

T E X A S Travel Log

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE TEXAS TRAVEL INDUSTRY

COMING UP

Four acres of campus land at Texas Tech University in **Lubbock** will become the site of a museum representing the most comprehensive collection of historic windmills in the world. Now all officials from the **National Windmill Project** need to do is raise \$3 million before building begins. The project already has a healthy collection of 93 windmills, including 48 from a collection in Nebraska. Other groups, including the Smithsonian, and private collectors, have attempted to purchase the rarest of the Nebraska collection, but only the National Windmill Project could ensure that all the windmills would stay together. Besides outdoor exhibits, the museum will house indoors the rarest of the windmills and will feature research centers, a windmill library, a windmill art gallery, and a restoration workshop.

After three years of delays, developers of a new horse racetrack in **Grand Prairie** got the go-ahead from the Texas Racing Commission, reports *The Dallas Morning News*. Work on the \$90-million **Lone Star Race Park** was to begin last month at its site north of I-30 and east of Belt Line Road. Track officials plan to be ready for live racing in December 1996. Betting windows could open next spring if owners get approval to air races from other tracks. The new facility will be the fourth Class 1 horse racetrack since voters approved pari-mutuel wagering in 1987.

AMC Entertainment Inc., one of the nation's largest movie the-

ater chains, will build a 30-screen movie theater, shopping center, and entertainment complex in Plano, at the southwest corner of Preston Road and Texas 121. According to *The Dallas Morning News*, the 6,000-seat theater will be equal in size to a 30-screen theater in Antwerp, Belgium, which is considered the biggest cinema complex in the world. Officials said the retail complex will open shortly after the movie theater makes its debut in 1996.

Ground-breaking ceremonies in July marked the beginning of **River Legacy Parks Nature Center** in **Arlington**, scheduled to open next summer. The \$5-million facility will feature indoor and outdoor classrooms, a resource library, exhibits room, bookstore/gift shop, pond, and critter compound. The 12,000-square-foot center will enhance the existing Living Science programs, which already attract thousands of park visitors each year. For more info, call the Arlington C&VB at 1-800-433-5374.

Construction continues on **Irving's** next major tourist attraction, **Elm Fork Ranch**, at the corner of Loop 12 and Carpenter Freeway. When complete, the Western-themed park will feature an outdoor amphitheater, rodeo arena, riding stables, children's park, sports facilities, and an assortment of shops and restaurants. According to the *Irving News*, Elm Fork Ranch originally was set to open March 1996, but torrential rainfall and land formation problems have pushed back its grand opening to next Labor Day.

PLACES

At long last **Mike Talley** can say his hometown of **Commerce** is listed in TxDOT's **Texas State Travel Guide**. As editor of the guide, Mike's been telling callers, for years, "My hometown's not in the book either." Now with the opening of **Heritage House** at East Texas State University (Mike's alma mater), he's going to have to come up with a new

line. Built in 1927 to serve as home for the president of the university, Heritage House has now been restored to its original elegance. Adorned with many furnishings and artifacts from former presidents' families, the home has hosted John Philip Sousa, Texas governors, entertainers, politicians, and business and religious leaders. Open for tours Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. For details, call 903/886-5712.

Fredericksburg Herb Farm in (guess where) **Fredericksburg** celebrates its tenth year this fall by sharing many of its recipes, philosophies, and growing hints in **"Along the Garden Path,"** scheduled for release by Thanksgiving. The *Austin American-Statesman* says it's "not your basic cookbook," with planting info and recipes sharing the same space. In just ten short years, the farm has gained international fame, winning two awards at the International Fancy Food and Confection Show in New York. In addition to hundreds of herb varieties and prod-



CLAY FEATS Marshall Pottery in Marshall celebrated its 100th anniversary in grand style last month with dedication of its new Marshall Pottery Museum. The museum touts pottery as an art form in a video presentation that takes visitors through the entire creative process— from digging the clay, to molding and firing, right down to the finished piece. A display of letters from dignitaries includes one from President Clinton with congratulations on the pottery's 100th year. Other exhibits include an antique pottery wheel and old photographs from the pottery's beginning days. Call 903/938-9201 for all the details.

T R A V E L T A L E S O V E R H E A R D

ucts, the farm includes a country store, a tearoom with herbal desserts, a bed and breakfast guest haus, and a quiet room for massages. Look for a large feature story in *Texas Highways Magazine*, coming up this spring. Open daily at 402 Whitney Street. For more information, call 210/997-8615.

A work of art, created as a dream-scape of Austin icons, opened near **Austin** on October 18. "A mural?" you ask. "A bronze statue, perhaps?" No. Just another megamall. **Lakeline Mall** offers more than the standard assortment of two-level shops, reports the *Austin American-Statesman*. In the center court, The University of Texas Tower and other landmark buildings bend under a blue and white neon-lit sky. Three hot air balloons emit an audible whoosh. A canary yellow version of the state Capitol dome surrounds an elevator. Other aspects of the Austin community are highlighted with a cowboy boot decorated with computer chips and a laser disc spur, a coffee cup spilling java, and an oversized guitar. Architect **Terry Guilbeau**, of McBride and Co., Miami, said "We wanted something very humorous and lighthearted. We wanted people to go in there and just smile." At U.S. 183 and R.M. 620.

