Ride the Texas PLAINS TRAIL

State Department of Highways and Public Transportation 6799

A Guide to the Texas Plains Trail

50th ANNIVERSARY CARAVAN

July 29-31, 2019
We’re thrilled you’re able to come along with us on the Texas Plains Trail 50th Anniversary Caravan to kick off our second half century of heritage tourism in the Lone Star State!

Here’s how the original 1968 “Ride the Texas Plains Trail” map and brochure produced by the Texas Highway Department described the part of the state we’ll be seeing:

The Texas Plains Trail spans a vast area of the High Plains region of Texas. The tableland is called the Llano Estacado, an ancient Spanish term generally interpreted to mean “staked plains.” Much of the Trail slices through what residents call the “Golden Spread,” a reference to this immensely rich agricultural, mineral and industrial region. Geographically this is the southernmost extension of the Great Plains of the United States.

Once the entire plains were grasslands. Not a fence, not a single tree or shrub grew on the tablelands—only grass, as trackless as the sea. A branch of the Great Comanche War Trail swept across the expanse, and herds of buffalo wandered at will. Man wiped out the buffalo and overstocked the range with cattle. Grazed too closely by cattle confined within fences, the immensely valuable tall native grasses were destroyed, leaving only the less desirable short species.

Travelers on the High Plains can be sure of one rule: the land will be nearly table-flat except where it has been disturbed by erosive influences. And therein lies some of the greatest geographical drama of the plains, because erosion has carved spectacular canyon landscapes.

The starting point is the city of Lubbock, major metropolitan area on the Trail. The route description is then presented in a clockwise direction. However, the Trail is designed so that it may be started at any point along the way, and it may be driven in either direction by carefully consulting the accompanying map and descriptive copy. See map legend for information about special Trail signs and arrows.

Fifty years later, a few things have changed. Even the map — which in 1968 didn’t have, for instance, the full Loop 289 in Lubbock (1972); the completed Interstate 27 (1992); Caprock Canyons State Park (1984); the restored Charles Goodnight House (2012); or the Route 66 National Historic District in Amarillo (1994).

These changes have led us to make a few minor departures from the exact 1968 Texas Travel Trail map.

The city population figures from 1968 have changed a lot, with major cities gaining population and many smaller ones losing some. Our demographic makeup has shifted, and so have our perceptions of the indigenous and immigrant peoples who have successively called this region home.

Wind energy has changed the landscape; dairy farming has grown more important than beef cattle raising in some parts of the region; our region’s two international airports have been renamed in memory of Texas astronauts lost in shuttle missions. The TEXAS Outdoor Musical has undergone numerous dramatic shifts in its presentation over more than a half century, and we’re fortunate to be among the first to witness a new iteration this season.

Other things, fortunately, haven’t changed. “Texas friendly” continues to be a way of life out here on the Plains and in the Panhandle, between neighbors or when greeting newcomers. The cost of living here and visit here is still a comparative bargain. And a diligent work ethic, a positive outlook, and an appreciation for sky and land prevail.

That’s what we’re here to experience, and to exemplify, in the coming three days. As we ask traveling mercies from the greater powers of our universe, let us travel safely, learn much, and enjoy the journey!
LUBBOCK

The population of Lubbock was 128,000 in 1968 — and by 2018 it had doubled to 256,000. Much of Lubbock’s growth is a result of migration from surrounding smaller communities. Texas Tech University and other institutions of higher learning have attracted students who have stayed for jobs in the medical, school, government, energy, and retail sectors, as well as a vibrant culture and society.

In 1968 Texas Tech’s enrollment was 16,000; today it’s more than 36,000. But when the Lubbock MSA population hit 300,000 in 2010, the culture shifted. Traffic and urban schools effected a cultural shift, and the population of bedroom communities built around school districts grew exponentially. Wolfforth with its Frenship School District, 12 miles southwest of Lubbock, has 10,000 students attending a dozen schools. Twelve miles due south of Lubbock is the Lubbock Cooper School District, in the town of Woodrow. With 6,500 students it’s the second fastest growing school district in the State of Texas.

Llano Estacado is not only the name of a very good winery—founded in Lubbock, the birthplace of the Texas plains viticulture movement in 1973, but it is also a region in the Southwestern United States that encompasses parts of eastern New Mexico and northwestern Texas, one of the largest mesas, or tablelands, on the North American continent.

Its long history is documented at our starting point.

AN ANCIENT WATERING HOLE

Lubbock Lake National Historic Landmark is a unique archaeological site — the only one in North America that preserves a complete record of nearly 12,000 years of human history located in one place, and uncovered by scientists. It is also a natural history preserve containing over four miles of hiking trails through 300 acres of restored prairie on the Southern High Plains.

Exhibits in the Nash Interpretive Center highlight cultural changes across time and introduce visitors to the scientific processes used in building this important cultural and geologic narrative. Research at the site has been ongoing for over 80 years and continues every summer with the public treated to guided tours during special events.
Lubbock, birthplace of 20th century rockabilly icon Buddy Holly, understands that history is often in the details. The city’s Buddy Holly Center exhibits many personal items that once belonged to the singer-songwriter including his guitars and the glasses he wore during his fatal 1959 plane crash. Across town in Lubbock’s National Ranching Heritage Center are thirty-eight restored ranch and pioneer structures where annual Ranch Days feature living history demonstrations of frontier skills that were once used every day. The Museum of Texas Tech University also knows all about details with more than two million items in its collection. Dinosaur bones, historic photos, and artifacts provide the curious and inquiring mind with an idea of the region’s recent and distant pasts. Don’t spend all your time grounded, however. Look up in the sky and witness over one hundred vintage windmills at the American Wind Power Center and Museum. Learn how a simple ranch windmill works or get complicated and explore the technology behind today’s giant wind turbines and wind energy production.

The Bayer Museum of Agriculture, founded more than four decades ago and expanded in 2012, houses not only farming implements and exhibits, but a wealth of educational information — and the fully restored Underwood Pullman Rail Car, which figured influentially in the rise of the inland cotton industry on the South Plains.

RAVE ON: Buddy Holly holds a prominent place in the music heritage of Lubbock, Texas — and the rock ‘n’ roll world. The Buddy Holly Center is located in the historic Depot Entertainment District in the former Fort Worth and Denver South Plains Railway freight depot. Permanent exhibits, from items crafted by a young Buddy Holley to artifacts from his musical career, from the famous eyeglasses to belongings retrieved from the tragic Feb. 3, 1959, airplane crash are on display amid interactive features and Holly’s music.

Buddy Holly — born Holley — is buried in the Lubbock City Cemetery, where fans come to pay their respects especially on February 3, “the day the music died.”

BUFFALO SPRINGS/RANSOM CANYON

Buffalo Springs Lake is a natural, spring-fed oasis nestled in beautiful Yellow House Canyon on one of the forks of the Brazos River. Here, where nomadic Indians once camped, thousands of families escape yearly to quench their thirst for fun in the sun. Camping is available at the lake’s public recreation area. Bird watchers, bring your binoculars and enjoy the Audubon Society Nature Trail. Enjoy a picnic right beside the Lake at one of our many picnic areas, highlighted with abundant shade, clean facilities and unspoiled surroundings.

Lake Ransom Canyon community adopted its name from the term “Rescate Canyon” (meaning “reclaimed”) that the Comanchero traders from New Mexico applied to the geographical feature of the
broad and deep canyon cut by the river that flowed south from where **Mackenzie Park** in Lubbock stands today. In the 18th and 19th centuries, New Mexico traders from Pueblo villages in their oxen-pulled wooden carts traveled up Rescate Canyon to meet with Comanche Indians to conduct trade. They exchanged their corn meal, baked bread, and vermilion, for the Comanches’ buffalo robes and tallow. In later years, these exchanges also included cattle and horses stolen by Comanches which Comancheros then traded to stock dealers in the Far West, and people kidnapped by the Comanches that the Comancheros would ransom back to their kin. “Rescate Canyon” appears so named on 1870-era military maps, then later became referenced as “Yellowhouse Canyon” and today appears labeled on maps as the channel through which flows the “North Fork Double Mountain Fork Brazos River.”

Though the lakefront is private, visitors may drive through Ransom Canyon neighborhoods to appreciate the sweeping canyon views and distinctive residential architecture, including artist Robert Bruno’s steel house at 85 E Canyon View Dr.

