





# with kids

collision-course with fun



Text by **KITTY CRIDER**

Photographs by **ROBERT W. HART**

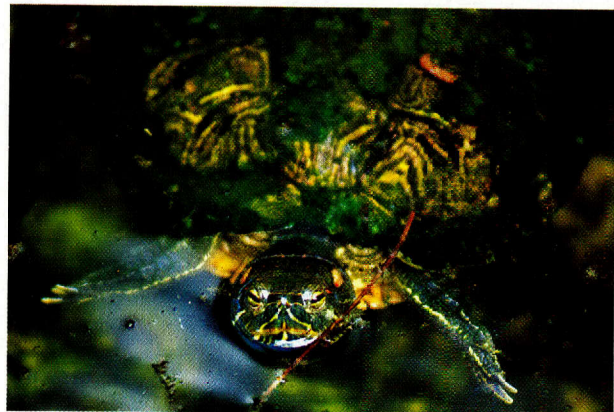
**M**y grandson Garrett, 11, climbs onto Pecos Bill, a surprisingly docile, brown-and-white Longhorn stationed in front of the Livestock Exchange Building in Fort Worth, just long enough for a wave and a photo. He jumps off and rushes down the sidewalk to watch cowhands driving a herd of some 15 other Longhorns down the brick-paved Exchange Avenue. Later, he rides a kid-friendly mechanical bull in the same block for 25 seconds!

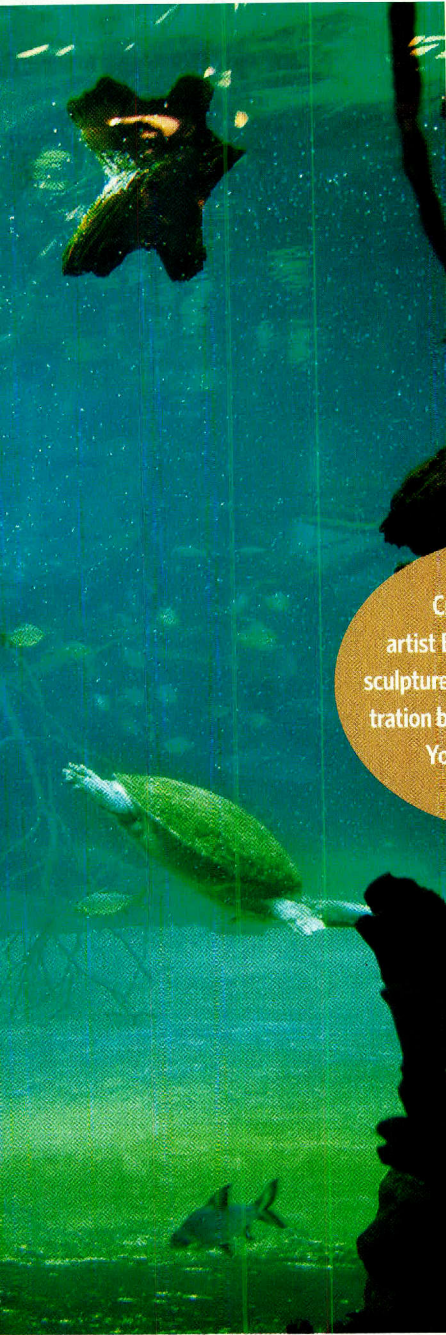
Cute cowpokes (from left) Christopher Lewis, Adam Veasey, Luke Shineman, and Cara Newburn perch on a fence at Stockyards Station along East Exchange Avenue, a good vantage point for viewing one of the twice-daily cattle drives in the Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District.



***It's an annual tradition:***

Three generations of Criders spend a weekend together in a Texas city, having fun and taking in its educational attractions.





Created by Austin artist Bob Wade, the iguana sculpture atop the zoo's administration building was once a New York City landmark.

**W**earing a big grin, this city boy from Austin proceeds to stampede the Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District, two miles north of downtown, where attractions include Western entertainment, museums, shops, and restaurants. He and his Aunt Beth feed alpacas, llamas, and two dozen other animals at a petting zoo before the “Fort Worth Jail,” an eight-foot-square, wood-and-metal cage down the street, calls his name. Soon, he and his Uncle Keith are behind bars, pretending they’re outlaws.

“I want to do the cattle-pen maze, and then we’ll get some vittles,” Garrett quips, in the spirit of the Crider Reunion Trip to Cowtown.

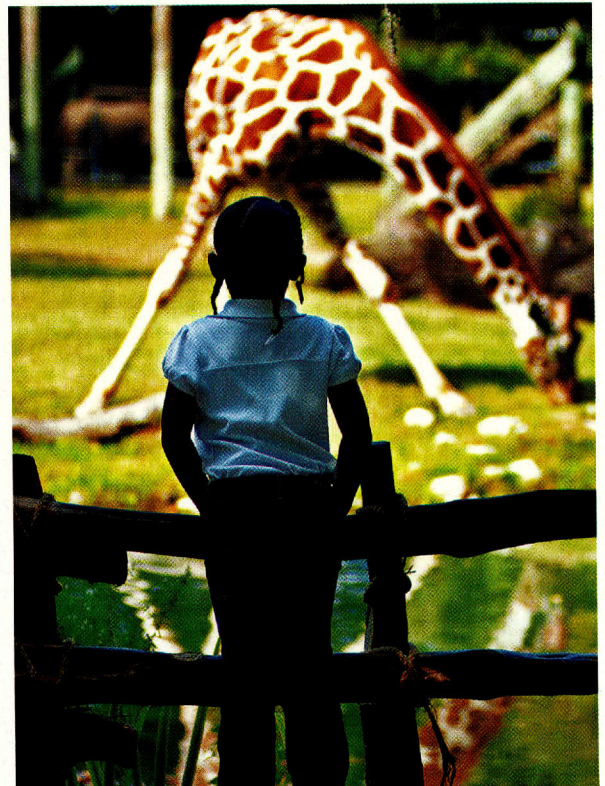
It’s an annual tradition: Three generations of my extended family spend a weekend together in a Texas city, having fun and taking in its educational attractions. This latest gathering includes Garrett and his eight-year-old brother, Ryan, and six adults.

We chose Fort Worth, the state’s fifth-largest city, because most of the family had never been to the historic stockyards, the Fort Worth Zoo’s new herpetarium, the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, or one of the Metroplex’s popular longtime attractions, Log Cabin Village.

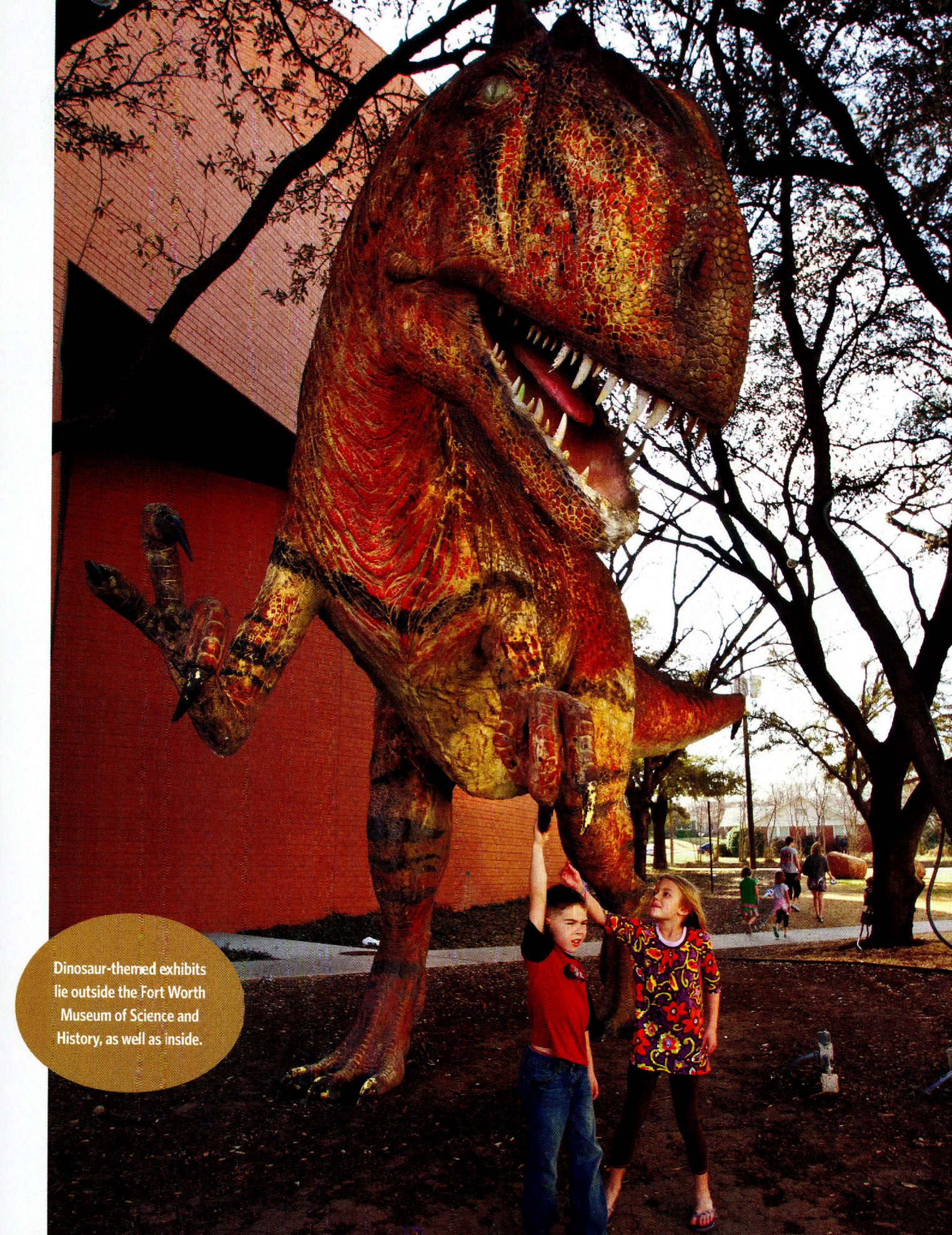
As we drive around the city, a 40-foot, green iguana sculpture catches our attention. It’s at the Fort Worth Zoo, home of nearly 7,000 animals and what some consider the country’s most elite herpetarium, the \$19 million Museum of Living Art (MOLA). We head directly to MOLA, where an intimidating, 16-foot crocodile suns in front of the building. We pull open the serpent-shaped door handles and find inside more than 100 thrilling exhibits featuring pythons, vipers, snapping turtles, a king cobra, rattlesnakes, Komodo dragons, and a shingleback skink, a heavily armored, four-legged reptile about a foot long.

