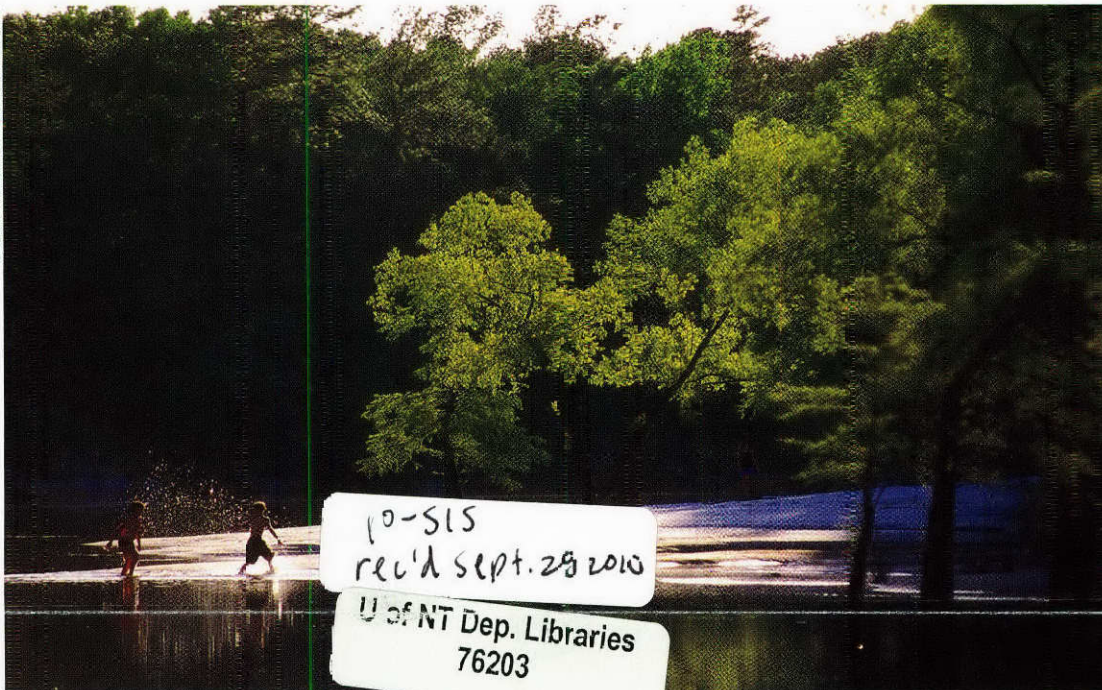


TEXAS TRAVEL LOG

- ★ Texas Travel Counselors converge on Corpus Christi to explore city, participate in awards presentation
- ★ *Freedom's Sisters* exhibit shines spotlight on 20 notable women
- ★ Audie Murphy/American Cotton Museum unveils Hall of Heroes

© TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT



A new 21-mile Big Thicket-area paddling trail, which ends at Village Creek State Park, is the 19th in the Texas Paddling Trail program.

TRAVEL NEWS

THE ROUND Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau took home the Outstanding Communication Advertising Award from the National Association of Sports Commissions at the annual NASC Sports Events Symposium in April.

The Outstanding Communication Advertising Award is given for any type of communication piece that markets the community as a sports destination, solicits corporate sponsorship or membership, or informs others about the organization. More than 370 cities and convention and visitors bureaus were eligible for the award.

The award-winning piece was the four-page, gatefold ad campaign the Round Rock CVB produced for *Sports Events Magazine*, *Sports Destination Management Magazine* and *Sports Travel Magazine*. The series of ads, designed by Austin-based Arsenal Brand, are the first of its kind for sports magazines and sports-destination marketing.

“Round Rock is always pushing the envelope in sports-destination marketing, and we are proud to have won this award,” says Nancy Yawn, Director of the Round Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau. “We are just as competitive in our marketing as the teams who compete on our fields are, and we are committed to maintaining the title of Sports Capital of Texas.”

LOCAL, STATE and federal officials gathered May 11 to celebrate the opening of the state’s newest paddling trail, which ends at Village Creek State Park.

The 21-mile paddling trail, which begins at F.M. 418, includes four access points as it snakes through an ecologically diverse corridor within the Big Thicket near Kountze, Silsbee and Lumberton. It is the 19th trail in the Texas Paddling Trail program, with more than a dozen more scheduled to open this year.