**SLATON**

**Rich in railroad, farming and German heritage,** Slaton offers visitors a friendly, hometown atmosphere. Located at **Slaton Airport,** the **Texas Air Museum** celebrates military aviation from the early 1900s to the present. Its collection features more than 60 vintage aircraft, including tanks, military vehicles and weaponry. A large World War II collection features artifacts from Allied and Axis forces, such as rare German and Japanese artillery and aircraft. Many of these World War II aircraft are flyable. The museum hosts a popular air show each summer.

The **Slaton Harvey House,** a landmark Santa Fe railroad depot built in 1912, offers an example of the luxury services that once accompanied railroad travel. The Harvey House, part of a chain created by Scottish immigrant Fred Harvey in 1876, provided fine dining to passengers preparing to travel on the Santa Fe line, serviced courtesy of a bevy of hostesses known as the Harvey Girls. The two-story Mission Revival structure features concrete walls a foot thick and a parapet decorated with Santa Fe Railway symbols. Today, the Slaton Harvey House has been restored to its former status as host to travelers, providing an event venue and archive to artifacts and memorabilia of the Slaton railroad heritage.

**WILSON**

**In the greater Wilson/Woodrow area** you aren’t too far from **Cap Rock Winery.**

Out of the flatness of the Texas High Plains rises one of the most
beautiful winemaking facilities in the country. Visitors from all over the world enjoy the beauty and style of the winery’s tasting room and its fourteen foot ceiling, stone fireplace, graciously appointed interior furnishings and green marble-topped bar. The stunning Southwestern mission style winery is outfitted with the finest quality equipment available. The name "Cap*Rock" refers to the actual geologic formation of the Texas High Plains area. A caprock is an impervious stratum or resistant rock usually at the summit of a mesa. The caprock extends from the Great High Plains to the northern part of the Texas Panhandle. Stop in for some live music, a fun night of comedy, or just a taste of some great wine.

TAHOKA LAKE

One hundred residents gathered at Tahoka Lake in 1902 and voted to organize Lynn County and a county seat named Tahoka, a Native American word for "fresh water." (Today, Tahoka's square boasts the 1916 Classical-Revival style Lynn County Courthouse designed by W. R. Rice, restored in 2019. The restored building, reopened and rededicated in July 2019, has earned National Register and State Archeological Landmark designations.)

GAIL

Gail and its home county, Borden are, together named in honor of the 19th century pioneer, land surveyor, newspaper editor, and inventor of condensed milk – Gail Borden, Jr. Gail is both the county seat and the only town in Borden County. Despite the Moderne-styled, 20th century courthouse, built in 1939 and comprised of brick masonry with decorative relief panels, occupying Gail’s town center, the community’s roots originate in a much earlier era of Texas frontier history. The county, created in 1876 and finally organized in 1891, elected Gail to its county seat somewhat by default, founding the community the same year. The town had little time to develop before serving as frontline to the “War of Ribbons,” a battle for land placed in the public domain by the 1902 Texas courts. With ranchers on one side, accustomed to unfettered grazing, and newly arrived settlers

Draw, Texas, is a Lynn County hamlet of 39 souls — whose highway sign just beckons artists to hop on over and set up a chair and a sketch pad!
ready to stake claims in the state-sanctioned land grab on the other, Gail experienced three days of knockdowns and fist-fights across its streets and inside the courthouse. To signify their allegiance, ranchers wore blue ribbon armbands and settlers wore red, thus the “War of Ribbons”. The confrontation reached such a violent level that the local sheriff ordered claimants to disarm, avoiding bloodshed. The conflict ended with winners and losers on both sides but, in time, nature proved the deciding factor. Drought drove most settlers from the region, returning the farmland to dry grasslands, conditions better suited for grazing cattle than growing crops.

**Mushaway Peak**, Gail’s most recognizable and venerable landmark, rises nearly 3,000 feet above the plains where Quanah Parker and his band last camped in 1875 before agreeing to relocate to the reservation in Oklahoma. **Gail Mountain** overlooks the town.

Borden County was also the location of **Quanah Parker’s last campsite** before agreeing to move his Kwahadi band of Comanches to reservation lands, an event commemorated in Gail’s giant arrow marker on the Quanah Parker Trail.

**David Dorward** (born December 15, 1872, in Burleson County, TX, to David and Anna Atkinson Dorward) arrived in Borden County, Texas, in 1892, and in 1893 began working as a wagon cook for the Square and Compass Ranch; a year later he began work for the Magnolia Land and Cattle Company. In 1901 David became a businessman when he opened the Dorward Drug store on the courthouse square. A week after opening his business on May 26, 1901, David Dorward married Minnie Russell, a schoolteacher. They raised three sons in Gail: Russell, Maurice, and Kelvin.

David began home study for his pharmacist license, receiving a district license first and then, on September 17, 1907, license #855 by the Texas State Board of Pharmacy. He supplied prescriptions for two local physicians, Dr. James Prince and Dr. John H. Hannabass. As the town of Gail began to dwindle in population, Dorward Drug became the focal point of the community by providing over-the-counter medicines, refreshments, and ice. Most important, the drugstore served as a gathering place to hear the local and area news. When the local telephone switchboard closed in 1918, Dorward Drug had the only telephone serving Gail and surrounding farms and ranches until the 1950s; Dorward would deliver telephone messages received at the store to local residents or to outlying farms and ranches.

David Dorward also served as a public servant by holding the offices of county treasurer and county judge. David taught adult Sunday school classes for thirty years, and Minnie taught classes more than fifty years. Their involvement in the Borden County community left an enduring legacy.

In 2012, R. D. “Buster” and Jean Creighton Taylor acquired the old property and were able to salvage the original walls, ceiling, shelving, soda machine, and safe from eventual destruction. A private histori-
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A historical marker was dedicated at the site of the refurbished store in 2014. While the drugstore building is not regularly open to the public, the pharmacy counter and samples of medicines and many other Dorward treasures may be viewed at the Borden County Museum.

POST

Ranchland became a Utopian town just below the Caprock Escarpment in 1907. That’s when Post Cereal founder and philanthropist, C.W. Post, established his namesake city as a model farming community. In the process he introduced agricultural innovations to the high Texas plains and paid the Santa Fe Railroad to ensure that a depot would be finished by 1910 (the restored building now serves as the city’s Visitors Center and Chamber of Commerce).

A five-block refurbished historic district looks much as it did in the cereal magnate’s day. His 1911 office is now the OS Ranch Museum, a gallery of world-class art collected by rancher and oilman Giles C. McRary and family. Downtown also offers B&B lodging in the 1915 Hotel Garza, plus family movies at the classic Tower Theater. A sanitarium opened by C.W. Post in 1912 houses the Garza County Historical Museum. Its 26 rooms retell the story of the county’s colorful ranching, farming and Native American heritage. One exhibit details the life and experiments of C.W. Post, including his dynamite-blasting efforts to make it rain. Next door, a two-story Arts-and-Crafts bungalow, built in 1913 for sanitarium nurses, now houses the Caprock Cultural Association and hosts special events. A statue of C.W. Post sits outside the 1923 Prairie School-style Garza County Courthouse. Not far from town, the Terrace Cemetery welcomes visitors with an unusual gateway built in 1908 using round rocks from C.W. Post’s ranch.

CROSBYTON

Established in 1958 in a replica of the Hank Smith house, the first permanent home on the Llano located in Blanco Canyon, the Crosby County Pioneer Museum houses both a community center and some 45,000 artifacts culled from local history. It displays a comprehensive

Leaving Gail, take FM 660 N out of Gail toward Post’ Drive into Dennis Ranch for a brief visit Approx. 5 miles

TO POST Take FM 660 N out of Gail Brief visit, Garza County Historical Museum (119 North Ave. N, Post). At intersection with US 380 in Post, continue straight past courthouse, then turn 1 block N to museum Approx. 30 miles

TO CROSBYTON Depart Post via Main St.; cross US 84 through downtown, across railroad tracks past Santa Fe Depot on R; turn N on FM 651. Follow it through broken country across Brazos River and up
caprock, stopping at US 82 at Crosby County Pioneer Museum (101 West Main St.)

Afternoon coffee/refreshment break Blanco Canyon; Agricultural history: irrigation, cotton

Approx. 38 miles

collection of Native American tools and artworks, as well as an early-20th-century Brush Automobile, a diorama of Blanco Canyon, and other exhibits documenting 700 years of tradition and culture.

