

TXD T 1325.6 T697 02/2006

Texas Document-Library Depository 0610
University of Texas Pan American

FEBRUARY 2006

INSIDE:

- ★ Trend grows as agricultural outlets find success by incorporating tourism aspects
- ★ Rodeos set to lasso big visitor numbers, economic benefits
- ★ Cultural benefits showcased in this Year of the Museum
- ★ Black History Month celebrated in music, film and more

TEX
★

TRAVEL LOG



Country music's Lee Ann Womack films a *Don't Mess With Texas* ad.

DON'T MESS WITH TEXAS

WHETHER they've traveled through the state or not, people have come to know that it's best if you just *Don't Mess with Texas*. The litter prevention program is now **20 years old** and home-grown **celebrities** are helping to **reinforce the message** and to add that they "wouldn't do it."

As the "Don't Mess with Texas" program released its celebrity-packed 20th Anniversary campaign for 2006, the Texas Department of Transportation issued a new mantra to combat the state's stubborn littering tendencies — "Real Texans Don't Litter."

"There aren't many things that are universally cool, and it's cool not to litter. I'd never do it," says Matthew McConaughey in an exclusive interview.

"Though recent research indicates roadside litter has dropped by a third, we've also discovered that more than half of Texans admit they litter, and that's just not acceptable," says TxDOT Travel Division Direc-

tor Doris Howdeshell. "We're grateful to the celebrities who have joined with TxDOT during this milestone year to be prime examples of real Texans who don't litter."

The new TV campaign, launched during the AT&T Cotton Bowl on Jan. 2, features some of the biggest stars from Texas: Lance Armstrong, Erykah Badu, Ray Benson, Jennifer Love Hewitt, Julius Jones, Los Lonely Boys, Matthew McConaughey, Chuck Norris, Janine Turner, Owen Wilson and Lee Ann Womack.

"TxDOT" launched the campaign back in '86 because of skyrocketing litter pickup costs," says Howdeshell. "We're proud the campaign has produced such good results for Texas, and the fact that it's become a part of pop culture is just an added bonus. We just want to make sure everyone knows "Don't Mess with Texas" means don't litter."

To view the ads and for more information, activities and contests, visit: www.DontMesswithTexas20.org.



TxDOT

ABILENE and surrounding communities will be hosting nearly 100 **travel industry professionals**, from April 17–20, as part of TxDOT's 51st annual **Texas Travel Counselors Conference**, and the **Feb. 15 registration deadline** is approaching. The conference gives counselors first-hand knowledge of sites and attractions so that they may better serve the traveling public. The event ends with a travel trade show featuring various chambers of commerce, CVBs and attractions from across the state.

For more information, contact Theresa Olson at (512) 486-5800 or tolson@dot.state.tx.us.

TEN TOURISM organizations have been **awarded free exhibit space** in the TxDOT **Travel Information Centers**.

From March through August, these areas will be promoting their attractions with special displays — including colorful photographs and other promotional materials — in the centers' lobbies.

Every six months, use of the display cases rotate to another set of tourism organizations.

Here are the newly selected exhibit space pairings:

- Amarillo:** Texas Independence Trail Region
- Anthony:** Arlington, Grand Prairie, Mansfield
- Denison:** Texas Coastal Bend Regional Tourism Council
- Gainesville:** Central Texas Bluebonnet Travel Council
- Judge Roy Bean Visitor Center:** Texas Badlands
- Laredo:** Texas Forest Trail Region
- Orange:** P.O.S.T. Partnership of Southeast Texas
- Texarkana:** Texas Lakes Trail Region
- Valley:** I-10 Corridor Association

Waskom: San Antonio Convention & Visitors Bureau

TxDOT will accept applications from June 1–20 for the next display period — September through February 2007. For more information, call the Travel Services Section at (512) 486-5800 or visit www.dot.state.tx.us/insdtdot/orgchart/trv/trvticdisplays.htm.

