

{ *Real* BBQ + FORT WORTH *Foodies?* }

texashighways.com » August 2013

# Texas Highways

THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE OF TEXAS

## *Dance Halls*

STILL ALIVE *and* KICKIN'



\$3.95

0 8 >



0 71896 47399 5



## Find the Remote!

It's no secret that an escape to a grand setting can momentarily suspend life's stresses and the world's worries. I was recently reminded of this as I sat in the audience under the vast night sky at *TEXAS*, the long-running outdoor musical held every summer in the Pioneer Amphitheater at Palo Duro Canyon State Park. The day had begun with a bike ride among the canyon's sandstone and shale formations on the scenic Lighthouse Trail. And the evening performance—portraying Panhandle history and pride, complete with a patriotic tribute and fireworks—perfectly punctuated the trip.

We've heard from several *TH* readers who have enjoyed the Palo Duro production over its 48-season run: "It is wonderful! Been several times and would go many more if I could," says Wanda Dedmon. Ray Watson observes, "The lightning effects look so real—you start looking for an umbrella." And I have to agree with Kay Smith Karnes, who adds, "The most beautiful and breathtaking scene is the cowboy carrying the Texas flag riding the ridge at sunset! Brings tears from the eyes and pride from the heart." Performances continue Tuesday through Sunday until August 17 ([www.texas-show.com](http://www.texas-show.com)).

No doubt, Texas is blessed with plentiful wide-open spaces. Look for our readers' favorite vistas across the state in next month's special issue (see "Sneak Peek," at right), and prepare to take the long (and scenic) way home on your next Lone Star vacation.

Here's to having room to roam. Until next time, find us online, and happy travels!

*Jill Lawless, Editor*

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter  

### BE SEEN. BE HEARD.

Have a story idea?  
A favorite restaurant?  
An interesting photo?  
Drop us a line anytime at  
[www.texashighways.com/upfront](http://www.texashighways.com/upfront)



PHOTO BY J. GRIFFIS SMITH

## Tell Us Your Tops

What do you think is Texas' best destination—and why? Whether it's a big city or small town, spring-fed pool or desert-mountain landscape, state park or art museum, let us know by October 15 at [www.texashighways.com/best](http://www.texashighways.com/best), [letters05@texashighways.com](mailto:letters05@texashighways.com), or Box 141009, Austin TX 78714-1009 (also find us on Facebook). Then look for your favorites as we count down **Texas' Top 40 destinations in 2014.**

### TRIP TIP:

## Out of This World

*TH* Web Editor Lois Rodriguez recommends Space Center Houston to anyone fascinated by the mysteries of space and the innovations that have come from the program. Go the extra mile, she says, and consider "Lunch with an Astronaut" or the ultimate behind-the-scenes experience of the "Level 9 Tour." In spring 2015, Space Center Houston will complete its Shuttle and 747 Carrier Project, a new, \$12 million complex that will include the iconic Shuttle Carrier Aircraft (SCA-905) and a full-scale Space Shuttle model—offering visitors the world's first and only all-access pass to the 747 carrier. Texas residents have a rare opportunity to help name the shuttle. Between July 4 and Sep. 2, Space Center Houston is calling on Texas residents to submit names for consideration. For more information, visit [www.nametheshuttle.com](http://www.nametheshuttle.com).

### SNEAK PEEK:

## Start the Party



Next month, we invite you to the kick-off of *Texas Highways'* 40th-anniversary celebration!

We'll debut our new look and additional stories, along with readers' choice results for Coolest Small Towns and Best Vistas. Also in your new *Texas Highways*, find extraordinary Texans, outdoors adventures, budget trips, family excursions, weekend escapes—and State Fair food, too.





features



COVER STORY  
**24**

**Come Together**

Join us for a tour of Texas dance halls and the culture, community, and history they celebrate. And whatever happens, don't forget your cowboy boots.

Text by **GAIL FOLKINS**

Photographs by **J. GRIFFIS SMITH**



**Destinations**

- Big Spring **6**
- Comfort **13**
- Round Top **19**
- Temple **24**
- Ammansville **24**
- Gruene **24**
- Luckenbach **24, 65**
- La Grange **24**
- Austin **24, 32, 48**
- New Braunfels **24**
- Fredericksburg **24, 48**
- Schulenburg **24**
- Victoria **24**
- Corpus Christi **24**
- Lockhart **32**
- Palestine **32**
- Huntsville **32**
- Bryan **32**
- Taylor **32**
- Marshall **32**
- Bellville **32**
- Washington **32**
- Arcola/Fresno **32**
- Fort Worth **40**
- El Paso **48**
- Dallas **48**
- Odessa **48**
- Galveston **48**
- Seymour **48**
- Waco **48**
- Kingsville **48**
- Llano **54**
- South Padre Island **64**

➔ Check out [www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com) for more travel information

**32** | **The Art, Spiritual Pursuit, & Culture of BBQ**

In an excerpt from the new book *Barbecue Crossroads: Notes and Recipes from a Southern Odyssey*, Robb Walsh explores the origins and mythology of Texas barbecue.

Text by **ROBB WALSH**

Photographs by **O. RUFUS LOVETT**

**40** | **Dining Redefined**

An innovative crop of Fort Worth chefs expands the city's culinary scene with a focus on locally sourced foods and global influences. Antelope carpaccio, Moroccan chicken salad, or ceviche, anyone?

Text by **MARGARET SHAKESPEARE**

Photographs by **J. GRIFFIS SMITH**

**48** | **On the Trail of Tom Lea**

El Paso-born artist Tom Lea left a legacy of paintings across his home state. Follow the trail of Lea's remarkable artworks and lasting influence on Texas, from his hometown to Fair Park in Dallas, the Odessa Post Office, and points in-between.

Text by **E. DAN KLEPPER**



## departments

6

**5 | Talk to TH**  
**Readers sound off**

South Padre, favorite swimming holes, and the merits of Mission.

**6 | Postcards**  
**Living History**

The meticulous restoration of the 1930 Hotel Settles animates the past and present of the West Texas town of Big Spring. *Plus:* The Dallas Arboretum's new Rory Meyers Children's Adventure Garden, and the Temple Railroad and Heritage Museum.

**13 | TH Taste**

**A New Twist on Comfort Food**  
The Hill Country hamlet of Comfort serves up dining delights worthy of the big city. *Plus:* Michael Cordúa's award-

winning Latin-American fare and Haak Vineyards' Madeira wine.

**19 | Weekender**  
**Same As It Ever Was**

Round Top retains its small-town charms while adding new shopping and dining options, and welcoming fans of antiques and classical music.

**54 | Speaking of Texas**  
**Llano's Polo Prodigy**

The story of Cecil Smith's unlikely path from a Llano County ranch to a legendary career in polo, both as a player and pony-trainer.

**59 | TH Traveler**

**A roundup of August events**  
Amid rebuilding, West pauses for polka at Westfest; and the

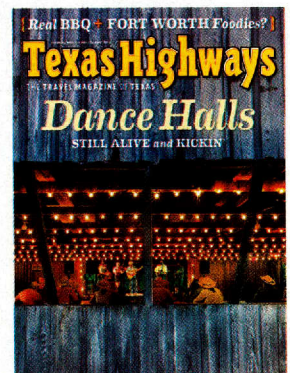
Concordia Cemetery in El Paso remembers John Wesley Hardin, its most notorious resident. *Plus,* 140 other fun things to do in August.

**64 | TH Daytripper**

**Sunny Side Up on South Padre**  
Chet Garner finds the fun beyond the party on South Padre Island—from surfing and building sand castles to enjoying tasty seafood and observing coastal wildlife.

**65 | Window on Texas**

**Cover Art**  
Photo Editor Griff Smith and Creative Director Mark Mahorsky discuss the process of shooting a photo for the *Texas Highways* cover, using this month's picture of Luckenbach dance hall as an example.

**About Our Covers**

**FRONT:** Bo Porter and friends play for the crowd at the Luckenbach dance hall. **Photo by J. Griffis Smith**

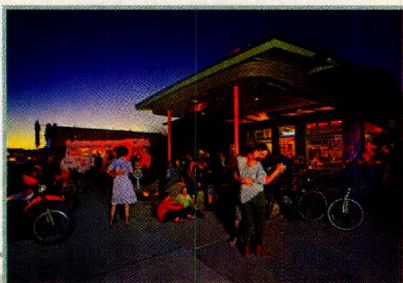
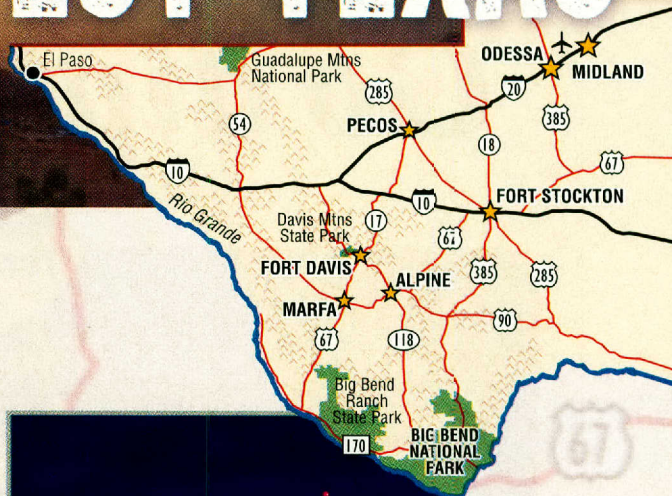
**BACK:** Neely's Sandwich Shop in Marshall barbecues pork butts with hickory wood in an offset smoker. **Photo © O. Rufus Lovett**



# EXPERIENCE WEST TEXAS

**YOU'LL FIND AN AMAZING RANGE** of relaxation and adventure, natural beauty and urban culture, fine art, fine dining, small-town charm and big-city amenities...

...but what you will remember most is the warm West Texas hospitality.

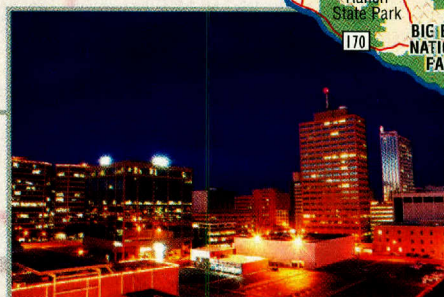


Make **ALPINE** the center of your attention. Natural beauty, unique nightlife and shopping, and a grand array of hotels and guest lodging make

this the perfect staging grounds for your West Texas adventure.



[visitalpinetx.com](http://visitalpinetx.com)



**MIDLAND:** Feel the Energy. A great starting point for your trip to West Texas! Midland International Airport is the closest airport to Big Bend National Park.



[visitmidlandtexas.com](http://visitmidlandtexas.com)

**FORT DAVIS**—National Historic Site, Davis Mountains State Park, McDonald Observatory, Nature Center, Botanical Gardens and a vast array of activities for all to enjoy. Over 250 rooms, quaint restaurants and unique shopping.



[fortdavis.com](http://fortdavis.com)



Lodging, Dining, Entertainment and History; **FORT STOCKTON** has it. Experience our Visitor Center, Historic Sites, Museum, Fort Grounds, Golf Course, and Unique Shopping opportunities, West Texas style.

[historicfortstockontx.com](http://historicfortstockontx.com)



**ODESSA**—known for breathtaking sunsets, wide-open spaces and warm West Texas hospitality; you'll enjoy shopping, dining, unique cultural attractions and events.



Wish you were here!  
[odessacvb.com](http://odessacvb.com)



**MARFA** defies easy explanation, yet any google search yields thousands of opinions. Marfa is tough to get to—tougher still to explain. But once you arrive, you get it.



[visitmarfa.com](http://visitmarfa.com)



**PECOS is Hot!** Our great location, our historic hot spots and our colorful activities, makes Pecos, Home of the World's First Rodeo, the cool place to visit when traveling West Texas.



[pecostx.com](http://pecostx.com)



## EVENTS

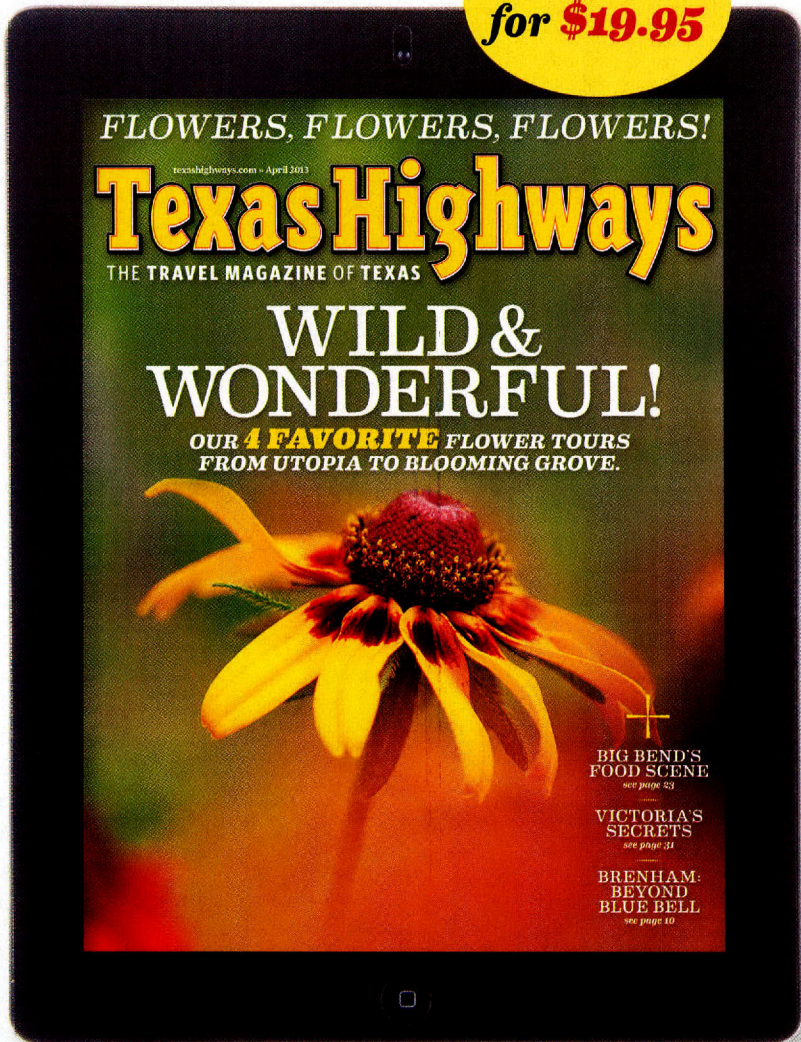
**Aug 1-3** Rock the Desert—"Awake My Soul"— **Odessa**  
**Aug 2/16** Live at Zero Stone - **Ft. Stockton**  
**Aug 4** 28th Cantaloupe Fly-in / Lions Pancake Bkfst - **Pecos**  
**Aug 8/22** Summer off the Patio - **Ft. Stockton**  
**Aug 9-10** Big Bend Ranch Rodeo - **Alpine**  
**Aug 9-11** Davis Mountains Hummingbird Festival - **Fort Davis**  
**Aug 9-11/16-18** Complete Works of Wm Shakespeare - **Odessa**

**Aug 22** Loretta Lynn at Wagner Noël Performing Arts Center - **Midland**  
**Aug 31-Sep 2** Big Bend Balloon Bash - **Alpine**  
**Sep 6-8** Museum of the Southwest SeptemberFest - **Midland**  
**Sep 13-15** 16 de Septiembre Fiestas - **Pecos**  
**Sep 28-29** Donkey Daze Packsaddle Mule Races - **Fort Davis**  
**Oct 11-13** Chinati Weekend - An October tradition - **Marfa**  
**Nov 1** Dia de los Muertos at Chinati (w/Blackwell School) - **Marfa**



Mobile traveler?  
**Go digital!**

**12 ISSUES  
 for \$19.95**



Log in anywhere • Bookmark  
 Print • Share

**www.zinio.com/texashighways**

Texas Highways digital editions are also available  
 on iPad®, Kindle Fire and Android™ tablets.

iPad is a trademark of Apple, Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries.  
 Kindle Fire and the AmazonKindle logo are trademarks of Amazon.com, Inc. or its affiliates.

# Texas Highways

**Governor of Texas**  
 Rick Perry

**Texas Transportation Commission**  
 Ted Houghton, Jr. **Chair**  
 Jeff Moseley **Commissioner**  
 Fred Underwood **Commissioner**  
 Victor Vandergriff **Commissioner**  
 Jeff Austin III **Commissioner**  
 Phil Wilson **Executive Director**

**Published monthly by the  
 Travel Information Division**

**Division Director** Margo Richards  
**Publisher** Charles J. Lohrmann  
**Creative Director** Mark Mahorsky

**Editor** Jill Lawless  
**Senior Editor** Lori Moffatt  
**Associate Editor** Matt Joyce  
**Editorial Coordinator** Cindy Newsom

**Contributing Editors**  
 Erin Inks, Julie Stratton  
**Editorial Associate\*** Michael Marks

**Photography Editor** J. Griffis Smith  
**Contributing Photographers**  
 Michael Amador, Kevin Stillman,  
 Will van Overbeek

**Video Producer** Chris Lewis  
**Photography Associate\*** Clarissa Peereboom

**Art Director** Jane Wu  
**Associate Art Director** Kirsti Harms

**Web Editor** Lois M. Rodriguez  
**Digital Art Director** Matt Wetzler

**Marketing Manager** Cindy Leffingwell  
**Interim Operations Manager**  
 Deborah Follien

**Advertising Coordinator** Lupe Valdez  
**Account Services** Raquel V. Sanchez  
**Administrative Assistant** Ana Alvarez

\*Texas Highways Volunteer Program

**For advertising information:** AJR Media Group,  
 25132 Oakhurst Dr., Ste. 201, Spring, TX  
 77386; 800/383-7677; fax 713/942-0277.

**Subscriptions to Texas Highways** are \$19.95  
 annually (\$29.95 foreign). Call **800/839-4997**.  
 (Call 903/636-1123 outside the U.S.) Copies  
 of current and back issues are available. Call 512/  
 486-5811. For subscription services, call 800/  
 839-4997. To be removed from mailing list sales,  
 write to Texas Highways Marketing, Mailing  
 Lists, Box 141009, Austin, TX 78714-1009.

Texas Highways (ISSN 0040-4349) is published monthly by  
 the Texas Department of Transportation, 150 East Riverside  
 Drive, Austin, Texas 78704; phone 512/486-5858, fax 512/  
 486-5879. The official travel magazine of Texas encourages  
 travel within the state and tells the Texas story to readers  
 around the world. [www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com)

Periodicals Postage paid at Austin, Texas, and additional mail-  
 ing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Texas  
 Highways Circulation, P.O. Box 8559, Big Sandy, TX 75755-8559.

© Texas Department of Transportation  
 2013. All rights reserved. [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov)



**IRMA** MEMBER, INTERNATIONAL REGIONAL  
 MAGAZINE ASSOCIATION





## SPI Escape

What timing on receiving the June issue. I had just made reservations for a South Padre RV trip for late summer after redeployment. Nice!

**STAN BALCER, TH Facebook Fan**

## High Praise

We arrived home from eating out to find the June edition in the mailbox. It's not often I see Angleton listed as a destination site, so I turned to the article. Lo and behold, it was on airport restaurants, including the one we had just come home from—Crosswind Café at the Texas Gulf Coast Regional Airport. We love having dinner there and watching planes come in. If you're lucky, the five acrobatic planes will be out—and they will not have run out of the buttermilk pecan pie! The owner, Pierce Waldrep, is a professional pilot and loves to talk planes with anyone who will listen. And the poblano soup is killer; Pierce roasts the poblano peppers each day! Throw in the fresh seafood and it's one of the best airport restaurants to be

Loved every page of the June issue. The cover title is what travel is all about: Making Memories!

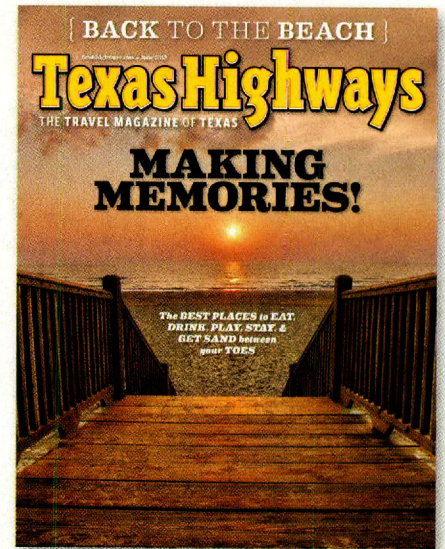
—JENNIE LOU CROWDER  
TH Facebook Fan

found. Fly on down. You'll be glad you did!

**MELINDA LASWELL,**  
*Lake Jackson*

## The Joys of Summer

I sent a copy of the May issue to friends in Pennsylvania, who enjoyed it as much as I did. Not only did they live in Texas many



years ago, our families visited several of the places mentioned in the “Best Summer Ever” story. Plus, we have a four-legged friend just like the one on the cover. Love TH—makes me smile when I find it in my mailbox!

**KATHY VACKAR**

## Get Wet!

In response to May's swimming-holes roundup, TH Facebook Fans share their top swimming spots.

I love Texas' swimming holes! Jacob's Well and Blue Hole (Wimberley), and Hamilton Pool (Dripping Springs) are my faves.

—KIRSTEN ALLEN

Garner State Park (Frio River), Neal's Lodges (Concan), Riding River Ranch (Leakey), and Blanco and Pedernales Falls state parks.

—MONICA MACIAS

## ➔ TH READER RECOMMENDATION

## Camels and Citrus

**TWELVE MILES** out of **Kerrville** sits the **Camp Verde General Store and Restaurant**. The store was established in the 1850s; the Army once housed camels nearby for transportation. The restaurant is popular, with wonderful food and housemade pies—all at very modest prices.

**FRANK C. EDWARDS, Kerrville**

*Camp Verde General Store and Restaurant is at 285 Camp Verde Rd. East, 830/634-7722; www.campverdegeneralstore.com.*

**WE HAVE** lived in **Mission** in the winter months for more than 20 years—a great town. We enjoy the **Mission Historical Museum**, the **Texas Citrus Fiesta** held in January, **Lone Star Bar-B-Que**, wonderful churches, and friendly people. Our back yard has six citrus trees and our fences are covered with bougainvillea of all colors. A treasure.

**MARILYN HOUGHTON KAYTON, Naperville, Illinois**

*For more on Mission, start with The Greater Mission Chamber of Commerce at www.missionchamber.com, and the City of Mission at www.missiontexas.us.*

## ➔ CONTACT TH

We want to hear from you! Send feedback and recommendations to: Texas Highways, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009. Email: letters05@texashighways.com.

**Please pass this magazine along!**

PRINTED IN U.S.A. ON RECYCLED PAPER






08  
13

# Postcards

INSIDE: WHAT'S NEW WITH COMFORT'S FOOD...13 WINDING DOWN IN ROUND TOP...19

## Living History

*Hotel Settles animates Big Spring of past and present* Text by **MATT JOYCE**



HOTEL  
SETTLES





**Do!**  
Swim in the Settles' newly added outdoor pool

**F**ROM THE ELEVATED VIEWPOINT OF THE TOWERING Hotel Settles, you can see much of Big Spring and the industries that have shaped the town since its 1881 founding. The Union Pacific Railroad rumbles through a few blocks away; the Alon oil refinery rises to the east; wind turbines spin on the southeastern horizon; the Veterans Administration hospital anchors the south end of town; and, beyond a ridge to the southwest, the Hangar 25 Air Museum recalls the influence of the defunct Webb Air Force Base.

It's natural to take a historical view of Big Spring when you check in to the Hotel Settles. The 83-year-old hotel, which opened in December after a meticulous restoration, conjures local history throughout. From the lobby's original terrazzo floor to the 1930s photos in the guest rooms, the Settles breathes new life into Big Spring, past and present. For travelers, the resurrection of the landmark provides comfortable lodging steeped in local character and a port for exploring this remote

West Texas town, where a northern outcrop of the Edwards Plateau meets the southern High Plains.