The museum is an excellent source of information on the Battle of Blanco Canyon, where the U.S. Army and Quanah Parker’s band of Comanches fought in October 1871.

Adjacent to the museum is the Wayne J. Parker Center for the Study of Native American Cultures, a facility dedicated to the exhibition of artifacts gathered by historians and archeologists Choice Smith and Wayne Parker.

TO ROARING SPRINGS
Follow US 82 E across Blanco Canyon; turn L on FM 264, which makes several small turns on its way into McAdoo. There, pick up FM 193 until it ends at TX 70; turn N and continue to FM 3203; proceed 1 mile and stop at entrance to Roaring Springs Ranch Club (1991 FM 3203). Visit Roaring Springs pool, springs. Afterward, exit Ranch Club and turn L on FM 3203, traveling N into downtown Roaring Springs and viewing Depot and Tabernacle before returning to TX 70 north to Matador.

Approx. 39 miles

Springs along the caprock; Indian metates; park and recreation for Matador cowboys; tabernacle; small-town industry

ROARING SPRINGS

The Plains Trail Region community of Roaring Springs, located in Motley County, harbors a long and unique history. Established around a group of active springs fed by runoff from the western High Plains, the site has served as gathering place for explorers, settlers, and ranchers possibly beginning with the expedition of Coronado in 1541. Native Americans inhabited the springs area even earlier. By the late-1800s, Roaring Springs provided respite for picnickers and an ideal location for camp meetings where the sound of rushing water (thus, its name) and a canopy of trees created a soothing, shady environment. The springs were a favored location for the area’s ranching interests as well, serving as line camp for the historic Matador Ranch. Today, the springs and surrounding area are property of the Roaring Springs Ranch Club. The club, a private enterprise, maintains a golf course, RV camping, and a spring-fed swimming pool.

Although the springs are now private, their history is everyone’s to enjoy, especially during Roaring Springs’ three-day long Old Settlers Reunion and Ranch Rodeo. Held since in 1923 for one weekend every August, this cowboy reunion and rodeo features barrel racing, team roping, bronc riding, and team branding. The festivities highlight two nights of dancing, including a Friday night dance geared specifically, according to the Motley County Chamber website, for the “old folks.”
MATADOR

NO BULLFIGHT BUT PLENTY OF CATTLE
The small community of Matador, established in the 19th century and seat of Motley County, is well prepared to last another hundred years. Matador’s character – gracious, historical and well-worn – appears after a cursory drive through town where the Motley County Historical Museum (housed in the former Traweek Hospital building). The Motley County Jail, the historic Hotel Matador, and 1930’s gas station/tourist attraction Bob’s Oil Well all share billing with the modern age.

The restored Hotel Matador is a particular standout, providing visitors with a surprising bit of luxury for a weekend getaway. This renovated charmer, now an eight-room bed and breakfast with modern conveniences including private bathrooms, Wi-Fi, and flat-screen TV’s, serves guests a gourmet breakfast every morning, fortifying them for a full day of sightseeing.

Matador is named for the nearby historic Matador Ranch, once property of the Matador Cattle Company. The cattle company started in 1878 with an abandoned dugout and 8,000 “jinglebob” cattle, the term used for a peculiar marking technique in which a steer’s ear is slashed so that the halves dangle. By the time company investors sold the outfit to a Scotland firm in 1882, the Matador represented 100,000 acres of land and 40,000 cattle. Today, the Matador Ranch and the El Matador Hunting Lodge offer world-class hunting opportunities while raising livestock (including horses and famed Akaushi beef) and promoting its natural wildlife resources. The ranch’s compelling heritage includes a visit by Quanah Parker, an event documented as part of the official Quanah Parker Trail. Matador serves as stop along the Trail, a heritage program designed to follow the path of Chief Quanah Parker across Texas.

Bob’s Oil Well, an oil derrick sitting on the top of a cook shack, was built in 1934 by Bob Robertson. Located at the crossroads of US Highway 70 and Texas Highway 70, the oil well could be seen for miles and was well known to travelers. Closed in 1964, forty years later this historic roadside attraction was renovated through more than 900 hours of citizen volunteerism and private donations.

TURKEY

WESTERN SWING KING
James Robert Wills, born in 1905 near the Texas community of Kosse, learned to play frontier fiddle music from his father and grandfather. But he also learned to play blues and jazz, picking up the style from African Americans coworking the cottonfields with him in west Texas. Wills combined these styles to create one all his own called western swing and in the process transformed American folk music.

TO MATADOR
Arriving at traffic signal at TX 70 and US 62 at Bob’s Oil Well, turn R into downtown Matador, then 1 block N on Main St. to Hotel Matador for check-in.

Approx. 10 miles

Visit Old Motley County Jail

Dinner at Main Street Café (1023 Main St., Matador, TX 79244), then overnight at historic Hotel Matador (1115 Main St., Matador)

Those who wish can watch 70-minute independent film, “A Line in the Sand,” in the hotel parlor after dinner.

Cattle ranches; frontier; Old Motley County Jail; what small towns can do with “cowboy ingenuity”

TUESDAY, JULY 30

Breakfast at Hotel Matador
Delicious home-cooked meal!

TO QUITAQUE VIA TURKEY
Return to Bob’s Oil Well and follow TX 70 N through White-flat to Quitaque; through town to Caprock Canyons State Park, 850 Caprock Canyon Park Road, Quitaque, TX 79255
The achievement earned him the title of “King of Western Swing” and his influence can clearly be heard in musical greats of the 20th century including Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Eric Clapton, and Willie Nelson. Wills’ contribution to music was recognized with a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2007, awarded over three decades after his death. The unique sound created by Wills and his Texas Playboys has endured decades of dramatic changes in American musical styles, a remarkable achievement documented among the memorabilia and artifacts catalogued in the Bob Wills Museum. Wills spent much of his childhood around the Texas Plains Trail community of Turkey where citizens, in return, created the museum. Turkey goes one step further as well, sponsoring the annual Bob Wills Day with live music and a celebratory atmosphere.

**QUITAQUE**

**A TONGUE TWISTER BUT EASY ON THE EYES**

In 1865 Comanchero trader José Piedad Tafoya built a trading post on the site of Quitaque, now a small Texas Plains Trail community, in order to trade goods with the area Comanche, an exchange that often included ammunition for stolen livestock. The tiny settlement that developed around the trading post was named “Quitaque” by cattleman Charles Goodnight who had already established his vast JA Ranch before buying the Lazy F Ranch nearby.

Goodnight believed the word meant “end of the trail” but, according to legend, the word actually refers to two distinct buttes along the horizon that resemble “piles of horse manure,” the real meaning of the word to local Native Americans. A third story suggests that “quitaque” was a permutation of the name of the Quitaca Indians, designated by Anglo settlers to mean “whatever one steals.”

Regardless of origin, the word today (pronounced “kitty-kway” by some and “kitt-a-quay” by others) refers to a pleasant little town on the Texas Plains. Quitaque also serves as the gateway to Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway. The state park is home to the Texas State Bison herd, the descendants of the wooly beasts once prolific across the Plains. The Trailway, a 64-mile abandoned railroad spur reconfigured as a hiking, biking, and equestrian trail, passes directly through Quitaque. The local trailheads, Quitaque East and Quitaque Depot (remains of the original wooden depot are buried beneath the trailhead location), provide outdoors enthusiasts trekking opportunities across the red soil farmland and brush country of the region.

Significant Works Progress Administration projects, both built in 1938, may be visited in Quitaque: the city park’s rock wall, located south of the traffic light in downtown town, and that of the Resthaven Cemetery east of town. The cemetery is open to the public, and a small building on the site houses a directory to all burial sites.
CAPROCK CANYONS STATE PARK & TRAILWAY

CANYONLANDS AND FARMLANDS

Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway lie along the Caprock Escarpment, a long, slender formation of rock that marks the transition between the western High Plains (known as the Llano Estacado) and the easterly Rolling Plains. The rock escarpment is a thousand feet high in places and creates an impressive vista as it drops off the flat farm fields of the Llano, collapsing into deep red canyons that expose layers of the Earth’s ancient past. The park offers hiking, camping, fishing (in tiny Theo Lake), and wildlife watching.

