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# T E X A S Travel Log

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE TEXAS TRAVEL INDUSTRY

## T x D O T

TxDOT's Travel and Information Division loses 101 years of experience with the retirement of three of the division's most cherished veteran employees. **Dale Sowder**, manager of the Gainesville Travel Information Center, bids his farewell after 39 years. Dale began his career in 1956 at the Denison TIC, where he was trained by the renowned Eddie Mathews. He remained in the forefront of the Texas travel industry, serving visitors at the Denison, Waskom and Gainesville TICs. Dale oversaw the opening of a new center in Gainesville in 1961. Again, in 1988, he supervised the opening of a modern facility just north of the old location, giving him the distinction as being the first manager to open two new centers. **Reva Keltner**, senior counselor at the Gainesville TIC, leaves after 33 years of service. Reva is probably best known for the pride she took in her role as travel counselor, helping Gainesville become one of the most efficiently run centers in the department. When computers were first installed some years ago, Reva jumped right in, becoming Gainesville's primary systems manager. Because of her interest and capabilities, she taught other counselors how to operate the system and improve their skills. Dale and Reva are both recipients of the prestigious Roadrunner Award, and are Certified Professional Travel Counselors. **Herman Kelly** exits after 29 years. Herman, long-time publisher of *Texas Highways* magazine, began his career with TxDOT in 1966 as a photojournalist. Besides his role as publisher, he has overseen division operations in travel literature,

graphic design, audiovisual operations, and public information. Division director **Doris Howdeshell** said, "Dale, Reva, and Herman leave behind a legacy that will benefit the division for years to come. I've learned a lot from these employees, and will remember them always as the best of the best."

## S U M M I T ' 9 5

Don't miss **Travel Summit '95**, slated for September 23-27 in **Amarillo**. Sponsored by the **Texas Travel Industry Association**, Summit has become the premier tourism event of the year, bringing together more than 500 key players in the hospitality industry. Representatives from convention and visitor bureaus, chambers of commerce, accommodations, airlines, attractions, restaurants, and state agencies will gather for panel discussions, guest speakers, breakout and concurrent sessions, networking opportunities, and an annual trade show. For registration information or to exhibit at the trade

show, contact TTIA at 400 W. 15th Street, Suite 711, Austin 78701. Or call 512/476-4472.

## C O M I N G U P

The folks in **Round Rock** have come up with a plan that would mark their heritage with the Chisholm Trail and provide a tourism attraction that is purely Texan. The *Austin American-Statesman* reports a life-size, cast bronze sculpture grouping of a cowboy on horseback leading several Texas longhorns will soon splash across Brushy Creek in Memorial Park, just east of the flat, rounded rock that gives the city its name. "It will bring a stream of new traffic to see it, and with that, a stream of new merchants," says **Vernon O'Rourke**, chairman of the Round Rock Chamber of Commerce tourism committee.

Hopes for restoring **Plainview's** first "talkie picture" theater to the luster it had during the Roaring Twenties are well on their way to becoming reality. The **Fair**

**Theatre**, originally named the Plainview Theatre, featured early motion pictures, as well as vaudeville acts, including one with a live elephant on stage. Now the citizens of Plainview are working hard to bring the theater back to life as an historic attraction and as the center of community events. Efforts to raise the \$35,000 needed to buy the building began in May. An additional \$150,000 to \$200,000 will be needed for restoration and repair. Once complete, the Fair Theatre will feature classic films, live musical and theatrical productions, and other public events. For more info or to arrange for a tour, call the Main Street office at 806/296-1119.

## P L A C E S

Leaders in the **City of Arlington** are basking in the afterglow of the recent **All Star Game**. **Judy Everett Ramos**, director of communications at the Arlington C&VB, said broadcast media mentioned the City of Arlington and The Ballpark in



**CHILL OUT** Folks in Dallas are talking up an outdoor ice-skating rink to be built on the West End. Proponents plan to use the rink as the centerpiece of *Dallas on Ice*, a new 90-day winter festival, proposed for Thanksgiving through late February. Though some are skeptical of an outdoor ice rink in Texas, city officials are quick to point out the popularity of the Dallas Stars hockey team, formerly of Minneapolis. The festival is expected to attract about 60,000 people and generate about \$1.4 million in business. Admission would cost \$3 to \$5.

