



Programs and Workshops for Your Community, 2014–15

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As your community organization plans its 2014–15 programs, the staff and volunteers of the Texas Plains Trail Region, an award-winning heritage tourism initiative of the Texas Historical Commission, offer talks, presentations, and workshops on a variety of topics relevant to our 52-county region of West Texas.

We can help your members understand the key role that heritage tourism plays in local economic development, historic preservation, and community empowerment. We can train and inspire your members in communications, history, hospitality, team building, and other aspects of the work you do. We can share resources and literature. (Plus, we have great stories to tell and great images to share!)

Whether it's a luncheon lecture on local history, a PowerPoint presentation about economic impacts, or a day-long workshop on social media or publication design, we can tailor a program to your needs. There is no fee for short programs, although we always appreciate reimbursement of mileage expense. For longer programs, fees may be waived if we are already traveling in your area, but in any case are reasonable and flexible.

Below is a sampling of topics.

PROGRAMS AND PRESENTATIONS 20 to 45 minutes; computer, digital projector, and screen provided if needed; convenient electrical connection and projection surface required

- **Texas Heritage Trails and Tales.** An armchair travelogue of the Texas Heritage Trails, including glimpses of some of the most scenic, historic, and quirky spots and stories in West Texas—and the best ways to visit them. For general audiences.
- **History for Keeps: How Heritage Tourism Fuels the Future of Texas's Economy.** An overview of the economic impacts on your community, county, and state of Texas's \$67 billion travel and tourism industry, and how communities of all sizes can benefit from cultivating a "preservation mindset."
- **Seen the Signs? Ten Ways Texas's Heritage Trails Draw Visitors to Your Community.** What heritage tourism is, why the heritage tourist stays longer and spends more, and how you can capitalize on this key visitor segment. For Chambers of Commerce, CVBs, and other civic organizations.
- **Seven/One: The Economic Impacts of Heritage Tourism in Your Community.** Updated with current figures as Texas's 84th Legislature gets under way. For EDCs, Chambers of Commerce, CVBs, and other civic organizations.
- **Repurposing the Past: Amazing New Uses for Old Spaces.** Every community has historic buildings and sites that beg to be appreciated by new generations. Here are inspiring examples of "adaptive reuse," and how West Texas communities envisioned, funded, and achieved it. For historic preservation groups, museums, and general audiences.
- **Your Stories: Finding Them, Keeping Them, Using Them.** Experience shows, again and again, that the stories behind your community's places and faces are what interest visitors—drawing them there, and encouraging them to patronize local businesses and spread positive word of mouth. How do you start gathering and preserving the treasure trove of your legacy? With innovative examples from West Texas groups that have succeeded with oral histories, photo round-ups, and regional publishing. For museums, volunteer groups, business retreats, family reunions, and general audiences. 20- to 45-minute talk, or longer workshop.
- **Traveling the Quanah Parker Trail.** A fascinating overview of the region's grass-roots project to mark and honor the sites of Native American history, with a series of 22-foot-tall steel arrow sculptures, and a walk back in time to understand our region's rich Comanche history and culture.

LONGER WORKSHOPS For community and civic groups of all kinds. 3 hours to full day. Computer lab, or personal laptops and high-speed Internet connection, required. (Consider school or college labs, Wi-Fi-enabled hotel or restaurant meeting rooms, or libraries as possible sites.)

- **Getting Started in Social Media.** In today’s wired world, almost everyone uses some form of social communication—so how can volunteers and “digital rookies” learn to tap into the power of websites, Facebook, Instagram, and other networking tools to build community and attract visitors?
- **“We’ve Got a Website—What Next?”: Building Your Social Media Presence.** An intermediate-level workshop demonstrating best practices for enhancing and updating digital content and promoting social interaction.
- **Publishing Your Community History.** The options for publishing your history, whether a family genealogy booklet or a city’s centennial book, are more accessible than ever—but also more numerous and confusing. Discover the array of possibilities, the relative costs, and the steps required to create a quality publication that will best represent your community and interest visitors. Depending on needs, this workshop can examine participants’ individual projects or focus on one particular project.
- **Publication Tune-up.** Does your group already have a book—or a promotional brochure, map, rack card, or other publication—that you’d like to update? Call us in to facilitate a critique session, provide editorial or design feedback, and show cost-effective alternatives.
- **Certified Hospitality Training.** Professionals within the Texas Heritage Trails Program are qualified via Texas AgriLife at Texas A&M University to offer professional development for your volunteers or staff seeking to improve their “Texas Friendly” knowledge and skills in welcoming and dealing with visitors. Participants earn certification through this day-long workshop.
- **Strategic planning.** Whether your group is evaluating annual progress and setting your next goals, working through a particular strategy issue, or beginning wide-ranging brainstorming, we can facilitate your process and help you arrive at a vision that is both practical and inspiring. Using a variety of guided evaluation, discussion, and consensus-building techniques, we will help you translate your goals from idea to writing—empowering your group to act quickly and confidently going forward.

FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

- **Texas History Trails and Tales** for school groups (especially 4th- and 7th-grade history classes).
- We can also arrange for **Texas History teacher workshops** with certified trainers, using proven classroom resources.

SPECIFIC TOPICS Our staff, board members, volunteers, and friends represent a rich network of talent and expertise—and we’re willing to share. If you’re looking for a talk or program on a particular topic—from West Texas music or songwriting, to Comanche history and the Quanah Parker Trail, to the nature of playa lakes, to the history of wind energy or winemaking or the Wild West, chances are we can connect you with an expert. Give us a call: 806.747.1997, or e-mail us at info@TexasPlainsTrail.com.

WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY?

- Let us know specific details for your location, time, number of participants, and A/V setup
- Invite any of our board members and partners in your area, if possible
- Publicize the event in advance in your local media and arrange for day-of news coverage, if possible (sample press release attached)

[SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE]
[YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME]
[DATE]
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Texas Plains Trail Region to present heritage tourism program [DATE]

[REPRESENTATIVE] of the Texas Plains Trail Region will present a program on [TITLE] at the regular meeting of [YOUR ORGANIZATION] [MEETING DAY, DATE, TIME] at [MEETING LOCATION].

The meeting is free and open to the public [OR OTHER RELEVANT MEETING DETAILS]. To RSVP or for more information, call [YOUR CONTACT PHONE NUMBER].

Hi-res photos and art are downloadable for media use:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/barbarabrannon/sets/72157645718490354/>

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The Texas Plains Trail Region (TPTR), an award-winning heritage tourism initiative of the Texas Historical Commission, is a nonprofit organization committed to increasing heritage tourism to the 52 counties of the Texas Plains and Panhandle by making visitors and residents aware of the Region and its historical, cultural, and natural attributes; educating them about Texas history and culture; fostering historic preservation in the Region; helping improve heritage sites within the Region; and helping develop local/regional heritage tourism leadership.

For more information out the Texas Plains Trail Region, visit www.TexasPlainsTrail.com.