“In terms of popularity, paddling may very well become the birding of the 21st century,” says Carter Smith,

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s executive director. “The creation of paddling trails serves as one more way to encourage people to get outdoors and travel our great state, and in the process, stimulate local economies with tourism dollars. The bottom line is that travel matters to all Texans.”

The Texas Paddling Trails program helps promote habitat conservation through sustainable economic development while providing additional recreational opportunities to the public. More Americans paddle (canoe, kayak or raft) than play soccer, making it one of the fastest-growing nature tourism experiences.

For more information, visit www.tpwd.state.tx.us/villagecreek.

CORPUS Christi’s South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center is extending evening hours from May 1 through Sept. 6. The gardens will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. daily. The extended hours are beneficial to birders, nature photographers and

other visitors who want more time to explore the recently-added Butterfly House and Anderson Bromeliad Conservatory.

This also will allow visitors time to view the center’s annual Flamingo Fandango, where professional and amateur artists are invited to dress plastic pink flamingos in custom costumes for the Best-Dressed Bird contest. Flamingo Fandango runs from July 1–Sept. 6.

Beginning Sept. 7, the gardens will resume normal hours of 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

For more information, call (361) 852-2100 or visit www.stxbot.org.

THIS SUMMER — 72 years after the park opened — Daingerfield State Park will close for a few months, beginning July 5.

In the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps constructed the park, including cabins, park buildings, roads and general infrastructure. The New Deal crews also hand-dug the centerpiece of the park, 80-acre Lake Daingerfield. Today, more than \$5 million in improvements at Daingerfield are part of a long list of major Texas state parks renovations under way this year, all aimed at keeping the parks fun, safe and customer friendly.

The project includes revitalizing three of the original CCC buildings, adding new restrooms with showers in all three park camp loops and installing a modern wastewater system that will be connected to the Daingerfield municipal system. Access will also be improved, bringing all facilities into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Project Manager Maureen Barcinski says, “We have a historic architect who is working closely with the Texas Historic Commission to ensure the rehabilitation is done correctly and the historic assets are protected.”

The improvements are courtesy of bond funding authorized by the

TOUTING TOURISM



Texas Travel Counselors Conference attendees experience a Corpus Christi Hooks home game at Whataburger Field.

MORE THAN 80 Texas travel counselors visited **Corpus Christi** from **April 26 -29** for the **55th annual Texas Travel Counselors Conference** to learn as much as they can about the community in hopes of referring more visitors to the area.

Corpus Christi Convention & Visitors Bureau CEO Keith Arrord says "This conference gives us a unique opportunity to show firsthand what the Coastal Bend has to offer to visitors directly to the people that give out tourist information at visitor centers all for the State of Texas."

After a week of exploring attractions, attendees were able to visit with representatives from numerous communities across the state at an information-sharing Travel Fair.

Award Winners

THE WEEK culminated with an awards banquet where four travel industry professionals received prestigious travel industry awards.

Gainesville Texas Travel Information Center Supervisor **Cheryl Cash** received the Lone Star Award; Granbury Convention and Visitors Bureau Director **Charlie McIlvain** received the 2010 Gene Phillips Hospitality Award; and TxDOT and AAA travel counselors **Valerie Followell** and **Ray Alejandro**, respectively, took home a Roadrunner Award.

Cash, a 29-year veteran of the travel industry, has served on the advisory board for the Dallas/Forth Area Tourism Council, is active with the Gainesville Chamber of Commerce, and has hosted many chamber representatives at the Texas Travel Information Center in Gainesville.

TxDOT Travel Information Division Director Doris Howdeshell says, "Her experience, dedication and professionalism make her a valuable asset to our division and the travel industry."

McIlvain, a 25-year tourism industry veteran, received the Gene Phillips Hospitality Award for his contributions to the state's \$60.6 billion travel industry, and his support of the state's tourism program and TxDOT's Travel Information Centers.

McIlvain, a National Tour Association Certified Tour Professional, served on the board of directors of the Texas Travel Industry Association, Texas Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus and National Tour Association. He founded Idle Time Tours, Texas Destinations Inc. and Tour Data Inc. He also has held leadership roles for the convention and visitors bureaus in Farmers Branch, Odessa and Fort Worth.

"Not only does he do an amazing job promoting Granbury, but his love and enthusiasm about Texas is real — he even looks the part," says Howdeshell.

The Roadrunner winners were awarded for outstanding service to the traveling public, TxDOT and the state.

Followell, who joined the Texas Travel Information Center in Denison, is a state and nationally certified professional travel counselor.

