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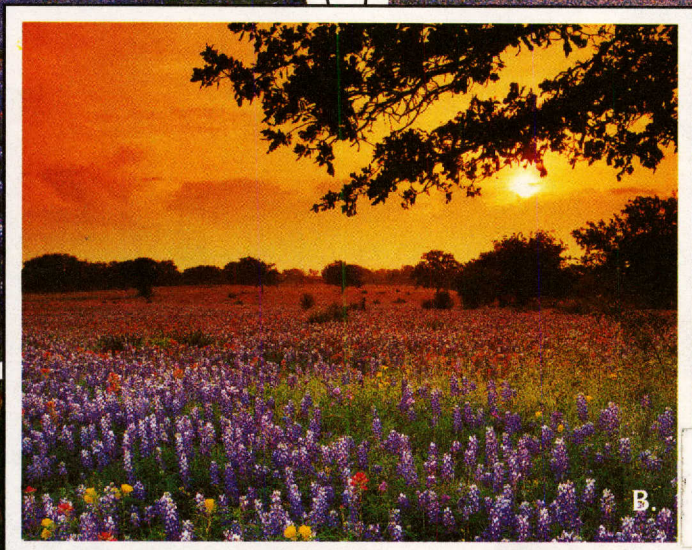
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THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE OF TEXAS

TEXAS

HIGHWAYS

APRIL 1998

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As I write this in late February, we're hoping spring brings a bumper crop of **wildflowers**, and, given the rainy conditions this winter, we think 1998 could produce many memorable landscapes as you travel Texas. It might be a great year, in fact, to pick up your camera and try to accomplish a little more with your wildflower photography than you may have done in the past.

To help you create better pictures, we asked a handful of top-flight wildflower photographers for their expert advice. Our thanks go to regular contributors **Stephan Myers, Earl Nottingham, Laurence Parent**, and **Richard Reynolds**, and to British nature photographer **Dr. Heather Angel**, all of whom shared their photo tips with our readers. Between them, these photographers have contributed to hundreds of magazine and newspaper articles, books, calendars, and posters.

This issue also includes a story by Austin writer **Rosemary Williams** on **Wildseed Farms**, a business that specializes in mail-order wildflower seeds, and also welcomes visitors to its retail outlet, where you can walk among the wildflowers, watch seed harvests in progress, and buy flowers, photographs, stationery, clothing, foods, and seed packages. We hope you enjoy the story and learn from founder **John Thomas'** years of horticultural experience.

John offers sound advice on establishing wildflowers on any acreage. He has served as a consultant for several state roadside planting programs, including that of the Texas Department of Transportation; his company is the world's largest supplier of bulk seed for Texas bluebonnets, Texas paintbrush, and other wildflowers; and his mail-order business has grown to the point that it plans to print and distribute some 800,000 copies of the functional (and fun) *Wildflower Reference Guide & Seed Catalog* this year.

For bluebonnet fans, April is the time to visit the Hill Country around the town of **Mason**, where you'll also find a cache of Western heritage and Texas topaz. Tyler-based photojournalist **Randy Mallory** takes us on a tour of the county's picturesque roadsides dotted with rock fences, flanked by farms and ranches, and punctuated with cozy bed-and-breakfast establishments,

appetizing eateries, and must-see sites....

In April 1598, Spanish explorer **Don Juan de Oñate** and his 600-strong entourage arrived at the Rio Grande and feasted in thanks for their survival. Was this ceremony the first such feast in today's United States? The debate rages on. By some accounts, Francisco Vásquez de Coronado celebrated his party's good fortune in Palo Duro Canyon in 1541. The marker the Texas Historical Commission installed east of Canyon in 1973 states, "*According to legend*, Fray Juan de Padilla conducted a feast of Thanksgiving for the [Coronado] group while in Palo Duro Canyon."

So, as **Gene Fowler's** story suggests, **El Paso** can lay credible claim to the **first Thanksgiving** in the present United States, an event commemorated this year on April 24-26—400 years after the original celebration—with a Quadricentennial Festival, a Quadricentennial Gala, the San Elizario First Thanksgiving Festival, and two museum exhibits that run until May 31 and June 28....

Associate editor **Nola McKey** and photographer **Wyman Meinzer** of Benjamin take us on a cultural tour of **Lubbock** this month. Nola wanted readers to have a sense of Lubbock's unexpected offerings, and she regrets she could not mention even more of the city's notable artists and venues. Nola holds a special place in her heart for Lubbock, as she lived there for eight years before joining our staff in Austin.

By the way, if you enjoy the flowers this month, we think you'll relish next month's flowers, as well. In the May issue, Nola, Wyman, and Richard Reynolds team up to tout **West Texas wildflowers**, which is one reason you won't find wildflower photos from the region in this month's magazine....

Be sure to fill out and send us the **readers' poll** bound between pages 8 and 9! We value your opinion and want to tally your votes. Results will appear in the November and December issues this year.

Here's to Flower Power!



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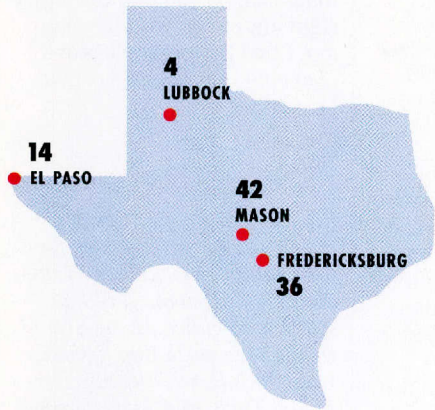
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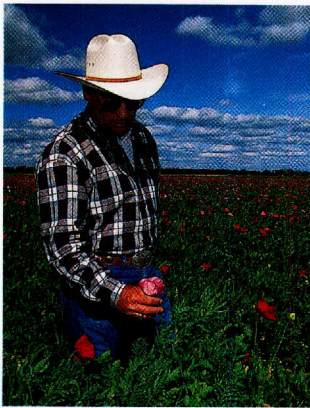


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Sites in This Issue



page 36



page 14



ABOUT OUR COVERS

FRONT—A field in McCulloch County blooms with bluebonnets, horsemint, gaillardia, phlox, pepperweed, and yellow evening primrose. For a colorful display of more spring bloomers, accompanied by tips from some of Texas' top wildflower photographers, turn to page 18. *Photo © Richard Reynolds*

BACK—A lone bluebonnet rises in a Burnet County pasture. Many photographers are loath to reveal their favorite shooting spots, but Texas offers ample photo opportunities every spring. *Photo © Dennis Flaherty*

FEATURES

4

CULTURE ON THE CAPROCK by Nola McKey

Wipe off your dusty image of Lubbock, and head to the South Plains hub for great music, art, and theater. The 20th annual Lubbock Arts Festival this month provides a sampling

6

LUBBOCK IN ANY LANGUAGE by Meredith McClain

When a Texas Tech University folk dance troupe touring Germany stumbled across a village called Lubbock Town, the discovery set into motion a stimulating intercultural exchange

9

STUBB'S: BARBECUE AND BLUES by Mary Beth Olson

Past and present Lubbock musicians treasure their memories of barbecue master C.B. Stubblefield, who created a musical legacy at his restaurant

14

THANKSGIVING IN APRIL? IT MUST BE EL PASO by Gene Fowler

After a grueling trek across the Chihuahuan Desert, Spanish explorers reached the Rio Grande in April 1598 and celebrated the first Thanksgiving on U.S. soil

18

WILDFLOWERS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS by Jack Lowry

They're baaack... and they're beautiful. If you're wild about flowers, you can capture Texas' bounty of blooms on film with advice from photography pros

36

WILDSEED INDEED! by Rosemary Williams

Take a walk on the Wildseed—Wildseed Farms near Fredericksburg, that is, where you can tiptoe through the tansy, bluebonnets, cosmos, and more. You can also pick your own bouquets, find beautiful gifts, and buy wildflower seed by the ounce or pound

42

TRUE BLUE by Randy Mallory

In spring, Mason County comes alive with color. Wildflower-lined lanes wind through history-rich hamlets and lead to myriad attractions—from antiques to topaz—in downtown Mason



DEPARTMENTS

2 LETTERS

3 SPEAKING OF TEXAS

50 FUN FORECAST

54 FOR THE ROAD

56 TEXCETERA

57 WINDOW ON TEXAS



© WYMAN MEINZER

The Godbold Cultural Center, at 2601 19th Street in Lubbock, keeps a watchful eye on the city's arts scene (see story, page 4), offering concerts and art exhibitions. Call 806/741-1953.

Readers: Thank you for the dozens and dozens of huzzahs for December's owl cover. As Joan Morrison Bechtel of Midland wrote, "The eyes have it!"

Texas Elsewhere

I have a newspaper snapshot that shows a placename sign that reads "Gr. Oesingen —Ortsteil [part of] Texas"! The part of Grosse Oesingen named Texas is a little country hamlet located in... Lower Saxony between Braunschweig and Hamburg. It is said that this settlement was founded about 70 years ago by German emigrants and colonists, who returned from the U.S.A. and chose the name "Texas" in commemoration of their stay in the U.S. West. It is unknown why they returned [here], [whether it was] forced by good or bad luck. In any case, they wished to keep Texas in their minds and in those of their descendants.

PETER OSTERHOLT
Braunschweig, Germany

We would like to bring to your attention a photogenic place important to Texas history that happens to be outside of Texas. The place is Austinville, Virginia. [The town] in Wythe County, about 30 miles southeast of Wytheville, is the birthplace of Stephen F. Austin. His father, Moses Austin, ran the lead mines there [from about 1789 to 1798]. There is a new marker [commemorating Stephen F. Austin] at Austinville in a lovely spot by the New River.

TOM AND CARILYN BAKER
Chantilly, Virginia

Nitty Gritty

February's "Dazzling Dunes" was super special. I am not a religious fanatic, but man cannot create such awesome works of art.

LOUISE M. LA PORTE
Palmetto, Georgia

It is often said that the location of the "sand hills," as we called them, is the highest point on the Texas Gulf Coast. The site at Ingleside is named

COURTESY MATTHIAS WALLISER



McGloin's Bluff for an empresario who brought settlers into Texas when it was a Mexican state.

I was especially interested in the requirement of a 14-mph wind to lift the smallest grain of sand. That is why the sand dunes continually moved inland, swallowing the live oak brush. When blue northers came, the sand moved back toward the bay.

[We used to play] in the sand hills' hot, white sand. Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts had many encampments nearby. I remember a treasure hunt that led us to mottes of live oak that hadn't been covered by the shifting sand, and the last clue was a bottle floating in Corpus Christi Bay indicating the treasure was tubs filled with ice and cold drinks back at our starting point.

At some time, the sand was sold and trucked away to an optical company. The high point is still there, with some white sand, but nothing like the grandeur of old.

W. EARL NELSON, *via email*

Red Velvet Romance

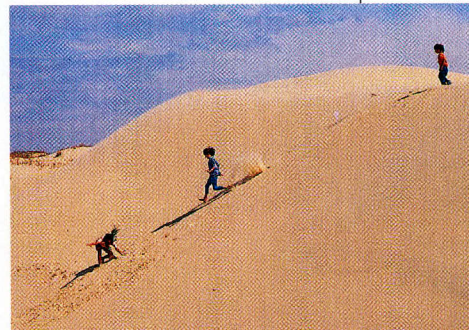
The Adams Extract article by Sheryl Smith-Rodgers, [with the] photograph of the Red Velvet Cake by J. Griffis Smith, is prominently displayed in the Kelly household. For more than 36 years, this cake has been known in our family as the Phoebe Ann Cake. In

The Lone Star State has a namesake settlement in Lower Saxony.

1961, while attending the University of Texas, I met this beautiful red-headed girl named

Phoebe Ann. Within a few weeks of dating, she baked the wonderful Red Velvet Cake and gave it to me. Needless to say, I got on a "sugar high," and we married just five months later. We now have two children in their thirties who still demand the Red Velvet Cake for special occasions. Whenever anyone is in the mood for Phoebe Ann's cake, I am sent to the store to buy the Adams Extract Red Food Color. Today, I love the cake and my wonderful wife more than I did in 1961.

RICHARD J. KELLY
Austin



© STEPHAN MEYERS

February's sandy photo spread evoked memories and emotions.

Songwriters' Paradise

Your February article on musicians and musical gatherings makes one want to head straight for Texas. How about a feature on one of Texas' musical treasures—Jimmie Dale Gilmore. Not only is he a fine

musician, he can pull the heart right out of you with his singing. I had the great pleasure of seeing him in concert last December.

KATHRYN CLARE
Clancy, Montana

Ed. Note: *If you like Texas music and musicians, look for June's story on a vintage Texas dance hall. Gruene Hall has spotlighted many a Lone Star troubadour, including Jimmie Dale. In July, we'll feature Ernest Tubb, and August brings a story on Buddy Holly.*

Hot Topics

Being a forester, I wish to point out to your readers that the back cover of the March issue portrays a pine that has been scorched by a wildfire or a prescribed burn and has subsequently shed some of the outer bark platelets, giving the bark a marked contrast.

LARRY TREKELL
San Augustine

In your February issue, there is an article by Gene Fowler titled "There's Somethin' in the Water." He lists various mineral/sulphur springs resorts from Texas' past. All but one (at least): Sutherland Springs had

a large hot and cold mineral/sulphur springs resort in the early 1900s—from 1909 until about 1928—called the "Saratoga of the South."

KAREN FARMER, *via email*

Ed. Note: *Thanks for writing. When we publish broad stories such as the one on spas, we can't possibly include everything. That's why we appreciate hearing from folks like you. By the way, Gene Fowler devotes several pages to Sutherland Springs in his comprehensive book Crazy Water, the Story of Mineral Wells and Other Texas Health Resorts.*

If you would like to write to *Texas Highways*, the editors would enjoy hearing from you. Though we are unable to print every letter, we just might select yours to appear in the magazine—whether you send us kudos or criticism. We reserve the right to edit letters we print. Write to Letters Editor, *Texas Highways*, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009, or fax 512/483-3672. Email: editors@texashighways.com

Kidnapped by Apaches in 1870, Herman Lehmann spent almost a decade living with the Indians and the rest of his life clinging to Indian ways.

During a raid in Mason County, Apaches captured Herman, then 10, and Willie, his younger brother. Willie escaped after a few days.

Herman's captor, Carnoviste, adopted the boy, who, after severe initiations, became a warrior. He participated in raids in Texas and Mexico and battled Comanches and Texas Rangers. During a fight within the tribe that left Carnoviste dead, Herman killed a medicine man to avenge the death. To escape punishment, he left the tribe and, after much wandering, joined the Comanches. Eventually, Chief Quanah Parker (the son of another famous Anglo captive, Cynthia Ann Parker) adopted Herman.

After the Comanches surrendered at Fort Sill, Oklahoma (in 1875), Army officials returned Herman against his will to his family in Loyal Valley (see map, page 49). By then 20 years old, he had to learn English and relearn his boyhood German. Though he married twice and fathered five children, he never completely readapted to Anglo ways. For the rest of his life, he preferred sleeping on the floor, and he often dressed in Indian garb. The latter habit, his easygoing personality, and public exhibitions of his roping and riding skills helped make him a Hill Country celebrity.

In later life, Herman met some of the men he had battled in earlier days, and, as a Comanche, he was given land in Oklahoma by the U.S. government. He died in February 1932 and was buried in Loyal Valley near his parents.

—Cindi Myers, Wimberley

Eighty years ago this month, a baby mule captured the hearts of Battery "E," 15th Field Artillery,

of the U.S. Army and gave embattled soldiers hope. Born in France in 1918 during the thick of World War I, Verdun the Mule soon became the 15th's mascot.

Verdun's mother foaled at 3 a.m. on April 16 while the Second Division was fighting a fierce battle with the Ger-

mans. Only four hours earlier, the mare had hauled shells to the front line. Stable Sergeant Norman Kendall, armed with a nursing bottle, took charge of caring for the baby, whom the soldiers named in honor of the months-long Battle of Verdun of 1916. Within a few days of her birth, Miss Verdun, as the mule was sometimes called, found the strength to walk some 15 miles to a resting area, her hooves wrapped in burlap for

protection. Later, she accompanied the 15th during many famous battles, including those at Belleau Wood (where her dam was killed in action) and Argonne Forest, and she marched with the Army of Occupation into the Rhineland.

When the war ended, military animals were left behind because of U.S. quarantine regulations. But somehow, Verdun made it back to the United States. According to legend, dotting soldiers hid her inside the regimental bass drum. Whatever the means of transport, when Verdun arrived in New York, both she and Sergeant Kendall were arrested and the mule put under six months' quarantine. At the end of that time, she (and, presumably earlier, the sergeant) was released. When Battery "E" was mustered out, she was honorably discharged ("character excellent"). She reenlisted in December 1919 in Battery "A" and spent the remainder of her days at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. According to a 1967 report, veterans of

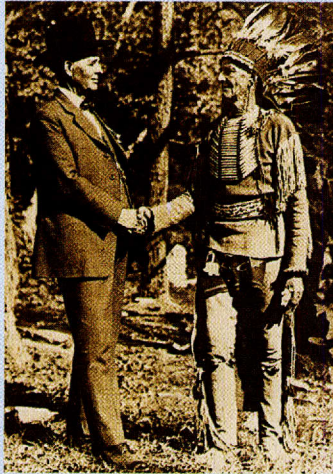
the 15th groomed and petted the mule "with more care than is usually accorded a noted screen beauty."

At Fort Sam, Verdun had a close friend, a burro named Raggedy Ann. Born on the post on Armistice Day in 1921, Raggedy Ann was the mascot of Battery "F," 12th Field Artillery. Unfortunately, the equine friendship came to an untimely end in 1923 when several pack mules, said to despise burros, attacked and killed Raggedy Ann while the two companions were grazing in a field. Verdun, loyal to the end, intervened with uncharacteristic viciousness, but proved unable to save her comrade.

Raggedy Ann was buried with full military honors. Verdun, bearing the burro's little saddle, its pommel facing rearward, followed the caisson transporting her friend's body. The regimental band played "Caissons Go Rolling Along" during the procession. A wreath of roses and alfalfa graced the burial site on Pershing Field. As the casket was lowered into the ground, guns fired a salute, and the battery bugler sounded "Taps."

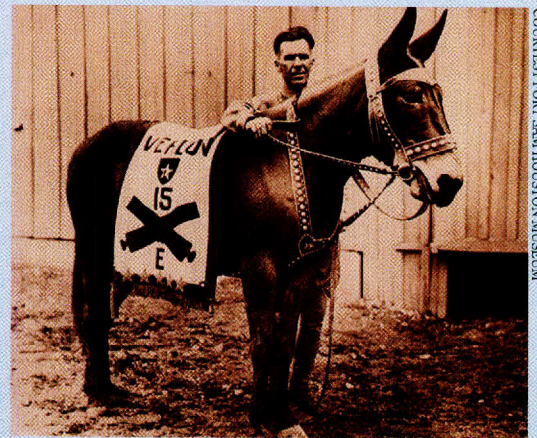
Verdun outlived her friend by 11 years. She breathed her last on Memorial Day in 1934, while members of the 15th were paying tribute to their compatriots who had died fighting in France. No doubt Verdun's burial proved at least as touching as Raggedy Ann's.

—Ann Gallaway



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Herman Lehmann (1859-1932), right, spent his adolescence among the Indians and never entirely readapted to Anglo ways.



COURTESY FORT SAM HOUSTON MUSEUM

Verdun the Mule (1918-1934) so captured the hearts of some World War I soldiers that they risked imprisonment for their mascot's sake.

WITH A TOP-RATED ARTS FESTIVAL, AN ARRAY OF YEAR-ROUND

Culture on



ATTRactions, AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION TO SPARE, LUBBOCK OFFERS

the Caprock

BY NOLA McKEY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WYMAN MEINZER

Like MOST CITIES, LUBBOCK HAS MANY FACES. People passing through, who see the surrounding cotton fields, the laid-back traffic, and the occasional tumbleweed blowing across Loop 289, sometimes conclude that the South Plains metropolis has little to offer in the way of arts and entertainment. But those who look a little deeper discover another side of Lubbock, one that reflects a cultural legacy as brilliant as a West Texas sunset.

Local writer and musician Andy Wilkinson provides a primer on the big picture: "Lubbock has been a crossroads on the Llano Estacado, or the South Plains, for thousands of years. The Lubbock Lake Landmark on the northwest edge of town records more than 11,000 continuous years of habitation in that one little spot. Because it grew to be the biggest city in the region, Lubbock is the hub of the South Plains," says Andy. "That's not to say that it's a better place than smaller towns. It just means that if you're a writer or an artist in Slaton or Muleshoe, at some point, you're going to have a connection with this town."

Surrounded by the Llano Estacado's sweeping vistas, Paul Milosevich paints on the edge of the Caprock near Lubbock. The city boasts more than its share of artistic talent, prompting speculation about "the Lubbock mystique."

Lubbock

IN ANY LANGUAGE

BY MEREDITH McCLAIN

You can visit Paris, Moscow, Rome, and New London without ever leaving the Lone Star State. But how many Texas towns can boast of having a namesake across the Atlantic?

In the summer of 1983, while touring overseas, a German folk dance troupe from Texas Tech University learned of a little place outside Cologne called Lubbock Town, a rural Old West village near the Rhine River. Delighted, the group visited Lubbock Town and discovered it had been named some 10 years earlier for the city on Texas' South Plains. So began the revival of an almost-forgotten German-Texan connection and the awakening of a lively cultural exchange.

Although Lubbock Town was established in the 1970s, the story of its origin begins much earlier, with the writings of the prolific 19th-Century German novelist Karl May. The author (whose name is

pronounced MY) set many of his books on the Llano Estacado, the broad expanse stretching from northwestern Texas into eastern New Mexico. They featured two main characters, a German frontiersman named Old Shatterhand and his blood brother, Winnetou, a noble young Mescalero Apache chief. Vivid descriptions of the exotic terrain accompanied plots in which the forces of good always triumphed.

Best-sellers in the 1880s and '90s, the books made May a millionaire and the best-known German author by the time of his death in 1912. Scholars think the popularity of his novels, more than anything else, explains the longstanding German fascination with the American West and the allure of the Llano Estacado among Germans both past and present.

Old West enthusiasts in Germany founded the Old Munich Cowboy Club, the first of that country's Western clubs, one year after May's death. A few other clubs soon followed, but

the pattern became a trend after World War II, when many West Germans, intrigued by America, were looking for weekend escapes. Today, hundreds of clubs exist, with a total membership of perhaps 50,000.

Of those hundreds of clubs, few have been as fortunate as the "Western-Indianer-Freunde" ("Western and Indian Friends") Club of Cologne, whose members built the village discovered by those Texas Tech dancers. After incorporating in 1957 with the goal of learning more about the American West, the club's original 38 members began traveling on weekends to a rural site seven hours outside of town. In 1972, they moved closer to Cologne and, over time, built the elaborate village that stands today. A large saloon, blacksmith shop, sheriff's office, church, bank, printing shop, and various bungalows give the theme-town the look of a Western movie set.

With stables for horses available at an adjacent farm and green fields all around, the resort town provides an ideal setting for practicing Western skills and escaping Cologne's big-city stresses. Club members usually spend their weekends relaxing in their "hobby outfits" and refining their rid-

ing, roping, leather-tooling, and beadworking expertise. An annual spring Powwow, hosted by a different group each year, brings together club representatives from across Germany for a long weekend. Wearing authentic Western or Indian dress, the enthusiasts visit around campfires and in tipis, eat chili and drink beer (available at the saloon), ride and rope, and barter for handmade items like bows and arrows and beaded moccasins. Clubs from Belgium, Holland, and France sometimes participate, too.