"We never thought the Settles would come back, really," says Tammy Shreengost, curator of the Big Spring Heritage Museum. "There were promises that came, and everybody would be excited, and

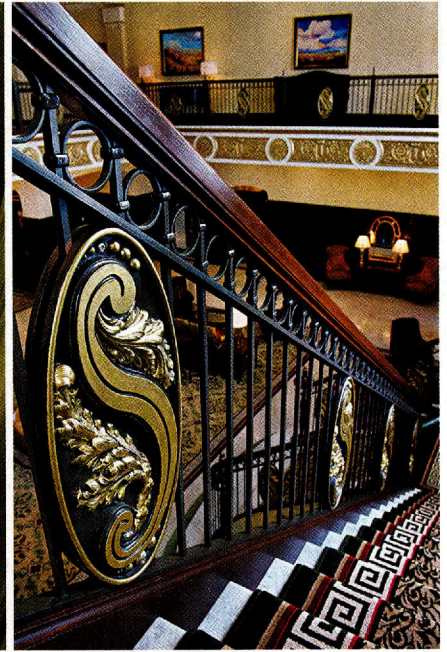
The 15-story Hotel Settles, the tallest building in Big Spring, was added to the National Register of Historic Places in April.

From the lobby's original terrazzo floor to the 1930s photos in the guest rooms, the Settles breathes new life into Big Spring.

PHOTOS: MICHAEL AMADOR



# Postcards



**After** soaking in the **local history** at the Settles, it's **worth** a drive around **Big Spring** to **visit** some of the **attractions** that **round out** the **town's** story.

then there would be a lot of disappointment. For it to blossom into a reality has been wonderful. I think it's always going to be the heart of Big Spring. No matter what happens, everyone's going to stand by the Settles."

The Hotel Settles was indeed the heart of Big Spring for decades after it opened in 1930. Howard County rancher W.R. Settles built the 15-story hotel for \$500,000 with his Texas tea windfall during the oil boom of the 1920s. Abilene architect David Castle designed the Art Deco building to be a luxurious West Texas stop-over between Fort Worth and El Paso. Though W.R. lost the hotel during the Great Depression, the Settles thrived for decades as a hot spot for professional conferences, grand parties, and lodging for high-profile visitors, among them Elvis Presley, Herbert Hoover, Roy Orbison, and Lawrence Welk.

The Settles' prominence faded over the years, however, subject to changing ownership, local economic struggles, and the degradation of time. By the 1970s, the hotel had deteriorated into a flophouse, and in 1980, it closed its doors. Over the next 25 years, various rehabilitation plans fell flat, short-term owners stripped the

interior of valuable components, vandals made a mess, the roof caved in, and the city

took ownership over unpaid taxes. Demolition appeared to be imminent.

"It's a phenomenal building, but it was just about as close to total destruction as you can imagine," says Brint Ryan, a Big Spring native who took a renewed interest in the Settles in 2006 when the city was considering a downtown redevelopment project that ultimately stalled. (Many downtown storefronts are vacant and await improvement.) Ryan, founder of Ryan LLC, a Dallas-based tax-services firm, bought the hotel building from the city, and over the next six years, the Settles Hotel Development Company carried out a \$30 million restoration, with a careful focus on historical accuracy. "We restored it as close as possible to the original as you can imagine," Ryan says. "W.R. Settles, if he walked in the lobby today, he'd recognize the place."

Visitors walking into the lobby encounter a wide-open room with a large marble staircase leading to a second-

The furnishings in the guest rooms and public areas of the Hotel Settles were designed to match the hotel's original 1930 décor.



# Big state! Big fun! STARTS WITH Texas Highways

**Join us!** Get 12 issues chock-full of Texas' best getaways, events, attractions, and natural wonders.

**Super Buy!** A one-year subscription to Texas Highways Magazine is just \$19.95... that's only \$1.66 an issue.

**Super Gift!** Friends, family members, and business associates all enjoy gifts of Texas Highways Magazine. The first U.S. subscription (yours or a gift) is \$19.95. Additional U.S. orders are just \$17.95 each when ordered at the same time.

To order by phone, call  
**1-800-839-4997**

(903-636-1123 from outside the U.S.)

Mon-Fri 7 a.m.-9 p.m. Central  
Sat 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Central  
Sun 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Central

Visa • MasterCard  
Discover • American Express

Or visit  
**www.texashighways.com**

## Get Texas Highways for yourself!

**Yes!** Start My Subscription—12 Full Months!



**\$1.66  
AN ISSUE!**

Please print  
MY NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please send me new features and offers from Texas Highways via email.*

Just \$19.95 for a 1-year U.S. subscription!  
(International subscriptions are \$29.95.)

**SAVE 58%  
OFF NEWSSTAND!**  
*Simply return this order form  
in the mail—we'll bill you later.*

6308SU1



To expedite service,  
call:  
**1-800-839-4997**

## Give Texas Highways to a friend!

**Yes!** Start a Gift Subscription—12 Full Months!

Please print  
MY NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please send me new features and offers from Texas Highways via email.*

**Send a gift subscription to:**  
RECIPIENT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

To include more gifts, enclose a list.

Just \$19.95 for the first U.S. subscription, and \$17.95 for each additional U.S. order!  
(International subscriptions are \$29.95.)

**\$1.66  
AN ISSUE!**

**SAVE 58%  
OFF NEWSSTAND!**  
*Simply return this order form in  
the mail—we'll bill you later.*

We'll send a card announcing your gift directly to your recipient.

For faster service, please call  
1-800-839-4997.

F308SU1





NO POSTAGE  
NECESSARY  
IF MAILED  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES

**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 52 BIG SANDY TX

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

# Texas Highways

PO BOX 8559  
BIG SANDY TX 75755-9865



*To expedite service,  
call:*  
**1-800-839-4997**



NO POSTAGE  
NECESSARY  
IF MAILED  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES

**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 52 BIG SANDY TX

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

# Texas Highways

PO BOX 8559  
BIG SANDY TX 75755-9865



*Subscribe now to*  
**Texas Highways**





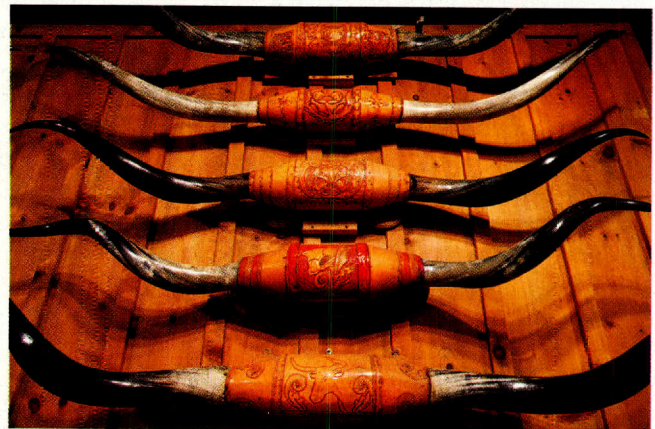
story mezzanine. Wooden wall paneling, plush leather couches, decorative carpets, and gold plaster flourishes on the wall mouldings reflect developers' attempts to re-create what they saw in the original blueprints, old photos, and the few remnant artifacts from the Settles' early days. "With the lighting, the lamps, the furniture, and details like that, we tried to emulate what we saw from back then in the pictures," says Juan Rodriguez, the hotel's managing director.

One of the restoration highlights is the Grand Ballroom, painted a soft pastel green and decorated with crystal chandeliers, golden plaster flourishes, and metal fans attached to the walls. An enlarged black-and-white photo of a banquet at the 1931 "West Texas Drug Convention" proves the remarkable accuracy of the ballroom's re-creation.

To meet the expectations of contemporary visitors, the hotel enlarged most

of its rooms during the restoration; now there are 65 rooms, down from the original 150. The new rooms are thoroughly modern—flat-screen TVs, comfy beds, mini-fridges—but they also reflect the hotel's origins with black-and-white tiled show-

ers, glass-topped writing desks, Art Deco lamps, maroon drapes, and historic photos. For those who really want the authentic experience, you can select one of the historic rooms on the third floor. The rooms measure 10-by-14 feet and contain metal bed frames, ceiling fans, tiled bathroom floors, and original cast-iron tubs. "We only have two of this size, because



the majority of people want the bigger rooms," Rodriguez says.

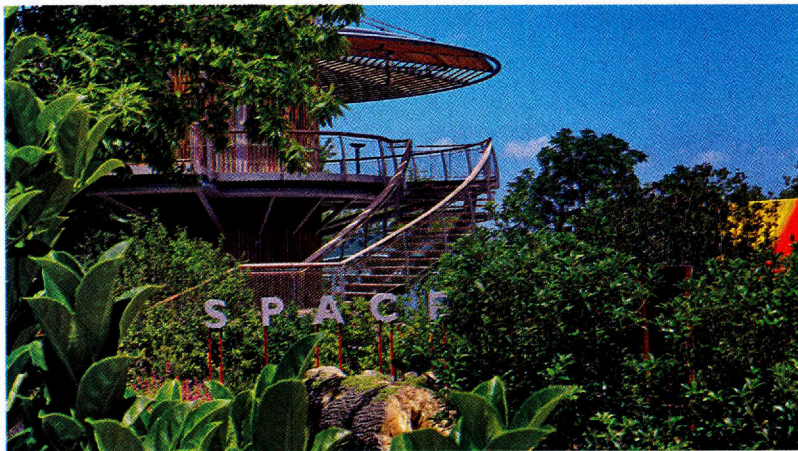
The Settles' bar and restaurant also represent a modern twist on the hotel's history. The Pharmacy Bar &

The Hangar 25 Air Museum harkens to Big Spring's aviation history, while the Heritage Museum displays a collection of 52 sets of Longhorn horns.



## Children's Adventure Garden

*Dallas Arboretum connects kids with nature*



**I**N A BIG CITY LIKE DALLAS, CHILDREN MAY NOT GET MUCH EXPOSURE to nature and the hands-on fundamentals of earth science. The Dallas Arboretum aims to do something about that with the opening of the Rory Meyers Children's Adventure Garden.

Set to open September 21, the children's garden will occupy eight of the arboretum's 66 acres on a hill overlooking White Rock Lake. The new garden—aimed at toddlers through middle-schoolers—is designed to be both educational and fun.

"What we're really trying to be is an immersion science lab for students in North Texas," says Maria Conroy, the arboretum's vice president of education. "They can use tools of science, do experiments, and get context for the lessons they're learning in a book."

The children's garden attractions include a skywalk through a tree canopy; a 32-foot fabricated tree with a staircase climbing up the interior of the trunk; a boardwalk through tunnels of grass; a vineyard and orchards growing various fruits; a "cereal garden" with rows of grain like corn and wheat; and an indoor hands-on science lab.

Conroy says the garden's mission is to introduce children to the natural world and basic lessons like the sources of the food they eat, and to animate the life and earth sciences with exhibits based on state science education standards.

"If we can bring them out here and help them think of science in a different way, it clears out their ears, and they can hear those lessons and make connections," Conroy says.

The children's garden will be open to school groups and visitors. See [www.dallasarboretum.org](http://www.dallasarboretum.org). —Matt Joyce

The "Pure Energy Tower" is one feature of the new children's garden.

of biscuits and gravy, grilled river trout, and New York strip steak typified the menu's contemporary Western fare—and tasted great.

After soaking in the local history at the Settles, it's worth a drive around Big Spring to visit some of the attractions that round out the town's story. At Comanche Trail Park, you can see the site of the city's namesake spring, which attracted buffalo, Native Americans, settlers, and the

**At Comanche Trail Park, you can see the site of the city's namesake spring, which attracted buffalo, Native Americans, settlers, and the railroad.**

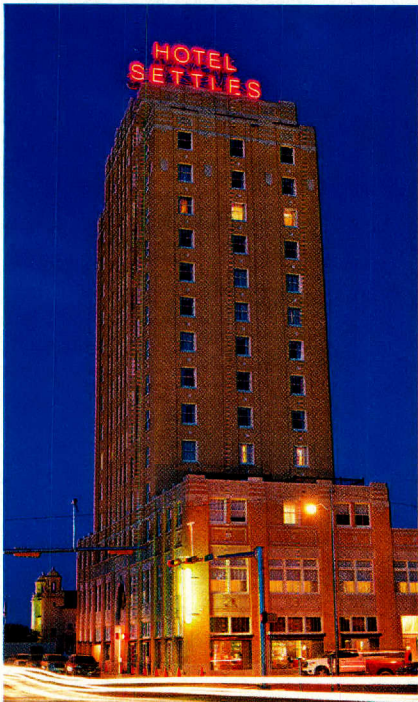
railroad. The spring ran dry not long after the town was settled, but now the city pumps water from Comanche Lake through a small creek, lined by oaks and mesquite, that flows into the limestone spring pool. A disc golf basket along the creek signals the presence of a 36-hole course, which hosts the annual West Texas championships. The park is also home to a playground with all sorts of towers and bridges, an 18-hole golf course, and an outdoor aquatic center with pools, slides, and a lazy river.

A stop at the Heritage Museum provides more insight into Big Spring history—and a few quirky displays donated by local residents. Along with exhibits explaining the local influence of ranching, the Texas & Pacific Railway (now the Union Pacific), and the Cosden oil refinery (now Alon), the museum features a collection of beautiful frontier paintings by H.W. Caylor, around 50

Parlour—the space was originally a pharmacy—has a backlit glass-top bar, as well as couches and a fireplace in the lounge area, a pool table, and a felt-top poker table. There are also poker tables in the Judge's Chamber—a basement lounge with a cigar

bar and shuffleboard table. The Settles Grill updates the hotel restaurant's historic status as a diner with a warm Art Deco vibe of blue vinyl booths, dark-wooden wall panels and dining tables, and a semi-open kitchen. During my family's stay, meals





antique phonographs and gramophones, and an extensive doll collection. Particularly interesting is the exhibit on Patricia McCormick, a local woman who became a famous bull-fighter in Mexico in the 1950s.

On the expansive grounds of the old Webb Air Force Base, the Hangar 25 Air Museum chronicles the history of the base and its predecessor, the Big Spring Army Air Corps Bombardier School, with a display of military training jets and propeller aircraft. The Air Force deactivated the base in 1977. The closure was a major blow to the local economy, but it also opened up space for an indus-

The Hotel Settles also houses a restaurant and bar, which are popular attractions for locals and guests.

### Hotel Settles

is at 200 East Third St. Call 432/267-7500; [www.hotelsettles.com](http://www.hotelsettles.com). For information on Big Spring, contact the Big Spring Convention & Visitors Bureau. Call 432/263-8235; [www.visitbigspring.com](http://www.visitbigspring.com).



trial park and new tenants including a private airport and a collection of federal and private prisons housing roughly 5,000 inmates. If you're interested in life on the inside, you can drive past the five facilities and see inmates playing basketball and soccer behind the razor wire-topped fencing.

Sitting between the town and the industrial park is Big Spring State Park, a 385-

acre park on the 200-foot limestone bluff known as Scenic Mountain. Joggers and dog-walkers flock to the winding road that climbs the hill amid scrub oak, mesquite, juniper, and yucca. The summit affords a terrific view of Big Spring and the rolling prairie and flatlands that stretch beyond. Rising above it all is the Hotel Settles, once again in its historic role as a beacon guiding Big Spring on to its next chapter. **TR**



## KERRVILLE, TEXAS

### small town **BIG EVENTS**



**HELLO WINE...MEET BEER!**

**Kerrville Wine & Music Festival**  
Aug. 30th - Sep. 1st, 800-435-8429  
[www.kerrville-music.com](http://www.kerrville-music.com)

**"The King & I"**  
Aug. 2nd-10th, 830-896-9393  
Playhouse 2000  
[www.caillouxtheater.com](http://www.caillouxtheater.com)

**"Don't Dress for Dinner"**  
Aug 9th- 24th, 830-367-5120  
The Point Indoor Theatre  
[www.hcaf.com](http://www.hcaf.com)

**New Odyssey**  
Sep. 8th  
830-896-9393  
[www.caillouxtheater.com](http://www.caillouxtheater.com)

**"Sons of the Prophet"**  
Sept 27th - Oct. 12th  
The Point Indoor Theatre  
830-367-5120  
[www.hcaf.com](http://www.hcaf.com)

**"Over the River & Through the Woods"**  
Sep. 27th-Oct. 13th  
Playhouse 2000  
830-896-9393  
[www.caillouxtheater.com](http://www.caillouxtheater.com)



**Kerrville Outdoor Painters Event**  
Oct. 2nd-5th, Exhibit thru 26th  
Kerr Arts & Cultural Center  
830-895-2911  
[www.kackkerrville.com](http://www.kackkerrville.com)



**Kerrville Convention & Visitors Bureau**  
800-221-7958  
[kerrcvb@ktc.com](mailto:kerrcvb@ktc.com)  
[KerrvilleTexasCVB.com](http://KerrvilleTexasCVB.com)





# Postcards

## Temple Railroad and Heritage Museum

**T**EMPLE'S RESTORED 1910 SANTA FE DEPOT, next to the BNSF rail yard, is the perfect place for the Temple Railroad and Heritage Museum.

On the first floor of the depot, the luxurious marble floors, green-tile wainscoting, and oak columns and ceiling beams reflect rail travel's reputation of elegance and romance. And the sound of a train rumbling by outside reinforces the desire to learn more about the transportation mode that helped build the state.

Temple is among the many Texas towns that the railroads established to provide services to trains; its roots date to an 1881 auction of lots by the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railway. Exhibits on the Harvey House, a place to eat before dining cars were added to trains, and medical care highlight other ties between the railway and the town. Displays also explore freight trains, Amtrak, railroads in World War II, and railroads in the Southwest.

Through August, the museum's temporary exhibit room fea-



tures *Citizens at Last: The Woman Suffrage Movement in Texas*, about the quest for women's right to vote, which was occurring during the period when the depot was built, says museum Director Stephanie Long.

In the communications room, you can listen to real-time communications between trains and rail workers while watching the active rails below. You can even see a telegraph and tap out a message using Morse code.

Call 254/298-5172; [www.rrhm.org](http://www.rrhm.org).

—Julie Stratton

**German Heritage.  
Amerikanisch Historie.**

While steeped in German heritage, the Fredericksburg area is home to national treasures like the Lyndon B. Johnson State and National Historical Parks. Explore the private ranch of our nation's 36th President, where he entertained international heads of state—right along the Pedernales River. Tour his 1960's Texas White House. See his vintage car collection and personal plane, fondly referred to as "Air Force One Half." Walk through the reconstructed birthplace and one-room schoolhouse he attended as a child, and take home some memories to put in your own history book. ★

VisitFredericksburgTX.com | 866 997 3600

**Fredericksburg**  
THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY

German Heritage. Texan Hospitality.



## A New Twist on Comfort Food

*Upscale dining in the heart of the Hill Country* Text by MICHELLE BURGESS



High's Café and the Plaid Goat will be closed August 1 through August 14. Mark your calendar to try High's delicious crab cakes.

**Make it!**

High's crab cake recipe at [texashighways.com/thtaste](http://texashighways.com/thtaste)





**N**ORAH JONES CROONS FROM HIDDEN SPEAKERS as a couple sinks into the soft, red sofa sitting perpendicular to an unlit fireplace. The straw-yellow walls are lined with broad-stroke oil paintings of farm animals, and a dozen or so tables take up the modest space in front of a long bar. It is Sunday evening at the Plaid Goat in Comfort, and the vibe is that of a casual, jazzy cocktail party. Out front, luxury cars sit alongside old work trucks; inside, their owners also share space. This is the kind of spot where it is common to strike up a conversation with a stranger—

*An appetizer of grilled Bandera quail marinated in a soy-ginger glaze sets the mood for dinner at 814-A Texas Bistro.*

or a whole table of strangers. Without looking at a menu, the two deliver their order: Havarti nachos for him; and for her, a rustic flatbread with crispy prosciutto and pecorino cheese.

With its extensive wine offerings and commitment to serving local, seasonal fare, the Plaid Goat would be a great addition to the dining scene in Austin or Dallas. But this is Comfort, an unincorporated, 2,400-person village all but un-

**So plentiful** are the diverse **dining** options in **Comfort** that a hungry soul could **eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner** for a **week** and **not have** chicken-fried steak **even once**.

known to tourists when compared to neighboring Boerne, Fredericksburg, and Kerrville. No one in this town bemoans its status as the best-kept secret in the Hill Country, though. Comfort is amazingly pedestrian-friendly and doesn't yet buckle under the weight of weekend and holiday visitors. There is no endless circling of the block to find parking, even during a Saturday farmers' market or the spring antiques show. And those antiques shops throughout town? They still have treasures to yield—and at bargain prices, too.

With one of the best-preserved rosters of historic buildings in any Texas downtown, Comfort has quaint down pat. But despite Comfort's antiques stores, wineries, bed and breakfasts, and opportunities for outdoors recreation, the town has lately become known for its dining scene—and inventive fare





that goes beyond the comfort food so ubiquitous in small-town Texas. **The Plaid Goat** reopens on August 15 after summer vacation. Locally sourced fare stars here.

Given Comfort's size, the Plaid Goat itself is enough to put it on the culinary map. But what really sets this 159-year-old German settlement apart is not that the Plaid Goat stands out—it's that it *doesn't*. So plentiful are the diverse and unexpected dining options in Comfort that a hungry soul could eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner for a week and not have chicken-fried steak even once. Not that there's anything wrong with a good CFS—and variations can certainly be found in and around Comfort, at Po Po or Cypress Creek Inn Restaurant or Guenther's Biergarten Grill. But consider that you could also choose to go to the visually stunning Terrace Grill at Riven Rock Ranch and try chicken-fried antelope, a brick-oven-roasted pork chop stuffed with Gulf shrimp, andouille sausage with a green-onion cream sauce, or a venison burger on brioche.

Back on High Street, in addition to the Plaid Goat and its sister restaurant, High's Café, those in search of an extraordinary meal can enjoy a wood-fired gourmet pizza from the candy-colored shell-back lawn chairs at Comfort Pizza, or perhaps partake in grilled Bandera quail with roasted corn and black bean salsa at

*Retreat. Relax.*  
*Always a Great Time in Kerrville!*

KerrvilleTexasCVB.com  
800-221-7958

"The King & I"  
at The Cailloux Theatre  
July 26th - August 10th

"Don't Dress for Dinner"  
at The Point Theatre  
Aug 9th-24th

Camp Eagle Classic  
Mountain Bike Fest  
Aug 30th- Sept 1

Kerrville Wine &  
Music Festival  
Aug 30th- Sept 1

**KERRVILLE**  
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

If the shoe fits... **MEET. PLAY. VISIT.**



Bryan College Station is a favorite destination for family fun, romantic get-aways, business trips events and more!

800.777.8292

VISITAGGIELAND.COM

**BRYAN**  
**COLLEGE**  
**STATION**  
CONVENTION AND  
VISITORS BUREAU



# Cordúally Yours

*Michael Cordúa honored with All-Star Chef status*

**I**N 1994, WHEN FOOD & WINE magazine honored Michael Cordúa with a “Best New Chef” designation, the Nicaragua-born chef had already made a name for himself in Houston with his restaurant Churrascos, which brought Latin American comestibles such as plantain bananas, *tres leches* cake, and the grilled meat known as churrasco to Texans’ culinary consciousness. “I call that the holy trinity of the Nicaraguan table,” says Michael. Recently honored by FOOD & WINE with the magazine’s “Best New Chefs All-Star” award, Michael—the patriarch of a restaurant empire that includes not only Churrascos but also Artista, Américas, and the Amazon Grill—speaks enthusiastically about the state of Latin American cooking in the Lone Star State. “The world is now noticing Texas as a culinary mecca, partly because of the diversity found here. It’s a great place to experiment with different Latin American cuisines.”

One of many chefs who participated in the recent Houston Wine & Food Week celebration in The Woodlands, Michael and his son, David, orchestrated a grand finale with a special menu at their Américas location in The Woodlands. French toast topped with achiote-braised pork carnitas and migas dressed up with grilled shrimp and corn-smoked crab claws incited sighs of pleasure. But when the Tres Leches Pancakes arrived—soaked in sweet sauce and topped with an artful dollop of meringue—there was such audible praise that strangers at the next table took notice. “Would you like a bite?” someone said, and the plate made the rounds. And so strangers became fellow adventurers, partners of pancakes if you will. Community starts at the table. See [www.cordua.com](http://www.cordua.com).

—Lori Moffatt



Michael Cordúa (left) says cooking with his son, David, is a dream come true.

814—A Texas Bistro. Throw in the always reliable and funky landmark eateries less than 15 minutes from town—hamburger haven Alamo Springs Café, upscale-rustic Welfare Cafe, and Wednesday-night steak hotspot Waring General Store—and the area offers enough culinary diversity to satisfy most anyone’s palate.