"Over the past year Valerie stepped up and did an outstanding job overseeing the day-to-day operation of the center when it was understaffed and without supervision. She is extremely knowledgeable of Denison and the surrounding area, and always goes the extra mile for our customers," says TxDOT Travel Services Section Director Brenda Harper.

April Campbell, in her nomination of employee Alejandro (AAA San Antonio West), says, "Ray has proven that not only can he reach any goal he sets his mind to, but is also willing to help others achieve theirs, while maintaining the eagerness and determination that he brought with him when he started."

Study Tour Faves

SEVERAL attractions and community hosts were honored at the recent Texas Travel Counselors Conference in Corpus Christi, after **travel counselors voted on their favorites** from a **North Central Texas study tour in October**.

The Texas Travel Industry Association Study Tour included visits to Addison, Glen Rose, Hico, Granbury, Weatherford, Mineral Wells, Graham, Wichita Falls, Nocona, Gainesville and Denton.

Awards were given to the Original Pancake House in Addison for Best Breakfast; Wildcatter Ranch in Graham for Best Lunch; and Babe's Chicken House in Granbury for Best Dinner.

The Best Attraction award went to the Granbury Opera House.

Votes also were cast for the tour guides along the way. Dana Lodge of Denton and Charlie McIlvain of Granbury tied for Best Step-on Guide. The Best Attraction/Museum Guide award went Drury Callahan at the Cavanaugh Flight Museum.

Hilton Garden Inn in Addison took Best Hotel honors, and Granbury took the prize for Best City visited on the study tour.

Texas Legislature and approved by Texas voters. Texas State Parks general obligation bonds have been sold to fund repairs and renovations to more than 40 state parks and to build a dry berth for the Battleship Texas.

Daingerfield State Park is expected to open early spring 2011.

FREE EXHIBIT SPACE

APPPLICATIONS for **free exhibit space** at TxDOT's **Texas Travel Information Centers** will be accepted from **8 a.m. on June 1 to 5 p.m. on June 10**. All city convention and visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce, and rural and regional tourism organizations that promote travel to a specific region in Texas (with a minimum of three cities representing that region) can apply for the free space on a six-month, rotating basis. Applications are for the upcoming rotation — Sept. 1 through Feb. 28, 2011. Exhibit space will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications submitted before or after that time period will not be eligible for consideration.

For more information and to access the online application, go to www.txdot.gov and enter the keyword "display case," or contact Elizabeth Small, esmall@dot.state.tx.us.

