

The Rural Texas
Travel *Guide*
For DEWITT★GOLIAD★GONZALES&LAVACA Counties





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WELCOME TO

WHERE TEXAS INDEPENDENCE BEGAN!

Texas' fight for independence. Cowboys and cattle drives. Good living and great people. The South Texas Crossroads is brimming with amazing history, colorful tales and the kind of down home hospitality you just won't find anywhere else!



Deep in the history that has made Texas what it is, the counties of DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales and Lavaca are the birthplaces of the Texas Independence Trail. Scattered throughout the area are remnants and remembrances dedicated to this portion of Texas' history. From monuments steeped in history, to festivals dedicated to the many events of the war, to historical reenactments, there's no end to the opportunities to learn more about what happened and how it shaped this area's history.

These counties are also the birthplace of the Chisholm Trail. Immortalized in the western movies of the last several decades, the cattle drives of the Chisholm Trail laid the foundation for Texas' incredibly successful cattle industry. Over the years through songs, stories and mythical tales, the Chisholm Trail has become a vital feature of the American identity... and it all started here!

This publication is designed to paint a picture for you of this vibrant region. More than that, we hope that you'll stop by these different communities and experience them for yourself. The counties included, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales and Lavaca, are dynamic representations of what makes Texas an outstanding vacation and business destination. They combine forward-thinking vision grounded in traditional values you just don't find many places.

To learn more about the communities featured in this magazine along with the different events featured throughout the year, please contact the various sponsors of this publication.

So, whether you're staying for a while or just traveling through, take some time to visit and experience what makes this part of Texas a fabulous destination for both young and old.

As a note of clarification, the community of Yoakum straddles the border of DeWitt and Lavaca counties, but for the sake of this publication, we have included it in the DeWitt County section.

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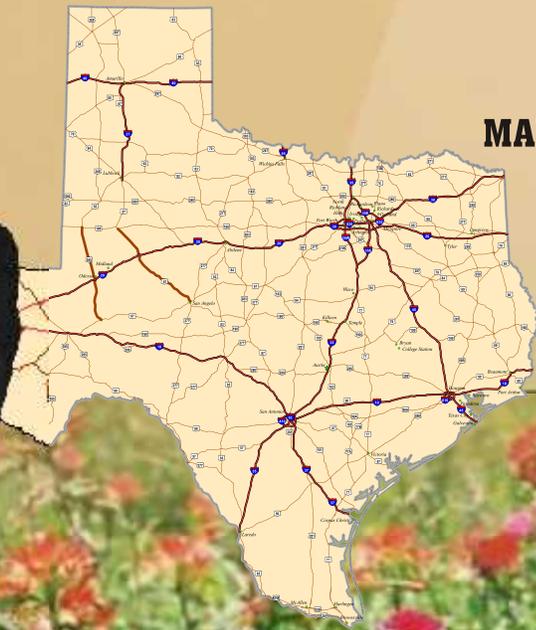
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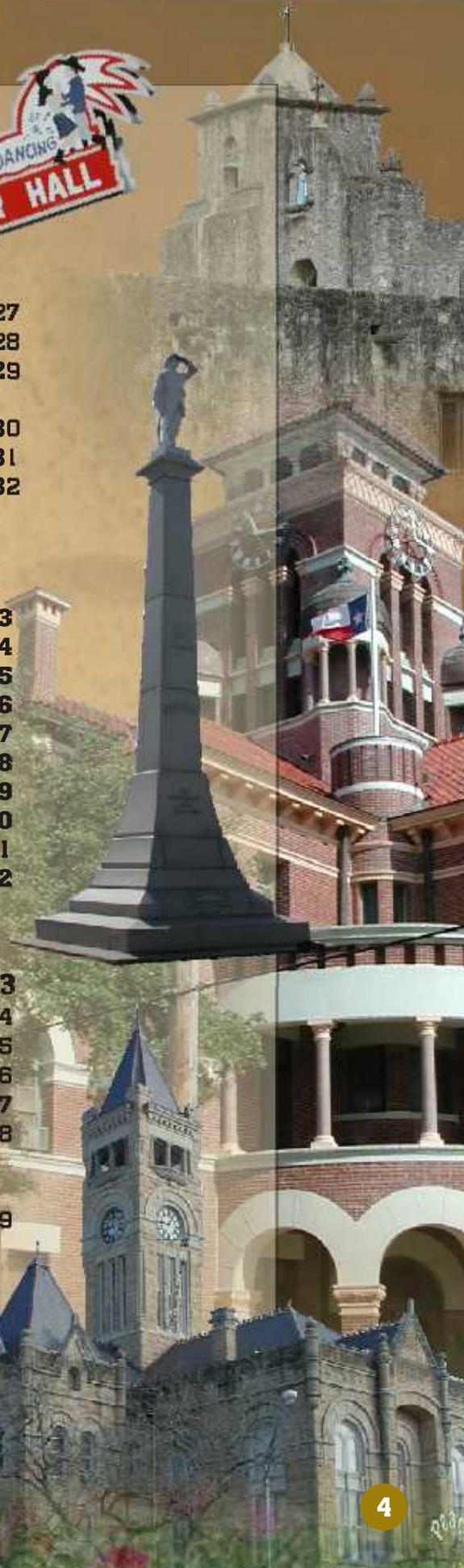
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WELCOME TO

DEWITT County

Cuero, Texas, the county seat for DeWitt County, is a comfortable, progressive community where people stop on the street, visit and appreciate their corner of Americana! Visitors will enjoy it too. Cuero is a unique community dedicated to preserving its history as it moves forward into the 21st century!

Cuero was widely known in its early days as a center for leather fabrication. The Spanish word for “raw hide” became the town’s name. Officially founded in 1873, Cuero was an unruly place until the influx of Indianola residents following the 1875 and 1886 hurricanes. Many Indianola homes and businesses were disassembled and moved inland to Cuero. There was a great deal of growth in the late 19th century, and Cuero was a bustling little city by the turn of the century. Much of the beautiful architecture from that era remains. Over 50 buildings, most notably the DeWitt County Courthouse, are listed on the state and national registers of historical places. Cattle trade has been significant from the

early days to the present.

The Chisholm Trail began near Cuero, and DeWitt County remains the most densely populated cattle county in Texas. Turkeys were once a major agricultural product, but there are no commercial turkey farms in DeWitt County today. The turkey industry is remembered yearly with the Annual TurkeyFest celebration.

Cuero is steeped in the history of the Chisholm Trail! In 1866, Crockett Cardwell gathered a herd of nearly 2,000 longhorns and hired trail boss Thornton Chisholm to drive them from Cardwell Flats (north of present-day Cuero) through Oklahoma and Kansas to St. Joseph, Missouri. The Chisholm Trail is memorialized at the Chisholm Trail Museum. Cuero offers attractions for visitors, including the DeWitt County Historical Museum, the Cuero Heritage Museum and the Cuero Livestock Show every March. And each Spring, the county explodes with color with the arrival of the Texas wildflowers.

Shop, eat, enjoy and relax as you experience small town living at its best in Cuero!



Shop. Eat.

Close your eyes. Envision a quieter time, when life was easier and an afternoon was spent lazily wandering downtown, visiting with friends and enjoying a cup of coffee or scoop of ice cream. Cuero's historic downtown district is the epitome of "Small Town USA." This vibrant and dynamic community is committed to aggressively retaining its roots with a far reaching forethought not often found in small communities. This commitment can be found in the loving restoration of its downtown district. New businesses have moved into the old buildings, restoring them back to their original condition, often keeping many of the elements of original tenants.

Enjoy!



Antiques Galore -

Treasures abound along Cuero's Main Street and Esplanade. Shoppers can find bargains galore at one of the many antique and specialty shops. Featuring gift items, primitives, home decor and, of course, antiques, these stores offer a treasure trove of items guaranteed to delight shoppers of all tastes and budgets.

Cooking Classes -

Are you planning a stay in DeWitt County? Then you won't want to miss a cooking class at The Cooking Depot. Housed in Cuero-Yoakum Propane, The Cooking Depot features a large variety of cooking utensils, Texas foods and gift baskets. For those with a taste for fine dining, a cooking class fits the bill. Offering open and private classes for lunch and dinner, students are treated to a meal and demonstration from award-winning chefs from as far away as Italy! Recipes are included as part of the package.

Dining - Cuero offers diners the best of all worlds! You can sample some of the best barbeque in the area at one of two outstanding restaurants featuring the menu items that are synonymous with Texas dining -- beef brisket, sausage and chicken, all roasted on wood pits and grilled to perfection. Don't forget the sweet tea to wash it down!

Visitors looking for something more reflective of the area's Hispanic heritage will enjoy an outstanding meal at one of Cuero's several Mexican restaurants. Featuring authentic Tex-Mex menus, these establishments offer diners outstanding meals at an affordable price. After your meal, take a walk down Cuero's business and shopping district and enjoy a cappuccino and a pastry. Diners can enjoy the meal indoors or watch the passersby at one of the outdoor tables. Other local fare abounds, with many of the restaurants locally owned and operated, offering patrons a unique and special brand of service that is only available in this incredible town!



Relax, shop and enjoy a day out in Cuero!



Get in the Spirit of the Season at

Christmas in the Park

A lighted sea serpent swimming through a lake, elves piling armfuls of presents under a beautifully lighted Christmas tree, Santa swooping through the air in an airplane; you'll see this and more at Cuero's annual Christmas in the Park.

Even though it's just a few years old, Christmas in the Park has become a holiday tradition that attracts visitors from around the state. Featuring festive lighted Christmas displays magically arranged throughout Cuero's City Park, this beautiful exhibit is a feast for the eyes for both young and old.

Christmas in the Park began in 2000 with the lighting of the Gazebo in the Cuero City Park. Each year, through the generous support of individuals and businesses, new displays have been added, and the tour has grown to over 50 vignettes with themes ranging from Victorian to Western to whimsical, many of the displays featuring dazzling animation. Work begins in early October with community volunteers setting up the displays, checking bulbs and wiring and laying out electrical cords and continues at a fevered pitch until the display opens in late November.



Highlights include a 17-piece Nativity scene on the Lake Island, an 85' paddlewheel boat that glistens magnificently off the water, the Peace on Earth Globe and, of course, Santa and his reindeer.

Christmas in the Park is a free, self-guided driving tour with holiday Nutcrackers pointing the way and lighted snowflakes scattered throughout the trees. It is located in Cuero City Park off Broadway Street (Highway 87). Turn in front of the GVEC building onto Fain McDougal Drive.

The Lighted Christmas Parade is a special highlight of this holiday event and is held after Thanksgiving. Also featured is a live Nativity scene on selected dates and carriage rides on some nights.

Make a special evening of your visit with dinner at one of Cuero's many restaurants situated in either the historic downtown district or on Esplanade Street that runs through town.

Christmas in the Park begins the week of Thanksgiving, runs through New Year's Day and is open nightly from 6pm to 10pm.





The Bluebonnet is the state flower of Texas. It is one of over 1,000 species of wildflowers found blooming along the Texas roadsides.

Where the Wildflowers Bloom

No where else in the state can you find the variety of wildflowers that you do in DeWitt County. And they're not just bragging! On May 4, 1999, the 76th Texas Legislature passed HR 769 designating DeWitt County as Wildflower Capital of Texas and April as Wildflower Month in Texas. Over 1,000 species of wildflowers which bloom in the county throughout the year have been catalogued.

Dewitt County sits at the confluence of soil and climatic conditions of the hill country, central and coastal plains, and the South Texas desert region. Thus vegetation is found native to all these areas.

The DeWitt County Wildflower Association, a non-profit civic group which promotes the enjoyment and knowledge of wildflowers, has cataloged over 1,000 different species of wildflowers, which are on display each April at the DeWitt County Historical Museum. On any given day in April, there are usually between 140 and 150 species represented at the Wildflower Exhibit housed in the Museum. Additionally, the Association hosts the state's only month-long exhibit and celebration with bike riding and driving tours along with other special events.

A scenic drive through DeWitt County's rolling hills and prairies make its natural beauty one of the gems of South Texas anytime of the year, but in the spring, when the wildflowers are blooming, it is absolutely spectacular.

WILDFLOWER EVENTS

Spring Scenic Cycling

Choice of 5 distances through gently rolling hills of historic and wildflower-strewn lanes and byways

Wildflower Headquarters & Exhibit

Located in the DeWitt County Historical Museum

312 E. Broadway (Hwy. 87 S.)

Cuero, Texas

Call (361) 275-9942 for more information

Open Daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sundays 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (Closed Easter Sunday)

Wildflower Excursion

3 hours aboard school buses with guide and scenic stops available for a nominal fee

Call for Reservations: (361) 275-5630



Fun for the Entire Family at **CUERO'S CITY PARK**

Cuero's 180-acre City Park is the center of activity for this vibrant community. It includes a nine-hole golf course, an amphitheater for outdoor plays and other performances, a community club house, swimming pool, sports fields, 6.8-acre picturesque lake with picnic units and a fishing pier, rodeo arena, and a large indoor/outdoor facility for stock shows. The newly constructed baseball complex with four fields is centered around a concession complex. The park also has a native plant area with gazebo, walking trail, multiple-use park pavilion, and children's playground.



Tired of the hustle and bustle of the work week? Try the tranquil city park lake with its lighted fishing pier for an evening of pure relaxation.

Fields of all kinds! Cuero is very proud of their newly constructed little league baseball and soccer fields. The park also contains softball and baseball fields. Little league games begin each year in April and run through June. Soccer has two seasons, one beginning in

the spring and one in the fall.

Relax on a hot summer day in the newly constructed junior olympic pool, open for business from late May through early August.