So how did Lubbock Town get its name? Years ago, club member Horst Klausner visited Lubbock and liked what he saw. No doubt, the city's location on the fabled Llano Estacado influenced him as well. Back home, Horst suggested the club name their village Lubbock Town. Today, a wooden plank bearing the name and mounted between wagon wheels marks the village entrance.

While in Lubbock, Horst met then-mayor Jim Granberry. The mayor sent official greetings to the Cologne club and invited the group to visit the city for which their village was named. In September 1973, several club members flew to

Long known for spawning musical talent—Buddy Holly, Mac Davis, and Joe Ely come to mind, among others—the Lubbock area today also has lively visual arts and theater communities. "The diversity of the arts and the level of creativity you find here are just phenomenal," says George Sorensen, a local theater director and professor emeritus of the Department of Theater and Dance at Texas Tech University.

William Kerns, entertainment editor of the *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, agrees. "The tired old stereotype of Lubbock being a dry, dusty place in the middle of nowhere with nothing to do just doesn't work anymore," he says. "I'll accept that it's isolated, but that's all. In fact, it's hard for me to imagine another city this size [pop. about 200,000] that offers as much variety, not just in the traditional arts, like orchestra and ballet, but also in popular culture. There's a tremendous

number of activities to choose from."

William's weekly calendar of events in the *Avalanche-Journal* confirms the cornucopia of attractions. Regular headings include listings for music (by venue and genre), movies, theater, comedy, concerts, dance, art events, galleries, and poetry readings. When you add in the touring attractions and the numerous festivals and annual events that take place here throughout the year, the array of entertainment appears endless.



Members of the Western and Indian Friends Club, a cowboy club in Cologne, Germany, built a resort village in the 1970s and named it Lubbock Town for the city on Texas' South Plains. This photo, which dates from the village's founding days, shows members in their "hobby outfits." Current members still come here on weekends to practice their Western skills.

Lubbock, where they received cowboy hats and a City of Lubbock flag, attended a Texas Tech football game, and toured Palo Duro Canyon in a chauffeur-driven van. Before they returned home, Lubbock's new mayor, Morris Turner, proclaimed them honorary city citizens.

Despite the warm welcome, over the next 10 years, Lubbock residents and members of the Cologne club lost contact with each other. So imagine the surprise of the Texas Tech folk dancers when they came

across the town in 1983 and found Lubbock-area memorabilia—Red Raider bumper stickers, barbed wire from South Plains ranches, the Lubbock flag—decorating the saloon. Club members had never forgotten their Texas welcome, which by then had taken on legendary proportions.

In September 1993, the Southwest Center for German Studies at TTU hosted another visit for members of the Cologne club, this one timed to coincide with the annual

National Cowboy Symposium & Celebration (see "Cowboy Culture," August 1994). The 13 Germans who came loved it so much that a contingent returns for the event each year. The friendly relationship between Lubbock and Lubbock Town has also sparked reciprocal visits, including professional tours of Germany by Lubbock musicians such as classical guitarist Susan Grisanti, the Western Swing trio Blue Prairie, and mezzo-soprano Sue Arnold.

Club members have continued to improve their Old West village and now offer an open-house weekend in August that attracts thousands. Participants soak up the atmosphere, listen to live country-western music, and enjoy grilled steaks. "Rodeo parties" for children give aspiring cowboys and cowgirls the chance to ride horses and try out lasso-throwing.

On any given weekend, you can usually find at least a dozen devoted members celebrating at Lubbock Town—even in freezing winter weather. The beer kegs may be frozen, but the bourbon, tequila, and country-western music flow into the wee hours.

To keep alive this intercultural exchange, 25 members of Cologne's cowboy club will arrive in Texas this September to attend the Cowboy Symposium as guests and to celebrate the 25th anniversary of their honorary citizenship. And for the first time, the Germans will show off their riding skills in the Cowboy Symposium rodeo. Once again, Texas hospitality will embrace a group of German friends who think there's just no place like Lubbock.

MEREDITH McCLAIN is director of Texas Tech's Southwest Center for German Studies.

William, who moved to Lubbock from Irving in the 1970s, remembers when the schedule wasn't this full. However, he says, "We've never had a shortage of good live music. Lubbock has always been, and still is, a breeding ground for Austin musicians. But in the late '80s, things really started mushrooming in the other arts. I used to roll my eyes when I heard people say there was nothing to do here. Now, I'm too busy trying to cover everything to pay much attention."

LUBBOCK ARTS FESTIVAL

Spotlighting the city's role as a cultural center, the 20th annual Lubbock Arts Festival takes place April 17-19 at the South Plains Fairgrounds. The event features visual and performing artists from throughout the nation, as well as plenty of Lubbock-area talent.

Recognized by *Sunshine Artist Magazine* in 1993 as one of the nation's top 200 art events, the festival also offers

artist demonstrations; seminars by gardening and culinary experts; a wide range of children's activities, like skateboard art exhibits and kite-making; and food booths that serve culturally diverse dishes. Tip: The Indian Taco (fry-bread topped with ground beef, beans, lettuce, tomatoes, salsa, and cheese) is an Arts Festival tradition. If you want to try one, go to that booth *before* you check out the art. This concession invariably sells out early.

Last year, festival organizers moved the event from the Lubbock Civic Center to the South Plains Fairgrounds, a long-time area landmark. Buddy Holly performed numerous times on the Fair Park Coliseum stage here during the '50s, and he often opened here for other

Springs Sunset, hangs in the Bob Hope Cultural Center in Palm Springs. His latest series of weavings, called *The Spirits of Them*, reflects his respect for the Llano Estacado's history. "These tapestries honor the spirits of those who traveled this land before me, particularly

separation and divorce," she says. "The beaded pieces have a pocket on the back containing a story about the piece. This one reads, 'So one day it was time to look again and see the healing, to accept the pain for its truth, to accept myself for my truth.'



[FROM LEFT] Lubbock is home to many well-known visual artists, including sculptor Eddie Dixon, noted for his bronzes of buffalo soldiers; Future Akins, a multimedia artist shown here with one of her "spirit dolls"; James Watkins, whose pottery is displayed in two Smithsonian Institution museums; and Roméo Reyna, a fiber artist known for his large, imaginative tapestries.

musicians, including Bill Haley and Elvis Presley. Still used today, the stage is one of six in service at the festival. More than 80 acts, including classical guitarists, ballet troupes, old-time fiddlers, gospel singers, and Tejano musicians, will appear over the weekend.

Wander into the juried art exhibition areas, and you'll likely run into three notable Lubbock artists: Paul Milosevich, Roméo Reyna, and Future Akins.

Paul Milosevich, best-known for his portraits of golf legends and country music celebrities (some 80 of his portraits hang in Nashville's Songwriters Hall of Fame), says one of the things that attracted him to Lubbock was the strong light. "The light here is fabulous," he says. "It's kind of stark. It just lays everything bare, and I've always liked that.

"There's a spirit here that I like, too," adds Paul, "a kind of spirit that says a lot of things are possible...we can do it. People here are not afraid to try things."

Romé Reyna, a fiber artist who is also known for his ceramics, woodwork, and metalwork, creates large, imaginative tapestries that grace homes and commercial buildings across the nation. One of his works, the 10-by-75-foot *Palm*

the Indians who roamed Yellow House Canyon," says Roméo.

"We have a very rich culture here," he continues. "Stanley Marcus once told me that artists from this region were not Southwest artists, but Llano Estacado artists, completely unique. I hadn't thought about it until then, but I've always believed that we were original. We don't need art critics to tell us what to do. We do what we want to do."

Future Akins, a multimedia artist whose work often depicts female figures, says one of the distinctive things about all West Texas creative artists is that they often tell stories in their work. From her "spirit dolls" (bundles of twigs embellished with cloth, found objects, and discarded jewelry) to her sequin-and-bead banners, she considers her art very autobiographical.

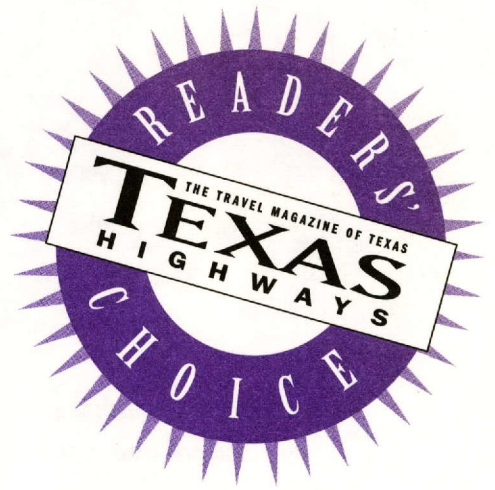
To explain, she points to a banner titled *After Goodbye*, which depicts a not-so-young woman with two streaks on her cheek and a scar on her breast. "This was a self-portrait after my

"Women are attracted to my work before they know the story," says Future. "It's not unusual for me to come up to one of my pieces at a show, especially when there's a story with it, and find women crying. What I know about my art is that I don't know how *not* to do it. And I don't know how to do it without telling the truth, the sliver of truth as I see it.

"Another distinctive thing about Lubbock artists is that we're all pretty independent," adds Future. "I think it's because of the geography—there's nothing to get in our way. On the Caprock, the sky is endless. You're high enough to see the sun come up and the sun go down, and there's nothing to distract you from what you want to do."

Andy Wilkinson, who will open for the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band when it plays at the arts festival on April 17, agrees regarding the independent nature of Lubbock's creative citizenry. "You have to remember," he says, "that this is still the frontier—this area was only settled within the last 100 years—and the

Readers! Here's your chance to voice your opinions on the Best of Texas! The top choices will appear in the magazine in November and December 1998. Just fill in the form and return it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. Provide as much information as you can, so we know exactly what you mean. For instance, if you say your favorite restaurant is The Texan, we may not know what you're talking about. So, please, tell us where the restaurant is in addition to its name. The results should be fun! Thanks for participating.



1 Texas' Number One tourist attraction is _____

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3 Texas' best annual festival or event is _____

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6 Texas' most memorable scenic drive is _____

7 Texas' best cheap tourist thrill is _____

8 Texas' best restaurant is _____

9 Texas' best place to walk or hike is _____

10 Texas' best spot for swimming is _____

11 Texas' most unusual sight or site is _____

12 Texas' best museum is _____

13 Texas' best place for a family reunion is _____

14 Texas' best town square is _____

15 Texas' best place (accessible to the public) to view spring wildflowers is _____

16 Texas' best camping spot is _____

17 Texas' best zoo is _____

18 Texas' best historic site or building is _____

19 Texas' most beautiful building is _____

20 Texas' most romantic place is _____

21 Texas' most scenic spot is _____

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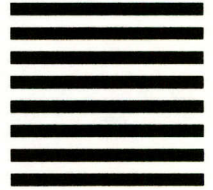
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frontier is not just a place, it's a culture. People on the frontier are egalitarian. You're important because of what you're able to do, not what kind of money you have. Your capacity as a human being is what gives you your status, and that's a very nurturing environment for art."

DEPOT DISTRICT

If you miss the arts festival in April, you can always sample a slice of Lubbock culture at some of the city's ongoing venues. The revitalized Historic Depot District, a downtown entertainment area anchored by the 1928 Fort Worth & Denver South Plains Railway Depot, specializes in that vibrant Lubbock staple, live music.

Hot spots include the 19th Street Warehouse, which brings in big-name rock-'n'-rollers like Joe Ely; the Hub City Brewery, a microbrewery known for its gourmet pizzas as well as its suds; the legendary Stubb's Bar-B-Q, where you can still eat great barbecue and enjoy rhythm-and-blues; Kyle's 88 Key Cafe, which on Saturday nights features a rowdy sing-along with owner-musician Kyle Abernathie; and Roadhouse Ruby's, where you can dance to the likes of Willie Nelson or such popular local bands as Spilling Poetry.

The heart of the district, the restored 1938 Cactus Theater, hosts live theater and musical productions year round. Popular offerings have included *The Odd Couple*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *The Rainmaker*, *Always... Patsy Cline*, and *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story* (the latter presented the last two years in association with the Buddy Holly Music Festival). The production of *Buddy's* story earned international critical acclaim.

Stubb's

BARBECUE AND BLUES

BY MARY BETH OLSON

When C.B. Stubblefield (Stubb) opened Stubb's Bar-B-Que in 1968 at 108 East Broadway in Lubbock, nobody dreamed he would become a local music legend. But over the years, Stubb's huge capacity for love and generosity earned him legions of friends in the music business, and in 1996, he became one of the first two inductees into Lubbock's Buddy Holly Terrace, which honors local contributors to the arts.

Stubb poured spirit, love, and happiness into his savory sauce and succulent hickory-smoked meat. He crammed

his old corner jukebox with vintage blues music, his favorite, and hung signs on the walls: "There Will Be No Bad Talk or Loud Talk in This Place." Stubb himself, despite his gentle nature, had an imposing presence: he stood almost 6½ feet tall.

When young guitarist Jesse Taylor saw the possibilities of a music venue in Stubb's funky joint, he approached the barbecue master with an offer to build a stage. With the stage complete, young musicians gathered to jam, and the Sunday night sessions became a tradition. Besides an audience, Stubb

gave 'cue and sides to hungry performers. And if anybody needed a bed for the night, Stubb supplied that, too.

"He would give without any strings attached," says Don Caldwell, a Lubbock

music producer and musician who did his share of jamming at Stubb's in the 1970s. "Stubb was an inspiration to all the young musicians, a real supporter." Besides Jesse and Don, Stubb's regulars included Joe Ely, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Butch Hancock, and Terry Allen. Muddy Waters, Johnny Cash, Linda Ronstadt, and Tom T. Hall, among others, also appeared there.

John Scott, Stubb's longtime friend and a partner in Stubb's Bar-B-Q in Austin, remembers when a young Stevie Ray Vaughan asked to perform at the Sunday night session for \$75, his bar bill from another gig. At Stubb's, though, entertainers worked for tips, and Stubb didn't know the future blues legend. So he checked with Joe Ely, who recommended he make an exception to his no-pay policy. Come Sunday night, Stevie Ray put on a smokin' show. Impressed, Stubb emptied the cash register of more than \$150 and, despite Stevie Ray's protests, handed it all over.

Stubb's food was his art, and he encouraged musicians to perform the way he cooked, "with heart and soul, or not at all." In the '70s, Stubb's became *the* place for live music in Lubbock, and the barbecue-music blend hooked white audiences as well as black.

In the early '80s, Stubb fell on hard times and took his special brand of barbecue and happiness to Austin. But in a 1991 interview with William Kerns, he said, "I've always been a man from Lubbock.... I'd be lying if I said I didn't want to come back someday." Fittingly, after Stubb died in Austin on May 27, 1995, at age 64, he was buried in Lubbock.

In 1997, Stubb's musician friends played two benefit "memorial jams" to raise money for a life-size bronze of their benefactor. The statue, by Terry Allen, will be erected at the East Broadway site. If Stubb were here, he'd probably respond to the tribute with his usual modest reply: "Ladies and gentlemen, I'm just a cook."

People whose lives he touched would disagree.

Former Lubbock resident MARY BETH OLSON wrote the story on artist Frank Reaugh that appeared in our April 1997 issue.



© JIM EPPLER

The late C.B. Stubblefield posed outside the original Stubb's Bar-B-Que, at 108 East Broadway, known in the '70s as the place in Lubbock for live music.

The Cactus will preview a new production, *Bye Bye Love: The Everly Brothers Musical*, the last two weekends of March and the first weekend of April. "It will be a joint venture with Nashville's historic Ryman Auditorium," explains Don Caldwell, the theater's general manager. "Ted Swindley, the writer, also wrote *Always* ... *Patsy Cline*. When he saw it at the Cactus, he was blown away. He arranged for me to meet with the manager of the Ryman, and everything just clicked for *Bye Bye Love*." The musical will debut officially in Nashville on May 14.

The Cactus also hosts nostalgic live-music revues of the Fifties, Sixties, and Seventies; special nights for Broadway, gospel, and Big Band music; and children's concerts. Don, a longtime music producer here, and his wife, Terri, who starred in *Always* ... *Patsy Cline*, produce most of the shows.

Don, who plays a mean saxophone himself, credits the Cactus' band, the Lubbock Texas Rhythm Machine, with making even the children's productions consistently professional. "It's just a great band," he says. "The leader, Steve Meador, has played with people like Carole King and Joe Ely and toured internationally. When you put kids with that band and stage them professionally, they go out and just shine.

"Our mission is to provide a showcase for the great talent in West Texas and to nurture promising careers," says Don. "When we first started, we tried a lot of different types of productions. The nostalgia angle has caught on for us, so we'll probably continue to emphasize it."

Little wonder that the nostalgia approach works. When Cactus regular Donnie Allison belts out a Buddy Holly tune like "Rave On," or when Don and his son Todd team up on saxophones to play "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy," they take the mostly-middle-aged audience back,



Performers at the Cactus Theater rehearse for a Nostalgia Nite. The logo in the background recalls the theater's presentation of *Buddy*, a highlight of previous Buddy Holly Music Festivals.

way back. The music and the costuming, along with the vintage theater's intimate atmosphere, make it easy for baby boomers to revisit old memories.

The nostalgia approach also works well with Don's aim of keeping the Cactus shows primarily family-oriented. "We have regular customers, and they expect clean, innovative productions when they come out on the weekend," says Don.

Watching a Nostalgia Nite, you get the feeling that Cactus productions are family-oriented in more ways than one. Although the band stays in place, the other six or eight artists on stage move easily from the spotlight to singing backup for fellow performers. A spirit of camaraderie pervades the high-energy shows.

The camaraderie extends to the audience, says Jeff McCreight, another frequent Cactus performer. "The people who come here come to hear music. It's wonderful to be able to sing for people like that," he says.

Junior Vasquez, who played Ritchie Valens in *Buddy* at the Cactus, echoes the sentiment. "The audience here

doesn't come to eat, to drink, to pick up somebody. So you've got to perform, to work harder. It pulls the best out of you. The crowd feels you, and you feel the crowd, and you work together. That's the magic. You get the magic of the crowd with you, and there's nothing like it."

Music fans will soon have another destination in the Depot District. The city recently purchased the Spanish Renaissance-style Depot building and plans to renovate the historic landmark for use as a music museum and fine arts center. According to Connie Gibbons, the city's fine arts director, a permanent exhibit on Buddy Holly and West Texas music will feature more than 150 vintage Buddy items that the city bought in 1994. The collection includes the singer's Fender Stratocaster guitar, a black book containing song lyrics in the singer's handwriting, Buddy's personal record collection, and fan letters mailed with three-cent stamps.

Connie, who sometimes jokes "If Lubbock weren't here, Austin wouldn't have a music scene," says other West Texas musicians will receive their share of the



[LEFT TO RIGHT] The city's status as Buddy Holly's birthplace attracts visitors from all over the world, many of whom make the statue of Buddy, near the Civic Center, their first stop. Nearby, TTU's International Cultural Center features a globe that makes a complete revolution each 24 hours.

limelight in the permanent exhibit. Expected to open in the summer of 1999, the new venue will also house the Fine Arts Center gallery and a smaller community gallery.

BUDDY HOLLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

The 3rd annual Buddy Holly Music Festival will take place September 4-6 (usually the weekend closest to Buddy's birthday, September 7), and like its predecessors, it promises plenty of rock-'n'-roll and '50s nostalgia. (Look for a story on the festival in the August 1998 issue.)

LEGENDARY LUBBOCK

If you're a Buddy Holly fan, you'll want to stop by the Lubbock Convention and Tourism Bureau office (14th and Avenue K) to pick up a brochure for the self-guided Buddy Holly Historic Tour. The brochure directs visitors to 14 local sites, including Buddy's grave in the city cemetery and his alma mater, Lubbock High School (look for

the Buddy Holly display near the office).

The last stop on the tour, the Buddy Holly Walk of Fame in front of the Civic Center, features a larger-than-life-size statue of Buddy playing a guitar. Bronze plaques honoring other West Texas musicians and artists such as Waylon Jennings, Roy Orbison, Tanya Tucker, and Paul Milosevich encircle the statue's base.

Santa Fe sculptor Glenna Goodacre, a Lubbock native famed for her *Vietnam Women's Memorial* in Washington, D.C., was inducted into the Walk of Fame during the 1997 Buddy Holly Music Festival. Glenna says her roots have definitely influenced her art. "Because of my West Texas upbringing, I'm a realist," she says. "But I was always more interested in the rancher than the ranch. I concentrate on realistic figures that people can identify with."

Terry Allen, another 1997 Walk of Fame inductee, also grew up in Lubbock and, like Glenna, now lives in Santa Fe, where he works as both sculptor and musician. Best known during his West Texas days for his musical talent, Terry now has an international reputation for

his life-size bronzes, which art critics have described as both humorous and thought-provoking.

CULTURE WITH A CAPITAL C

Like most cities with a large university, Lubbock boasts a full slate of traditional arts venues—symphony, ballet, opera, theater, museums. "The city serves as a cultural center for West Texas and eastern New Mexico, so events here pull in people from outside the area, as well as Lubbock residents," says William Kerns.

"Of course, we're extremely lucky to have the caliber of artists we have at Texas Tech," he adds. William cites several examples. He notes that voice instructors John and Mary Gillas in Texas Tech's music department have trained singers who have gone on to perform in opera and musical theater all over the world. Mary Jeanne van Appledorn, the university's unofficial resident composer, consistently wins international composing competitions. Clarinetist Robert Walzel and pianist Wil-



The Southwest Collection's new building on the Texas Tech campus houses an outstanding array of books, photographs, and oral histories. The library's records of the ranching industry rank among the most complete in the world. Its Vietnam archive is the second largest in the nation.

liam Westney have both toured worldwide. Art professor Lahib Jaddo is well known internationally for her large oils. Architecture professor and ceramics artist James Watkins has work on display in the White House Craft Collection, as well as in the Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park in Japan.

"Apart from the university," William adds, "we have excellent community organizations like the Lubbock Symphony Orchestra, which has been around for more than 50 years, the Lubbock Chorale, and several active community theaters. Ballet Lubbock has a magnificent new studio and rehearsal area and appears to be on the verge of another dynamic season. When you put all that together, along with the national touring musicals that come our way, it's enough to keep area arts patrons smiling all year long."

While audiences here support the traditional arts, they tend to turn out in record numbers when an event has a South Plains slant. Theater-goers still talk about Andy Wilkinson's one-man play, *Charlie Goodnight's Last Night*, presented at the 1996 arts festival. The historically accurate play, which starred Lamesa native Barry Corbin of *Lonesome Dove* and *Northern Exposure* fame, grew out of an album Andy wrote and recorded about his distant uncle, pioneer trail-



One of the state's largest universities, Texas Tech contributes much to Lubbock's cultural mix. Red streamers adorning the Will Rogers statue signify a home-game weekend.

driver and cattleman Charles Goodnight.

Andy's newest play, to debut the first weekend in May, promises another memorable experience. Set on the Llano Estacado and presented entirely in song and poetry, *My Cowboy's Gift* is a play about faith, says Andy. It focuses on a rancher's painful transformation on learning of his late wife's relationship with a cowboy who had worked on the ranch some 30 years earlier.

George Sorensen, who will direct the play, says, "I saw Donnie Allison [who will play the cowboy] in *Buddy* and thought he was wonderful. He epitomizes a quality I saw in many of my students from this area," continues George.