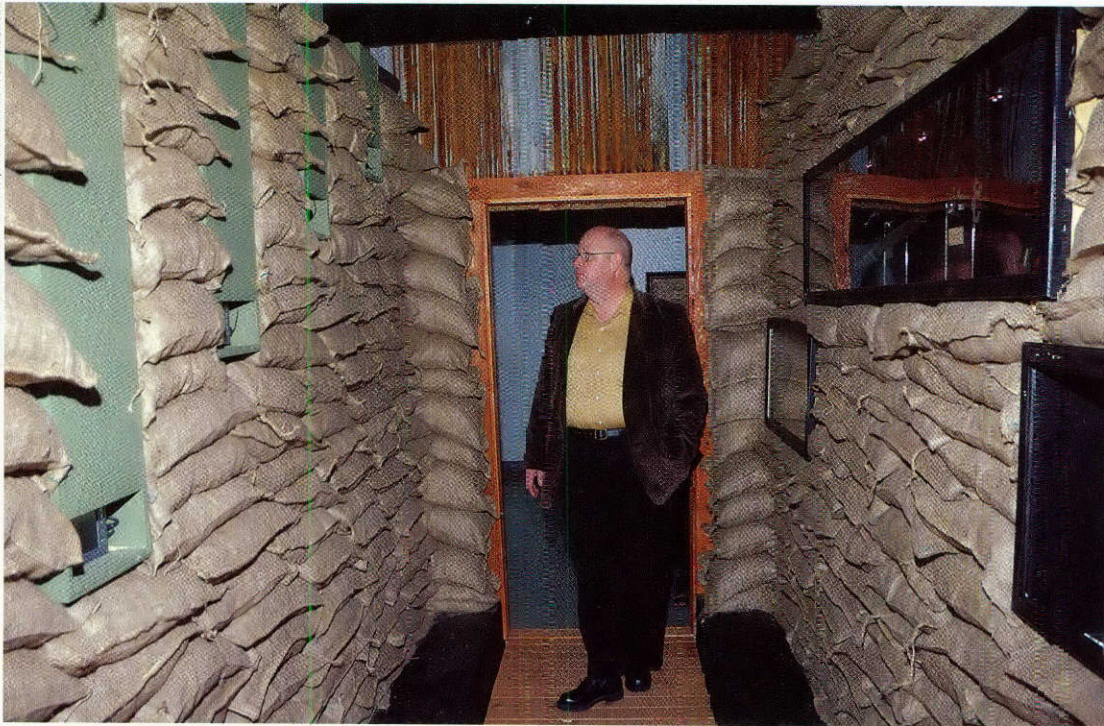
LET FREEDOM RING

THE **WOMEN'S Museum in Dallas** is giving special attention to **20 African-American women** and their stories of courage and commitment in the exhibit **Freedom's Sisters**, which **runs through July 4** before going on a three-year national tour to Atlanta and Baltimore.

The interactive exhibit explores key moments in the nation's history through the actions of women such as Harriet Tubman and her Underground Railroad; Rosa Parks, who refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery City bus; and Fannie Lou Hamer and her stand at a 1968 political convention.

This collaboration among Ford Motor Company Fund, the Cincinnati Museum Center and the Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) is organized around four themes — "Dare to Dream," "Inspire Lives" "Serve the Public" and "Look to the Future." Historical simulations and interactive displays are being set up to drive home messages and meanings central to each woman's life.

COURTESY OF THE AUDIE MURPHY/AMERICAN COTTON MUSEUM.



Walking through a mock World War I trench, visitors can hear battle sounds, feel the percussion of gunfire through the vibrating floor and see period film footage.

“It is an honor to be a part of the *Freedom’s Sister’s* national exhibition,” says honored guest Sonia Sanchez, a poet and activist. “*Freedom’s Sisters* will teach our children lessons of history, struggle and blood of African-Americans. Our children, the middle aged, the elderly will learn the lessons of the blood of the people that have shaped and moved not only America but the world.”

“These 20 women left not a footnote but a footprint on American history,” says SITES Director Anna R. Cohn. “Many of their stories may not be well known, but their roles and contributions were monumental in shaping our country and its conscience.”

For more information, call (214) 915-0860 or visit www.thewomensmuseum.org.

THE AMERICAN Freedom Museum in Bullard (about 12 miles south of Tyler) has opened its doors to showcase more than 600 artifacts in a new 15,000-square-foot facility. Inside, visitors get a glimpse of the nation’s military history.

The museum, on the campus of The Brook Hill School, features fifteen galleries, including exhibits about the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, Cold War, Korean conflict, Vietnam, Persian Gulf and the War on Terror.

Artifacts are paired with informative panels, period-appropriate music and touch-screen monitors. Visitors can even board a C-47 transport plane fuselage where they can learn about the experiences of paratroopers the morning of D-Day.

The Hall of Presidents Gallery features a document signed by every president of the United States from George Washington to Barack Obama. Included is a lock of George Washington’s hair, a poem written by John Quincy Adams, a Senate tally sheet from Andrew Johnson’s impeachment trial, a letter from Theodore Roosevelt offering to revive the Rough Riders for service in World War I, and a letter of resignation signed by Richard Nixon.

Additionally, there’s the Holocaust Gallery that includes original prisoner uniforms and insignia, as well as a large Nazi flag taken down at Dachau concentration camp by U.S. troops.

For more information, call (903) 894-5252 or visit www.americanfreedommuseum.org.

MUSEUM PIECES

FORT WORTH Museum of Science and History’s Omni Theater, an IMAX® dome, is featuring *Van Gogh: Brush With Genius* a 40-minute giant-screen film about the life and paintings of Vincent Van Gogh. The film captures the

landscapes and colors of the painter’s most famous works, seen for the first time with the visual effects of the giant screen. It was filmed entirely in 15/70mm film in France and the Netherlands.

Created with the cooperation of the Van Gogh Museum, the Musée d’Orsay and the Kröller-Müller Museum, *Van Gogh: Brush With Genius* traces the artist’s journey from the time of his first canvasses at the age of 27 to the masterpieces he produced before he died at age 37 — more than 700 paintings. Told through the eyes of Van Gogh and based on more than 900 personal letters, the film transforms Van Gogh’s work

into an entertainment experience.