TEXAS TRAVEL LOG
is published monthly by the Texas Department of Transportation, Travel and Information Division. Please send news items of interest to the Texas travel industry to Texas Travel Log, P.O. Box 141009, Austin, Texas 78714-1009. (512) 483-3727, FAX (512) 483-3793. Deadline for each newsletter is the 20th of the month preceding the issue date.

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Contributing Editors: Marty Lange, Jane McNally, Mike Talley

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AMARILLO TIC A special "thank you" from manager Rosemary Eaves goes to all those who stopped in to see their newly remodeled center during Travel Summit '95.

DENISON TIC Tabitha Downing, who began last summer as a high school VOE employee, joined the staff as a full-fledged

travel counselor. Tabitha, who works part-time at the center, is working toward a degree from Grayson County College.

WICHITA FALLS TIC Manager Lisa Smith is the proud momma of a brand-new slab, the beginning of a 4,000-square-foot center, adjacent to the current TIC. The new, modern facility

should be ready for visitors sometime in January.

VALLEY TIC While Lisa was giving birth to a slab, manager Sam Martinez's wife Denise was giving birth to a brand-new baby boy. Zachery Martinez was born October 18, on Sam's birthday. Mother and baby are doing fine. Congratulations to all.

Readers of *Successful Meetings Magazine*, one of the most influential publications in the convention industry, have selected the **Fort Worth C&VB** as a **1995 Pinnacle Award** recipient. The designation recognizes excellence in servicing meetings and conventions, and incentive travel programs throughout the year. "Recognition by some of the most discriminating critics in the business is a tremendous achievement," said **Doug Harman**, C&VB president and CEO. The Pinnacle Award is the second major award presented recently to the bureau. The C&VB was honored in 1994 by *Meetings & Conventions Magazine* with the Gold Service Award.

F A C E S

Jutta Matalka, long-time tourism professional at the El Paso C&VB, has moved up—up north, that is, to the **Amarillo Convention & Visitors Council**, where she took the reins as tourism director on October 9. For many years, TxDOT's travel editors have depended on Jutta for information on El Paso attractions and events. Her love of everything Texan gives her that winning edge when it comes to promoting her city or state. We have no doubt she's already dug her heels deep into the Panhandle Plains soil in Amarillo. Give her a call at 806/374-1497.

E C O T O U R I S M

In a joint venture of the **Texas Parks and Wildlife Department** and the ecology agencies of the Mexican border states of Tamaulipas, Coahuila, and Nuevo Leon, a series of five- and six-day nature tours to Mexico were offered this fall. The program grew out of the 1993 Border Governors Conference, an annual meeting involving border states from the U.S. and Mexico. "The tours generate income for the people who live inside these natural areas in Mexico," said **Maria Araujo**, TP&WD inter-

national affairs coordinator. "This provides an economic incentive at the local level to protect the areas. The tour activities are low-impact, designed to sustain the natural and cultural character of each site."

W I L D L I F E

We just learned of a wonderful facility in **Boyd**, northwest of Fort Worth, that provides a home for exotic cats with no place else to go. **Texas Exotic Feline Foundation** was founded in 1983 by **Robert and Gene von Reitnauer**, who offer sanctuary

ALL FLY AWAY Tens of millions of monarch butterflies have made their way from the central and eastern states and Canada to Texas on their yearly cross-country trek to the high fir forests of central Mexico. For the third year in a row, Monarch Watch volunteers have helped tag and track the monarchs to assist researchers in learning environmental cues the butterflies use to guide their migratory flight. Unlike most insects, the monarch has the ability to fly long distances like migratory birds.



for abandoned, abused, or illegally owned cats and care for them for life. Lions, tigers, jaguars, bobcats, leopards and other exotic cats live in spacious habitats with pools, houses, and special diets. A visit to TEFF includes a two-hour, guided walking tour, where stories are shared of how each cat came to the facility and with fascinating facts about the similarities and differences of the various species. Open Mondays and Fridays for 10 a.m. tours, and Saturdays and Sundays, 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Entrance requires a minimum \$20 tax-deductible donation from adults; \$10 from children, ages 7 to 12. For more information or to schedule a tour, call 817/433-2378.

MUSEUMS

Enter a time capsule from the 1930s at the **Light Crust Doughboys Hall of Fame and Museum** at the McWhorter-Greenhaw Hardware and Music Store in **Mesquite**. The 1,000-square foot museum highlights 64 years of Western swing memorabilia, including vintage film clips, programs, billboards, a 1955 television script, awards, and a suit worn by a Doughboy in the early 1950s. Bob Wills formed the band in 1931 and persuaded Burrus Mill and Elevator Company to sponsor the group on a radio show by advertising the mill's Light Crust Flour. The broadcasts became so popular they grew into a statewide network. The legend continues with the release of new recordings, a new documentary film, TV and concert appearances, and a resurgence in the band's popularity. This year, the Legislature proclaimed the Light Crust Doughboys as official music ambassadors for the State of Texas. Visitors can tour the museum during store hours: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. on

Saturday, or by appointment. At 105 Broad Street. Call 214/285-5441 for more info.