"There's an honesty, almost an innocence, that shows in their work. That quality, along with hard work, helps many of them build successful careers. The most well-known examples are G.W. Bailey [who played Sergeant Rizzo in *M*A*S*H* and Captain Harris in *Police Academy*] and Barry Corbin, both of whom studied drama at Texas Tech."

SITES, FESTIVALS, AND MORE

From the Lubbock Lake Landmark State Historical Park to the new Landmark Gallery in Texas Tech's art department, other sites offer numerous cultural opportunities. You can multiply your options by timing a trip to coincide with one of the city's many annual festivals and events, which

range from the "Fourth on Broadway" celebration in July to the National Cowboy Symposium in September.

If you want a glimpse of the "big picture," drive five miles east of town to Buffalo Springs Lake. At this natural oasis nestled in Yellow House Canyon, you can look out over the Caprock and try to imagine what life was like on the Llano Estacado hundreds, or thousands of years ago.

Andy Wilkinson believes that the Llano Estacado's centuries-long legacy influences him as well as other Lubbock

artists. "If you go to a place full of history and open yourself up to it, you can feel it," he says. "People and events leave their traces, and those traces last a long time."

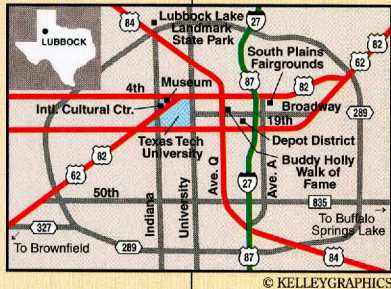
Whatever the source of Lubbock's rich cultural heritage—longtime status as a South Plains crossroads, strongly held frontier values, or vibes from a legendary past—it appears that the area's arts patrons will reap the benefits for years to come. ★

Associate editor NOLA McKEY lived in Lubbock more than eight years—long enough to appreciate the city's cultural wealth and special people.

Freelance photographer and Texas Tech graduate WYMAN MEINZER says Lubbock is his favorite city.

State of the Arts in Lubbock

The largest city on the Llano Estacado, Lubbock is 380 miles northwest of Austin. For a free visitor guide and a Buddy Holly Historic Tour brochure (which includes directions to the Buddy Holly Walk of Fame), write to the Lubbock Convention and Tourism Bureau (14th and Ave. K), Box 561, Lubbock 79408; 806/747-5232 or 800/692-4035. Web site: www.LubbockLegends.com. Lubbock's area code is 806.



formance on Mar. 20 will begin at 6:30; tickets \$50. Other showtimes: Fri-Sat 8 p.m., Sun 2 p.m. Admission: \$10-\$20. Wheelchair accessible. Write to Box 2526, Lubbock 79408; 762-3233.

The Lubbock Community Theater will present Andy Wilkinson's new play, *My Cowboy's Gift*, at the Lubbock Municipal Auditorium Apr. 30-May 3. Showtimes:

Thu-Sat 8 p.m., Sun 2 p.m. Admission: \$15, \$12 age 10 and younger and age 65 and older, free age 1 and younger. \$12 each for groups of 20 or more. Wheelchair accessible. Write to Lubbock Community Theater, Box 3556, Lubbock 79452-3556; 770-2000.

The 3rd annual **Buddy Holly Music Festival** takes place Sep. 4-6. For information, contact the Lubbock Convention and Tourism Bureau (address and phone number listed previously).

Lubbock hosts more than 25 other festivals and annual events. Contact the Convention and Tourism Bureau.

Historic Depot District

Lubbock's newest entertainment area lies downtown between I-27 and Buddy Holly Ave. The district features a variety of clubs and restaurants, including: **19th Street Warehouse** (747-6156), **Hub City Brewery** (747-1535), **Stubb's Bar-B-Q** (747-4777), **Kyle's 88 Key Cafe** (763-8888), and **Roadhouse Ruby's** (747-8297). All sites wheelchair accessible.

The **Cactus Theater**, at 1812 Buddy Holly Ave., presents live theater and music productions. Wheelchair accessible. For ticket information or an events calendar, write to Box 2526, Lubbock 79408; 762-3233.

University Programs and Sites

Celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, Texas Tech University, at Broadway and University, hosts a speakers program and numerous

special events. For a calendar of events, write to University Center Programs, Texas Tech University, Box 42031, Lubbock 79409-2031; 742-3621.

In addition, the following university sites (all wheelchair accessible) offer cultural opportunities year round:

The **Museum of Texas Tech University**, at 4th and Indiana, houses 17 permanent exhibits, including the Diamond M Collection, an outstanding Western art collection donated in 1994. Hours: Tue-Wed 10-5, Thu 10-8:30, Fri-Sat 10-5, Sun 1-5. Admission: Free. Advance reservations for groups requested. Call 742-2442.

Also at the museum, the **Moody Planetarium** features outstanding astronomy programs for all ages. Showtimes: Tue-Wed 3:30, Thu 3:30 and 7:30, Fri 3:30, and Sat-Sun 2 and 3:30. Admission: \$1, 50¢ students, free age 5 and younger and age 60 and older. Call 742-2442.

The **Ranching Heritage Center**, at 4th and Indiana (adjacent to the Museum of Texas Tech University), features 35 restored ranching structures and hosts several annual events. Admission: Free; donations appreciated. Hours: Tue-Sat 10-5, Sun 1-5. Call 742-2498.

The **Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library**, at 15th and Detroit, houses more than 22 million documents, 500,000 photographs, 4,500 oral history tapes, and 50,000 books. Holdings range from records of the disbanded Southwest Conference to a substantial archive of Vietnam materials. The new facility opened last April. Hours: Mon, Wed, and Fri 9-5; Tue and Thu 9-7; Sat 10-2. Admission: Free. Call 742-3749.

The **International Cultural Center**, at 6th and Indiana, hosts visitors from around the world and holds many events, including the "Vietnam in Asia" conference, Apr. 17-18. (For conference fees, call TTU's Vietnam Center at 742-3742.) Hours: Mon-Fri 8-5. Admission: Free. Call 742-2218.

Opened in Feb., the new **Landmark Art Gallery** in the university's art department, at 18th and

Flint, displays the work of numerous artists affiliated with Texas Tech. Hours: Mon-Fri 10-4:30, Sat 1-4. Admission: Free. Call 742-1947.

Other Sites

The **Lubbock Lake Landmark State Historical Park**, on the city's northwest edge near the intersection of Loop 289 and US 84, is the only known site in North America that contains evidence of all the cultures thought to have existed on the South Plains (see "Lubbock Lake Landmark," April 1997). Hours: Tue-Sat 9-5, Sun 1-5. Admission: \$2, \$1 students, free age 5 and younger. Partially wheelchair accessible. Write to the Park Supt., 2202 Landmark Lane, Lubbock 79415; 765-0737 or 741-0306.

Buffalo Springs Lake, 5 miles east of Lubbock on FM 835, offers watersports, horseback riding, hiking, camping, and a nature trail that dips into Yellow House Canyon. Always open. Admission: \$2, \$1 age 11 and younger and age 65 and older. Write to Rt. 10, Box 400, Lubbock 79404; 747-3353.

Books and Music

Look in your library or bookstore for these books: *Caprock Canyonlands: Journeys into the Heart of the Southern Plains* by Dan Flores (Univ. of Texas Press, 1990); *Prairie Nights to Neon Lights: The Story of Country Music in West Texas* by Joe Carr and Alan Munde (Texas Tech Univ. Press, 1995); and *Out of the Ordinary: The Art of Paul Milosevich* by Elizabeth Sasser (Texas Tech Univ. Press, 1991).

To order Andy Wilkinson's albums, *Charlie Goodnight: His Life in Poetry and Song*, *The Road Is Still the Road*, and *Storyteller*, write to Grey Horse Press, 612 Broadway, Lubbock 79401-3504; 740-0100. To order *Donnie Allison: A Tribute to Buddy Holly*, write to Don Caldwell Productions, Box 2526, Lubbock 79408; 747-7047.

One of the best sources of Lubbock music is in Austin. Originally owned by Lubbock native and well-known songwriter-musician and artist Butch Hancock, **Lubbock or Leave It** is at 2311 W. North Loop Blvd. It offers CDs and cassettes by such notables as Joe Ely, Terry Allen, Kimmie Rhodes, and Butch himself. Call 512/302-9024.

Lubbock Arts Festival

The 20th annual Lubbock Arts Festival takes place Apr. 17-19 at the South Plains Fairgrounds (100 E. Broadway, near the intersection of Ave. A and Broadway). On Fri. night, Apr. 17, the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band performs in the Fair Park Coliseum from 9-11, with an opening performance by local singer-songwriter Andy Wilkinson at 8:45. Admission: \$5-\$15, free age 5 and younger. Festival hours: Sat 10-8, Sun noon-6. Festival admission: \$2 per person per day. Ample free parking. Food concessions. All facilities wheelchair accessible.

On Sat-Sun, spectators can view works by more than 100 U.S. visual artists, take in acts by more than 80 performing artists, and enjoy artists' demonstrations, gardening and culinary seminars, and children's activities. Special events include the first Hub City People-Powered Art Derby, a Celtic Fair, children's concerts, a Ranch Dance, a Gospel Brunch, and a Tejano Concert.

For a listing of arts festival events or information on contacting artists, write to the Lubbock Arts Alliance, Inc., 2109 Broadway, Lubbock 79401; 744-2787.

Other Events

Lubbock's Cactus Theater, at 1812 Buddy Holly Ave., will preview *Bye Bye Love: The Everly Brothers Musical* Mar. 20-22, Mar. 27-29, and Apr. 3-5. The reception and opening night per-

MORE THAN TWO DECADES BEFORE THE PILGRIMS FEASTED AT PLYMOUTH, SPANISH EXPLORERS COUNTED THEIR BLESSINGS NEAR PRESENT-DAY EL PASO.

THANKSGIVING IN APRIL?

“I AM DON JUAN DE OÑATE,” THUNDERED SHELDON HALL OF THE EL PASO MISSION TRAIL ASSOCIATION TO “PILGRIMS” AT PLYMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS, IN 1991. “I BRING NEWS FROM HIS MAJESTY KING PHILIP II OF SPAIN. THE FIRST THANKSGIVING IN THE UNITED STATES WAS HELD NEAR EL PASO, TEXAS, IN APRIL 1598.”

CLAD as Spanish conquistadors and Franciscan friars, Sheldon and a party of fellow El Pasoans soon found themselves involved in a mock trial in Plymouth’s 1714 courthouse. The Texans accepted their arrest and trial with grace. After all, their mission was not to subvert the traditional November holiday inspired by New England colonists; rather, they merely sought greater awareness of a feast of thanks that took place beside the Rio Grande 23 years before the Pilgrims broke bread with Indians at Plymouth Colony—400 years ago this month.

Still promoting that awareness, each April since 1989 El Paso County folks have staged a reenactment of the arrival at *el Río del Norte* (now called the Rio Grande)

of explorer Don Juan de Oñate and his expedition of some 600 conquistadors, clergymen, and colonists. This year, a Quadricentennial Celebration offers a month-long festival of performances, exhibits, and special events. Highlights include a Quadricentennial Gala in El Paso on April 25, featuring a joint performance by the El Paso Symphony and the Chihuahua Philharmonic Orchestra. Just east of El Paso, the town of Socorro will host a Spanish Colonial-themed fair April 24-26, complete with artisan and craft booths, entertainers, and replicated facades of the area’s three missions. Several times during the festival, reenactors will present the “First Thanksgiving” pageant.

BY GENE FOWLER

The story told by the 60-member reenactment cast began at Santa Bárbara, south of present Chihuahua, Mexico, in January 1598. The son of a wealthy Zacatecas mine owner, Don Juan de Oñate (whose wife, Doña Isabel de Tolosa, was the granddaughter of the conqueror Cortés and the great-granddaughter of the Aztec emperor Moctezuma) had received a contract from King Philip II to colonize New Mexico.

Previous expeditions by Coronado and other explorers had followed the Conchos River in Mexico northeast to its juncture with the Rio Grande near present-day Presidio. Oñate struck a new northern trail, extending the Camino Real straight across 200 miles of blazing Chihuahua desert.

Conquistadors on the journey dreamed of finding the Southwest’s fabled cities of gold and silver; the clergymen hoped to redeem Indian souls; and families sought new homes on the northern frontier of New Spain. As described by historian Marc Simmons in *The Last Conquistador: Juan de Oñate and the Settling of the Far Southwest*, the caravan “stretched for more than two miles, its

I T M U S T B E

EL PASO

In April of 1598, Spanish explorer Don Juan de Oñate and his 600-strong expedition arrived at the Rio Grande and feasted in thanks for their survival.





The month-long Oñate First Thanksgiving Quadricentennial Celebration features dozens of events in El Paso and Socorro, including this re-creation of *La Toma*, the ceremony in which Oñate claimed the lands drained by the Rio Grande for King Philip II of Spain.

length studded with fluttering pennants and spiked with polearms.... In the vanguard, like a pair of colorful sails, rose the crimson and gold standard of the king and the richly ornamented standard of Oñate.... From a distance, the train must have resembled a giant caterpillar crawling slowly under its canopy of dust."

QUADRICENTENNIAL CELEBRANTS MIGHT EVEN GET TO BREAK BREAD—OR TORTILLAS— WITH REAL LIVE NEW ENGLAND "PILGRIMS."

Seven thousand head of livestock, including horses, mules, sheep, goats, and cattle, accompanied the caravan. Eighty-three ox-drawn *carretas* carried the colonists' equipment. Officers came prepared to make bold fashion statements on the frontier. "One captain," writes historian W. Eugene Hollon in *The Southwest: Old and New*, "required twenty-two

wagons to carry his chain mail and armor, imported satin and velvet clothes, plumed and tasseled hats, leather boots and gloves, hand-carved bedstead, linen bedding, mattress, and fancy equipment for his horses."

The trail worked great hardship on both beast and man, as the heavens alternated torrential rain with searing drought. "Our provisions gave out," wrote expedition chronicler Gaspar Pérez de Villagrà in *Historia del Nuevo Méjico* (first published in 1610), "and we were obliged to subsist on such edible weeds and roots as we found." Near the end, after four days without water in *Los Médanos*, the sand dunes below present-day Juárez, the horses of the expedition's advance party "were almost frantic with thirst" and "well-nigh blind." Upon reaching the river on April 20, Villagrà wrote, two horses drank so furiously that they "burst their sides and died." Two others drowned. The men, after quaffing "as though the entire river did not carry enough to quench their terrible thirst... threw themselves upon the cool sands, like fowl wretches stretched upon some tavern floor in a drunken orgy, deformed and swollen and more like toads than men."

When the entire expedition had

assembled at the river, the exhausted Spaniards feasted on plentiful duck, geese, and fish. For several days, they renewed themselves beneath the tall cottonwoods by the life-giving *Río del Norte*. They were camped in the vicinity of present-day San Elizario, Texas, which lay south of the Rio Grande until the river shifted course in 1829. On April 30, friendly Indians visited the camp and witnessed *La Toma* (The Taking), the ceremony in which Oñate claimed the lands drained by the Rio Grande in the name of King Philip II. In gratitude for having survived the grueling trek, soldiers performed an original drama, speedily written by Captain Farfán de los Godos. Viewed by some historians as the first play performed on U.S. soil, the drama depicted the conversion of Pueblo Indians to Christianity.

In early May, the Spaniards proceeded upriver. They crossed at a ford, marked as a well-traveled Indian trail, that lay just west of today's downtown El Paso. Resuming the quest to colonize *Nuevo Méjico*, the expedition moved on through the narrow mountain pass carved by the Rio Grande. In July, Oñate established headquarters at San Gabriel (just north of Santa Fe), the first European colony in the Southwest.



Oñate's soldiers performed an original play depicting the conversion of Pueblo Indians to Christianity, re-created here.

First Thanksgiving

Gaspar Pérez de Villagrà's *Historia del Nuevo Méjico* did not appear in an English translation until 1933. Thus, when President Abraham Lincoln formally designated the third Thursday of November as a day for the nation to pause and give thanks, he likely acted unaware of Oñate's ceremonies on the Rio Grande. (Lincoln selected the day based on the autumnal harvest party of the Plymouth Pilgrims; in 1941, Thanksgiving Day was moved to the last Thursday of November.)

A RETIRED construction contractor and an active history enthusiast, Sheldon Hall first read Villagrà's book in 1986. Searching for ways to preserve and publicize the three Spanish missions in San Elizario, Ysleta, and Socorro (all just east of El Paso), Sheldon found inspiration in Villagrà's words. Why not underscore the importance of the El Paso area in Southwestern U.S. and North American history, Sheldon thought, by reenacting Oñate's arrival at the Rio Grande?

Bringing the "conquistadors" back to El Paso, however, proved easier said than done. For one thing, Sheldon states candidly, "I knew about as much about a reenactment as my two-year-old granddaughter." The need for authentic apparel presented one of the biggest problems. When he began the hunt for costumes, Sheldon found friars' and peasants' outfits by the score, but in all of El Paso he could find only one half of a conquistador ensemble. A nationwide search of theatrical suppliers found suitable togs, but at prices that would have required all the wealth in the Southwest's legendary seven cities of gold.

Finally, the novice pageant-producer recruited a talented El Pasoan, Barbara Prewitt, who created the costumes and staged the premiere in 1991. For authenticity, Barbara modeled her costumes on the painting *Arrival of Don Juan de Oñate at Paso del Norte* and other works by renowned El Paso artist José Cisneros. The role of Oñate that year was played by one of the explorer's descendants, Don Manuel Gullón y de Oñate, the Count of Tepa.

The Count will attend the reenactment this year. Hector Serrano, the cre-

For general information about lodging, dining, and attractions in El Paso, write to the El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1 Civic Center Plaza (79901); 915/534-0600 or 800/351-6024.

For information about the month-long **Oñate First Thanksgiving Quadricentennial Celebration**, including the following two events, write to the El Paso Quadricentennial Commission, Box 3789, El Paso 79923; 915/534-0677.

Highlights of the celebration include the Quadricentennial Festival, Apr. 24-26 in Socorro at Cougar Park, at 10662 Socorro Dr. The Oñate party's arrival will be staged daily, and jousting performances will take place mornings and afternoons. Three stages (one for children) will offer continuous entertainment. Court jesters, jugglers, troubadours, swordsmen, falconers, and others will entertain throughout the fair. The park is wheelchair accessible.

Also, the **Quadricentennial Gala** will take place Apr. 25 at the El Paso Civic Center. The joint concert by the El Paso Symphony and the Chihuahua Philharmonic Orchestra begins at 6:30, followed by dinner and dancing until 2 a.m. Tickets: \$75. Wheelchair accessible.

Another event, the **San Elizario First Thanksgiving Festival**, featuring arts and crafts booths, live music, dancing, food, and rides, takes place in San Elizario Apr. 24-26. Hours: Fri 5 p.m.-midnight, Sat noon-1 a.m.,

Sun noon-11. Donations accepted. Write to Organización Progresiva, Box 423, San Elizario 79849; 915/851-0000.



The **El Paso Museum of History** will host the exhibit *The Road North: Juan de Oñate's 1598 Journey* Apr. 5-May 31. The museum is at I-10 East and Avenue of the Americas North. Hours: Tue-Sat 9-4:50, Sun 1-4:50. Admission: Free. Wheelchair accessible. Write to the El Paso Museum of History, 12901 Gateway West, El Paso 79927; 915/858-1928.

The **El Paso Museum of Art** will feature the exhibit *The Glory of Spain in the New World* Apr. 26-June 28. Hours: Tue-Sat 10-5, Thu 10-9, Sun 1-5. Admission: Free. Wheelchair accessible. Write to the El Paso Museum of Art, 1211 Montana, El Paso 79902; 915/541-4040.

Look in your library for the following books: *The Last Conquistador: Juan de Oñate and the Settling of the Far Southwest* by Marc Simmons (Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1991); *Don Juan de Oñate: Colonizer of New Mexico, 1595-1628*, edited by George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey (Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1953); *New Spain's Far Northern Frontier* by David J. Weber (Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1979); and *The Southwest: Old and New* by W. Eugene Hollon (Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1961). For children, try *The Very First Thanksgiving* by Bea Bragg (Roberts Rinehart Pub., 1997, available through the El Paso Quadricentennial Commission).

ative force behind the outdoor show *Viva El Paso!*, will direct the pageant with his customary flair. King Juan Carlos and Queen Sophia of Spain had to RSVP their regrets, but several Spanish dignitaries will represent them at the festival. The Spaniards will present El Paso with two gifts: a replica of the flag Oñate carried when he claimed that large stretch of the Southwest for Spain, and several exact copies of the uniforms worn by Oñate expedition members.

Quadricentennial celebrants might even get to break bread—or tortillas—with real live New England "Pilgrims." If so, the Pilgrims' bemused expressions will likely echo a front-page headline that ran in *The Wall Street Journal* back in 1989: "If Thanksgiving Is a Sunday In April," observed the august business periodical, "This Must Be Texas."★

Freelancer GENE FOWLER of Austin, a frequent contributor to *Texas Highways*, calls El Paso one of his favorite Texas cities.



© LAURENCE PARENT

Beauty is in the eye of the photographer. An array of bluebonnets, bitterweed, and verbena (*left*) creates a colorful bouquet in Hays County.

Dakota vervain (*facing page*), also known as prairie verbena, blooms with greenthread and gaillardia in a Medina County field.

Experts offer tips on flower photography

Wildflowers worth a thousand words

By Jack Lowry

Since *Texas Highways* became a travel magazine in 1974, readers from Texas to Tasmania have known it as one of the best magazines anywhere for wildflower photography. This month, we asked a group of photographers to share their tips and observations on photographing Texas flowers. If you have ever wondered how they take their magnificent shots, read on.



© RICHARD REYNOLDS

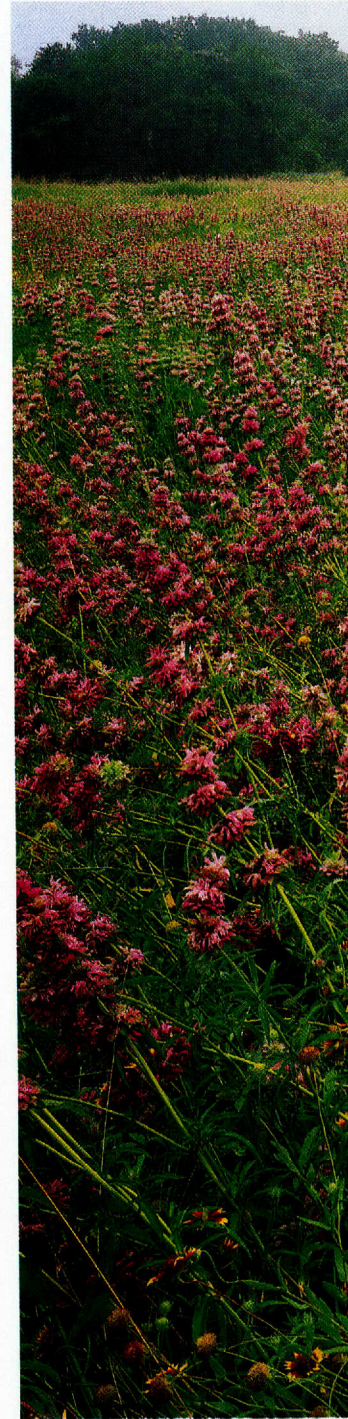
Make a picture before you take a picture. Huisache daisies and verbena (*above*) share a Medina County hillside.





