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# T E X A S Travel Log

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE TEXAS TRAVEL INDUSTRY

## NEW LOOK

Texas Travel Log got a face-lift this month, thanks to Austin designer **Jane Yansky**. Let us know what you think. If you enjoy *Texas Travel Log* and want to continue receiving it, be sure to complete the form on the back cover and send it in, along with the mailing label. You'll get three chances to respond.

## MEETINGS

It's not too early to mark your calendar for April 11-14, when travel professionals from throughout the state gather in Beaumont for the **39th Annual Texas Travel Counselors Conference**. The popular Travel Fair, sponsored by the Texas Travel Industry Association, will be Thursday, April 14. More to follow.

## PLANNING

**Travel and Information Division** top staffers met recently with architects to discuss plans to renovate or replace the Wichita Falls and Amarillo Travel Information Centers. Meeting in Amarillo were division director **Don Clark**, **David Linzey**, assistant director of Travel Services, **Rosemary Eaves**, manager of the Amarillo Center, and **Cheryl Cash**, manager of the Center in Wichita Falls. T. S. Orendain Associates, a Dallas architectural firm, has begun preparation of preliminary plans and cost estimates, which will then be presented to the Texas Transportation Commission for approval.

## COMING UP

Ground breaking for the new **Nolan Ryan Center** on Alvin Community College campus is just weeks away, reports Michelle Domingue of the Nolan Ryan Foundation. The new facility should be open to the public within the year. Though plans for specific displays still are not firm, the center will feature exhibits regarding the life and career of one of Texas' favorite sons. Contact the Nolan Ryan Foundation in Alvin for details; 713/388-1134.

**The Texas Rangers** have hired an historical consultant to head development of a **Baseball Hall of Fame Museum**, auditorium, and learning center that will be the first of its kind in the nation. The museum will teach patrons about baseball and its role in society, while the learning center will feature interactive exhibits that will tie academic skills to sports. The \$2.25-million project opens April 11, 1994, the same day **The Ballpark in Arlington** opens with the Rangers' first home game of the season. For more information,

contact the Arlington C&VB at 1-800-433-5374.

**Tiger Field in Wharton** will be the site of the **Babe Ruth World Series**, scheduled for August 20-27, 1994. National president and CEO Ronald Tellefsen singled out citizens coming together as a team as the decisive factor in site selection. "I think the major thing is that Wharton has a total community effort, with all the outlying towns also pitching in," said Tellefsen. The series is expected to draw an average daily attendance of almost 5,000, bringing in big bucks to area businesses, restaurants, and motels.

Next year marks the **150th birthday of New Braunfels**. And, as usual, the folks there plan to celebrate in a big way. The 130-member Sesquicentennial Commission already has lined up 10 days of major events, including a giant parade, barbecue, fireworks, and a trail ride from Indianola, site of the first landing of German immigrants to Texas. Mark your calendar for April 14-23, 1995. More info later. Much later.

## FACTS

**Did you know** the tourism/travel industry provides 410,200 jobs to Texans? Tourism and travel expenditures in Texas have grown to more than \$21 billion annually, with travelers contributing \$823.3 million in state taxes and \$533.4 million in local taxes. Now you know.

## PUBLICATIONS

After 30 years of research, **Dr. Robert Prince** has published a book about life in Dallas not found in traditional history books. **"A History of Dallas: From A Different Perspective"** tells how African-Americans helped build Dallas, and paints a portrait of life in Dallas' oldest Freedman's Town, a neighborhood founded by former slaves just north of downtown. It's a book of who's who, and tells about state and national events that affected African-Americans in Dallas and Texas. Available through Eakin Press for \$15.95.

**The Community Garden Club** of Johnson City has done



**HARD ROCK ON THE RIVER WALK** Officials broke ground in San Antonio last month for a 50,000-square-foot entertainment and retail complex called **The South Bank**. Located on the River Walk about a block from the Alamo, the new facility will feature a **Hard Rock Cafe** as its major tenant. **Hard Rock Cafes** are known for their collection of rock music memorabilia, with establishments in Dallas, Houston, and others around the world. Targeted completion date is November 1994.