Located close to the pool is a fenced playscape area with a large covered picnic area, which is great for family get-togethers. A large covered pavilion is a great location for kids to play basketball and makes a great place for outdoor social events.

While the kids play in the pool, mom and dad can grab their golf clubs, come out to the clubhouse, put on a pair of spikes, and check out our beautiful 9-hole course.

Ride one of the available carts or walk the course — either way, you'll enjoy golf in Cuero.

The park also plays host to many events throughout the year including rodeos, festivals and the annual TurkeyFest celebration.

In late November and December, the park is transformed to a Christmas wonderland with Cuero's annual Christmas in the Park. Featuring over 50 lighted and animated displays, this event has become a "must see" for thousands of visitors each year.

With numerous hotels, bed and breakfasts and campgrounds in the area, Cuero's City Park is a great place to relax and enjoy some great family fun.



The Cuero TurkeyFest, which began in 1912, includes a parade, carnival, live entertainment and many other fun festivities for the entire family to enjoy. The photo above illustrates the pageantry of the early "Great Gobbler Gallop" celebrations.

Come Trot with the Turkeys at TURKEY FEST

Down the stretch they're neck and neck... Ruby Begonia and Paycheck... Paycheck and Ruby Begonia... It's gonna be a photo finish, folks... they're approaching the finish line... who's going to take home the trophy this year?...It's, it's, it's... A turkey of a good time for all at Cuero's Annual TurkeyFest Celebration!

It all began in 1908 when Cuero's first turkey dressing house was opened and turkey raising began on a large scale on DeWitt County farms. Early in November the growers

would herd their turkeys down country roads and through the city streets to the packing house. Visitors in town would marvel at the sight, and year by year the number of visitors who came to Cuero to watch the turkey drives grew.

In 1912 a group of businessmen in the Chamber of Commerce decided to start a celebration with a turkey drive down the city's main street as the main feature. A popular dance at that time was the "Turkey Trot" and this name was adopted for the event.

The original "Turkey Trot" and all future "Trots" proved to be a hit with the local community and visitors far and wide! Newsmen, cameramen, magazine writers and thousands of spectators flocked to Cuero each year for the annual celebration with as many as 20,000 live turkeys strutting their stuff down Cuero's main street.

In 1973, the city of Worthington, Minnesota, also a large turkey producing community, sent a challenge to

Cuero, "our turkey against your turkey." Texans are nothing if not proud. Rising to the occasion, a tradition was born – North Star against Lone Star in the "Great Gobbler Gallop." The Worthington turkey was named Paycheck (nothing goes faster than a paycheck). Cuero dubbed their entry, Ruby Begonia.

The Gobbler Gallop has always been run in two laps against the clock, one lap raced down Worthington's main street and a second lap down Cuero's main street. The bird with the best combined times is the winner each year.

The race of the North Star and the Lone Star turkeys has been a feature of the turkey celebrations both at Worthington and at Cuero for three decades, the prize being a four foot trophy, "The Traveling Turkey Trophy of Tumultuous Triumph" and the title of the "World's Fastest Turkey."

Held the second weekend in October, TurkeyFest has become a "must see" event for thousands of people each year.

Yearly festivities also include a kickoff dance on Friday night, The Great Gobbler Gallop on Saturday morning, a parade through downtown and live entertainment and events in Cuero's City Park. There's lots of great food, a chili and bar-b-que cook-off, games for the entire family in addition to live shows, displays and a carnival.

For more information visit the TurkeyFest website at www.turkeyfest.org.



Ruby Begonia races down Main Street to defend her title of the "World's Fastest Turkey" during TurkeyFest in October.

A Place Where Your Grandpa Shopped! WAGNER'S HARDWARE

Take a walk through Cuero's Wagner's Hardware and you'll feel like you've stepped back 100 years.

Imagine an old-timey hardware store. The kind of place where your grandfather shopped, finding everything he needed to keep things running on the home front. A place where you could purchase anything from a water pump for the well to nails to fix the roof to bolts of burlap. Take a walk through Cuero's Wagner's Hardware and you'll feel like you've stepped back 100 years.

Originally built as a hardware store in 1879, the business was purchased by the Wagner family in 1945 and renamed Wagner's Hardware. It continues to be family owned and operated with the 3rd generation of Wagners contributing to the longevity of this community institution.

As you walk in, notice the original metal threshold and wooden floors. The brick walls are the original construction and are lined with memorabilia including old hand cranked water pumps, bolt bins and barrels, fixtures and metal works.

The store's heritage is evident by its 12-foot front doors and hardwood floors, making visitors feel as though they've gone back in time. Close your eyes and



Wagner's Hardware on Esplanade is one of Cuero's hidden treasures where you'll discover hand-crafted gifts, Texas memorabilia, antiques and more.

you can almost hear the horse hoofs walking up and down the earthen streets that was Cuero 130 years ago.

The current generation of Wagners have worked diligently and lovingly to restore this historic structure to its original grandeur. As you walk through the store and up the old wooden staircase, you'll see old business signs and historic photos that remember Cuero in days gone by.

Upstairs you'll discover a whole new world in Gram's Attic.

This store is housed in what was originally a doctor's office and government agricultural offices. The seven rooms are filled with treasures including hand crafted furniture, unique antiques, elegant ranch furnishings, home accents and decor along with accessories and pillows.

Together, both stores offer a unique shopping experience, including the feel and charm of an old hardware store from days gone by. Wagner's Hardware is one of the few continuously operating, true Texas hardware stores still in existence and is located in Cuero's historic district on Esplanade.



WILDLIFE ABOUNDS

in DeWitt County!

DeWitt County has been named the “Wildflower Capital of Texas” by the Texas legislature, and each Spring the area is ablaze with color and beauty. With the flowers come butterflies, birds and other wildlife, making DeWitt County a nature lover’s dream come true!

DeWitt County is also listed as site #28 on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail. While Governor of Texas, George W. Bush described it well, saying, “I am proud to welcome citizens and visitors to enjoy the diverse natural resources of our great state. The Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail is the first of its kind in the United States. It promises to guide you on a fun and educational tour of the Texas coast and its diverse avian wildlife.”

While Texas boasts numerous state parks, wildlife management areas, federal refuges and forests, the vast majority of our land is privately owned. Outstanding conservation efforts are taking place on millions of acres of private land owned by Texans who are good stewards of our state's natural resources.

Whether you want to see a green jay, butterflies or a whooping crane, chances are excellent that you will see one in Texas, home of one of the most diverse bird populations in North America. After you have traveled the 500 miles of the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, I hope you will continue your bird-watching in other regions of our great state. You never know what awaits you!

DeWitt County takes its commitment to nature to heart, with the annual Wildflower festivities every April, and over 70,000 acres of land managed for wildlife conservation.

Visitors to the area can explore the county and view many different species of birds including mourning doves, quail, wild turkeys, migrating birds such as scissor tail flycatchers, hummingbirds, whistling ducks, indigo and painted buntings and bluejays. Birders can also observe hawks, songbirds, woodpeckers and swallows.

It’s also a great place for turkey, hog and deer hunting. For a real Texas experience, participate in the annual wild hog hunt. Please call (361) 275-5132, DeWitt County Extension office, for more information.

So grab the binoculars and commune with nature in DeWitt County!

Whether you want to see a green jay, butterflies galore or a whooping crane, chances are excellent that you will see one in Texas, home of one of the most diverse bird populations in North America.





Take a Ride Back in Time

CHISHOLM TRAIL MUSEUM

Take a ride back in time ... to the year 1866. It is April 1, and with the coming of first light, two thousand head of the toughest Longhorn cattle are gathered at Cardwell Flats (about four miles north of present-day Cuero, Texas) as cowboys prepared for the long drive north....



As the story is told, Crockett Cardwell had recognized the abundance of Texas cattle, coupled with the growing demand for beef. Seeing an opportunity, he called on his friend

Thornton Chisholm to lead an ambitious cattle drive all the way to St. Joseph, Missouri. And so that early morning, the story begins with the groan of a wagon wheel and the bawling of cattle in the rising dust headed due north.

The intriguing lore of this early cattle drive is what prompted a group of dedicated area citizens to establish a museum preserving the history associated with the Chisholm Trail era and Texas' rich ranching and agricultural history. The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum preserves and showcases memorabilia and valuable artifacts that help bring the stories of cowboys on the Chisholm Trail vividly to life.

The museum is housed in the historic Knights of Pythias Building (c. 1903), listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Located in the 300 block

of North Esplanade in Cuero, the building comprises 10,000 square feet on two floors and features architect James Wahrenberger's creative use of fanciful brick work in Romanesque Revival style. Once restored, it will provide a destination for historic tourism and an educational experience for area youth.

Many of the greatest tributaries of the legendary Chisholm Trail originated in DeWitt, Victoria, Goliad, Lavaca, and Gonzales Counties, making this area an integral part in the Reconstruction following the War Between the States. These numerous herds were driven to northern railheads, providing beef for midwest and eastern markets. These cattle herds also formed the foundation stock for cattle raised in the great American West.

Sadly, none of the old trail hands are here to tell their amazing tales. But their memory is still with us, and that's what the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum is all about.

For more information about the Chisholm Trail Museum, please visit them online at www.chisholmtrailmuseum.org.

Experience History at One of Cuero's Museums

DeWitt County is rich in history and very proud of its rich and vibrant past. Visitors to this area will enjoy a day spent learning more about this interesting and diverse community!



DeWitt County Historical Museums

The Bates - Sheppard House, located at 213 E. Broadway, houses the DeWitt County Historical Museum and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Recorded Texas Historical Landmark. In addition to the home, a two-room log cabin is also located on the grounds. The home and log cabin have a fascinating history that includes connections and memories with the early settlement days of old Indianola, a Gulf Coast port rivaling Galveston in its time. On a guided tour, you will hear local history, view changing displays, and tour the Victorian home. Visitors can stroll through the beautiful old-fashioned garden and walk back in time to explore and experience log cabin life. **The Museum is open Thursday and Friday from 9am to 4:30pm, Sunday 9am to 5pm and daily in April. Admission is free.**



Cuero Heritage Museum

This fine building, listed on the National Registry of Historic Structures, built in 1915 at a cost of

\$62,000, is now home to the Cuero Heritage Museum, featuring Cuero memorabilia as well as being home to the Cuero Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture.

Originally built to house the Post Office and other federal offices, the building stood majestically but empty for several years after it became too small and inconvenient to use. In 1991 the City of Cuero applied for the building to be used as the Cuero Heritage Museum and proposed that the Chamber be housed in the facility, keeping the building open on a regular basis for the public. The proposal was accepted and the beautiful old building is now alive with exhibits, the Chamber, and visitors.

"Cuero Talks Turkey" is a permanent exhibit detailing the genesis of a legend—the pageantry, the economics and the turkeys—a collaborative effort between the Museum Board and the Turkeyfest Association featuring pictures and memorabilia of early Turkey Trots and 3 decades of "The Great Gobbler Gallop".

Reuss Pharmacy Museum

In 1875, German immigrant, Dr. Joseph M. Reuss established a drug store under his name in Cuero. The J.M. Reuss & Son Drug Store operated in the same building on Main Street in Cuero for 99 years. In 1971 Mr. Joe B. Reuss, great-grandson of Dr. J.M. Reuss moved the business to its present location at 515 N. Esplanade Street in Cuero. To preserve the many pieces of history and pharmacy memorabilia, a museum was incorporated into the new pharmacy's format. The museum contains many glass bottles, some with the original herbs and chemicals, pharmacy scales and balances, mortars and pestles, and a unique antique soda fountain.

The soda fountain is the museum's centerpiece and was on "Traveling Texas". Many tourists visit the museum each year and learn not only a history of the pharmacy, but a brief story of how our community originated.

WELCOME TO YOAKUM

Yoakum is located partially in western Lavaca County and partially in eastern DeWitt County. Today Yoakum is known as the “The Leather Capital of the World,” due primarily to the economic impact of several leather goods manufacturing firms with factory locations throughout Yoakum.

In its early years, Anglo-Americans used Yoakum as a gathering site for thousands of bawling Texas Longhorns that were grouped into “Cattle Drives” and driven along the Chisholm Trail to market. Yoakum’s town site was established in 1887 with the arrival of the San Antonio & Aransas Pass railroad – the railroad era of Yoakum’s history.

Once, Yoakum was the “Green Wrap” tomato capital of the world and still commemorates this heritage with the Annual Tom Tom Festival.

As this industry faded, the community leaders, namely Mr. C.C. Welhausen, fostered the idea that Yoakum needed another industry as a base to its economy – thus the beginning of the leather industry era that now employs some 1,500 and produces millions for the Yoakum area economy.



Fun and Frolic as You ENJOY NATURE



Wildflower Trails

From March to May, there are several highways and by ways in which to enjoy the beautiful wildflowers of this area, which include native bluebonnets, Indian blankets, primroses, buttercups, hollyhocks, coreopsis, verbenas and many others.

One such route includes a segment of Highway 77-A from Yoakum to Cuero that has been awarded the "Citation of Merit" from the White House for highway beauty.



Bird Sanctuary

Located adjacent to US Hwy 77-A Business south of Yoakum, this 15 acre sanctuary utilizes public property owned by the City of Yoakum and the Lower Colorado River Authority. Habitats vary from open meadowland to dense woods

along Brushy Creek. A leisurely walk on the marked trail should reveal hawks, songbirds, woodpeckers and swallows, as well as butterflies and wild flowers.