If the culinary bounty of Comfort comes as a surprise, don’t feel bad—especially if your last excursion through

this part of the Hill Country was more than a few years ago. Before the launch of High’s Cafe in 2005, locals could—and sometimes would, they say—literally bowl down High Street, it was so devoid of cars and pedestrians. Back then, Comfort was close-knit, quirky, and relatively content to stay out of the limelight.

Enter Brent Ault. The uncontested godfather of Comfort’s dining scene is an unassuming and soft-spoken Fort Worth

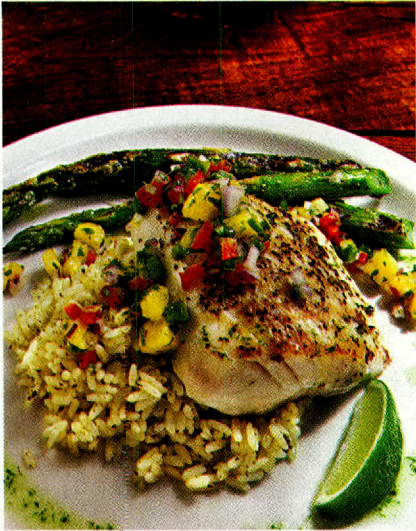
native who moved to the area about 12 years ago. A restaurant veteran, Ault knew about Comfort because the town’s barber is his dad’s best friend. Though food, shopping, and nightlife options were slim at the time, Ault says he fell in love with the area’s easygoing vibe and fascinating history. Settled in the mid-1850s by German freethinkers and intellectuals, Comfort has always eschewed the status

If the **culinary bounty** of **Comfort** comes as a **surprise, don’t** feel bad—especially if **your last excursion** through **this part of the Hill Country** was **more than a few years** ago.

quo. For example, during the Civil War, many settlers took an abolitionist stance, leading to the 1862 Battle of Nueces and the massacre of 34 Union sympathizers, an event commemorated by Comfort’s *Treue der Union* monument.

When Brent and his business partner, Denise Rabalais, set up shop in town, it was not as restaurateurs. Both were working in home design at the time and rented the building that is now High’s as office space. After a bit, they began serving coffee and a few pastries. “Then,” Brent says, “someone said to us ‘It’s cold outside—y’all should serve soup.’ So I made soup.” Gradually, word spread and High’s became a gathering place. When the pair experimented with happy hour at High’s and it was successful, the idea of opening a second eatery was born. In November 2011, the two opened the Plaid





Goat—an evening establishment that complements High’s breakfast-and-lunch service.

At the Plaid Goat, diners can choose from options including fish, fowl, and game. Here, pineapple-serrano salsa adds a kick to grilled mahi mahi.

The Goat’s success has created a financial domino effect that isn’t limited to the gourmet scene. Shops, bars, nearby wineries, and lodgings—including the 130-year-old Hotel Faust, smack-dab in the middle of High Street—have experienced a boost attributable to the one-two punch of High’s and its younger sister. As word begins to spread about the delights of Comfort—culinary and otherwise—Brent and others say they will embrace the newcomers just as they do their current clientele. “You’re successful if you’re true to your point of view and do what you do well,” he says. “That’s what we’ll continue to do.”

For all of us who find joy in food, those are welcome words. **TH**

### Comfort Food

For more details about Comfort and the surrounding area, call the Comfort Chamber of Commerce, 830/995-3131; [www.comfortchamberofcommerce.com](http://www.comfortchamberofcommerce.com).



# Brenham

## Washington County

### FRESH AIR & FUN FOR EVERYONE!

- Aug. 3-4, 10-11: Crush For Fun, Harvest Grape Stomp
- August 10: Chappell Hill Lavender & Wine Fest
- September 15-22: Washington County Fair – “Oldest County Fair in Texas”
- Sept. 28-Oct. 5: La Bahia Antiques Show
- October 2-5: Official Round Top Antiques Fair
- October 12-13: 37th Annual Chappell Hill Scarecrow Festival

[VisitBrenhamTexas.com](http://VisitBrenhamTexas.com)

For a free Visitor’s Guide call 1-800-509-1752 • [Facebook.com/Brenham.Texas](https://www.facebook.com/Brenham.Texas)

On Hwy. 290, halfway between Austin and Houston



## Explore the Outdoors in Lufkin



### Discover East Texas

Hundreds of miles of hiking, biking and backpacking trails



### A New Perspective

Get off the beaten path and find breathtaking beauty



### Adventure for All

Enjoy an extensive network of trails for every skill level

*Live It Up in Lufkin!*

[VisitLufkin.com](http://VisitLufkin.com) ■ 936-633-0349



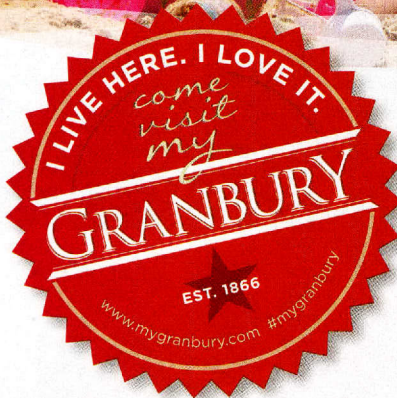
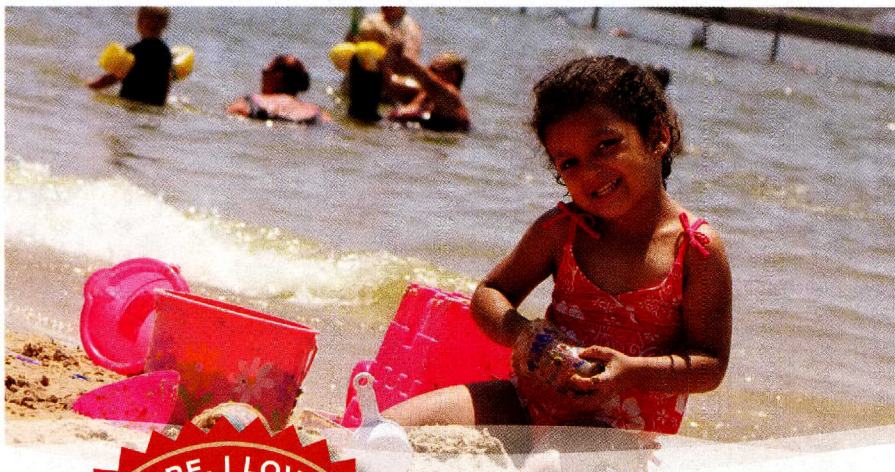


*Getaway to* **Lake Whitney**  
*at the Top of the Texas Hill Country*

Escape for a Week or a Weekend  
 B&Bs, Cabins, Cottages, Motels & Resorts

Boat rentals from local marinas  
 Fishing, swimming, skiing  
 Spectacular sunsets  
 Limestone cliffs  
 Antiquing  
 Golf

TexasGetawayVacation.com/guide



**COME VISIT MY GRANBURY.**

Celebrate summer with a fun festival, stroll through the unique shops on the historic square, play on our beach or simply relax in one of our many cozy B&Bs. Start planning now, the adventures in Granbury are endless!

**Taste**

**Madeira Can Take the Heat**

*Haak Vineyards' delicious tribute to Portugal*

**A**T A RECENT BLIND TASTING hosted by Tasting Panel magazine, the Madeiras of Texas' Haak Vineyards went head-to-head with Portuguese Madeiras dating to the late 19th-Century. In a speakeasy-style wine bar in downtown Austin called The Red Room, tasters sipped, compared notes, and learned more about this elixir's fascinating history—and how Haak Vineyards of Santa Fe, Texas, managed to earn designation as an authentic Madeira in 2006 only hours before strict international regulations put the hammer down. "We are the only vineyard to make Madeira in Texas, and one of a very short list in the United States," says winemaker Raymond Haak, who runs the vineyard with his wife, Gladys.



Madeira—a richly flavored fortified wine, usually produced on the Portuguese islands of Madeira—was first made in the late 1700s by happy accident. Ships loaded with port embarked on the six-month voyage to the Americas, where the wine was exposed to heat and oxygen—normally wine's archrivals. But when buyers tasted it, they liked it and sought to duplicate the process, and hence the birth of a new spirit.

Like producers in Portugal today, Raymond Haak heats his port (made from Texas-grown *blanc du bois* and Black Spanish grapes) in a heated cellar, which approximates the voyage in a ship's hull and makes the wine "practically indestructible" says Raymond.

You can taste Haak Vineyard's Madeira, port, and other wines year-round at the winery in Santa Fe, which offers tours, a tasting room, and a covered pavilion overlooking the three-acre vineyard. See [www.haakwine.com](http://www.haakwine.com).

—Lori Moffatt



## Same as It Ever Was

*Round Top  
comes full circle*

Text by **RAMONA FLUME**

The 19th-Century pioneer structures at Round Top's Henkel Square have been transformed into shopping and dining destinations.





In Bybee Square, The Gallery at Round Top specializes in antiques and art. Here, Lucy the dog receives some love from co-owner Karen Vernon.

**I** NOTICED SOMETHING STRANGE AS I DROVE DOWN THE tree-lined country road wending south from US 290 toward the bucolic town of Round Top. Though I've made this trip dozens of times, today there was one striking anomaly: The time-worn number "77" indicating the town's population on the city-limits sign had been repainted to read "90."

Times must be changing in small-town Texas.

As I approached Bybee Square, the city's first business and recreational plaza, I wondered what else might have changed in Round Top. After all, the town is roughly equidistant from three of the state's largest cities—Austin, Houston, and San Antonio. Tourists flock here year-round, and more than 100,000 people come here each year solely to

attend Round Top's famous spring and fall antiques fairs.

But I breathed a sigh of relief as I arrived at the same four-block "downtown" square I remembered, with its many shops, art galleries, and restaurants. I smiled to see the small crowd lingering on the porch of Royers Café, whose outrageously delicious pies have garnered praise from such authorities as celebrity homemaker Martha Stewart

and foodies at *The New York Times*. (I can vouch for them, too—especially the "Texas Trash" version, a sweet-and-savory mix of chocolate chips, pecans, pretzels, cocorut, and graham crackers.)

So some things remain constant. But change is afoot in tiny Round Top, including the transformation of Henkel Square, a collection of 19th-Century pioneer structures that once served as a living-history museum, into a shopping and dining destination.

The historic properties, built by some of the area's first German settlers, are still here. But in recent years they've been modernized with new paint jobs and amenities like central air and heat, and they now house an assortment of boutiques, restaurants,



Despite **cultural** boons like **antiques fairs** and events at **Festival Institute**, Round Top has **resisted** major development, **allowing** visitors to **enjoy** the same **tranquil setting** experienced a **half-century** ago.

art galleries, and other local businesses, including the Round Top Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center. Here, too, are full-service venue spaces, like the restored 19th-Century Haw Creek Church; and the new Henkel Hall, an 8,000-square-foot event space that is popular for weddings and other gatherings.

Now known collectively as Henkel Square Market, the structures are surrounded by manicured gardens and connected by crushed-gravel pathways. I'm happy to see that visitors can still immerse themselves in history—especially the early settlers' architectural legacy—thanks to such preserved elements as original oak floors and cedar woodwork.

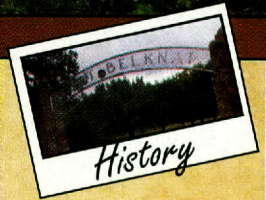
Round Top, established in 1870, has evolved into a weekend getaway for nearby urban dwellers. It's an identity that was first cultivated in the 1960s by a group of influential philanthropists, art collectors, and preservationists from Houston, including Ima Hogg—the daughter of Texas Governor James Stephen Hogg—and her friends Hazel Ledbetter and Faith Bybee.

In 1959, with the goal of preserving Round Top's heritage and historic

## Experience Graham & Take Home a Memory!

Come see what Graham has to offer you!

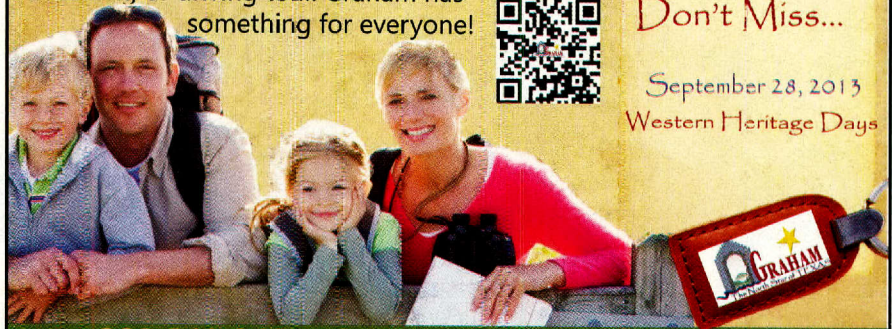
Located just 90 minutes west of Fort Worth in the beautiful North Texas Hill Country, Graham is the perfect place to escape life's hustle and bustle. Discover new trails for hiking, horseback riding, or mountain biking. Shop America's Largest Downtown Square or explore Texas history with a walking or driving tour. Graham has something for everyone!



Events & Activities

Don't Miss...

September 28, 2013  
Western Heritage Days



866.549.0401 • [www.visitgrahamtexas.com](http://www.visitgrahamtexas.com)

## Ranch Dressing

Western isn't a style.  
It's a statement.

Strut your sassy in Amarillo.

Step Into The Real Texas

AMARILLO

visit [AmarilloTX.com](http://AmarilloTX.com) 800-692-1338





**The Prairie** by Rachel Ashwell, my favorite B&B in Texas, incorporates ornate **French décor** with elements like **corrugated metal** and chandeliers made of **deer antlers**.

architecture, the three began purchasing and preserving Round Top properties and introducing the arts— theater, music, and antiques—to town. Hogg, who had collected early American art and antiques in Houston since the 1920s, encouraged local antiques dealer Emma Lee Turney to establish an annual show; today, the biannual fairs are two of the town's most popular draws. And in 1968, Faith Bybee and her husband founded the Texas Pioneer Arts Foundation, which restored historic area homes and relocated them to central locations like Henkel Square.

The whistle-stop of a town provided the perfect place for Houstonians eager to escape the big city. But Hogg and her coterie saw much more in Round Top than its sylvan charm. They saw the perfect platform for a cultural and fine-arts outpost.

In the late 1960s, Hogg donated a 19th-Century barn on the outskirts of

Visitors relax on the patio of the Stone Cellar, a pizzeria in Bybee Square, Round Top's original business plaza.

Round Top to serve as the performance space for Shakespeare at Winedale, a University of

Texas-affiliated program dedicated to summertime performances of the Bard's work. She also supported concert pianist James Dick, who in 1971 founded the Round Top Festival Institute, an internationally acclaimed fine arts campus. Visitors to Round Top today shouldn't miss a stroll through the Festival Institute's beautifully landscaped flower and herb gardens, and if the timing is right, a concert in the handcrafted Festival Concert Hall.

But despite cultural boons like the antiques fairs and the Festival Institute's many classical music and poetry festivals, Round Top has resisted major development, allowing visitors to enjoy the same peaceful setting experienced a half-century ago.

Those seeking tranquility in Round Top will find it everywhere, it seems—including at my favorite bed and breakfast in Texas, a 46-acre retreat known as The Prairie by Rachel Ashwell.

I first visited The Prairie in 2010, soon after British interior designer Rachel Ashwell bought a small operation known as The Outpost and revamped its 19th-Century Texas farmstead and cottages. The modest country estate served as the ideal blank canvas for Ashwell's style, which incorporates ornate French décor with elements like corrugated metal and chandeliers made of deer antlers. The lush grounds feature mature pecans, cedars, live oaks, and palm trees amid flowerbeds flush with seasonal roses and wildflowers. There are now three one-bedroom cottages available for rent,





along with two larger houses, plus a renovated barn that often hosts weekend workshops and events.

I can imagine Round Top's pioneering patronesses wandering around here, past trees draped in vines, browsing slip-covers or pastel-colored glassware in the onsite boutique, or perhaps simply reveling in the nearly pristine landscape. After all, Round Top still boasts a certain old-fashioned sleepiness. Some shops are closed during the first half of the week, for example, and restaurants tend to close when business is light. And pie is practically a required course at every meal.

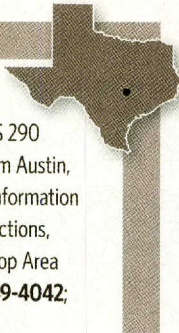
In fact, Royers Round Top Café, which operates a full-service restaurant on Main Street, has expanded with a new pie-and-coffee bar at Henkel Square Market. People even queue up in the mornings for breakfast options like "Not My Mom's Apple Pie," the café's version of a "breakfast pie."

No matter the calorie count: Breakfast pie is the perfect fuel for a languid afternoon of exploring Round Top's boutiques, antiques shops, and art galleries. On a recent trip, I found myself attracted to a painted Styrofoam dinosaur head at a shop called Lizzie Lou's. Debating whether I could find a place for it in my home in Austin, I resisted the urge and strolled instead to admire the locally made jewelry at The Gallery at Round Top. I spoke with co-owner Ken Muenzenmayer about the new energy I'd noticed in town, and I mentioned the new city-limits marker.

He paused for a moment and then said with a laugh, "Yep, we've got ourselves a real population explosion." **TH**

## Round Top

is in Fayette County, between US 290 and I-10, roughly equidistant from Austin, San Antonio, and Houston. For information about lodging, restaurants, attractions, and events, contact the Round Top Area Chamber of Commerce, **979/249-4042**; [www.roundtop.org](http://www.roundtop.org).



**WOW!**  
*What a Place To Visit!*

Fish Year-round  
 Visit Wild Places  
 Take A Historical Tour

**Brownsville**  
*Always A Fiesta!*

Brownsville Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.  
[www.brownsville.org](http://www.brownsville.org) / 800.626.2639

**UVALDE**  
*Surround yourself with adventure.*

For info on lodging, attractions, events & tours  
[www.visituvalde.com](http://www.visituvalde.com)





# { Come Together }

**A CULTURAL TOUR OF TEXAS DANCE HALLS**

**TEXT BY Gail Folkins    PHOTOGRAPHS BY J. Griffis Smith**

Summer evenings are a great time for dancing at Luckenbach's dance hall. Opposite, a glimpse inside historic Gruene Hall, which was built in 1878.





**GRUENE'S HALL**  
 BUILT IN 1878 AS A SALOON AND SOCIAL HALL FOR AREA COTTON FARMERS, THIS IS BELIEVED TO BE ONE OF THE OLDEST DANCE HALLS IN TEXAS. CHRISTIAN HEERY (1854-1917) BUILT THE HALL UNDER THE DIRECTION OF TOWN DEVELOPER HENRY D. GRUENE, FOR WHOM MANY OF THE FARMERS WORKED. THE CENTER OF THE COMMUNITY'S SOCIAL LIFE FOR OVER A CENTURY, THE LARGE ONE-STORY STRUCTURE FEATURES A "FALSE FRONT" ENTRY WITH ASYMMETRICAL WINDOW AND DOOR ARRANGEMENTS.  
RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK - 1289





**I**T'S A LATE AFTERNOON at Club Westerner, an 84-year-old dance hall in Victoria, and musicians with The Scott Taylor Band are setting up their instruments for the night's show. The sounds of tuning guitars and microphone checks bounce off the walls, just as they have for decades. In the hours to come, dancers will fill the historic hall, absorbing the country music and skimming across the shiny oak dance floor in a counterclockwise motion. It's a ritual that has taken place at dance halls across Texas for more than a century, and judging by the diversity of halls and their fans, it's a tradition that shows promise to persevere as a hallmark of Lone Star culture.

Texas dance halls offer a history as complex and varied as the musical notes drifting through their open doors. Located throughout the state, the halls have their origins in Texas' German, Czech, Polish, Tejano, and African-American cultures. German and Czech immigrants built dance halls throughout Central Texas in the mid- to late 1800s, while in the mid-1900s Mexican-American dance halls sprang up throughout South Texas. Across ethnic groups, these structures provided a venue for people to hold community meetings, as well as a space for relaxation with music and dance. The halls were open in nature, which encouraged cultural crossover, exposed visitors to diverse musical styles, and even fostered the development of new forms of music, such as conjunto.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL AMADOR

The impact of Texas dance halls on community, music, and culture continues today. While some historic halls have been closed or repurposed, others still serve as spaces for public and private events. Today's dance



hall visitor can experience the cultures of these historic halls and the diverse communities they helped form. »



**VISITORS TO GRUENE HALL  
can find local and national bands  
playing the wooden-floored  
dance hall every night except  
Thanksgiving and Christmas.**







**TOM SEFCIK HALL**  
*"Established in 1923"*  
 GAMES BILLIARDS COLD DRINKS      OPEN EVENINGS 5:00PM TILL ?      MUSIC DANCING HALL RENTAL  
 254-985-2356



Stephen Dean, co-founder and board member of the nonprofit Texas Dance Hall Preservation Inc., says dance-hall culture is more prominent in Texas than anywhere else. "Dance halls were the lifeblood of small communities as immigration spread across Texas and an integral point of the town's social fabric," he says, adding that visiting dance halls is one of the best ways to help preserve them.

**The first Czech** immigrants settled in Central Texas, particularly in the Fayette County area. Another wave of Czech immigrants established commu-





Sefcik Hall, Seaton

hall is draped with multicolored strings of decorative lights—Sulak put them up one holiday season and decided to leave them—and 1930s-era, backlit glass signs advertising beer, feed, and banking line the walls. Dances, with music ranging from country to polka, take place on weekends.

Alice says music provides the biggest enjoyment of her life, although running a dance hall has its challenges. “It’s fun to see the people have a good time and enjoy themselves,” she says. “There’s also a limit to the beer business; you have to be sensible. When people get rowdy, I put my foot down. Some things you have to swallow, and sometimes you have to tell them how it is.”

In La Grange, the Fair Pavilion (formerly the Round-Up Hall), located on the Fayette County fairgrounds adjacent to the Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center, hosts private bookings and community events. Czech settlers originally held weekend dances in this early-20th-Century hall, which features open sides and ample room for dancers and those who want to sit and socialize. Public functions at the hall and surrounding grounds include the Fayette County Fair, which takes place over Labor Day weekend, and the Best Little Cowboy Gathering, held the second full weekend in March.

Outside of La Grange, the KJT Hall in Ammannsville takes its acronym from *Katolická Jednotá Texaská* (Catholic Union of Texas), a fraternal Czech organization formed in 1889. Ammannsville and

neighboring communities of Dubina and Hostyn were among the first Czech settlements in Texas, and the vast majority of the settlers were Catholic. The barn-like, white wooden structure with a metal roof and a large “KJT” on its front serves as a community hall for the local St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. Its biggest event is the annual Father’s Day parish picnic, featuring polka bands, fried chicken, and bingo.

**German immigrants** arriving in Texas during the early to mid-19th Century settled in the south-central part of the state, later expanding to north-central and west-central Texas. The dance halls they built served as meeting spaces and social centers for fraternal organizations such as the Sons of Hermann.

Scholz Garten in Austin is a restaurant and beer garden that is also home to a dance hall owned and run by Austin Saengerrunde, a singing group established in 1879. With a name that means “singer in the round,” Austin Saengerrunde was one of many singing clubs formed by German immigrants to Central Texas in the late 19th Century. August Scholz built the hall in about 1870. Needing a larger space to host their events, Austin Saengerrunde purchased the downtown Austin venue in 1908. In addition to the dance hall, the locale includes a historic six-lane bowling alley, its gleaming floors integrated into the hall itself.

About 50 miles south of Austin lies New Braunfels and the historic district

nities in the north-central region of Texas. While many Czech settlers held dances in their homes, fraternal organizations in the late 19th Century spurred growth of area lodges, or dance halls.