TRAVEL NEWS

IT MAY have been built in 1907, but the **historic Kingsbury House** is now the **new home** of the **Boerne Visitor Information Center** operated by the **Boerne Convention and Visitors Bureau**.

"The Visitor Center is just beautiful and it's in a great location," says Wendy Little, interim director for the Boerne CVB. Little added that the long-abandoned structure had been somewhat of an eyesore, but one that many felt had potential. "The community is really happy with what is happening, and people are starting to catch on that we're here."

The limestone and stucco Texas Ranch house — donated to the city and specifically renovated for CVB offices and Visitor Center — rests high on the bank of Menger Creek and is surrounded by 150-year-old live oaks.

The Visitor Center features bright natural lighting, custom brochure kiosks, hardwood floors, original doors and windows, a large wrap-around porch and several fireplaces. Also on the property is an original two-room rock house — one of the oldest in Boerne, a rain catch system, windmill and the old rock wall that was built by early settlers.

The Convention and Visitors Bureau was created two years ago and, since then, marketing efforts have increased, a new Web site was launched, the new Visitor Center has opened and a new brochure is on its way.

SURFING THE TRAILS

SCOPING out wildlife throughout the state is more manageable with the help of eight **Great Texas Wildlife Trails maps**, two of which are now **available online**. The others are expected to be online by the end of March.

The comprehensive maps, which help visitors plan trips and experience the nature tourism trails throughout the state, include the Panhandle Plains Wildlife Trail and Heart of Texas West Wildlife Trail, which are currently online. Other regions include Lower Texas Coast, Central Texas Coast, Upper Texas Coast, Heart of Texas East, Prairies and Pineywoods West, and Prairies and Pineywoods East.

The Great Texas Wildlife Trails maps are also available in print

and can be purchased through the Texas Cooperative Extension Bookstore online at tcebookstore.org or by calling (888) 900-2577.

To view maps, visit www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/wildlife_trails.

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT © 2006. LORENE MOORE



Bats take flight from Devil's Sinkhole State Natural Area in Rocksprings.

“Boerne is getting ready to explode and eventually we’re going to have to expand our staff,” Little says, adding, “we have a lot of high goals for ourselves.”

For more information on Boerne, 20 minutes northwest of San Antonio, call (888) 842-8080 or visit www.visitboerne.org.

BIG BEND National Park has implemented a minor revision to its **entrance fee rates** for 2006 in accordance with the Federal Land Recreation Enhancement Act, which shifts 16-year-olds into “adult” status when individual fees are applied.

According to National Park Services spokesperson Claudia Arnberger, “This does not change anything else. Big Bend’s entrance fee is still \$15 per vehicle, regardless of the number of people or ages. The only change is that 16-year-olds will be charged an individual fee of \$5, if they are in a group situation where visitors are charged per person (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, for example).” Previously, those 16 and younger were not charged an entrance fee.

Fees are used for improvements related to visitor use and enjoyment.

In other Big Bend news, the park will temporarily close or restrict ac-

cess to certain areas of the land to protect the population of peregrine falcons. From Feb. 1 through May 31, the Southeast Rim Trail and part of the Northeast Rim Trail from Boot Canyon/Southeast Rim junction to a point just north of Campsite NE-4 will be closed.

All Southeast Rim campsites and Northeast (NE) campsites 4 and 5 will also be close.

Technical rock climbing on rock faces near known peregrine eyries, as posted, will not be allowed between February 1 and July 15.

For more information, visit www.nps.gov/bibe.

AGRITOURISM

AS A TESTAMENT to growing interest in agritourism, PBS’ new weekly television series “**America’s Heartland**” features segments on Texas in at least four of its episodes and examines why the areas appeal to visitors and tourists.

The **King Ranch** near **Kingsville**, **Aloe King Farms** in **Harlingen**, the **sugar cane industry** and the **Texas A&M research facility** in **Weslaco**, and the **Del Monte Spinach plant** in **Crystal City** were each featured in five-minute segments of the program.

The Office of the Governor, Economic Development & Tourism, along with their public relations agency, Vollmer PR, assisted the program producers in February and March 2005 to shoot these segments.