TRAVEL TALES OVERHEARD

it again. **"Potluck on the Pedernales, Second Helping"** offers more down-home cooking from deep in the heart of LBJ country, and includes three new sections and more prize recipes that made the first volume a regional winner of the Tabasco Community Cookbook Award. Proceeds will be used for civic and community projects, with a portion of the royalties pledged to Friends of the Blanco County Historical Commission for restoration of the courthouse. Published by Eakin Press in Austin; \$16.95.

A new full-color brochure is now available from the **Huntsville/Walker County Chamber of Commerce**. Highlights include museums, historic sites, attractions, accommodations, antique shopping, and outdoor recreation. They're free for the asking by writing P. O. Box 538, Huntsville 77342-0538. Or call 1-800-289-0389.

**Southern Brazoria County** has a new brochure covering attractions in Clute, Freeport, Lake Jackson, and Surfside Beach. For a supply, write Southern Brazoria County Visitors and Convention Bureau, 420 Hwy. 332 B, Clute 77531. Or leave a message at 1-800-WET-GULF.

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

Ann Kelton, Editor  
 Contributing Editors: Marty Lange, Jane McNally, Mike Talley

**WICHITA FALLS TIC** Congratulations to Lisa Stephens. She's now Counselor Smith, after her marriage to Jerry Smith on December 27.

**GAINESVILLE TIC** TxDOT has completed a new service road running in front of the Travel Information Center and to the new Gainesville Factory Shops Mall. "Before the road was complete, we practically had to go to Oklahoma and turn around to get to the Center," laughed counselor Rhonda Hillis. "But it's smooth riding now, especially to the mall!" Rhonda said traffic to the mall really increased during the holiday shopping period. The second phase of the mall will begin next spring, adding even more shops.

**ORANGE TIC** All travel counselors have completed the fourth module towards obtaining a Certified Travel Counselor certificate. The grueling six-module program requires counselors to participate in TxDOT's Achieving Excellence specialized curriculum. A final examination must be passed before certification is achieved.

**WASKOM TIC** Counselor Darlene Hudson and manager Melissa Heard were step-on guides for tour buses at Wonderland of Lights in Marshall last month. Visitors from all 50 states and some 20 foreign countries attended. Darlene said the festival gets bigger and bigger each year.

**DENISON TIC** (under construction) Manager Anne Newsome says she's got a new foundation and structural steel is up in the office area at the new location. With the final debris hauled off from the old center, Anne sighed, "I was more attached to that place than I thought." She hopes to be back in business by summer.

**LAREDO TIC** Counselor Grace Villanueva said a Texan stopped by to pick up another copy of the *Texas State Travel Guide* and a new map. He said he had given his copy to an out-of-town guest. When Grace asked where he got his first copy, he proudly answered, "I picked that one up at your Jim Beam Visitor Center in Langtry!"

OUTDOORS

What do Cozumel, Australia, the Caribbean, and Freeport, Texas, have in common? **Deep sea diving**. Up until now, it's been a well-kept secret that beyond the brown water usually seen along the shores of the Gulf Coast lies clear, blue water and marine life that can't be found anywhere else in the world. Now, the folks in the **Brazosport area** are ready to spread the word. They say cheaper costs and the area's excellent marine life could help build Freeport into a divers destination. Popular diving spots include the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, a series of coral reefs about 100 miles offshore, numerous oil rigs, and Stetson Bank. Call the Southern Brazoria County Visitors and Convention Bureau for charter boat information.

**A pact for preservation** between TxDOT and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to buy

swampland near Orange may be one of the most important for the preservation of a natural area in the state. The two agencies have entered into an agreement to buy about 3,000 acres of **Blue Elbow Swamp** near Orange, a unique ecological system in private ownership. If the deal goes through, some of the land will be used to modernize the Texas Travel Information Center on I-10 and for other TxDOT uses. The bulk of the land will be administered by TP&WD as a wildlife management area.