Horsemint (left), gaillardia, Engelmann's daisies, and pepperweed (at right, foreground) color a meadow in McCulloch County.

© RICHARD REYNOLDS



Wind is the enemy,” says longtime *Texas Highways* contributor Laurence Parent of Manchaca. “Wind can drive you nuts.”

How is the wind so vexing? To capture maximum sharpness, most experts use slow film, which generally calls for a slow shutter speed. Exposing a wildflower scene with a slow shutter speed while the wind is blowing causes the flowers to blur. The problem becomes even more irksome with medium- and large-format cameras, which many professional photographers use for the beautiful images they can yield.

According to Stephan Myers of Jasper, “The best time to shoot is mornings, when the wind is lightest. Most wildflowers photograph best under an overcast sky—especially blue or purple flowers. Orange and yellow flowers, on the other hand, show up best in early-morning or late-afternoon sunlight.”

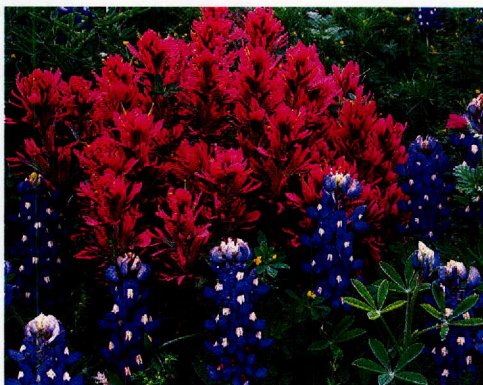
Most wildflowers photograph best under an overcast sky.

“Film does not have the same latitude as the human eye for recording high-light and shadow detail,” adds Stephan. “And because of that, photos taken on overcast days have skies that wash out to a milky white. If you add a graduated neutral-density filter, you can darken and add detail to the sky.”



An overcast sky (above) provides remarkable lighting conditions for a field of horsemint and Indian blanket in Travis County.

Prairie paintbrush and bluebonnets (right) photograph well under a muted sky in Lampasas County.



© RICHARD REYNOLDS

The number one thing is patience,” says Laurence. “You have to wait for the wind and light to be right. I’ve waited for hours to get good shots, and sometimes you just have to pack up your gear and not get anything.

“Soft-light or overcast days are not necessarily bad, as long as you use a tripod and a cable release [which allows the shooter to release the shutter without vibrating the camera],” Laurence adds. “Use the slowest film that the conditions will allow. Macro lenses [used to bring into focus objects very close to the camera] can be kind of neat for getting closeups. On overcast days, work on closeups, rather than on broad views.

Otherwise, your skies will wash out to white.

“On sunny days,” Laurence continues, “it’s

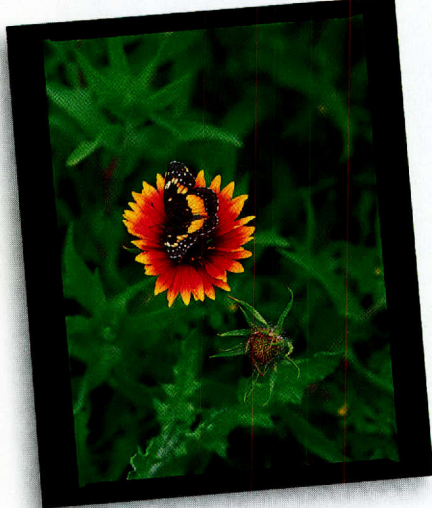
best to shoot either early or late, but when you shoot bluebonnets, remember that they don’t do well in the very first or last light of the day. So you may want to wait until the second half-hour of light in the morning or the next-to-last half-hour of light in the evening.”

When you shoot bluebonnets, remember that they don’t do well in the very first or last light of the day.

Richard Reynolds of Austin agrees: “My favorite conditions under which to shoot wildflowers are (in order): misty, foggy, cloudy and bright (hazy), generally cloudy or overcast, and lastly, sunny. Photographic film renders wildflowers best in subdued light.”

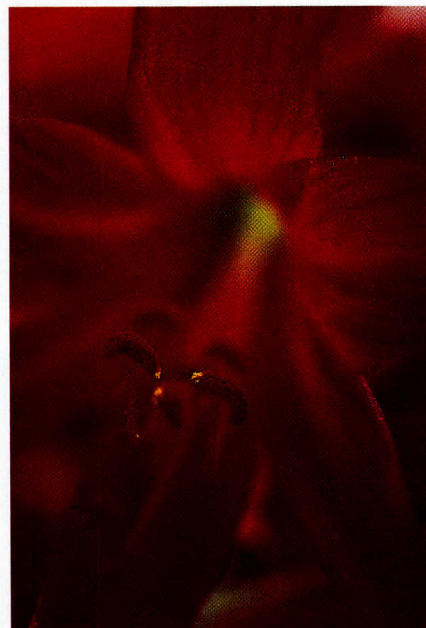
And, Richard adds what may seem obvious, but it’s advice that amateurs don’t heed often enough: “Use a tripod whenever possible for sharper pictures.”

© RUSTY YATES



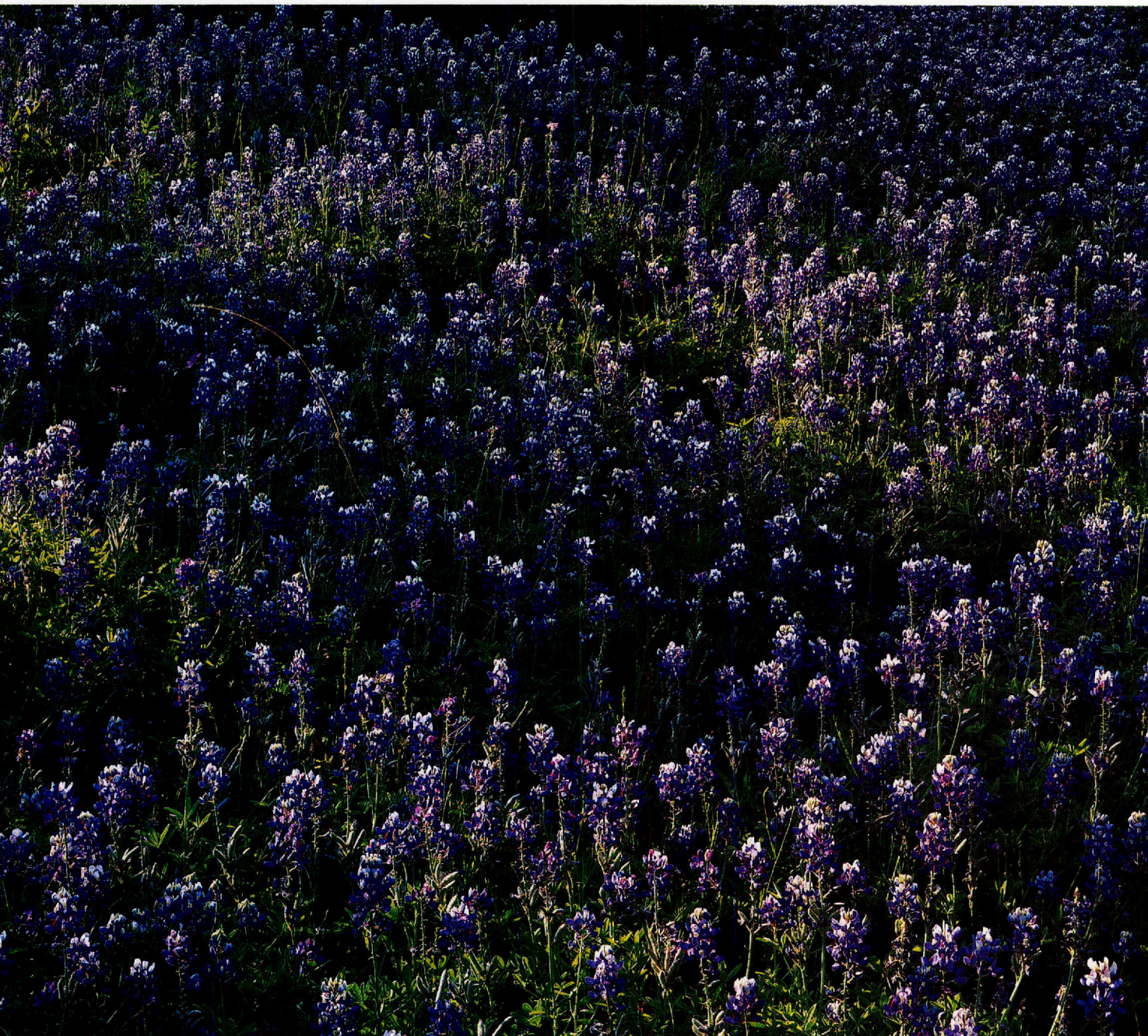
A butterfly (above) pauses long enough for the photographer to capture it on a gaillardia blossom.

An extreme closeup (right) of a red water lily produces an almost abstract, O’Keeffe-like effect.

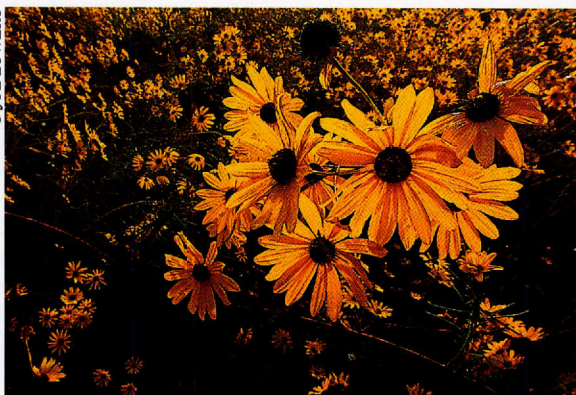


© KEVIN VAN DYKE





© JOE LOWERY



Bluebonnets (*above*) fill a pasture in Gillespie County. Notice the play of light and shadow, which lends texture to the photograph.

Compositae (*left*) are the boon and bane of photographers. The beauty and abundance of members of the sunflower family make them spectacular to photograph, but they can be difficult to identify. Hence, their common nickname, "DYFs," for "damn yellow flowers."



Fog-shrouded bluebonnets (left) form a picture-perfect subject in Bell County.

Groundsel and bluebonnets (facing page) bloom among prickly pears and rock outcroppings in Llano County.

A tripod is an absolute necessity,” concurs Earl Nottingham, chief photographer for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. “It forces you to anchor your camera for image composition and allows you to close down your lens for maximum depth of field.

“What I usually tell folks,” he continues, “is that the biggest secret of wildflower photography is the time of day and the lighting conditions in which you shoot. On clear days, the

light does beautiful things with wildflowers directly after sunrise and just before sunset. It

Don't be afraid to shoot photographs when it's raining or foggy.

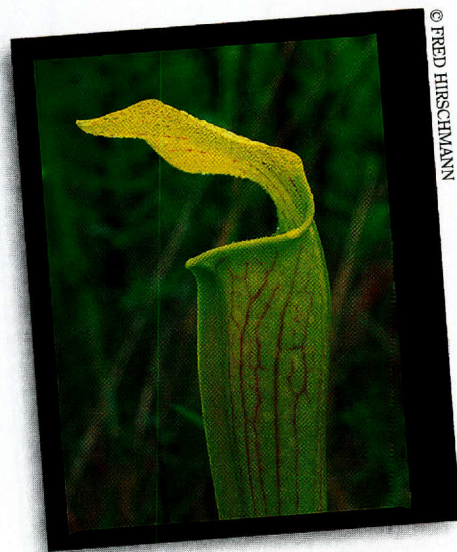
creates strong textures, plus it lends warmth. My preference, however, is a slightly overcast day. This light brings out important detail in shadows, which is usually lost in harsh sunlight. It also brings the film more into line with the way the human eye sees. For closeups of flowers on a sunny day, a diffusion material such as ripstop nylon or just a white sheet between

the flower and the sun will provide a nice result. And be prepared: The best angles for photos will either put you in a fire-ant bed, a prickly pear, or on a rocky slope.

“Don't be afraid to shoot photographs when it's raining or foggy,” says Earl. “If nobody else is out taking pictures, it may actually be the best time for photography. Usually, when I get out to take evening pictures, everybody else is done for the day, and I'm just getting started.

“Early and late in the day, because of the lower intensity and angle of the light (hence, the need for slow shutter speeds), a tripod is a must. These types of lighting are the ingredients for dramatic wildflower and landscape shots.”

Pitcher plants typically grow in the longleaf pine-blackgum savannahs and bay-gallberry holly bogs of the Big Thicket. The leaves of these plants, which are carnivorous, frequently contain liquid and decaying insects.



© FRED HIRSCHMANN



Other factors come into play when capturing wildflowers on film.

“Don’t trespass, even if you’re tempted. Get permission,” cautions Laurence Parent. “And when you shoot cacti, watch where you put your hands and rear end. I’ve been stuck enough to know.”

“Look out for fire-ant mounds,” Laurence adds. “I’ve been on my knees, and all of a sudden I’ve felt all of them biting at once. Ticks and chiggers are also fun, so always carry insect repellent in your camera pack.”

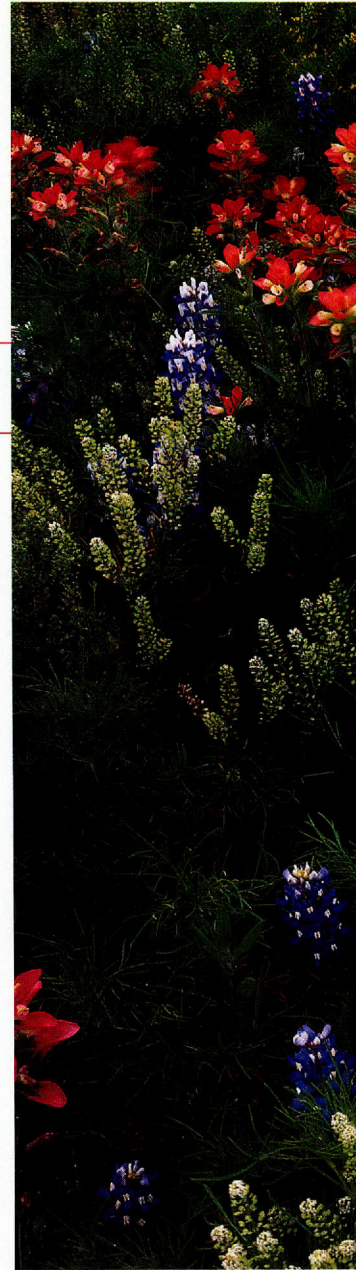
For closeup work, bring knee pads or a scrap of carpet to kneel on.

Stephan Myers prefers to wear shorts when he takes flower pictures. “This surprises a lot of people,” he says. “If you get into a fire-ant bed, you can see them easily and get them off of you quickly.”

“The other advantage is that ticks and chiggers do not like exposed skin. With long pants, they attach to you and attack. With shorts, you can easily feel them and get

them off. Of course, with shorts, you get scratched up a bit, but I see it as the lesser of two evils.”

Laurence offers some other pieces of advice: “Take aspirin with you. You can get a stiff neck and a headache shooting flowers. A hat and sunscreen are also good things to bring. For closeup work, you may also want to bring knee pads or a scrap of carpet to kneel on.”

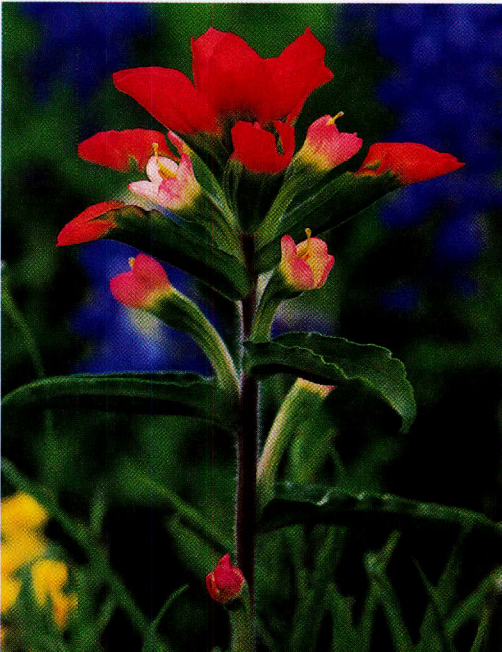


Coreopsis and Indian paintbrush (*above*) bloom among ferns near Groveton, just outside the Davy Crockett National Forest in Trinity County.

A dandelion cluster (*right*) thrives in The Woodlands, north of Houston in Montgomery County.



© KATHY ADAMS CLARK



Pepperweed, bluebonnets, and Indian paintbrush (*above*) flourish in a pasture in Llano County.

A sharply focused Indian paintbrush (*left*) on a soft background of bluebonnets makes an attractive picture in Llano County.

A lavender sunrise (*overleaf*) casts sumptuously resonant light on a hillside of bluebonnets in northern Gillespie County.





Perspective also plays a big role in getting good wildflower photos.

“Shoot at different heights—not always at eye level,” says Richard. “If you’re shooting a broad expanse of flowers with a wide-angle lens, try kneeling or squatting down to get closer to the foreground flowers, and try using a smaller f-stop [the setting of an adjustable lens aperture] to achieve sharp focus throughout the scene.”

“If you can, get into a mind-frame of *making* a picture, not just *taking* a picture,” says Earl Nottingham. “By that, I mean taking time to compose the image, taking time to wait for the right lighting, and going to the effort to modify the lighting with reflectors or diffusers if necessary. When you make a picture, there’s an element of craftsmanship you can see in the finished product.”

Laurence adds that you should “try to keep shots as simple as possible. And keep billboards, phone poles, and other clutter out of the picture.”



Get into a mind-frame of making a picture, not just taking a picture.

“For individual flower shots,” says Stephan, “a medium telephoto lens [100-135 mm] is good because it isolates the subject from the background. And for wide vistas, I use a wide-angle lens [28 mm and below].”

“With closeup lenses, vibrations from shutters and mirrors can be a problem,” Stephan adds. “Even though medium telephoto lenses may offer a better perspective, a shorter lens [50 mm] is less subject to camera vibration. The longer the lens, the more it magnifies vibration from the mirror. Any time you magnify the image, you magnify the problems.”

Spring beauty (*above*) lives up to its name. The flower, shown here in Grimes County, is one of the first to bloom each spring.

Mountain pinks (*right*) blossom on an open limestone slope in Travis County. These hardy plants grow well in gravelly and rocky limestone soils and around granite boulders.





Coneflowers (above) bloom in a wheat field in Bell County. These robust wildflowers thrive in Texas prairies, food plains, and roadsides.

Wisteria (right) grows in Elgin, east of Austin. In pockets throughout eastern Texas, wisteria has escaped from cultivation to form picturesque additions to the landscape. The trailing or climbing vine blooms from April through August.





© RICHARD RENNOIDS

Ideal picture-taking conditions vary, depending on who is shooting the photographs. Left, bluebonnets and gaillardia bloom elegantly together in the fields of San Saba County.

Firewheels (*below*), also known as Indian blanket or gaillardia, add rich warm color to the Blackland Prairie belt of Central Texas.

White prickly poppies (*facing page*) brighten a pasture north of the LBJ Ranch in Gillespie County.

© TOM KILTY

Are you ready to get out and shoot? It's no mere Texas brag when we say that the state offers some of the best wildflower picture-taking possibilities on the planet.

When British nature photographer Dr. Heather Angel began

There is nothing to compare with the intensity of colors of Texas blooms.

working on her book *How to Photograph Flowers* for Stackpole Books, she scheduled a trip to Texas in April 1996. Because it was a drought year, Dr. Angel put off her trip for a year, to spring 1997. Following an introductory visit to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, she drove south to Cuero, where, she says, "The flowers along the lanes and byways were so spectacular, I was spoilt for choice in this area. In some 25 years of photographing wildflowers all around the world, I have never seen such a glorious spectacle. An added bonus was being able to confirm my identifications with the wonderful team of volunteers who are available at the DeWitt County Historical Museum in Cuero throughout April."

Dr. Angel observes that in England, "There is nothing to compare with the intensity of colors of Texas blooms. Whenever I show the Texas slides in lectures here in England, everyone is amazed to see the riot of color within a small patch."



© EARL NOTTINGHAM





Resources

The Texas Department of Transportation provides updates on wildflower conditions throughout Texas (800/452-9292). Staff botanists at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center (512/832-4059) can also offer advice on prime roadside viewing spots. Remember, as photographer Laurence Parent says, "Hotlines can be useful, but good conditions for *viewing* wildflowers may not be the best conditions for *photographing* them."

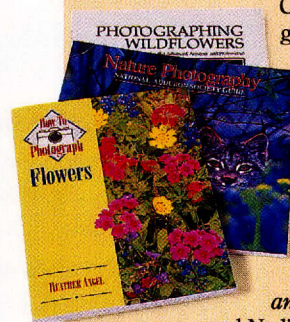
Photography workshops and magazines can provide useful tips on wildflower and landscape photography, as can books like *How to Photograph Flowers* by Heather Angel (Stackpole Books, 1998). Dr. Angel, the author of more than 25 books on photography and nature subjects, shot the cover of her latest book (pictured here) in Cuero in 1997. Other guides include *The Field Guide to Photographing Flowers (Center for Nature Photography Series)* by Allen Rokach and Anne Millman (Amphoto, 1995); *Photographing Wildflowers: Techniques for the Advanced Amateur and Professional*, by Craig and Nadine Blacklock (Voyageur Press, 1987); and *Nature Photography: National Audubon Society Guide* by Tim Fitzharris (Firefly Books, 1996).

Wildflower guides such as Geyata Ajilvsgi's *Wildflowers of Texas* (Shearer Publishing, 1984); Campbell and Lynn Loughmiller's *Texas Wildflowers* (Univ. of Texas Press, 1984); and Marshall Enquist's *Wildflowers of the Texas Hill Country* (Lone Star Botanical, 1987) can also be helpful in identifying and learning about wildflowers.

The photographers quoted in this story are a talented and experienced lot. Laurence Parent has published numerous calendars and some 20 books, including such titles as *Official Guide to Texas State Parks* (Univ. of Texas Press and Texas Parks & Wildlife Press, 1997) and *Texas* (Graphic Arts Center Publishing Co., 1995). Richard Reynolds has also published a number of calendars and books, including *Texas Hill Country*, *Texas Reflections*, and *Texas Wildflowers* (all three, Westcliffe Publishers, 1996). Stephan Myers, a longtime contributor to *Texas Highways* and national magazines, is also the photographer of the *Diving and Snorkeling Guide to Texas* by Barbara Dunn and Janet R. Edwards (Pisces Books, 1996). Earl Nottingham contributes regularly to *Texas Highways* and *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazines.



© RICHARD REYNOLDS



We hope these pointers, along with the striking images on these pages, will inspire you to get out and enjoy the wonders of springtime in Texas, camera in hand. While you're at it, use these tips from the pros to hone your photography skills.

Summerfield's Wagons (*facing page*), which sells and repairs vintage conveyances on US 183 near Palmetto State Park in Gonzales County, makes a picturesque backdrop for a field of bluebonnets, bladderpod, and Indian paintbrush.

Prickly pear, Drummond's phlox, and obedient plant (*above*) form a texture-filled bouquet in Gonzales County.

Corn poppies (*right*) provide pockets of crimson to a meadow in Travis County.



© RUSTY YATES

A rush of red. A sprinkle of pink. A bluster of blue. In the springtime, such floral hues brush themselves brightly across the Texas landscape. But nowhere can they be found in such concentrated profusion as in the vibrant fields that border US 290 about seven miles east of Fredericksburg. Here, white cosmos, red corn (Flanders) poppies, bluebonnets, and larkspurs concentrate a colorful symphony that plays to an admiring audience.