The boys’ voices rise with excitement as we go from room to room, peering at poison dart frogs and Caiman lizards. Garrett, who doesn’t like girls currently, and I have a deal. If I, someone who hates things that slither, visit the herpetarium—and keep my eyes open—he will enter the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame.

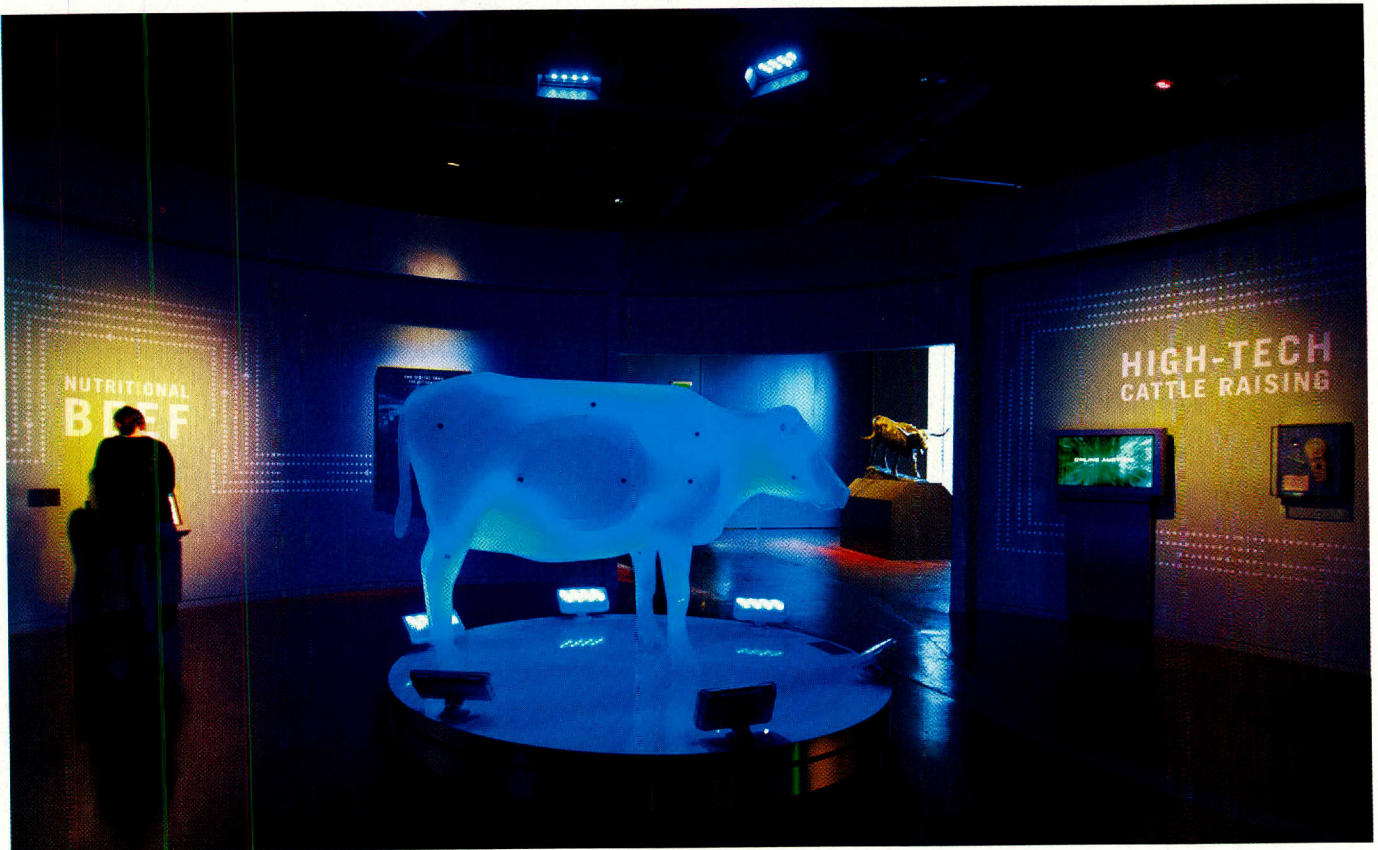
A raised boardwalk offers visitors views of grazing giraffes, as well as black rhinos, swans, and an ostrich, in the African Savannah exhibit.



ABOVE: Marcy Calland and her six-year-old daughter, Kaylee, study fish and turtles in the Gharial River exhibit, a large, mixed-species aquarium in the Fort Worth Zoo’s newest complex, Museum of Living Art. LEFT: A red-eared slider in the *Texas Wild!* exhibit, also home to prairie dogs, pelicans, and bobcats.



Dinosaur-themed exhibits lie outside the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, as well as inside.



I take a deep breath and deal with it, even though, to my horror, both boys love pressing their faces against the glass displays, looking for the poisonous reptiles hidden among rocks, leaves, and branches.

Finally, we exit MOLA and proceed past the flamingos to the penguin building for feeding time. At this indoor exhibit, Ryan steps right up to a tank for an underwater view of the tuxedoed birds paddling about. Then we head to the World of Primates to watch the gorillas' antics. With all the exotic sights and sounds, it's easy to understand why there are so many adults, kids, and strollers here.

After walking around the zoo, we're ready to fuel up for the next attraction. We must eat beef in Cowtown, and Pappas Burger has a location near the zoo. We're fans of its half-pound, hand-formed patties, especially the peppercorn ranch version topped with pepper jack cheese and spicy onion rings. My son Bart proclaims it one of the best burgers in Texas. My husband, Chester, and I agree.

Across the street from the zoo is the Log

Cabin Village, a living history museum that recalls 19th-Century Texas with 10 structures clustered in a shaded, three-acre park. All except one—a reproduction blacksmith shop—date to the 1800s and were moved to the site from various North Texas locations. The collection includes log homes, a gristmill, a smokehouse, and our favorite—a one-room schoolhouse with benches, a pot-bellied stove, and a slate blackboard. School rules—posted at the back of the room—were explicit. For pupils: Do not talk, smile, or turn your head. Stand up when asked a question and recite. For teacher: Bring coals and water. Clean the chimney.

At one cabin, a docent in 19th-Century attire encourages visitors to lie down on the rope bed, handle the primitive household equipment, ring a dinner triangle, and pump water. My daughter-in-law Kim, our

**Housed within the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, the Cattle Raisers Museum showcases scientific aspects of the cattle industry.**

LEFT: A life-size model of an *Acrocanthosaurus* dwarfs visitors at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History. ABOVE: An exhibit in the Cattle Raisers Museum highlights everyday products derived from cattle, including cosmetics and textiles.

*Our theater seats shake, objects on the screen bombard us, and we're misted with water. It's so much fun that we decide to do it again.*



A mother-daughter duo takes a "waists-on" approach to hula-hooping in the Innovations Studios area of the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History.

family's history buff and a former teacher, later names the village her favorite Fort Worth attraction.

A visit to the recently renovated Fort Worth Museum of Science and History brings us back to the present. Passing through the spacious, colorful structure, we enter the Energy Blast exhibit's theater and don 3-D glasses. During a six-minute movie we learn how natural gas formed in the Barnett Shale of North Texas more than 300 million years ago and how geologists and petroleum engineers have used science and technology to extract the

natural resource for use by humans. As we blast off from the heavens to the bottom of the ocean, our theater seats shake, objects on the screen bombard us, and we're misted with water. It's so much fun that we decide to watch the movie again.

The Fort Worth Museum of Science and History offers a wealth of interactive exhibits for both children and adults, as well as a café, an IMAX theater, and numerous public events.

Exiting the theater, we encounter a 50,000-pound, seismic vibrator truck; it is so massive that when the museum was constructed, a crane placed the truck on a concrete slab and then the museum was built around it. Vibrations from trucks like this can send sound waves more than a mile-and-a-half underground; geologists use the seismic data to help find gas deposits. We decide that the Energy Blast is a secret

find—the theater isn't visible from the main hallway and there are no lines. Not only is it fun, but we come away with a new understanding of natural gas exploration in Texas.

The museum, which attracts a million visitors annually, also includes an IMAX, a planetarium, a children's museum with both indoor and outdoor exhibits, a DinoLab and DinoDig, and the Cattle Raisers Museum. The latter



Brianna Farragher and her brother Charlie make a discovery in the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History's DinoDig, where authentic fossils from North Texas are hidden in the sand.