The park’s Trailway, a sixty-four mile roll across the Llano and Caprock country, also makes for an excellent opportunity to travel through time. The Trailway follows the abandoned Fort Worth and Denver South Plains Railway Line where trains once stopped in Turkey, South Plains, Estelline, and Quitaque, enabling local farmers to ship their wares and reap the benefits of bigger markets farther north. The 1928 branch line served this slice of the Panhandle for over sixty years until Burlington closed it in 1989. Resurrected as a multi-use hiking, biking and equestrian trail (sans rails), the Trailway is now divided into six trail sections and hosts eight trailheads accessible from farm-to-market roads and state highways. It crosses forty-six bridges, passes through Clarity Tunnel, and follows Quitaque Canyon before climbing up and over the Caprock Escarpment on a 7% grade.

SILVERTON

In August 1891, Olivia G. Porter, wife of town founder Thomas J. Porter, named the Briscoe County seat of Silverton supposedly from silvery reflections she saw on local playa lakes.

Three years later, a two-story jail constructed of rock from nearby Tule Canyon was erected. Its first occupant, the county sheriff, was locked up during the grand opening ceremony as a joke. Today, the restored 19th-century jail serves as the Old Jail Museum, which offers a realistic look at frontier justice. The Briscoe County Courthouse is a brick Classical Revival building originally built in 1922 and...
remodeled in 1954.

North of Silverton, State Highway 207 offers breathtaking scenery as it crosses Palo Duro and Tule Canyons. **Tule Canyon** was infamously the site of the US Army’s destruction of more than 1,000 Comanche horses during the brutal Red River War to force Native Americans onto reservation lands. Though the actual site of the pony kill is on private land in adjoining Swisher County, three giant Quanah Parker Trail arrow markers in Briscoe County mark the significant Comanche and other Native heritage of this region. Quitaque, long an important gathering spot for Comanches and Comanchero traders, invites visitors to explore this history at the **Comanchero Canyons Museum**.

**Hamblen Drive** is a scenic road located approximately 20 miles south of Claude, Texas, United States, in Armstrong County. Hamblen Drive itself is a section of **Texas State Highway 207**, which cuts through Palo Duro Canyon and crosses the Prairie Dog Town Fork Red River. The road is named for Will H. Hamblen (1876–1952) who, with his family, first moved to the Palo Duro Canyon area in 1890. He married his wife, Ada, in 1900 and together they ranched near Way-side, Texas after 1905.

In the 1890s, Hamblen helped his father haul cedar posts cut from Palo Duro Canyon to Amarillo, Texas to sell for three cents apiece. The journey was made over old Indian trails through the canyon. During these trips Hamblen began to create a crude road, which made it a bit easier to make the trip to Amarillo, and cut approximately 120 miles of the journey to the courthouse in Claude, Texas. This crude road was steep and dangerous, and Hamblen still wanted better roads for the settlers to use. He worked for many years to get a road built through the canyon. In 1928 he was elected county commissioner and a graded road was built. In 1930, the commissioner’s court dedicated the road as Hamblen Drive, and paved it in 1954.

In 1968 the State Historical Survey Committee placed a historical marker (marker number 4284) atop a scenic overlook on the cliff of the Palo Duro Canyon.
CLAUDE

Before the Texas Plains Trail community of Claude installed modern plumbing for its residents, citizens were required to haul water from the public trough, located on the courthouse square beneath the shade of a cottonwood tree. At the time Claude won the Armstrong County seat courtesy of an election held in 1890, the outcome of which, according to folklore, was determined by a tie-breaking vote cast by none other than Charles Goodnight.

The era also saw the construction of the elaborate, three-story Palace Hotel, considered the largest hotel in the Panhandle at the time of completion. Today, visitors may discover the details of Claude and Armstrong County heritage (and enjoy a bit of theatrical drama) at the Armstrong County Museum and Gem Theatre.

Twelve miles east on US287 at Goodnight, the Charles Goodnight Historical Center, incorporating a visitor center, outbuildings, and the restored home of Charles and Mary Ann Dyer Goodnight, who lived in the handsome prairie structure from 1887 to 1926, preserves the legacy of the Plains ranching legend. Goodnight, an entrepreneur, rancher, and frontiersman, and his wife Mary Ann were instrumental in saving the country’s historic bison herds from extinction.

The Buffalo Gold Herd Wear Store, next to the Goodnight House, not only sells bison merchandise and memorabilia, but is itself a veritable museum of all things bison.

GOODNIGHT

At the Charles Goodnight Historical Center, the 1887 Victorian-style Goodnight home is newly restored on its original site. It features a 268-foot second-floor sleeping porch with spectacular views of the countryside and the nearby bison herd, descendants of the herd raised by Charles and Mary Ann Goodnight. The J. Evetts Haley Visitor and Education Center offers exhibits about the Goodnights, bison, and transportation and settlement of the area. A Quanah Parker Trail giant arrow marker commemorates the friendship between Charles Goodnight and Quanah Parker. The updated Cattalo Building, behind the main house, hosts weddings, family reunions, and other events.

CANYON

CANYON CULTURE

Visitors to the Texas Plains Trail city of Canyon, home to the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, will find a thriving environment of cultural and natural heritage. This Texas Main Street City and participant in the Texas Historical Commission Courthouse Preservation
Program harbors a healthy share of Texas State Historical Markers within its city limits. The **Randall County Courthouse**, the **Presbyterian Church Building**, and the **1909 First National Bank** are a few of the over thirty markers on structures and sites around town.

A favorite among visiting artists is the marker commemorating 20th century American painter Georgia O’Keeffe and her time spent here as faculty member at West Texas State Normal College, now **West Texas A&M University**. O’Keeffe arrived in Canyon in 1916 where, inspired by the surrounding countryside, she began to incorporate themes from nature in her work, a decision that would influence her painting for the rest of her life. Canyon also serves as gateway to **Palo Duro Canyon State Park**, believed to be the largest canyon in Texas, no doubt a haunt of O’Keeffe’s that continues to be a favorite destination for many Texas artists today.

WHERE THE CLIFF SINGS AND THE CANYONS DANCE

**Palo Duro Canyon, considered the “Grand Canyon of Texas”** for its geological variation and rich color, is 120 miles long and 800 feet deep, making it one of the largest canyons in the country. Although Palo Duro is a relatively young topographical feature (in geological time, at least) formed less than a million years ago by erosion, more recent human interaction is marked by Texas frontier history.

The canyon has served as a traditional refuge for Native Americans and in 1874 was the site of the final and decisive battleground of the **Red River War**.

It has provided water, grazing and protection for early cattle ranchers, offered inspiration for artists as diverse as Georgia O’Keeffe and Jack Sorenson, and encompassed Depression-era works projects. Today offers exceptional recreational opportunities, from horseback riding to plein-air painting, made richer with the knowledge of the canyon’s history.

Palo Duro Canyon State Park, established in 1934, encompasses nearly 30,000 acres of the canyon, where fascinating hoodoos and rimrock features make a hike through the canyon an entertaining challenge for the imagination. The Civilian Conservation Corps had a significant hand in the canyon’s development as well, constructing the park’s visitor center, cabins, shelters, and park roads. Palo Duro Canyon State Park is also home to “Texas,” a musical extravaganza performed at the park’s outdoor amphitheater that interprets much of the state’s history in dance and song.

Multiple RV and tent campgrounds, rock cabins, trails for hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian use, and a magnificent lodge for group rental support overnight and day use. The Canyon Gallery, located in the historic Coronado Lodge on the canyon rim, makes available an impressive selection of books, gifts, and western art in addition to interpretive exhibits and an all-weather observation point. A giant arrow marker on the Quanah Parker Trail is located on private land several hundred yards from the park entry gate.

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**TO CANYON**
Go under I-27; take Canyon Drive (access road) S toward Canyon. Continue 10 miles parallel to I-27/US 87; at curve this becomes Hereford Hwy. At stop sign at N. 15th St., turn L across US 60 overpass and turn into parking lot for Tex Randall statue (get out for photo op); downtown Canyon; Georgia O’Keeffe at Hudspeth House

Approx. 10 miles

**TO PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL MUSEUM**
Continue on 1th St. S toward Canyon; at 4th Ave. (courthouse square) turn E (left). Proceed past Hudspeth House on L to US 87 intersection; turn L for Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum parking (2503 Fourth Ave., Canyon).