The vivid blossoms spread out a lustrous welcome mat to Wildseed Farms of Fredericksburg, where wildflowers and exotic garden varieties go from field to vase or seed packet. Visitors can oooh and ahhh over row upon row of glorious floral displays, walk among the wildflowers, watch seed harvests in progress, snip bouquets of selected species, purchase cut or dried flowers, and choose seed packages for their own plantings.

FIELDS OF FLOWERS NEAR FREDERICKSBURG YIELD SEEDS GALORE.

The turnkey operation is the brainchild of longtime Texas flower farmer and horticultural innovator John Thomas. John founded the original company, Wildseed Incorporated, in 1983 at Eagle Lake, where he still farms some 1,000 acres of wildflowers. Wildseed quickly became the world's largest supplier of bulk seed for Texas paintbrush, showy primrose, Indian blanket, and Texas bluebonnet.

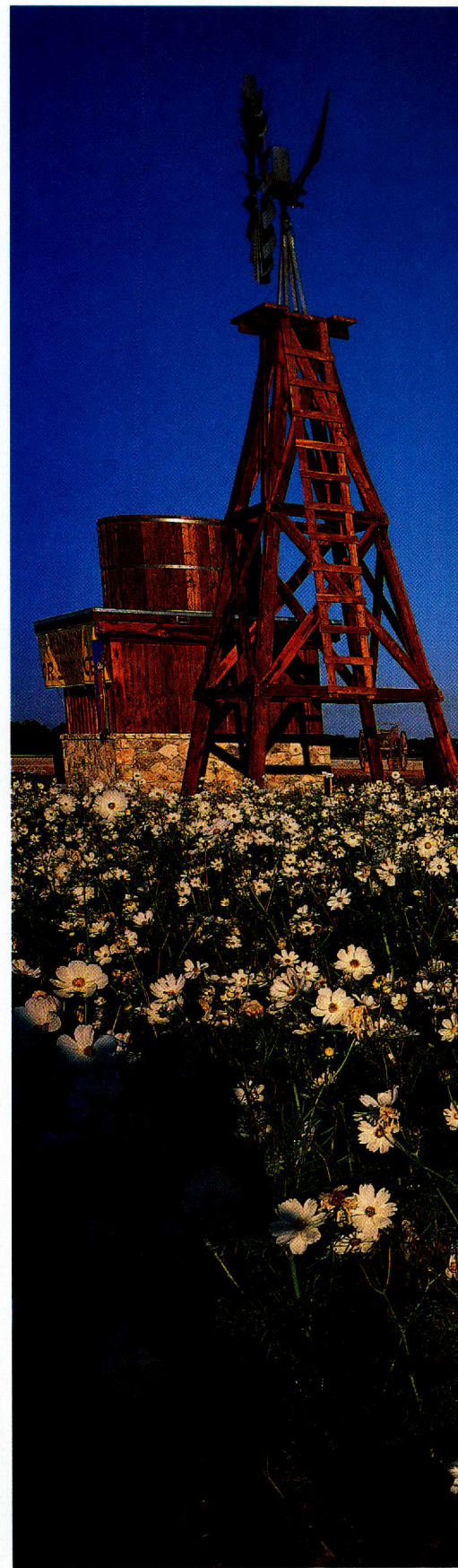
When torrential rains generated by El Niño destroyed Wildseed's bluebonnet crop in 1990, John and his wife, Marilyn, decided to establish an arm of the company away from the coastal region. "We decided that having all our eggs in one basket wasn't too practical," says John. They began scouting a vast area of the state, seeking the best location.

"We traveled many miles over the western part of Texas looking for just the right place," says John. "Nothing seemed to fit. Then we saw Fredericksburg for the first time. I thought Marilyn was going to jump out of the car when we drove into downtown Fredericksburg. 'This is it!' she said. She was right. Who wouldn't love this town! Six months later, we moved here," says John.

Starting with 50 acres of leased farmland east of Fredericksburg, John began growing his new stand of wildflowers for seed harvest. The Hill Country venture thrived. In 1995, he purchased the 200 acres that form the present attractive site, which sits adjacent to US 290, smack-dab between Fredericksburg and Stonewall, and he began leasing another 400 acres nearby. Within a year, John and Peyton Vaughn, a friend and fellow newcomer to Fredericksburg, began building the 6,000-square-foot Market Center, a handsome two-story, peaked-ceilinged structure crafted of aromatic cedar and native limestone. They completed the center last year.

"Peyton and our carpenters put lots of chainsaw and hatchet time into this building," says John. "We wanted a distinctive Hill Country look, and I think we captured that. We also modeled the center's basic design after the historic 6666 Horse Barn, whose replica I saw at the Ranching Heritage Center in Lubbock," he says.

Wildseed Farms of Fredericksburg proves very much a family-and-friends enterprise. Here, John, Marilyn, their son, Ryan, and daughter Tricia Immel, along with Peyton Vaughn and his wife, Carol, head a team that promotes the wonderful world of wildflowers, from seed production to sales of flower-related merchandise.



Wildseed *indeed!*



Wildseed Farms, near Fredericksburg, is one of the nation's largest wildflower companies that grows and harvests the flowers for seed production. State highway departments place the largest orders, but the company sells worldwide. Here, the farm's gift shop and retail outlet sits in a field of cosmos.

Visitors to Wildseed Farms can walk among the wildflowers, watch seed harvests in progress, snip bouquets of selected species, purchase flowers, and choose seed packages for their own plantings.

The Market Center houses not only a retail outlet that sells Wildseed Farms wildflower and herb seeds, but also an extraordinarily diverse gift shop, where Marilyn, Tricia, and Carol exercise their marketing savvy and elegant sense of style. Shoppers find flower-embellished items of all types, including bookmarks, photographs, stationery, and clothing, as well as packaged gourmet foods, Texas wines, and seasonal local produce, such as peaches and pecans.

But, during bloom time, the farm's primary lure lies in the fields of resplendent poppies, bluebonnets (even pink and red bluebonnets!), larkspurs, coreopsis, and yellow cosmos bursting with what John describes as "killer color."

WILDSEED FARMS MAKES IT easy for flower-gazers to enjoy their favorite spring pastime. Rather than straining for quick glimpses of wildflowers through windshields and windows, visitors to Wildseed find themselves awash in waves and rivulets of kaleidoscopic blossoms. Here, they can relax at picnic tables under the shade of a pavilion or wander in leisurely fashion through fragrant fields.

"We maintain trails where people can actually walk out into the flowers," says John. "We rope off an area about 30 to 50 feet into the flowers, and that's a really big hit with

Growing wildflowers can be a dicey undertaking, but Wildseed Farms (which predicts a success rate of 70 percent with Drummond phlox, shown here) publishes a guide that can help.



folks. We plant a couple of extra acres of each variety to give visitors the opportunity to get out among the flowers, especially the bluebonnets.

"We Texans love our bluebonnets," says John. "Here at Wildseed Farms, we have several fields of them, including one 50-acre plot. At first, we roped off a small section that allowed visitors a good look at the bluebonnets, but folks were just stepping over the rope and walking out into the field. So we enlarged the area and let 'em have at it. I wish I had a nickel for every snapshot that's been made among the bluebonnets here," he says.

"Bluebonnets got me into this business—and they darn near got me out of it," says John, whose passion for the state flower spurred him into growing it for commercial seed production. "I discovered right away that bluebonnets are one of the hardest plants in the world to grow. They're really fickle. Sometimes they grow well, sometimes they don't. They're soil-specific and site-specific. You can plant tons of seeds and maybe never get a stand. You really have to know what you're doing with bluebonnets, and with other wildflowers, as well," he says.

In an effort to help customers take some of the guesswork and growing pains out of planting wildflowers, Wildseed Farms began publishing the informative *Wildflower Reference Guide & Seed Catalog* in 1989. The 49-page resource booklet has become so popular with wildflower aficionados that the company will print and



distribute some 800,000 guides in 1998. Color photographs depict both the seedling and mature stages of 70 flowers, such as the Texas bluebonnet (*Lupinus texensis*), blanketflower (*Gaillardia aristata*), and purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), while the text describes each plant's characteristics and gives valuable when, where, and how planting tips.

The guide also advises how many pounds of seeds to plant per square foot and per acre; tells the average number of seeds per pound (about 5.1 million Texas paintbrush seeds per pound, compared to 13,500 bluebonnet seeds per



© SERGIO PIUMATTI

pound); shows range maps that outline optimum planting times across the United States; and divulges the approximate success rate of each plant.

"We try to give as much information as possible on all the seed varieties we sell," says John. "Though the 'gurus' told us we'd be crazy to print success rates, we feel it's very important for people to know up front that some wildflowers can be difficult to grow. For example, the Texas bluebonnet delivers only a 60-percent success rate, and the foxglove comes in even lower, at 50 percent. On the other hand, the gloriosa daisy [*Rud-*

beckia sp.], a golden-orange perennial whose seed we're introducing this year, shows a success rate of 80 percent, meaning it's relatively easy to grow," he says. "We believe that such information prepares our customers to grow wildflowers knowledgeably and *patiently*."

John advises clients to begin small the first time they plant. Start, say, with a blend such as Wildseed Farms Texas/Oklahoma mix of 26 species, which includes the Texas bluebonnet, Indian blanket (*Gaillardia pulchella*), Drummond phlox (*Phlox drummondii*), lemon mint (*Monarda citriodora*), and plains coreop-

sis (*Coreopsis tinctoria*). Learn what blooms best at the chosen site for a year or two, and then proceed from there.

"I'm probably the worst seed salesman in the world," says John. "When someone comes in and wants a huge amount of wildflower seeds to plant on a large section of land where they haven't planted wildflowers before, I say, 'Hey,

Doreen Piumatti of Richardson enjoys a boundless expanse of Indian blanket. Or is it blanket-flower? Belonging to the same genus, *Gaillardia*, but different species, the two flowers are nearly indistinguishable from each other.



Wildseed Farms owner John Thomas stands amid red poppies. One of John's inventions, the J-Thom 42 Wildseeder, makes it possible to plant up to 14 varieties of flowers simultaneously—especially helpful along roadsides. The Wildseeder has several hoppers, which hold different sizes of seeds.

whoa!' I advise them to start with, maybe, \$50 worth of seed that will cover about a 4,000-square-foot area and map out a two-year program to see what's going to work," he says.

"During that trial growing period, you can choose the color combinations you like best and take your resource guide and note which flowers worked. Next year or the year after that, come back to us and order those individual species. Out of 26 varieties, you're probably going to get eight or 10 that you now *know* will work. That's cost-effective, because now you're buying plants that will succeed and that you know you will like," says John.

RESearch RIDES IN TANDEM with education at this working wildflower farm. Everything here points toward seed production in harmony with Mother Nature. Even the rows of red, lavender, maroon, and pink bluebonnets require no special horticultural abracadabra, just hard, painstaking work and lots of patience.

"The misconception is that we're in a laboratory, cross-pollinating plants and tricking them into producing different colors," says John. "Well, that's not the

case. These hot-pink bluebonnets were actually found in the wild, maybe just one plant with pink blooms. Seeds were gathered from that one plant.

"You collect, for example, 100 seeds off a plant," he continues. "Of those 100, probably 80 grow back blue. We hoe out the blue plants, keep the pink ones, collect seeds from them, and continue that process for about seven years until we have what we call a 'stable' color. If you isolate the plants long enough, they'll stabilize and continue to come back predominantly pink. These pink bluebonnets are as pink as can be. This same selection process has also yielded a vibrant red bluebonnet. And the bedding-plant industry is really excited about the colors we've isolated for them. But these colors result from *nature*, not from something that was done in the laboratory," John says.

Wildseed Farms may begin selling the seeds of the pink (as well as the red

and maroon) bluebonnet as early as the fall of 1998, if the spring crop proves plentiful.

Visitors can walk through the farm's research and development field, known as the "trial area," where they can observe production in progress. Here, workers begin testing a species by planting hand-collected seeds in small rows. If the flowers look good and germinate well, their seeds are planted in slightly larger plots. Success there means that the flowers go into full-scale production. But it all begins in the little trial areas.

In developing certain flowers, such as the various hues of the bluebonnet, for commercial production, John, who obtained his degree in business administration from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, often works with Dr. Jerry Parsons, a professor and horticulturist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas A&M University System, in San Antonio. Dr. Parsons salutes John for his expertise and ingenuity in making flower seeds available that would otherwise be impossible to obtain in large quantities.

"I consider John Thomas a genius, with 'genius' being described as one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration," says Dr. Parsons. "He is a smart, hardworking farmer who seized the opportunity to produce, harvest, and market wildflower seed using commercial-agriculture technology. John also

sees the opportunity and obligation to be a seed producer of more than just wildflowers. He wants to produce Texas-adapted flowers, or 'easy-to-beautify-with' flowers, or 'satisfaction-guaranteed' flowers, not just wildflowers," he says.



Celosia, or cockscomb, numbers among a few garden-variety flowers grown by Wildseed Farms for pick-your-own bouquets. The farm's gift shop also sells celosia and other flowers dried.

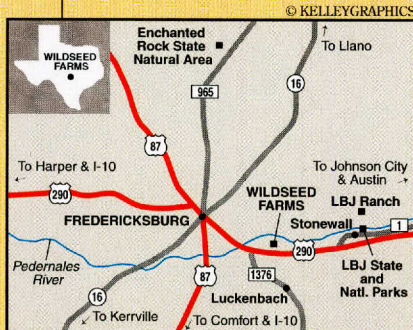
Wildseed Farms

Wildseed Farms of Fredericksburg is on the north side of US 290, 7 miles east of Fredericksburg and 7 miles west of Stonewall and the LBJ State and National Historical parks. Watch for a small highway sign that says "Wildflower Farm." You can't miss the farm's Market Center, a huge structure about 100 yards off the highway.

Wildseed Farms opens daily from 9:30-6. You can buy drinks and light snacks here or bring a picnic lunch and dine at the pavilion near the windmill. The Market Center gift shop offers a bounty of items with floral, Texas, and Hill Country themes, as well as gardening gadgets of all types. Packaged food and drink specialties include such treats as spiced pecans, pickled garlic and okra, Jardine's salsas, jams, and chili mixes, and Hill Country wines. Christmas shoppers should mark their calendars for a special trip to Wildseed Farms during the pre-holiday season, when the shop adds unusual handcrafted tree ornaments, decorations, and toys, as well as foods, beers, and wines imported from Germany. For more information

about the Market Center and about a visit to the farm, call 830/990-1393.

During blooming season, you can cut your own fresh flowers, such as zinnias, larkspurs, and bluebells, with shears provided by the farm. Cost depends on species and quantity.



To obtain the *1998 Wildflower Reference Guide & Seed Catalog* (\$2), or to place an order for seeds, call 800/848-0078 Mon-Fri 8-7, Sat 9-4 through May 1; Mon-Fri 8-5, May 2-Dec. 31; fax 830/990-8090; or write to Box 3000, Fredericksburg 78624-3000.

Sample seed prices: Texas/Oklahoma Wildflower Mix, \$9.95 per 1/4 pound, which seeds about 500 square feet; \$27.50 per pound, which seeds about 2,000 square feet. Texas bluebonnet seeds cost

\$13.50 per pound, which seeds about 1,250 square feet. Texas paintbrush seeds cost \$375 per pound, which seeds about 4 acres.

To view portions of Wildseed Farms of Fredericksburg's reference guide and catalog, or to order a catalog on-line, visit the company's Web site at www.wildseedfarms.com.

Nearby Sites

Fredericksburg, 7 miles west of Wildseed Farms, offers visitors the renowned Admiral Nimitz State Historical Park, diverse specialty shops, and numerous dining and lodging possibilities, including a large number of bed and breakfasts. The town reflects its German heritage in its architectural styles, in the delicious breads and pastries available at several bakeries, and in the cuisine offered in its restaurants. For more information, write to the Fredericksburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, 106 N. Adams (78624); 830/997-6523.

The **Lyndon Baines Johnson State and National Historical parks** at Stonewall, 7 miles east of Wildseed Farms, contain fascinating memorabilia about the late president. A National Park Service bus tour lasting about

1 1/2 hours includes LBJ's birthplace, the LBJ Ranch, and the president's grave in the Johnson family cemetery. Tours depart frequently 10-4 from LBJ State Park headquarters. Cost: \$3 age 7 and older. Park grounds open daily 8-5 (closed Christmas and New Year's days). Call 830/868-7128. The state park also offers the **Sauer-Beckmann Living History Farm**, which depicts German family life 1915-18. Interpretive guides lead tours of the farm, which opens daily 8-4:30 (closed Christmas and New Year's days). Write to the LBJ State Park, Box 238, Stonewall 78671; 830/644-2252.

About 18 miles north of Fredericksburg via Ranch Road 965 is **Enchanted Rock State Natural Area**. The "rock" is the second-largest single-rock mountain in the nation (after Georgia's Stone Mountain). A favorite spot for rock-climbers, the park also offers tent camping (*no vehicle-camping allowed*), hiking, showers, and a day-use group facility for up to 200.

Note: Park sometimes closes on weekends and holidays and during spring break because of overcrowding. Call ahead for status, hours, fees, and other information. Write to 16710 RR 965, Fredericksburg 78624; 915/247-3903.

"In addition to making commercially available the red, pink, and maroon bluebonnets and other wildflower species, I hope that John will be able to use his technology to produce and market seeds of the old-fashioned petunia," says Dr. Parsons. "Gardeners want 'plant-it-once-and-you-have-it-forever' species that prove durable yet beautiful. Old-fashioned petunias, larkspurs, and bluebonnets offer those characteristics. But, it does little good to tout a plant if no one will have the opportunity to enjoy it. So, before I promote an item like the petunia to gardeners, I like to have a reliable source of seed, such as Wildseed Farms," says Dr. Parsons.

This spring, Wildseed Farms will display for the first time a field of bunny bloom larkspurs (*Delphinium ajacis* sp.), a species that Dr. Parsons and John Thomas hope will prove commercially feasible. The plant's distinctive flower petals form the shape of a rabbit's head and usually blossom profusely around Easter time. "Should be a natural," says John.

A few months ago, a friend who graduated from high school with John stopped by Wildseed Farms. "You know, John," she said, "you were about the last person our class would have chosen as a 'flower child.'" "Yep," says John. "That's true. Of course, my daddy says I'm growing things today he's been trying to kill for years!"


John Thomas has lots of plans for Wildseed Farms of Fredericksburg. Someday, he says, there'll be wagon tours that will carry folks through the fields and down to the pristine Palo Alto Creek arm of the Pedernales River that borders the farm. Maybe some quaint bed-and-breakfast cabins will stand here, too. And a winery, perhaps.

Meanwhile, acres and acres of red and blue and pink and white blossoms paint a Technicolor testimonial to John Thomas and his fields of dreams. ★

Freelance writer ROSEMARY WILLIAMS of Austin wrote January's story on salsa.

Staff photographer STAN WILLIAMS shot last April's story on specialty-cut flowers.





With bluebonnets,
Texas topaz, and Western
history, Mason County proves

TRUE

IF MASON COUNTY EVER TAKES A POLL ON an official color, vote blue. Indeed, the pastel blue topaz found here already bears the title “Official State Gem,” courtesy of the Texas Legislature. And who wouldn’t rally ’round the area’s deep azure skies—viewed straight up or reflected in clear creeks and rivers?

BLUE

But the main campaign for Mason blue emerges during spring’s landslide of color. That’s when Texas bluebonnets, the official state flower, burst into bloom, blanketing hills and hollows. With Indian paintbrushes and prickly poppies mixed in, the countryside seems decorated by a bunting of red, white, and mostly blue.

For visitors eager to “vote blue” each spring, the Mason Chamber of Commerce makes it easy by providing a guide to three scenic drives, all of which start at Mason’s historic square. They take you down 120

Martin’s Crossing (Ranch Road 1723), on the Llano River, remains a favorite put-in point for canoeists.

Story and Photographs
by Randy Mallory

Today, rock-fence remnants stretch along many roadsides, flanked by stone farmhouses, water tanks, barns, and churches more than a century old.

miles of paved and well-maintained dirt roads during April and May, when wildflowers reach their peak...and when wildlife abounds within easy eyesight of roadways.

Myriad birds flitter among scattered clumps of mesquite and live oak trees. Small groups of white-tailed deer graze in meadows lush with green grass and flowers. Jackrabbits zigzag in the underbrush. And, on a rare occasion, wild turkeys gobble by.

Mason County's German heritage permeates all three scenic drives. In the 1840s and 1850s, German farming and ranching families began moving here from the Fredericksburg area. They cleared fields of stones and, in the days before barbed wire, stacked them into fences to keep cattle out of their crops. Today, rock-fence remnants stretch along many roadsides, flanked by stone farmhouses, water tanks, barns, and churches more than a century old. (Don't be shocked, however, by the sight of an occasional tennis court. A tennis stronghold since the 1970s, Mason County sports 23 private and 10 public courts and hosts major public tournaments annually.)

THE LONGEST WILDFLOWER ROUTE, 50-mile-long Fredonia-Pontotoc Drive, jaunts past fields of peanuts, a top local farm product, once you leave Mason. At Fredonia, an old general store, a blacksmith shop, and an antique windmill suggest rural life of an earlier era. In the community of Art, the Upper Willow Creek General Merchandise and Feed Store has brought new life to an 1883 store and post office. If you've got the time, proprietors Mary Ann Lockeby and her husband, Larry, will show you his collection of "old stuff"—shelves here are filled with metal toys and cowboy and Indian figurines from Larry's childhood, as well as tools handed down from his father.

© LARRY HODGE



Bluebonnets encircle the Methodist Church built in 1902 at Hilda, an old German community in southeastern Mason County.



dows, smell the scent of wildflowers in the air, and enjoy more rock fences, old farm structures, and a one-room schoolhouse, reborn as the Art Community Center. You even get the chance to navigate a low-water crossing or two.

The drive takes you past yet another B&B located on a working ranch and farm. In 1996, Willow Creek Ranch Bed & Breakfast owners Kay and Dennis Evans turned the smokehouse and root cellar of their 1870s-era farmstead into a quaint, cozy guest cottage and a wine cellar. A short walk from the cottage, the Llano River borders the ranch for a quarter mile, with tranquil pools for

Across the creek from the store, the Art United Methodist Church actually comprises two 19th-Century churches in one. After the Civil War, internal squabbles divided the church into two factions, each of which erected its own building. In the 1940s, members reunited and moved their congregations and their church structures back together again.

Down the road, at the Hasse House Bed & Breakfast, innkeeper Laverne Lee loves showing guests around the stone house that her great-grandparents Heinrich and Fredericka Hasse built in 1883. The B&B, part of a working ranch, features a two-mile nature trail.

The second scenic loop, 44-mile Hilda Drive, passes numerous 19th-Century German farmhouses, including the striking Brandenberger Ranch House, with its red-and-white stonework and a wide view of the surrounding countryside. Nearby, down a dirt lane, the Hilda Methodist Church displays fine cut-stonework and Gothic

arches built by skilled German craftsmen around the turn of the century. In April, the country church sits in a sea of bluebonnets. The drive also passes the 1884 Ben Grote Ranch House, once a Pony Express stop, and the elegant two-story Ellebracht House (ca. 1850), framed by a picturesque rock fence.

The 24.5-mile Lower Willow Creek Drive is the shortest and perhaps most laid-back of Mason County's three wildflower routes. Mostly a dirt lane, the drive makes for slow going. But the easy pace affords you the chance to roll down your win-

wading or swimming and shallow rapids that flow past the ruins of a waterwheel.