FACES

Welcome back **Shirley Milam** to the Wichita Falls C&VB. Milam returns as tourism director after a four-month absence.

PLACES

Bingo players are heading west to **El Paso** and the Tigua Indian Reservation where the **Speaking Rock Bingo and Entertain-**

**ment Center** opened November 23rd. Operated by the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo, the luxurious facility is equipped with state-of-the-art electronic display boards. It's next door to Isleta Mission at 122 Old Pueblo Rd. Open for bingo, Tuesday through Sunday. For information, 915/860-7777 or 1-800-77-BINGO.

Enter the world of movie magic at **The Studios at Las Colinas in Irving**. Daily tours take you behind the scenes to the screening room and sound stages, where you'll discover the secrets of the image makers. Find out how sets, special effects, and miniatures trick the eye, and how makeup and costumes perfect the illusion. The state-of-the-art motion picture and television production complex has been host to such blockbuster films as "Robocop," "Silkwood," "Problem Child," "The Trip to Bountiful," "JFK," and "Leap of Faith." Tours every 15 minutes, Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, 12:30 to 4 p.m. Call the tour line at 214/869-FILM.

**Science Spectrum** in **Lubbock** is bigger and better than ever, with twice the space, three times the exhibits, and ten times the fun. Having evolved into a significant educational resource for West Texas and Eastern New Mexico, Science Spectrum outgrew its original facility on West 50th St., and moved next to the new **OMNIMAX theater** on Loop 289. The expanded program continues to provide quality science and technology demonstrations, hands-on exhibits, and a Kid-space Children's Museum. For information on single and group rates, or special events, call 806/745-2525. For a recording of OMNIMAX film schedules and times, call 806/745-MAXX. Open seven days a week at 2579 S. Loop 289, Suite 250.

**MUSEUMS**

A fascinating collection of weapons are on display at the **Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History**, January 15 through May 1. *Stone to Steel: The World of Arms and Armor* features everything from tribal clubs and spears to finely engraved swords and guns. Also included are more than 100 ethnographic weapons and 19th Century firearms donated to the San Antonio Museum Association. Open daily at 1900 N. Chaparral; 512/883-2862.

**The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth** has acquired 17 major works by the late **Robert Motherwell**, worth between \$8 and \$10 million. Motherwell was one of the key figures in the abstract expressionist movement that first gave American art international prominence during the 1940s. The museum now houses one of the most comprehensive public collections of Motherwell's works in the world, spanning five decades of his career. Open

Tuesday through Sunday at 1309 Montgomery St.; 817/738-9215.

**Selected photographs** from New York collector and photographer Allan Chasanoff's unconventional collection will be on view at the **Museum of Fine Arts, Houston**, from January 16 through March 27. *The Allan Chasanoff Photographic Collection: Tradition and the Unpredictable* focuses on images that examine the impenetrable and disruptive dimensions of life, rather than those that present life in an informative and precise manner. The broad spectrum of contemporary photographs creates a sense of doubt as to what is real and what is an invention or distortion. At 1001 Bissonnet between Montrose and Main. 713/639-7300.

The third season of the popular literary series, "**Arts and Letters Live**," runs February 25 through May 13 at the **Dallas Museum of Art**. The sellout event expands to 17 programs, including four "Texas Bound" short story events, four evenings

**TEXAS TRIVIA**  
**In what Texas town was the Frito created?**

The popular corn chip was created in San Antonio by a Mexican who hawked his fried snack in various local cafes. In 1932, Elmer Doolin paid the anonymous Frito Inventor \$100 for his recipe and list of customers. Doolin's snack-food company evolved into the giant Frito-Lay Corporation, now headquartered in Dallas.

