

★ TEXAS

TRAVEL LOG

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COURTESY GALVESTON CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU



With the help of new attractions like the Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier, Galveston saw its best tourism season on record this year.

GALVESTON IS BACK

FOUR YEARS AFTER HURRICANE IKE, **Galveston Island** is reporting that the **Summer of 2012 was its best peak-tourism season on record.**

"I think it's safe to say Galveston is back," says Kelly de Schaun, executive director of the Park Board of Trustees and Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau. "It's remarkable how far the island has come."

Galveston has resurfaced as a booming tourist destination, generating \$8.3 million in hotel-occupancy tax revenue this summer compared with \$7.5 million the summer before Hurricane Ike and \$7.6 million generated in summer 2011. In addition, summer hotel occupancy on the island was up 6.8 percent this year compared with 2011, according to the Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Much of the growth in Galveston has been attributed to new developments and attractions, such as the redesigned Rainforest Pyramid at Moody Gardens, Schlitterbahn Galveston Island and the \$60 million Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier that opened in

May 2012. It replaced the former Flagship Hotel that stood on a pier over the Gulf of Mexico for nearly 50 years before being destroyed by Hurricane Ike.

Galveston also is growing as a cruise destination, becoming the fifth-busiest cruise port in the U.S. in 2011. Along with Carnival Magic, Carnival Triumph and Royal Caribbean's Mariner of the Seas, Disney Cruise Line began sailing from Galveston in September. Princess Cruise Lines' Crown Princess will follow in December.

"Cruising has become a big market for us," de Schaun says. "As a destination, Galveston has a lot to offer for a pre- or post-cruise vacation, and we know the cruise lines see value in downtown Galveston's shops, attractions and restaurants being steps away from the cruise terminal."

Historic downtown Galveston has been another center of growth for the island's tourism industry. The popular shopping destination has opened a variety of new attractions since 2011, including Pirates! Legends of the Gulf Coast Museum, Haunted Mayfield Manor and Jet Boat Thrill Rides on Pier 21.

TRAVEL NEWS

TEXAS Department of Transportation and AAA travel counselors will be exploring the **Far West Texas region** as they embark on the **Oct. 7-12 Texas Travel Industry Association-sponsored study tour.**

The regional study tours promote travel within the state by offering travel counselors first-hand experiences of visiting Texas towns and attractions. The more acquainted the travel counselors are with a region, the more capable they are in conveying that information to the traveling public.

Davis Phillips of Phillips Entertainment Inc., Bob Phillips of the Town of Addison and a host of local guides, will lead the tour, which begins in El Paso and ends in Midland.

Planned stops include the Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Van Horn, Fort Davis, Alpine, Lajitas, Study Butte, Big Bend National Park, Chisos Mountain Basin, Marathon and Fort Stockton.

TO ACCOMMODATE growing demand as it nears capacity, the 13-year-old **Austin-Bergstrom International Airport** is slated to undergo a **\$40 million expansion.**

The expansion, which is expected to begin late 2013, will include a new security checkpoint with eight security lanes and four baggage carousels. It is expected to be complete by 2015.

Austin-Bergstrom was built to handle 11 million passengers annually. This past year, the airport saw about 9 million.

GOVERNMENT **Canyon State Natural Area** in west Bexar County near San Antonio opened **its first campground on Oct. 5.**

"The new campground will offer a unique and more rustic camping

ROB MCCORKLE, © TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

experience for our visitors and blends perfectly with the natural area's mission and purpose," says Chris Holm, Government Canyon's superintendent. "Having this type of primitive campground in such close proximity to a major metropolitan area is a real treasure."

The natural area, which opened in 2005, now offers overnight camping on Fridays and Saturdays only in its front country, walk-in tent campground. Tent campers can choose from 23 individual campsites, renting for \$18 per night, and two group campsites, costing \$40 a night. Regular entry fees will apply.

Vehicle parking is nearby with pedestrian trails leading to the campsites. Water faucets and two self-composting toilets are centrally located within the campground. For more information, www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/government-canyon. To reserve a campsite visit www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/park_reservations or call (512) 389-8900.

THE TEXAS Department of Transportation is accepting applications through Nov. 16 for the **federally funded Transportation Enhancement Program** to aid communities across the state with much-needed improvements for bike trails, landscaping, preservation and more.

Up to \$70 million is available to fund the improvement of areas that include pedestrian and bicycle trails, the rehabilitation of historic railroad



Government Canyon State Natural Area (its visitor center shown here) opened its first campground on Oct. 5.

facilities, landscaping near roadways and preventative care to protect water resources from highway runoff. Qualifying projects must demonstrate a relationship to the surface transportation system and involve at least one of the following categories:

- Pedestrians and bicycles facilities
- Safety and education activities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic and historic properties
- Scenic or historic highway programs (including providing tourist and welcome center facilities)
- Landscaping and other scenic beautification

TEXAS TRIVIA

Where are the best golf courses in Texas?