## *In Fort Worth's historic*

*Stockyards area, visitors can hear the clip-clop of horses' hooves, get an occasional whiff of livestock, and see a cattle drive twice every day.*

exhibit traces the history of the cattle industry in Texas; showcases hats and saddles from the 1850s to the 1920s; and displays more than 100 cattle brands, including the J Cross W brand and another one that belonged to Stephen F. Austin. One nook features an interactive roundup, where Ryan sits on a mock horse and drives cattle on a computer screen.

The science-museum admission also covers the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame, located next door. It contains more than 5,000 items illustrating the lives of women in the American West, among them Annie Oakley's traveling trunks from Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show. But I have erred in planning, and the museum is closed on Mondays. Garrett grins. Disappointed, I



Cowtown's heritage takes center stage in the Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District, a 15-block area that showcases Western-themed exhibits and family fun.

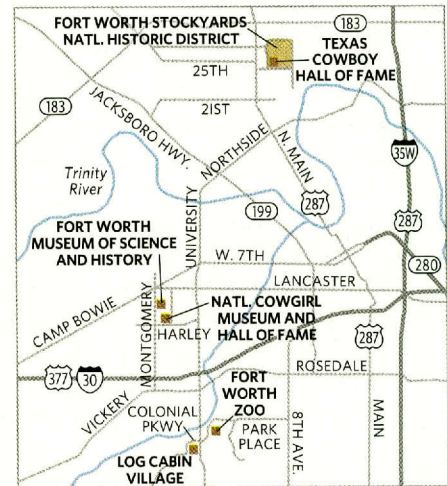


reminisce with Ryan about a previous visit, when he and I spent nearly an hour playing at a mock chuckwagon, cooking over a pretend campfire, and practicing lassoing.

However, back at the Stockyards, the Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame *is* open. Housed in a historic barn, the museum displays the world's largest collection of specialized wagons. Among the 60 antique wagons and carriages: a fringed-top surrey, a milk wagon, a Standard Oil tank wagon, a fire wagon, a chuckwagon, a mail wagon, a photographer's wagon, a hearse, and a covered wagon.

The more than 100 people saluted with displays in the Hall of Fame include bull rider Lane Frost (the subject of the 1994 movie *8 Seconds*), singers George Strait and Willie Nelson, baseball pitcher Nolan Ryan, and trauma surgeon Dr. Red Duke. (Despite its Western emphasis, this museum honors individuals who have excelled in business, sports, and other aspects of Texas life.) There are more attractions: an exhibit of 120 horse bits, a saddle display, [continued on page 60]

## TH ESSENTIALS



## Family-Friendly Fort Worth

FOR MORE INFORMATION about events, attractions, restaurants, and lodging, call the **Fort Worth Convention & Visitors Bureau**, 800/433-5747; [www.fortworth.com](http://www.fortworth.com). Contact information for sites in the story follows.

**Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District** (visitors center), 130 E. Exchange Ave., 817/624-4741; [www.fortworthstockyards.org](http://www.fortworthstockyards.org).

**Fort Worth Zoo**, 1989 Colonial Pkwy., 817/759-7500; [www.fortworthzoo.org](http://www.fortworthzoo.org).

**Pappas Burger** (near zoo), 2700 West Freeway, 817/870-9736; [www.pappasburger.com](http://www.pappasburger.com).

**Log Cabin Village**, 2100 Log Cabin Village Ln., 817/392-5881; [www.logcabinvillage.org](http://www.logcabinvillage.org).

**Fort Worth Museum of Science and History**, 1600 Gendy St., 817/255-9300; [www.fwmuseum.org](http://www.fwmuseum.org).

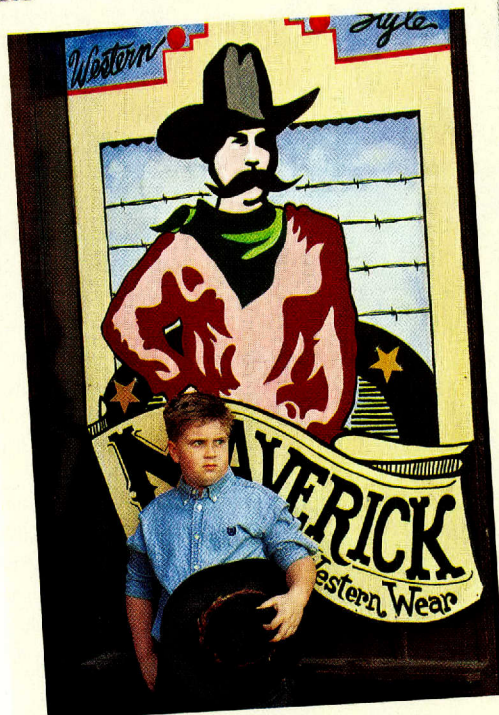
**National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame**, 1720 Gendy St., 817/336-4475; [www.cowgirl.net](http://www.cowgirl.net).

**Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame**, 128 E. Exchange Ave., Historic Barn A, 817/626-7131; [www.texascowboyhalloffame.org](http://www.texascowboyhalloffame.org).

**Hyatt Place Fort Worth Historic Stockyards**, 132 E. Exchange Ave., 817/626-6000; [www.stockyards.place.hyatt.com](http://www.stockyards.place.hyatt.com).



ABOVE: Tourists line East Exchange Avenue as drivers guide the Fort Worth Herd down the brick-paved street. RIGHT: Kinser English of Southlake sits outside a Western shop in the historic Stockyards.



and a kid-friendly “branding” activity involving an inkpad, paper, and rubber stamps.

“You’re supposed to brand the paper, not each other,” Beth tells Garrett and her husband, Keith, who are enjoying stamping each other with a pretend “X” brand.

The Stockyards area is filled with families having a good time. We’ve opted to spend the night at the Hyatt Place Fort Worth Historic Stockyards, conveniently located on Exchange Avenue, where the cattle drives take place. In front of the hotel, we watch a rider with a preschooler on the saddle in front of him, nudging his horse to dance for the tourists. We notice hotel guests checking in wearing real spurs. Later, from the window of our hotel suite, we can see a lighted corral, where cowgirls and cowboys are practicing for an equestrian performance at Cowtown Coliseum.

Fort Worth looks so different from Dallas,

only 30 miles away, Kim observes. My son Bart agrees, adding, “Here, you can still get the cowboy culture that people want to see.”

He’s right. Visitors can hear the clip-clop of hooves on the streets, get an occasional whiff of livestock, and see a cattle drive twice every day—all vivid reminders of how important cattle have been to Texas.

It’s time to leave. But some of us are already talking about a return visit to Fort Worth—for its famed art museums.

Garrett owes me. **TH**

*Austin writer KITTY CRIDER and her family have wandered through shark tunnels in Dallas, explored space labs in Houston, and ridden the Ferris wheel in Kemah. Fort Worth photographer ROBERT W. HART first shot the historic Stockyards area in 1975, when Exchange Avenue was lined with abandoned storefronts and boarded-up windows—a stark contrast to the popular destination it is today.*

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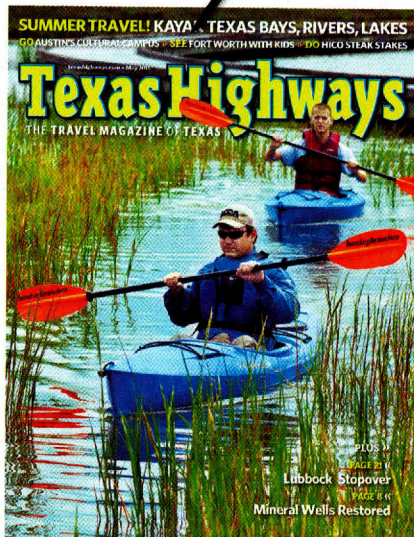
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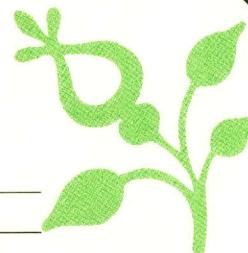
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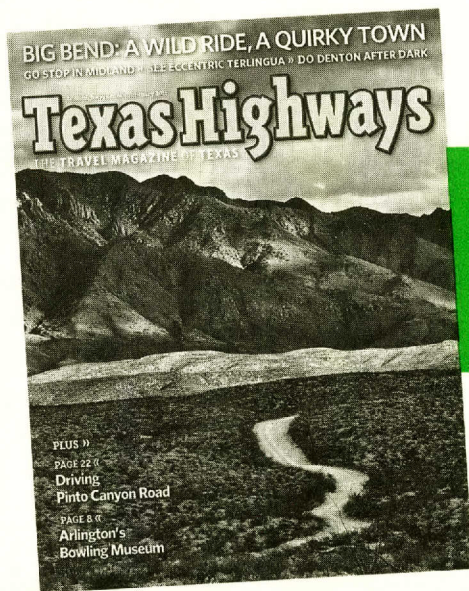