Municipal Park and Golf Course

Yoakum's Municipal Park is truly a community gem! It boasts one of the finest municipal golf courses in the region with a nine hole course that is open to the public. Beautifully located on 150 acres, the park features a fishing pond, soccer fields, jogging trail, BBQ pits, basketball and tennis courts and a swimming pool along with a new playscape. Enjoy some family fun at the horseshoe pits, volleyball courts and a fitness area. The park is located just two miles from downtown shopping.

Planning to stay a few days? Hub City RV Park is the perfect choice. Located in the Municipal park, this publicly owned facility offers RVers 17 pull-thrus and 13 back-in spots with utilities including cable TV hookup. A covered shelter is perfect for picnics and the park also provides public phones, showers and clean restrooms.



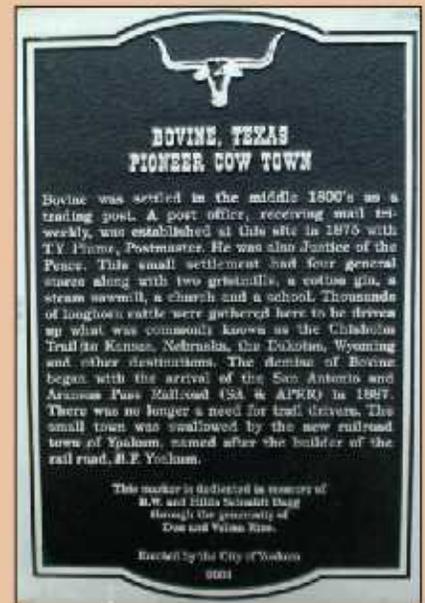
Centennial Park

Centennial Park, as it was named in May of 1987, sits on land donated by the Stevens Family. After the erection of the flag pole to commemorate the US Bicentennial; the gazebo to commemorate the Texas Sesquicentennial and the foot bridge to commemorate Yoakum's Centennial, the park was re-named "Centennial Park". During Christmas, the park is festively decorated and a big red fire truck brings Santa and Mrs. Claus for a visit. A long-range project begun in 1973, the park was a cooperative effort of the City of Yoakum, the Jaycees and the Pilot Club.

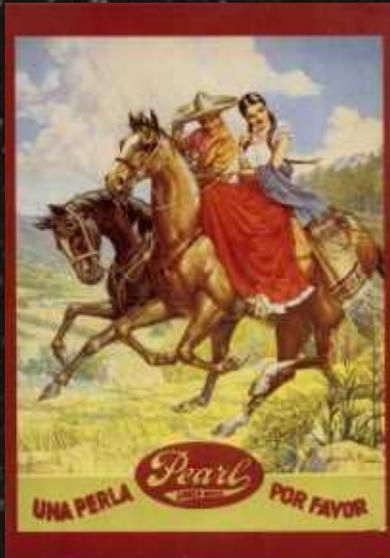


Jamison Park

Beautiful, large oak trees invite you to enjoy an afternoon of fun at the Mack Jamison Park for your next family gathering. Equipped with a large 4' x 8' barbecue pit, picnic tables, pavilion, playscape, basketball court, baseball field and restrooms, the park is close enough to downtown to be convenient if supplies are needed, yet far enough away to be serene and peaceful.



A Night In **OLD PEARL CITY**



In just a few short years, a Night in Old Pearl City has become one of the most popular events in the area, bringing attention to the historic significance of the Pearl City and Hochheim communities.

Pearl City was named in 1932 by Walter G. Hagens, owner of the community's only store, and R.J. Etlinger, the local Pearl beer distributor. They chose the name based on the popularity of the beer and the amount that was consumed in Hagens' store. This tiny hamlet is located on the Hochheim Prairie, about 6-1/2 miles west of Yoakum.

This event is held each year on the Saturday before Thanksgiving and includes an afternoon tour of local historic sites. Each site has a story to tell and represents an important piece of the area's architectural and cultural

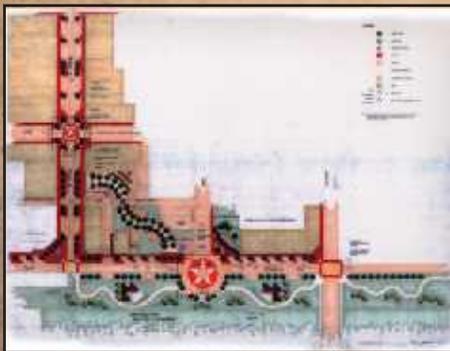
history. Past tours have included the Saint Ann's Church and Cemetery, Hermann Sons Cemetery, Hochheim Prairie School and the Stagecoach Inn.

Tickets are available for a small fee and include a historic tour, dinner with dessert, silent auction, dance and door prizes.



BRING THE PAST TO LIFE

PERSHING SQUARE



Pershing Square will soon be a South Texas destination for fine shopping, dining, and community festivities.

The community of Yoakum prides itself on being progressive as it retains a strong vision of history and tradition. Out of this commitment came the Pershing Square Revitalization Project. As the brainchild of community leaders, this project reflects the vision of the citizens of Yoakum to bring a new life to Yoakum's historic downtown district.

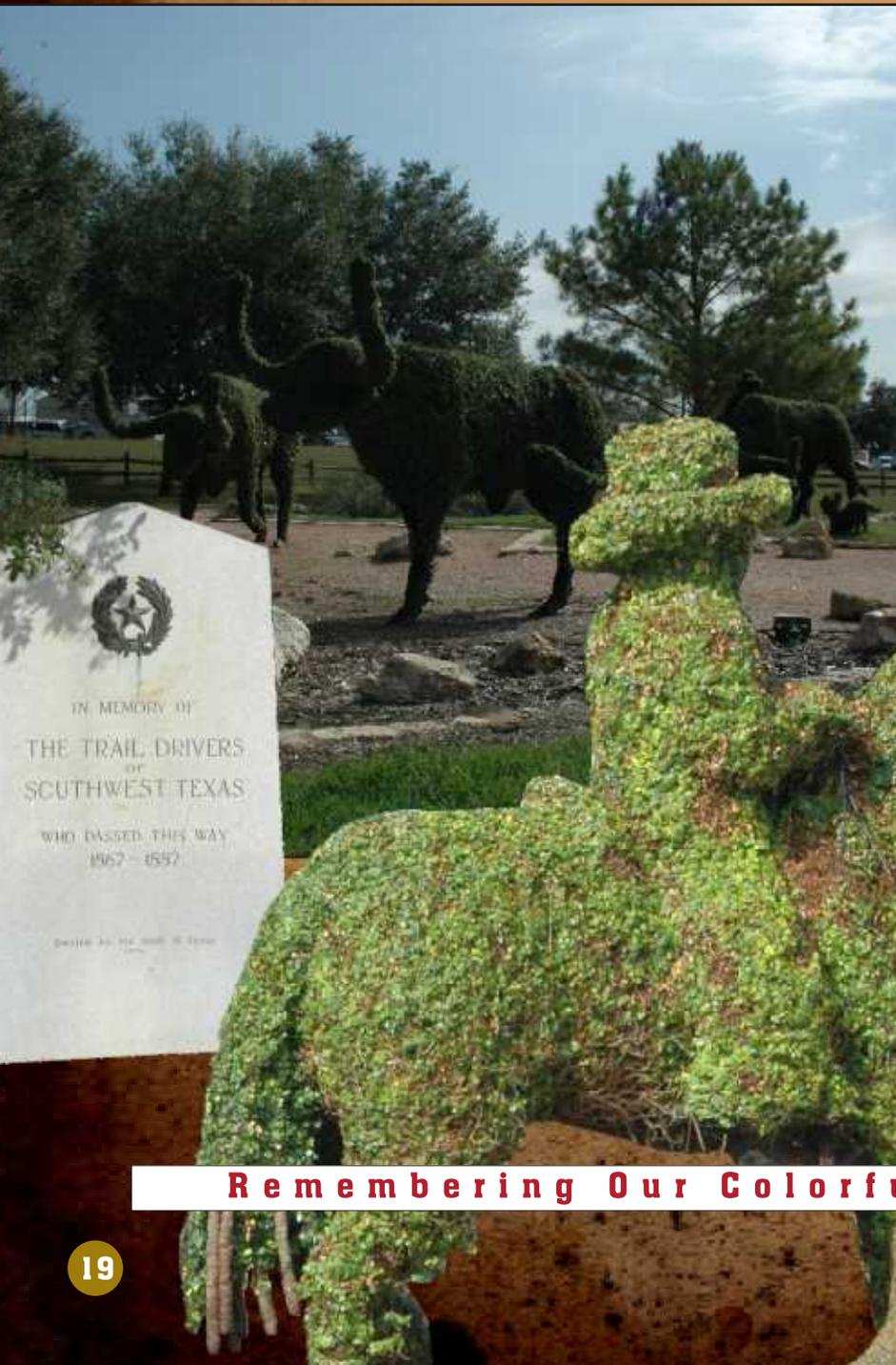
Designed by students from Texas A&M University, the project is named after General Pershing. It brings together local business owners and citizens as they construct a destination for fine shopping and dining. Shoppers and visitors can stroll down the beautifully landscaped and brick laid streets and relax on benches under the swaying branches of large, inviting trees while viewing the beauty of historic Yoakum.

Community events that revolve around the square include the annual Tom Tom Festival and Land of Leather Days.

Already a cornerstone of Yoakum activity, Pershing Square promises to be a dream come true for this forward-thinking community.



CHISHOLM TRAIL MEMORIAL PARK



Yoakum, Texas captures the spirit of the old trail drives with a memorial dedicated to the Chisholm Trail. The trail extended from South Texas to parts of the northern U.S., where cattle was sold in the mid to late 1800s.

Following the Civil War, Texas was bankrupt and in complete despair, but beef was in big demand in the northern states. Between 1867 and 1887, thousands and thousands of wild longhorn cattle were driven from South Texas to the cattle markets in the North. The longhorns became known as “Texas Gold” and were essential in the economic recovery of the state.

Today, Yoakum honors the cattle drivers’ journeys with the Chisholm Trail Memorial Park. The park is adorned with beautiful, larger-than-life topiaries depicting a trail rider, his dogs and longhorn cattle. Native plants and lush trees make it perfect for a short stroll or picnic.

This memorial and park are located at the intersection of West Gonzales Street and Hwy 77A.

Remembering Our Colorful History



Carl & Mary Welhausen HISTORIC LIBRARY

Originally founded in 1933, the Carl & Mary Welhausen Library is housed in the old historic Municipal Power Plant Building. Declared as “the best adaptive re-use” of a building by the Texas Downtown Merchants Association in 1991 and recorded as a Texas Historic Landmark in 1993, the library is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Library serves both DeWitt and Lavaca Counties with over 18,000 volumes of books, periodicals, videos and internet access. The library also offers a genealogy section to assist those weekend scavengers looking for clues to the past. It is a landmark that truly depicts the concerted efforts of the Yoakum citizens to preserve history and education for future generations.

Each Christmas the library hosts a holiday display for all to enjoy.

The Carl & Mary Welhausen Library is located at 810 Front Street.



Gingerbread houses depicting the city's historic downtown are featured during the Christmas season.

Computers

With ten internet-ready computers for public use, there is virtually nowhere in the world you can't visit from your comfortable seat in the Welhausen Library. Finding books and videos within the library is made simple with a computer-based cataloging system. Just click on the Cataloging Icon and search by author, title or subject.

Genealogy

One computer is dedicated to genealogy. The online resources and a Family Tree Maker Program allows you to build your own family tree, research passenger logs from early voyages to the Americas and save all of your family information to your own 3 1/2" floppy disk - right there in the library. Listed below are the resources available for our local area.

Special Collections

- Yoakum City Birth Records 1910-1948
- Yoakum City Death Records 1910-1948
- Yoakum Herald, Death Records Index 1898-1942
- Yoakum Herald Highlights
- Beck - Buffington Funeral Home Info 1910-1973
- Obituaries 1898-present

MICROFILM

- Yoakum Newspapers 1898-1932 (Partial)
- Yoakum Newspapers 1933-2000 (In Progress)
- Census
- DeWitt & Lavaca Counties 1850-1930 (Texas Indexes 1850-1880)
- Surrounding Counties 1850-1920
- Hope Methodist Church & Sunday School Applications and First Families thru #4700

TOM TOM FESTIVAL

The Tom Tom festival originated to honor Yoakum's tomato industry, which was predominant in the area in the late 20s - early 30s. This Festival is one of the oldest in the region due to the "down home" style of fun, found only in South Texas. With a craft show, live music, barbeque cook-off, parades, rodeo and a whole lot more, this festival draws thousands each year... and for good reason!



Greatness Begins With You, Texas - "State of the Tom and the Tomato Year" Day

The week starts with Royalty Pageants. On Friday night, there is a "fun" Tomato King and Queen Contest. On Saturday morning, the Grand Parade is held in downtown Yoakum.

The fun continues at the park, with several events including a BBQ Cook Off, Tomato Cook Off, children's games, horseshoes and volleyball tournament.

There are food and craft booths, a car and motorcycle Show and a dachshund race.

A CPRA Rodeo is held Friday and Saturday nights. Texas Music fans will be not be disappointed as they enjoy local and regional artists. Bring your lawn chair for this concert.

To make the event complete, a carnival is held from Thursday through Sunday at the Yoakum Community Center.



In 1958, Yoakum City Manager, Rueben Kaether (left) presents tomatoes to Texas Governor Price Daniel.



FOOD, FUN AND FESTIVITIES IN YOAKUM, TX.

*Eus Binn & Son
H.P. WITTE & SONS
Handelmanns*



IT'S A WHOOPING GOOD TIME AT YOAKUM'S A N N U A L LAND OF LEATHER DAYS

Yoakum is the proud home of ten individual leather companies that employ thousands of people who produce millions of dollars in quality leather products that are sold throughout the world. These skilled craftsmen handcraft every stage of the product starting from the wooden saddle tree on which the leather is hung, down to the intricate leather handtooling.