At the Llano, you might want to toss a hook in its crystal-clear, slow-moving waters. (The county boasts several



[ABOVE] Brandenberger Ranch House, with its cast-concrete columns and balustrade, alternating red and white stone, and patterned metal roof, sits high on a hill overlooking the Llano River Valley.

[RIGHT] Majestic pecan trees planted during the Thirties surround the 1910 Mason County courthouse, where almost every room has a fireplace trimmed with ornate pressed metal.

other river crossings as well.) River fishing, including fly-fishing, remains a longstanding tradition for locals and visitors alike. A roaring flood in 1997, however, washed away normally teeming bass and sunfish populations, says fly-fishing guide Leonard Wilson. But there's a silver lining for catfish anglers, he adds: With much of their food supply (bass and sunfish) reduced, large river catfish—yellows, channels, and humpback blues—remain all the hungrier for bait.

IF YOU'RE HUNGRY AFTER A MORNING'S ramble along the county's wildflower drives, stop by Cooper's Pit Bar-B-Q, a Mason tradition since 1953. Owners Duard and Yvonne

Dockal smoke their meats on the premises. In fact, you can select your portion of beef, chicken, pork, or cabrito right from the pit. For dine-in patrons, Cooper's serves its hearty fare the old-fashioned way, on butcher paper; then you add the sauce you want and choose side orders such as beans, cole slaw, and potato salad. Save room for a slice of Yvonne's homemade pie or cake.

Freshly prepared foods also await you on Mason's downtown courthouse square, at the Willow Creek Cafe. You can't miss this eatery's turn-of-the-century cast-iron facade, tall glass windows, and wide doors—holdovers from its previous life as a Model T Ford showroom. Inside, owners Cindy and James Morris show good taste in decor as well

[BELOW] On the Seaquist Ranch, Tom Zayko digs for topaz along streams that meander through granite outcroppings.

as cuisine. Exposed rock walls, pleasant paintings, and high ceilings create a light and airy atmosphere. Lunch specials range from King Ranch chicken casserole to chicken-fried steak, with vegetarian entrées thrown in for variety. The dinner menu features steaks, salads, and homemade desserts.

After lunch, why not saunter next door to the chamber of commerce and pick up their informative guide to a walking tour of the courthouse square? It's one of Texas' few "two-block squares," meaning it forms a rectangle one block wide but two blocks long.

Treasure-seekers come searching for topaz and quartz among granite outcroppings rimmed with spring-fed streams and flower-covered meadows.





Graphic detail proclaims Mason's German heritage on a commercial building facing the town square.

The Mason Square Bed & Breakfast shares more of the town's past. Built in the late 1880s, the structure served as the Buckhorn Saloon from around 1900 to 1905, and it still contains a well and pump that supplied water for the entire block. Innkeepers Monica and Brent Hinckley have lined the walls of their upstairs B&B with original maps of Texas and the Southwest that date from 1601 to 1905. The inn's second-floor balcony offers a grand view of downtown.

On the square's west side, restoration continues on the 1928 Odeon Theater. Operated as a movie house until 1993, it premiered Walt Disney's *Old Yeller*, based on the novel by Fred Gipson, a native of Mason. (The M. Beven Eckert Memorial Library, just a few

blocks away, has a permanent exhibit on Gipson's life and work.) Today, the Odeon periodically features current and classic films, as well as live performances.

The square's antique shops hold a few surprises. One shop, called Antiques and Crafts, houses not only antiques but also Kendal Hemphill's Rock Bottom Canoe Company. Kendal rents canoes and sit-on-top kayaks for navigating the Llano River even in low water.

Other antique shops and stores on or near the square sell Mason County's most prized geological treasure, topaz. The Antique Emporium carries the famous pale blue topaz, as well as cut smoky quartz. You can also find cut topaz at Benjie's Books & Gifts and at Country Collectibles, home of Big Blue, a 587.15-karat stone that's one of the largest pieces of topaz ever found in the county, says owner Doris Grote.

The 1910 Classical Revival Mason County courthouse—in which almost every room has a fireplace trimmed with ornate pressed metal—dominates the square. Beneath towering pecan trees on the courthouse lawn, the statue of a trail driver pays tribute to ranching, the area's economic mainstay for more than 100 years. Local sculptor Mitch Mikeska created the piece. The statue's base bears the names of early pioneers—including one cattlegirl, Anna Martin, reportedly the first woman bank president in Texas. Across the street from the courthouse, the bank she founded, now called Commercial Bank, displays caricature woodcarvings about ranch life created by Gene Zesch, a nationally known artist from Mason.

For a leathery feel of Mason's Old West heritage, stop by Schooley Saddlery. Steve Schooley moved here two years ago from San Angelo, where he refined his craft. Now he builds saddles from scratch and sells many of them through dealers back East. He also fashions custom belts and holsters.

Local heritage, Western and otherwise, thrives on the square. At Davenport Pharmacy, old photos on display chronicle the county seat's growth. A chat with owner and local historian Grace Ray Davenport reveals her years of research on the history of the square's development.



The 1880s Seaquist House welcomes visitors to tour its 22 rooms and wrap-around galleries. An unusual feature is a stone water tower, installed in the 1920s to increase water pressure.



On the promontory where Fort Mason overlooks the community, Stan Brown portrays Private Herman Rost, a real-life U.S. Army soldier who served at the 1850s fort, which guarded settlers against Indian raids.

YOU CAN DIG FOR GEMSTONES YOURSELF, if you prefer them *au naturel*. Treasure-seekers come, shovels and strainers in hand, searching for topaz and quartz among granite outcroppings rimmed with spring-fed streams and flower-covered meadows.

“Some people dig just about anywhere, anytime,” reports rock hound Tom Zayko, who, several years ago, moved to the county because of its geologic wealth. “But it’s best to dig right after a rain in low areas where topaz or quartz may have washed from rocks higher up.”

Even if you come away empty-handed, hunting for topaz makes for a relaxed day’s outing. A few miles northwest of Mason, two private ranches, the Hofmann and the Seaquist, open their lands to gem-hunters.

In town, the Seaquists open up another family treasure for tours—one of Mason’s top two tourist attractions—the 1880s Seaquist House, a 22-room mansion listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The three-story landmark features 24-inch-thick carved-limestone walls, 16 fireplaces, and an 1,800-square-foot ballroom complete with fiddler’s roost. On tours, Mike Seaquist tells how his grandfather Oscar Seaquist, a Swedish immigrant, bought

the house in 1919 and added a tall stone water tower in the Twenties to increase the water pressure on the third floor. At the same time, luxury-minded Grandfather Seaquist added a round shower room 12 feet in diameter inside the tower, where pipes sprayed water both from above and from the sides.

You’ll find Mason’s other top tourist draw a half-mile up Post Hill Street from the square. In 1851, the U.S. Army established Fort Mason on an elevated site overlooking an artesian spring. The cavalry outpost, one of a line of forts stretching from the Red River to the Rio Grande, offered protection from Indian attacks for settlers and travelers headed west. Today, the fort site offers a panoramic view of the town that grew up around it. A reconstructed officers’ quarters, the only structure on the site, sits on its original foundations.

The fort and, consequently, the town and county were named in honor of George T. Mason, a soldier killed near Brownsville in a skirmish leading up to the Mexican-American War in 1846. After the army abandoned the fort in 1869, area residents dismantled all but one of the 48 military buildings (the creekside stable was left standing) and used the red sandstone to transform storefronts and to build many of the

Victorian homes that now make up the Mason National Register Historic District (located between the fort and the square).

A historical footnote: Forty-eight officers who trained at Fort Mason—including Robert E. Lee and Albert Sidney Johnston—later became generals in the Civil War.

A training ground of a wilder sort lies along a remote stretch of Mason County’s James River. Around dusk, from mid-May to mid-October, hushed visitors hunker down on wooden benches at the Eckert James River Bat Cave Preserve to watch 4 to 6 million Mexican free-tailed bats stream from one of the nation’s largest maternity bat caves. Early in the season, adults go out on their nightly feeding forays, leaving their newborn behind. As they mature, the young bats then try out their wings by joining the twisting “bat tornado,” which takes more than an hour to emerge from the cave.

The phenomenal bat flight has fascinated nature-lovers for generations, says Clinton Schulze, mayor of Mason since 1984. The mayor’s grandfather W. Phillip Eckert bought the ranch on which the cave is located in 1904. “It has always been quite an event,” Schulze says. “People would picnic along the river, then go watch the bats come out of the cave.”

For more than 50 years, the Eckert family mined the cave’s accumulated bat guano—using cable cars drawn at first by horses, and later by Model T trucks—and sold it as fertilizer to area farmers. In 1991, Richard P. Eckert and Virginia Garrett donated the cave to The Nature Conservancy of Texas with the stipulation that it remain open to the public for enjoyment and education.

It’s a shame bats can’t vote. As they swirl into the darkening sky over rolling hillsides cascading with wildflowers, they might want to vote Mason blue, too. ★

RANDY MALLORY wrote and photographed “Songwriters’ Paradise,” which appeared in the February issue.

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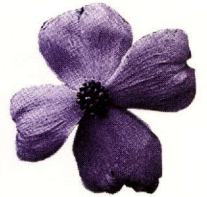
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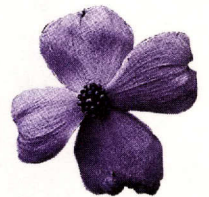


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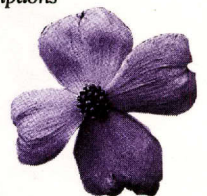


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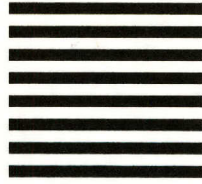
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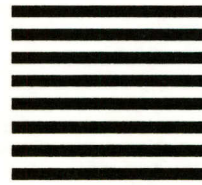


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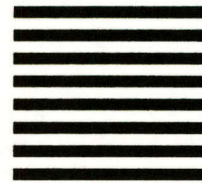


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The Travel Magazine of Texas

Mason County

Mason County is in the Texas Hill Country 100 miles west of Austin. The county seat, Mason, is at the intersection of US 377, US 87, and Texas 29. For a free packet that includes a calendar of events and a list of accommodations, restaurants, and shops, write to the Mason Chamber of Commerce, Box 156, Mason 76856; 915/347-5758. Walk-on guides available for bus tours by prior arrangement.

The area code for all places listed is 915. All addresses, unless otherwise noted, are Mason 76856. All sites are wheelchair accessible, except as noted.

Self-Guided Tours

The chamber, at 108 Ft. McKavitt St., has printed guides for a walking tour of downtown. It also has driving guides to April and May's Bluebonnet & Wildflower Country Lanes Tours.

Sites

The historic **Seaquist House**, 400 Broad St., opens during the April Bluebonnet Country Lanes Tours for 90-minute tours on Sat. at 10 a.m., and at other times by appt. Admission: \$5. Not wheelchair accessible. Call 347-5413.

A reconstruction of the officers' quarters of **Fort Mason**, at 110 Spruce St., offers a panoramic view of town. Always open for viewing, with interpretive tours by prior arrangement with the chamber of commerce.

View woodcarvings of noted artist **Gene Zesch** at Commercial Bank, 100 Moody. Hours: Mon-Fri 9-3, Sat 9-noon. Call 347-6324.

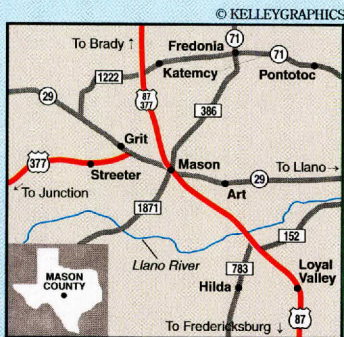
See an exhibit on Mason native **Fred Gipson**, author of *Old Yeller*, at the **M. Beven Eckert Memorial Library**, 410 Post Hill St. Hours: Mon-Wed noon-7, Thu 1-5:30, Fri 9-1:30, Sat 10-noon. Call 347-5446.

Odeon Theater, 118 Moody, periodically shows current and classic films and stages live productions. For a schedule, write to the Odeon Preservation Assn., Box 700, or call Thom Canfield at 347-5911.

Schooley Saddlery is at 108 S. Live Oak. Hours: Mon-Fri 8-5:30, Sat 8:30-1. Call 347-5407.

Davenport Pharmacy is at 130 Ft. McKavitt. Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30-5:30. Call 347-6321.

Upper Willow Creek General Merchandise and Feed Store, 7898 Texas 29 in Art (76820), is 10 miles east of Mason. Hours: Mon-Wed and Fri-Sat 8-5 (Fri-Sat 8 a.m.-9 p.m. during deer season). Call 347-0019.



Topaz

Two ranches (not wheelchair accessible) offer topaz hunting. Daily admission: \$10 per person. You keep what you find. Bring digging tools and dress comfortably.

Garner Seaquist Ranch offers primitive camping for \$5 a day or \$10 with hookups. Pay fees and get gate key and directions at Nu-Way Grocery, 317 Ft. McKavitt. Closed Oct-Dec for deer season. Write to Seaquist Ranch, Box 35; 347-5413.

Wayne Hofmann Ranch offers free primitive camping (closed Nov-Dec for deer season). Pay fees and get gate key and directions from Wesley Loeffler. Wesley says topaz on the ranch has been "hunted out and is awfully hard to find anymore." Call 347-6415.

Buy cut topaz at these stores on or near the square: **Country Collectibles**, 424 Ft. McKavitt, open Mon-Sat 9-5, Sun noon-5, 347-5249; **Underwood Antique Mall**, 100 S. Live Oak, open Mon-Sat 10-5, 347-5258; **Benjie's Books & Gifts**, 208 Ft. McKavitt, open Mon-Sat 9-5, 347-6323; and **Antique Emporium**, 106 S. Live Oak, open Mon-Sat 10-5, 347-5330.

Accommodations/Dining

Mason County offers a dozen or so bed and breakfasts and many restaurants. For a complete list, contact the chamber, but here are a few selections. Downtown, try **Mason**

Square B&B, 124 Ft. McKavitt; write to Box 298, or call 347-6398 or 800/369-0405 (not wheelchair accessible). In the community of Art, 6½ miles east of Mason, look for the **Hasse House**, 7362 Texas 29; write to Box 58, or call 347-6463 or 888/414-2773. On the Llano River, try **Willow Creek Ranch B&B** (not wheelchair accessible), 14 miles south of Mason. Write to Box 1599, or call 347-6781 or 888/281-7242 (email: willowcr@hctc.net).

Willow Creek Cafe, on the square, opens Thu-Sat 11-2 and 5-9, Sun 11-2; 347-6124. **Cooper's Pit Bar-B-Q**, on US 87 South, opens daily 10:30-5:30 (though hours sometimes vary). Call 347-6897.

Bat Cave

About 16 miles south of Mason on James River Rd. is the **Eckert James River Bat Cave Preserve**. Hours: 6 p.m.-9 p.m. Thu-Sun, mid-May to mid-Oct. Time of bat exodus varies. Admission: Free. Not wheelchair accessible. For details and directions, call 347-5970 during bat season; off-season, write to The Nature Conservancy of Texas, 11617 FM 2244, Austin 78733; 512/263-8878.

Outdoor Recreation

From Oct-Dec, Mason Co. features some of the top bow and gun deer hunting in Texas. The chamber sponsors a **Wild Game Dinner**, usually the second Sat. of Nov., (this year, on Nov. 7, 1998), and it

also keeps a list of available leases. **Fishing** for bass, sunfish, and catfish has been a Llano River tradition for generations, although floods in 1997 reduced fish populations. For angling guide service, write to Leonard Wilson, HCR 85, Box 10, Hext 76848; 915/456-6069. After moderate to heavy rainfall, try **canoeing** or **kayaking** on the Llano. For rentals and put-in/take-out service, visit the **Rock Bottom Canoe Co.** at **Antiques and Crafts** (beside Hemphill Insurance), 201 Westmoreland. Write to Box 564; 347-6440.

Long known as a haven for **tennis**, Mason hosts two major public tournaments annually, the 4-day **Dr Pepper Tournament**, beginning the fourth weekend in July (July 23-26, 1998) with junior and adult categories, and the **Over-the-Hill Tournament** (age 35 and older) the second weekend in Oct. (Oct. 10-11, 1998). Write to Paul Smith, Box 15; 347-5444.

Books

For more information, look for the 704-page *History of Mason County, Texas* by Margaret Bierschwald, to be published in May 1998 by the Mason Co. Historical Commission, Box 524, 347-6471 (\$55.30, including tax and shipping). *Fort Mason, Texas: Training Ground for Generals* by Jerry Ponder is available from Box 792, 347-6539 (\$19.71, including tax and shipping).



Quaint stucco and stone cottages, like this private home on Austin Avenue (Texas 29), abound in Mason.

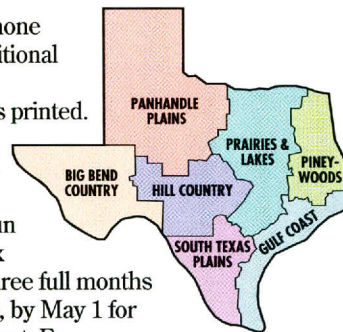
Fun Forecast

| May 1998 | | | | | | |
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In Fun Forecast, we provide events and telephone numbers for next month, so that you'll have additional time to plan your outings.

Sometimes dates change after the magazine is printed.

Before you drive miles to an event, confirm the date by calling the number listed next to the festivity or by contacting the local chamber of commerce. If you wish to submit an event for Fun



Forecast, please send the information to Fun Forecast, *Texas Highways*, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009; fax 512/483-3672. Submit information at least three full months before the first of the month in which the event will take place (for example, by May 1 for August festivities). Space is limited, so we may not be able to print every event. For a quarterly, more detailed schedule of events, write for a free Texas Events Calendar, Box 5064, Austin 78763-5064, or fax 512/483-3672.

Texas Highways' Web site (www.texashighways.com) includes an expanded Fun Forecast that gives descriptions of the events.

For free routing assistance or details on any destination in Texas, call 800/452-9292 toll-free from anywhere in the United States and Canada, any day between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Central Time. A travel counselor at one of the state's travel information centers will be on the line to provide travel information, send brochures, and advise you of any emergency road conditions.

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| <p>Panhandle Plains</p> <p>1-2 CROWELL Cynthia Ann Parker Days 940/684-1670</p> <p>LUBBOCK <i>Viva la Musica!</i> 806/770-2000</p> <p>1-3 CHILDRESS Rolling Plains Heritage Festival 940/937-2567</p> <p>WICHITA FALLS Notre Dame Spring Festival 940/691-4987</p> <p>1-4 AMARILLO (began Jan 31) <i>Puzzle Pieces</i> 806/355-9548</p> <p>1-3, 29-31 POST Old Mill Trade Days 806/495-3529</p> <p>2 ALBANY Fort Griffin Fandangle Sampler 915/762-2525</p> <p>BLUEGROVE Old-Time Fiddlers Contest 940/895-3791</p> <p>PAMPA Golf Tournament 806/665-6677</p> | <p>2 SNYDER May Day & Auction 915/573-4035</p> <p>WICHITA FALLS Kids Fest 940/691-0003</p> <p>2-3 BIG SPRING Civil War Weekend 915/264-1105</p> <p>BRECKENRIDGE Stephens Co Frontier Days 254/559-2801</p> <p>GRAHAM Lake Country Art Festival 940/549-3355</p> <p>LUBBOCK Gem & Mineral Show 806/746-4936</p> <p>Iris Show 806/793-3542</p> <p>SAN ANGELO Railfair 915/658-3120</p> <p>WICHITA FALLS Barrel Race 940/855-8999</p> <p>2, 9, 16, 23, 30 ROPESVILLE Cowboy Music at Bevers' Crossing 806/562-4412</p> <p>WICHITA FALLS Texas Gold Country Music Show 940/723-9037</p> | <p>3 ROPESVILLE Cowboy Church & Breakfast 806/562-4412</p> <p>6-9 MINERAL WELLS Palo Pinto Co Livestock Assn Rodeo 800/252-MWTX</p> <p>8 SAN ANGELO Cactus Jazz Series 915/653-6793</p> <p>8-10 ABILENE Western Heritage Classic 915/677-4376</p> <p>PLAINVIEW Roadrunner Car Show 800/658-2685</p> <p>9 BROWNWOOD Lake Brownwood State Park 75th Birthday Celebration 915/784-5223</p> <p>CLARENDON Saints' Roost Jamboree 806/874-3942</p> <p>ELECTRA Goat Barbecue 940/495-3577</p> <p>MEADOW Bluegrass & Gospel Music 806/539-2266</p> <p>PAMPA Golf Tournament 806/665-0711</p> | <p>9 WICHITA FALLS Bird Mart 940/692-2886</p> <p>9-10 PAMPA Trade Days, Arts & Crafts Fair, Chili Cookoff 806/669-3241</p> <p>10 WICHITA FALLS Carillon Concert 940/322-9758</p> <p>13-14 WICHITA FALLS Buffalo Soldiers 940/528-2211</p> <p>14 ABILENE Artwalk 915/677-8389</p> <p>15-16 QUANAH Buffalo Soldiers 940/839-4331</p> <p>16 PLAINVIEW Pioneer Roundup 806/291-5267</p> <p>SAN ANGELO Campfire Concert 915/949-6870</p> <p>SANTA ANNA Funtier Days 915/348-3535</p> <p>16-17 BRECKENRIDGE Bass Tournament 915/676-7711</p> | <p>16-17 OLNEY Trade Days 940/564-5445</p> <p>PAMPA Golf Tournament 806/669-5866</p> <p>SNYDER Arts & Crafts Show 915/263-1423</p> <p>23 FLOYDADA Old Settlers Reunion 806/983-8434</p> <p>SLATON Opry 806/828-6238</p> <p>23-24 HENRIETTA Clay Co Old West Festival 940/538-6968</p> <p>25 QUANAH Copper Breaks State Park Appreciation Day 940/839-4331</p> <p>28-30 LAMESA Bluegrass Festival 806/872-2121</p> <p>SAN ANGELO <i>Dearly Departed</i> 915/949-4400</p> <p>29-30 OLNEY Rodeo Parade & Family Fun Festival 940/564-5445</p> | <p>30 BALLINGER Depot Daze 915/365-2333</p> <p>QUANAH Western Festival 940/663-2248</p> | <p>1-3 ENNIS (began Apr 30) NHRA Lone Star Nationals Drag Racing 888/366-4748</p> <p>FORT WORTH (began Apr 30) Mayfest 817/332-1055</p> <p>(began Apr 30) Auto Swap Meet 817/332-1161</p> <p>(began Mar 27) <i>Zimwe & the Drum</i> 817/338-4206</p> <p>MCKINNEY Collin Co Student Art Show 972/542-1502</p> <p>WACO Cinco de Mayo Celebration 254/754-7111</p> <p>1-4 DALLAS <i>The Dallas Morning News</i> Wine & Food Festival 214/720-9004</p> <p>1-9 FORT WORTH <i>Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs</i> 817/332-2272</p> <p>1-2, 7-9, 14-16 GAINESVILLE <i>Daddy's Dyin' Who's Got the Will?</i> 940/665-8152</p> | <p>1-16 ARLINGTON (began Apr 16) <i>Funny Money</i> 817/275-7661</p> <p>1-26 FORT WORTH <i>Incredibugs!</i> 817/871-7050</p> <p>1-2, 8-9, 15-16, 22-23, 29-30 FORT WORTH Stockyards Championship Rodeo 817/625-1025</p> <p>1-3, 28-31 CANTON First Monday Trade Days 903/567-6556</p> <p>1-3, 29-31 WEATHERFORD First Monday Trade Days 817/594-3801</p> <p>1-31 GRANBURY <i>Moon Over Buffalo</i> 817/573-9191</p> <p>1-Jun 14 WAXAHACHIE (began Apr 25) Scarborough Faire 972/938-1888</p> <p>1-Jul 31 GRAND PRAIRIE (began Apr 1) Lone Star Park Thoroughbred Racing 972/263-7223</p> <p>2 BELLEVILLE Market Day 409/865-3407</p> <p>COMMERCE Crawfish Festival 903/886-2112</p> <p>DECATUR Car Show 940/627-1553</p> <p>Jr Women's Club Golf Classic 888/694-3400</p> <p>DENTON Cinco de Mayo Celebration 940/349-8289</p> <p>DUNCANVILLE Bluegrass Festival 972/780-5099</p> <p>FARMERS BRANCH Cinco de Mayo Celebration 972/919-2631</p> | <p>2 FORT HOOD NAF Auction 254/287-1460</p> <p>HOWE Founders Day 903/893-1646</p> <p>IRVING Las Colinas Symphony Orchestra 972/580-1566</p> <p>KAUFMAN Cinco de Mayo Celebration 792/932-3118</p> <p>LANCASTER Cinco de Mayo Celebration 972/227-1112</p> <p>MESQUITE MayFest 972/216-6468</p> <p>SEGUIN Wildflower Photo Workshop 830/379-4833</p> <p>TERRELL Heritage Tour 972/524-1234</p> <p>2-3 BRYAN Adopt a Pet at Brazos Animal Shelter 409/775-5755</p> <p>DALLAS Cinco de Mayo Celebration 214/750-0670</p> <p>DENTON MS 150 Red River Challenge Bicycle Tour 214/373-1400</p> <p>WEST Trade Days 888/868-8606</p> <p>2, 7, 10 DALLAS Arts & Letters Live 214/922-1219</p> <p>2, 9, 16, 23, 30 ARLINGTON Nature Hike 817/860-6752</p> <p>COLUMBUS Columbus Opry 409/732-9210</p> <p>HICO Saturday Night Music 800/361-HICO</p> <p>STEPHENVILLE Cross Timbers Country Opry 254/965-4132</p> |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|