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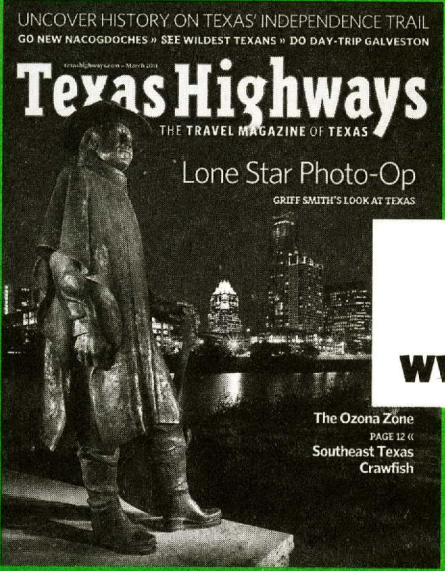
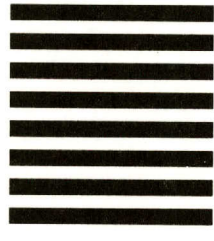
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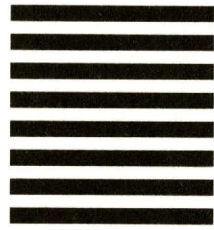
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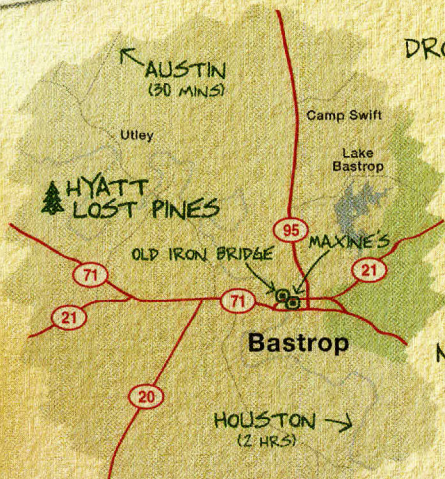
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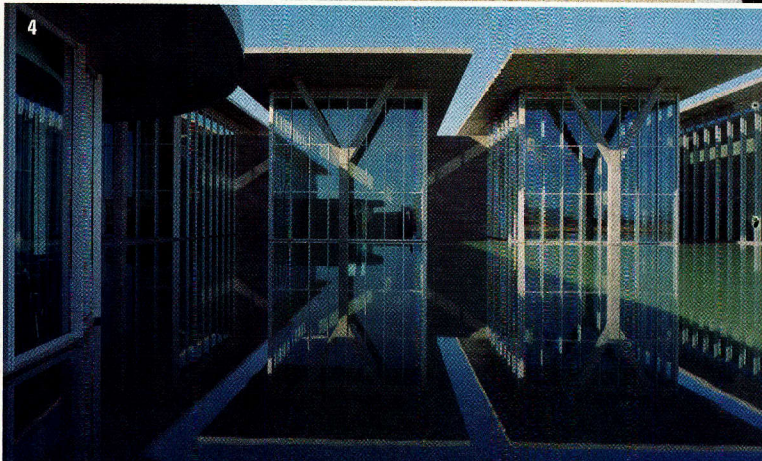


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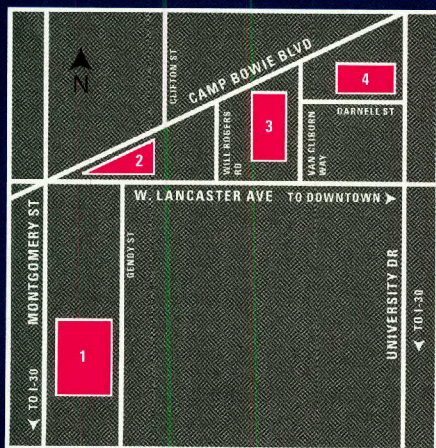
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## On the Road Again

*The nation's second transcontinental auto route, the historic Bankhead Highway still links communities across Texas*

Text by **GENE FOWLER**

### **F**IFTEEN YEARS AGO, RETIRED METEOROLOGIST

Dan Smith of Fort Worth was riding his bicycle on backroads near Aledo when he discovered something that piqued his curiosity and launched him on a quest that continues today. “I rode up to an old bridge that was closed and abandoned,” he recalls. “A sign there identified the road as the ‘Old Bankhead Highway.’”

Smith later learned that he had found the nation’s second transcontinental auto route. (The first was the 1913 Lincoln Highway.) Made possible by the Federal Aid Road Act of 1916 and named for Senator John Hollis Bankhead of Alabama, the Bankhead Highway ran from Washington, D.C., to San Diego, California. Opened for traffic in Texas in the early 1920s, the Bankhead—known at one time as “the Broadway of America”—entered the state at Texarkana, passing through Sulphur Springs, Dallas/Fort Worth, Abilene, and Midland/Odessa before leaving the state at El Paso.

Large-y forgotten as newer highways—US 67, US 80, US 180, I-20, and I-30—were built over its path or diverted travelers from its small towns, the Bankhead today is enjoying something of a renaissance as communities commemorate its convoluted pathway with historical markers and

Travelers motoring the Bankhead Highway through Fort Worth in 1928 marveled at the new Montgomery Ward store, an architectural icon that now houses loft apartments.



other signage. Bankhead scholars debate details about its route, and websites like [bygonebyways.com](http://bygonebyways.com) chronicle its twists and turns, nurturing a nostalgic fervor reminiscent of the affection shown for Route 66. The state's Historic Roads and Highways Program, initiated by former state representative Carol Kent in the 81st Texas Legislature in 2009, proclaimed the Bankhead the first official Texas Historic Highway.

"The idea was suggested by constituents in Garland," says Kent. (As has occurred in many towns along the route, the Bankhead in Garland was long ago renamed Main Street.) "Communities all along the Bankhead see the official designation as a great opportunity for developing heritage tourism."

First, though, folks have to find it. Bankhead detective Dan Smith explains that Texas Highway 1, the road that became a part of the Bankhead, was more "assembled than built." Noting that early auto roads were mostly "rutted wagon trails at best," Garland historian Jerry Flook adds that existing roads were improved and linked to create Texas 1.

Fellow Bankhead historian Joe Specht of Abilene describes the process: "There was no blasting—they just followed the contours of the landscape." When newer, more direct highways were built, sections of the old Bankhead were sometimes left stranded. Near Rowlett, for instance, the route passes under Lake Ray Hubbard, continuing on the far shore. Bridge railings jut above the water as though floating in surreal tableau.

Finding his way by satellite imagery and antique maps, Smith has recently completed tracking, driving, and

documenting each mile of the lost highway for a book project. Much evidence remains visible. Between Fort Worth and Abilene, sections of the Bankhead, some built with bricks made in Thurber, can still be driven in Weatherford, Mineral Wells, and other towns. The town of Strawn features original brick streets and a newly repainted sign announcing the (long-closed) Bankhead Hotel and Apartments. The Old Jail Museum Complex in Palo Pinto displays a yard-wide panoramic photo of the hundreds of attendees who met in 1919 in Mineral Wells to establish the Bankhead route between Arkansas and El Paso.

Baird's T&P Railroad Depot Museum hosts a permanent Bankhead display, and Abilene's four-mile-long Bankhead Historical District is on the National Register of Historic Places. "A number of Bankhead-era sites like the Ponca Motel and the 1930 Abilene Courts still stand along the Abilene route, awaiting restoration," says Joe Specht.

Many of the sweetest Bankhead reminders, of course, exist in folks' memories. Ray Mack Thompson of Richardson, who says he is "old enough to remember when the brick Bankhead was the main highway into Dallas/Fort Worth," grew up on a Pecos cantaloupe farm just a mile north of the old road. "Our family specialized in individual gift packages shipped by railway express," says Thompson, "and I remember Mother saying that one of our biggest customers was the man who helped inspire the interstate highway system, Senator Bankhead of Alabama."

People often say we need to see where we've been to see where we're

The Bankhead entered the state at Texarkana, passing through Dallas/Fort Worth, Abilene, and Midland/Odessa before leaving the state at El Paso.

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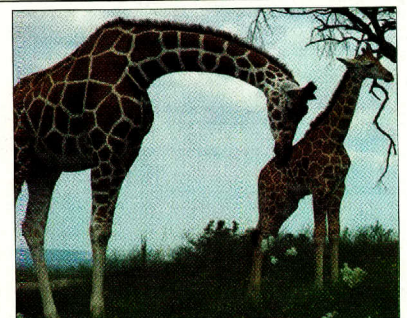


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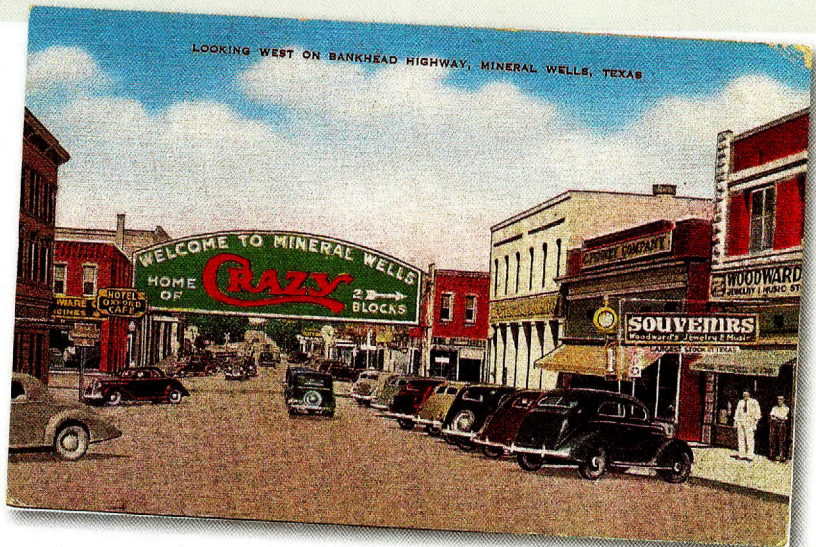
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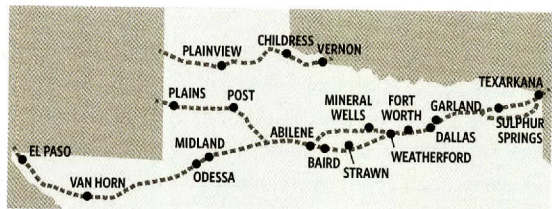
Bricks made in Thurber paved many Texas sections of the Bankhead, including the stretch through Mineral Wells.

going. The same goes for the roads that get us there. And just like the Camino Real, the Chihuahua Trail, Route 66, and other paths that carried our predeces-

sors to a place called Texas, traveling and preserving the old Bankhead Highway can help us keep from losing our way on the road to tomorrow. **TH**

### Long Live the Bankhead

OPENED FOR TRAFFIC IN the early 1920s, the Bankhead Highway ran from Washington, D.C., to San Diego, California. In Texas, the main route passed through **Texarkana** and went west through **Sulphur**



**Springs, Garland, Dallas, Fort Worth, Mineral Wells, Abilene, Midland, Van Horn, and El Paso**—and the many towns in between. Several branch routes connected towns in the Texas Panhandle along present-day US 287 and US 70, including **Vernon, Childress, and Plainview**; as well as such towns as **Post and Plains** on present-day US 380.