TRAVEL TALES OVERHEARD

Arlington enough times to equal several million dollars worth of advertising. ABC-TV, which broadcast the game July 11, mentioned the city's name and the ball park's name 22 times, which adds up to a whopping \$2.42 million in free advertising. That figure does not take into account CBS Radio Network or print coverage. The game was seen on television in 167 countries and heard in 30 nations through the Armed Forces Radio Network. Sixty-five Canadian radio stations broadcast the game, as well.

Everytime we turn around, we find another wax figure has been added to the awesome collections at the **Plaza Theatre of Wax in San Antonio** or the **Palace of Wax in Grand Prairie**.

Most are the result of the talents of **Peter Carsillo**, wax figure sculptor and attraction designer for both locations. As usual, Carsillo outdid himself on his latest project, with the creation of Jim Carrey in his role as Ace Ventura in the movie "Ace Ventura Pet Detective." Carrey takes his place beside Kevin Costner in "Dances with Wolves," and Julia Roberts in "Pretty Woman." Upcoming additions include Demi Moore, Tom Cruise, Jessica Tandy, Dustin Hoffman, Jodie Foster, and Denzell Washington. For

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Ann Kelton, Editor

Contributing Editors: Marty Lange, Jane McNally, Mike Talley

Layout: Jane Yansky Design

**JUDGE ROY BEAN TIC** The center celebrated its 19th wedding, when Sid and Bonnie Skinner from Bandera got hitched for the third time on the front porch of the Jersey Lilly Saloon. Three's the charm.

**1-800 PHONE TIC** Counselor Brenda Moum received a call from an elderly woman who needed someone to help route her through Texas on her upcoming

vacation. When Brenda tried to help, the woman interrupted with, "Who I really need to talk to is Eddie Mathews." When Brenda explained "we have no one here by that name," the frustrated customer still insisted on talking with Mr. Mathews and even asked for his home phone. Brenda then asked when she had talked with him last. "Oh, it's been about 30 years," the woman replied. Eddie Mathews retired

as manager of the Denison TIC in 1983. The legend lives on.

**WICHITA FALLS TIC** Manager Cheryl Cash said construction of the new Travel Information Center, on the banks of the Wichita River, is officially under way. The new center could be ready for visitors as early as November. Are they excited? "You bet we are," said Cheryl. "We just can't wait."

information, call the Plaza Theatre of Wax in San Antonio at 210/224-9299, or the Palace of Wax in Grand Prairie at 214/263-2391. Group rates available.

The **Wichita Theatre in Wichita Falls** now offers the best in country/Western music, Branson-style. Every Saturday night, "**Texas Country Gold**" features a full lineup of first-rate talent, guaranteed to entertain young and old. The family-run theater has been completely restored and seats up to 1,000 visitors. At 924 Indiana. Call 1-800-688-2345 for details.

The **West of the Pecos Museum in Pecos** reopened for business after completion of a half-million dollar restoration project. **Genora Prewit**, director and curator, said three floors of exhibit space, which includes 50 rooms, portrays Pecos and West Texas history. Open daily at First and Cedar Streets. For information on special events, call 915/445-5076.

Trekkies will want to "beam up" to **Irving** for a look at a newly created "**Star Trek**" exhibit at **The Movie Studios at Las Colinas**. The permanent exhibit, which spotlights memorabilia from six of the seven "Star Trek" movies and various television episodes, establishes The Movie

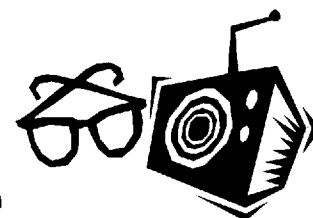
Studios as part of an elite group of "Star Trek" collectors. Original costumes, props, and set designs include Khan's suit in "Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan," Captain Kirk's uniform from "Star Trek: The Movie," a mannequin used as William Shatner's stunt double in the television series, and costumes from the Enterprise's encounters with Romulan, Vulcan, and Klingon civilizations. Open daily at North O'Connor Road and Royal Lane. For information, call 214/869-7703.