You’ll find one of the best examples of a Texas-Czech dance hall at Sefcik Hall in Seaton. Tom Sefcik built the hall in 1923, and his daughter, Alice Sulak, greets patrons these days—when she’s not playing saxophone for Jerry Haisler and the Melody 5. Sefcik’s features a downstairs bar and a dance hall on the second floor, complete with an elevator for hauling bar supplies and musicians’ gear. The



**YOU’LL FIND ONE OF THE BEST examples of a Texas-Czech dance hall at Sefcik Hall in Seaton. Tom Sefcik’s daughter, Alice Sulak, greets patrons these days—when she’s not playing saxophone for Jerry Haisler and the Melody 5.**





LEFT: Wright's Park in Schulenburg hosts a June-teenth celebration and other community events. TOP: In Luckenbach, Cameron Nelsor participates in a pickin' circle.

of Gruene, home of Gruene Hall, one of Texas' best-known live-music venues. Henry D. Gruene constructed the hall to serve as a host for community social activities, especially dances, in 1878. In 1975, Gruene Hall was placed in the National Register of Historic Places. That same year, Pat Molak purchased the hall, leading to its continued preservation and the rebirth of the community of Gruene. Today, visitors can find local and national bands playing the wooden-floored dance hall every night except Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Another of Texas' most prominent dance halls is at the Luckenbach store, southwest of Fredericksburg. Luckenbach began with a post office and general store in 1854, expanding to a dance hall, blacksmith's shop, bar, and cotton gin by the late 1800s. The festive site—made famous by the 1977 Waylon Jennings song "Luckenbach, Texas (Back to the Basics of Love)"—continues to host musical acts most days. Visitors

can experience afternoon and evening performances in the open-sided hall and oak-shaded outbuildings.

**African Americans** in Texas also have a history of gathering at local halls for community meetings and dances. One of the best preserved is Wright's Park in Schulenburg. Olton and Josephine Wright founded the hall in 1948, and their family has run the place for generations. When Olton's daughter, Ora Mae Wright, began managing the hall in 1960, she continued the musical traditions started by her father and booked blues acts such as Albert Collins. Ora's son, Robert Moore, has managed the hall for the past 17 years, keeping alive its community efforts, such as the Easter egg hunt started by his grandfather, and organizing cemetery cleanups. An annual Wright's Park highlight is the June-teenth celebration, an event that extends outside the hall with entertainment and a parade to kick off the day's events.

**In South Texas** and the Rio Grande Valley, you'll find a range of dance halls and ballrooms, many of which opened in the aftermath of World War II to cater to young veterans with music and dancing. Regional dance halls helped foster the development of conjunto music, a blend of German accordion-based polka with Mexican-American folk music. The style originated in the late 1800s, grew popular in dance halls, and over time spread beyond them.

In Corpus Christi, the Galvan Ballroom opened in 1949 and hosted jazz and swing acts like the Ralph Galvan Orchestra and Beto Villa and Balde González, as well as conjunto acts such as Paulino Bernal and Tony de la Rosa. Businessman Rafael Galvan Sr. opened the hall and rented it to various social clubs, promoting diverse acts and musical styles. Today, the youngest of Galvan Sr.'s nine children, Bobby, works at the music store below the ballroom. The dance hall upstairs features a



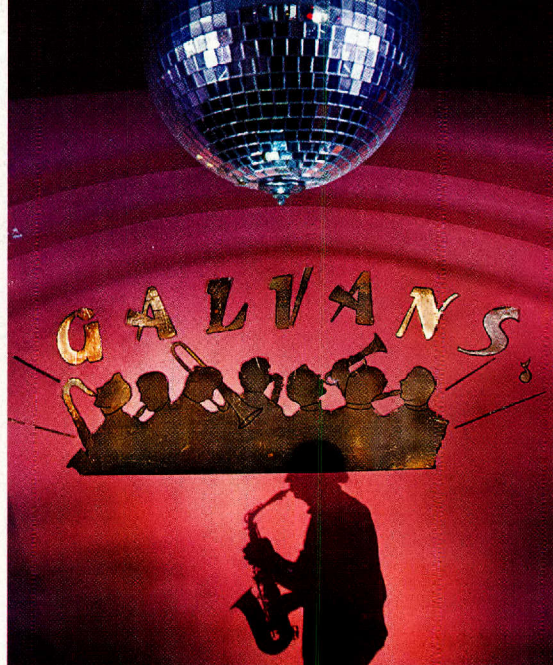


PHOTO BY MICHAEL AMADOR

LEFT: Polka bands keep the dancers twirling at the KJT Hall in Ammansville. TOP: The Galvan Ballroom in Corpus Christi.

raised bandstand tucked in a pink alcove with a shiny brass background featuring the silhouettes of big-band musicians. Red light bulbs adorn the ceiling, and a mirrored disco ball adds even more flair to the large wooden dance floor.

Back at Club Westerner in Victoria, the 3,000-square-foot dance floor has hosted both musical performances and political gatherings. John Manuel Villafranca, a local postal service employee, started Sunday dances at the Westerner in 1956. The afternoon dances became so popular that Villafranca added “Club” to the name and expanded to night acts including pop bands on Fridays, conjunto on Saturdays, and big bands on Sundays. Villafranca purchased the hall in 1965 and continued to run it until he passed away in 2007. These days, the Villafranca family leases Club Westerner for private events and puts on occasional public shows featuring local and regional performers, such as

Little Joe y la Familia and Ruben Ramos.

Villafranca’s daughter, Debbie Escalante, grew up at Club Westerner and is now a co-owner. She has memories of youngsters sleeping on chairs around the dance floor, using jackets and tablecloths as blankets, as their parents danced the night away. The historic character of the club keeps people coming back, she says. “We’ve had dances where people will come back 30 years later, and tell us they came here when they were 16, and met their wife or husband. Now they’re coming back with their kids and grandkids,” Debbie says. “It’s nostalgic.” **TH**

*Austin writer GAIL FOLKINS is the author of Texas Dance Halls: A Two-Step Circuit, published in 2007 by Texas Tech University Press. As a steel guitar player, TH Photography Editor GRIFF SMITH enjoys visiting Texas dance halls. But he thinks twice before asking anyone to dance.*

**TH ESSENTIALS**

## Texas Dance Halls

TEXAS is home to hundreds of dance halls. To learn more, visit Texas Dance Hall Preservation Inc., [www.texasdancehall.org](http://www.texasdancehall.org). More information on sites mentioned in the story follows.

**Sefcik Hall**, 200 Seaton Rd., Temple, 254/985-2356.

**KJT Hall**, FM 1383 in Ammansville.

**The Fair Pavilion**, 250 West Fairgrounds Rd., La Grange, 888/785-4500; [www.czechtexas.org](http://www.czechtexas.org).

**Saengerrunde Hall**, 1607 San Jacinto, Austin, 512/288-1994; [www.saengerrunde.org](http://www.saengerrunde.org).

**Gruene Hall**, 1281 Gruene Rd., New Braunfels, 830/606-1281; [www.gruenehall.com](http://www.gruenehall.com).

**Luckenbach**, 412 Luckenbach Town Loop, Fredericksburg, 830/997-3224; [www.luckenbachtexas.com](http://www.luckenbachtexas.com).

**Wright’s Park**, 1301 James Ave., Schulenburg, 979/212-1128

**Club Westerner**, 1005 W. Constitution, Victoria, 361/575-9109; [www.clubwesterner.com](http://www.clubwesterner.com).

**Galvan Ballroom**, 1632 Agnes St., Corpus Christi, 361/654-2582.









***The ART,  
SPIRITUAL PURSUIT,  
& CULTURE of***

**BBQ**

***Exploring the roots of barbecue mythology***

***Text by ROBB WALSH***

***Photographs by O. RUFUS LOVETT***







“There is no best barbecue, any more than there is a best song or a best painting. In the part of the country where barbecue has long been part of everyday life, as soon as you forget the scorekeeping, you become open to the wider experience of BBQ as an art form, a spiritual pursuit, and a culture.”

“We

weren't looking for just any barbecue restaurants. We had no interest in places that used electric or gas-fired barbecue ovens. We were looking for the keepers of the flame—the last of the old-fashioned Southern barbecue pits,” explains Texas food writer Robb Walsh in the preface of his new book *Barbecue Crossroads: Notes and Recipes from a Southern Odyssey*.

We couldn't help but be intrigued by Robb's mission. Texas popular culture has bestowed a mythical quality upon mouth-watering barbecue and its purveyors. In his book, Robb digs into this treasured culinary tradition and scours the barbecue joints of Texas and the southern United States to examine barbecue's history and changing culture. His findings are enlightening—and they'll make you want to search out some 'cue for yourself. —TH

.....

This quest started when I left my job at the *Houston Press* after ten years of restaurant reviewing. I found myself enjoying barbecue more than I had in decades. Liberated from my role as critic and otherwise unemployed, I had the luxury to just sit back and take it all in. And without the strictures of anonymity, or anything better to do, I could banter to my heart's content with the folks who tended the pits.

And I could see the folly of much of what I had written. Barbecue Top 10 lists, ratings, and all the rest of it are, as the Buddhists would say, illusion. Bloggers, journalists, and magazine editors put scores on barbecue joints in order to convince the public (and ourselves) that we are the masters of the barbecue universe. But it's all a lot of smoke.

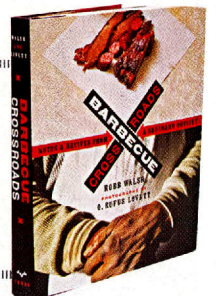
When you get caught up in arguing about who serves the best barbecue, you lose sight of the larger picture. Some days the sausage at Smitty's in the Central Texas town of Lockhart is so wet it squirts when you cut it, and sometimes in the late afternoon it gets dry. So what? You want to give the sausage a score? Go ahead if it makes you happy. The sausage has been smoked the same way for over a hundred years. It will still be here after we are gone.

There is no best barbecue, any more than there is a best song or a best painting. In the part of the country where barbecue has long been part of everyday life, as soon as you forget about the scorekeeping, you become open to the wider experience of BBQ as an art form, a spiritual pursuit, and a culture. I realized that in twenty years of food writing, I had never actually written what I wanted to say about barbecue. So I teamed up with photographer O. Rufus Lovett. The idea was to take another approach to barbecue. We didn't go looking for the best barbecue—we went looking for the wellsprings of barbecue mythology.

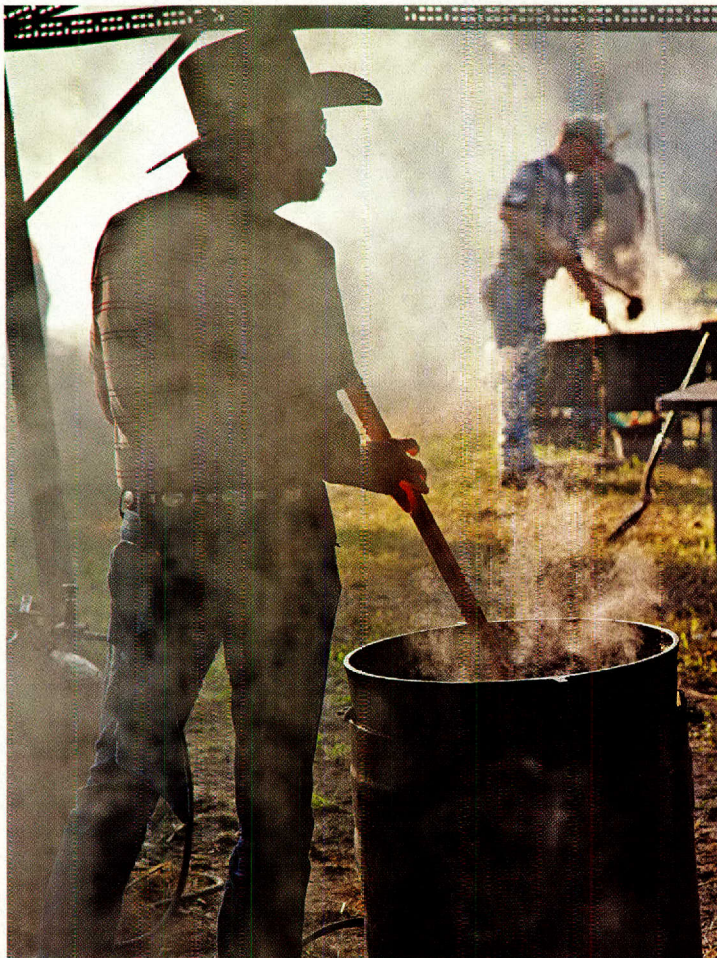
What we found was the routine of the pitmasters; the sharpening of knives, the cutting of meat, the chopping of hardwood, the tending of coals, and the opening and closing of black iron pit doors. In these daily rituals, we saw an older way of relating to food. The sliced brisket, pulled pork sandwiches, and tender ribs were delicious. But it was the ancient artisanal tradition itself and the culture and mythology that surround it that we were determined to document.

PREVIOUS PAGE:  
Mama Sugar in Fresno.  
OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE  
FROM TOP LEFT: Millheim  
Hall; dominoes at Fresno  
Juneteenth; Taylor Café;  
Nelly's in Marshall.

Text selections and photos from *Barbecue Crossroads: Notes and Recipes from a Southern Odyssey* by Robb Walsh and O. Rufus Lovett (Copyright © 2013), used by permission of the author and photographer. For more information visit [www.utexaspress.com](http://www.utexaspress.com).















## PITS & PULPITS

**R**ufus and I introduced ourselves to Jeremiah “Baby J” McKenzie, the proprietor and pitmaster of Baby J’s Bar-B-Que & Fish, in Palestine. But our trip got off to a strange start when he told us, “We’re out of brisket, pork, and ribs. All we got is fried catfish.”

Baby J’s had been written up in a Dallas newspaper over the weekend, and the meat had sold out. Baby J’s started out at a small location in Elkhart and moved to its current site on the edge of Palestine a few years ago. The restaurant building is located on a vacant lot under a water tower on the unpopulated outskirts of town. Its only neighbor, besides the giant steel ball full of water, is a fireworks stand.

Baby J spoke quietly, and his words conveyed a sense of wonder. I was surprised to discover that Baby J recently celebrated his tenth year as pastor at the One Way Apostolic Church of Palestine.

“I started cooking for our church suppers. Everybody at the church loved my barbecue, and they kept saying, ‘You should open a restaurant.’ So I did,” he said.

He climbed the stairs to enter an enclosed trailer and invited me to join him. Baby J opened the steel door of the rig and cut off a few slivers of the brisket that was cooking so I could taste his spicy seasoning.

“People in town said I would never last because I made my meat too spicy,” Reverend Baby J told me. “I guess they were wrong. My barbecue place started showing up in newspapers and magazines and my business took off.” Baby J was convinced that the good ink flowed down from heaven. “There are a lot of barbecue joints out there, and to be singled out like that is a blessing from God,” he said.

There’s a big difference between African-American barbecue in East Texas and meat-market barbecue in Central Texas. East Texas brisket is not a fanned array of picture-perfect slices. It’s a falling-apart mess of hot and greasy meat, aggressively seasoned with peppery barbecue sauce. In East Texas, cheap and plentiful beef was substituted for pork, but the “chopped sandwich” barbecue style remained the same. In Central Texas, German butchers adapted Southern barbecue to their traditions of sausage making and Old World enclosed smokers.



## CONVENIENCE STORES

**T**he Southern tradition of eating at stores and markets came from the migrant farmworkers. For a hundred years, from the end of the Civil War to the mid-1960s, cotton was picked by hired hands. Hundreds of thousands of pickers were required. They moved from south to north, following the ripening of the cotton. There were often more cotton pickers than local residents for the several weeks it took to bring in a crop. Regardless of whether they were African Americans, Mexican nationals, or poor whites, cotton pickers were at the bottom of the social scale. They weren’t welcome in restaurants or cafes where townspeople ate.

Cotton pickers bought their food in gas stations, convenience



stores, and meat markets. In Lockhart, cotton pickers were dropped off after work in the parking lot of a meat market now named Smitty’s, and formerly known as Kreuz Market. The front door of the retail meat market is on the town’s main square. The parking lot and back door are located across the street from the cotton gins and railroad tracks. Migrant workers came in the back door and either got their smoked meats to go or ate them at picnic tables in the back of the market. The same scenario was repeated in other meat markets run by European immigrants.

In the days before refrigeration, butchers followed the traditions of eastern Europe, grinding their scraps into sausage and smoking them along with unsold meats. They probably had no idea what the cotton pickers were talking about when they called the smoked sausage and pork “barbecue.” But the butchers knew that when the cotton pickers were in town, they sold a lot of it. Soon enough, the eastern European immigrants were calling it barbecue, too.

OPPOSITE: Soas of Hermann Washington lodge barbecue. ABOVE: Rev. Jeremiah “Baby J” McKenzie, proprietor of Baby J’s Bar-B-Que & Fish in Palestine.

### WEB EXTRA:

For Robb Walsh’s “Texas Crutch” Brisket recipe, see [www.texashighways.com/webextra](http://www.texashighways.com/webextra).



Church BBQ



They probably had no idea what the cotton pickers were talking about when they called the smoked sausage and pork “barbecue.” But the butchers knew that when the cotton pickers were in town, they sold a lot of it.



## COMMUNITY BARBECUES

**T**hose of us who value tradition have been mourning the disappearance of wood-fired pits from barbecue restaurants and complaining about the extremes of the cook-off circuit, but we have mostly overlooked the events where American barbecue culture has been best preserved.

Rufus and I met up at a community barbecue in the Brazos Valley, at the Sons of Hermann lodge in Washington. I go there at seven in the morning, but the Sons of Hermann barbecue crew had been there all night.

The barbecue pit was covered with cardboard. It was three courses of cinder block above ground level and ten cinder blocks long, which would make it two feet high and fifteen feet long. The opening looked to be around four feet across. On top of the cinder-block chamber, a grate made of metal rods with stout wire mesh attached spanned the opening. The mesh

### ESSENTIALS:

## Texas Barbecue

This excerpt contains only a fraction of the interesting places mentioned in *Barbecue Crossroads: Notes and Recipes from a Southern Odyssey*. Here's information on sites mentioned in the story.

**Baby J's Bar-B-Que & Fish**, FM 2419 at US 287, Palestine, 903/729-8402.

**Smitty's Market**, 208 South Commerce, Lockhart, 512/398-9344; [www.smittysmarket.com](http://www.smittysmarket.com).

**Sons of Hermann Washington Lodge**, 9499 FM 1370, Washington, 936/878-2269.





OPPOSITE: A plate at New Zion Missionary Baptist Church Barbecue in Huntsville. LEFT: An order of brisket and ribs at Martin's in Bryan.

area was only three feet across so that there was a gap between the edge of the cinder block and the cooking area. This allowed the fire underneath to be refueled. When the cardboard was pulled back to reveal the meat, I counted fourteen briskets and around thirty Boston butts. Three men mopped the meats with small cotton dish mops dunked in a big pot of mop sauce. Lumps of B&B hardwood charcoal were added to the fire.

After visiting the Sons of Hermann lodge in Washington, I wondered how many community barbecues there must have been in the 1950s, when organizations like the Kiwanis, Lions, Elks, Rotary, and Optimists were at their peak and churches were still holding camp meetings regularly. Once upon a time, before television and the Internet, those groups were our “social network.”

Although community organizations are shrinking, many of the old barbecues are still going on. They aren't conveniently located in restaurants, and they aren't open seven days a week. The service is terrible—you have to stand in line. But give one of these events a try. Pretty soon, you'll find yourself slowing down and getting caught up in a conversation. When you sit at a common table and share your enthusiasm for great smoked meat, tangy sauce, or juicy sausage with the people you meet, you become a part of a community of barbecue lovers.

And that's what American barbecue culture is really all about. **TR**

## RECIPES:

### **BIG ABE JOHNSON'S MOP SAUCE**

From the Sons of Hermann lodge in Washington

4 cups vinegar, plus 8 cups water

1 cup butter

1/2 cup Worcestershire sauce

1/4 cup Louisiana hot sauce

2 bottles of beer

Combine all ingredients in a large pot and cook over medium heat until the butter melts (or set over hot coals on the pit). Using a cotton dish mop, use the mop sauce to baste meat as it cooks. Yields approximately 3 1/2 quarts.

### **SHAVED SLAW**

1/2 cup olive oil

1/4 cup white vinegar

1/2 cup yellow prepared mustard

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon ground black pepper

1 teaspoon celery seed

1 teaspoon celery salt

1 teaspoon sugar

1 medium head green cabbage, shaved

Combine the oil, vinegar, mustard, salt, pepper, celery seed, celery salt, and sugar. Toss with the cabbage until well mixed. Slaw wilts and loses volume, so the yield will be less than the amount of raw ingredients. Allow to melt in the refrigerator overnight. Makes about 8 cups.



# Dining *Redefined*



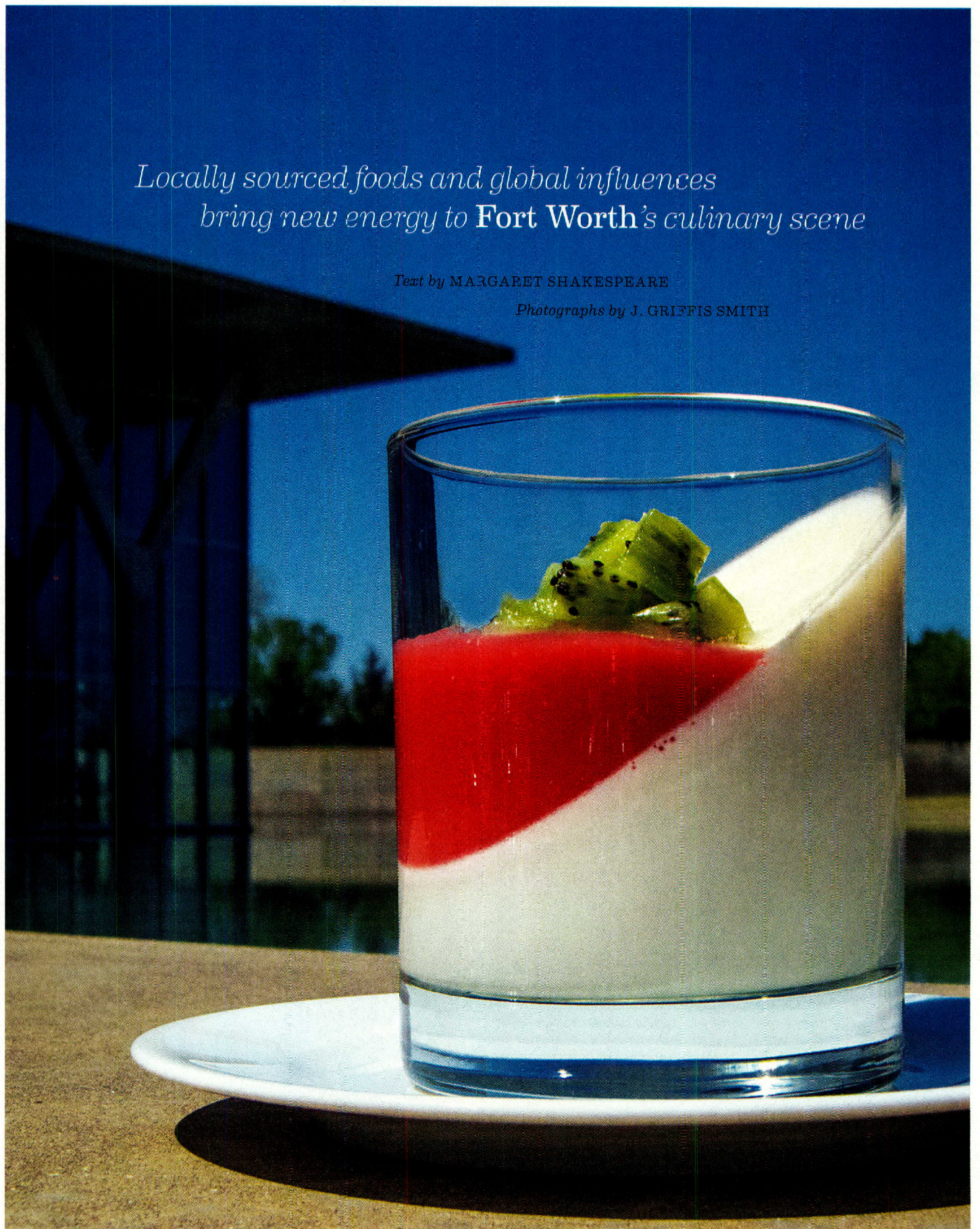
Lanny's Alta Cocina Mexicana Yellowtail Ceviche



*Locally sourced foods and global influences  
bring new energy to **Fort Worth's** culinary scene*

*Text by* MARGARET SHAKESPEARE

*Photographs by* J. GRIFFIS SMITH



*Café Modern Lychee Panna Cotta*



“When I’m traveling I seek out what the locals are feeding the locals,”

says Jon Bonnell, executive chef and owner of two of Fort Worth’s hottest restaurants, Bonnell’s Fine Texas Cuisine and the new Waters: Bonnell’s Coastal Cuisine. He and Dena Peterson, executive chef of Fort Worth’s Café Modern, the light-infused restaurant at The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, have just served up a special seven-course dinner designed to showcase the Fort Worth culinary scene to a group from all over the United States, including me, from New York City. It has been an evening full of appetizing surprises.