Brief visit, with refreshments

**TO PALO DURO CANYON STATE PARK**
From PPHM, turn L on 4th Ave. and continue 12 miles on TX 217 to entrance of Palo Duro Canyon State Park. As TEXAS guests, we’ll be waved through the entrance gate. Continue on Park Road past El Coronado Lodge (we will make a brief stop at the visitor center if possible) then down into the canyon. Park at Pioneer Amphitheatre lot on R. Pre-show chuck wagon dinner; optional backstage tours; visits with Comanche actors; TEXAS play, fireworks

Approx. 15 miles each way, in and out of park.
AMARILLO

TURNING YELLOW INTO GOLD

The color of the local creek bank soil and the saffron hue of area wildflowers were the most likely inspirations for naming this 1887 townsite for the Spanish word meaning yellow. Amarillo's first residents followed suit by painting their houses the color as well. A cattle boom followed, quickly elevating this Potter County seat to industrial holding ground for livestock driven across the Panhandle, the Plains, and eastern New Mexico on their way to market via the railroad.

Shortly before the turn of the century, Amarillo's status as cattle shipping point outranked all others worldwide and the resulting prosperity enabled the city to thrive over the next three decades. Despite a setback during the Dust Bowl era, the city continued to grow, constructing a new courthouse and other buildings in the Art Deco style of the period. Amarillo's Potter County courthouse has since been renovated courtesy of the county and the Texas Historical Commission Courthouse Preservation Program. Today the Amarillo Museum of Art, the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame and Museum, Cadillac Ranch, and Amarillo's Historic Route 66 district are among the cultural institutions representing the city's dynamic and historic legacy.

Center City Amarillo—the city's Main Street program—has encouraged significant preservation initiatives downtown, including the restoration of historic neon signs along the Polk Street corridor. While the Paramount Theatre is no longer operating as a movie house, its iconic sign has become a symbol of Amarillo's revitalization. Other structures along Polk, such as the Amarillo National Bank and the Kress Building, have adopted or restored similar designs. Also on Polk, the Bivins House is home to the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce and the Convention and Visitor Council.

The Santa Fe Railroad building — owned continuously by the railroad until purchased by Potter County as a courthouse and office building — has likewise come to showcase the vitality of Amarillo’s central business district.

Most recently, minor league baseball has returned to the Yellow City, with the San Diego Padres affiliate, the Amarillo Sod Poodles, playing in an award-winning Hodgetown ballpark situated in the heart of downtown.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31

Breakfast at Comfort Suites; be ready to depart promptly at 8:00 a.m.

FOLLOW AMARILLO MAP PROVIDED. Leaving hotel, travel N on I-27 (passing Jack Sisemore Traveland Museum on R) across I-40 and bear R on Buchanan St. exit. Travel N on Buchanan past Civic Center. Turn W (left) on 3rd St., passing the abandoned Herring Hotel on your R. Travel 4 blocks to Polk St., noting Amarillo Building on R. Turn S (left) on Polk and travel 11 blocks to Harrington House. Turn W (right) onto 16th St.; continue 8 blocks to Washington St. Turn N (right) on Washington and continue around N (it will become Adams St.) to SW 6th St. Turn W (left) onto 6th, which is now historic Route 66. Continue on slowly — taking in the Route 66 history! — past the intersection with Georgia Ave., on to Western Blvd. But first we’ll pull in at Texas Ivy Antiques (3511 West 6th Ave.) and get a photo with Dora!

Approx. 15 miles total

After show ends, travel back up Park Road and onto TX 217 to I-27. Turn N (right) at overpass and continue 10 mi. to hotel.
START: Leaving hotel, travel N on I-27 across I-40 and bear R on Buchanan St. exit. Travel N on Buchanan past 1 Hodgetown ballpark, 2 Civic Center, 3 Globe-News Center. Turn W (left) on 3rd St., passing the 4 abandoned Herring Hotel on your R. Travel 4 blocks to Polk St., noting 5 Amarillo Building on R and restored neon signage.

Turn S (left) on Polk and travel 11 blocks (passing 6 historic Paramount sign, 7 Santa Fe Building, 8 Blivins House, 9 Polk Street United Methodist Church) to 10 Harrington House.

Turn W (right) onto 16th St.; continue 8 blocks past 11 Youngblood’s Cafe to Washington St.

Turn N (right) on Washington and continue around N (it will become Adams St.) to SW 6th St. Note 12 Blue Front Cafe on Route 66. Turn W (left) onto 6th, which is now historic Route 66.

Continue on slowly — taking in the Route 66 history! — under the 13 Rock Island Railroad bridge, past the intersection with Georgia Ave. at the 14 historic motor court on L, 15 Route 66 entry plaza on R, then 16 Lile Art Gallery on L.

Continuing on Route 66, note 17 Golden Light Cafe and 18 Fibonacci Building on R, then look for 19 Texas Ivy Antiques on L. Pull into parking lot next door for a photo op with Dora Meroney!

Continue on to Western St.; turn N (right) onto Western and proceed to Amarillo Blvd., where we will turn E (right) and head toward Panhandle on US 60. Note 20 Will Rogers Park on R.
ROUTE 66 IN AMARILLO
Details from www.nps.gov/nr/travel/route66/6th_street_historic_district_amarillo.html
Get your kicks on this popular stretch of the iconic American highway! The U.S. Route 66—Sixth Street Historic District comprises 13 blocks of commercial development in the San Jacinto Heights Addition west of Amarillo's central business district and runs along an east-west axis between Georgia and Forrest Avenues.

Developed as an early 20th century streetcar suburb, the district was transformed by the establishment of a national transportation artery running through its center. The road was originally paved with gravel in 1921. Asphalt pavement on a concrete foundation replaced the gravel when the road became part of federally designated Route 66 in 1926. The commercial corridor was the first highway constructed to carry travelers out of Amarillo to the south and west.

The district, a member of the National Register of Historic Places, is Amarillo's most intact collection of commercial buildings that possess significant associations with the highway. Featuring elements of Spanish Revival, Art Deco, and Art Moderne design, these buildings represent the historic development phases of the early 20th century and the evolving tastes and sensibilities of American culture.

The district is now a hub for nightlife and shopping, and the surrounding San Jacinto neighborhood remains a vibrant center of activity. Today, restaurants, antique stores, and specialty shops are housed in the rehabilitated storefronts.

The 12 buildings described below represent many of the significant road trends that have shaped this district along historic Route 66 and provide an overview of the district’s character.

The Natatorium, better known as the Nat, is located at 604 South Georgia. Built in 1922 as an indoor swimming pool in a Gothic Revival style, the Natatorium faces West Sixth and acts as the visual gateway to the district. High turrets at the corners and a crenellated parapet ornament the two-story block clad in stucco veneer. An ample pointed arch marks the primary entrance, and windows and doors are set deep in the wall. Reflecting its nautical theme, the north side of the building around the corner is designed to look like an ocean-faring vessel replete with lifeboat-like elements near the roofline.

The Nat was converted into a ballroom in 1926. After hosting headliners like Tommy Dorsey and Duke Ellington, the Nat closed its doors in the 1960s. The adjoining Alamo Bar, which was built in 1935 and connects to the Nat by tunnel, is still open for business. Today, the Nat serves as an antiques mall.

The Bussey Buildings at 2713-2727 W. Sixth were the first major commercial buildings in the district. Built in the late 1920s, the modest strip of commercial buildings consists of four storefronts with large glass display windows and dark brick with limestone detailing. The building’s most famous occupant was the San Jacinto Beauty

FOLLOW AMARILLO MAP
FOR ROUTE 66 DETAILS

Have some fun with TPTR’s Hunt for History on Route 66!

Q: Where can you buy one-of-a-kind “Cadillite” jewelry handmade from hardened chips of paint flaked off the cars at Amarillo’s Cadillac Ranch? Hint: Stop into this shop and Bob will tell you in a while, Crocodile!

A: Lile Art Gallery, 2719 SW 6th Ave.
School, which received Texas’ first beauty license and occupied the store from 1941 to 1964.  

**The Cazzell Buildings** are located across the street from each other at 2806 and 2801 W. Sixth. W.E. Cazzell purchased the one-story brick building at 2806 W. Sixth in 1918 and operated a general store and post office. When he sold the building in 1922, he commissioned a new two-story one across the street.  