For more information about the route roughly paralleled by present-day US 80 and US 180, see [www.redriverhistorian.com/US80.html](http://www.redriverhistorian.com/US80.html).

Dan Smith's forthcoming book on the Bankhead Highway is currently in development with State House Press of Abilene.

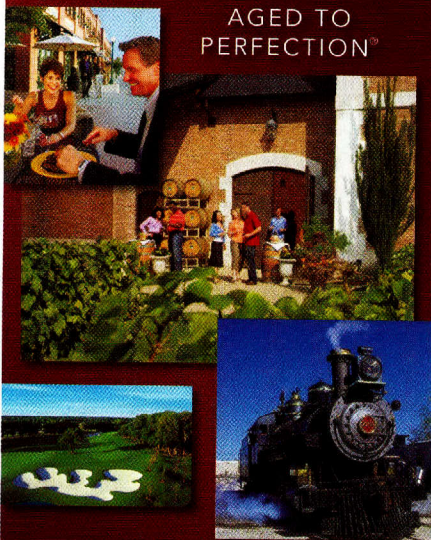
Some of the most visible remnants of the Bankhead survive in **Garland** and in **Baird**, where historical markers commemorate the route; in **Weatherford**, where the original brick street through downtown has been restored; in **Strawn**, where the former Bankhead Hotel and Apartments building has been repainted and awaits restoration; and in **Abilene**, where a yet-to-be-restored, four-mile stretch of the former highway has been designated the Bankhead Historical District and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

In **Van Horn**, some 120 miles before the old Bankhead exited Texas at El Paso, the Hotel El Capitan was built in 1930 to cater to cattlemen, rail travelers, and automobile travelers headed west (or east) along the Bankhead route. Recently restored, the hotel offers 38 rooms and suites with private baths. Call 877/283-1220; [www.hotelelcapitan.net](http://www.hotelelcapitan.net).

—Lori Moffatt

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## Island Lure

### TH TRAVELER SAYS GET TO GALVESTON!

The annual **Galveston Historic Homes Tour** wows visitors again this year. On May 7-8 and 14-15 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Galveston Historical Foundation presents ten 19th- and 20th-Century homes, from the grandest mansions to the quaintest cottages. Don't miss Moonlight and Martinis, a bike tour, an antiques sale, and tours of Bishop's Palace. Call 409/765-3409; [www.galvestonhistory.org](http://www.galvestonhistory.org).

And **Moody Gardens** goes wild as the newly revamped **Rainforest Pyramid** opens on May 28. After a \$25 million enhancement, the pyramid allows visitors to stroll above the treetops on a 300-foot-long canopy walkway. Greet the residents, too, including macaws, cotton-top tamarins, and giant river otters. **Palm Beach**, the gardens' freshwater wonderland, reopens for the season on the same day, with a Lazy River and other new features. Call 800/582-4673; [www.moodygardens.org](http://www.moodygardens.org).

See!

Saki monkeys at Moody Gardens



## May Events

### BIG BEND COUNTRY

**DEL RIO: George Paul Memorial Bull Riding** May 7-8. Val Verde Fairground. 800/775-3551

**EL PASO: Monet to Matisse** May 1-22. El Paso Museum of Art. [www.visiteelpaso.com](http://www.visiteelpaso.com)

**EL PASO: Treasure!** May 1-30. Treasure-hunting exhibit. [www.lynxexhibits.com](http://www.lynxexhibits.com) 915/533-4330

**ODESSA: Fiesta West Texas** May 5-8. Ector County Coliseum. 432/288-5321

**SAN ELIZARIO: Mission Trail Art Market** May 15. Veterans Memorial Plaza. [www.missiontrailartmarket.com](http://www.missiontrailartmarket.com) 915/594-8424

### GULF COAST

**BEAUMONT: Cinco de Mayo Celebration** May 5. Riverfront Park. 409/728-0625

**CORPUS CHRISTI: Buc Days Festival** May 1-7. [www.bucdays.com](http://www.bucdays.com) 361/883-5111

**CORPUS CHRISTI: Beach to Bay Relay Marathon** May 21. [www.beachtobayrelay.com](http://www.beachtobayrelay.com) 361/881-6166

**CRYSTAL BEACH: Texas Crab Festival** May 6-8. Gregory Park. [www.texascrabfestival.com](http://www.texascrabfestival.com)

**GALVESTON: Shirley MacLaine** May 1. The Grand 1894 Opera House. [www.thegrand.com](http://www.thegrand.com) 800/821-1894

**GALVESTON: Texas Outdoor Family Workshop** May 1. Reservations required. Galveston Island State Park. [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/galveston](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/galveston) 512/389-8903

**GALVESTON: Galveston Symphony Orchestra** May 8. The Grand 1894 Opera House. [www.thegrand.com](http://www.thegrand.com) 800/821-1894

**HOUSTON: Czech SpringFest** May 1. [www.czechheritage.org](http://www.czechheritage.org) 713/349-0500

**HOUSTON: Celebrating 15 Years of History at Holocaust Museum Houston** May 1-December 31. 713/942-8000

**HOUSTON: Houston International Festival** May 1, 7-8. [www.ifest.org](http://www.ifest.org)

**HOUSTON: Art Car Parade Sneak Peek** May 21. Discovery Green. [www.discoverygreen.com](http://www.discoverygreen.com)

**HOUSTON: Buffalo Bayou Kayak Trips** May 21. [www.buffalobayou.org](http://www.buffalobayou.org) 713/752-0314 (ext. 3)

**HOUSTON: Comicpalooza** May 27-29. George R. Brown Convention Center. [www.comicpalooza.com](http://www.comicpalooza.com)

**HOUSTON: Texas Outdoor Family Workshop** May 28-29. Reservations required. Sheldon Lake State Park. 512/389-8903

**HUMBLE: Texas Beer Fest** May 7. Civic Center. [www.texasbeerfest.org](http://www.texasbeerfest.org)

**KEMAH: Bluegrass Festival** May 1. Kemah Lighthouse District. [www.kemah-tx.gov](http://www.kemah-tx.gov)

**LA PORTE: Hard Hat Tour of the Battleship Texas** May 17. Battleship Texas State Historic Site. 281/479-2461

**ORANGE: Texas Cajun Heritage Festival** May 21-22. [www.orangetexas.org](http://www.orangetexas.org) 409/883-1011

**PASADENA: Bayou Boil** May 14. Armand Bayou Nature Center. [www.abnc.org](http://www.abnc.org) 281/474-2551

**PASADENA: Strawberry Festival** May 20-22. Pasadena Fairgrounds. [www.strawberryfest.org](http://www.strawberryfest.org) 281/991-9500

**PEARLAND: Summer Concert Series** May 6, 13, 20, 27. Southdown Park. [www.pearlandparks.com](http://www.pearlandparks.com) 281/412-8900

**PORT ARANSAS: Artfest and Songwriter's Showcase** May 21-22. Historic Tarpon Inn. [www.portaransasartcenter.org](http://www.portaransasartcenter.org)

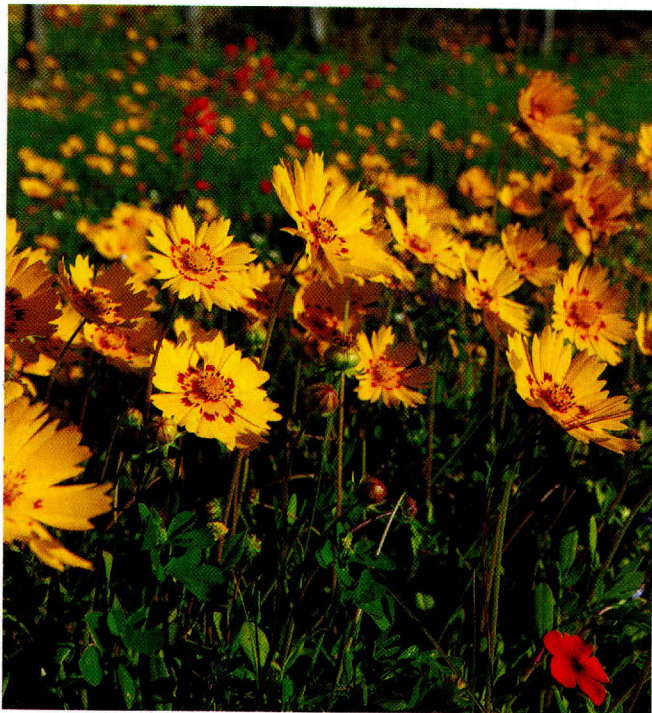
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➔ **TH SPOTLIGHT**

## Better Than a Bouquet

IN HONOR OF NATIONAL WILDFLOWER WEEK, THE LADY Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, along with *Texas Highways* and Canon, will present *The Serendipity of Wildflowers 2011*—a photographic exhibit showcasing the vibrant wildflower images from the April issue of *TH*. The exhibition runs from May 2-8 in the McDermott Learning Center.