Not so long ago, I recall from previous visits, Fort Worth dining meant choosing steak or Tex-Mex or, maybe, Southern soul food—all full-flavored and in fill-’er-up-size portions. But Jon and Dena, two local chefs who have developed national profiles, crafted this meal without those traditional boundaries. Among the dishes we sampled were a meaty antelope carpaccio, a light yet full-flavored goat-cheese soufflé, a sumptuous venison with a cabernet reduction sauce, and divine whiskey-vanilla milkshakes. The chefs have taken a fresh approach—with ingredients, methods, thinking, menu planning, and wine pairings—and their food pops with flavors and textures at once familiar and satisfying but also adventuresome, intriguingly new, and inviting. I crave seconds, maybe thirds.



*Bonnell's Fine Texas Cuisine and Waters*  
Executive Chef and Owner Jon Bonnell



*Lanny's Alta Cocina Mexicana* Corn Soup





*Café Modern Moroccan Chicken Salad*

So I decide to seek—and taste—more of what they and others in Fort Worth are feeding the locals these days.

Dena assures me, when we talk later, that tradition hasn't exactly been supplanted. "We have deep roots in Southern food, the cattle industry, and also Tex-Mex," she says. And she still *looooooves* tamales. "But now we have influences from Vietnam, Japan, Italy, and all over, so food here has become eclectic." These days, her favorite tamales (from Hot Damn, Tamales!—a restaurant and mail-order business on trendy Magnolia Avenue) might be stuffed with goat cheese and spinach or wild mushrooms. "I consider my own cuisine global," Dena adds. "But I use as many local ingredients as possible." In her kitchen at Café Modern, she makes Middle Eastern-style preserved lemons to brighten her Moroccan Chicken Salad, the café's most popular dish. "But I find inspiration in my grandmother's Sunday-dinner menu—fresh vegetables, cornbread, meat—too." That explains why green tomato fritters with buttermilk dressing turn up on the summer menu. And why you might find classic chicken-fried steak getting a stylish remake as a Chicken-fried Benedict—a tender slice of lightly battered beef atop a buttermilk biscuit with black-pepper hollandaise sauce.

If you were to trail after Dena or Jon on a typical Saturday morning, you—and they—would likely end up at Cowtown Farmers Market, an 87-year-old venture frequented by many of the city's most popular chefs. It's also a regular stop for Molly McCook, executive chef and co-owner of Ellerbe Fine Foods. This is the not-so-secret source for ingredients that end up on many local plates, all of it grown or produced by the 400 or so vendors. "What the farmers' market brings to the table is immense," says

Molly, whose dirty rice, shrimp po' boys, and andouille sausage speak to her native Louisiana. Of course, she counts on bushels of seasonal produce, "but also cheese, grits, breads, fresh-roasted coffee, and lots more."

Often, chefs identify local provider brands on their menus, such as Latte Da Dairy goat cheeses from Flower Mound and cow's milk products from Eagle Mountain Farmhouse Cheese Company in Granbury (whose Saint David's raclette makes a memorable grilled cheese sandwich with a slather of fig preserves). "This is the fun part of what we do, going to the market ourselves and picking out what we want," adds Dena, sorting through some baby salad greens. "We have all forged relationships with these farmers."



PHOTO © ROBERT HART

*Café Modern Executive Chef Dena Peterson*

**F**arm-to-table dinners, popular nationwide, have come to Fort Worth along with the locavore movement, which challenges devotees to eat food produced within a small geographical radius. Noting the abundance of squash, tomatoes, melons, beans, cheese, and meat



Waters Texas Shrimp,  
Striped Bass, and Ahi Tuna Ceviche



Lanny's Alta Cocina Mexicana  
Chef-Owner Lanny Lancarte II

The local larder is an inspiring paintbox for food artists, full of mix-and-match, colorful textural choices.

coming from local suppliers these days, Jon Bonnell reckons, "Now a 100-mile dinner wouldn't be a stretch." In practice, though, the local larder relies on all of Texas: citrus from South Texas, seafood from the Gulf Coast, olive oil from groves near Victoria, and game meat (boar, several types of venison, and antelope) from sources such as Broken Arrow Ranch in Ingram. It is an inspiring paintbox for food artists, full of colorful, textural choices.

Perhaps no one has experimented with more culinary brushstrokes and broadened the local culinary landscape more than Lanny Lancarte II, chef-owner of Lanny's Alta Cocina Mexicana. Lanny has colored outside traditional Tex-Mex borders and borrowed boldly from cuisines across the ocean to fashion something you might think of as "Mex-Med." At least that's how I've come to think of what he does with *foie gras* (a compote, combined with Mexican *piloncillo* sugar), corn soup (with a dash of saffron and *huitlacoche agnolotti*, a pasta similar to ravioli), salmon (pan-fried in a crust of pumpkin seeds), and steak frites (served with spicy chipotle aioli). Lanny, born into the business as the great-grandson of Fort Worth restaurateur Joe T.





Café Modern Achiote Pork Tacos

Garcia, founder of the Tex-Mex classic Joe T. Garcia's, wasn't convinced he would stay in the business or how he might fit in. Not until the James Beard Foundation recognized Joe T.'s as one of its 1998 America's Classics—and Lanny, at the awards gala, rubbed shoulders with star chefs from New York, Chicago, California, and elsewhere—did he start to think about developing his own culinary talents.

Lanny soon immersed himself in culinary travels with the great Mexican food expert Diana Kennedy, absorbing her knowledge of regional cuisines in Oaxaca, Jalisco, and other Mexican states. Then, after studying at the Culinary Institute of America, he interned with Rick Bayless, owner of Frontera Grill and Topolobampo in Chicago, whom Lanny calls “the authority in the States on Mexican regional cooking.” Eventually, he returned to Fort Worth, where his family at Joe T.'s loaned him a kitchen and a dining room where he and a few chef friends could “bang ideas off each other.” Those ideas matured into the menu offered at Lanny's Alta Cocina Mexicana today.

**A**s I order *sweetbreads with truffles* and raisins from the tapas list at Alta Cocina Mexicana, I wonder what I should be drinking. Red or white wine? Bubbles? Wines from Texas? It turns out that the drink selections are diverse too. Lanny offers a tasting menu option that includes a different wine chosen for each course. His guidelines for spicy foods are young, fruit-forward wines; for super-spicy, off-dry rieslings. Ceviches, which are usually acidic thanks to lime juice, pair well with Spanish cava or other sparklers. Of course, it's a good bet to go with the cabernet or whatever wine the chef has stirred into the sauce—or you can simply ask the staff about their favorites.

Dena Peterson mentions Llano Estacado Winery in Lubbock as one of her favorite Texas producers. “I was a judge at a blind tasting, and it was amazing how high we rated those wines,” she says.

Jon Bonnell, who especially likes the wines produced by Messina Hof, Fall Creek Vineyards, and Becker Vineyards, agrees. “I'm proud of how the Texas wine scene has grown





*The Woodshed Smokehouse Chef Tim Love*

and improved. There are some good niche wines.” He points out tempranillo (great with some of the game meats he features) and viognier as two varietals that grow well in some parts of the state, where viticulturalists have figured out how to match Texas’ challenging soil and climate with specific grapes. Richard King, Ellerbe co-owner and general manager, tells me, “Texas is making some good viogniers. One I really love is from Brennan Vineyards in Comanche. It has a great balance of acidity and weight and it’s very aromatic, so it pairs well with a lot of our salads and some of our seafood dishes.”

**T**his still-young generation of chefs has already emerged into the national arena. North Texas native Tim Love first made a name for himself more than a decade ago when he opened the Lonesome Dove Western Bistro in Fort Worth’s Stockyards District, grilling kangaroo, rattlesnake, elk, rabbit, boar and, yes, beef. He called his style Western urban, keeping the atmosphere casual

and the fires stoked—literally and figuratively—which propelled him into guest appearances on some of television’s hottest cooking shows. Soon, he branched out into other restaurant ventures, including a burger joint called The Love Shack and the Woodshed Smokehouse, the latter nestled in a nook along the banks of the Trinity River.

As I hop around enjoying all the local food, I appreciate the spirit of revitalization these chefs bring to their neighborhoods. It spreads: A string of worthy restaurants along Magnolia Avenue enlivens the historic Fairmount neighborhood, where Molly and Richard repurposed a 1920s gas station to house Ellerbe. Yet another string of eateries grows along West 7th, linking the Cultural District to downtown, where Lanny Lancaster turned a sun-splashed house into his restaurant’s new home. I like discovering that Dena’s sous chef Alan Huang, who makes a memorable white *mole* sauce to accompany *ropa vieja* (a traditional Mexican shredded-beef dish that resembles a jumble of old clothes, hence the name), came to her from the kitchen of Dallas überchef Dean Fearing. And I feel especially





Lanny's Alta Cocina Mexicana Pepita Crust Salmon



For more Fort Worth restaurant suggestions, see [texashighways.com/webextra](http://texashighways.com/webextra).

reassured when—despite all the innovation they bring to their menus—Jon, Lanny, and Dena collectively whittle down their kitchen essentials to pecans, tomatoes, and chile peppers.

“Any chef in Fort Worth must be able to use a jalapeño five ways,” jokes Jon. “The guacamole recipe comes on the back of your birth certificate.”

But then he gets serious for a moment. “Fort Worth food is not cutting-edge stuff that will go away next year,” says Jon. “I feel like it is timeless. And I don’t want to put anything on my menu that won’t be there in three years.”

I’m counting on that. **TH**

Writer **MARGARET SHAKESPEARE** lives in New York and eats all over the world. She went to graduate school at North Texas. “I don’t normally eat the sets,” says Photo Editor **GRIFF SMITH**. “But when I saw Café Modern’s lychee panna cotta, I knew I had to try it. The combination of tangy sauce and creamy pudding was outstanding.”

## TH ESSENTIALS

### Dining Fort Worth

FOR MORE information about visiting Fort Worth, including hotels, events, attractions, and restaurants, contact the **Fort Worth Convention and Visitors Bureau**, 800/433-5747; [www.fortworth.com](http://www.fortworth.com). Sites in the story follow.

**Café Modern**, 3200 Darnell St. (within The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth). Call 817/738-9215; [www.themodern.org/cafe](http://www.themodern.org/cafe).

**Bonnell’s Fine Texas Cuisine**, 4259 Bryant Irvin Rd. Call 817/738-5489; [www.bonnellstexas.com](http://www.bonnellstexas.com).

**Waters: Bonnell’s Coastal Cuisine**, 2901 Crockett St. Call 817/984-1110; [www.watertexas.com](http://www.watertexas.com).

**Hot Damn, Tamales!**, 713 W. Magnolia Ave. Call 877/826-2539; [www.hotdarn tamales.com](http://www.hotdarn tamales.com).

**Ellerbe Fine Foods**, 1501 W. Magnolia Ave. Call 817/926-3663;

[www.ellerbefinefoods.com](http://www.ellerbefinefoods.com).

**Cowtown Farmers Market**, 3821 Southwest Blvd. See [www.cowtownmarket.com](http://www.cowtownmarket.com).

**Lanny’s Alta Cocina Mexicana**, 3405 West 7th St. Call 817/850-9996; [www.lannyskitchen.com](http://www.lannyskitchen.com).

**Joe T. Garcia’s**, 2201 North Commerce St. Call 817/626-4356; [www.joets.com](http://www.joets.com).

**The Love Shack**, 110 East Exchange Ave. (817/740-8812) and 3505 Bluebonnet Circle (817/927-0224); [www.loveburgershack.com](http://www.loveburgershack.com).

**Woodshed Smokehouse**, 3201 Riverfront Dr. Call 817/877-4545; [www.woodshedsnakehouse.com](http://www.woodshedsnakehouse.com).

**Lonesome Dove Western Bistro**, 2406 North Main St. Call 817/740-8810; [www.lcnesomedovebistro.com](http://www.lcnesomedovebistro.com).



# ON THE TRAIL



**W**e Texans love to celebrate our heritage in creative ways, and we go so far as to designate special routes that commemorate important events in our state's past. Among them, the Independence Trail follows our struggle to statehood, leading us from the Brazos River bottomlands to the Alamo in San Antonio, and the Forts Trail traces historic settlements on the edge of the Texas frontier. Our trails also celebrate the progress of early influential personalities like Comanche Chief Quanah Parker and statesman Sam Houston, who—along with other notable figures including lawmen, pioneer women, Buffalo Soldiers, and *vaqueros*—deserve recognition for their unique contributions to Texas and what it is, as well as what it represents, today.





NO POSTAGE  
NECESSARY  
IF MAILED  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES

**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**

FIRST-CLASS MAIL

PERMIT NO. 52

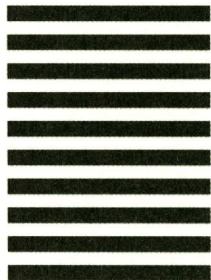
BIG SANDY TX

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

**Texas Highways**

PO BOX 8559

BIG SANDY TX 75755-9865





**SAVINGS CERTIFICATE**

**58% off**

*Only*  
**\$19.95!**

12 ISSUES ~~\$47.40~~

**Texas Highways**  
THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE OF TEXAS

*Please print*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

*Please send me new features and offers from Texas Highways via email.*

**SEND NO MONEY NOW. WE'LL BILL YOU.**

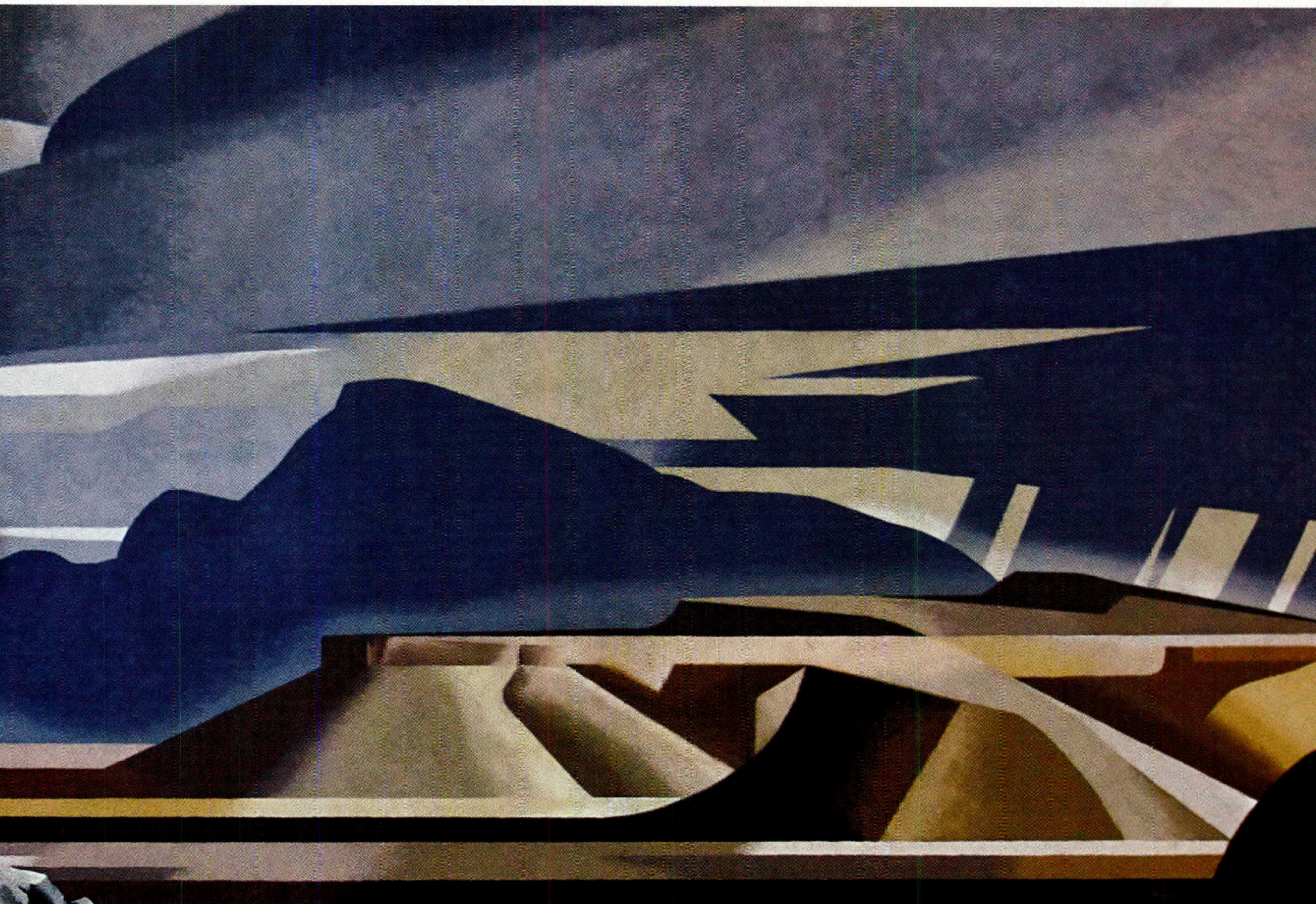
**[www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com)**

Offer good in the U.S. only. Advertised savings are based on the newsstand cover price of \$3.95. International subscriptions are \$29.95.

6308B11



# OF TOM LEA



Southwest, El Paso Museum of Art

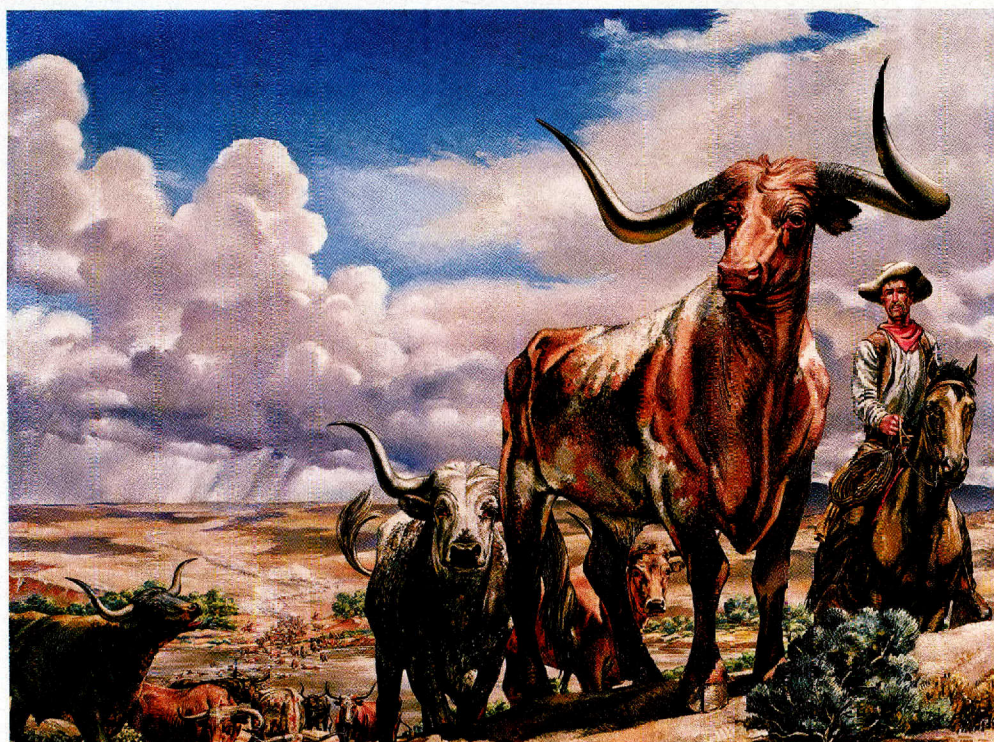
Texan Tom Lea—painted painter, muralist, author, and war correspondent—even gets his own month, at least as far as his hometown of El Paso is concerned. And Lea's decades of creativity and accomplishment created a trail as well. Even though the Tom Lea Trail is not officially designated, following it requires a rambling traverse of the entire state. And, unlike a military leader or frontier defender, Tom Lea commanded his bit of history with brush and pen rather than with bayonet or musket. In doing so, Lea helped to define the way the world would view the mythology of Texas for much of the 20th Century.

To celebrate and understand the creative energy of Tom Lea, we must start where Lea himself began and where, perhaps, he made his greatest contributions—in El Paso del Norte, known today as El Paso.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: *Pass of the North*, Historic El Paso Federal Courthouse; *The Lead Steer*, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin; *That 2,000-Yard Stare*, original in the U.S. Army Center of Military History, Fort Belvoir, VA.



TOP: © ERIC SCHLEGEL, COURTESY HISTORIC EL PASO FEDERAL COURTHOUSE; LOWER LEFT: COURTESY U.S. ARMY CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY, FORT BELVOIR, VA; LOWER RIGHT: COURTESY BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN, GIFT OF C.R. SMITH



**L**

**ea was born in 1907, just a few** years before the start of the Mexican Revolution. As the son of a prominent defense attorney who served as El Paso's mayor from 1915-17, Lea enjoyed the advantages of a civil, affluent household despite the dangers posed by the Mexican Revolution's proximity. After expressing a talent for the

arts through childhood, Lea left El Paso for the Art Institute of Chicago where, at 18, he began two years of formal training, followed by a five-year apprenticeship with Chicago muralist John Norton, including a period in Italy to study Renaissance frescoes.

Lea left El Paso an enthusiastic youth and returned, more than a decade later, an accomplished, professional artist with a number of major works under his belt. But it would be his commission for the city's federal courthouse that would solidify his reputation as a Texas muralist and draftsman, idealizing the state's long and varied history with a stylized and cinematic flair.

The mural's location, a wall 12 feet high and 53 feet long intersected by a broad Classical doorway, provided an ideal canvas for his first true masterwork—*Pass of the North*.

"I filled the space on each side of the door with figures of old giants, some of them nine feet tall, standing before a background of Mount Franklin and the Rio Grande," Lea wrote, describing the work in his autobiography *A Picture Gallery*. It took Lea the first half of 1938 to finish the painting, populating the desert-landscape background with larger-than-life figures including a U.S. soldier, a Franciscan priest, a Mexican vaquero, horses, a Spanish explorer, pioneer settlers, Apaches, a Texas rancher, a prospector, and the town sheriff. Lea claimed the mural to be the one he learned the most from, worked the hardest at, and took the most pleasure in completing.

*Pass of the North* represented more than Lea's passion for dramatizing Texas history. In many ways it also embodied a departure for Texas art in a fast-changing world of early-20th-Century fine art. While the art centers of New York and Paris had already begun to move toward abstraction, many artists in American rural provinces held fast to realism. In this environment, Lea's artwork shone, allowing him to thrive in an era when mural painting often represented the true measure of an artist.

But to see the evolution of Tom Lea's independent style you must travel north, just as "Pass" suggests, and back in time to Dallas and the extravagant Hall of State. The Hall of State, located in Fair Park and built to house the exhibits of the 1936 Texas Centennial Exposition, was designed by a team of 11 architects, led by Houston's Donald Barthelme, and constructed to create an elaborate interpretation of the Art Deco style of the period. Lea was among several artists commissioned to decorate the interior, including a portico and "great hall" flanked by colonnaded

galleries, a task he was both honored and delighted to tackle. Here, on the north wall of the West Texas Room, you'll find Lea's idealized cowboy, lanky and bow-legged with lariat in hand, posed among the desert mountains and corrals of the classic Trans-Pecos ranchlands. The mural, seven feet high and 13 feet long, is one part realism and two parts drama, dominated by a modern style that prevails in other Texas regionalists of the period. It is also, without a doubt, all Tom Lea.

Wherever Texas leads, its chroniclers will follow. Thus the state's enthusiasm for its frontier past and its iconic cowboy continued to dominate Lea's subject matter. Traveling south you'll find examples in Austin, including a full-color oil called *The Lead Steer* at the Blanton Museum of Art, and the more subdued *A Little Shade* in Waco's Texas Ranger Hall of Fame. Both works provide testimony to Lea's enthrallment with the subject matter.

Perhaps the work that best illustrates Lea's grasp of magnitude and drama in the icon of the Texas West can be seen in the Odessa Post Office. Here, Lea's stormy nighttime mural of Longhorns

in mid-stampede, spooked by a lightning strike, thunder across 16-plus feet of post office wall. Amid the terrorized cattle, a lone cowboy and his up-ended horse tumble toward the ground, overtaken by the battalion of Longhorn hooves and horns. Painted in 1940 as part of the WPA program, *Stampede* remains one of Lea's most arresting works of the period.