“*Van Gogh* uses the full force of the IMAX Theater experience to create a deeply personal portrait of the artist that will intensify viewers’ admiration for his work,” says director Francois Bertrand. “Audiences will rediscover a Van Gogh they never knew before and appreciate anew the stunning landscapes and vibrant colors that give his work their strength and beauty. We are honored to be the first to bring the energy and vitality of Van Gogh’s art to IMAX Theaters.”

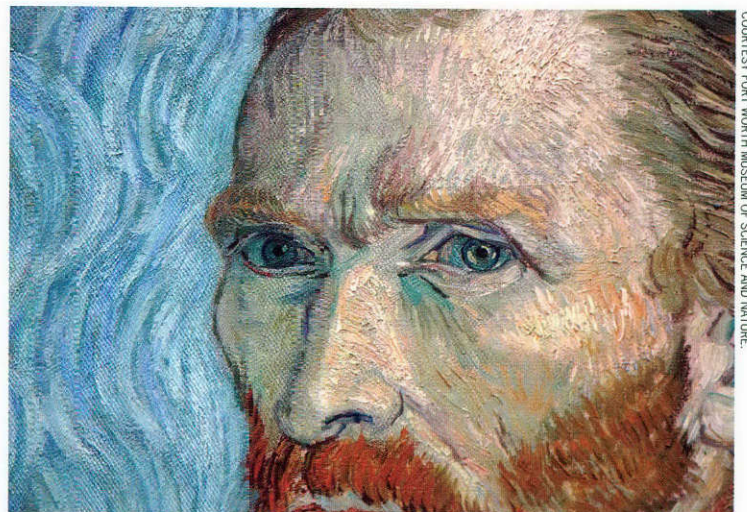
For more information, call (817) 255-9540 or visit www.fortworthmuseum.org.

THE NEW Hall of Heroes wing opened at Greenville’s Audie Murphy/American Cotton Museum. The additional 3,700 square feet expands the museum’s military history section with exhibits covering the Civil War through Vietnam, with an emphasis on WWII and Hunt County native Audie Murphy, the most decorated combat soldier of WWII.

The wing features a mock-up trench complete with battle sounds, vibrating floors that emulate the percussion of gunfire, and film footage from that time period. The experience follows Murphy’s time with the 3rd Infantry Division through Anzio, Italy, where he earned his first Bronze Star, to France and Holtzwhir, where he earned the Medal of Honor.

A Battle of the Bulge diorama includes an audio simulation of a soldier and his wife reading the letters they received from each other.

For additional information, call (903) 450-4502.



The Fort Worth Museum of Science and History offers a glimpse into the art and genius of Van Gogh through an IMAX film about his life and paintings.

COURTESY FORT WORTH MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND NATURE.

TEXAS TRIVIA

Which Texas stone quarry, now a national treasure, was used as far back as 12,000 years ago by inhabitants of the southern Great Plains?

Alibates Flint Quarries, on the isolated plains of the Texas panhandle, is the only National Monument in the state, and is an integral part of Lake Meredith National Recreation Area. It can only be visited as part of a ranger-guided tour. When staffing and weather permit, there are typically two tours to the Alibates Flint Quarries at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. The tour, which includes a one-mile walk to an elevation of about 150 feet, takes about two hours. A spot on the tour must be reserved in advance. To make reservations, call (806) 857-3151 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday–Friday.

TEXAS TRIVIA

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

EDITOR: Lois M. Rodriguez

DESIGN/LAYOUT: Kirsti Harms

♻️ PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTERS

VISITOR NUMBERS as of April 30, 2010

TRAVEL CENTER	Month Visitors	Percent Variation*	Year-to-Date Visitors	Percent Variation*
AMARILLO	7,434	+11.99	24,360	-1.07
ANTHONY	7,739	-1.01	32,246	-1.30
CAPITOL	8,110	+23.65	28,291	+3.36
DENISON	26,617	-1.32	88,953	-18.62
GAINESVILLE	23,619	+2.17	92,584	+0.65
LANGTRY	6,796	-4.72	23,852	-3.01
LAREDO	8,641	+0.35	38,097	+2.57
ORANGE	36,346	-12.32	124,111	-20.11
TEXARKANA	23,773	+18.38	83,352	+7.19
VALLEY	10,314	+13.04	89,640	+11.65
WASKOM	32,410	+12.21	120,971	+6.46
WICHITA FALLS	11,902	-9.00	41,073	-21.39
CENTER TOTALS	203,701	+2.12	787,530	-4.77

*Compared to last year

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

www.traveltex.com • www.texashighways.com
www.txdot.gov • www.dontmesswithtexas.org

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