Visit one of Yoakum's famous leather companies and see an old western craft still in practice. Saddles, belts and many other products are made by hand in these still-operating factories. Tours are given the last weekend in February during the Land of Leather Days Celebration.

Yoakum pays tribute to its outstanding leather industry with Land of Leather Days. Held the last weekend in February, this annual festival features leather factory tours, a carnival, arts and crafts booths, an outdoor mall, food booths and live music.

And because it's never too chilly to eat chili, this celebration has turned into a real humdinger of an event, with one of the largest chili cookoffs in the State. Each year chili cooking teams come from afar to gather in downtown Yoakum to join in the festivities.





YOAKUM

HERITAGE MUSEUM



The Yoakum Heritage Museum, located at 312 Simpson Street, was built in the early 1900s by the J.K. Elkins family, local Yoakum business owners.

This antebellum home continued as the residence for the Elkins family for almost a century. In 1981, the home was converted into a museum, and on December 1, 1986, Mary Bell Browing formally deeded the home over to the community.

The museum is a beautiful example of Victorian architecture, featuring the original stained and beveled glass windows and ornate staircase along with other unique features.

Serving the community as a remembrance of its history and roots, the museum contains history, culture and artifacts of Yoakum and the S.A. & A.P. RR. The Leather Room features leather industry history from the cattle drive era to today's creative craftsmanship, including the first tannery and rare vintage leather products. On the site of the museum is an original carriage house which housed the carriage, horses, and hay for transportation of the Elkins family.

Ongoing exhibits include the Leather Room, The Military Room and the Train Room. The Leather Room features a photographic history of the leather industry in Yoakum with exquisite, hand-tooled saddles on display. The Military Room houses historic artifacts from the Civil War through the Vietnam War. Displays include souvenirs from local residents who served our country. The Train Room tells the history of Yoakum's railways. Artifacts from the early railroad days are on display.

In addition to ongoing exhibits, the Museum hosts several special exhibits throughout the year including **Clay display, Tompkins display, Railroad display and Christmas Tree Forest.**



General Jonathan Wainwright accepts a hat and saddle from Yoakum, Texas.



T A P Y O U R T O E S A T
**COUNTRY
MUSIC
U ★ S ★ A**



Want a taste of good ol' fashioned Texas family fun? Then grab your boots and scoot over to the Yoakum Community Center the second Tuesday of each month for Country Music USA.

This popular community event began in 1977 when four Rotary Club members decided that since three of them could play musical instruments and the other had the ability of an announcer, they could present a talent show to raise money for Rotary. The first show was September 1977 and featured local talent and about ten musicians. They

performed to a sell out crowd and decided to do it again the next month, and the rest, as they say, is history!

Each year this musical celebration grows in popularity, and guests are still entertained by the original announcer as their Master of Ceremonies, having never missed a show. Country Music USA has won the distinction and award from the Country Music Organization of America (CMOA) as the best "Live Show of the Year" in 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001. Shows are held every second Tuesday at 7:30pm at the Yoakum Community Center with a nominal admission fee. And don't worry about grabbing a bite to eat before you go, because a hot, homestyle cooked meal is available before each show starting at 5:30pm.

So bring your chair cushion and the family and enjoy the fun.

Featuring over two hours of pure country music performed by nine in-house band members and three guest artists, these performances showcase an original brand of Texas Country music along with traditional favorites!



WELCOME TO

GOLIAD

County

Goliad, Texas, the county seat of Goliad County, is one of the oldest municipalities in Texas. In 1749, the Spanish government transferred Mission Espiritu Santo and its royal protector, Presidio La Bahia, to the site of a small Aranama Indian village, which they named Santa Dorotea. This mission served the Aranama, Tamique, and their allies for 110 years, longer than any other Spanish colonial mission in Texas.

A small villa grew up around the walls of the presidio, and was called La Bahia. This area was occupied by the Spanish until 1821, when Mexico won its independence from Spain. The name of the town was officially changed to Goliad in 1829. Goliad is a phonetic anagram of Hidalgo, the name of the priest who became a hero during the Mexican Revolution. Mexican soldiers occupied Presidio La Bahia from 1821 to 1825.

The first great cattle ranch in Texas is said to have its beginnings at Mission Espiritu Santo. Along with its sister, Mission Nuestra Señora del Rosario, Mission Espiritu Santo possessed the largest longhorn herds in the state, at times owning more than 40,000 head.

The first offensive action of the Texas Revolution occurred here on October 9, 1835, when local colonists captured the fort and the town. The first Declaration of Texas Independence was signed on the altar of the Presidio

chapel on December 20, 1835. As 92 citizens signed the document, pledging their support to the cause of freedom, the “Bloody Arm” flag, first flag of Texas independence, was hoisted above the town.

The flag, described as a white ground, in the center of which “...was a sinewy arm and hand painted red, grasping a drawn sword of crimson,” symbolized the Texians’ willingness to make any sacrifice, no matter how great, to win their freedom from the tyranny of General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna.

During the 1836 Texas campaign, Colonel James Walker Fannin’s force surrendered in defeat at the Battle of Coleto Creek. The Texian soldiers were imprisoned in the Presidio for a week. On Palm Sunday, March 27, Col. Fannin and his 341 men were marched outside the walls and shot, making Goliad the site of the largest single loss of life in the cause of Texas independence. The Goliad Massacre, which accounted for twice the loss of life as that at the Alamo, was, in part, the inspiration of Gail Borden’s headline, “Remember Goliad! Remember the Alamo!”, which became the rousing battle cry of the victorious Texians at the Battle of San Jacinto.

One of Goliad’s most endearing legends was also born of the heroism associated with the massacre here—that of the Angel of Goliad. Panchita Alavez, wife of a high-ranking officer in the Mexican army is credited with saving at least 28 lives, by begging the commander there to spare them. One of the survivors, Dr. Bernard, wrote, “Her name deserves to be recorded in letters of gold among those angels who have from time to time been commissioned by an overruling and beneficent power to relieve the sorrows and cheer the hearts of man.”

Goliad offers visitors a wonderful blend of history and charm. Enjoy a day on the square, a weekend at the park, and the time of your life!



Kick Up Your Heels at



If you mention Schroeder Hall to anyone who lives in South Texas you're going to get a smile... Mention it to anyone who's lived in the Crossroads area for any length of time and chances are you're going to get a few stories too!

Schroeder Hall has been a hangout for the folks of South Texas for decades. It's played host to such famous performers as Tammy Wynette, Conway Twitty, Pat Green and Robert Earl Keen. Schroeder Hall is what you think of when you think of Texas!

The second oldest dance hall in Texas, Schroeder Hall is the favorite place for locals to kick up their heels on the dance floor to live music. Well-known musician Willie Nelson, back when he was clean-shaven, played at Schroeder Dance Hall years ago and Roy Clark played his first professional gig at Schroeder Hall, making 50 dollars for a night's performance. It's rumored that Lyndon Johnson did the Texas Two Step on Schroeder Hall's dance floor. Brooke Shields did a photo shoot there some years back. The stories, some believable some not so believable, are as plentiful as the patrons that have scooted on the dance floor since it opened in 1935.



On any given weekend, guests enjoy live performances of not just country music, but Polka and rock and roll. On a Sunday afternoon you might find members of the local Harley Davidson club enjoying a drink in the saloon or on the outdoor patio. On

Saturdays, the dance hall is opened wide with performances from popular performers known locally and nationally, and the music is as varied as the people who come out to Schroeder Hall. The country standards still make it through Schroeder to entertain audiences along with the young bucks of country music. Polka music is a standard favorite and rock and roll bands always give a great show. One thing that you will always find, no matter what the

music, is people dancing and have a great time.

Schroeder Dance Hall is a part of Texas culture. It's tied to country music and to the current of German and Czech history that runs so deep through this part of the country. It's a place to gather, a place to have fun, a place to let go and just enjoy a cold drink and great music.

PRESIDIO LA BAHIA

South Texas is known for its history, all the way back to the Spanish settlements of the 1700s. One favorite site for locals and tourists alike is the Presidio La Bahia, located one mile south of Goliad on US Highway 183. Presidio La Bahia was established at this location in 1749, with Mission Espíritu Santo. It has been owned by the Catholic Church since 1853 and is currently operated by the Catholic Diocese of Victoria, Texas.

During the mid-1960s, the Kathryn Stoner O'Connor Foundation funded a restoration project under the direction of architect Raiford Stripling and archeologist Roland Beard. The fort was rebuilt to its 1836 appearance, based on documents and archeological evidence dating from the Texas Revolution. Presidio La Bahia was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1967.

During the year, La Bahia offers visitors self guided tours and reenactments of Texas history. It is designated a National Historic Landmark and is considered the



world's finest example of a Spanish frontier fort. This is the most fought over fort in Texas history, having seen participation in six National Revolutions/Wars for independence. Spanish, Mexican and Texian soldiers all garrisoned its fortified walls. Here, at this Crossroads of Revolution, was felt almost every attempt to forcibly change the governmental order of Texas.

The fort is the site where Goliad history began. The Presidio chapel still serves as a community church. Visitors may tour the grounds and chapel and visit the Presidio's museum, which contains exhibits and cases of artifacts. The most popular annual event at the site is the Goliad Massacre Living History Program, a two-day reenactment of the battle of Coleto Creek and the subsequent execution of Colonel James W. Fannin and his troops.

For more information on the Presidio, please visit their website at www.presidiolabahia.org.

MISSION ESPIRITU SANTO STATE HISTORICAL SITE

G O L I A D S T A T E P A R K

A wonderful opportunity for visitors to experience both natural and cultural resources awaits at Goliad State Park. Situated within three ecological zones and located on the San Antonio River, the park offers a variety of flora and fauna blending with tangible remains of Texas history and culture. The park serves as a hub for visitors to the Mission Espíritu Santo State Historic Site (located in the park), the Presidio La Bahía, the Ignacio Zaragoza Birthplace State Historic Site, Fannin Battleground State Historic Site, the Goliad Historic District, and Mission Rosario State Historic Site. Surrounding ranches and oil fields remind visitors of the role the area played in the unfolding of Texas' history and economy.

Goliad State Park is 188.3 acres, and contains the Mission Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo de Zuniga, reconstructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s. The mission was originally established in 1722 near Matagorda Bay, and rebuilt at its present site in 1749. The mission was the first



The above replica of Mission Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo de Zuniga, gives visitors a unique look at Texas history.



large cattle ranch in Texas, supplying its own needs and those of Spanish colonial settlements as far away as Louisiana.

The park also manages the General Ignacio Zaragoza's Birthplace, Plaza, and Amphitheater, located near Presidio La Bahía. General Zaragoza assumed command of a rag-tag Mexican Army and welded it into a staunch fighting force, which met and defeated the French on May 5, 1862, in the Battle of Puebla, leading to Mexico's independence from France. The park complex contains the ruins of Mission Nuestra Señora del Rosario, established in 1754, located four miles west of Goliad on US Highway 59.

The park offers outstanding recreational activities and facilities which include camping, picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating (no ramps provided for river access), swimming (a junior olympic swimming pool, operated by the City of Goliad is across from the park), nature study, and historical study.

The park is operated by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Facilities are available for trailer and tent camping. For more information, visit www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

ANGEL OF GOLIAD NATURE TRAIL

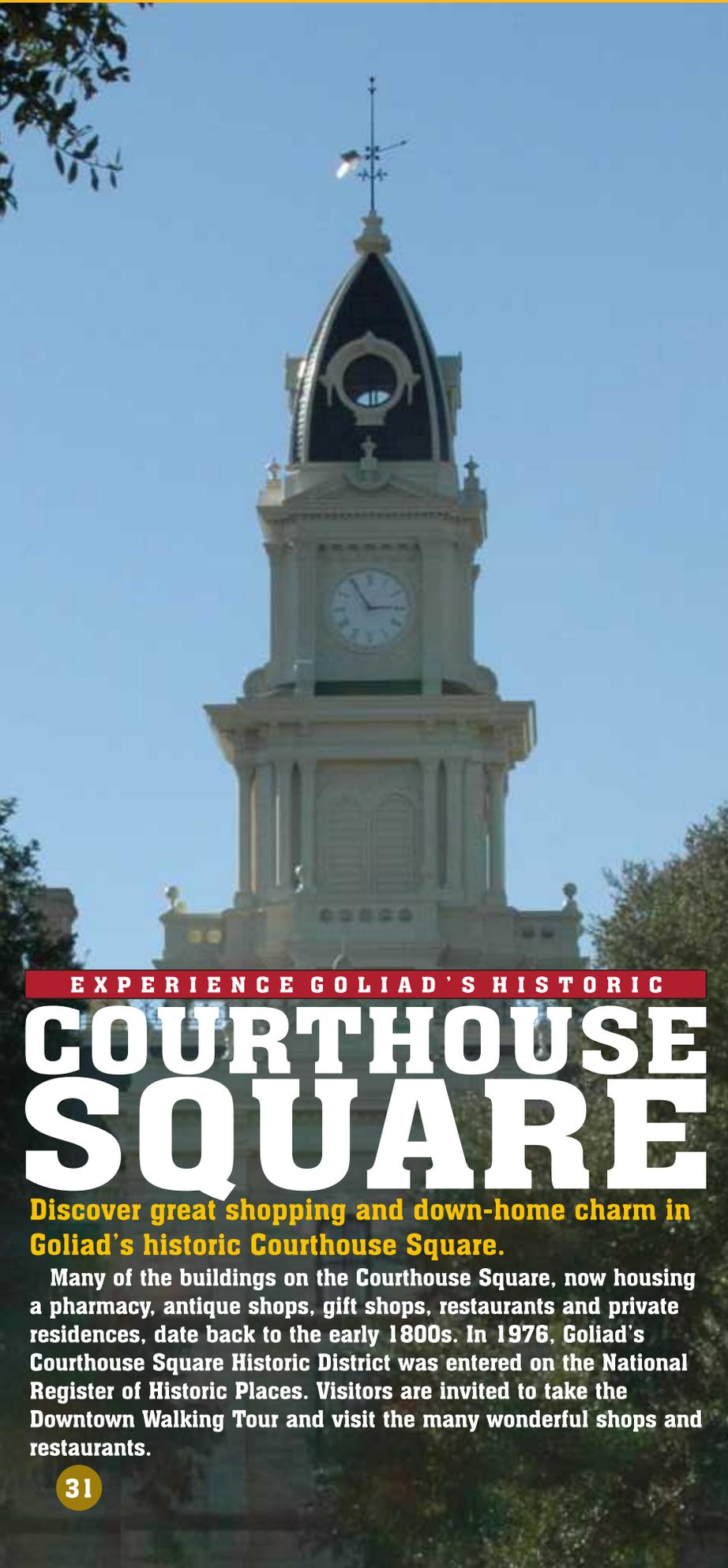
A nature trail heads from the mission buildings and picnic grounds and traverses typical south Texas brushland, or chaparral. The brushland contrasts sharply with the luxuriant gallery woodlands of the San Antonio River floodplain. Birdlife along the trail is especially varied, due to proximity of diverse habitats and to the mild regional climate.