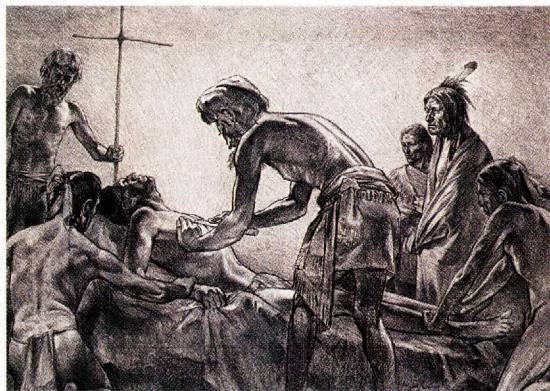
Then, beginning in 1941, Lea would witness firsthand a theater of far greater violence. "In the fall of 1941," Lea wrote, "I went to sea aboard a U.S. Navy destroyer on duty in the submarine-haunted North Atlantic, as an Accredited War Artist-Correspondent of *Life Magazine*. ... I became, for deeply felt reasons, an eye-witness reporter, in drawings and paintings, of men and their machines waging a war

worldwide. ... I want to make it clear that I did not report hearsay; I did not imagine, or fake, or improvise; I did not cuddle up with personal emotion, moral notion, or political opinion about War with a capital-W. I reported in pictures what I saw with my own two eyes, wide open. ... In those years, 1941-1945, I saw, and I drew, and I painted, many kinds of things, many men, in many situations, in many places. To this day, you see a man here who is proud—exceedingly proud—that he went out and saw it, and came back home bringing a legible, trustworthy record of what he saw. And to this day, you see a man here who is grateful—humbly grateful—that he got home with his hide intact."

Lea's remarkable collection of work from this period, 82 pieces in all, portrays his illustrative skills at their best. Dense with narrative and unsparing in its depiction of carnage, the collection expresses an understanding of tragedy and pathos that required an unflinching eye. Although the collection is archived at the U.S. Army Center of Military History at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, it tours periodically, including in an exhibition planned for the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg in late 2015.

**PASS OF THE NORTH REPRESENTED MORE THAN LEA'S PASSION FOR DRAMATIZING TEXAS HISTORY. IN MANY WAYS IT ALSO EMBODIED A DEPARTURE FOR TEXAS ART IN A FAST-CHANGING WORLD OF EARLY-20TH-CENTURY FINE ART.**





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:  
Stampede, Odessa Post Office; *The First Recorded Surgical Operation in North America, Cabeza de Vaca*, UT Galveston Moody Medical Library; Mural section in the Hall of State at Fair Park, Dallas.

TOP: COURTESY BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN, GIFT OF C.R. SMITH; BOTTOM LEFT: COURTESY DALLAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY; BOTTOM RIGHT: COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, GALVESTON, MOODY MEDICAL LIBRARY

Undoubtedly, the war left its mark on Lea's psyche. But rather than retreat, Lea began a period of prolific creativity upon his return home at war's end. He began to write as well as paint, publishing a best-selling novel titled *The Brave Bulls* in 1948. Several years after publication, the rights were sold to the film industry and in 1951 the movie, starring Mel Ferrer and Anthony Quinn, was released. It was followed by *The Wonderful Country*, based on Lea's western of the same name, starring Robert Mitchum.

Lea's penchant for dramatization was aided by the mastery of his draftsmanship, a skill he used repeatedly to re-create not only what he saw but what he could imagine. To get a real sense of Lea's abilities, you'll want to travel southeast to the Texas coast and Galveston. Here, at the UT Galveston Moody Medical Library, Lea's *The First Recorded Surgical Operation in North America, Cabeza de Vaca*, portrays the Spanish explorer removing a flint arrowhead from the wounded chest of a Native American. The work has all the tension of the grand narrative, made all the more real by Lea's skillful hand and brought to life by his sense of scale and style.

But perhaps the greatest character in Lea's work and the one he painted best was the expansive landscape of his home. "We have

the privilege of living in this life in this marvelous place," Lea wrote. "And writing and painting to me don't have anything to do with who I am and what I do, but with what is so wonderful about what's out there." To witness just what Lea meant you'll want to return, full circle, back to his homeland in El Paso. Here, across a wall in the El Paso Public Library, Lea painted *Southwest*, a mural 20 feet across that depicts the landscape he loved most. "It took its shape simply as a luminous window looking out upon its birthland," Lea wrote of creating the work. "It spoke of space, sun, cloud, rain, wind, mountain, mesa, rock, sand, soil, and of living growth nurtured by them. ... It was the earth, inhabited only by the viewer's mind."

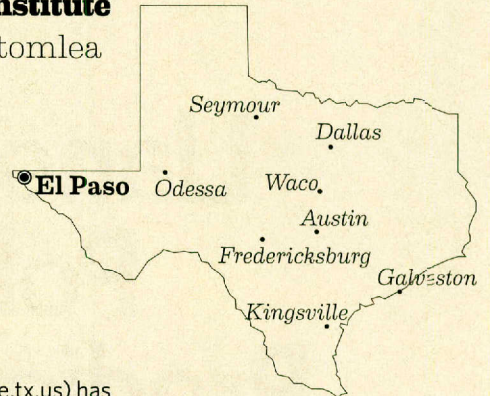
Completed in 1956, *Southwest* wouldn't be Lea's last work of art. He lived and painted for another 45 years. But it would be perhaps the one that best embraced his grasp on the transformative power of art. "Having love in your life," Lea wrote of his passion for art and the homeland before him, "having energy enough to pursue a thing with all your might and all your spirit. You're not telling anyone about how good you are, but about how good they are because look at what they can see and do and feel in this marvelous life." **TM**

"We Texans are lucky," says writer E. DAN KLEPPER, "to be able to call Tom Lea one of our own."



WHERE  
TO SEE  
**THE ART OF  
TOM LEA**

**For information on events staged during Tom Lea Month** (celebrated every October throughout the El Paso region), start with the **Tom Lea Institute** website, [www.tomleainstitute.org](http://www.tomleainstitute.org).



**El Paso**

The **El Paso Museum of Art** (915/532-1707; [www.elpasoartmuseum.org](http://www.elpasoartmuseum.org)) is a great place to start enjoying Lea's contribution to the state's arts and letters. In addition, the **University of Texas El Paso**, the **Historic Federal Courthouse**, and the **El Paso Library** all feature Lea's works; details at [www.tomleainstitute.org](http://www.tomleainstitute.org).

**Odessa**

Lea's *Stampede* for the **Odessa Post Office** (432/332-6436) is a well-preserved work available for viewing.

**Dallas**

The **Hall of State at Fair Park** (214/421-4500; [www.hallofstate.com](http://www.hallofstate.com)), a work of art in its own right, houses works by Lea

and other early Texas artists. Lea's dramatic *History of Beef Cattle* paintings are at the **Dallas Museum of Art** (currently not on view; call 214/922-1200; [www.dallasmuseumofart.org](http://www.dallasmuseumofart.org)).

**Austin**

The **Blanton Museum of Art** (512/471-7324; [www.blantonmuseum.org](http://www.blantonmuseum.org)) and the **Harry Ransom Center** (512/471-8944; [www.hrc.utexas.edu](http://www.hrc.utexas.edu)), both on The University of Texas campus, house works by Lea. Call for specifics; the HRC also has Lea's archives. Also visit the **State Capitol** ([www.tspb.state.tx.us](http://www.tspb.state.tx.us)), where Lea's *Ranger Escort West of the Pecos* commissioned for John Connally hangs in the Governor's Business Office. The **Texas State Cemetery** (512/463-0605;

[www.cemetery.state.tx.us](http://www.cemetery.state.tx.us)) has Lea's cenotaph on Republic Hill.

**Waco**

Several of Lea's works hang in the **Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum** (254/750-8631; [www.texasranger.org](http://www.texasranger.org)).

**Baylor University's** Texas Collection houses a portrait of R.E.B. Baylor ([www.baylor.edu](http://www.baylor.edu)).

**Fredericksburg**

A reproduction of Lea's World War II illustration called *That 2,000-Yard Stare* helps tell the story of the Battle at Peleliu at the **National Museum of the Pacific War** (830/997-8600; [www.pacificwarmuseum.org](http://www.pacificwarmuseum.org)).

**Galveston**

Visit the **Moody Medical Library** (409/772-2397; [www.som.utmb.edu/moody](http://www.som.utmb.edu/moody)) at the University of Texas, Galveston, to view Lea's depiction of Cabeza de Vaca surgically removing an arrowhead lodge in a patient's chest.

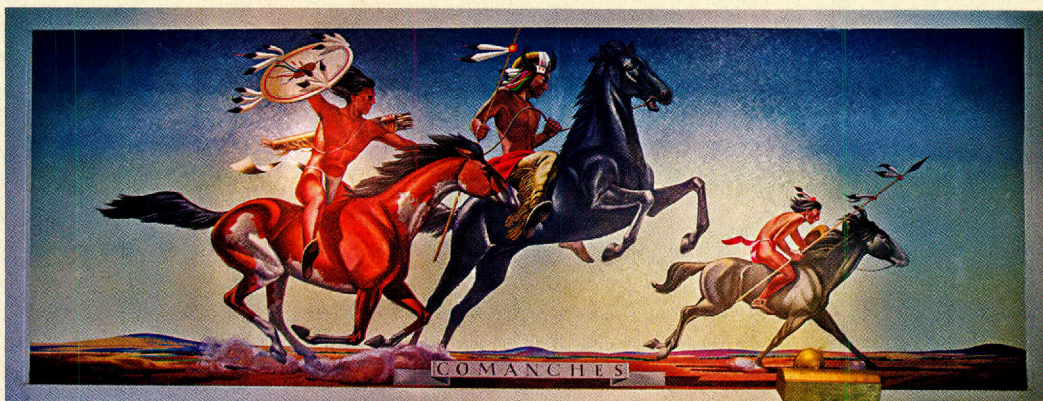
[www.som.utmb.edu/moody](http://www.som.utmb.edu/moody)) at the University of Texas, Galveston, to view Lea's depiction of Cabeza de Vaca surgically removing an arrowhead lodge in a patient's chest.

**Kingsville**

Tom Lea created illustrations for his definitive biography of the famous King Ranch (titled *The King Ranch*). Learn all about the King Ranch at the **King Ranch Museum** in Kingsville (361/595-1881; [www.king-ranch.com](http://www.king-ranch.com)) and see the ranch on guided tours.

**Seymour**

Lea's *Comanches* mural is in the **Seymour Post Office** (940/889-3550).



*Comanches*, Seymour Post Office

KEVIN STILLMAN, COURTESY SEYMOUR POST OFFICE



## Llano's Polo Prodigy

*Cecil Smith's unlikely rise in 'The Sport of Kings'*

Text by **MICHAEL MARKS**

**O**NE OF TEXAS' GREATEST SPORTSMEN never played a down at Cowboys Stadium. He never took the field with the Rangers or Astros. He didn't win a championship with the Stars or Spurs, or electrify crowds in college sports or the Olympics.

You've never watched him on television, followed him on Twitter, and probably haven't read a book about him.

But if you're searching for arguably the most extraordinary athlete to ever come from Texas, a man whose record may never be broken, then you'll find Cecil Smith of Llano County—one of the finest polo players the game has ever known.

The late Smith's record-breaking career, which coincided with a golden era of United States polo in the 1930s, is chronicled at the Llano County Historical Museum. Located in the historical district near the bank of the Llano River, the museum features a display of news clippings, polo uniforms, mallets, and photographs from Smith's days as the world's greatest polo star.

Cecil Smith was renowned for his pony-training prowess.

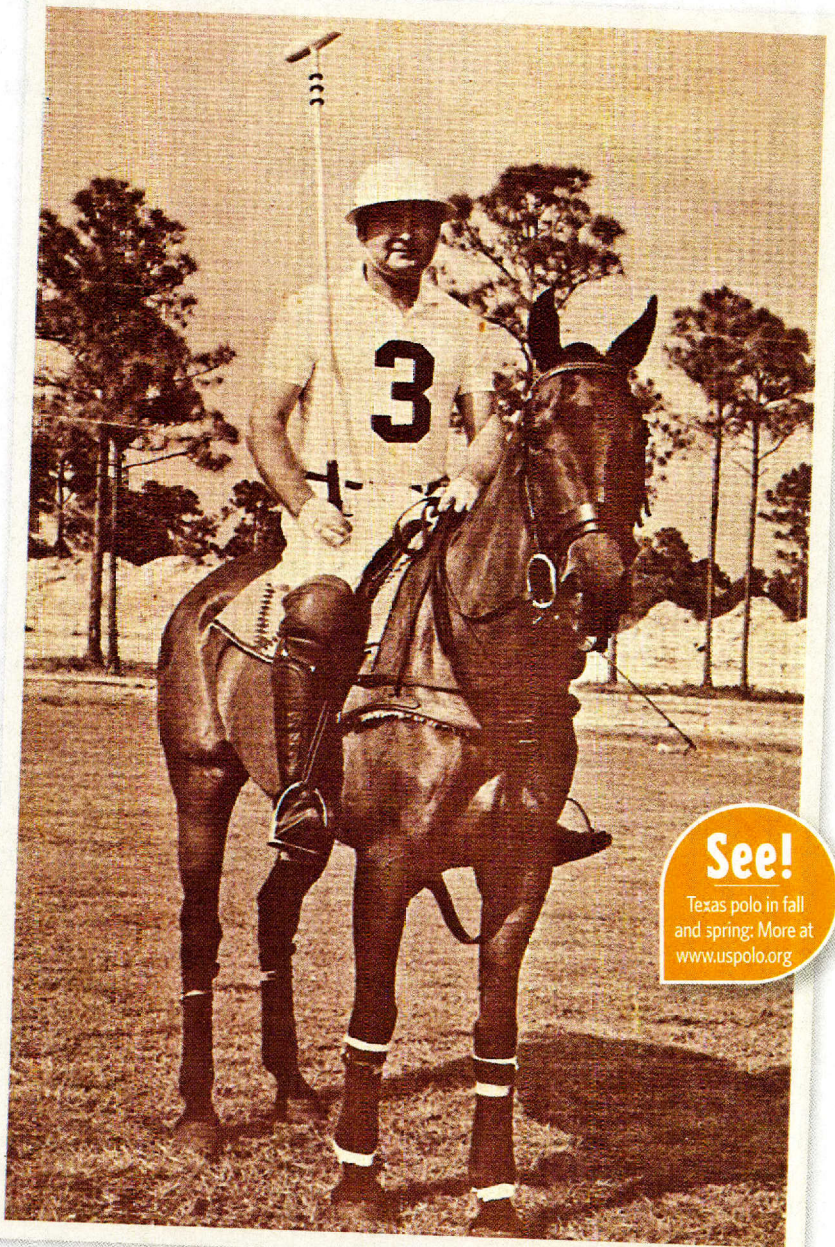
Adept ponies are critical to a polo player's success.

Smith was born in February 1904 on the C.T. Moss Ranch, where his father was the foreman. Like many Hill Country boys in the early 20th Century, Smith spent his childhood

on horseback. By age four, he had already learned to ride, and shortly thereafter he started working with the men on the ranch, herding in the shadow of Enchanted Rock.

Smith was a natural around the ranch, and by his teenage years he had become adept at breaking and training horses. Word spread of his abilities as a trainer, and in 1924 a horse dealer from Austin named George Miller brought two horses to the Moss Ranch for Smith to train.

According to a 1977 profile of Smith in *Sports Illustrated*, Miller wanted the two horses to be trained as polo ponies (as all polo horses are called), and brought along the mallets and balls used for the game. Smith, who had scarcely heard



**See!**

Texas polo in fall and spring; More at [www.uspolo.org](http://www.uspolo.org)



of polo, much less played a match, took to walloping the balls into the hills that surrounded the ranch, then giving chase on horseback—like a fox hunting rabbits.

Smith was hooked. He continued to train horses, eventually relocating to Austin to work on Miller's ranch, but he had found his passion in polo. Though his talent with a mallet was undeniable, it was his eye for horses that fostered his transcendent play. "He just knew how to train them to do what they needed to do in the game," said Sidney Smith, one of Cecil's two sons, who resides in Boerne.

Polo players will tell you that the horse accounts for about 75 percent of a player's success in a game. Without a well-trained mount, even the most skilled polo player will languish in the face of top competition. In this way, Smith thrived.

In 1930, after six years of "stick-and-balling" against ranch hands and military teams in Central Texas (interspersed with a few tournaments on the East Coast against polo's well-funded establishment), Smith earned a seven-goal handicap from the United States Polo Association. A player's handicap

indicates his or her overall ability on the field, accounting for both the rider's skill and the horse's quality. Handicaps range from negative two to 10; a seven meant that Smith was among the best players in the country.

Even though Smith lacked the money to put together the elite "strings" of horses used by wealthier players (they would often bring as many as 30 horses to a tournament, whereas Smith brought only a single pony on his first trip to Long Island), he ascended rapidly to the highest levels of the sport.

After a few victories on the East Coast, Smith and fellow Texan Rube Williams, who had worked together on Miller's ranch, were chosen as two members of the West team in the legendary 1933 East-West match, which featured teams made up of the best players from both sides of the country.

The match, played in Lake Forest, Illinois, as a part of the 1933 Chicago World's Fair, pitted Smith against the game's reigning master, Tommy Hitchcock. Hitchcock's destiny as a polo player was forged before he was born.

His father, a 10-goal player, founded Long Island's Meadowbrook Polo Club and raised Tommy on a steady diet of ponies and mallets. By 1933, Hitchcock was renowned as one of the world's best. His presence nudged the bookies to give heavy odds in favor of the East team.

But after three games, during which Smith suffered a concussion and Williams broke a leg, the underdog West team rode off with the victory, two games to one. "A lot of people didn't think that the western players could play as well as the eastern players," Sidney said, "but [the West] won that big series and that changed a lot of things."

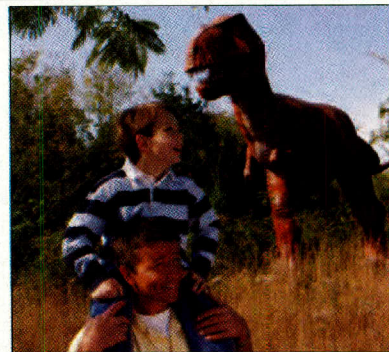
The East-West match was

## Cecil Smith and Texas Polo

**C**ECIL SMITH'S REMARKABLE POLO career is featured in an exhibit at the **Llano County Historical Museum**, not far from where Smith grew up on a Hill Country ranch. Tucked in a corner of the museum, the exhibit showcases artifacts from Smith's playing days, and brings to life some of his greatest moments on the polo field with scrapbooks containing newspaper clippings from that era. For more information, call 325/247-3026; [www.llanomuseum.org](http://www.llanomuseum.org).

If you're interested in a more immediate connection to polo, there are polo clubs and teams around Texas, particularly around larger cities and some universities. The United States Polo Association lists Texas polo organizations on its website, [www.uspolo.org](http://www.uspolo.org). The association also keeps a schedule of upcoming matches.

The polo season picks up in the spring and fall. Matches last about two hours and take place on fields measuring 160-by-300 yards. If that's not enough for you, most clubs offer lessons for riders of all ages and skill levels. —Michael Marks



### Dinosaur Capital of Texas

- Barnard's Mill Art Museum
- Brazos & Paluxy Rivers
- Creation Evidence Museum
- Dinosaur Valley State Park
- Dinosaur World
- Fossil Rim Wildlife Center
- Historic Courthouse Square
- Land of the Dinosaurs
- Oakdale & Big Rocks Parks
- The Promise

### Glen Rose, Texas

Request Visitors' Packet & Coupons

1-888-346-6282

[www.GlenRoseTexas.net](http://www.GlenRoseTexas.net)



### DRIVE DOWN MEMORY LANE.

Travel one hour north of Dallas and visit Denison's historic downtown Texas Arts & Cultural District. Come explore the art galleries, specialty boutiques, antique shops, eateries, musical venues, winery, and much more. You'll find more information on our website.



903.465.1551 | [www.denisontexas.us](http://www.denisontexas.us)



# Speaking of Texas

a watershed moment for Smith, who proved that, even without the best ponies (since he often had to sell his best horses to finance his travels and livelihood), there were few who could play the game as well as he did. The famous cowboy entertainer Roy Rogers, a fellow polo player and friend of Smith's, said after the East-West match that "the hillbillies beat the dudes and took the polo championship right out of the drawing room and into the bunkhouse."

After the high-profile match, the U.S. Polo Association gave Smith a 10-goal rating for the first time. Though he briefly lost the top rating, he regained it in 1938, remaining a 10-goal player for 25 consecutive years—a record that still stands.

The record "certainly sets him apart from the rest," said George DuPont, executive director of the Polo Hall of Fame in Lake Worth, Florida. "Some people peak and get to that level for six or seven years,

but to be there for so long is quite a feat. It's going to be tough to top it."

Along the way, Smith's teams won the U.S. Open Championship seven times, the Pacific Open seven times, and the Monty Waterbury Cup, held in Westbury, Long Island, four times, according to Smith's obituary in *The New York Times*.

Though he played into the 1980s, Smith eventually had to retire from the sport after hip surgery. He spent time watching his two sons, Charles (who is also a polo Hall of Famer) and Sidney, and training horses on his ranch in Boerne.

The Polo Hall of Fame inducted Smith into its inaugural class in 1990, nine years before he passed away at the age of 94. His biography in the Hall of Fame reads, in part, "Over the years, he played on more fields with more players than any one else in polo."

And he started on a ranch in the Texas Hill Country. **TH**

# Texas Highways

THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE OF TEXAS

## Reader Service Guide to Advertisers

For information from our advertisers, use the forms in this issue, or go to [www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com).

(Reader service numbers are in bold.)

1. City of Alpine, pg. 3
2. Amarillo Convention & Visitors Council, pg. 21
3. Andrews Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 59
4. Big Bend Ranch Rodeo, pg. 62
5. Boerne Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 59
6. Brady/McCulloch County Development Office, pg. 62
7. Brenham/Washington County Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 17
8. Brownsville Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 23
9. Bryan-College Station Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 15
10. Denison Chamber of Commerce, pg. 55
11. Fort Davis Chamber of Commerce, pg. 3
12. Fort Stockton Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 3
13. Fredericksburg Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 12
14. Glen Rose Convention & Visitor's Bureau, pg. 55
15. Graham Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 21
16. City of Granbury Department of Tourism, pg. 18
17. Hutchinson County Museum, pg. 61
18. Kerrville Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 11 and pg. 15
19. Lake Whitney, pg. 18
20. Lufkin Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 17
21. City of Marfa, pg. 3
22. Midland Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 3
23. Odessa Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 3
24. Pecos Tourism, pg. 3
25. Sonora Chamber of Commerce, pg. 61
26. Uvalde Convention & Visitors Bureau, pg. 23

## Get 12 full months!

- Small towns to big cities
- Day trips and extended treks
  - Diners and drives
  - And much more

## Just \$19.95

for a 1-year U.S. subscription  
International subscriptions  
are just \$29.95

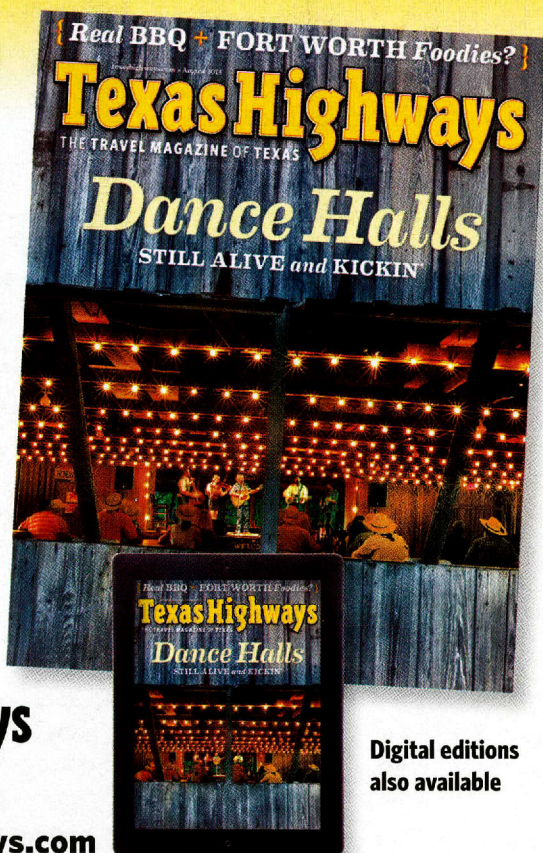
## 1-800-839-4997

(903-636-1123 from outside the U.S.)  
and mention source code  
**A3HTHM1**

# Texas Highways



[www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com)



Digital editions  
also available



# FREE Information

## From Our Advertisers

### ONLINE:

Go to [www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com)  
and select **Advertising Information**  
from the **red navigation bar**  
at the bottom of the page.