AWARDS

The **Friends of the Cibolo Wilderness** beat out more than 350 applicants statewide when they were handed **The Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence** in the Civic Category this past May. The Cibolo Wilderness Trail & Nature Center in **Boerne** has long received the loving support of its community. The 65-acre inner-city greenbelt, with its

NOT FADE AWAY

**The City of Lubbock purchased a 156-piece Buddy Holly memorabilia collection**



**for \$175,000. The collection, the largest of its kind in North America, includes a guitar, orange sweater, microphone, camera, stage shoes, photos, and the journal where the musician inscribed the lyrics to "That'll Be the Day." The Museum of Texas Tech University will showcase a portion of the collection in a special exhibit entitled Buddy Holly —The Influence, on view September 7 through May 10. Call 806/742-2442.**

three separate and distinct ecosystems, includes walking trails along cypress-filled pathways and Cibolo Creek, and a year-round offering of environmental awareness programs. The mission of the Friends of the Cibolo Wilderness is to promote conservation of natural resources through education.

The **Beaumont C&VB** was awarded first place at the Women in Communications Matrix Awards Dinner at the University of Houston, for their comprehensive Visitors Guide in the Most Improved Publication Category. "When the brochure was entered, it was apparent there would be a lot of competition" said **Karen Kiesling**, director of communications at the C&VB. "We wanted to determine just how well we measured up in the Houston market. It's truly an honor to be recognized as the best."

**I N T E R N E T**

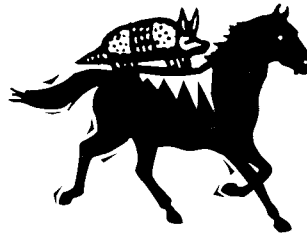
Anyone with access to Internet can now retrieve the most current information on Arlington. The **Arlington Convention and Visitors Bureau** is one of only about 20 C&VBs in the nation who designed and developed their own home page, and who update their own information. C&VB president **Burke Pease** said the bureau's home page is updated daily. The program includes information on attractions, restaurants, hotels, and special events. Users can read the bureau's quarterly newsletter, read staff biographies, look at staff photos, and contact employees through E-mail. In addition, meeting planners can look at floor plans for conference hotels and the Arlington Convention Center. There's even a request form that users can fill out to receive more information. The URL address is <http://www.dfw.net/~acvb/>. Call 1-800-433-5374 for details.

**S T A T E P A R K S**

The **Texas State Railroad**, which runs between state park terminals in **Palestine** and **Rusk**, now offers a \$2 discount as part of a special summertime program. Tickets for the 50-mile round trip aboard the turn-of-the-century steam trains are regularly \$15 for adults and \$9 for children. Riders can receive the lesser fare by just mentioning the discounts when they call to make reservations. Call 1-800-442-8951 to book your space.

**W I L D L I F E**

Bird-watchers who follow the migration of **Neotropical birds** across Texas generate some \$365 million annually for the state's



**TRAIL MIX** Visitors to **Lake Livingston State Park** can now enjoy some of the park's most scenic nature trails on horseback. The weekend rides, which began June 1, are attracting from 10 to 15 equestrians for each guided, one-hour tour. Cost is \$12 for adults, and \$3 for children under six carried by their parents. For park information, call 409/365-2201. To make horseback riding reservations, call 409/967-5032.



economy. But according to the **Texas Parks and Wildlife Department**, declining numbers of these popular birds could spell trouble for this fast-growing outdoor hobby. Nationwide population trends collected through **Partners In Flight**, a coalition of state agencies, indicate the numbers of some popular Neotropical bird species are falling at a rate of two to four percent a year. The primary reason: loss of habitat. "Our areas of greatest concern in Texas right now are our prairies and the South Texas brush country," said **Cecilia Riley**, state coordinator for Partners In Flight. For more info, contact Partners In Flight at 512/389-4970.

to TCA and its endowment. As a further incentive, Alamo offers customers requesting the TCA code, discounts on daily and weekly car rentals. To make car rental reservations that support the arts in Texas, call your travel agent, or Alamo at 1-800-354-2322.