There is also a designated wildlife viewing area.

T O U R S :

There is historical, natural and cultural study available through guided interpretive tours. Tour fees apply. Museum hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily. The Mission is closed on Christmas Day.

This monument honors General Ignacio Zaragoza, who played a critical role in Mexico's independence from France.



EXPERIENCE GOLIAD'S HISTORIC

COURTHOUSE SQUARE

Discover great shopping and down-home charm in Goliad's historic Courthouse Square.

Many of the buildings on the Courthouse Square, now housing a pharmacy, antique shops, gift shops, restaurants and private residences, date back to the early 1800s. In 1976, Goliad's Courthouse Square Historic District was entered on the National Register of Historic Places. Visitors are invited to take the Downtown Walking Tour and visit the many wonderful shops and restaurants.

Goliad County Courthouse

A Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, Goliad's courthouse is a rough-cut limestone structure designed by Alfred Giles. The stones used in its construction came from the old courthouse, which was built in 1865; according to stories, some of this stone was originally hauled from Austin by oxcart. This courthouse building was completed and occupied in August, 1894. After a 1902 tornado devastated most of the city, the courthouse served as a hospital and a morgue. In 1942, a hurricane destroyed the clock tower and turrets. In 1964, the interior was renovated, and the original wainscoting and carved staircase were retained. The entire renovation was completed in 2003. On display at the courthouse are the nine flags that have flown over Goliad.

Hanging Tree (Cart War Oak)

A Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, between 1846 and 1870 this live oak tree served as the site of court sessions. Death sentences pronounced by the court were carried out immediately. During the 1857 Cart War, during which Texan freighters perpetrated a series of vicious attacks against Mexican cart drivers along the Indianola-Goliad-San Antonio Road, this tree was also the site of a number of unauthorized lynchings, before the Texas Rangers brought the conflict under control.

Masonic Temple

A recorded Texas Historic Landmark, constructed and dedicated in 1854, this limestone structure is home to Goliad Lodge No. 94, the oldest Masonic Lodge in continuous use in the state of Texas. Lodge members have always met on the top floor, while the bottom level has been used as a dining hall, doctor's office, post office, school and newspaper.

Baptist Oak Tree

On May 7, 1849, a dozen Goliad citizens, led by Rev. John Freeman Hillyer, met under this live oak tree, just a block off the town square, to organize the first Baptist church west of the Guadalupe River. The congregation included members of the Hillyer family, along with former Tennessee Congressman and noted attorney, Pryor Lea and his wife.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Goliad has been home to an Episcopal presence since 1861, as a result of the foreign mission outreach. This building was erected in 1883 and was consecrated in 1885. It served as a mission church until it was elevated to parish status in 1913. The building, regarded as one of the most beautiful small churches in the state, features several stained glass memorials.

V I S I T COLETO CREEK

Coletto Creek Park is 190 acres of lush landscape sprawled alongside a beautiful reservoir. It's perfect for fishing, barbecuing, or a day of relaxation. The park has picnic facilities, complete with BBQ grills, as well as a swimming area, playground, and sand volleyball courts.

For overnight visits, there are 58 multi-use campsites and 4 camping cabins located on the reservoir shoreline. The campground also has 2 miles of hiking and nature trails to further explore the park. Plus, during the summer the park offers a variety of programs such as, "Moonlight Hikes", "Stargazing", "Boaters Ed" and "How to Fish Coletto."

Being a "Hot Water Reservoir", Coletto Creek is an exceptional place for bass-fishing even during the cooler months of January and February. The catch-rate-per-hour-fished and the number-of-bass-being-caught has placed Coletto in the top ranks of Texas Bass Lakes. Coletto also has an outstanding population of catfish, including blues, yellows, and channels.

Coletto Creek is also a great place for bird watching and is the Designated Viewing Site on the Texas Birding Trail. It is a prime migratory winter site for a wide variety of water fowl and birds including nesting Southern Bald Eagles, Osprey, Rosette Spoonbills, and White Pelicans. At last count, there were over 100 different bird species recorded visiting the park.

In addition to bird life, you will find an abundance of wildlife. On any given day, campers may see deer, squirrels, turkey, foxes, stray emus, and a variety of other wild creatures.

As you prepare for your visit to the Coletto Creek Reservoir and Park, you may want to browse our website at www.colettocreekpark.com for a complete listing of activities and facilities.

We recommend calling (361) 575-6366 in advance for camping reservations if you plan to stay in the park. The staff can provide you with information on the current reservoir and fishing conditions, upcoming events, and names of area hotels.



Come join paddlers from around Texas on the first Saturday in November to venture down 6.5 miles of Goliad's scenic riparian San Antonio River to Goliad State Park. Lunch will be awaiting all registered paddlers! For more information please visit their website at www.canoetrailgoliad.com



The dog days pass, and Indian summer brings cooler temperatures, brilliant sunshine, and beautiful blue skies. Rejuvenate yourself while creating happy memories, in this peaceful town only two hours from the metropolitan areas.

Join the fun each October for the annual Missions Tour de Goliad Bike Ride, which is rapidly becoming one of the premier rides in Texas. The Missions Tour offers the unique charm and challenges of the South Texas countryside. Whether you choose the 10-, 30-, 50-, or 85-mile tours, you will pedal through a rich countryside filled with stately centuries-old live oak trees and gently rolling hills. Make plans now to join us on the third Saturday in October. Set your course for Goliad--a Texas Destination!



An event for every speed enthusiast! The Texas Mile is a top speed, one mile shootout for street cars and motorcycles as well as Land Speed Racers. Come join the crowd to watch as the current Texas record of 257mph will be attempted to be broken on the last weekend March and October. For more information please visit their website at www.texasmile.com



Fannin Battleground State Historic Site

This 13.6-acre park east of Goliad, in Goliad County has been in custody of the State Board of Control since the state acquired the site in 1914. A Texas legislative enactment in 1965 placed the site in custody of Texas Parks and Wildlife, and the park opened the same year.

On March 20, 1836, at this site, Colonel J. W. Fannin surrendered himself and 284 of his men after the Battle of Coletto. He surrendered to Mexican General Jose Urrea and told his men that they would be treated as prisoners of war. Seven days after the capture, General Santa Anna had Fannin and the men with him, plus other prisoners captured in the area executed as traitors. Twenty-eight escaped while 342 were massacred near what is now Goliad State Historical Park.

WELCOME TO GONZALES *County*



Gonzales, Texas, the county seat of Gonzales County, was established in 1825 on Kerr Creek, 2 1/2 miles east of the confluence of the San Marcos and Guadalupe Rivers. It was the capital of Empresario Green DeWitt's Colony and was the westernmost Anglo settlement until the close of the Texas Revolution. The town was named in honor of Don Rafael Gonzales, provisional Governor of Coahuila, Mexico and Texas.

During the colonial period of 1825 to 1835 there were many problems with the Comanche and Tonkawa Indians. In 1831, the Mexican government sent Gonzales a six-pound cannon as protection against the Indians.

This cannon was used in the "Come and Take It" Battle on October 2, 1835, firing the first shot in the Texas Revolution. General Sam Houston, while in Gonzales, learned of the devastating defeat of the Alamo from Mrs. Almaron (Susannah) Dickinson, who, with her baby and two servants, survived the siege. After learning of this event, General Houston gathered troops and began the famous

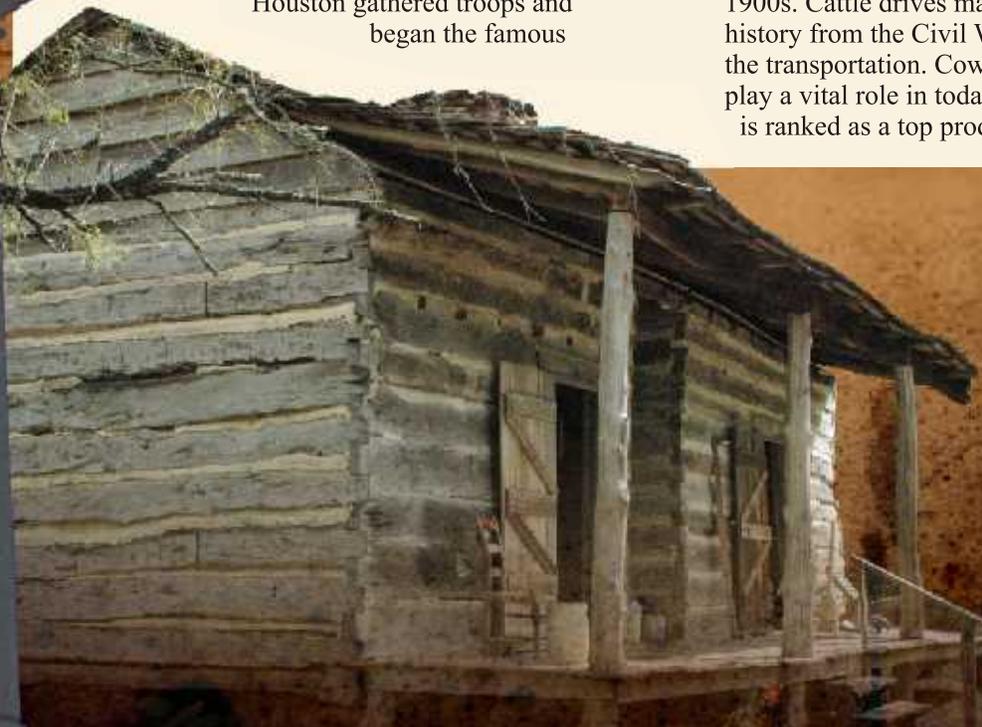


"Runaway Scrape", gaining time and mustering troops to eventually take a stand at San Jacinto, where Santa Anna was defeated and Texas gained its freedom from Mexico.

On December 14, 1837, Gonzales County was created by the legislature from the DeWitt Colony, along with Guadalupe, Caldwell, Comal, Lavaca, Fayette, DeWitt, Victoria and Jackson counties. Gonzales became a melting pot of ethnic backgrounds, with Mexican families settling alongside the members of Green DeWitt's Colony. The 1850s saw Germans and Czechs moving into the area and African-Americans coming with the development of plantations.

The Civil War period found about 20 volunteer military companies organized in Gonzales County. In 1863, the Confederate government commissioned a fort to be built in Gonzales as protection against inland invasion by Yankee troops. Fort Waul, C.S.A. an earthen embankment fort, was located on a prominent hill north of the city.

Cotton was king in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Cattle drives made their place in Gonzales history from the Civil War until railroads took over the transportation. Cow-and-calf operations still play a vital role in today's economy, while Gonzales is ranked as a top producer of eggs and chickens.



S h o p . D i n e .

Enjoy!

HISTORIC GONZALES

There are few communities in South Texas that have to offer all the beauty, history and majesty that is Gonzales. The citizens of Gonzales are proud of their community and they're not ashamed to tell you so.

The downtown square is something to see, with cute shops and restaurants setting up home in lovingly restored buildings, to the museums displaying testaments to Gonzales' colorful past.

When you tour the downtown, you'll want to stop by Licorice and Gum Drops Old Fashioned Candy Shop, where the treats such as homemade fudge, lollipops and of course, Texas' own Blue Bell Ice Cream. Enjoy a scoop as you sit at one of the outdoor tables and bask in the beauty of this community where Texas history began.

Directly opposite Licorice and Gum Drops is the newly restored Lynn Theater. Built in 1949, this community staple was closed in the mid-80s. In 2005, this lovely building opened up its doors again to



The Lynn Theatre, built in 1949, is among many unique buildings.



The Gonzales County Brand Monument.

entertain visitors. Carefully restored, you'd think you were stepping back in time as many of the features of the original building were kept and used during the restoration process. The Lynn Theater features two screens and proudly shows first-run movies. So grab some popcorn and a soda and enjoy an evening out.