2, 16, 30
McKINNEY
 Flower Walk
 972/562-5566

3
FAIRFIELD
 Queen of the Trinity Star Pilgrimage
 903/389-2945

3, 17
BASTROP
 Cowboy Church
 512/303-9609

3, 17, 23
BASTROP
 Rodeo Club
 Play Day
 512/303-4321

5
NORTH RICHLAND HILLS
 MasterWorks Series
 817/283-3406

5-10
DALLAS
Annie
 214/421-5678

7-10
DALLAS
 Dallas Symphony
 214/670-3600

7, 14, 21, 28
LANCASTER
 Musicfest Concert
 972/227-1112

7-31
GARLAND
Man of La Mancha
 972/205-2780

8-9
CANTON
 Motorcycle Rally
 214/535-7797

8-10
DALLAS
 Swiss Avenue Mother's Day Homes Tour
 214/220-9630

FORT WORTH
 Sculpture Along the Trinity
 800/551-6617

8-10, 14-17
DENTON
Crimes of the Heart
 940/382-1915

9
BLOOMING GROVE
 Bloom Fest
 903/695-2711

EDGEWOOD
 Jamboree
 903/869-4241

FORT WORTH
 Civic Chorus
 817/737-7610

LANCASTER
 Second Saturday on the Square
 972/218-1101

SCHULENBURG
 Bull Bash
 409/561-8247

SULPHUR SPRINGS
 Hopkins Co Folk Festival
 903/885-2327

9-10
DALLAS
 Zoo Family Fun Weekend
 214/942-3678

FORT HOOD
 Belton Lake Water Festival
 254/287-2523

GATESVILLE
 Antiques Show
 254/865-6826

9-10
WHITEWRIGHT
 Old Rose & Garden Tour
 903/364-5230

9, 23
McKINNEY
 Bird Walk
 972/562-5566

10
CYCLONE
 Flag Hall Mother's Day Barbecue
 254/985-2393

10-11
ARLINGTON
 Regatta
 817/465-1119

10-17
IRVING
 GTE Byron Nelson PGA Tour Classic
 972/717-0700

14-16
DALLAS
 Dallas Symphony
 214/670-3600

14-17
COLUMBUS
 175th Anniversary
 409/732-8385

15-16
NAVASOTA
 Blues Festival
 409/825-3527

15-17
CANTON
 Antique Classic Car Swap
 972/276-1790

COLUMBUS
 Springtime Festival/Magnolia Homes Tour
 409/732-5135

15-17
FORT WORTH
 Civic Chorus & Symphony
 817/737-7610

Quilt Show
 817/731-9817

GRAPEVINE
 Main Street Days
 800/457-6338

GROESBECK
 Trade Days
 254/729-3616

McKINNEY
 Trade Days
 972/542-7174

NAVASOTA
 Trade Days
 409/825-8490

15-18
GREENVILLE
 Flea Market
 903/455-6109

15-17, 21-23
TEMPLE
The Lion in Winter
 254/778-4751

15-31
BEDFORD
The Girls of the Garden Club
 817/354-6444

15-Jun 14
FORT WORTH
A Soldier's Play
 817/338-4411

16
BASTROP
 Horse Show
 512/303-2828

FORT WORTH
 Herb Festival
 817/488-7262

HILLSBORO
 Starlight Sounds Concert
 254/582-2481

16
NOCONA
 Fun Day Car Show
 940/825-3526

PARIS
 Art Fair
 903/785-5221

Run for the Arts
 903/785-5221

Tune into the Arts Fiddling Contest
 903/785-5221

WHITEWRIGHT
 Opry
 903/364-2539

16-17
COLUMBUS
 Arts & Crafts Show
 409/732-8398

DALLAS
 Antique & Collectors Market
 405/478-4050

Flea Market
 405/330-1330

FORT WORTH
 Fairmount Historic Homes Tour
 817/927-8004

GRANBURY
 Art Show
 817/279-0139

GRAND PRAIRIE
 Cajun Fest
 972/647-2331

McKINNEY
 Mayfair on the Square
 972/562-6880

WACO
 Gem & Mineral Show
 254/666-4077

18-24
FORT WORTH
 Colonial Golf Tournament
 817/927-4278

22
IRVING
Dear World
 972/252-ARTS

22-24
DALLAS
 Art Fest
 214/670-0310

ENNIS
 Polka Festival
 888/366-4748

22, 24
DALLAS
 Marvin Hamlish with the Dallas Symphony
 214/670-3600

22-Jun 6
IRVING
Inherit the Wind
 972/255-1453

23
DALLAS
 Fretz Park 10-K Volkssport Trek
 972/780-1226

Black Invitational Rodeo
 214/565-9026

DENTON
 Lake Ray Roberts State Park Bicycle Rally
 940/387-8814

FORT WORTH
 Bird Mart
 817/478-8320

GREENVILLE
 Audie Murphy Day
 903/455-7232

23-24
GRANBURY
 Festival in the Park
 817/579-5299

KILLEEN
 Festival of Flags
 254/526-9551

WACO
 Car Show
 713/932-8806

23-25
DALLAS
 Walk, Swim, & Bike
 972/723-6536

GRAND PRAIRIE
 Holiday Market
 972/647-2331

HUBBARD
 Trade Days
 254/576-2521

24
FORT WORTH
 YMCA Volkssport Swim
 817/325-7760

10-K Volkswalk/
 25-K Bicycle Event
 817/735-8774

24
HALLETTSVILLE
 Sacred Heart Parish Picnic
 512/798-6888

IRVING
 Heritage House Garden Party
 972/252-3838

RICHARDSON
 Community Band
 972/851-9784

SHINER
 Catholic Church Spring Picnic
 512/594-3836

25
CORSICANA
 Navarro Co Memorial Day Barbecue
 903/396-2294

DENISON
 Memorial Day Parade
 903/465-1551

IRVING
 10-K Walk/300 Meter Swim Volkssport Event
 972/986-5086

LOCKHART
 Lockhart Opry
 512/601-2154

28
HURST
 MasterWorks Music Series
 817/283-3406

SEGUIN
 Agri-Feast
 830/401-2486

29
ATHENS
 Texas Fiddlers' Reunion
 903/675-2325

29-31
DALLAS
 Skitch Henderson with the Dallas Symphony
 214/670-3600

30
COLLEGE STATION
 Tomato Picking Contest
 409/778-8130

FLOWER MOUND
 Wildflower Festival
 972/539-0500

GONZALES
 Courthouse Trade Day
 830/672-6532

RICHARDS
 Founder's Day
 409/851-2279

Pineywoods

1-3
JASPER
 Bass Tournament
 409/698-2591

JEFFERSON
 Historical Pilgrimage
 903/665-2672

Musical Review
 903/665-2535

MARSHALL
 (began Apr 30) Jr Barrel Race
 915/935-5358

MINEOLA
 (began Apr 24) *The Boys Next Door*
 903/569-2300

NACOGDOCHES
 Multicultural Festival
 409/564-0849

1-3, 8-10
NACOGDOCHES
Best of Friends
 409/564-8300

1-16
NACOGDOCHES
 SFA Texas Nationals Art Competition & Exhibit
 409/468-6407

1-2, 8-9, 15-16, 22-23, 29-30
LIBERTY
 Opry on the Square
 800/248-8918

2
HUNTSVILLE
 Herb Festival
 409/291-7090

TRINITY
 East Texas Cowboy Jamboree
 409/594-8077

2-3
MINEOLA
 May Days Bean Fest
 903/569-2087

OVERTON
 Gospel Music Weekend
 903/834-3542

5
NACOGDOCHES
 SFA Jazz Concert
 409/468-6407

6-9
JASPER
 Lions Club Championship Rodeo
 409/384-5109

8
NACOGDOCHES
 Verdi Masterworks Concert
 409/468-6407

8-9
CONROE
 Barbecue Cookoff/Casino Night
 281/367-2886

NACOGDOCHES
 Bluegrass Reunion
 409/569-1179

TEXARKANA
 Bass Fishing Classic
 903/793-3151

8-10
NACOGDOCHES
 Flea Market
 409/564-4490

9
CONROE
 The Nylons
 409/760-2787

LIVINGSTON
 Bluegrass
 409/327-3381

TENAHA
 Spring Festival & Trades Day
 409/248-3841

12
NACOGDOCHES
Double Play
 409/468-6407

15-17
LONGVIEW
 Rodeo
 903/757-2662

MARSHALL
 Stagecoach Days
 903/935-7868

NACOGDOCHES
 Trade Days
 409/564-2150

TYLER
 Trade Days
 903/595-2223

16
TYLER
 East Texas Symphony
 903/592-1427

16-17
KOUNTZE
 Big Thicket Birding Tour
 281/445-1187

LONGVIEW
 Rubicon Bike Tour & Race
 903/236-2049

18
TYLER
 Eisenhower International Golf Classic
 903/566-9162

21-24
TEXARKANA
 Bluegrass Festival
 903/792-2481

Travel Texas Highways on the Web.

<http://www.texashighways.com>




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|---|--|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| 23 COLDSRING Trades Day 409/653-2009 | 2 BROWNSVILLE St Luke Concert 956/546-3721 | 9 CHINA Chinaberry Festival 409/752-2561 | 17 GALVESTON Oma Galloway Concert 409/763-4591 | 29-31 HOUSTON Coin Show 281/558-1540 | 3 EAGLE PASS Car Show 830/773-3289 | 14-17 SAN ANTONIO Arabian Horse Show 210/698-3300 | 1 JUNCTION Earth Day 915/446-3994 | 2-3 AUSTIN Old Pecan St Spring Arts Festival 512/478-1704 |
| 29-30 CONROE <i>Of Thee I Sing</i> 409/756-1226 | GALVESTON Maureen McGovern 409/765-1894 or 800/821-1894 | CORPUS CHRISTI Ballet Tableaux 512/991-8521 | 22 PORT ARANSAS Beachwalk Adventure 512/749-4158 | Special Olympics Texas Chapter Summer Games 800/876-5646 | SAN ANTONIO Low Rider Car Show 210/226-1177 | 15-16 SAN ANTONIO DanzaHispana San Antonio's Nomenaje a Federico Garcia Lorca 210/822-2453 | 1-2 AUSTIN Symphony & Civic Chorus 512/476-6064 | GEORGETOWN ArtWalk 512/869-4959 |
| Gulf Coast | VICTORIA Dallas Wind Symphony 512/573-6427 | HOUSTON Habrera Hativ'it 713/227-1911 | 22-24 TEXAS CITY Trade Days 409/643-5902 | PORT ARTHUR SALT Fishing Rodeo 409/985-5583 | 3-9 SAN ANTONIO Senior Olympics 210/344-3453 | 16 SAN ANTONIO "Fore the Zoo" Golf Tournament 210/734-7184 | KERRVILLE Roundup 830/896-2553 | KERRVILLE A Weekend on the River Fishing Camp 830/895-4348 |
| 1 PORT ARANSAS Wildflower Walk 512/749-4158 | 2-3 BEAUMONT Garden Tour 409/860-5119 | 9-10 SEABROOK Back Bay Market 713/474-3869 | 22-24, 29-31 SPRING Texas Crawfish Festival 281/353-9310 | 30 ANAHUAC Birding Tour 281/445-1187 | 4-10 COTULLA Santiago Jimenez, Jr 512/320-0022 | 21-Aug 15 SAN ANTONIO Fiesta Noche del Rio 210/226-4651 | (began Apr 30) Senior Games 830/896-4263 | NEW BRAUNFELS Folkfest 830/629-2943 |
| Sunset Sounds Music in the Park 512/749-4158 | GALVESTON Spirit of Flight Air Show & WalkAbout 409/740-7722 or 888/354-4488 | 10 LEAGUE CITY Star Gazer Yacht Cruise 281/334-4692 | 22-Jun 14 HOUSTON <i>How I Learned to Drive</i> 713/228-8421 | HOUSTON Carmen 713/546-0233 | 5 COTULLA Cinco de Mayo 800/256-2326 | 22-23 LAREDO Powwow 800/361-3360 | ROUND ROCK <i>A Murder is Announced</i> 512/244-0440 | |
| 1-2 BEAUMONT (began Apr 21) Neches River Festival 409/835-2546 | 2, 5, 8 HOUSTON <i>The Marriage of Figaro</i> 713/546-0246 or 800/346-4462 | 13 GALVESTON Morgan Academy of Fine Arts Dance Concert 409/763-4591 | 23 ANGLTON Brazoria Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Birding Tour 281/445-1187 | South Texas Plains | 8-9 LAREDO Cinco de Mayo 800/361-3360 | 22-23 SAN ANTONIO Fiesta Noche del Rio 210/226-4651 | SAN MARCOS (began Apr 30) Viva! Cinco de Mayo 512/396-2495 | |
| (began Apr 29) Rodeo 409/832-9991 | 2-3, 9-10 GALVESTON Historic Homes Tour 409/765-7834 | HOUSTON Charlie Pruitt's Country Music Show 409/832-6649 | 23 GOLIAD Cinco de Mayo Fiesta 512/645-2144 | 1 SAN ANTONIO San Antonio Dances! 210/212-7775 | 22-24 SAN ANTONIO Guadalupe Dance Co 210/271-3151 | 21-Aug 15 SAN ANTONIO <i>My Fair Lady</i> 210/554-1010 | VANDERPOOL Lost Maples 10-K Volkswalk 210/496-1402 | |
| CORPUS CHRISTI (began Apr 23) Buccaneer Days 512/882-3242 | 3 BEAUMONT Crawfish Festival 409/866-2400 | HOUSTON Antique Bottle, Advertising, & Collectibles Show 281/589-1882 | 1-2 ROCKPORT Mayfest 512/729-0386 | First Friday in Southtown 210/224-2448 | THREE RIVERS Brush Country Jamboree 512/449-1349 | 23 EAGLE PASS Freddy Gonzalez Memorial Day Fiesta 956/383-4961 | 2-3, 7-9 OUVALDE <i>Mousetrap</i> 830/278-4184 | |
| ORANGE International Gumbo Cookoff 409/883-3536 | VICTORIA Noche en Mexico 512/578-7434 | 14 PORT ARANSAS Tarpon Inn Songwriters' Showcase 512/749-4061 | 1-2 FALFURRIAS Fiesta Ranchera 512/925-3333 | HOUSTON Festival of Wines 512/729-1271 | 8-9 SAN ANTONIO Blue Star Arts Complex Wednesdays in Performance 210/227-5867 | 25 SAN ANTONIO Canoe Challenge 210/227-4262 | 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31 AUSTIN <i>Hill Country Flyer</i> Steam Train 512/477-8468 | |
| 1-3 BEAUMONT (began Apr 25) Great Birding Classic 800/392-4401 | 6, 13, 20, 27 PORT ARANSAS Birding on the Boardwalk 512/749-4158 | 15 VICTORIA Country Opry 512/552-9347 | 1-3 SAN ANTONIO Cinco de Mayo Festival 210/732-2156 | HOUSTON Ode to Joy 281/363-3300 | 9-10 EAGLE PASS Mall de las Aguilas Arts & Crafts Fair 830/773-3224 | 27 SAN ANTONIO Blue Star Arts Complex Wednesdays in Performance 210/227-5867 | 2-3, 7-9 AUSTIN Cinco de Mayo Festival 512/499-6270 | |
| HARLINGEN (began Apr 25) International Gulf Coast Birding Festival 512/389-4800 | 7 SMITH POINT Birding Tour 281/445-1187 | 15-16 BEASLEY Beasley Bash 409/387-2541 | 1-2 ROCKPORT Mayfest 512/729-0386 | HOUSTON Team Roping Championship 210/698-3300 | 8-10 SAN ANTONIO Arts & Crafts Fair 830/773-3224 | 27 SAN ANTONIO <i>Postmortem</i> 210/221-5953 | 1-31 MASON Bluebonnet & Wildflower Country Lanes 915/347-5758 | |
| HOUSTON (began Apr 29) <i>Blue Suede Shoes</i> 713/227-1911 | 8-9 SEABROOK Mayfest Quilt Show 281/333-2459 | 15-17 PASADENA Strawberry Festival 713/910-2232 | 23-24 GALVESTON Island Art Festival 713/521-0133 | 23-25 HOUSTON <i>Ode to Joy</i> 281/363-3300 | 8-10 SAN ANTONIO <i>Eyes of Zapata</i> 210/227-5867 | 29-31 SAN ANTONIO National Barrel Racing Super Show 210/698-3300 | 2 BOERNE Hauptstrasse Quilt Fest 830/249-3053 | |
| LAKE JACKSON Migration Celebration 409/265-2505 | 8-10 CRYSTAL BEACH Texas Crab Festival 409/684-5940 | 15-17 VIDOR Barbecue Cookoff 409/769-6339 | 23-25 HOUSTON <i>Ode to Joy</i> 281/363-3300 | 25 BROWNSVILLE Memorial Day Parade 956/542-8967 | 8-Jun 28 SAN ANTONIO <i>Eyes of Zapata</i> 210/227-5867 | 27-Jun 27 SAN ANTONIO <i>Postmortem</i> 210/221-5953 | FREDERICKSBURG Founders Day 830/997-2835 | |
| LEAGUE CITY Village Fair 281/332-5005 | HOUSTON Symphony Pops 713/225-7575 | 15-31 HOUSTON <i>Zorro: The Musical</i> 800/678-5440 | 23-25 HOUSTON <i>Ode to Joy</i> 281/363-3300 | 29-31 RICHMOND Decoration Day at George Ranch 281/343-0218 | 9 BIGFOOT Market Trail Day 830/665-5054 | 27-Jun 27 SAN ANTONIO <i>Postmortem</i> 210/221-5953 | Pioneer Memorial Library Book Sale 830/997-6513 | |
| SOUTH PADRE ISLAND Windsurfing Blowout 956/761-6433 | 8-9, 15-16 BEAUMONT <i>Big River</i> 409/832-6649 | 16 LEAGUE CITY Bluegrass Show 281/893-9541 | 23-25 HOUSTON <i>Ode to Joy</i> 281/363-3300 | 27-28 GALVESTON Flying Days 409/740-7722 | 9-10 SAN ANTONIO Horse Show 210/698-3300 | 29-31 SAN ANTONIO National Barrel Racing Super Show 210/698-3300 | HONDO Hootenanny 830/426-3438 | |
| 1-10 DICKINSON (began Apr 17) <i>Harvey</i> 281/337-SHOW | 8-Jun 7 HOUSTON <i>Noises Off</i> 713/228-8421 | 16-17 PORT ARTHUR Trade Days 409/982-4950 | 2 FLORESVILLE Heritage Days 830/216-4519 | 29-30 HOUSTON Accordion Kings 713/520-3290 | 12-17 SAN ANTONIO Tejano Conjunto Festival 210/271-3151 | 29-31 SAN ANTONIO National Barrel Racing Super Show 210/698-3300 | SAN SABA Cow Camp Cookoff 915/372-5141 | |
| | | | | | | 30-Jun 1 EAGLE PASS Border Golf Tournament 830/773-0469 | WIMBERLEY Golf Tournament 512/847-2201 | |
| | | | | | | Hill Country | Market Day 512/847-2201 | |
| | | | | | | 1 AUSTIN <i>River City Flyer</i> Steam Train 512/477-8468 | 2-3 AUSTIN Zilker Garden Festival Flora Rama 512/477-8672 | |
| | | | | | | | 8-10 MARBLE FALLS SpringFest 800/759-8178 | |
| | | | | | | | 8-9, 15-16 GEORGETOWN <i>The Diary of Adam & Eve</i> 512/863-8979 | |