The center's annual celebration of **Wildflower Days** continues through May this year and includes the **arboretum groundbreaking** on April 30, **exhibits** of the intricate paper sculptures of Shou Ping and mosaics by Stefanie Distefano through May 22, and the annual **Gardens on Tour**, featuring access to five private gardens and tours of the center's displays, on May 7. Call 512/232-0100; [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org).

And remember, the deadline for the spring wildflower **photo contest**, sponsored by the Wildflower Center and *Texas Highways*, is June 15. Go to [www.wildflower.org/photocontest](http://www.wildflower.org/photocontest).

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- ▶ 64th Annual Pilgrimage: Historic Home Tours & Spring Festival - May 6-8
- ▶ "Battle of Port Jefferson" Civil War Re-enactment - May 6-8
- ▶ "Jefferson Salutes America" 4th of July Celebration - July 4

Visit [JeffersonTexas.com](http://JeffersonTexas.com)  
(903) 665-3733

**PORT ARTHUR: S.A.L.T. Fishing Rodeo** May 28-29. Pleasure Island. 409/963-0433

**ROCKPORT: Women Artists of the West show** May 11-June 4. [www.rockportartcenter.com](http://www.rockportartcenter.com) 361/729-5519

**SEABROOK: Sailboat Races on Clear Lake** May 4, 11, 18, 25. [www.clearlakeracing.com](http://www.clearlakeracing.com) 281/468-6909

**SOUTH PADRE ISLAND: South Padre Island Kiteboarding Roundup** May 18-22. [www.spikiteroundup.com](http://www.spikiteroundup.com)

**SPRING: Texas Crawfish & Music Festival** May 13-15, 20-22. [www.texas crawfish festival.com](http://www.texas crawfish festival.com) 800/653-8696

**WEBSTER: Greek Festival** May 6-8. [www.clearlakegreekfestival.com](http://www.clearlakegreekfestival.com) 409/939-9852

**WHARTON: Wharton County Youth Fair** May 1-7. Wharton County Fairgrounds [www.whartoncountyyouthfair.org](http://www.whartoncountyyouthfair.org) 979/677-3350

### HILL COUNTRY

**AUSTIN: Art Week Austin** May 1. [www.artallianceaustin.org](http://www.artallianceaustin.org)

**AUSTIN: Old Pecan Street Spring Arts Festival** May 7-8. [www.oldpecanstreetfestival.com](http://www.oldpecanstreetfestival.com) 512/469-6060

**AUSTIN: Farm to Plate** May 12. Barr Mansion. [www.sustainablefoodcenter.org](http://www.sustainablefoodcenter.org)

**AUSTIN: Pachanga Music Festival** May 21. Fiesta Gardens. [www.pachangafest.com](http://www.pachangafest.com)

**BANDERA: Cowboys on Main** May 7, 14, 21, 28. [www.frontiertimesmuseum.com](http://www.frontiertimesmuseum.com) 800/364-3833

**BANDERA: Cowboy Capital Rodeo Association Pro Rodeo** May 27-29. Mansfield Park Rodeo Arena. [www.banderarodeo.com](http://www.banderarodeo.com) 830/796-7207

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**BLANCO: Blanco Trade Days & Farmers' Market** May 28-29. Yett Park. [www.blancotradedays.i8.com](http://www.blancotradedays.i8.com) 830/833-4460

**BOERNE: Hauptstrasse Quiltfest** May 7. Downtown and Main Plaza Park. 830/249-9511

**BOERNE: Abendkonzerte** May 25. Main Plaza Park. [www.ci.boerne.tx.us/parks](http://www.ci.boerne.tx.us/parks) 830/249-7277

**BROWNWOOD: Spring Open House & Youth Outdoor Day** May 6-7. Lake Brownwood State Park. [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/lake\\_brownwood](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/lake_brownwood) 325/784-5223

**BUDA: Lions Club Country Fair & Wiener Dog Races** May 1. Buda City Park. [www.budalions.com](http://www.budalions.com) 512/312-0084

**BULVERDE: Spring Chicken Festival** May 1. Bulverde Community Center. [www.bulverdecommunitycenter.com](http://www.bulverdecommunitycenter.com) 830/980-7938

**BURNET: Barbecue Cook-Off & Music Festival** May 20-21. Burnet County Fair and Rodeo Grounds. [www.burnetcookoff.com](http://www.burnetcookoff.com) 512/585-8215

**CASTROVILLE: Relay for Life** May 13. Medina Valley High School track. E-mail: [tony@alamocredit.com](mailto:tony@alamocredit.com)

**FREDERICKSBURG: Founders Day Festival** May 7. Pioneer Museum. [www.pioneermuseum.net](http://www.pioneermuseum.net) 830/997-2835

**FREDERICKSBURG: Lavender Fest** May 21-22. [www.beckervineyards.com](http://www.beckervineyards.com) 830/644-2681

**FREDERICKSBURG: Crawfish Festival** May 27-29. Market Square. [www.tex-fest.com](http://www.tex-fest.com) 866/839-3378

**FREDERICKSBURG: Pacific Combat Living History Re-enactment** May 28-29. National Museum of the Pacific War. [www.pacificwarmuseum.org](http://www.pacificwarmuseum.org) 830/997-8600

**GRUENE: Come and Taste It Spring Wine Series** May 5, 12, 19, 26. Grapevine Texas Wine Bar. [www.grapevineingruene.com](http://www.grapevineingruene.com)

**GRUENE: KNBT Americana Music Jam** May 22. Gruene Hall. [www.gruenehall.com](http://www.gruenehall.com) 830/629-5077

**HONDO: Annual Hondo Fly-In** May 21. Hondo Army Airfield. [www.hondochamber.com](http://www.hondochamber.com) 830/426-3037

**KERRVILLE: Southwest Gourd Fine Art Show** May 26-June 26. Kerr Arts & Cultural Center. [www.kackckerrville.com](http://www.kackckerrville.com) 830/895-2911

**KERRVILLE: Texas State Arts & Crafts Fair** May 28-30. River Star Arts & Events Center. [www.tacef.org](http://www.tacef.org) 888/335-1455

**LLANO: Mike Blakely's TexAmericana Fandango Music Festival** May 13-15. Robinson Park. [www.mikeblakely.com/dates](http://www.mikeblakely.com/dates) 325/247-5354

**LLANO: Llano Country Opry: Georgette Jones** May 14. Lantex Theater. [www.hillbillyhits.com](http://www.hillbillyhits.com) 325/247-5354

**LUCKENBACH: Hill Country Run Motorcycle Rally** May 6-8. [www.hillcountryrun.com](http://www.hillcountryrun.com) 866/839-3378

**MARBLE FALLS: Howdy Roo Regional Chili Cook-Off/Lonestar BBQ State Championship Cook-Off** May 4-8. Johnson Park. 281/615-2408

**MARBLE FALLS: MayFest** May 12-15. Johnson Park. [www.marblefalls.org](http://www.marblefalls.org) 830/693-2815

**MASON: Mason Country Opry with Landon Dodd** May 24. Begins at 7:30 p.m. Odeon Theater. 325/597-1895

**NEW BRAUNFELS: Art in Bloom** May 1-30. New Braunfels Art League Gallery. [www.newbraunfelsartleague.com](http://www.newbraunfelsartleague.com)

**NEW BRAUNFELS: Wein und Saengerfest: Wine Market and Tasting** May 7. 830/221-4350

**NEW BRAUNFELS: Mid-Texas Symphony: Pops!** May 8. Civic & Convention Center. [www.mtsymphony.org](http://www.mtsymphony.org) 830/372-8089

**OZONA: Western Frontier Days** May 20-21. [www.visitfortlancaaster.com](http://www.visitfortlancaaster.com) 432/836-4391

**PFLUGERVILLE: Deutschen Pfest** May 20-22. Pfluger Park. [www.cityofpflugerville.com/dpfest](http://www.cityofpflugerville.com/dpfest) 512/990-6101

**SAN MARCOS: Viva! Cinco de Mayo** May 6-7. Hays County Civic Center. [www.vivacincodemayo.org](http://www.vivacincodemayo.org) 512/393-4140

**SAN MARCOS: Texas Natural & Western Swing Festival** May 21. Downtown and San Marcos Plaza Park. 512/393-8430

**SONORA: Cinco de Mayo Celebration** May 7. Sutton County Park Complex. [www.sonoratx-chamber.com](http://www.sonoratx-chamber.com) 888/387-2880

**WIMBERLEY: Annual Garden Tour** May 21. [www.wimberley.org](http://www.wimberley.org) 512/847-2201

## PANHANDLE PLAINS

**ABILENE: Western Heritage Classic** May 12-14. Taylor County Expo Center. [www.westernheritageclassic.com](http://www.westernheritageclassic.com) 325/677-4376

**AMARILLO: First Friday Art Walk** May 6. The Galleries at Sunset Center. [www.amarilloartists.com](http://www.amarilloartists.com) 806/353-5700