The square is a living testament to Gonzales' incredible history. From the monuments and memorials to the fire house, which is still in operation, to the old jail, which has been turned into a museum and offices for the Chamber of Commerce, you can't get away from the history. Chamber volunteers are always available and eager to give visitors a personal tour of this wonderful community.

Radiating out from the square, the shopping and exploring continue with a wide array of beautiful Bed and Breakfasts, each offering weary visitors a comfortable bed, hearty meal and the type of hospitality that you'll only find in South Texas.

There are a multitude of museums waiting to tell you their stories. And, if you're looking for treasures, you won't have to look further than one of Gonzales' many antique stores. Stop by Laurel Ridge, a lovely store offering shoppers fine American antique furnishings circa 1835 to 1885. Located in a beautifully restored Victorian home, Laurel Ridge is the perfect place to find that unique item that will be the centerpiece of your home.

A day of shopping and exploring, visiting and learning is what you'll discover in this amazing Texas town. Stay and weekend and get to know the people and this place they call home.



Spend a day shopping at many of the Old fashion shops lining downtown.

COME AND TAKE IT FESTIVAL

The Come & Take It Festival celebrates the firing of the first shot of the Texas revolution on Oct. 2, 1835, which took place near Gonzales.

Gonzales became known as
"The Lexington of Texas",
where the first shot was fired,
and where the first Texas Army
of Volunteers gathered.

Come And Take It

The town of Gonzales was established by Empresario Green DeWitt in 1825, two and one-half miles east of the confluence of the San Marcos and Guadalupe Rivers. It was the westernmost Anglo settlement until the close of the Texas Revolution and was named in honor of Don Rafael Gonzales, provisional governor of Coahuila, Mexico and Texas. The town was laid out in the shape of a cross, with seven squares. During the colonial period of 1825 to 1835, there were many problems with Comanche and Tonkawa Indians, but Gonzales flourished. It was a thriving capital of the DeWitt colony by 1833.

In 1831 the Mexican government loaned the citizens of Gonzales a six-pound cannon as protection against the Indians. In September of 1835, as political unrest grew, Mexican officials at San Antonio de Bexar demanded the cannon be returned.

A corporal with five soldiers and an oxcart were first sent by Col. Ugartechea, Bexar military commander, to Gonzales. The corporal carried a request that the small reinforced cannon, a bronze six-pounder, be returned to the Mexican Army. Andrew Ponton refused to relinquish it, stalling for time, and the little cannon was buried in George W. Davis' peach orchard, near the Guadalupe River.

Next came Lieutenant Castaneda and 150 mounted soldiers to "take" the cannon. When the soldiers appeared on the west bank of the Guadalupe River, there were only 18 men in Gonzales, but these "Old Eighteen" stood at the river in defiance, denied the Mexicans a crossing by hiding the ferry and sent out a call for volunteers to assist them.

As the soldiers scouted the river for a place to cross, they moved upriver a short distance, near the present-day community of Cost and camped for the night. There, in the early-morning hours of Oct. 2, 1835, the colonists crossed the river with their cannon, surprising the troops and waving their hastily fashioned flag, which proclaimed "Come and Take It." Almost immediately the cannon fired, killing one of Castaneda's men and scattering the rest, forcing them to retreat to San Antonio de Bexar. Thus was fired the shot that set off the struggle for Texas independence from Mexico. When the smoke cleared, the Mexican troops had taken off. The Texas Revolution had begun.

Gonzales became known as "The Lexington of Texas", where the first shot was fired, and where the first Texas Army of Volunteers gathered. A few months after the first shot, men and boys from the region would gather in Gonzales, sending the only reinforcements ever received at the Alamo.

Each October, on the weekend nearest the October 2 anniversary, the citizens of Gonzales gather to celebrate their Texas heritage in a three-day festival called "Come & Take It."

The festival features a parade, music and sports tournaments, arts and crafts, a carnival, rodeo and car show. Most of all, it features fun for all!

M U S E U M

Gonzales Memorial Museum

A Centennial historical memorial, the Memorial Museum commemorates the "Immortal 32" who died in the Alamo. Memorabilia is displayed there from the founders and early settlers of Gonzales, including the Come & Take It Cannon, which might have fired the first shot for Texas independence on Oct. 2, 1835. Located at 414 Smith Street between St. Lawrence and St. Louis streets, Memorial Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 5 p.m.; on Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. Closed during the noon hour and on Monday.

The Eggleston House

This "dog-run" style cabin was built after the Texas Revolution and is located on St. Louis Street east of Memorial Museum. Period furniture is on display there and a recording can be activated that tells its story. It is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m.

J. B. Wells House

The James Bailey Wells house was built in 1885 of Florida long-leaf pine. The 15-room house features original wallpaper, drapes and furnishings. The Gonzales Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas is the custodian. Call for pre-arranged tours. It is usually open for tours at Springfest and Winterfest between the hours of 2 & 6 p.m. The museum is located at 823 Mitchell Street.

Braches House & Sam Houston Oak

The Braches House is open by appointment only. A log house built in 1831 by Sarah Ann and Bartlett D. McClure was replaced by this plantation-style house built in the 1840s by Sarah Ann and Charles D. Braches. The house became a stopping place for wagon trains, stages and mail hacks.

After the fall of the Alamo, General Sam Houston ordered the burning of Gonzales before the advancing Mexican Army. A large oak tree near the home will forever be known as "The Sam Houston Oak", because it was here the general is said to have rested on his first stop during "The Runaway Scrape".

TAKE A STEP BACK IN TIME WITH A VISIT TO

PIONEER VILLAGE

Perhaps one of the most extensive collections of 19th-century buildings, Gonzales Pioneer Village offers tours, demonstrations and battle re-enactments through the year. Don't miss seeing the Hamon Church, where the spirits of former congregations might whisper as you settle into a pew.

Located north of the intersection of Business US Highway 183 and TX 90A, Pioneer Village stands as a monument of the history with its collection of buildings on a 12 acre tract of land, which is part of the original Spanish cross design for the Town of Gonzales. The project began as a way to save endangered historic structures in Gonzales County and has evolved into a living history museum where school children from all over South Texas tour to learn about their heritage.

The collection includes an 1830s log cabin, 1840s log home, 1856 Cypress-sided home, 1892 two-story Greek Revival house and museum, smoke house, barn, blacksmith shop, broom factory, 1870's church and a memorial to the "Immortal 32" who went to the Alamo.

On special occasions, Pioneer Village serves as a backdrop for costumed historical re-enactments and skills



demonstrations. The last Saturday in April begins the season of special events with the Annual Storytelling Festival and Dutch Oven Cook-off. Visitors will enjoy stories from the old West, sample wonderful food cooked over an open fire, and, in the evening, some spine-chilling ghost stories.

In October, visitors can enjoy re-enactments to coincide with Gonzales' Annual Come and Take it Festival. These special shows teach visitors the chain of events that led up to the Texas revolution.

On November 25th, 26th, December 2nd, 3rd, 9th and 10th, Gonzales Pioneer Village presents "Stars in the Village." Enjoy thousands of tiny, twinkling lights, as scenes of early Texas are reenacted in the village homes and buildings. During a twilight walk with history, visitors can enjoy the music of costumed historians playing seasonal sounds on antique instruments and beautiful period Christmas decorations. Of course, the evening is complete with Texas hospitality - Christmas cookies and punch.

Pioneer Village is a wonderful combination of history and fun and is the perfect destination for the entire family!



THE OLD JAIL MUSEUM

Just across the street from the courthouse in downtown Gonzales, the Old Jail Museum is the perfect place to take a step back in time and truly experience the “Old West.” Designed by architect Eugene T. Heiner and built between 1885 and 1887, the jail was still actively used until 1975. The brick structure was designed to hold up to 200 prisoners. Contractor Henry Kane and Snead & Company Iron Works contracted to build the jail of concrete and steel for \$21,660.20.

As you enter the jail facility through an entrance hall which was originally the sheriff’s office, you’ll notice three rooms to the left served as the kitchen, bath and family living quarters for the sheriff or jailer.



All of the ceilings are made of corrugated steel and concrete and are designed to withstand riot conditions. On the lower floor are display cases for articles taken from prisoners and information on the sheriffs, deputies and other law enforcement officials who served through the years.



At the end of the hall is the dungeon, where the only light and air came from holes above the door. There is a jailer’s bedroom and the “women and lunatics” cell.

The second and third floors feature a large room known as the runaround which is two stories high. The rooms in the east and west wings housed criminals charged with less-serious crimes. The death cells are at the front of this



room and feature doors of two-inch iron strips forged and fused through the use of heat, borax and hammer, since the jail was built before welding was invented. In each wing of the room are two-story metal cells, built as rooms within a room and featuring more of the riveted doors.

The gallows were last used in 1921 and were torn down in the 1950s. They stood in the run-around next to the third-floor walkway. The present gallows are an exact reproduction. Large doors to the cell blocks feature small swing-out doors with bars, from which the jailer could observe the prisoners, and inside the room are levers that opened and closed latches on the cell doors.

As you tour the jail, note the small diagonally shaped coal stoves in the far corner of each cell. At the end of each wing is a recessed arch where a large wood stove was used.

There were six legal hangings in Gonzales between 1855 and 1921. The last hanging was that of Albert Howard on March 18, 1921. A legend persists that while Howard was in jail, he became obsessed with the clock on the courthouse, keeping strict attention to the number of hours he had to live. He swore his innocence would be shown by the clock and that none of the four faces would ever keep the same time again if he was hanged. Through the years the faces have rarely been consistent.



This old jail house is an exciting escape to days gone by, and as you tour this old historic structure, listen closely and you might hear the voices of those who have long since left.

PARKS AND RECREATION



Lake Wood Park & Campground

A quiet and scenic campground in a shady pecan grove on the banks of the Guadalupe River, hawks, squirrels, white-tailed deer and other animals are seen, and winter brings a variety of waterfowl to the lake. The park offers a 488-acre lake with largemouth bass, crappie, yellow, blue and channel catfish and bait fish in the lake, at the lighted spillway below the dam, in the river or the slough. There is a boat ramp & dock, river access, canoeing, fishing, boating, restrooms, showers, picnicking, grills/fire pits, playground, horseshoes, and volleyball. Lake Wood Recreation Area is located approximately 5 miles west of Gonzales on U.S. Highway 90-A.



Palmetto State Park

Located on 78 Park Road 11 South, Ottine, Texas off US 183 North of Gonzales, this isolated island of lush greenery is named for the plant growing in its bogs. A stop on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, approximately 240 species of birds have been observed there. The abundant dwarf palmettos give a feeling of a tropical paradise, a surprising contrast to the nearby rolling hills. The San Marcos River and a small oxbow lake are perfect for swimming and fishing. Campsites are available with water only, water/electricity, and full hook ups, also a group camping area.



Independence Park along the Guadalupe River

This park, located off U.S. 183 South, offers many activities for a wide range of interests. The lower park, The Brickyard, has a soccer field, quadraplex softball and baseball fields, a pavilion that can be reserved, picnic sites, a pond with waterfowl and good fishing along the Guadalupe River.

The upper park has three pavilions that can be reserved, four restroom areas, basketball courts, volleyball courts, tennis courts, a swimming pool open May through August, a nine-hole golf course, show barn and rodeo arena.



Independence Golf Course

This nine-hole golf course offers challenging holes and is open six days per week, Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Open until 9 p.m. for Daylight Savings Time.

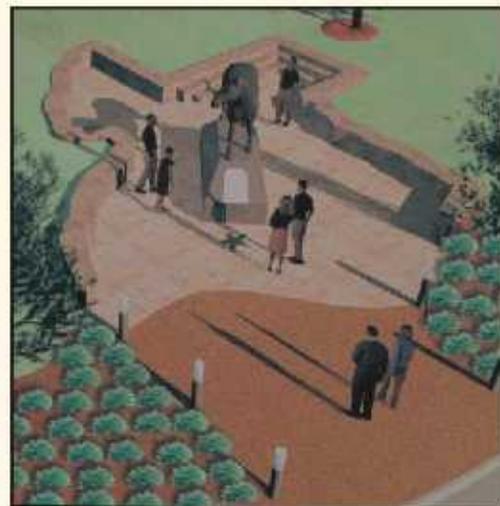
Green fees are \$8 per day on weekdays, \$10 per day on weekends. Cart rentals are \$8 for 9 holes and \$15 for 18 holes plus tax.



JB WELLS PARK

The family of J.B. Wells, Jr. donated the land to the City of Gonzales in 1999 to build a public park. The park was funded by a cooperative effort by the City of Gonzales, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Lower Colorado River Authority, and Gonzales Economic Development Corporation.

It's located at the intersection of US Highway 183 and State Highway 97 just south of Gonzales along the Guadalupe River. It has a 67,000 square foot covered facility called the Gonzales Arena that hosts numerous rodeo events, concerts, circuses, and ag shows throughout the year. The Gonzales Arena is rented along with a warm-up arena that was built by the Gonzales Arena Association. The City of Gonzales built a covered stall barn with 200 stalls inside. The Gonzales Economic Development Corporation built a multi-purpose showbarn. The City of Gonzales also built a covered pavilion and 150 full RV hook-ups. There is also a hike and bike trail that goes around the Santa Anna Mound. The trail measures approx. one mile.





BED & BREAKFASTS

Gonzales is the birthplace of Texas, often called the "Lexington of Texas." Located at the intersection of the Chisholm Trail and the Old Spanish Trail, Gonzales has more history to offer than you can consume in a lifetime. The Gonzales Bed and Breakfast Association has Cattle Barons' Homes, Guest Cottages and even a working ranch to offer for your accommodation.