**Borden’s Heap-O-Cream** at 3120 W. Sixth is a one-story frame building with Art Moderne detailing such as oval plate glass windows, three-lite wood double doors and a rounded metal awning on front and sides. Preservation Amarillo and the San Jacinto Boy Scout Troop rehabilitated the building in 1990. The grandson of the original sign painter provided plans to aid in replicating color, dimension, and style.  

**The Adkinson-Baker Tire Company** is located at 3200 W. Sixth. This service station was built in 1939 and is fronted by a projecting canopy over the pump island. The station originally housed the Adkinson-Baker Tire Co.#2 and exclusively sold Texaco gas. It was sold in 1945 and became the Theo A. Bippus Service Station. The Adkinson Baker Tire Company is one of three extant historic stations in the district and has been virtually unchanged since it opened in 1939.  

A fine example of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, the **Carolina Building** at 3313-23 W. Sixth is divided by brick piers into eight glass storefronts. Built in 1926, it is one of the earliest examples of strip commercial buildings in Amarillo. Original occupants included an auto paint firm, a barbershop, beauty shop and a drug store. The red tile pent roof runs the length of the building and shades the store entrances and display windows. The parapet features cast concrete coping broken by several gables.  

**The Dutch Mill Service Station and Café** has been in operation since 1932 at 3401 W. Sixth. This seemingly plain-looking building may fool visitors, but it has just as much character as some of the flashier places. The stuccoed walls are pierced by a glass paneled door, plate glass windows, and a roll down garage door. Ornamental crenellations grace the building, which originally featured a large Dutch windmill at its curbside to attract passing motorists. Until the 1950’s this building housed both the service station and the café, which later expanded into the larger building at 3403 W. Sixth.  

**Taylor’s Texaco Station** is located at 3512 W. Sixth. Built using the standard Texaco design developed by Walter D. Teague in 1937, this one-story station clad in white porcelain has a projecting canopy over the pump island and also houses an office, two service bays, and restrooms. One of the first standardized gas station designs, the basic formula and red star motif provided instant recognition for the motorist in search of Texaco products.  

**Martin’s Phillips 66 Station** at 3821 W. Sixth operated from the 1930s to the 1990s. The earliest facility at this site included the corporation’s standard issue Tudor Revival style cottage, designed to blend
in with a residential neighborhood. The building survived on the site until after construction of the current facility in 1963. Designed to catch the eye, its replacement exhibits exaggerated modernistic features including an office with canted plate glass walls, angled service bay entrances, and a soaring triangular canopy over the pump island. Herb Martin operated the station through all the changes in styles and marketing. Martin assisted many Route 66 travelers during the 1930s, giving gas to some and allowing those without money for lodging to spend the night at the station.

Prominent local architect Guy Carlander designed the **Hubbell Duplex** at 3912 W. Sixth in 1925 for Mr. and Mrs. Hubbell, who owned Hubbell Diamond T Truck Company. At the western end of one of Amarillo’s busiest streets, the house typifies the modest housing built during the city’s boom years. The dark brown brick dwelling features typical Craftsman details such as battered brick piers supporting the twin entry porticoes. The duplex remains virtually unchanged since its construction.

Located at 610 South Georgia, the **San Jacinto Fire Station** was built in 1926 to serve the rapidly growing population of the San Jacinto area. The one-story brick building was designed in Mission Revival style with a red tile roof, battered walls and curvilinear parapets. The station served the neighborhood until 1975 and is the only surviving pre-World War II fire station in Amarillo.

Constructed in 1926, the **San Jacinto Methodist Church** is located at 505 S. Tennessee. The church is a two-story, dark brown brick building with a pedimented entryway supported by square brick pilasters with a double limestone stringcourse below the cornice. The double entry doors sit below an arched stained glass transom. When Sixth Street was widened in 1924, the church lost its original entry stairway. The original concrete steps lead to Sixth Street and were flanked by a broad balustrade capped in cast stone. Today, the main entrance is on South Tennessee and flanked with pipe railings. The south façade of the church features four sets of paired wooden double hung, narrow stained glass windows, with two pairs of the same windows lighting the east and west sides of the entry. A large two-story brick building was added in the rear that houses the present sanctuary and educational facilities.

Q: **Wild Bill’s Fillin’ Station, 3512 Sixth Ave., started out as a place where travelers could fuel up their vehicles. What kind of service station operated there originally?** Hint: Running on empty for answers? Historic Route 66 merchants might remind you that in bygone days you could “Trust Your Car to the Man Who Wears the Star.”

A: Texaco

Q: Located at 610 South Georgia, this one-story brick building was designed in Mission Revival style with a red tile roof, battered walls, and curvilinear parapets. It served the neighborhood until 1975, when its siren song came. **What was this building?** Hint: If you need an urgent answer, get fired up and find a Historic Route 66 merchant to help you out.

A: San Jacinto Fire Station

TO BORGER

In Panhandle, proceed N on Elsie St. (TX 207) into Borger, bearing R onto S. Main St. Continue 4 mi. N to Hutchinson County Historical Museum (618 North Main St.), where we’ll have a Coffee break. Note the oil derrick exhibit across the street.
TO PANHANDLE
In Amarillo, turn N on Western Blvd. and travel N 1 mile to Amarillo Blvd. Turn E (right) and continue 30 miles as it becomes US 60, to Panhandle. Turn N (left) onto TX 207 at CEFCO store; proceed around and turn N (left) onto Elsie St. past Carson County Square House Museum (corner of Elsie and Fifth Streets).

Approx. 40 miles

TO BORGER
From Square House Museum, proceed N on Elsie St. (TX 207) into Borger, bearing R onto S. Main St. Continue 4 mi. N to Hutchinson County Historical Museum (618 North Main St.), where we’ll have a coffee break. Note the oil derrick exhibit across the street.

Approx. 20 miles

PANHANDLE

Panhandle derives its name from its central location in the Texas Panhandle. Originally named “Carson City,” it was later changed to “Panhandle City.”

In 1887, Panhandle obtained a post office, and in 1888 the town was planned as the terminus of the Panhandle and Santa Fe Railway. At that time the town was surrounded by several large cattle ranches. The community soon acquired a bank, a mercantile store, a wagon yard, a school, a newspaper, and three saloons. In 1888, Carson County was organized, and Panhandle became the county seat.

Temple Lea Houston, the eighth and last child of politician Sam Houston, built a home near Panhandle. In 1881, Houston was named district attorney for the 35th Judicial District, and was elected to the Texas Senate in 1884, two years before he met the minimum age requirement of 26. Houston was known for favoring legislation popular with frontiersmen.

Panhandle was scandalized in 1897 after George E. Morrison, a preacher at the Methodist Episcopal Church, poisoned his wife Minnie with a strychnine-laced apple so that he could marry his mistress Miss Annie Whittlesey of Topeka, Kansas. Morrison was sentenced to die in the gallows at Vernon in Wilbarger County, Texas, his last words being: “Jesus, Lover of My Soul.”

In 1909, Panhandle voted to incorporate, and the population grew in the 1920s when Panhandle became the center of a natural gas field. A new county courthouse was completed in 1950.

Panhandle continued to thrive throughout the late 20th century as a regional marketing and shipping center for cattle, wheat, and petroleum products.

The Carson County Square House Museum is located inside the oldest house in Panhandle, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

BORGER

During the Roaring Twenties, Borger boomed as one of West Texas’ roughest oil towns. Shrewd promoter and city namesake Ace Borger platted his town in March of 1926, and within three months 15,000 people called the place home.

The boom also attracted criminals...so many that Gov. Daniel J. Moody imposed martial law and engaged Texas Rangers and state troopers to uproot corruption. Exhibits on Borger--the town and the man--take center stage downtown at the Hutchinson County Historical Museum. Two floors of colorful exhibits chronicle county heritage with an emphasis on the rich and rowdy boom era. On display is a copy of famed artist Thomas Hart Benton’s painting Boom-town, which the artist composed from sketches on a trip to Borger.
Across the street from the museum looms a rare cable-tool oil drilling rig used from 1926 to 1947. The Gulf Dial No. 54 rig was once a busy, noisy, dangerous place as men drilled for oil in Hutchinson County.

The museum also chronicles and leads tours to Adobe Walls, the site in northern Hutchinson County of a 19th-century buffalo hunters' camp. Started as a trading post in 1843 and abandoned in 1849, Adobe Walls preserves some of the most storied episodes in the West. Kit Carson and a group of Union soldiers battled Plains Indians there in 1864, and Billy Dixon and a group of buffalo hunters battled Indians again in 1874.