### BY MAIL:

Locate the **numbers** printed to  
the **left of each advertiser on the**  
**Reader Service Guide to Advertisers.**  
Circle the corresponding numbers on  
the **postage-paid card** at right and  
mail today.

### BY FAX:

Submit your card to our toll-free  
fax number: **1-888-847-6035.**

# Texas Highways

THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE OF TEXAS

[www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com)

Please circle the numbers below that match the bold numbers on the Reader Service Guide to Advertisers.

1	7	13	19	25	31	37	43	49	55	61
2	8	14	20	26	32	38	44	50	56	62
3	9	15	21	27	33	39	45	51	57	63
4	10	16	22	28	34	40	46	52	58	64
5	11	17	23	29	35	41	47	53	59	65
6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66

Please print

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Card expires 2/1/14

**FREE  
ADVERTISING  
INFORMATION**

130801

# Texas Highways

THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE OF TEXAS

[www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com)

Please circle the numbers below that match the bold numbers on the Reader Service Guide to Advertisers.

1	7	13	19	25	31	37	43	49	55	61
2	8	14	20	26	32	38	44	50	56	62
3	9	15	21	27	33	39	45	51	57	63
4	10	16	22	28	34	40	46	52	58	64
5	11	17	23	29	35	41	47	53	59	65
6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66

Please print

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Card expires 2/1/14

**FREE  
ADVERTISING  
INFORMATION**

130801

# Texas Highways GIFT SHOP

We offer a fabulous array of  
Lone Star-themed products!

**SEE OUR AD  
IN THIS ISSUE**

***It's easy to order***  
**from the *Texas Highways* Gift Shop!**

**ONLINE:** [www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com)

View the entire *Texas Highways* product collection online.

**BY PHONE:** **1-800-839-4997** (903-636-1123 from outside the U.S.)

Mon-Fri 7 a.m.-9 p.m. Central • Sat 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Central • Sun 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Central

**BY MAIL:** **Fill out the order form** on the reverse side. Include your payment.

Enclose in an envelope and mail to: Texas Highways

PO Box 8558

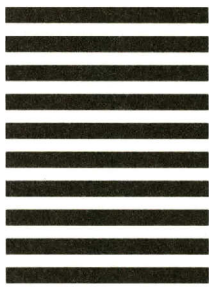
Big Sandy, TX 75755-8558

AUG13TH





NO POSTAGE  
NECESSARY  
IF MAILED  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES



**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO 418 NAPLES FL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

**Texas Highways**  
PO BOX 413050  
NAPLES FL 34101-6832



NO POSTAGE  
NECESSARY  
IF MAILED  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES



**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO 418 NAPLES FL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

**Texas Highways**  
PO BOX 413050  
NAPLES FL 34101-6832



# Free advertiser information

## PRODUCT ORDERS!

**COMPLETE THIS BOX FOR YOUR ORDER**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone Number ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
(In case we have questions regarding your order)

Check or money order enclosed (payable to Texas Highways)

Charge my:  Visa  MasterCard  
 Discover  American Express

Card number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Item #	Size	Description	Qty.	Price	\$ Total
<b>Product Total</b>					
<b>Shipping &amp; Handling</b> (See chart on right)					
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>					
<b>Add 8.25% Sales Tax for deliveries to Texas (products + S&amp;H).</b>					
<b>TOTAL</b>					

Product order must include payment.

By state law, shipping and handling charges are taxable.

Mail with payment to:  
Texas Highways  
PO Box 8558  
Big Sandy, TX  
75755-8558

AUG13TH

**U.S. SHIPPING & HANDLING**

(Charges do not apply to subscriptions.)

\$14.99 and under .....	\$4.95
\$15.00 to \$49.99 .....	\$8.95
\$50.00 to \$74.99 .....	\$11.95
\$75.00 to \$99.99 .....	\$13.95
\$100.00 to \$149.99 .....	\$16.95
\$150.00 to \$199.99 .....	\$18.95
\$200.00 + .....	\$21.95

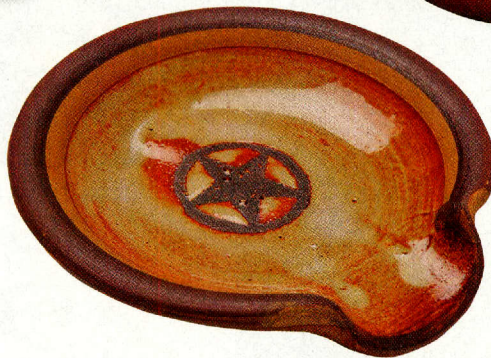
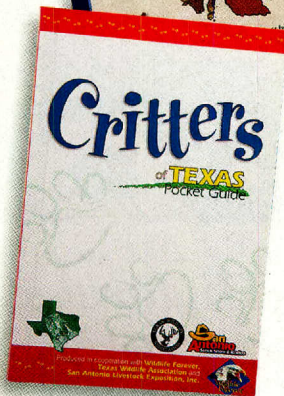
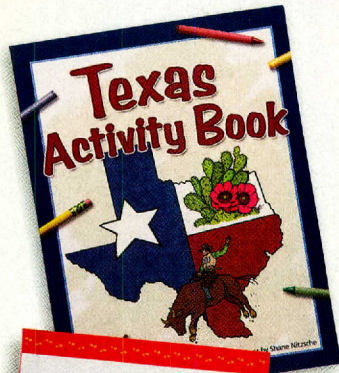
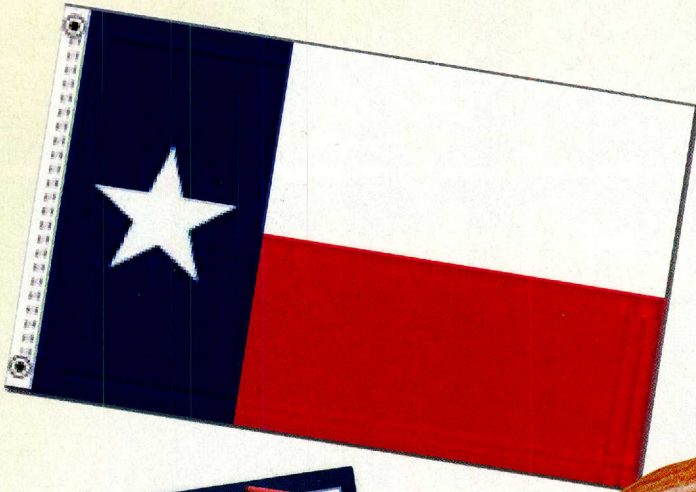
Rates are per each address. Allow up to 2 weeks for REGULAR U.S. delivery. • For orders delivered outside the U.S., please add \$12 to the U.S. S&H prices. International shipping times vary.

EXPRESS: For delivery within 3 days of receipt, add \$7.50. Express handling is not available outside the continental U.S.

**SALES TAX** is required by state law for merchandise, shipping, and handling. For orders shipped to Texas addresses, please add 8.25% sales tax to your subtotal.



# New in the Gift Shop



## Texas Activity Book

By Paula Ellis and Shane Nitzsche

How do you make the perfect family getaway even better? Supply your kids with a state-themed activity book for hours of fun! From mazes and word finds to maps and pictures to color—not to mention fascinating information about the region—the *Texas Activity Book* is ideal for car rides and quiet time.

Item 36806 ..... \$5.95

## Critters of Texas Pocket Guide

Designed for kids, but great for anyone wanting concise information on Texas' favorite critters. From the armadillo to wild turkey, the large color photos and interesting "Did You Know" facts will help you identify and learn about Texas wildlife. 4 x 6 inches, color, 128 pages, paperback.

Item 36533 ..... \$5.95

## Texas Star Kitchen Trio

Add a little Texas style to your kitchen with stoneware pottery in a classic Texas Ranger Star design. Hand made by Luling Icehouse Pottery in Texas, each item is durable, oven, microwave and dishwasher safe.

### Independence Mug

The super large mug holds a full 24 ounces of your hot or cold beverage.

Item 37343 ..... \$28.95

### Ladle/Spoon Rest

The 6-inch diameter easily holds ladles and large stirring spoons.

Item 37831 ..... \$17.95

### Salad Oil Bottle

6-1/2 inches tall from base to stem.

Item 37830 ..... \$28.95

## Texas Flag

Ready for your front porch flag pole—our 3 x 5-foot, sewn nylon Texas state flag comes with sturdy brass grommets. Made in the U.S.A.

Item 37832 ..... \$35.95

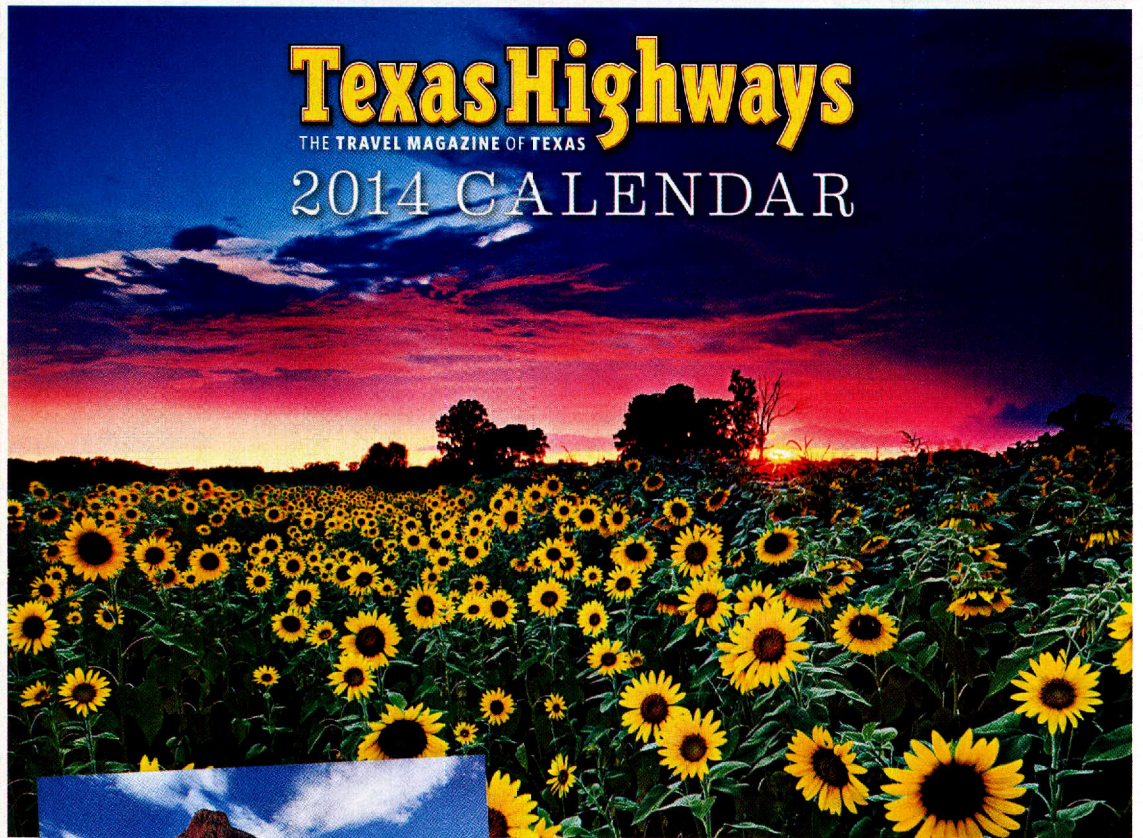
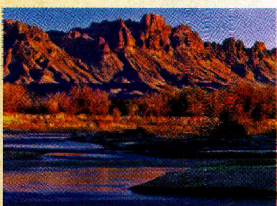
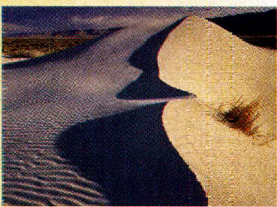
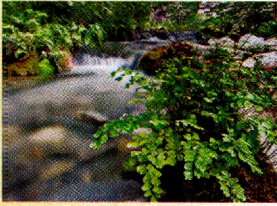
View our entire collection at  
[www.texashighways.com](http://www.texashighways.com)

## ORDER BY PHONE: 800-839-4997

(903-636-1123 from outside the U.S.A.)

**BY MAIL:** Use the **ORDER FORM** inside this issue. Send completed form, along with payment to: *Texas Highways*, PO Box 8558, Big Sandy, TX 75755-8558





# Texas Highways

THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE OF TEXAS

## 2014 CALENDAR



# Texas Highways'

# 2014

## WALL CALENDAR

*Texas Highways* showcases the beauty of the Lone Star State, as seen through the lenses of gifted photographers. From Pampa to Laguna Madre, you will enjoy exploring Texas scenery every month.

13½" × 21½" when open.

Item **33154a** . . . . . **\$13.95**

**Quantity discounts** available when shipping to the same address.

Item **33154b**: 2 - 4 calendars . . . . . **\$12.95** each

Item **33154c**: 5 - 9 calendars . . . . . **\$11.95** each

Item **33154d**: 10-49 calendars . . . . . **\$10.95** each

Item **33154e**: 50 or more calendars . . . . . **\$9.95** each

**800-839-4997**

(903-636-1123 from outside the U.S.A.)

**www.texashighways.com**



EVENTS » HAPPENINGS

## Celebrating West

**WESTFEST IS ONE OF TEXAS' BIGGEST CELEBRATIONS** of Czech heritage, and this year's event takes on new significance in the aftermath of the April fertilizer facility explosion.

West is still recovering from the deadly blast, but organizers say the tragedy isn't deterring the festival, which takes place Labor Day weekend (Aug. 30-Sept. 1).

"There were a lot of concerns that we wouldn't have the festival, but that's not true," says Brian Muska, a Westfest board member. "It will go on and will be stronger and bigger than ever."

The 20-acre festival grounds will buzz with everything from polka band performances to a Miss Westfest contest, arts-and-crafts vendors, and a kolache-baking contest.

Westfest will remember the first responders who died in the blast as honorary marshals for the Saturday-morning downtown parade, Muska said. [www.westfest.com](http://www.westfest.com).

### TH tip

Polka acts include Brave Combo, Praha Bros., and Dujka Bros.



## August Events

### BIG BEND COUNTRY

**ALPINE: Big Bend Ranch Rodeo** August 9-10. Sul Ross State University S.A.L.E. Arena. [www.bigbendranchrodeo.com](http://www.bigbendranchrodeo.com) 432/364-2696

**EL PASO: Plaza Classic Film Festival** August 1-11. Plaza Theater. [www.plazaclassic.com](http://www.plazaclassic.com) 915/533-4020

**EL PASO: Sun City Music Festival** August 31-September 1. Ascarate Park. [www.suncitymusicfestival.com](http://www.suncitymusicfestival.com)

**MARFA: Marfa Lights Festival** August 30-September 1. Presidio County Courthouse square. [www.marfac.com](http://www.marfac.com)

**MIDLAND: Mustang Stampede** August 24. Commemorative Air Force Main Hangar. [www.airpowermuseum.org](http://www.airpowermuseum.org) 432/563-1000

**MONAHANS: Roy Hurd Fly-In** August 10. Roy Hurd Municipal Airport. [www.monahans.org](http://www.monahans.org) 432/943-4311

**ODESSA: Rock the Desert Christian Music Festival** August 1-3. [www.rockthedesert.com](http://www.rockthedesert.com) 432/697-4548

### GULF COAST

**BEAUMONT: Permanent Collection Exhibit** August 1-September 1. Art Museum of Southeast Texas. [www.amset.org](http://www.amset.org) 409/832-3432

**BEAUMONT: McFaddin-Ward House Tour** August 31. [www.mcfaddin-ward.org](http://www.mcfaddin-ward.org) 409/832-2134

**BROWNSVILLE: The President's Photographer: Fifty Years Inside the Oval Office** August 1-October 12. [www.brownsvillemfa.org](http://www.brownsvillemfa.org) 956/542-0941

By all means, be this happy ... Visit Boerne!



Photo taken at Kühl Yogurt

A place to explore nature, enjoy fun events or indulge yourself in great shopping, dining, or just relaxing. Enjoy the warm, friendly hospitality that makes Boerne as unique as our name!

**BOERNE**  
As UNIQUE As Our Name

VisitBoerne.org  
888.842.8080 [f](https://www.facebook.com/visitboerne) [t](https://www.twitter.com/visitboerne) [y](https://www.youtube.com/visitboerne)



# ANDREWS, TX

## Pioneers & Patriots

Providing America's Solutions for over 100 Years!

VETERANS MEMORIAL • HISTORICAL SITES • BIRDING  
LABOR DAY WEEKEND 25/50/100K RANCH & RIG RIDE  
JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> FESTIVITIES & FAMOUS TURTLE RACES  
TUMBLEWEED FESTIVAL & BAR-B-QUE COOK-OFF  
HOLLY JOLLY WEEKEND & CHRISTMAS MARKET



700 W. BROADWAY • 432-523-2695 • [achamber@andrewstx.com](mailto:achamber@andrewstx.com)



## TH tip

The \$5 entry fee benefits Concordia Cemetery upkeep.

### TH SPOTLIGHT

## The Death of an Outlaw

EL PASO WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A fresh start after prison for the murderous outlaw John Wesley Hardin. But, the story goes, he slid back into crime within a year and found himself on the wrong end of a gun barrel at the Acme Saloon on August 19, 1895.

The **John Wesley Hardin Secret Society** will gather August 17 to remember Hardin's violent end with its annual reenactment of his death. The 7 p.m. public event takes place at Hardin's gravesite in **El Paso's** historic **Concordia Cemetery**.

The night includes a recounting of Hardin's life—he reportedly killed more than 30 people in his 42 years—and a reenactment by Six Guns and Shady Ladies, a theatrical Old West gun-fighting group.

Why the interest in Hardin 118 years after his death? It's the mystique of the Old West and Hardin's reputation as a gentleman who claimed he "didn't kill anybody that didn't need killing," figures Melissa Sargent, a director of the Concordia Heritage Association. [www.concordiacemetery.org](http://www.concordiacemetery.org).



**CLUTE: Paint-In Show** August 1-18. The Center for the Arts & Sciences. [www.bcfas.org](http://www.bcfas.org) 979/265-7971

**FREEPORT: Summertime Bikes and Blues Fest** August 30-31. [www.freeportbluesfestival.com](http://www.freeportbluesfestival.com) 979/233-3526

**GALVESTON: Party on the Pier** August 17. Pier 21. 409/762-0062

**GALVESTON: ArtWalk** August 24. Various locations. [www.galveston.com/artwalk](http://www.galveston.com/artwalk) 800/821-1894

**GALVESTON: BrewMaster Craft Beer Festival** August 30-31. Moody Gardens. [www.brewmastersbeerfest.com](http://www.brewmastersbeerfest.com)

**HOUSTON: Space City Con: Your Houston Comic Con 2013** August 1-4. [www.spacecitycon.com](http://www.spacecitycon.com) 713/978-7400

**HOUSTON: The Brillembourg Capriles Collection of Latin American Art** August 1-September 1. [www.mfah.org](http://www.mfah.org)

**HOUSTON: Ctrl + P** August 1-September 8. [www.crafthouston.org](http://www.crafthouston.org)

**HOUSTON: The Tool at Hand** August 1-September 8. [www.crafthouston.org](http://www.crafthouston.org)

**HOUSTON: James Turrell: The Light Inside** August 1-September 22. [www.mfah.org](http://www.mfah.org) 713/639-7300

**HOUSTON: Houston International Jazz Festival** August 2-4. [www.jazzeducation.org](http://www.jazzeducation.org) 713/839-7000

**HOUSTON: Houston Shakespeare Festival** August 2-10. Miller Outdoor Theatre. 713/743-2929

**KEMAH: Shark Weekend** August 9-11. Kemah Boardwalk. [www.kemahboardwalk.com](http://www.kemahboardwalk.com) 877/285-3624

**LAKE JACKSON: Abner Jackson Plantation Site Tours** August 3. [www.lakejacksonmuseum.org](http://www.lakejacksonmuseum.org) 979/297-1570

**LEAGUE CITY: Fire On The Strings Bluegrass Music Festival** August 16-17. [www.fireonthestrings.com](http://www.fireonthestrings.com)

**PORT ARANSAS: Texas Legends Billfish Tournament** August 7-11. [www.txlegends.com](http://www.txlegends.com)

**PORT ARANSAS: Texas Women Anglers Tournament** August 23-25. Robert's Point Park. [www.gofishtx.com](http://www.gofishtx.com)

**PORT LAVACA: Flip-Flop Festival** August 31. Bayfront Peninsula. [www.portlavacatx.org](http://www.portlavacatx.org) 361/552-2959

**ROCKPORT: AquaFest** August 31-September 1. Rockport Aquarium. [www.rockportaquarium.com](http://www.rockportaquarium.com) 361/727-0016

**SEABROOK: Bay Cup II Boat Race** August 3. [www.lakewoodyachtclub.com](http://www.lakewoodyachtclub.com) 281/472-2511

**TOMBALL: Tomball Night** August 2. Downtown. [www.tomballchamber.org](http://www.tomballchamber.org) 281/351-7222

**VICTORIA: Victoria Faire** August 17-18. Victoria Community Center. [www.texasmarketguide.com](http://www.texasmarketguide.com) 888/225-3427

## HILL COUNTRY

**AUSTIN: How to Prepare a Possum: 19th-Century Cuisine in Austin** August 1-January 5. Austin History Center. [www.austinhistorycenter.org](http://www.austinhistorycenter.org) 512/974-7480

**AUSTIN: Austin Ice Cream Festival** August 17. Fiesta Gardens. [www.icecreamfestival.org](http://www.icecreamfestival.org) 512/441-9015

**AUSTIN: Bat Fest** August 24. Ann Richards Congress Avenue Bridge. [www.roadwayevents.com](http://www.roadwayevents.com) 512/441-9015

**AUSTIN: Austin Chronicle Hot Sauce Festival** August 25. Fiesta Gardens. [www.austinchronicle.com](http://www.austinchronicle.com)

**BOERNE: Ring of Fire Ranch Rodeo and Concert** August 3. [www.sacorrclub.org/ring-of-fire-ranch-rodeo](http://www.sacorrclub.org/ring-of-fire-ranch-rodeo) 210/460-0932

**BOERNE: Kendall County Fair** August 30-September 1. [www.kcfa.org](http://www.kcfa.org) 830/249-2839

**BOERNE: Buggy Roundup** August 31. Main Plaza. [www.texasmanxclub.com](http://www.texasmanxclub.com) 281/238-0577

**BRADY: World Championship Barbecue Goat Cook-Off** August 30-31. [www.bradytx.com](http://www.bradytx.com) 888/577-3491

**CASTROVILLE: St. Louis Day Celebration** August 25. Koenig Park. [www.saintlouisday.com](http://www.saintlouisday.com) 830/931-2826

**FREDERICKSBURG: First Friday Art Walk** August 2. Various locations. [www.ffawf.com](http://www.ffawf.com) 830/997-6523

**FREDERICKSBURG: Trade Days** August 16-18. [www.fbgtradedays.com](http://www.fbgtradedays.com) 830/990-4900

**FREDERICKSBURG: Gillespie County Fair** August 22-25. [www.gillespiefair.com](http://www.gillespiefair.com) 830/997-2359

**GRUENE: Old Gruene Market Days** August 17-18. [www.gruenemarketdays.com](http://www.gruenemarketdays.com) 830/832-1721

**HARPER: Frontier Days** August 31-September 1. [www.harpercommunitypark.org](http://www.harpercommunitypark.org) 830/864-4050