**AMARILLO: Critter de Mayo** May 7. Amarillo Zoo. [www.amarillozoo.org](http://www.amarillozoo.org) 806/381-7911

**BALLINGER: Texas State Festival of Ethnic Cultures** May 1. [www.ballinger.tx.gov](http://www.ballinger.tx.gov) 325/365-2333

**BIG SPRING: American Kennel Club Dog Show** May 7-8. Dorothy Garrett Coliseum. 432/267-4194

**BRECKENRIDGE: Stephens County Frontier Days** May 6-7. City Park. [www.breckenridgetexas.com](http://www.breckenridgetexas.com) 254/559-2301

**CANADIAN: Canadian River Music Festival** May 14. Jones Pavilion. [www.canadianrivermusicfestival.com](http://www.canadianrivermusicfestival.com) 806/323-6234

**ELECTRA: Annual Goat Barbecue** May 6-7. City Fairgrounds. [www.electratexas.org](http://www.electratexas.org) 940/495-3577

**POST: Old Mill Trade Day** May 7. [www.postcitytexas.com](http://www.postcitytexas.com) 806/495-3461

**SAN ANGELO: Simply Texas Blues Festival** May 7. Oakes Street, downtown. [www.sanangelobluesociety.com](http://www.sanangelobluesociety.com)

**SAN ANGELO: Armed Forces Day** May 21. Fort Concho National Historic Landmark parade grounds. [www.fortconcho.com](http://www.fortconcho.com)

**SANTA ANNA: Funtier Days & World Championship Bison Cook-Off** May 20-21. Old Armory Civic Center. [www.santaannatex.org](http://www.santaannatex.org)

**WICHITA FALLS: Buffalo Soldier Encampment** May 14. Lake Arrowhead State Park. [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/lake\\_arrowhead](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/lake_arrowhead) 940/528-2211

## PINEY WOODS

**HUNTSVILLE: Annual Airing of the Quilts** May 7. [www.tallpinesquiltguild.com](http://www.tallpinesquiltguild.com) 936/295-8322

**JEFFERSON: Historical Pilgrimage & Spring Festival** May 6-8. [www.jefferson-texas.com](http://www.jefferson-texas.com) 903/665-7311


**KILGORE: Spring Film Festival** May 1-5. 4 Star Cinema. 903/983-1249

**LUFKIN: Summer Fest Texas** May 6-7. George H. Henderson Jr. Exposition Center. 936/633-0349

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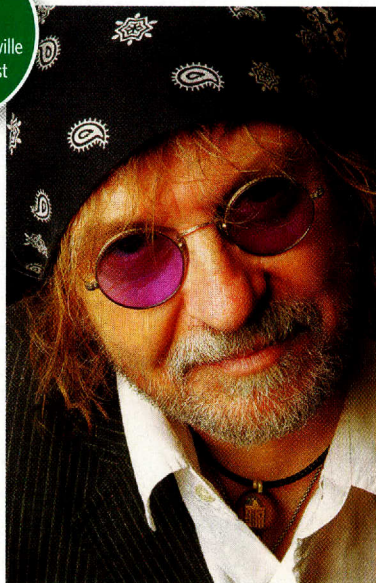
## Fine Folk

JOIN HUNDREDS OF SINGER-SONGWRITERS and their bands for 18 days of good times and great music at the 40th **Kerrville Folk Festival**. Held at Quiet Valley Ranch (nine miles south of Kerrville), the festival takes place May 26-June 12, 2011.

Catch weekend performances by Terri Hendrix, Ray Wylie Hubbard (right), Randy Rogers & Wade Bowen, and Asleep at the Wheel, and marvel at handmade crafts in the Crafts Village, which stays open during all main-stage performances. Also enjoy breakfast, lunch, or dinner at the Kerr-Café, open daily in the campgrounds.

Between weekend performances, attend workshops in songwriting, blues guitar, and harmonica, or simply wander the campgrounds to join one of the many impromptu jam sessions.

Come out for the day, set up camp for a weekend, or hang out for the whole time. Call 830/257-3600; [www.kerrvillefolkfestival.com](http://www.kerrvillefolkfestival.com).



**MINEOLA: May Days** May 12-14. Civic Center. [www.mineolachamber.org](http://www.mineolachamber.org) 903/569-2087

**MONTGOMERY: Historic Montgomery Antique Sale and Show** May 1. [www.hmba.biz](http://www.hmba.biz) 936/597-1004

**NACOGDOCHES: Texas National 2011** May 1-21. Juried art competition and exhibition. The Cole Art Center at The Old Opera House. [www.finearts.sfasu.edu](http://www.finearts.sfasu.edu)

**THE WOODLANDS: Jimmy Buffett and the Coral Reefer Band in Concert** May 5. Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion. [www.woodlandscenter.org](http://www.woodlandscenter.org) 281/363-3300

**THE WOODLANDS: Memorial Day Weekend Event** May 28-29. Waterway Square. [www.thewoodlandscvb.com](http://www.thewoodlandscvb.com) 281/363-2447

**WINNSBORO: Spring Festival** May 7-8. 903/342-5267

## PRAIRIES AND LAKES

**ADDISON: Taste Addison** May 20-22. Addison Circle Park. [www.addisontexas.net](http://www.addisontexas.net) 800/233-4766

**ANDERSON: Stagecoach Day** May 14. Fanthorp Inn State Historic Site. [www.birthplaceoftexas.com](http://www.birthplaceoftexas.com) 936/873-2633

**ATHENS: Cinco de Mayo Celebration** May 7. Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center. [www.athenstx.org](http://www.athenstx.org) 903/670-2266

**BELLVILLE: Spring Creek Bluegrass Club Show & Jam** May 28. Coushatta Recreation Ranch. [www.springcreekbluegrass.com](http://www.springcreekbluegrass.com) 979/865-5250

**BRENNAM: Maifest** May 6-7. [www.maifest.org](http://www.maifest.org) 888/273-6426

**BRIDGEPORT: Butterfield Stage Days Festival & PRCA Rodeo** May 12-14. [www.bridgeportchamber.org](http://www.bridgeportchamber.org) 940/683-2076

**BUFFALO: Springfest/Fiddler Contest** May 7. Harriman Park. [www.buffalotxchamberofcommerce.org](http://www.buffalotxchamberofcommerce.org) 903/322-5810

**CLARKSVILLE: Historic Clarksville Square Fine Art Festival** May 28. [www.clarksvilleartfest.com](http://www.clarksvilleartfest.com) 903/341-0761

**COLUMBUS: Rolling Hills Challenge Bicycle Ride** May 14. [www.rollinghillschallenge.com](http://www.rollinghillschallenge.com) 979/732-8385

**DALLAS: Concerts in the Garden Series** May 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26, 31. Dallas Arboretum. [www.dallasarboretum.org](http://www.dallasarboretum.org)

**DALLAS: Dallas Symphony Orchestra Pops Concerts** May 13-14, 27-28. Meyerson Symphony Center. [www.dallas-symphony.com](http://www.dallas-symphony.com) 214/871-4000

**DALLAS: Spring Celebration Series** May 25-29. Dee and Charles Wylie Theatre. [www.dbdt.com/performances/spring-celebration.php](http://www.dbdt.com/performances/spring-celebration.php) 214/880-0202

**DALLAS: Chamber Music International Concert** May 27. Caruth Auditorium, Southern Methodist University. [www.cmi-now.org](http://www.cmi-now.org) 972/385-7267

**DENTON: Denton Arts & Jazz Festival** May 1. Quakertown Park. [www.dentonjazzfest.com](http://www.dentonjazzfest.com) 940/565-0931

**EDDY: Mayfest Barbecue Cook-Off** May 6-7. [www.bruceville-eddytx.com](http://www.bruceville-eddytx.com) 254/859-5774

**ENNIS: National Polka Festival** May 27-29. [www.nationalpolkafestival.com](http://www.nationalpolkafestival.com) 972/878-4748

**FARMERS BRANCH: Liberty Fest** May 27-28. Farmers Branch Historical Park. [www.flibertyfest.com](http://www.flibertyfest.com) 972/919-2620

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**FORT WORTH: Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra Performances** May 6-8. Bass Performance Hall. [www.fwsymphony.org](http://www.fwsymphony.org)

**FORT WORTH: Frontier Forts Days** May 13-14. Fort Worth Historic Stockyards. [www.fortworthstockyards.org](http://www.fortworthstockyards.org) 817/625-9715

**FORT WORTH: Crowne Plaza Invitational** May 16-22. Colonial Country Club. [www.crowneplazainvitation.com](http://www.crowneplazainvitation.com) 817/840-2219

**FORT WORTH: Fort Worth Opera Festival** May 21-June 4. Bass Performance Hall. [www.fwopera.org](http://www.fwopera.org) 877/731-0726

**FRISCO: Bike MS: Sam's Club Frisco to Fort Worth Ride** May 1. [www.bikemstexas.org](http://www.bikemstexas.org) 800/344-4867

**GRANBURY: Memorial Day Hometown Fair & Picnic** May 28-30. [www.granburysquare.com](http://www.granburysquare.com) 817/648-6968

**GRAND PRAIRIE: Big Mamou Cajun Festival** May 1. Traders Village. [www.tradersvillage.com](http://www.tradersvillage.com) 972/647-2331

**GRAPEVINE: Bead Renaissance Show** May 20-22. Grapevine Convention Center. [www.grapevinetexasusa.com](http://www.grapevinetexasusa.com) 800/457-6338

**GRAPEVINE: SummerBlast** May 27-September 5. [www.grapevinetexasusa.com](http://www.grapevinetexasusa.com) 800/457-6338