Attacks by Native Americans on the camp sparked the Red River War, an epic struggle that led to the subjugation of Southern Plains Indians in the 1870s.

Near the museum, the restored 1947 Morley Theater shows current movies in a historical setting.

**SANFORD**

Contrasting spectacularly with its surroundings on the dry windswept Llano Estacado, Lake Meredith is truly one of the gems of the region. The Canadian River has cut and re-cut 200 foot canyons called breaks.

Sanford Dam created Lake Meredith on the Canadian River and now fills many of the breaks whose walls are crowned with white dolomite caprock, scenic buttes, pinnacles, hoodoos, and red-brown wind eroded coves. Lake Meredith now supplies water to over 14 cities in the Texas Panhandle. Visitors may enjoy fishing, water skiing, camping, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, and scuba diving.

**STINNETT**

DOLLAR DAY

Among the attractions in Stinnett, visitors will find the historic McCormick House, one of the oldest surviving structures in the Hutchinson County. Originally located two miles northeast of present-day Stinnett, the simple lumber house was built by settlers Isaac and Capitola McCormick in October of 1899. The McCormicks, who raised ten children in the house, first lived in the covered wagon that brought them to the Texas Panhandle until the house was completed. The lumber used to build the house, purchased in the community of Panhandle, 35 miles to the south, was freighted by a wagon team across the Canadian River.

By 1901 citizens organized Hutchinson County, enlisting the house as election headquarters, inspiring its designation as "Birthplace of Hutchinson County." Today, the house serves as museum, opened to the public periodically and managed by civic organizations.
including the Golden Spread Grandmothers Club, the Stinnett chapter of the National Federation of Grandmothers Clubs.

In 1926, the community of Stinnett was formally established in order to provide a shipping point along the Amarillo branch of the Chicago, Rock Island & Gulf Railway. Some of Stinnett’s first residents arrived to the area courtesy of a period in which events known as “Dollar Day” picnics were organized by promoters to draw interested investors to the community. The events were successful, aiding organizers in selling almost half a million dollars in town lot sales in less than four months.

DUMAS

Dumas was made famous by the hit song “I’m a Ding Dong Daddy from Dumas,” written by Phil Baxter of Navarro County in the 1920s after he had spent a night in the town en route to Denver, and later recorded as a hit by the leader of Benny Goodman’s band. The local radio station, KDDD, took its name from the three D’s and created a caricature of the “Ding Dong Daddy”—who was later joined by his “Ding Dong Dolly” counterpart. With its history and culture, modern-day Dumas continues to provide a welcoming way station for Rocky Mountain-bound Texans.

A comfortable city park adjacent to the highway overpass offers a free night’s stay for RV travelers. The Window on the Plains Museum features memorabilia and displays of local history, area wildlife, Indian artifacts, and changing exhibits.

The Moore County Art Association’s home adjoining the museum is a great place to visit. You can even join an open-painting program or enjoy the Art Association’s permanent collection of impressive artworks.

CHANNING

The Hartley County Courthouse is situated at 900 Main Street between West 9th and West 10th Streets in Channing. The historical marker in front indicates that the building was constructed in a Beaux Arts style featuring a triumphal arch on the front façade, while the building’s cornerstone indication the courthouse was constructed in 1906 by architect O.Q. Rouquemore. It’s a working courthouse, and while visitors can stroll its tree-shaded grounds, you can also visit the interior during normal business hours.

Just around the corner on the 10th Street side is the Hartley County Jail. Constructed as the same red brick as the courthouse, the jail features high arched, barred widows. Constructed in 1908, the jail is still in use today.

On the opposite end of town at Fifth and Railroad Streets sits the XIT Ranch House, headquarters of what was the once the largest
ranch in the world under fence in the 1880s. Destined in 2008 to be dismantled and moved to the National Ranching Heritage Center in Lubbock for reconstruction, the historic building remained in Channing thanks to vigorous mobilization and fund-raising by local citizens.

BOYS RANCH

Occupying the site of former wild west town of Old Tascosa, Cal Farley’s Boys Ranch is a nationally known home for boys and girls who benefit from guidance and education in a ranch setting. Established in 1939 by the late Cal Farley, Texas businessman and world welterweight wrestling champion of the 1920’s. Guests are welcome to visit the Boys Ranch campus, and while there, stop in at Old Tascosa’s remaining sites - Boot Hill Cemetery and the Julian Bivins Museum which is housed in the original Oldham County courthouse.

VEGA

GET YOUR KICKS HERE

The community of Vega, organized in the first decade of the twentieth century, is located along historic Route 66 (now Interstate 40) west of Amarillo. Originally established to serve the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Texas Railroad, Vega fully embraced the Route 66 aesthetic, building classic mid-century modern motels and cafes to accommodate one of America’s historic highway corridors.

Today, Vega showcases its history in a variety of museums and collections. Its pioneer days are represented by the Milburn-Price Culture Museum, dedicated to the history and culture of Oldham County and Vega, its county seat. The region’s agriculture is featured in the outdoor display of farming and ranching equipment at the Oldham County Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum. Vega’s Route 66 days are preserved by Magnolia Station, a historic gas station built in the 1920s along the old Route 66 alignment. The station has been restored by the city of Vega with help from a National Park Service cost-sharing grant and represents the unique architecture of gas stations during the period and served gas through the early 1950s. It now functions as an interpretive stop along the historic highway route.

TO BOYS RANCH

Return to US 385 and turn S (right), to the entrance of Boys Ranch, on L just north of the Canadian River. Note Boot Hill cemetery on R, Frenchie’s Tree on L. Meet up with Danyel Parkhurst, who will ride with us to Vega.

Approx. 13 miles

TO VEGA

Continue S (left) out of Boys Ranch, past site of Old Tascosa and over Canadian River. Continue to Vega courthouse square; at Magnolia gas station turn R on Coke St. Sandwich tray lunch at Milburn-Price Cultural Center (1005 Coke St.); walking tours highlighting “Petroliana”: Route 66; Dot’s; Magnolia Station; Comanchero traders

Approx. 25 miles
HEREFORD

Good land and water have long attracted ranchers and farmers to Deaf Smith County. After a railroad passed this way in the late 1890s, a town called Blue Water sprang up. Settlers changed the name to Hereford when cattlemen imported the British livestock in 1898, and the town became the county seat. As early as 1904 some called it the Windmill City for the 400 windmills dotting the flat landscape. In the mid-20th century, scientists noticed that the mineral-rich water helped prevent tooth decay, earning Hereford the moniker, “Town Without a Toothache.”

Today, the 1910 Deaf Smith County Courthouse anchors a charming downtown in this self-proclaimed “Beef Capital of the World.” The Deaf Smith County Museum chronicles county history in a 1927 Catholic school building. The museum’s general store and family parlor recall life in 1900. One unusual display shows scale-model circus scenes made locally to entertain families during the Great Depression. There’s also farm equipment, the county’s original steel-cage jail cell and a replica of an 1890s dugout home.

During World War II, Hereford hosted a prisoner of war camp housing several thousand Italian soldiers, many of whom were artisans and craftsmen. These men designed and built a chapel out of concrete made to resemble marble as a memorial to five Italians who died while interned. A water tower and the restored chapel can be visited just three miles south of Hereford in a corn field.

EARTH

Earth was established by William E. Halsell, who laid out the townsite in 1924. Originally Halsell named the city Fairlawn, but in 1925 it was renamed Earth when it was learned that there was already a town in Texas by the name of Fairlawn. In order to find a new name the townspeople sent in suggestions, and the agreed-upon best name was chosen. The name Earth was submitted by Ora Hume (O.H.) Reeves, who became the owner of the city hotel.
MULESHPOE

With a mule’s shoe as its brand, the Muleshoe Ranch was carved out of the historic XIT Ranch. The railroad pushed through in 1913, and a town formed at the ranch’s cattle-loading pens. The Santa Fe depot is now part of the Muleshoe Heritage Center, along with an 1897 XIT (later the Muleshoe Ranch) cookhouse, two 1915 mail-order ranch houses and an early 1900s hotel. The 27-foot-high “World’s Largest Muleshoe,” erected as an Eagle Scout project, looms over the complex. Bailey County seat Muleshoe is home to the 1925 Classical Revival courthouse of red brick.

