

'Winter Texans' Flock To Rio Grande Valley

Tyler Makes Pitch For Visitors To Stop In ET For Azalea Trails On Way Home

Approximately 125,000 "Winter Texans" flock to the Rio Grande Valley each year for a variety of reasons. The Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce Visitors and Conventions Council recently participated in the Annual Discover Texas Association Travel Fair in Harlingen and Brownsville. This fair is held for destinations to encourage these Winter Texans on their way back home to stop off in their cities.

Approximately 75 Texas cities and attractions were represented at this year's fair. The Tyler booth marketed by upcoming Azalea and Spring Flower Trail as a top attraction to these visitors to our state.

The Tyler program was directed by Henry Bell III, manager of the Tyler Chamber's Visitor & Conventions Commission. Manpower for the Tyler booth was provided by volunteers who serve on the commission, including Jay Shinn, Joel Irwin, Katy Gilbert, Ben Gillis, Linda Sellers, Cindy Gore and Bob Turner.

The Winter Texans come primarily from the northern midwest states for a wide variety of reasons. From a poll taken by the State Highway Department, the top states represented in this population group are

Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan, Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin, Kansas and Indiana.

The Department also recently surveyed these Winter Texans for what reasons they come to South Texas. Some of the answers were obvious:

- Escaping the severe cold northern weather.
- For health reasons.
- Wanting tropical surroundings.
- The recreational opportunities available in warmer weather.
- One of the biggest responses received was to be with friends. As the Winter Texans travel down here over the years, they have become friends with one another. Just the rhetoric between them has become a big part of their lives.
- Low cost of housing.
- International atmosphere being located close to the Mexican border.
- the community charm of the Valley.
- And no state income tax.

Some of the Winter Texans stay over six months a year and declare Texas as their home state. In addition to the Winter Texans that travel from the northern midwest states, the Tyler booth discovered that there were other Winter Texans from closer distances. There were Winter Texans from Tyler, Atlanta and Texarkana. Basically, these individuals travel south to be with their new friends they have made from the North.

In learning what these Winter Texans think about the Tyler area, Tyler was reported to be a good location proximity when they would be traveling back. Many who were polled felt it would be a more desirable stop on their route when Highway 31 is four lanes 100 percent.

In addition, one of the main drawbacks in the Tyler area is the shortage of Recreational Vehicle facilities. Many of these Winter Texans are in portable homes of one form or another looking for parks, such as Tyler State Park, where they can hookup their own facility.

The Minnesotians, especially feel Tyler and the East Texas area to be much like their home states in the summer months, particularly with the abundance of lakes, trees and spring flowers.

En route, the Tyler attractions were presented in San Antonio at a general sports and travel show. Similar shows in the near future in Dallas and Fort Worth will find the Tyler booth and volunteers on location.



COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY, OREGON



30% MULTNOMAH FALLS, BENSON FOOT BRIDGE

TRAVEL TRIVIA contest winner Richard C. Cantrell praised the beauty and resources of Oregon, but it took a 65-year-old postcard from Lipschuetz & Katz in Portland to show us this view of the second highest falls in the United States. The water cascades 840 feet from the brink of a cliff, and then 70 feet more to the floor of the valley.

Louisiana Pilgrimage One Of Top Attractions

ST. FRANCISVILLE, La. — Each Spring the West Feliciana Historical Society in St. Francisville, La., stages a pilgrimage into its past.

The Pilgrimage, listed as one of the Top 20 attractions in the South, is dedicated to the memory of the historic parish's most famous visitor, John James Audubon, who painted many of his famous Birds of America in West Feliciana during the 1820s. The proceeds further the Society's preservation efforts.

The 19th Pilgrimage, March 16-18, concentrates on four architecturally and historically significant homes, each of which gives visitors an intimate glimpse of Southern history from frontier to plantation, from plumb times to war and from war's defeat to resurgence. Each provides a microcosm of Southern history and culture.



SEABROOK — This Anglo-Creole vernacular cottage with its fine Federal detail was built prior to 1811 when St. Francisville as a brand new town. (Courtsey Photo)

Seabrook, c. 1809, a small Anglo-creole cottage with fine Federal detailing and plaster moldings fashioned by its mid-19th-century owner, a master craftsman from whom the house takes its name, is in the heart of the National Register Historic District and is almost as old as the town itself.

On the outskirts of town is Windy Hill, c. 1820, a shed-roof structure, classically vernacular, and still with its original faux bois interior doors. In Audubon's day, this house was owned by a legendary Baptist Missionary who also kept an academy called Society Hill.

The Myrtles plantation, established in the late 18th-century by a refugee from Pennsylvania's Whiskey Rebellion, was enlarged in 1834 by a member of the Stirling family and decorated with the lacy iron grill work and elaborate plaster friezes that form a romantic backdrop for antebellum splendor.