Many facilities offer special packages that coincide with the festivals and special events that happen in Gonzales throughout the year. Take a weekend away from the kids and everyday life with a romantic getaway. Enjoy antique shopping in Gonzales' many antique stores, tour the historical sites and rediscover yourself in this spectacular corner of the world.

When you stay in one of Gonzales' Bed and Breakfasts, you will be treated to warm hospitality and shown the unique role Gonzales has played in the history of this great state. Come stay for a weekend, enjoy fine dining, incredible shopping, and leave with a lifetime of memories.

Abiding Life B&B

206 St. James
830-263-0452

Belle Oaks Inn

222 St. Peter
830-857-8613

The Boothe House & The McDowell Guest House

706 St. George St.
830-672-7509

The Cabana Guesthouse

834 Mitchell
830-672-5169

Oaks at Ottine

Park Road 11 at FM.1586
830-857-5925

St. James Inn B&B

723 St. James St.
830-672-7066

Lazy F Guest Ranch

FM 1116
830-587-6378

John Fauth Guest Cottage

521 St. Peter St.
866-563-2884



OLD SALVAGED ITEMS FIND A NEW LIFE

DISCOVERY ARCHITECTURAL ANTIQUES

It's become all the rage... new construction that looks like old construction. Used wood and fixtures finding a renewed life in new homes. Home owners and home builders alike are discovering the treasures at Discovery Architectural Antiques, located at 409 St. Francis in Gonzales.

Discovery Architectural Antiques is the largest operation of its kind in the Southern USA, stocking nearly everything imaginable that can be salvaged

from old homes and buildings including antique stained glass, doors, windows, flooring, siding, beams, shiplap, posts, lighting, tin ceiling, tubs, sinks, and one of the best collections of antique door hardware to be found anywhere.

This unique facility has over 125,000 square feet of inventory under roof, the main showrooms alone take up five buildings in downtown Gonzales, Texas.

The owners work diligently to find the many different items builders want for "Old House" Restoration as well as "New Home" architectural embellishments. They stock nearly everything from



flooring to bath tubs, from doorknobs to tin ceiling, and antique beams to quality stained glass.

The largest of the 5 warehouse sites offers buyers 75,000 square feet of products including over 5,000 doors, 3,000 mostly wavy glass windows, flooring, barn wood, siding, trim, 20+ foot long beams, dimensional lumber, beaded wood, shiplap, hand hewn beams, tubs, sinks, toilets, and bricks, clay roofing tiles and much more.

Warehouse #2 has the sawmill, the flooring machines, and large beams

that are cut up for flooring and custom beam sizes or dimensional lumber.

Warehouse #3 has beams as long as 52' and is where they store sold merchandise until customers are ready for delivery or pickup.

Warehouse #4 contains more doors, sashes (new old stock 100 years old but never installed), 100 years old wavy glass, textured glass, and 10,000 square feet of tin ceiling, antique cypress shutters, walnut new old stock spindles, iron fireplace fronts, and more tubs.

WELCOME TO

LAVACA *County*

In 1833, John Hallet built a log cabin on a league of land on the east bank of the Lavaca River. Shortly after, he returned to his former home in Goliad where he died in 1836. Following the death of her husband, Margaret Hallet moved from Goliad back to the cabin on the Lavaca. She stocked it with a small supply of merchandise and within a short time other pioneers settled nearby on both sides of the river. These formed the nucleus for the Hallet settlement.

In 1842, the Texas Congress created a “Judicial” county from the fragments of Fayette, Colorado, Jackson, Victoria and Gonzales counties, naming it LaBaca. In 1846, Lavaca became a regularly constituted county. Petersburg and Hallettsville both wanted the county seat, but after two elections and a violent contest, Hallettsville was declared the seat of the government in 1852, and Petersburg went into decline.

Following the Civil War, Czechs and Germans began settling around Hallettsville, changing it from a simple trading post to the agricultural center of the county, and bringing in a rich history and culture that has become firmly integrated into this community.

While forging ahead, the community has not forgotten its past. There are a number of state historical markers in the town, and Hallettsville has memorialized many of its pioneer settlers in a memorial park.

Offering visitors wonderful shopping from a variety of local merchants, a dining experience featuring fare that is uniquely Texan and a down-home hospitality that will make you feel right at home, Hallettsville is worth a trip and worth a stop.

K O L A C H E F E S T

The community of Hallettsville has a proud history rooted in the immigrants from Germany and Czechoslovakia that began settling there in the mid 1800s. Kolache Fest is a tribute and celebration of this rich heritage.

A “kolache” is a Czech pastry with a fruit filling. If you’ve never had one, they’re perfect served warm and enjoyed with a hot cup of coffee, and they abound in shops and bakeries throughout this region of Texas. Some of the older residents will delight you with stories about how nothing tasted as good as the kolaches their grandmothers would make. Hot from the oven and melt-in-your-mouth delicious! It’s only fitting that this Czech festival be named after this beloved treat.

Held the last Saturday of September at the Knights of Columbus Hall, Kolache Fest has something for everyone! From the Kolache Bake-Off

and Eating Contests to the arts and crafts booths to the classic car show featuring

cars from all over the area. Perhaps the highlight of the day for children young and old is the Kolache Fest Parade through Hallettsville’s Downtown Square. Other activities for the children include games and activity booths. You can also test your singing skills with a karaoke contest.

Of course, it wouldn’t be a Czech festival without polka music. Throughout the day polka bands are on hand to entertain guests and delight visitors.

The night is finished off with the Kolache Fest dance featuring bands that are local and regional favorites.

If you’re looking for an opportunity to discover what Texas heritage is all about, come to Kolache Fest and learn the wonderful Czech philosophy. Dance to the polka, and sing the songs of the musician. Taste the true ethnic food and lend your soul to the fulfillment of the Czech cultural heritage.



Festivities, including the kolache eating contest, are a treat for everyone.



Beautiful antique cars are proudly displayed during Kolache Fest.



FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

A visionary wish and an imaginative dream inspired the “Festival of Lights” in Hallettsville’s downtown square, and good ol’ Texas determination made it become an inspirational reality.

In September, 1996 a small group of citizens decided to inquire if the community would support their vision of a Christmas celebration involving the community, churches, city and county governments. Their quest received overwhelming support and the Festival of Lights committee set forth their mission statement: “Celebrate with us our Past and enjoy our Present so that you might catch a glimpse of our Future while we feel the Peace, envision the Hope, celebrate the Joy and share the Love of Christmas.”

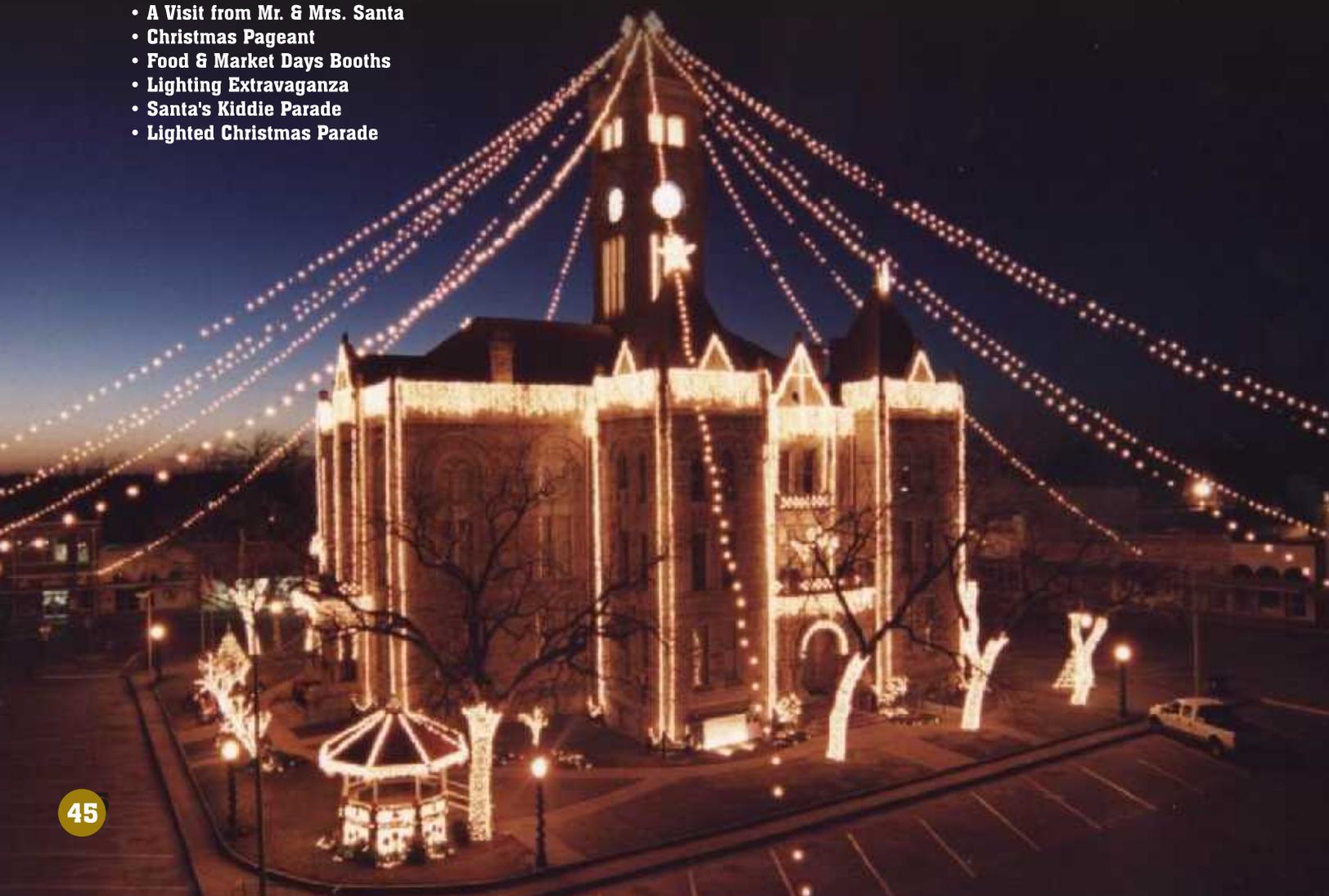
The “Festival of Lights” is about celebrating the big holidays on the calendar and the little holidays of the heart. Designed for children and adults young at heart, the Festival includes a variety of wonderful holiday events ranging from:

- **A Visit from Mr. & Mrs. Santa**
- **Christmas Pageant**
- **Food & Market Days Booths**
- **Lighting Extravaganza**
- **Santa's Kiddie Parade**
- **Lighted Christmas Parade**

The Market Days activities begin at noon on the Saturday after Thanksgiving and feature many arts and crafts booths and food vendors.

The organizers of this annual event hope that your visit to the “Festival of Lights” will remind you that Christmas is a time when our thoughts turn to the special people Christ has brought into our lives... and as we remember, our hearts are warmed with love!

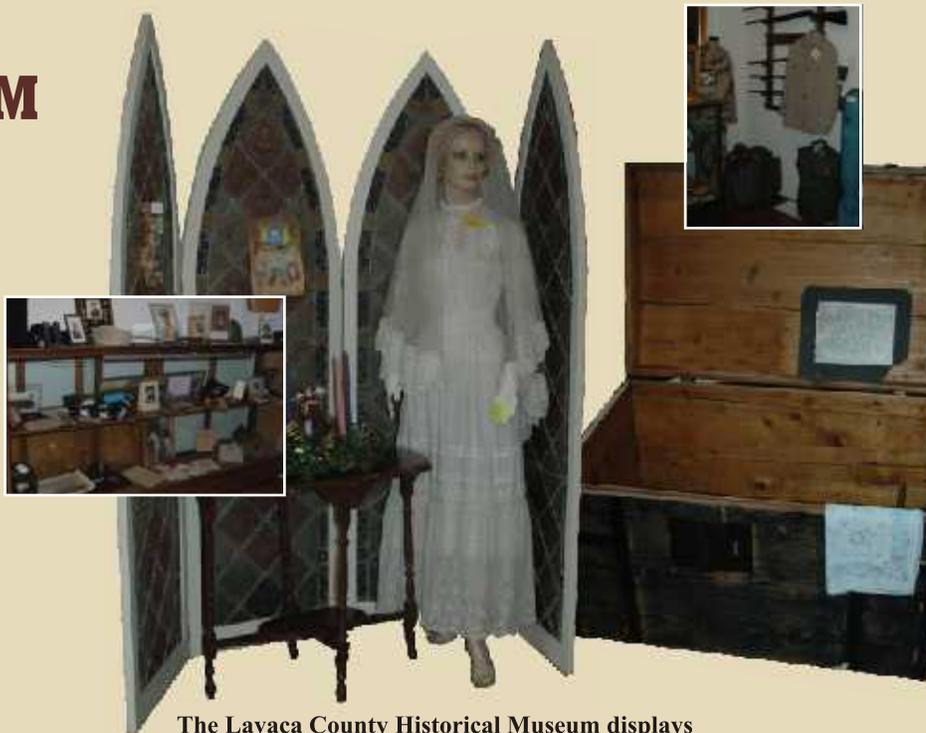
The “Festival of Lights” Lighting Extravaganza is presented from Thanksgiving weekend through the first week in January in the genuine spirit of Christmas bringing to you a holiday spectacle and the ultimate festival of lights.



LAVACA COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Lavaca County Historical Museum is located at 413 North Main, a few blocks from the town's square. This converted home houses historic artifacts, photos, household furnishings and other items focusing on the area's rich history. A special treat is the Old-Timers Baseball Hall of Fame. The facility features a restored carriage house and outhouse. The community of Hallettsville has worked hard and diligently over the years to maintain the history and beauty of this facility to ensure that visitors and locals alike will enjoy this treasure for decades to come.