**TEXAS TRIVIA**



**IN SHIP SHAPE** The *Niña* of the Columbus Fleet, docked at Corpus Christi Bay, shipped out to Gulf King Shipyard in Aransas Pass for routine maintenance and historical alterations. This year, changes on all three ships will make the Columbus Fleet replicas more historically accurate. The *Niña* welcomes visitors again the middle of next month. During her absence, both the *Pinta* and *Santa María* are open for on-board tours. Call 512/883-2863 for details.

with "Distinguished Writers," and five "Literary Cafe" evenings in Deep Ellum. New this year will be a "Words and Music" program, a poetry event, a celebration of Latino literature and film, and a young adult writer's program. For tickets and a complete schedule of events, call the Dallas Museum of Art box office at 214/922-1290.

**HISTORY**

**Roma, Texas**, one of the towns included in Los Caminos del Rio, the 200-mile corridor from Laredo to Brownsville, was designated a **National Historic Landmark** by the National Park System Advisory Board. Contact Gloria Canseco, Executive Director, Los Caminos del Rio; 210/791-4300.

**EVENTS**

Head to **Rockport** for the first-ever **Arts and Crafts Fair on the Beach**, Saturday, February 12. Headquartered at the Salt-water Pavilion, the new event promises a full day of quality arts and crafts, and seaside fun.

Call Jane Gimler at the Rockport-Fulton Area Chamber of Commerce for details; 1-800-242-0071.

The Kerrville Music Foundation's first annual **Kerrville Music Awards** were held as a black-tie and boots affair in Austin on December 2. The celebrity-packed ceremonies were cohosted by Gary P. Nunn and Sara Hickman at the Texas Federated Women's Clubs building. Topping the list of winners was Austin-based singer/songwriter Jimmy LaFave who won Song of the Year, Texas Album of the Year, Outstanding Male Vocalist, Group or Band of the Year, and Best Independent CD/Cassette.

**The Texas Mohair Festival** in **Kerrville** expands to two days this year with the addition of a Goat to Garment Contest and Miss Mohair Texas Pageant. Slated for January 28-29 at the Hill Country Youth Exhibition Center, this event salutes the mohair industry in the Texas Hill Country, which produces about 90 percent of mohair fiber in the U.S. and about 50 percent in the world. For information, contact the Kerrville C&VB at 210/792-3535.

TRAVEL CENTER	Month Visitors	Percent Variation*	Visitors Year-to-date	Percent Variation*
<b>Amarillo</b>	7,371	+6.32	154,146	+12.90
<b>Anthony</b>	14,793	-6.17	204,510	-3.75
<b>Denison</b>	Under Construction			
<b>Gainesville</b>	36,027	+13.39	492,003	+13.29
<b>Langtry</b>	6,420	+39.32	94,800	+11.29
<b>Laredo</b>	10,938	-6.10	150,585	-5.04
<b>Orange</b>	35,073	-11.97	531,453	+6.66
<b>Texarkana</b>	40,692	+32.90	494,931	+26.60
<b>Valley</b>	30,201	+21.97	296,100	-1.79
<b>Waskom</b>	34,923	-3.24	513,681	+13.58
<b>Wichita Falls</b>	10,590	+14.02	188,865	+5.90
<b>Capitol Complex</b>	15,600	-35.35	323,940	-35.99
<b>CENTER TOTALS</b>	242,628	+3.05	3,445,014	+1.80

MAIL SERVICES Austin Office	This Mo.	This Yr.
<b>TxDOT</b>	6,492	138,915
<b>TDOC</b>	18,612	892,565
Total year-to-date		1,031,480

  

SERVICES TO THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY	This Mo.	Y-T-D
<b>TxDOT TRAX System</b>		
Subscriber inquiries	61	
Addresses offered	31,382	
Addresses transmitted	15,514	
Addresses transmitted		621,372

  

OFFICIAL STATE TRAVEL MAGAZINE	This Mo.	Y-T-D
<b>Texas Highways print run</b>		
This month		431,095
This month last year		450,693
This year-to-date		5,348,968
Last year-to-date		5,311,026

Data as of December 31, 1993  
\*Compared to last year

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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