Recovering from the Civil War and its aftermath, the builder of The Oaks in 1888 turned to the flamboyant Queen Anne style of architecture. His thoroughly "modern" house abounds in energetic gingerbread, fanciful turrets and deep dormers. It is now the heart of a family farming operation going back six generations.

For more information write or call the Audubon Pilgrimage, Box 338, St. Francisville, La. 70775; (504) 635-6330.

Soldier Of Cortes Project Started

HERMOSILLO, Mexico (AP) — The Mexican government has begun a massive hotel project called Soldier of Cortes on the Gulf of California near the town of Guaymas.

The 18,000-room development 250 miles south of Nogales, Ariz., will create 20,000 jobs, the official news agency Notimex said.

TRAVEL TRIVIA

CHINA OR CHOW MEIN; IN 4688 GET A HORSE!

Once again, the New Year for several nations of the Orient is the Year of the Horse, and to them it is 4688, give or take a few years or horses.

You can gamble on the Isle of Man without joining a club or having credentials from Vegas. Check it out.

One who checked it out the Isle of Man back in October is world-gadder George E. Haddaway, whose other home is at Hide-A-Way Lake in Smith County. The pioneer aviation publisher who openly celebrated his 80th birthday last year was on Isle of Man with his wife Doris, and they discovered among other things that the local British postoffice uses an "X" to indicate the month of October in the cancellation.

As chairman emeritus of Wings of Hope, Haddaway continually is able to direct attention to the aviation charity which is located in St. Louis, and had its start during the famine year 1961 in Africa.

Wings of Hope was not called that initially when two airline pilots bought a plane and flew it to the Burkhan Desert that year, for use as a medical missionary transport.

In mid-1989, aircraft No. 87 in the WOH program was delivered to Tanzania. At about that same time, some of Haddaway's friends decided to recognize his birthday with new contributions to WOH, and at last count over 135 individuals had said "happy birthday, George" to the tune of over \$50,000.

OTHER TRAVEL INFORMATION JUST COMES AND GOES

You do not have to go to the Isle of Man to gamble, even legally, that is. While the folks in New Orleans were warming up for the Super Bowl (and later when millions around the country were cooling off it as a spectator dud), there was a different crowd gathering at a pier in Galveston.

Ready to take off from Pier 34, or perhaps it is the one next to it, was the Pride of Mississippi, Texas' own gambling ship, relocated from Biloxi waters.

The "Pride" leaves a bit earlier than reported here in past editions, so it will be best to confirm everything, through a travel agent, or direct with the ship operators.

Anyhow, it was a full house on Jan. 28, with an estimated crowd of 600 on board for the fun and games. Before going, it probably would be best to ask someone whose interests are similar to yours, who has made the trip. The Buick people used to say "Ask the man who owns one." Or it could have been the Packard folks.

"Dear Anne Wanders:

"Your space had a report two weeks ago about what looked like a volcano near Mexico City, but since then our paper got wet, but our memories have dried out, and it might have been a pyramid.

"The name was 'Pretzelcoke' or something like that. What really counts is can you come up with a real picture of it, and some more details. Even one on a postcard will do.

"A mounds student,
"Saltino Cerveza"

"Dear Professor:

"This is one even my assistant could answer. We'll look around and try to come up with something.

"In the meantime, in case your reference book falls open at the right page, you are asking about 'Quetzalcoatl.' One seldom noted fact is that it was built with non-union labor.

"Your answer hunter,
"ANNE WANDERS"

"Dear Anne Wanders:

"Someone has dared me to ask you to name the closest free tourist attraction in Tyler, Texas, to the center of town. Let's measure it from the Law Enforcement Officers memorial on Fountain Plaza, to be precise.

"Could the answers to this be made into a little TTrivia game, and perhaps put into some kind of contest for your readers?"

"Waiting & Wondering
"G. Ratis Ducats,
"P.O. Box 390, City"

"Dear Annie, with an 'i':

"This came by surprise, and too close to a deadline. Are you just trying to start something in which you will have headstart, and an advantage in winning one of TTrivia's fabulous prizes?

"Read next week,
"ANNE WANDERS"

"Dear Anne Wanders:

"To some of us, your mind may be wandering, too.
"Who would name Albany, N.Y., as a place to go? The busiest and biggest activity there is looking at travel schedules and road maps to get out of town.

"K. Nick Erbacher,
"Bronxville, N.Y."

"Dear George Raft II:

"Albany was listed because it is the capital of New York. Hide a guide book of facts in your latest copy of the Half Hollow Hills shopping news.

"Informatively yours,
"ANNE WANDERS"

Granbury Preparing For Birthday Party

GRANBURY — The historic Town Square in Granbury will once again be the sight for the annual General Granbury's Birthday Party and Rib Cook-off to be held March 10.