**JOHNSON CITY: Art Walk** August 31. [www.tastewineart.com](http://www.tastewineart.com) 830/868-9290

**JUNCTION: Summer Classic Rodeo and Dance** August 9-10. [www.junctiontexas.com](http://www.junctiontexas.com)

**JUNCTION: Martin Memorial Car Show** August 10. Kimble County Courthouse. 830/634-2698

**KERRVILLE: Fiber Art of the World** August 1-September 1. [www.kackerrville.com](http://www.kackerrville.com) 830/895-2911

**KERRVILLE: Kerrville Wine and Music Festival** August 30-September 1. [www.kerrvillefolkfestival.com](http://www.kerrvillefolkfestival.com) 830/257-3600

**MARBLE FALLS: LakeFest Drag Boat Races** August 9-11. [www.marblefallslakefest.com](http://www.marblefallslakefest.com) 830/693-2815

**STONEWALL: Grape Stomp at Pedernales Cellars** August 10-11, 17-18. [www.pedernalescellars.com](http://www.pedernalescellars.com) 830/644-2037

**STONEWALL: Grape Stomp** August 24-25, 31-September 1. [www.beckervineyards.com](http://www.beckervineyards.com) 830/644-2681

**STONEWALL: President Lyndon B. Johnson's 105th Birthday Celebration** August 27. [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/lyndon-b-johnson](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/lyndon-b-johnson) 830/644-2252 ext. 222

**UVALDE: Hotter Than Hell 100-Mile Yard Sale** August 2-4. Also includes stops in Knippa, Sabin, and D'Hanis. [www.visitualde.com](http://www.visitualde.com) 830/278-4115

**UVALDE: Palomino Fest Labor Day Weekend Celebration and Pro Rodeo** August 29-September 1. Uvalde County Fairplex. [www.palominofest.com](http://www.palominofest.com)



## PANHANDLE PLAINS

**ABILENE: West Texas Club Woman 1880-1950** August 1-December 23. [www.thegracemuseum.org](http://www.thegracemuseum.org) 325/673-4587

**ABILENE: InVinci-Bull Youth Bull Riders World Finals** August 7-10. Taylor County Expo Center. 817/626-2855

**ABILENE: ArtWalk** August 8. 325/677-8389

**ALBANY: Lucien Abrams Exhibition** August 1-September 15. [www.theoldjailartcenter.org](http://www.theoldjailartcenter.org) 325/762-2269

**ALBANY: West Texas Triangle Exhibit: Danville Chadbourne** August 1-September 15. [www.theoldjailartcenter.org](http://www.theoldjailartcenter.org) 325/762-2269

**AMARILLO: First Friday Art Walk** August 2. The Galleries at Sunset Center. [www.amarilloartists.com](http://www.amarilloartists.com) 806/353-5700

**AMARILLO: America's Horse in Art** August 10-November 9. [www.aqha.com/americanhorseinart](http://www.aqha.com/americanhorseinart) 806/376-5181

**AMARILLO: Center City Block Party** August 17. Downtown. [www.centercity.org](http://www.centercity.org) 806/372-6744

**BIG SPRING: Big Spring Art Association Art Show** August 24-October 3. [www.heritagebigspring.com](http://www.heritagebigspring.com) 432/267-8255

**BUFFALO GAP: Chautauqua Learning Series** August 10. Buffalo Gap Historic Village. 325/572-3365

**BUFFALO GAP: Chili Super Bowl** August 31-September 1. Old Settlers Reunion Grounds. 325/675-8412

**CANYON: Drawings from the Permanent Collection** August 1-September 2. [www.panhandleplains.org](http://www.panhandleplains.org)

**CANYON: Wild and Wacky Weather on the Panhandle Plains** August 1-January 31. [www.panhandleplains.org](http://www.panhandleplains.org) 806/651-2244

**DALHART: XIT Rodeo and Reunion** August 1-3. [www.dalhart.org](http://www.dalhart.org) 806/244-5646

**LUBBOCK: First Friday Art Trail** August 2. [www.ffat.org](http://www.ffat.org) 806/762-8606

**LUBBOCK: Wines and Vines Festival** August 2-3. [www.mcphersoncellars.com](http://www.mcphersoncellars.com) 866/687-9463

**LUBBOCK: Harvest Festival and Grape Crush** August 24. Cap\*Rock Winery. 806/686-4452

**PERRYTON: Wheatheart of the Nation Celebration** August 16-24. [www.perryton.org](http://www.perryton.org) 806/435-6575

**POST: Post City Trade Day** August 3. Main Street. [www.postcitytexas.com](http://www.postcitytexas.com) 806/559-0835

**POST: Post Stampede Rodeo and Parade** August 8-10. [www.postcitytexas.com](http://www.postcitytexas.com) 806/495-3461

**QUANAH: Quanah Rodeo** August 2-3. Quanah Riding Club Arena. 940/663-2222

**SAN ANGELO: Antelope Light: A Photographic Essay by Lisa F. Richardson** August 1-September 1. [www.samfa.org](http://www.samfa.org) 325/653-3333

**SAN ANGELO: Art Walk** August 15. [www.downtownsanangelo.com/artwalk.html](http://www.downtownsanangelo.com/artwalk.html) 325/653-3333

**VEGA: Oldham County Roundup** August 10. [www.oldhamcofc.org](http://www.oldhamcofc.org) 806/267-2828

**WICHITA FALLS: The Original Texas Ranch Round-up** August 16-17. [www.texasranchroundup.com](http://www.texasranchroundup.com) 940/687-4932

**WICHITA FALLS: Hotter 'N Hell Hundred Endurance Bike Ride** August 22-25. [www.hhi00.org](http://www.hhi00.org) 940/322-3223

## PINEY WOODS

**GLADEWATER: Main Street Art Stroll** August 10. Email: [gladewaterartstroll@gmail.com](mailto:gladewaterartstroll@gmail.com) 903/845-5753

**JEFFERSON: Labor Day Celebration at Historic Jefferson Railway** August 30-31. [www.jeffersonrailway.com](http://www.jeffersonrailway.com) 903/665-6400

**NEW BOSTON: Pioneer Days and Rodeo** August 9-10, 14-17. [www.newboston.tx.org](http://www.newboston.tx.org) 903/824-1048

**THE WOODLANDS: Labor Day Weekend Celebration** August 31-September 1. [www.thewoodlandscvb.com](http://www.thewoodlandscvb.com) 281/363-2447

**TYLER: Tyler Horse Breed Show** August 30-September 1. Texas Rose Horse Park. [www.texasrosehorsepark.com](http://www.texasrosehorsepark.com)

**WINNSBORO: Classic Cruise-In and Car Show** August 30-31. 903/243-7526

## PRAIRIES AND LAKES

**ATHENS: Bird and Nature Walk** August 10. [www.athenstx.org](http://www.athenstx.org) 888/294-2847

**BASTROP: Bastrop Homecoming and Rodeo** August 1-4. [www.bastrophomecomingrodeo.org](http://www.bastrophomecomingrodeo.org) 512/923-1440

**BEDFORD: Bedford Blues and Barbecue** August 31-September 1. [www.bedfordbluesbbq.com](http://www.bedfordbluesbbq.com) 817/952-2128

**BELLVILLE: Spring Creek Bluegrass Club Show and Jam** August 24. [www.springcreekbluegrass.com](http://www.springcreekbluegrass.com) 979/865-5250

**BRENHAM: Crush for Fun** August 3-4, 10-11. Pleasant Hill Winery. [www.pleasanthillwinery.com](http://www.pleasanthillwinery.com) 979/830-8463

**BRENHAM: Harvest Grape Stomp at Windy Winery** August 3-4, 10-11. [www.windywinery.com](http://www.windywinery.com) 979/836-3252

**CALDWELL: Saturday Orchard Tours at Royalty Pecans** August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31. [www.royaltypecans.com](http://www.royaltypecans.com)

**CHAPPELL HILL: Lavender and Wine Fest** August 10. [www.chappellhilllavender.com](http://www.chappellhilllavender.com) 979/251-8114

**CLIFTON: Texas Troubadour Songwriter Classic** August 17. [www.bosqueartscenter.org](http://www.bosqueartscenter.org) 254/253-1263

**CORSICANA: Second Saturday Event Series: Island Time** August 10. [www.corsicanamainstreet.org](http://www.corsicanamainstreet.org) 877/648-6248

**CUERO: Country Music Opry** August 15. VFW Hall. [www.cuero.org](http://www.cuero.org) 361/275-6334

**DALLAS: Hard Rock's "Gone Too Soon" Memorabilia Tour** August 1-8. Hard Rock Cafe. [www.hardrock.com](http://www.hardrock.com)

**DALLAS: Malleable Forms: an Exploration of Texas Sculpture and Clay** August 1-31. Latino Cultural Center. [www.dallasculture.org/latinoculturalcenter](http://www.dallasculture.org/latinoculturalcenter)

**DALLAS: Alice's Wonderland Flower Village** August 1-31. Dallas Arboretum. [www.dallasarboretum.org](http://www.dallasarboretum.org)

**DALLAS: Hotel Texas: An Art Exhibition for the President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy** August 1-September 15. [www.dallasmuseumofart.org](http://www.dallasmuseumofart.org) 214/922-1200

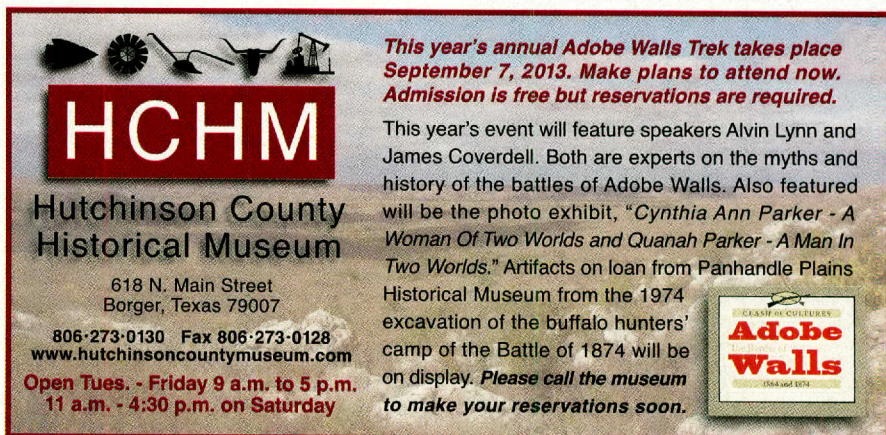


**SONORA**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Discover Sonora, Texas, where you will find a rich Western heritage, natural wonders, and a wide variety of family activities to enjoy.

Explore the Caverns of Sonora. Walk the trails of Eaton Hill Nature Center. Learn about Sonora's pioneers, cowboys, and outlaw Will Carver at the Old Sonora Ice House Ranch Museum and Miers Home Museum.

[www.sonoratexas.org](http://www.sonoratexas.org) 888-387-2886



**HCHM**  
Hutchinson County Historical Museum


618 N. Main Street  
Borger, Texas 79007

806-273-0130 Fax 806-273-0128  
[www.hutchinsoncountymuseum.com](http://www.hutchinsoncountymuseum.com)

Open Tues. - Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
11 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. on Saturday

This year's annual Adobe Walls Trek takes place September 7, 2013. Make plans to attend now. Admission is free but reservations are required.

This year's event will feature speakers Alvin Lynn and James Coverdell. Both are experts on the myths and history of the battles of Adobe Walls. Also featured will be the photo exhibit, "Cynthia Ann Parker - A Woman Of Two Worlds and Quanah Parker - A Man In Two Worlds." Artifacts on loan from Panhandle Plains Historical Museum from the 1974 excavation of the buffalo hunters' camp of the Battle of 1874 will be on display. Please call the museum to make your reservations soon.





# Traveler

LABOR DAY WEEKEND  
2013  
AUGUST  
30th & 31st

40 YEARS  
AND STILL SMOKIN' GOAT LIKES

40TH ANNUAL  
**WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP  
BBQ GOAT COOK-OFF**  
BRADY, TEXAS

www.BradyTX.com

SATURDAY NIGHT STREET DANCE  
FEATURING  
**AARON WATSON**  
& KEVIN SEALE  
DOWNTOWN COURTHOUSE SQUARE

**BIG BEND  
RANCH RODEO**  
ALPINE, TEXAS  
www.bigbendranchrodeo.com

2013 Weekend  
Schedule

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 8th**  
1:00pm S.H.O.T. Team Challenge  
Sul Ross State University S.A.L.E. Arena

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 9th**  
8:00am Ranch Cutting @6 Flats Arena  
7:00pm WRCA Ranch Rodeo performance  
Sul Ross State University S.A.L.E. Arena  
Dance following the rodeo at the Lobo Bar and Grill

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 10th**  
9:00am RHAA Competition  
Sul Ross State University S.A.L.E. Arena  
10:00am Youth Working Cow Horse Competition  
Sul Ross State University Outdoor Arena  
7:00pm WRCA Ranch Rodeo performance  
Sul Ross State University S.A.L.E. Arena  
Dance following the rodeo at the Lobo Bar and Grill

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 11th**  
10:30am Church Service: Big Bend Cowboy Church

**DALLAS:** *Nature in My Art: Recent Artwork by Pavlina Panova* August 1-September 29. www.dallasculture.org 214/670-8749

**DALLAS:** *The Body Beautiful in Ancient Greece: Masterworks from the British Museum* August 1-October 6. www.dma.org 214/922-1200

**DE LEON:** *Peach and Melon Festival and Tractor Pull* August 6-10. www.deleonpeachandmelonfestivalandtractorpull.com 254/893-6600

**DENTON:** *North Texas State Fair* August 16-24. www.ntfair.com 940/387-2632

**FORT WORTH:** *We the People: Picturing American Identity* August 1-September 8. www.cartermuseum.org

**FORT WORTH:** *June Wayne: The Tamarin Decade* August 1-January 19. www.cartermuseum.org

**FORT WORTH:** *Yellow Rose Car Show* August 10-11. www.yellowrosecarshow.com 817/595-6900

**FORT WORTH:** *NRHA Cowtown Classic Reining Horse Competition* August 10-17. www.nrha.com 817/392-7469

**GLEN ROSE:** *Art on the Square* August 17. www.glenrosetexas.net 254/897-2321

**GLEN ROSE:** *Texas Ceramic Fifth Annual Weekend Getaway* August 23-24. www.pcceramicsupply.com 940/521-2412

**GRANBURY:** *Last Saturday Gallery Night and Art Walk* August 31. www.granburytx.com 817/579-7733

**GRAPEVINE:** *SummerFest at the Gaylord Texan Resort* August 1-September 6. www.gaylordtexan.com 817/722-9423

**GRAPEVINE:** *First Fridays at Nash Farm* August 2. www.nashfarm.org 817/410-3185

**IRVING:** *Selections from the Tegge Circus Archives Collection* August 1-September 1. www.irvingartscenter.com

**LA GRANGE:** *Fayette County Sheriff's Posse CPRA Rodeo* August 9-11. www.ci.la-grange.tx.us

**LINDSAY:** *Antique Tractor and Farm Machinery Show* August 31-September 1. www.antiquetractorshow.net 940/665-6823

**MCKINNEY:** *Texas Art History Series Presentation* August 7. www.heardcraig.org 972/569-6909

**MESQUITE:** *Devil's Bowl Speedway Racing* August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31. www.devilsbowl.com 972/222-2421

**MESQUITE:** *Mesquite Creative Arts Club Exhibit* August 4-30. www.mesquiteartscenter.org 972/216-6444

**MOUNT VERNON:** *Rodeo Festival* August 30-September 1. Email: chamber@mt-vernon.com 903/537-4365

**NAVASOTA:** *Navasota Blues Festival* August 9-10. www.navasotabluesfest.org 936/825-6600

**PLANO:** *One Day Only Theater Festival* August 23-24. Courtyard Theater. www.roverdramawerks.com

**SALADO:** *Midnight Madness Down Main 5K Fun Run* August 2. www.salado.com 254/947-5040

**SALADO:** *Salado Legends Musical* August 3. www.tablerock.org 254/947-9205

**SHERMAN:** *Dino Days Exhibit* August 1-3. www.the.shermanmuseum.org 903/893-7623

**SHERMAN:** *Second Saturday Nature Program* August 10. Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge. 903/786-2826

**THE COLONY:** *Into the Woods Disc Golf Tournament* August 24-25. www.visitthecolonytx.com 972/625-1106

**WACO:** *Southwest Association of Turners Symposium* August 23-25. www.swaturners.org

**WACO:** *Margarita and Salsa Festival* August 24. www.extracoeventscenter.com 254/776-1660

**WASHINGTON:** *Toy Time at Star of the Republic Museum* August 1-31. www.starmuseum.org

## SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

**ALICE:** *Hispanic Heritage Festival* August 30-31. www.alicehfc.com 361/664-3454

**SAN ANTONIO:** *Fiesta Noche del Rio* August 1-10. www.fiestanochesa.com 210/226-4651

**SAN ANTONIO:** *Majority Rules: A Decade of Contemporary Art Acquisitions* August 1-September 15. www.mcnayart.org 210/824-5368

**SAN ANTONIO:** *Beth van Hoesen at the McNay* August 1-September 29. www.mcnayart.org 210/824-5368

**SAN ANTONIO:** *Balcones Heights Jazz Festival* August 2, 9. www.sanantoniocentral.org/jazz-festival 210/732-0055

**SAN ANTONIO:** *Canoe Challenge* August 3. River Walk. www.thesanantonioriverwalk.com

**SAN ANTONIO:** *People en Espanol Festival* August 31-September 1. www.peopleenespanol.com/festival

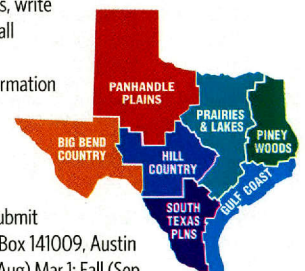
**WESLACO:** *Alfresco Weslaco* August 15. Texas Boulevard. www.weslacoedc.com 956/969-0838

## Want more? Go to the Events Calendar at www.texashighways.com.

For a free printed copy of an even more detailed, quarterly schedule of events, write to Texas Events Calendar subscriptions, 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).

To submit event information: www.texashighways.com and go to Events, Submit Event Listing; e-mail: texasevents@txdot.gov; or mail: Texas Events Calendar, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009. 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.





*Your Texas Highways:  
Even better!*



*Your **September 2013** issue will feature*

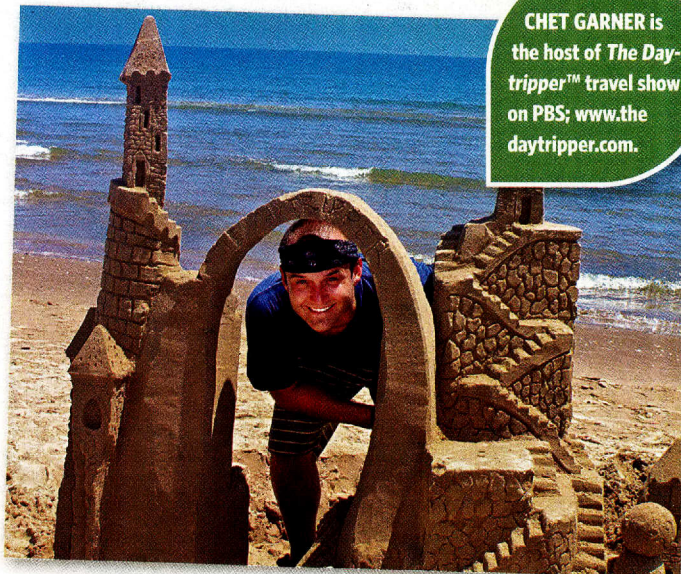
*The **PEOPLE**, the **PLACES**,  
the **WIDE-OPEN SPACES** of **TEXAS***

As we approach our 40th anniversary in 2014, we're excited to present a new look and added content. Share your thoughts at [letters05@texashighways.com](mailto:letters05@texashighways.com).



# Sunny Side Up on South Padre

**ON THE SOUTHERN EDGE** of Texas, along the Gulf of Mexico, there's a town that defies the typical "Texas" stereotypes. And while South Padre Island may have a reputation as a party town, in truth it's a laid-back island paradise, a place where you can escape the world—without ever leaving the Lone Star State.



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

**8:30 a.m.** With the waters of the Laguna Madre below, I crossed the Queen Isabella Memorial Bridge from mainland Texas to the island and immediately felt the salty breeze, making me hungry for seafood. Yes, even for breakfast. So I went to **Pier 19 Restaurant and Bar** for an omelet stuffed with blackened shrimp and sliced avocado. One bite and I knew it was going to be a great day.

**9:30 a.m.** I was ready to hit the beach, so I met up with the **South Padre Surf Company** for a lesson on riding the Gulf's waves. Having never successfully surfed, I was nervous. However, after a bit of good teaching, I was standing up in no time and hanging ten all the way back to shore. Cowabunga! Make that ... Texabunga!

**11:00 a.m.** After time in the surf, I was ready for the sand. **Dennis Barrett**, aka the "Sand Slave," met me for a private lesson in building sand castles. What started out as a pile of wet sand quickly grew into a

commanding tower. Before long I was carving out windows, building an arch, and even fortifying a wall to fend off marauding crabs. I finished with something infinitely more impressive than my previous dribble castles.

**1:30 p.m.** Hungry again, I headed to **Dirty Al's**, an island institution, and found myself sitting before a massive basket of fried shrimp, fish, and oysters. In a moment of bravery, I ordered some house fish throats (served fried, grilled, or blackened). I never knew that fish had edible throats, or that they were so tasty.

**2:30 p.m.** Next up, **Sea Turtle Inc.**, a nonprofit sea turtle hospital and education center that rescues, rehabilitates, and protects turtles on South Padre Island and Boca Chica Beach. I learned about the five sea turtle species found off the Texas coast and walked among the huge tanks filled with Atlantic

green, loggerhead, hawksbill, and even endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtles. I left with a newfound appreciation for turtles and planned a return trip to help release new hatchlings into the wild.

**4:30 p.m.** Just as abundant as the wildlife in the sea is the wildlife above it, and the **South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center**

gave me an up-close look at some of the roughly 320 bird species that live in the area, including a pair of dueling spoonbills. Watching their tussle confirmed

that spoons probably aren't the best weapon for battle.

**6:00 p.m.** Venturing north, I headed up **Padre Boulevard** until I reached a point where the pavement disappeared beneath flowing dunes of white sand. It was amazing to think that the next 100 miles of coastline are nothing but uninhabited wilderness.

**7:00 p.m.** I tripped back to civilization for dinner at the **Padre Island Brewing Company**, which has been "feeding faces" since 1995. I ordered up a tasty scratch-made basil pesto pizza topped with chicken and fresh tomatoes. The experience only got better with a pint of craft-brewed Texas Long Board Lager, which I enjoyed at sunset while sitting on the deck in the island breeze.

**8:45 p.m.** Like a moth to a flame, I couldn't resist the lights of **Gravity Park**, nor could I resist the urge to tee up on its mini-golf course and ride its multi-level wooden go-kart track. However, the grand finale was to defy gravity by flying 250 feet in the air on a human slingshot known as a reverse bungee.

WHILE South Padre Island may turn into party central during spring break, it's what happens the other 51 weeks of the year that makes this island truly special. So, whether you follow my footsteps or forge your own path, I hope to see you on the road. **TH**

Contact the  
**South Padre Island  
Convention &  
Visitors Bureau**,  
800/767-2373;  
[www.sopadre.com](http://www.sopadre.com).





**Click!**

TH video on how our front covers are photographed at [texashighways.com/windowontexas](http://texashighways.com/windowontexas)

## Window on Texas

Photograph by **J. GRIFFIS SMITH**

**COVER ART** For our cover this month, Photography Editor Griff Smith and Creative Director Mark Mahorsky traveled to Luckenbach to photograph Bo Porter, Bill Lewis, Jake Martin, and Theresa and John Reeves on the dance-hall stage.

The above image is one of the shots taken during the trip. For the design team to deem an image cover-worthy, though, they look at many factors, including room for text and the amount of detail in the photo. If you want to learn more about how a photo makes the cover, go to [www.texashighways.com/windowontexas](http://www.texashighways.com/windowontexas) to see Griff's photo-tips video.

"It's about how to shoot, frame, and execute a photo for a cover," Mark says.

The video explores the creative process involved in composing a cover photograph, as well as tips on setting up the shot and photographing multiple elements.

Other photo-tips videos on the *Texas Highways* website include photographing sunsets, live performances, and architecture.

For more on Luckenbach, call 830/997-3224; visit [www.luckenbachtexas.com](http://www.luckenbachtexas.com).