Muleshoe also boasts a life-sized mule statue as a tribute to the animal’s role in World War I. “Ol’ Pete” is the only national memorial representing the role mules played in US history. In 2001, he traveled to Washington, DC, for President Bush’s Black Tie and Boots Presidential Inauguration Ball and Inaugural Parade.

MULESHPOE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Established in 1935, Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge is the oldest National Wildlife Refuge in Texas. The 6,440-acre refuge, situated in the southern part of the county, is the state’s oldest, set aside in 1935. Its grasslands and playa lakes annually host one of the largest concentrations of lesser sandhill cranes in North America, and is a significant site of CCC-era construction as well.

The refuge includes several intermittent salinas, or salt lakes, some of which have been modified to extend their wet periods. Paul’s Lake, on the east side of Highway 214, is spring-fed, and hosts wildlife during times when the other lakes are dry. The refuge is a stop for migratory waterfowl flying between Canada and Mexico. If sufficient water is present, during the winter it hosts tens of thousands of sandhill cranes. The cranes are most visible at dawn and at dusk, as they leave the lakes during the day to feed in nearby fields.

Other wildlife includes wood warblers, meadowlarks, raptors, burrowing owls, blacktailed prairie dogs, jackrabbits, cottontail rabbits, coyotes, and badgers. The prairie ecosystem includes plant life such as wildflowers, grasses, yucca, cacti, and mesquite. Rangeland management techniques include controlled burning and grazing. All of this ecosystem is a part of “La Pista de Vida Agua,” an interconnected series of “living water” trails followed by wildlife and, eventually, humans through this region.

MAPLE

A brief side trip around this loop to see a lavender field

TO MULESHEOE

From Earth, turn W onto US 70 and travel to downtown Muleshoe. Coming into Muleshoe, turn N (right) onto US 84 (American Blvd.). Note Muleshoe Visitor and Mule Memorial on L before turning. TRUCK TRAFFIC WILL BE HEAVY. Travel 2 mi. to Muleshoe Heritage Center and World’s Largest Muleshoe on R (2211 American Blvd.). Pull in and turn around, then pull back out on US 84 and quickly turn R onto 20th St. Go 3 blocks and turn L onto Ave. C. Travel 18 blocks past Bailey County Courthouse, then turn S (right) onto S. 1st St / TX 214 toward the Wildlife Refuge.

Approx. 19 miles

TO MULESHEOE NWR

Travel 20 mi. through Needmore to Muleshoe NWR entrance on R. Proceed down caliche road to headquarters. We’ll stop for a brief coffee break and a talk by local historian Sammie Simpson. Let’s also chat about a talk about “2/14 on Hwy. 214” plan for educating travelers about the food, fuel, and fiber route of the South Plains.

Approx. 22 miles

TO MAPLE

Leaving Muleshoe NWR, turn S (right) onto TX 214. At Enochs we’ll take a short loop W over to Maple, where there is a lavender field. FM 114 will bring us back E into Morton.

Approx. 10 miles
TO MORTON
Coming into Morton in FM 114, note Cochran County Courthouse on L (100 N. Main St.) Circle the block to pass by Texas’s Last Frontier Museum (108 SW 1st St.) and QPT arrows.

Approx. 18 miles

In Cochran County, we remember the fallen men of the Buffalo Soldier Tragedy of 1877, who perished in drought and summer heat this week 142 years ago.

MORTON

BOLL WEEVILS NOT WELCOME
In Cochran County’s bid to transform an early ranching empire into a more equitable agricultural community in the early 1900s, a flier was sent out to prospective farmers touting Cochran County land, offered at $20 per acre, as ideal cotton growing soil. It’s most attractive attribute according to the pamphlet? “No boll weevils”. The irony, lost on many, was that land absent cotton (the boll weevil’s preferred crop) is also land absent the agricultural pest. By 1924, Cochran County had its farmers and was well on its way to having boll weevils as well. But, in the meantime, Morton (Cochran County seat) had a land boom on its hands.

In 1926, the Texas Telephone Company moved the county’s first telephone office to Morton, connecting the county seat to the modern age. The building outgrew company use in 1949 and now houses the county’s Texas’ Last Frontier Historical Museum.

The Dust Bowl descended on Morton and Cochran County just as it did the rest of the Great Plains. Relief came, in part, courtesy of the Civil Conservation Corps who moved a camp of 175 young men from nearby Littlefield to Morton in 1941. The crew battled wind and water erosion with efforts like fence-building and tree-planting. Today, Morton continues to serve the agricultural industry, providing a center for farming supplies as well as financing.

Cochran County is also the location of a Texas historical marker honoring the men of the Buffalo Soldier tragedy of 1877. On July 26 that year, African American troops — known as Buffalo Soldiers — from Co. A of the 10th Cavalry began to pursue a Comanche party. During the pursuit, the Comanches led the troops away from water holes as the expedition traveled through Cochran and other counties.

After Several days without water, Capt. Nicholas Nolan led his dehydrated soldiers and remaining animals back to Double Lakes in Lynn County; they arrived on July 30, having gone 86 hours without water. Several soldiers left camp in search of water and four died during the expedition: Pvt. John H. Bonds; Pvt. Isaac Derwin; Pvt. John Isaacs; and Pvt. John T. Gordon.

TO WHITEFACE
AND LEVELLAND
Continue SE on FM 114 to Whiteface, curving around toward Levelland. Coming into Levelland, turn S (right) onto Av. H. through downtown, noting mosaic murals, Burklee Hill Winery, and Main Street signage.

WHITEFACE

According to the Handbook of Texas, the name of the town came from rancher C. C. Slaughter’s Whiteface Camp and Whiteface Pasture, which were named in turn for the cattle on his ranch. By 1924, Slaughter’s son-in-law, Ira P. DeLoache, turned the ranch into the new community of Whiteface.

The community was moved several miles the next year to be at the railroad. Oil was discovered near the town in 1937. It was incorporated in 1945.
IN LEVELLAND

At H and 11th St. turn L into Visitor Center beside Lobo Lake for a photo op at mural or QPT Arrow, and refreshments and greeting from Main Street Levelland.

Approx. 27 miles

IN LUBBOCK

At intersection with W Loop 289, proceed under Loop and turn N (left) onto Loop 290. Travel to Clovis Rd. exit; turn R and cross highway onto N. Indiana; make immediate L onto Landmark Dr. to return to Lubbock Lake Landmark.

Approx. 20 miles

TO SMYER

Depart Levelland via 13th St. heading west and crossing US 385 to Brashear Lake Park and turning N on Sherman Ave., which will run back into TX 114. Turn R onto 114; pass vineyards in the Smyer area.

Approx. 13 miles

TO LUBBOCK

Return to Lubbock via TX 114, through the historic Carlisle community.

Approx. 20 miles

LEVELLAND

Levelland, a Texas Main Street city, makes sure that visitors and residents alike know about the city’s achievements. Among Levelland’s Main Street accoutrements are seasonal banners, rotated throughout the year to announce citywide events; gateway signage at each of the four city entrances; and the installation of courthouse benches and pavers installed around the entrances to the Hockley County courthouse, centerpiece of Levelland and Hockley County seat. In addition, the city hosts a downtown historical walking tour each May in honor of National Preservation Month.

Levelland has a lot of history to share despite the fact that by Texas standards it’s a fairly young community, surveyed in 1912 but developed beginning in 1921, the year the county organized. But the city wasted little time in advancing the interests of both the county and its residents. Today, Levelland hosts festivities and programs year-round designed to celebrate its history and feature its Main Street including Christmas on the Square and a summer concert series called “Sounds of Texas.”

Downtown has recently welcomed a winery and a pie shop, in addition to its reopened Wallace Theater. Thanks to the numerous mosaic murals installed locally by South Plains College artists and others, Levelland has earned the nickname “City of Mosaics.”

SMYER

Smyer is the home of Bolen Vineyards, which grow Malbec, Merlot and Mourvèdre grapes for Messina Hof Winery in Bryan. It is only one of the many vineyards thriving in the sandy soil of the western South Plains, due to ideal climate and soil conditions.

LUBBOCK REDUX

Back to Lubbock Lake Landmark and farewell till our next adventure!
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DAY 3, WEDNESDAY, JULY 31
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