“Trends in travel information that we are seeing lately points to the fact that people are looking for more experiential travel,” says Janice Langlains of Vollmer. “Experiencing and working on farms and ranches fits the bill for many travelers, and there has been a concerted effort, by the Texas Department of Agriculture and the Office of the Governor, Economic Development and Tourism, to provide opportunities for land owners in the rural areas to broaden their business ventures into the tourism area.”

“Some of the more popular draws in Texas are dude and working ranches, fruit farms, festivals and wineries,” Langlains says.

The bonus is that “America’s Heartland” airs on PBS stations in more than 150 television markets in the nation, and each program airs an average of 3 times per station. The media value of the four episodes tops \$1 million.

Because air dates and times vary by market, visit www.americasheartland.org for details.

RODEO ROUNDUP

IT’S RODEO season and cities across the state are gearing themselves for the annual **influx of visitors** that come in for the roping, riding and entertainment.

“A lot of people come to town for this,” says Fort Worth Convention and Visitors Bureau research director Jerry Thiel says about the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo. “The last attendance number I heard for the stock show was 900,000, and that’s a lot of hotel rooms, not to mention food and alternate entertainment.”

And when the stakes are raised, big prize money keeps them coming back. San Angelo Rodeo Chairman Mark Duncan says, “We reward our competitors, as a result, we have the best of the best competing in San Angelo.”

Coming up:

Jan. 13–Feb 5: Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo is the world’s original indoor rodeo. Call (817) 877-2400 or visit www.fwstockshowrodeo.com.

Feb. 3–19: San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo events are followed with headliner musical performances. Voted 2005 PRCA Indoor Rodeo of the Year. Call (210) 225-5851 or visit www.sarodeo.com.

Feb. 16–26: The San Angelo Stock Show & Rodeo (7th in the nation — between Fort Worth and Reno — in prize payout) boosts local economy and scholarship money for local students. Call (325) 653-5622 or visit www.sanangelorodeo.com.

Feb. 28–March 19: Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, is the second largest festival/fair in the nation, and includes parade, barbecue cook-off, carnival and nightly big-name entertainment. Call (832) 667-1000 or visit www.rodeohouston.com or www.hlsr.com.

March 11–25: Star of Texas Fair and Rodeo in Austin features rodeo events, concerts, pageants, carnival and more. Call (512) 919-3000 or visit www.staroftexas.org.

SPORTS TOURISM

ASHAKE UP in the **soccer** world was bad news for the Bay Area, which lost its Major League Soccer team, the **San Jose**

Earthquakes, but the fallout is good news for **Houston**, the immediate **new home for the team**. All the players and coaches will follow the team; only the name, team colors and records stay behind.

The yet-to-be-named team will begin playing at University of Houston's Robertson Stadium once the season kicks off on April 1. The stadium, which recently underwent massive renovations, will serve as a three-year temporary home. Plans are for a public-private partnership to build a permanent soccer-specific stadium complex in Houston. One possibility is a facility that would be shared with the Houston Independent School District at the site of the district's Delmar Stadium at U.S. 290 and Loop 610.

Team owner Anschutz Entertainment Group also owns three other MLS teams — Chicago Fire, Los Angeles Galaxy and New York City area's MetroStars — as well as sports venues like the Staples Center in Los Angeles. AEG feels Houston is a market that will quickly get behind the team.

"We came here, and we start fresh," AEG President and CEO Tim Leiweke said at a Houston City Hall welcoming ceremony. "The good news is for Houston: This is not an expansion team."

Houston Mayor Bill White is excited that the city will now be on the map of worldwide professional soccer.

This team acquisition now gives Texas two MLS teams, including Frisco's FC Dallas, which recently hosted the MLS Cup in November.

For more information, visit houston.mlsnet.com (no www).