(Find the answer on the last page.)

- Historic preservation
- Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals)
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including conversion and use for pedestrian and bicycle facilities)
- Control and removal of outdoor advertising
- Archaeological planning and research
- Environmental mitigation to address water pollution because of highway runoff or reduce vehicle caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity
- Establishment of transportation museums.

Projects that are selected will be eligible for reimbursement of up to 80 percent of costs, with the entity nominating a project being responsible for the remaining cost share, including cost overruns.

Applications should be submitted to local TxDOT district offices.

For information, visit www.txdot.gov/business/governments/te.htm.

MAGAZINE AWARDS

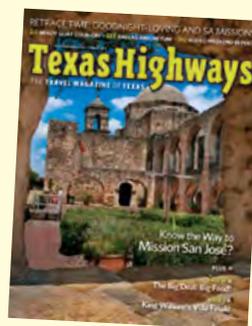
TEXAS HIGHWAYS took home five awards at the 2012 International Regional Magazine Association conference

in Scottsdale, Arizona on Oct. 1.

The magazine received a Gold in the Culture Feature category for its "Road to Freedom" story by LaDawn Fletcher; a Silver for its companion website, www.texashighways.com; and a Bronze in the Historical Feature category for "Retracing the Goodnight-Loving Trail" by Julia Robinson.

Additionally, *Texas Highways* received two Awards of Merit—one for Gene Fowler's feature "Eddie World Headquarters" and another for the magazine's Postcards department based on representative stories, "Right Up Your Alley" by Barbara Rodriguez, "A Collecting Obsession," by Gene Fowler, and "2100 Postoffice Street" by Charles Lohrmann.

Editor Jill Lawless says, "The Texas Highways staff is honored by the recognition and ever-grateful to our amazing team of freelance contributors."



ON EXHIBIT

THIS MONTH, the Holocaust Museum Houston will dedicate the completion of its permanent memorial to the 20,000 Jewish communities that were obliterated, along with 6 million Jews who were killed, during the Holocaust. The completion marks the addition of more than 300 new communities to its Destroyed Communities memorial.

"Here, locally, we focus on Houston-area Holocaust survivors' destroyed communities, with more than 300 of them being added to the slope outside our building. It is important that we learn about them, remember them and spread the awareness of their prior existence so we can leave this legacy for our descendants," says Holocaust survivor Edith Mincberg and co-chair of the project for Holocaust Museum Houston.

Ellen Trachtenberg, another co-chair of the effort and a founding member of the museum, says it is "vital to know about the history, culture, activities of Jewish life in these towns, because that is the only way one can truly understand what was lost, the true extent of the tragedy perpetrated on the world by the Nazis. The synagogues, schools, orchestras, theaters, newspapers, businesses—everything that made the lives of the Jews so vibrant, so fulfilling—were destroyed.

"These stones will serve as a reminder not only of the 6 million Jews who were murdered, but also the beautiful Jewish communities that the victims had created, that had thrived for hundreds of years," she says. These stones will help personalize the tragedy by showing how the Jews were murdered, town by town by town by town."

The Destroyed Communities project began even before the opening of the museum in March 1996. It was finally completed thanks to a gift from Hymann Penn and his family who honor the memory of Penn's parents, Linda and Morris I. Penn, and grandmother Riva Kremer, who all were Holocaust survivors.

Ceremonies, which are free and open to the public, begin at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 14, outside the museum's Morgan Family Center. The Penn family, along with other survivors and their families, will be on hand.

For more information about the museum, call 713-942-8000 or visit www.hmh.org.



Hidalgo's BorderFest Association netted 30 IFAE Pinnacle awards for BorderFest 2012 Celebrating England (above) and its Festival of Lights. Along with its Pinnacle awards, Grapevine (lower right) also was named a World Festival and Event City winner.

HILL COUNTRY artist Benini returns to McAllen's International Museum of Art & Science to showcase his latest works in *Benini: New Masterworks* which will be on display through Jan. 20, 2013.

Benini was born in Italy in 1941, and has lived and painted in 12 different countries. He immigrated to the United States in 1977, finally settling in the Texas Hill Country in 1999, where he still paints every night. Benini continues to exhibit internationally.

For more information, call (956) 682-0123 or visit www.imasonline.org.

AND THE WINNER IS...