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| <p>9</p> <p>AUSTIN Zilker Park Bluegrass Festival 512/218-1567</p> <p>BLANCO Ira Caswell Nature Trail Anniversary 830/833-4333</p> <p>BURNET Market Day 512/756-6074</p> <p>CASTROVILLE Market Trail Day 830/931-2331</p> <p>GEORGETOWN Grand Ole Opry 512/869-7469</p> <p>Market Day 512/863-6101</p> <p>Saddle Series 512/259-4161</p> <p>VANDERPOOL Madrona Springs Heritage Festival 830/966-5198</p> | <p>9</p> <p>WIMBERLEY Garden Tour 512/847-2201</p> <p>YANCEY Market Trail Day 830/426-8654</p> <p>9-16</p> <p>AUSTIN Historic Preservation Week 512/474-5198</p> <p>15-17</p> <p>KERRVILLE Fishing & Outdoor Show 830/895-4348</p> <p>16</p> <p>BOERNE Anhalt May Fest 830/438-2350</p> <p>WIMBERLEY Homes Tour 512/847-3390</p> <p>Celebration of the Arts 512/847-2201</p> | <p>16-17</p> <p>AUSTIN Antique & Collectible City-Wide Garage Sale 512/441-2828</p> <p>Bonsai Show 512/266-2655</p> <p>Fiesta Laguna Gloria 512/458-8191</p> <p>CASTROVILLE Antiques Show 281/373-9977</p> <p>GRUENE Old Gruene Market Days 830/629-6441</p> <p>17</p> <p>SAN MARCOS Texas Natural Weekend 512/393-5900</p> <p>Western Swing Show 512/393-5900</p> | <p>21-Jun 7</p> <p>KERRVILLE Folk Festival 830/257-9600</p> <p>22-24</p> <p>BURNET Hill Country Tour 512/259-2236</p> <p>FREDERICKSBURG Ft Martin Scott Weekend 830/997-9895</p> <p>MOUNTAIN HOME Y.O. Ranch Longhorn Trail Drive 800/967-2624</p> <p>22-25</p> <p>KERRVILLE State Arts & Crafts Fair 830/896-5411</p> <p>23</p> <p>GOLDTHWAITE Central Texas Country "Fare" 915/648-3312</p> <p>LAGO VISTA North Lake Travis Music Fest 512/267-1161 or 800/288-1882</p> | <p>23-24</p> <p>BOERNE Market Days 210/689-1855</p> <p>LAGO VISTA Regatta 512/267-1161 or 800/288-1882</p> <p>NEW BRAUNFELS Arts & Crafts Show 830/629-8022</p> <p>24</p> <p>BRACKETVILLE Car Show 830/563-2828</p> <p>29-Jun 6</p> <p>ROUND ROCK Marvin's Room 512/244-0440</p> <p>30</p> <p>AUSTIN Daylily Show 512/892-5139</p> <p>Capital City Men's Chorus 512/477-SING</p> | <p>30</p> <p>NEW BRAUNFELS Collectors Show 830/629-2943</p> <p>30-31</p> <p>AUSTIN Sami Show Arts & Crafts Affaire 512/441-7133</p> <p>Big Bend Country</p> <p>1-2</p> <p>SANDERSON Cinco de Mayo Celebration 915/345-2687</p> <p>1-3, 5-6, 9-10, 23-24</p> <p>BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK Natural History Seminars 915/477-2236</p> | <p>2</p> <p>FORT STOCKTON Cinco de Mayo Celebration 915/336-5085</p> <p>VAN HORN Cinco de Mayo Festival 915/283-2682</p> <p>2, 6, 13, 16, 20, 23, 27, 30</p> <p>FORT STOCKTON Ste Genevieve Winery Tour 915/336-8052</p> <p>4-5</p> <p>DEL RIO Cinco de Mayo 830/774-2391</p> <p>5</p> <p>EL PASO Temple Mt Sinai Centennial 915/532-5959</p> | <p>7</p> <p>EL PASO Los Angeles Guitar Quartet 915/541-4481</p> <p>8</p> <p>EL PASO Manuel Barrueco, Guitarist 915/541-4481</p> <p>9</p> <p>EL PASO Santa Fe Quartet 915/541-4481</p> <p>15-17</p> <p>MIDLAND Celebration of the Arts 915/683-3381</p> <p>16</p> <p>FORT DAVIS McDonald Observatory Tour & Astronomy Workshop 915/477-2236</p> | <p>16-17</p> <p>EL PASO Ballet Folklórico El Paso 915/532-7273</p> <p>20</p> <p>PECOS West of the Pecos Museum Chuck Wagon Barbecue 915/445-5076</p> <p>23-25</p> <p>PRESIDIO Desert Survival Workshop 915/229-3416</p> <p>29-30</p> <p>EL PASO Ballet Folklórico Quetzales 915/532-7273</p> <p>30-31</p> <p>MIDLAND Menudo Cookoff 915/682-2960</p> |
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Southfork Still Sizzles

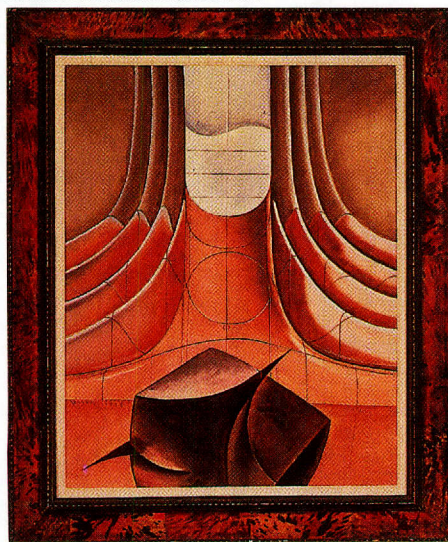
It's been 20 years since CBS debuted *Dallas*, the wildly popular nighttime soap opera that chronicled Texas' wealthy Ewing clan. The Ewings scandalized prime-time audiences with their endless jockeying for money, power, and sex until the show went off the air in 1990.

If you still love to hate J.R., you owe it to yourself to pay a visit to Southfork Ranch, a former horse spread on the outskirts of Dallas, which was used for many of the show's exterior shots. The ranch's visitor center, gift shops, and mansion annually attract thousands of *Dallas* fans from around the globe.

In the visitor center, an extensive family tree (which of ten veers far from the family) traces the Ewings' many illicit liaisons and ill-fated marriages. Four television monitors air clips from the series and interviews with the stars. You can also walk through five galleries of *Dallas* paraphernalia, including Lucy Ewing's Victorian wedding dress and the pearl-handled .38 Colt revolver that incited the nationwide chorus, "Who shot J.R.?"

A tram takes you to the outdoor arena (used to film rodeo scenes), past the ranch's event and conference center (where you can have lunch), and to the two-story Ewing mansion, which opens for tours. The pool

COURTESY SBC COMMUNICATIONS INC.



American surrealist Man Ray's 1948 painting *Macbeth* (*Shakespearean Equations Series*) is on tour as part of a collection focusing on American artists.

these days. They don't mind; after all, the works are on tour throughout Texas, giving art-lovers a chance to view the creations of some of America's great artists.

Through May 10 at the Austin Museum of Art's downtown location, *Amer-*

and patio saw many a Ewing shenanigan, and each of the home's 12 rooms is named and decorated for *Dallas* characters.

Southfork Ranch, at 3700 Hogge Road (FM 2551) in Parker, opens daily 9-5. Admission: \$6.50, \$5.50 age 55 and older, \$4.50 ages 4-12, free age 3 and younger. Wheelchair accessible, except for mansion's second floor. Write to Southfork Ranch, Box 516009, Dallas 75251; call 972/442-7800 or 800/989-7800.

American Images

In a plush office tower in San Antonio, the movers-and-shakers of SBC Communications, accustomed to gazing at world-class artwork as they conduct daily business, find their hallways a bit less colorful

ican Images: The SBC Collection of Twentieth-Century Art provides an overview of the major movements in American art, including Modernism, Abstract Expressionism, and Pop Art. Culled from the company's 1,000-plus collection, the 80 pieces on exhibit include paintings, collages, photos, sculpture, and mixed-media pieces by such artists as Georgia O'Keeffe, Charles Demuth, Jackson Pollock, Robert Rauschenberg, Edward Hopper, Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Robert Mapplethorpe, Carrie Mae Weems, Jacob Lawrence, Jesse Amado, and many others.

After the show closes in Austin, it travels to The Museum of South Texas in Corpus Christi (June 13-Sep. 5) and to the El Paso Museum of Art (Sep. 25-Dec. 31).

The Austin Museum of Art's downtown location, at 823 Congress Ave., opens Tue-Sat 11-7 (Thu until 9) and Sun 1-5. Admission: \$3, \$2 age 65 and older, free age 11 and younger. On Thu., everyone gets in for \$1. Write to Box 5568, Austin 78701, or call 512/495-9224.

Guadalupe River Ranch

Wanna feel like a movie star? Head to the Hill Country, and spend a night (or longer) at Guadalupe

River Ranch, a 360-acre retreat near Boerne that offers four-star lodging, beautiful views, recreational activities galore, and delectable meals you'll write home about.

San Antonio banker Walter Napier built the main lodge in the Twenties and later sold the ranch to actress Olivia de Havilland, who lived here for a short time in the Thirties. For today's many amenities, guests can thank Broadway producer and author Walter Starcke, who bought the land in 1977 and opened it to the public shortly thereafter.

Guests can choose from lodging that ranges from rustic stone cottages to luxurious rooms with private balconies overlooking the river. Nature-lovers should bring hiking shoes and explore the winding trails along the canyons to the east and west; armadillos, deer, butterflies, and plant life abound. Mountain biking, tennis, and horseback riding provide other active diversions, or you can simply choose to laze about in a sumptuous hammock, sniff the herbs in the garden, nap alongside the swimming pool and sauna, or toss a ball to one of the ranch's plump, pampered pets.

Which brings us to the food here: It's divine. Lettuce, herbs, and vegetables often come from the garden; breads are baked fresh daily; and chef Mike McClure makes magic in the kitchen. From portabella mushroom appetizers to grilled salmon entrées, each dish looks gorgeous on the plate and makes your taste buds sing.

For rates (which can include any or all meals and most activities), write to Box 877, Boerne 78006, or call 830/537-4837 or 800/460-2005.

By the Way...

Are you going to Scarborough Faire? On weekends through June 14 (plus Memorial Day), this annual festival—one of the state's largest Renaissance fairs—hosts a king's castle's worth

Twenty years after *Dallas*' debut on prime-time TV, Southfork Ranch still welcomes fans, who admire memorabilia in the museum galleries and gift shops, then tour the grounds and stately mansion.





The Fort Worth Museum of Science and History's newest exhibit, *Flight: Where Adventures Take Off!* lets kids and adults alike explore the world of airborne craft.

If you like life-size caterpillars, tarantulas, wasps, beetles, and butterflies, then you'll love the Fort Worth Zoo's new *Incredibugs* exhibit (at the zoo through May 26), where robotic insects stretch from eight to 16 feet tall. In addition to the mechanical creatures, bug-lovers can partake in touch-screen games and puzzles, or walk through a lush greenhouse filled with hundreds of live butterflies.... call 817/871-7050. Web site: www.fortworthzoo.com.

A short jaunt away, the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History spreads its wings with *Flight: Where Adventures Take Off!*, an exhibit (at the museum through Sep. 7) that explores the history of flight. Visitors can climb inside a real biplane and examine real helicopters; admire miniature airports and wind tunnels; and, via video simulators, pilot a Boeing 727, test-fly planes with different wing shapes, and "meet" Amelia Earhart and Chuck Yeager.... call 817/255-9300.

The northeast Texas communities of Hughes Springs, Linden, and Avinger celebrate their wildflower bounty each year in April during Cass County's **Annual Wildflower Trails Festival**, held this year April 23-25. Along Texas highways 49, 155, and 11, wildflowers bloom in abundance. Visitors can also enjoy a fun run, a bicycle race, a carnival, a parade, food and craft booths, entertainment ranging from square dancers to gospel singers, and a country-western dance on Saturday night.... call 903/639-7519.

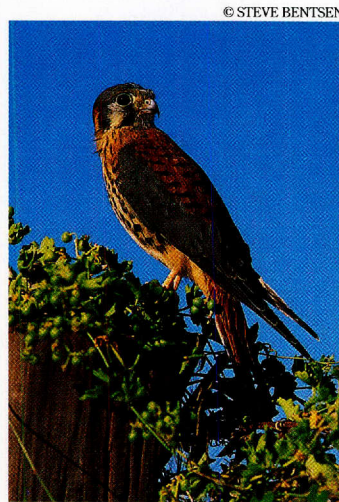
of entertainment on its 35-acre site near Waxahachie. Ten stages spotlight such enticements as juggling, full-armor jousting, falconry demonstrations, elephant and camel rides, maypole dances, and knighting ceremonies—plus plenty of live music, feasting, and shopping.... call 972/938-3247 or 888/5-FESTIVAL.

If you haven't yet toured Texas' recently restored 1888 Capitol, spring is a great time to do so. But if you can't make an Austin trip a reality, don't fret: After all, there's *virtual* reality. A new CD-ROM called *A Virtual Tour of the Texas Capitol* (\$8.95) offers armchair travelers an interactive floor-by-floor tour of Austin's resplendent Hall of State, audio and video clips, a portrait gallery and library of historic photos, a special section called "How a Bill Becomes a Law," and 360-degree "look-around" views of each room.... call 512/305-8408.

The Celtic Heritage Society of East Texas celebrates the cultures of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and Great Britain each year during its annual **Celtic Festival**, held this year in Kilgore April 18-19. Festgoers can enjoy entertainers (bagpipers, harpists, dancers, and storytellers, to name a few), Celtic food and drink, costume contests, and mock battles. Clan tents, devoted to honoring specific Irish and Scottish clans, offer information about tartans, badge crests, and genealogy.... call 903/759-9017 or 753-1269.

The Texas Gulf Coast will receive national attention April 25-May 2, when the second annual **Great Texas Birding Classic** invites thousands of competitive birdwatchers to document the spring migration in the name of habitat conservation. Teams of birders try to spot as many species as they can in one, two, or all three coastal zones. Birders will visit such spots as the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge, as well as enjoy birding seminars and dozens of other events. The deadline for early registration is April 6.... call 888/TX-BIRDS.

The recent Olympic Winter Games in Nagano, Japan, have awakened worldwide interest in Japanese culture. Here on Texas soil, learn about Japanese customs at the **6th Annual Japan Festival**, April 25-26 in Houston's Hermann Park. You can partake in formal tea ceremonies, try origami (paper folding), watch martial arts demonstrations, listen to Japanese drumming and musical groups, play traditional games, shop for toys like paper lanterns and colorful flags, and sample fare from the area's Japanese restaurants.... call 713/963-0121 or 863-9993.



Keen-eyed birders participating in the Great Texas Birding Classic (Apr. 25-May 2 along the Gulf Coast) may spot American kestrels, small falcons that commonly winter in Texas.

Visit our Web site at <http://www.texashighways.com>

The town of Hallettsville hosts the world's best breakdown fiddlers at the **28th Texas State Championship Fiddlers Frolic** April 24-26. The event kicks off with a Cajun Fun Night on Friday, featuring four bluegrass bands and Cajun food galore. On Saturday,

© CONNIE THOMPSON



Black-eyed Susans begin blooming in late April. You'll spot them during Cass County's wildflower trails event, April 23-25.

100 contestants vie for finalist status in Sunday's State Champ competition, and you can also enjoy barbecue and sausage cookoffs and an evening dance. Sunday brings a guitar-picking contest, more barbecue, and the moment of truth for 20 state-champ hopefuls.... call 512/798-2311 (before noon) or 798-2662. Web site: www.hallettsville.com.

Founded 50 years ago by Mary Lauderdale and her husband, Sam, Greenville's **Mary of Puddin' Hill** has become North Texas' most famous purveyor of fine chocolates and fruitcakes. Though you can tour the small factory and watch employees make candy year round, the Easter season offers extra incentives. Through April 11, Mary displays her spectacular chocolate Easter sculptures, including a three-story furnished Victorian dollhouse, a carousel pony, and a Fabergé-like egg featuring Princess Diana.... call 903/455-2651 or 800/545-8889.

TEXCETERA brings you readers' tips and timely travel tidbits. Because we're unable to check out every item in "Readers Recommend," and because details can change, we encourage you to call ahead for more information. When we mention new places, products, or publications, we try to include only those with promise; keep in mind, however, that problems can occur with start-up businesses.

If you run across a noteworthy Lone Star attraction, restaurant, event, or product, we'd love to hear about it. Write to Readers Recommend, *Texas Highways*, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009. Email: editors@texashighways.com. Remember that space constraints prevent us from running every suggestion we receive. We reserve the right to edit items.

READERS RECOMMEND...

My wife grew up in Florida and loves seafood. On a trip through the Panhandle, we spent the night in **Amarillo**. We ate at **Chowder's Seafood Grille** on West I-40. She claims that theirs was the freshest and best-tasting seafood she has ever had. All this in the High Plains, many miles from the [ocean].

John Hagood, Merritt Island, Florida
Chowder's Seafood Grille is at I-40 and Western Street in Amarillo; 806/355-9901.

Bever's Crossing is a great barbecue place in **Ropesville**, about 20 miles southwest of Lubbock on US 82. The owners, Buddy and Delores Bevers, bought an old railroad stationmaster's house and remodeled it into a restaurant. They have all manner of cowboy artifacts and

three prairie schooners; one is a fully equipped...chuck wagon.

People come from all over the High Plains to eat barbecue and homemade peach cobbler with ice cream, and to just visit with these beautiful people.

Polly McClish, Amarillo
Bever's Crossing is at 306 Arnette in Ropesville; 806/562-4412. On Saturday evenings from April 18 through October, you can enjoy cowboy poetry and music in the backyard.

My wife, oldest daughter, and I had an especially nice visit to one of the places I lived back in my early teens—Iraan. To make it very special, we stayed with Dickie Dell Ferro at the **Parker Ranch Bed & Breakfast**. This old (but very well preserved) ranch house is beautifully indescribable—

and the setting in those desert mountains is so in touch with nature and the heavenly skies! Please encourage your readers to visit with Dickie Dell and enjoy something delightfully relaxing and different!

BB Breland, Wiggins, Mississippi
Parker Ranch Bed & Breakfast, a Spanish Colonial-style home built in 1929, is

The 1883 Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Austin now houses the Texas Historical Commission's new library and research center.

4 miles northeast of Iraan on County Road 310. Rates: \$65 per night for one or two people; reservations required. Write to Box 1320, Iraan 79744; 915/639-2850.

SANCTUARY OF HISTORY

The Texas Historical Commission's new library and research center, in Austin at 16th and Congress Avenue, harbors resources on state and local history, historic preservation, and antiquities protection in Texas. History buffs can pore over files on some 11,500 historical markers, as well as photos and slides of state historic sites and buildings. The library holds around 5,000 publications, including 3,000 books on Texas heritage and an assortment of archeology and history periodicals.

Housing this extensive collection is a work of historic preservation in its own right—the Gethsemane Lutheran Church. In 1883, members of a Swedish congregation built the church with bricks and stones from the remains of the 1850s Texas Capitol, which had burned in 1881. Today, though pews have been replaced with shelves and tables, the chancel area remains, featuring an ornate altar created in 1920. Tall stained-glass windows—13 in all—still radiate in the daylight. Write to Box 12276, Austin 78711-2276; 512/463-5753.

THE EAGLE WILL SOAR AGAIN

The **Sam Rayburn House and Museum** in Bonham is on the road to recovery after a fire on December 4. The 1916 structure was home to Sam Rayburn, a U.S. Congressman from 1913-1961 and Speaker of the House for 17 of those years. Possibly started by an electrical problem, the blaze caused severe smoke damage to the house and artifacts and some structural marring. Officials hope

to have repairs made and the museum open again by June 1. (You can still visit the gift shop and visitor center, Monday through Friday 8-5). Write to Box 308, Bonham 75418; 903/583-5558.

LOOP-THE-LOOPS AND HOOPLA

Hold on to your hats! On March 14, **Six Flags Astro-World** in Houston debuts **Taz's Texas Tornado**, a 112-foot steel roller coaster. The four-loop thriller, in the park's Mexicana section, promises 60 mph of white-knuckled excitement. The coaster numbers among other special features and activities planned for the theme park in this, its 30th year of operation. Call for seasonal hours. Write to 9001 Kirby Drive, Houston 77054; 713/799-1234.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, **Sea World of Texas** in San Antonio will add several splashy attractions throughout the season. See new ski shows, musical performances, and dances, along with "Birds of a Feather" (showcasing birds from around the world) and a new children's pool and play area called Lil' Gators Lagoon. Call for seasonal hours and for opening and closing dates of shows. Write to 10500 Sea World Drive, San Antonio 78251-3002; 210/523-3611.

Down the Road

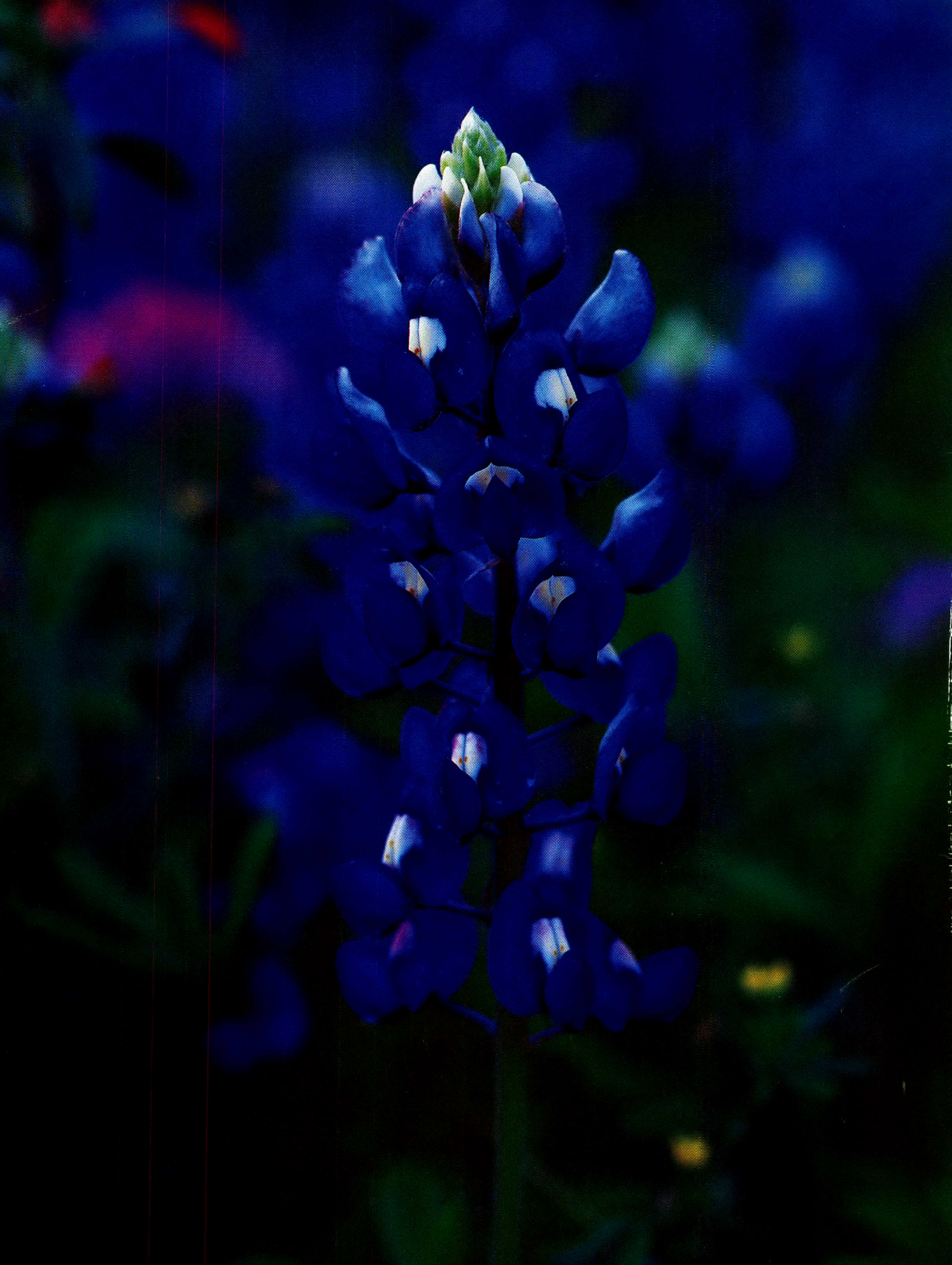
In May, we'll take you away to two Gulf Coast pearls—the sparkling city of Corpus Christi and Rockport's historic Fulton Mansion. We'll show you some of Stephan Myers' most striking images, then head to the High Plains for more wondrous wildflowers.



MICHAEL A. MURPHY



Fasciated bluebonnets, while unusual, occur normally in nature as the result of a virus that causes enlargement and flattening of the flowers. Fasciated plants sometimes look as if several stems have fused together. This one was photographed west of Beeville.



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