For more information and hours of operation, please call (361)798-2786.



The Lavaca County Historical Museum displays historical artifacts related to the area's rich heritage.

BIG BUCK C O N T E S T



The Knights of Columbus Big Buck Contest is one of the largest buck contests in Texas. Hunters from around the state proudly present their prized bucks in a display encompassing an entire facility for a chance to win the contest. The Big Buck Contest attracts over 100 entries. There are five divisions: Lavaca County, State of Texas, South Texas, Lavaca County Youth & State of Texas Youth. Each year the contest culminates with the annual Knights of Columbus Wild Game Supper and Awards Banquet which is held on the third Friday of January. The wild game supper features deer, hog, squirrel, dove, duck, crawfish, wild rice, duck gumbo, Lavaca County sausage and Wesley Wild Sublime pinto beans. Attendees also have an opportunity to buy raffle tickets to win over \$40,000 in various prizes, from guns to four-wheelers. **For info on the Big Buck Contest and other events, Knights of Columbus #2433 events, visit www.kchall.com.**

THINGS TO DO & SEE IN HALLETTSVILLE



FIDDLERS' FROLICS

The Texas State Championship Fiddlers' Frolics, founded in 1971, is the largest fiddlers' contest in the world, attracting the best fiddlers in the U.S. and around the globe. The event also features entertainment including guitar and banjo "pickin'", live cajun, bluegrass and country music and jam sessions. Cooking teams come together to compete in the barbeque, sausage and bean cook-offs also held during the four-day event. While there, visit the Texas Fiddlers Hall of Fame.

For more information call 361-798-2311 or 361-798-5934.

TEXAS STATE PARTNERS DOMINO CHAMPIONSHIP



The Texas State Championship Partners Domino Double Elimination Tournament was founded in 1951. It is now the largest state championship domino tournament and most prestigious. Players from across the U.S. compete for the

state title. Held annually on the 3rd Sunday in January, the tournament starts at 9:00 am. **For more information call 361-798-2311 or www.kchall.com.**

SOUTH TEXAS SAUSAGE AND POLKA FEST



Discover the best sausage and Czech music at the South Texas Sausage and Polka Fest, held the 4th weekend in March. Festivities begin with a traditional Polka Mass. Performers, such

as The Moravia Czech Heritage Singers and area polka bands provide music throughout the day and into the late evening. The two day event starts Saturday and ends Sunday. **For more info call, 361-798-5430.**

LAVACA COUNTY VIETNAM VETERANS' MONUMENT



The Vietnam Veterans' Memorial, located in Hallettsville, is dedicated to the six men of Lavaca County who lost their lives during the Vietnam War and honors all veterans, past, present and future. The

Cobra AH1, a restored helicopter used during the Vietnam War, is located on U.S. HWY 77 North, next to the Hallettsville Chamber of Commerce office.

TEXAS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP "42" DOMINO TOURNAMENT



Hallettsville proudly presents the Texas State Championship "42" Domino Tournament. For over two decades, Hallettsville has hosted the event, honoring one of the most popular domino

games in the state, "42". It attracts the best domino players from all over Texas for one intense competition. Trophies and cash prizes are awarded. It's held the first weekend in March.

Contact the Hallettsville Chamber of Commerce, 361-798-2662.

COLE THEATRE

The town square in Hallettsville has always been the community's center for shopping and entertainment, and a big part of a Saturday evening trip to town included a movie at the Cole Theatre.

The Cole Theatre's history began in 1926 when Mart Cole opened a silent movie theatre in the magnificent three story Opera House on the west side of the Courthouse square. He christened his new establishment the Cole Theatre. On any weekend you could enjoy a movie for a few pennies. For special showings, big name Hollywood stars such as singer Jimmy Rogers would appear in person and sign autographs and maybe even perform a song.

In 1929 the theatre was moved to its present location on East Second Street. Spanish murals were hand painted on the interior walls giving it a rich and detailed beauty.

The first "talkie" shown at the Cole was "Wings", and during the depression and WWII, the theatre kept movie goers informed on world events with newsreels. The theater's air conditioning system kept patrons comfortable by using fans to blow air over blocks of ice.

As so often happens over the years, ownership of the Cole Theatre changed and the facility began to show its age, finally closing its doors in the early 1990s. Then, in 1992, the Cole Theatre was discovered by Bill and Barbara Orsak. Bill had always loved the theater, having worked as a projectionist as a teen in nearby Victoria.

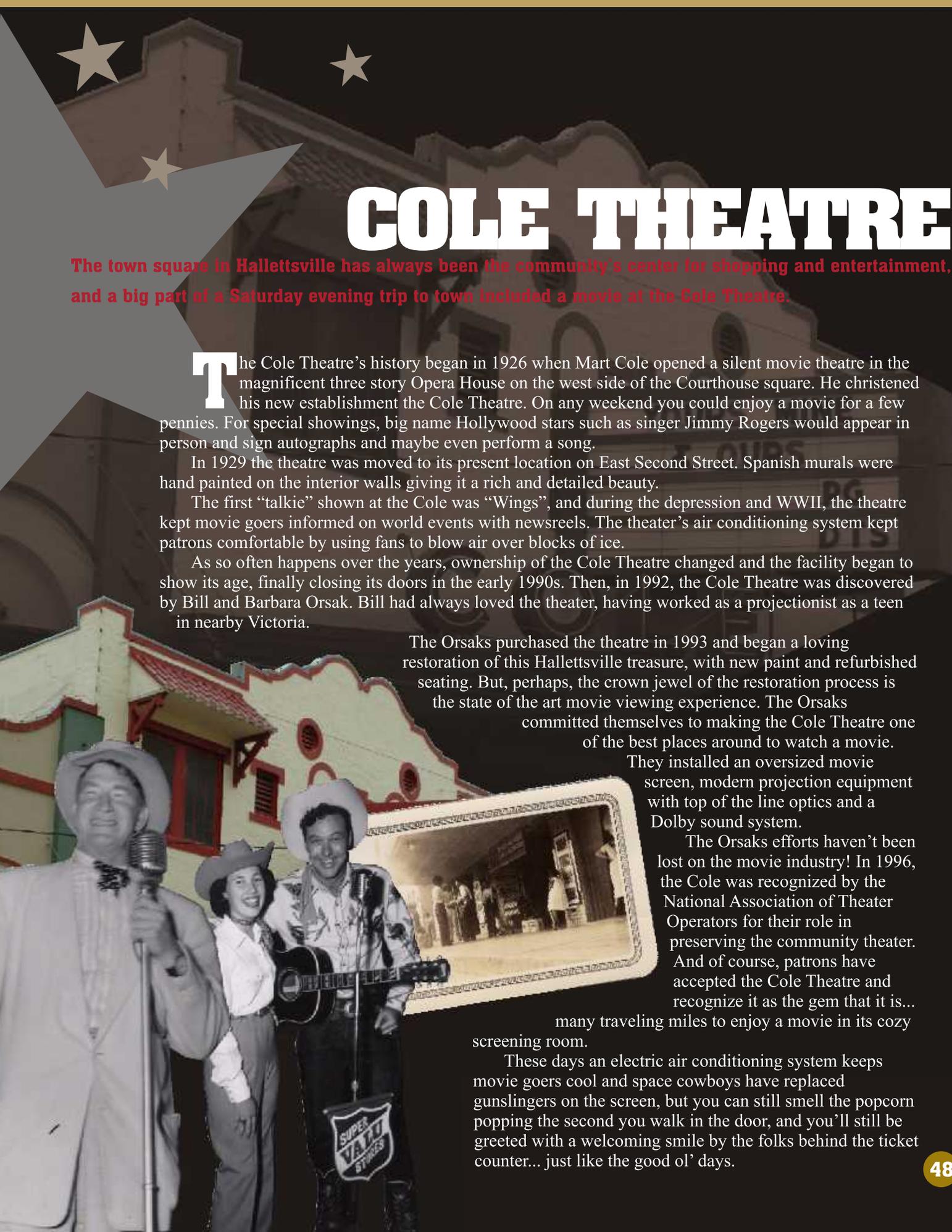
The Orsaks purchased the theatre in 1993 and began a loving restoration of this Hallettsville treasure, with new paint and refurbished seating. But, perhaps, the crown jewel of the restoration process is the state of the art movie viewing experience. The Orsaks committed themselves to making the Cole Theatre one of the best places around to watch a movie.

They installed an oversized movie screen, modern projection equipment with top of the line optics and a Dolby sound system.

The Orsaks efforts haven't been lost on the movie industry! In 1996, the Cole was recognized by the National Association of Theater Operators for their role in preserving the community theater. And of course, patrons have accepted the Cole Theatre and recognize it as the gem that it is...

many traveling miles to enjoy a movie in its cozy screening room.

These days an electric air conditioning system keeps movie goers cool and space cowboys have replaced gunslingers on the screen, but you can still smell the popcorn popping the second you walk in the door, and you'll still be greeted with a welcoming smile by the folks behind the ticket counter... just like the good ol' days.



ANNUAL EVENTS

JANUARY

Yoakum	
Country Music USA	2nd Tuesday
Hallettsville	
Wild Game Supper (KC Hall)	3rd Friday
State Championship Domino Tournament	3rd Sunday
Miss Hallettsville Scholarship Pageant	
Hallettsville Junior Livestock Show	Late January

FEBRUARY

Yoakum	
Land of Leather Days	Last Weekend
Country Music USA	2nd Tuesday
Gonzales	
Pilgrim Country Opry	

MARCH

Cuero	
Cuero Livestock Show	
Yoakum	
Country Music USA	2nd Tuesday
Goliad	
Market Days	2nd Saturday
County Fair, Rodeo and Parade	3rd Weekend
Goliad Fair Parade	3rd Saturday
Presidio La Bahia Living History	Weekend Closest to the 27th
Texas Mile	Last Weekend
Gonzales	
Wildflower/Historic Sites Tours	Weekends
Hallettsville	
State Championship "42" Domino Tournament	1st Saturday
South Texas Polka & Sausage Fest	4th Weekend

APRIL

Cuero	
Wildflower Tours	All Month
Yoakum	
Wildflower Trail Days	Weekends
Heritage Museum Spring Exhibit	End of Month
Country Music USA	2nd Tuesday

APRIL CONT.

Goliad	
Market Days	2nd Saturday
Gonzales	
Wildflower/Historic Sites Tours	Weekends
Springfest	Last Weekend
Trade Days	Last Saturday
Hallettsville	
State Championship Fiddlers' Frolics	4th Weekend

MAY

Yoakum	
Country Music USA	2nd Tuesday
Goliad	
Cinco de Mayo Celebration	1st Weekend
Market Days	2nd Saturday
Gonzales	
Trade Days	Last Saturday

JUNE

Yoakum	
Tom Tom Festival	1st Weekend
Country Music USA	2nd Tuesday
Goliad	
Colet Creek Fishing Tournament	1st Weekend
Market Days	2nd Saturday
Hallettsville	
2-Man Scramble Golf Tournament	1st Weekend

JULY

Yoakum	
Country Music USA	2nd Tuesday
Goliad	
Main Street Stars & Stripes Jubilee	Weekend Closest to the 4th
Market Days	2nd Saturday
Gonzales	
Trade Days	Last Saturday
Hallettsville	
TYRA Texas Youth Rodeo	
Kolache Classic Golf Tournament	3rd Weekend

WINTER... SPRING... SUMMER... FALL... no matter when you plan to visit this beautiful area, there's always something fun and exciting going on! Please check with the local chambers of commerce for more information and exact dates and times

AUGUST

Yoakum

Heritage Museum Rail Days All Month
Country Music USA 2nd Tuesday

Goliad

Market Days 2nd Saturday

SEPTEMBER

Yoakum

Heritage Museum Rail Days All Month
Country Music USA 2nd Tuesday

Goliad

Diez y Seis de Septiembre TBA
Market Days 2nd Saturday

Hallettsville

KolacheFest Last Saturday

OCTOBER

Cuero

TurkeyFest 2nd Full Weekend

Yoakum

Country Music USA 2nd Tuesday

Goliad

Texas Mile Last Weekend
Market Days 2nd Saturday
Missions Tour de Goliad 3rd Saturday
Harvest Moon Celebration 31st

Gonzales

Come and Take it Festival 1st Full Weekend

Hallettsville

American Legion Auxiliary Quilt Show 1st Sunday
Falling Leaves Polka Fest 4th Sunday

NOVEMBER

Cuero

Christmas in the Park Thanksgiving

Yoakum

Country Craft Bazaar Mid Month
Country Music USA 2nd Tuesday
Night in Old Pearl City Dinner/Dance Saturday before Thanksgiving

Goliad

Antique Festival 1st Fri. - Sun.
Canoe Trail Goliad Fall Floatilla 1st Saturday
Market Days 2nd Saturday

Gonzales

Pioneer Village - Stars in the Village Last Weekend

Hallettsville

Festival of Lights Lighting Extravaganza Thanksgiving Weekend

DECEMBER

Cuero

Christmas in the Park All Month

Yoakum

Christmas Tree Forest All Month
Library Christmas Display All Month
Country Music USA 2nd Tuesday
Open House Tour 1st Sunday

Goliad

Christmas in Goliad 1st Weekend
Christmas Concert 1st Weekend
Market Days 2nd Saturday

Gonzales

Winterfest 1st Weekend
Pioneer Village - Stars in the Village Weekends
Christmas Tour of Historic Homes 1st Weekend
Trade Days 1st Saturday

Hallettsville

Festival of Lights All Month
Lions Club Arts & Craft 1st Sunday

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY YOUR VISIT!