The **Texas Maritime Museum** in **Rockport** premiered the **William A. Mann Center for Oral History and Library** on September 23. Much of the state's maritime heritage has been reflected through oral tradition. Now 20th-Century technology makes it possible to record these traditions for posterity. Young and old salts can tell their story, then receive their own copy of the tape. The original cassette becomes part of the museum's

? TEXAS TRIVIA

What is the biggest myth surrounding Cynthia Ann Parker, Texas' and the nation's most famous Indian captive?

Since the time of Cynthia Ann Parker's abduction by Comanches in 1836, most people misconceived that she wanted to return home. At the time of the raid on her family's isolated frontier outpost in present Limestone County, Cynthia Ann was only nine years old and so adjusted quickly to her new life. She grew up, married a Comanche chief, and gave birth to two sons, Pecos and Quanah. Then in 1860, at age 34, she and her two-year-old daughter were saved from death during a battle between the Comanche and a force of Texas frontier rangers. She was miserable at her enforced reinstatement into what was, to her, enemy society, and was guarded and locked in a room to prevent her escape. Both Cynthia Ann and her daughter died about four years after they were separated from the wild, free life of the Comanche tribe.

TEXAS TRIVIA



OUR CAPS OFF Last month the **State Preservation Board** received one of the most prestigious awards among national preservationists for overhauling the **Texas Capitol**. **Dealey Herndon**, restoration project manager and the board's former executive director, accepted one of **17 National Preservation Honor Awards** from the **National Trust for Historic Preservation** at its annual conference in **Fort Worth**. The **\$187-million restoration and expansion project** is regarded as one of the largest in the nation.

archives. More formal, in-depth interviews are directed by a professional oral historian. In addition, the library contains more than 500 volumes of maritime publications, making the state's seafaring heritage more accessible to the public. The new center is the first of its kind on the Texas Gulf Coast. Open Tuesday through Sunday at 1202 Navigation Circle. Call 512/729-1271 for more info.

The **American Quarter Horse Heritage Center & Museum** in **Amarillo** unveiled a life-size bronze of champion racehorse Dash For Cash with jockey Jerry Nicodemus, through the generous funding of patron **Anne W. Marion**, heir of the famed 6666 Ranch. Dash For Cash, once owned by Marion, had 25 starts in his racing career, winning 21 times and placing second only three times. Today, he is the all-time leading sire of money earners, with total earnings of his foals topping \$35.7 million. Jerry Nicodemus, who retired in 1993,

has won every major American quarter horse race. He won the Champion of Champions race four times, twice riding Dash For Cash into the winner's circle. The Center offers visitors interactive exhibits, artifacts, video presentations, breathtaking works of art. Open daily at 2601 I-40 East. Call 806/376-5181 for details.

EVENTS

Celebrate the East Texas tradition of ribbon cane syrup making at the **Heritage Syrup Festival** in **Henderson**, Saturday, November 11. Visitors will delight in an old-time syrup-making demonstration at the Depot Museum. Folk artists will demonstrate timeless skills in blacksmithing, spinning, weaving, basket weaving, and quilting. Festivities will overflow to downtown's Heritage Square, where an arts and crafts show, great food, and bluegrass music will continue all day. For details, call 903/657-4303.

TRAVEL CENTER	Month Visitors	Percent Variation*	Visitors Year-to-date	Percent Variation*
Amarillo	13,098	-38.52	120,501	-20.77
Anthony	14,226	-28.91	148,995	-16.31
Denison	20,745	-22.24	217,791	+398.06
Gainesville	30,816	-15.82	326,511	-13.62
Langtry	8,337	-40.86	94,923	+3.51
Laredo	9,165	-23.97	105,102	-20.17
Orange	45,759	-17.21	521,652	+4.37
Texarkana	56,208	-25.64	542,499	+6.18
Valley	22,119	+14.03	275,031	+1.30
Waskom	46,953	-11.73	482,553	+1.97
Wichita Falls	13,791	-35.84	177,855	-4.24
Capitol Complex	9,183	+6.51	108,567	-14.19
1-800 Phone Center	10,710	-67.76	184,884	+15.41
CENTER TOTALS	301,110	-24.26	3,306,864	+3.24

Data as of October 31, 1995

*Compared to last year

MAIL SERVICES	This Mo.	Y-T-D
	41,264	1,201,600
SERVICES TO THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY		
TxDOT TRAX System	This Mo.	Y-T-D
Subscriber inquiries	51	
Addresses offered	10,422	
Addresses transmitted	13,188	
Addresses transmitted		1,204,234
OFFICIAL STATE TRAVEL MAGAZINE		
Texas Highways print run		
This month		398,357
This month last year		400,108
This year-to-date		3,766,301
Last year-to-date		4,121,173

Dial toll-free 1-800-452-9292 for travel assistance from TxDOT's Texas Travel Information Centers (8 a.m.-9 p.m. daily)

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