TWO OF TEXAS' Schlitterbahn waterpark attractions and Landry's Inc. CEO Tilman Fertitta are winners of *Amusement Today's* 2012 awards.

Schlitterbahn Waterpark Resort in New Braunfels continues its winning streak with the Golden Ticket Award for Best Waterpark. Schlitterbahn Galveston Island won for Best Indoor Waterpark.

The publication named 25 winners in categories honoring everything from parks, rides and events to food, landscaping and cleanliness. The awards are handed out based on calculations from an international poll conducted by *Amusement Today*.

Gary Slade, publisher and editor-in-chief of *Amusement Today*, also personally selected four recipients for

the Publisher's Pick Awards. Fertitta won the Person of the Year Award for the redevelopment of Galveston's Pleasure Pier.

Fertitta recently spoke to *Forbes* about his acquisition history, how he improves his properties' bottom lines and his perspective on the hospitality industry. He also is in the process of developing a new Las Vegas concept with actress Eva Longoria.

THE INTERNATIONAL Festivals & Events Association presented the annual Haas & Wilkerson Pinnacle Awards for outstanding festival and event promotions, including many for Texas events, on Sept. 21 in Denver.

Entries from across the globe are recognized in four budget categories—less than \$250,000, \$250,000 to \$749,999, \$750,000 to \$1.5 million, and more than \$1.5 million.

Hidalgo's BorderFest Association led the pack with 30 awards, including two Gold Grand Pinnacle awards for the Festival of Lights (less than \$250,000) and BorderFest 2012 Celebrating England (\$250,000 to \$749,999). BorderFest 2012 Celebrating England took 25 awards, including Gold Awards for Best New



COURTESY GRAPEVINE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

25th Anniversary 2011 (\$750,000 to \$1.5 million).

Additionally, the **Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau was named a World Festival & Event City Award Winner**—one of only three U.S. cities out of 13 cities recognized. Grapevine was the top choice in the category for cities with populations of less than 1 million people. Each city entry was considered based on the community overview, its festivals and events, the city/government and non-governmental community support those events receive, and market leveraging of "community capital" created by the events.

Downtown Fort Worth Initiatives received several awards including a Gold for Best Full Length TV program (local, less than \$250,000) for the Chesapeake Energy Parade of Lights and for its Main St. Fort Worth Arts Festival in categories such as Best Single Magazine Display Ad and Ad Series (more than \$1.5 million).

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo received several awards including a Gold for Best Radio Promotion, T-shirt design and Best Pin/Button. Laredo's Washington's Birthday Celebration's awards included a Gold for Single Display Ad, and Fiesta San Antonio Commission also received several awards including Gold for Best Social Media Site.

Other Texas events and organizations that were honored include **The Woodlands Convention and Visitors Bureau's** Gold for Best Event/Organization Newsletter, and tied with itself for Silver in the category of sponsor follow-up reports.

City of Sugar Land Parks and Recreation earned several awards, including Golds for Best Miscellaneous Printed Material for Halloween Town and Best Public Safety/Security Plan for an Event for Red, White and Bluefest. The New Year's Eve on the Square and Christmas Tree Lighting event also were noted in a few categories.

Houston Festival Foundation received a Silver for Best Miscellaneous Printed Materials (single page) for the more than \$1.5 million category for its Houston International Festival.

IFEA President and CEO Steven Wood Schmader says, "The IFEA/Haas & Wilkerson Pinnacle Awards represents the hallmark of excellence in the festivals and events industry.

Event, Children's Programming, Community Outreach Program and New Promotion.

Galveston Historical Foundation netted 12 awards total for its Dickens on the Strand and Homes Tour, including Gold Awards for Best Radio Promotion, Newspaper Insert Single Magazine Ad Display and Billboard for Dickens on the Strand (less than \$250,000).

Grapevine took home 11 awards for Main Street Days 2012, People's Choice Wine Tasting Classic (Gold for Best Event Program in the \$750,000 to \$1.5 million category), Pizza Piazza and Christmas Capital of Texas 2011. Awards also included Gold for Best Direct Mail Piece or Brochure for Summer Blast 2012 (\$250,000-\$749,000) and Grapefest

Entries in every budget category, from every corner of the globe, allow us to recognize the best in our business while raising the standards and quality of media promotions and events across the board.”

For a complete listing of winners, visit www.ifea.com.

ATTRACTIONS

AN OCT. 5 grand opening is set for the **Panhandle's newest tourism landmark**—newly restored **Charles and Mary Anne Goodnight House** at the **Charles Goodnight Historical Center in Claude, near Amarillo**.