Officials at the **Museum of Fine Arts, Houston**, announced plans for a new 185,000-square-foot gallery building, to be constructed at Main and Binz Streets, adjacent to the present museum at 1001 Bissonnet. The expansion will more than double the museum's exhibition and program space and provide galleries designed to attract major exhibitions that cannot presently be hosted in Houston due to lack of space. In addition, renovation of the current structure, which will begin simultaneously with the new construction, will provide a suitable setting for the museum's contemporary collection. Scheduled to open in 1999, the new addition will become the central repository of the museum's burgeoning collection of art from antiquity to 1910. Call 713/639-7300 for more information.

**? TEXAS TRIVIA**  
**What names were given to Texas by early Spanish explorers?**

Though the word Texas (variously, tejas, tayshas, tejas, techan, teysas, and others) had wide usage among the Native American tribes of East Texas long before the coming of the Spanish, the first title given by Spanish explorers to the New World territory was Amichel. The land, which was granted to Francisco Garay in 1521, was comprised of the whole Gulf coast from present Alabama to Tampico, Mexico. New Philippines was the name used for Texas about the time, in 1716, when Don Martin de Alarcón was appointed governor. Of course, the territory eventually became known as Texas, meaning friends or allies, depending on the tribe.

**T H E A R T S**

The **Texas Commission on the Arts** welcomed **Alamo Rent A Car** as TCA's first corporate partner to assist in generating funds for the arts in Texas. Through this new program, individuals who request Rate Code BY and give TCA's ID number 421115 when booking reservations, can automatically contribute a five percent rebate



TRAVEL CENTER	Month Visitors	Percent Variation*	Visitors Year-to-date	Percent Variation*
<b>Amarillo</b>	13,401	-31.79	79,029	-21.65
<b>Anthony</b>	13,008	-15.69	109,215	-17.40
<b>Denison</b>	26,226	**	156,294	**
<b>Gainesville</b>	36,786	-6.50	240,096	-14.48
<b>Langtry</b>	7,908	+12.07	73,755	+13.03
<b>Laredo</b>	13,101	-23.79	77,922	-14.38
<b>Orange</b>	74,049	+20.78	380,463	+6.83
<b>Texarkana</b>	68,742	+15.34	393,855	+19.08
<b>Valley</b>	17,337	-15.91	221,391	-.63
<b>Waskom</b>	63,849	+8.83	355,212	+8.79
<b>Wichita Falls</b>	23,076	-9.13	130,416	+1.35
<b>Capitol Complex</b>	11,496	-36.32	82,389	-13.27
<b>1-800 Phone Center</b>	20,574	+42.43	142,941	+47.49
<b>CENTER TOTALS</b>	389,553	+7.70	2,442,978	+9.60

Data as of July 31, 1995

\*Compared to last year

\*\* The Denison TIC was temporarily closed in 1990 due to highway construction; resumed operation September 13, 1994.

MAIL SERVICES	This Mo.	Y-T-D
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<b>SERVICES TO THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY</b>		
<b>TxDOT TRAX System</b>	<b>This Mo.</b>	<b>Y-T-D</b>
Subscriber inquiries	54	
Addresses offered	119,452	
Addresses transmitted	58,627	
Addresses transmitted		515,583
<b>OFFICIAL STATE TRAVEL MAGAZINE</b>		
<b>Texas Highways print run</b>		
This month		383,587
This month last year		400,352
This year-to-date		2,598,018
Last year-to-date		2,910,595

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

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