Bean and rib efficienados from all over the area and state are set to converge on the square at 5:30 a.m. and commence to fire up their cookers and whip up some mighty good vittles for the afternoon's judging competition, according to the Lake Granbury Area Chamber of Commerce officials.

Events are scheduled to take place throughout the day. A children's carnival ride and one-mile fun run begin at 9 a.m. Other activities on tap include Plains Indian Dancers, bean eating contests, pie throwing, shootouts, dancers and musicians and the Outrageous Out-house Race around the town square.

The 11th annual event pays homage to the town's namesake, Gen. Hiram Granbury, who died at the Battle of Franklin during the Civil War. The general personified will be on hand to help serve up free portions of the biggest birthday cake you have ever seen. The cake, donated by Kroger Food Store, is a larger than 3-feet by 5-feet.

New for the 1990 event will be the Bean Barn Dance, to be held March 9 at Granbury Marina. Tickets will be available at the door for \$2.50 a

person. Live entertainment by A.T. & Georgia will be provided.

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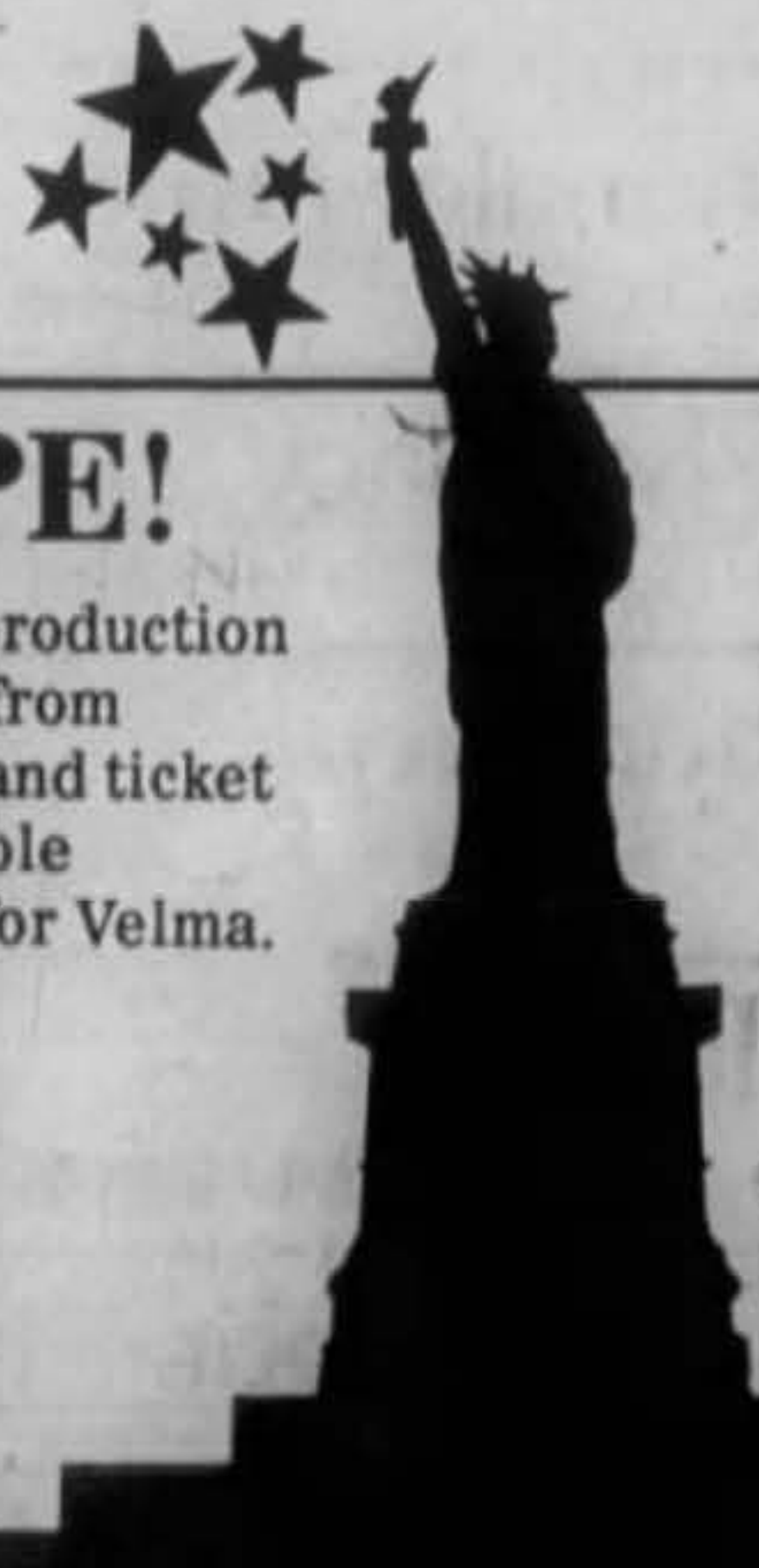
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