**IRVING: New Philharmonic Orchestra of Irving Performances** May 8. Irving Arts Center, Carpenter Performance Hall. [www.irvingartscenter.com](http://www.irvingartscenter.com) 972/252-ARTS

**IRVING: Dallas Comic Con 2011** May 20-22. Irving Convention Center at Las Colinas. [www.irvingconventioncenter.com](http://www.irvingconventioncenter.com) 972/252-7476

**IRVING: Byron Nelson Championship** May 23-29. TPC Four Seasons Resort and Club. [www.hpbnc.org/byronnelson](http://www.hpbnc.org/byronnelson) 214/943-9700

**LEWISVILLE: Jam Session in Old Town Lewisville** May 12. Lewisville City Hall. [www.lfdpipesanddrums.com/KTASymposium.html](http://www.lfdpipesanddrums.com/KTASymposium.html)

**MCKINNEY: Third Monday Trade Days** May 13-15. [www.tmt.com](http://www.tmt.com) 972/562-5466

**MOUNT VERNON: Piney Woods Wine Festival** May 21. Downtown square. <http://pineywoodswinetrail.com/festival.shtml> 903/860-2193

**NOCONA: Fun Fest** May 21. [www.nocona.org](http://www.nocona.org) 940/825-3526

**PALESTINE: RailFest** May 7. Texas State Railroad Palestine Depot. [www.texasstaterr.com](http://www.texasstaterr.com) 888/987-2461

**PLANO: Asia Fest** May 7. Haggard Park. [www.asianamericanheritage.org](http://www.asianamericanheritage.org) 214/252-0900

**RICHARDSON: Wildflower! Arts & Music Festival** May 20-22. Galatyn Park. [www.wildflowerfestival.com](http://www.wildflowerfestival.com) 972/744-4580

**ROCKWALL: Vintage Baseball Game** May 1. Campbell Spring Sports Complex. [www.rockwallcountyhistoricalfoundation.com](http://www.rockwallcountyhistoricalfoundation.com)

**SEGUIN: Cinco de Mayo Celebration** May 13-14. Downtown Central Park. [www.visitseguin.com](http://www.visitseguin.com) 830/743-3214

**SOMERVILLE: Great Texas Sausage Festival** May 7-8. Welch Park. 979/596-2383

**WAXAHACHIE: Scarborough Renaissance Festival** May 1-30. [www.scarboroughrenfest.com](http://www.scarboroughrenfest.com) 972/938-3247

**YOAKUM: Country Music USA** May 10. Community Center. 361/293-2309

## SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

**EAGLE PASS: Memorial Day Ceremony** May 30. Maverick County Lake. 830/773-4528

**EDINBURG: Market Days** May 14. County Courthouse Parking Lot. E-mail: [information@edinburg.com](mailto:information@edinburg.com)

**SAN ANTONIO: Cinco de Mayo** May 5. [www.market-squares.com](http://www.market-squares.com) 210/207-8600

**SAN ANTONIO: Savor the Arts** May 5. Southwest School of Art. [www.swschool.org](http://www.swschool.org) 210/224-1848, ext. 306.

**SAN ANTONIO: First Saturdays at the Alamo** May 7. [www.visitsanantonio.com](http://www.visitsanantonio.com)

**SAN ANTONIO: Kumamoto En Day** May 7. Celebrate Japanese culture. [www.sabot.org](http://www.sabot.org) 210/207-3250

**SAN ANTONIO: Floating Festival** May 10-11. [www.artssa.org](http://www.artssa.org) 210/226-2891

**SAN ANTONIO: Culinaria Wine & Culinary Arts Festival** May 11-15. [www.culinarias.com](http://www.culinarias.com) 210/822-9555

**SAN ANTONIO: Tejano Conjunto Festival** May 13-15. Rosedale Park. [www.guadalupeculturalarts.org](http://www.guadalupeculturalarts.org) 210/271-3151

**SAN ANTONIO: Fiesta Noche del Rio** May 13-14, 20-21, 27-28. Arneson River Theatre. [www.fiestanochedelrio.com](http://www.fiestanochedelrio.com) 210/226-4651

**SAN ANTONIO: Let There Be Light** May 21-22. [www.sachamberchoir.org](http://www.sachamberchoir.org)

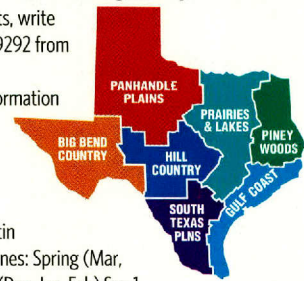
**WESLACO: Dragonfly Days** May 7-8. [www.valleynaturecenter.org](http://www.valleynaturecenter.org) 956/969-2475

## Want more? Go to the Events Calendar at [www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com).

For a free printed copy of an even more detailed, quarterly schedule of events, write to Texas Events Calendar, Box 149249, Austin 78714-9249. Or, call 800/452-9292 from anywhere in the U.S. or Canada, between 8-6 Central.

For Texas travel questions, call 800/452-9292 to reach a TxDOT Travel Information Center, where a professional travel counselor will provide routing assistance, advise you of any emergency road conditions, and send brochures (including the official Texas State Travel Guide and map, accommodations guide, and quarterly Texas Events Calendar).

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](mailto:trv-tec@dot.state.tx.us). Listing deadlines: Spring (Mar, Apr, May) Dec 1; Summer (Jun, Jul, Aug) Mar 1; Fall (Sep, Oct, Nov) Jun 1; Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb) Sep 1.



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



# Llano Rocks! (Literally)

**OFFICIALLY**, Llano is known as the “Deer Capital of Texas.” But what is a daytripper to do in this Hill Country hideaway when it isn’t deer-hunting season? I set out for the day determined to find out.

**9:00 a.m.** I cruised into town early to energize at **Fuel Coffee House**, a nonprofit coffee shop that supports the local arts scene, just off Llano’s main square. As the epicenter of coolness in town, Fuel is often brimming with art, poetry, and live music, especially on Sunday evenings, when Fuel grills up free burgers for anyone with an appetite.

**10:00 a.m.** Llano tags itself as “the way Texas used to be,” and I set off on foot to explore downtown. Past the old **Red Top Jail** with its gallows still in place on the top floor, I took a hard right to stroll across **Roy Inks Bridge** and peek down at the **Llano River**. Back on the square, I circled the **1893 Llano County Courthouse** and popped into **Enchanted Rocks & Jewelry**. Owner Frank Rowell told me that Llano draws almost as many rock hunters as deer hunters. Turns out Llano is situated on top of the Llano Uplift, a geologic formation created when rock thousands of feet below the surface

pushed its way to the top and kicked up all sorts of precious stones and minerals, including “Llanite,” a type of granite found only in Llano County, and even ... gold. I left inspired to go on my own rock quest, but first things first.

**12:00 p.m.** I was so hungry I could have

eaten a rock. But there’s no need for a Llanite lunch when **Cooper’s Old Time Pit Bar-B-Que** is nearby. I took my place in line and salivated as I inched closer to Cooper’s outdoor pit, where diners get to choose their meat straight from the fire. My turn arrived, and I ordered enough food to feed a hundred hungry prospectors. To make matters worse (or better), I couldn’t resist Cooper’s signature pecan cobbler.

**2:00 p.m.** Next, I focused on finding my fortune in the river’s flowing

waters. Frank had directed me to the end of **Ash Street**, which allows easy access to the banks below. I rolled up my pants and waded in, and spent the afternoon inspecting rocks and following every shiny speck in the water. While scavenging the river bottom, I inadvertently wandered all the way to the waterfalls beneath

Roy Inks Bridge and over the **Llano Dam**.

Already soaked from the waist down, I decided to jump in full-on. The swim washed away my illusions of wealth, remind-

ing me that whether we’re rich or poor, the Texas sunshine was made for all of us.

**5:00 p.m.** Still hoping to find **Llanite** in the wild, I drove Texas 16 to a **rock outcropping** 10 miles north of town (just beyond the gates to Baby Head Cemetery, all that’s left of the Baby Head community). There, I found Llanite with

its pink hue and signature blue specks.

**6:00 p.m.** Back in Llano, and not even remotely hungry, I sipped a glass of Fall Creek Cabernet Sauvignon at the **Badu House Wine Pub**, an historic house originally constructed as a bank and later occupied by the mineralogist who discovered Llanite. The bar counter is a beautiful, 14-foot-long specimen of polished Llanite.

**7:30 p.m.** The neon lights of the **LanTex Theater** summoned me in. Built in 1927, the LanTex is one of the few historic movie theaters in Texas still showing current movies. That is, when it’s not hosting the **Llano Country Opry**.

THE HOUSE LIGHTS dimmed as I munched on my popcorn dinner and settled in my seat for the movie. I may not have struck it rich in Llano, but my day trip was richly abundant nonetheless. So, whether you follow my footsteps or forge your own path, I hope to see you on the road. **TH**

Contact the **Llano Chamber of Commerce** at **325/247-5354** or **866/539-5535**; [www.llanochamber.org](http://www.llanochamber.org).

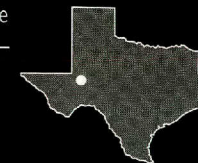




## Window on Texas

Photograph by **J. GRIFFIS SMITH**

**ODESSA STONEHENGE** This West Texas version of England's enigmatic, prehistoric structure stands next to the Visual Arts Studios on the University of Texas of the Permian Basin campus. The creators configured the limestone blocks so that they—like the stones in the original—align with the summer solstice sunrise and the winter solstice sunset. **For details, call 432/552-2806; [www.utpb.edu](http://www.utpb.edu).**



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