HUNTSVILLE will host the **American Amateur Baseball Congress 2006 Stan Musial World Series** (held in Battle Creek, MI for the last 60-plus years). Fourteen games will be played in Huntsville at Sam Houston State University, during the World Series Aug. 17-20. Participants will be coming from eight states, with each team bringing coaches and friends to Huntsville. For more information, call the Huntsville Convention & Visitors Bureau at 800-289-0389 or visit www.huntsvilletexas.com.

YEAR OF THE MUSEUM

IN A NATIONAL effort to help people understand the contributions museums make and to encourage people to experience and support local museums, 2006 has been dubbed the Year of the Museum, according to the American Association of Museums.

Recognizing this, PBS will be airing a documentary special in May entitled, *Riches, Rivals and Radicals: 100 Years of Museums in America*. The focus is on people and social changes that have shaped museums.

Texas is loaded with diverse offerings, including these upcoming exhibits:

Museum of the Big Bend, Alpine: *2006 Trappings of Texas* (cowboy gear and art), Feb. 25–April 16. www.sulross.edu/~museum.

LBJ Library and Museum, Austin: *The Vietnam Experience: A Visual Sense of the Vietnam War through the Eyes of Navy Combat Artists*, through May 29. www.lbjlib.utexas.edu.

Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, Canyon: *Common Ground, Sacred Spaces: The Art and Symbolism of Amarillo's Llano Cemetery*, through May 21; and *Revealing Character: Robb Kendrick's Texas Photographs*, Mar 3–May 28. www.panhandleplains.org.

African American Museum, Dallas: *Dust Off Your Feet and Keep On Dancing*, through Mar 5. www.aamdallas.org.

Fort Worth Museum of Science and History: *Lone Star Dinosaurs*, opens May 28 (ongoing). www.fwmuseum.org.

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth: *Gauguin and Impressionism*, through March 26. www.kimbellart.org.

Holocaust Museum, Houston: 10th anniversary rededication ceremony on March 5 to celebrate years of outreach, education, honor and remembrance. www.hmh.org.

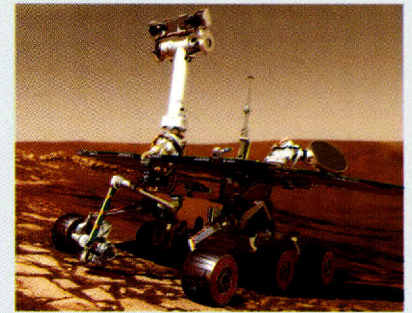
San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts: *Treasures & Pleasures, 20 Years of Collecting at the San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts*, through March 26. www.samfa.org.

San Antonio Museum of Art: *Retratos: 2,000 Years of Latin American Portraits*, Feb. 4 through April 30. www.samuseum.org.

For more information, visit the Texas Association of Museums at www.io.com/~tam.

TAKE A TRIP TO MARS

YOU MIGHT never get to Mars, but with the size and clarity of the IMAX screen, visitors can go on an exclusive adventure to explore the Red Planet's landscape through the eyes of the Mars Rovers — Spirit and Opportunity. The



New IMAX release — "Roving Mars" — gives public a rare experience.

screenings, which run through July 27 at selected IMAX theaters, offer a bit of drama as the Rovers explore the rugged terrain.

In accompaniment, the **Fort Worth Museum of Science and History's Omni Theater** is offering Mars-Immersion fun and learning on Saturday afternoons through Feb. 25 with Rover Races, samplings of astronaut food, tactile exploration of simulated Mars soil, telescope building projects and more.

For more information, visit www.imax.com.

BLACK HISTORY

BLACK History Month is being honored in the state's Capital with **film and music festivals**, as well as **exhibits** that pay tribute to the group's rich history and culture.

Through March 4, **Marching on: Independent African-American Films from 1935-1950** highlights the role of Black films in this country's history. Carver Museum, The Texas Union Theatre and Bass Concert Hall on the University of Texas campus host screenings and The Carver Museum and UT's Center for American Studies feature corresponding exhibits. For more information, visit www.utexas.edu/events/marchingon.

The Carver Museum also brings popular performers like Ruthie Foster and Lavelle White to headline for the **Legends of Black Music Festival** held every Thursday in February and March. For more information, visit www.ci.austin.tx.us/carver.

The Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum showcases **A Slave Ship Speaks: The Wreck of the Henrietta Marie** from Feb. 11–April 15. The exhibit includes artifacts recovered from the wreck of the British merchant slave ship, which sank off the coast of Key West in 1700. A free lecture, *Race, Memory and the Museum*, and a screening of the HBO documentary *Unchained*

Memories: Readings from the Slave Narratives as retold by noted African-American actors are also slated. For more information, visit www.thestoryoftexas.com.

NEW FACES

EL PASO is beefing up its cultural and heritage tourism initiatives with two new faces at the helm: **Veronica Castro** and **Yolanda R. Alameda**.

Castro and Alameda will be working closely together to better showcase the region's art and cultural activities.

Castro, who previously worked with the El Paso Convention & Visitors Bureau, rejoins the office to serve as the Senior Sales Manager for Tourism Development. Her concentration is building leisure tourism for Destination El Paso and the El Paso region. Alameda, the new Director of Museum and Cultural Affairs for the City of El Paso, is charged with the city's three public museums — El Paso Museum of Art, El Paso Museum of Archaeology at Wilderness Park and the Museum of History of El Paso — as well as the city's public art program, funding programs, citywide presentations and gallery programs.

For more information on El Paso, call (915) 534-0601 or (800) 351-6024, or visit www.elpasocvb.com.

TEXAS TRIVIA

Who was the first celebrity to utter the words, "Don't Mess With Texas," for the Texas Department of Transportation's litter prevention campaign?

The late blues guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughan was the first celebrity to utter the words "Don't Mess with Texas" in the campaign's first public service announcement, which debuted during the Cotton Bowl in 1986. According to www.dontmesswithtexas.org, the original ad campaign tapped into "Texas' effusive sense of state pride with a slogan that doesn't say 'please.'" "Don't Mess with Texas" kick started what became the nation's preeminent litter prevention initiative. Thirty-three different TV concepts have since been produced featuring more than 20 Texas musicians, athletes and actors.

TEXAS TRIVIA

TEXAS TRAVELOG is published monthly by the Texas Department of Transportation, Travel Division. Please send news items of interest to the Texas travel industry to *Texas Travelog*, P.O. Box 141009, Austin, TX 78714-1009. (512) 486-5874, fax (512) 486-5879. E-mail: trv-log@dot.state.tx.us. Deadline for each newsletter is the 15th of the month preceding the issue date.

EDITOR: Lois M. Rodriguez DESIGN/LAYOUT: Kirsti Harms

♻️ PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTERS

VISITOR NUMBERS as of December 31, 2005

TRAVEL CENTER	Month Visitors	Percent Variation*	Year-to-Date Visitors	Percent Variation*
AMARILLO	6,049	-7.68	104,652	-10.35
ANTHONY	15,279	+34.55	161,372	+9.66
CAPITOL	6,655	+24.23	89,340	-2.20
DENISON	35,615	+2.88	457,706	+3.06
GAINESVILLE	33,469	+32.94	392,901	+38.69
LANGTRY	3,216	-32.39	63,176	-14.10
LAREDO	11,664	+2.66	128,963	-10.87
ORANGE	42,853	-6.50	599,807	-2.44
TEXARKANA	31,749	-13.11	525,332	+0.93
VALLEY	14,509	-8.25	204,806	+2.33
WASKOM	44,742	+8.18	589,625	+4.42
WICHITA FALLS	11,802	+5.61	184,051	+2.20
CENTER TOTALS	257,602	+3.09	3,501,731	+3.57

*Compared to last year

Dial toll-free (800) 452-9292 for travel assistance from
 TxDOT's Texas Travel Information Centers
 (8 a.m.-6 p.m. daily, Central Time)

www.traveltext.com • www.texashighways.com
 • www.dontmesswithtexas.org

FORWARDING AND RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED
 ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

TRAVEL DIVISION
 P.O. BOX 149249
 AUSTIN, TX 78714-9249