The renovation, a project of the Armstrong County Museum, was geared toward restoring and preserving the property, telling the Charles and Mary Ann Goodnight story, and interpreting the natural resources and the pioneering lifestyles that have characterized Armstrong County and the Texas Panhandle over the years.

Charles Goodnight, known as the Father of the Panhandle, established the first permanent cattle-raising operation in the Panhandle. He also was a former Texas Ranger, was the developer of the chuck wagon and is one of the namesakes of the Goodnight-Loving Cattle Trail in the 1800s. Descendants of the Goodnight's prized southern herd of bison are now owned by the State

TEXAS TRIVIA

ANSWER: According to GolfDigest, Dallas National is the top golf course in the state. The other top courses, in descending order, are: • Whispering Pines, Trinity • Champions (Cypress Creek), Houston • Colonial C.C. Fort Worth • The Club at Carlton Woods (Fazio), The Woodlands • Briggs Ranch, San Antonio • The Club at Carlton Woods (Nicklaus), The Woodlands • Miramont, Bryan • Barton Creek C.C. (Fazio Canyons), Austin • TPC Craig Ranch, McKinney • Austin C.C., Austin • The Rawls Cse., Lubbock • River Oaks C.C., Houston • The Vacquero Club, Westlake • Boot Ranch, Fredericksburg, and • Texarkana G. Ranch, Texarkana.

By the way, at an altitude of 4,688 feet, the Marfa Municipal Golf Course is the highest course in the state.

of Texas and cared for at Caprock Canyon State Park.

The home, which the Goodnights occupied from about 1887 to 1926, is noted as one of the most important historic structures in the state. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is designated as an America's Treasure.

For more information, visit www.armstrongcountymuseum.com/Goodnighthouse.htm.

INDUSTRY INSIDER

IN HONOR of his outstanding contributions to the travel and tourism industry in Texas, **Daniel J. Decker, Park President of SeaWorld San Antonio**, was presented with the **Tall in Texas Award** by the **Texas Travel Industry Association** during the association's annual conference, the **Texas Travel Summit** on Sept. 24 at the **Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort outside Bastrop**.

The Tall in Texas Award is given to an individual nominated from the TTIA membership for outstanding contributions, leadership and innovations that have a lasting effect on tourism and TTIA.

Decker was honored for his work in innovative water conservation as well as his management and oversight of capital developments at SeaWorld San Antonio.

“Dan's extraordinary foresight to embrace environmental concerns has made, and will continue to make, a positive difference to SeaWorld San Antonio and Texas,” says Nanci Liles, Executive Director of the Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau and TTIA Board member.

Decker serves as a member and past chair of the TTIA board of directors and currently sits on the executive committee of that board. He also is on the board and executive committee of the San Antonio Tourism Council and is a past chair of the San Antonio Convention and Visitors Bureau board. He also serves on the board of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and the Texas Tourism Foundation, and is the incoming chair of the Texas Nature Tourism Council.

“He has improved the tourism landscape not only in San Antonio but in the entire state of Texas,” says TTIA President and CEO, David Teel.

THE DAYTRIPPER with **Chet Garner** has been **nominated for three Emmys by the Lone Star Emmy Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences**. The nominations were announced were announced on the evening Sept. 28.

The program received a nomination in the Texas Heritage-Program Special category for the program special Goliad, Texas.

It also received a Magazine Program nomination for Marfa. Garner,

himself, received a nomination for On Camera Talent.

This makes the third consecutive year in a row that *The Daytripper* was nominated. The previous nominations netted a win for the show.

Garner also contributes a regular *TH Daytripper* feature for *Texas Highways* magazine.

Winners of this year's Lone Star Emmy Awards will be announced on Saturday, Nov. 10 at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington.

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTERS

VISITOR NUMBERS as of August 31, 2012

TRAVEL CENTER	Month Visitors	Percent Variation*	Year-to-Date Visitors	Percent Variation*
AMARILLO	7,954	-0.74	62,641	-1.34
ANTHONY	3,592	-29.91	33,435	-21.08
CAPITOL	6,170	+14.92	54,960	+3.22
DENISON	16,130	-36.16	148,856	-30.81
GAINESVILLE	18,612	+6.68	170,753	+1.87
LANGTRY	2,288	-0.78	30,071	-6.94
LAREDO	6,843	+9.91	56,184	+9.61
ORANGE	30,865	-8.52	253,447	-12.97
TEXARKANA	23,666	+117.14	255,492	+174.14
VALLEY	14,027	+58.41	97,294	+10.31
WASKOM	23,654	-4.77	205,942	-7.87
WICHITA FALLS	14,300	+5.07	114,384	+2.25
CENTER TOTALS	168,101	+3.96	1,453,459	+2.18

*Compared with last year

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

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