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January 2024

### Texas Ranger Hall of Fame Newsletter

Department the City of Waco  
Official State Repository of Texas Ranger Memorabilia  
Home of Texas Ranger Bicentennial 1823-2023

### Story Time Reading Nook

When the TRHFM shut our doors back in March 2020 due to the COVID Pandemic, staff created a program kids could enjoy at home. Story Time with Audrey was born. It focuses on Texas, Western and history themed books and is accessible for free on Facebook, our website and YouTube.

By the third installment, Story Time with Audrey caught the eye of the *Killeen Daily Herald* in the article "Virtual Fun Available with Socially Distanced Activities and Events." Please click here to see the full list. The *Waco Tribune Herald* interviewed Audrey as part of a feature on locally produced story times.



The popularity of Story Time has led to the creation of a reading nook in the TRHFM pop culture gallery. Maggie O'Quinn from the Baylor Informal Education class helped to springboard the idea of a nook where parents could read books to enhance their family's visit. You can see the start of the transformation in this photograph.

As a first step, we have created a wish list on Amazon of books that we would like to have available. Most of the books Audrey read were loaned from the Waco-McLennan County Library. If you would like to purchase one of these books for the reading nook, please visit our [Amazon Wish List](#). You can also find our list by searching "Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum" in the Amazon Registry search. Books are shipped directly to the museum. Thank you!

### A Look Back at the Bicentennial 2023

2023 marked the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Texas Rangers. They are the oldest existing law enforcement agency with statewide jurisdiction and the only one to have served under five national flags. In cooperation with Texas DPS and the Texas Rangers Division, lead agency Texas Ranger 2023, the Texas Ranger Association Foundation and many more cities and sponsors, we participated in a State-wide celebration and educational experience. The kick-off began in January at the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo and then traveled to: Midland, Houston, Waco, Lubbock, San Antonio, Fort Worth, the Dallas State Fair, McAllen and Austin. We were privileged to be invited to participate and represent the museum. It was a busy and wonderful year that we will always remember.



### Lt. Peña Visits a Kindergarten Class

At Spring Valley Elementary School in Hewitt, Mrs. Michelle Peña's kindergarten class had been learning all about Texas and received a special visit from Texas Ranger Lt. Patrick Peña. He read to the class and talked about Texas history. Lt. Peña detailed the Texas Ranger uniform and then students presented their coloring pages to him. A wonderful way to end their Texas-themed week.



### Surfside, Texas Celebrates the Bicentennial

In December, an Historical Awards ceremony was held in Surfside, Texas. Author Bob Alexander presented historical information about the Texas Rangers and received the Dan

Parkinson Literary award, for his detailed contributions to Texas history.



**Left to Right:** Museum Curator Michael Bailey presented Author Bob Alexander the Dan Parkinson Literary Award at Surfside City Hall. Photograph courtesy Katie Britt.

Bob has authored 18 books and enjoys traveling to the physical locations of the places he researches for his books. There wasn't an empty chair in Surfside City Hall as Alexander told the story of the Texas Rangers.

He felt that commemorating 200 years of Texas Ranger history was not just a milestone, but important to the core of Texas history. "It's wonderful," Alexander said. "It's what it takes to keep our heritage alive. No matter who we are, we have to record it and share it, and that's what we're doing, especially with local historians and historical organizations. Since I'm now retired, I started primarily writing about the Old West and the Texas Rangers as they make the transition from their earlier days into the modern era, and the law enforcement that they're involved in today."

### SOG Promotions

The Special Operations Group (SOG) was created by Director McCraw in October 2011 to address the growing escalation in illegal narcotics trafficking, human smuggling and escalation of violence in the Texas Border region.

As a result of the selection process for Staff Lieutenant, Texas Ranger Division, Special Operations Group, the following were selected and will be appointed effective 01/01/2024 to Special Response Teams:

- **Region 2 SRT:**  
James Wilkins, Texas Ranger, Co. A
- **Region 3 SRT:**  
Stephen West, Texas Ranger, Co. D
- **Region 4/5 SRT:**  
Joel Callaway, Texas Ranger, Co. E
- **Region 6 SRT:**  
Justin Aguilar, Staff Sergeant, SRT-6
- **SWAT North (Alpha)**  
Eric Sadler, Staff Sergeant, SWAT
- **SWAT South (Charlie)**  
David Armstrong, Texas Ranger, Co. B



### Custom License Plate

Sergeant Lewis presented retired Texas Ranger Marshall Thomas his DPS license plate containing his original DPS Identification Number #06925. Thomas served as Ranger from

2005-2015. He continues to serve the State of Texas as the Montague County Sheriff. Thank you Sheriff Thomas.



[Please click here to learn about Marshall Thomas' Texas Ranger service.](#)

**In Memoriam: Lt. George L. Turner**



We are saddened to announce the loss of our friend retired Co. "F" Lieutenant George L. Turner, who worked with the museum staff for many years. A veteran of 36 years in law enforcement, he began with the Department of Public Safety in 1973 as a Texas Highway Patrolman and retired in 2009 as a Lieutenant in the Texas Rangers (1985-2009). George was born on July 31, 1951 and passed on December 1, 2023.

[To read his obituary, please click here.](#)

Our condolences to his family and friends.

**Waco Regional Airport Renovation Completed**



For your next visit to Waco, consider flying into the newly renovated Waco Regional Airport. The multi-phase project included a complete overhaul from floor to ceiling. The City of Waco collaborated with Creative Waco to commission four art pieces that welcome both local residents and travelers through a journey of Waco's rich history and vibrant culture. The new art installations are:

- "Ice Age Migrants" by Manca Ahlin
- "Waco, Texas—Past, Present and Future" by Mike Tabor
- "Welcome to Waco" by Eirini Linardaki
- "Wichita Grass Houses" by Camargo Copeland Architecture

**Gift Shop Feature: Sherpa Sweater**

Keep warm in this quarter zip pullover Sherpa sweater featuring camouflage print and embroidered badge. \$30.00 + Tax



### Sherpa Sweater

Camo print with embroidered badge. Quarter zip pullover.  
\$30.00 + Tax



To shop more items available for purchase, please visit our [Gift Shop online](#) or in person 9am to 4:30pm daily. You never have to pay admission to shop. Sales from the Gift Shop benefit the preservation and education activities of the Museum. Please call (254) 750-8631 or email [info@texasranger.org](mailto:info@texasranger.org) to order. We ship worldwide. Thank you!



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Save \$1.00 off regular adult admission for up to two adults. Coupon not valid on discounted senior or military admission. No cash value.

**\$2.00 OFF**

Expires 1/31/2024

The museum is open 9am to 5pm with the last guest admitted at 4:30pm. The museum is located off I-35 and University Parks Drive in Waco, Texas. For more information, call (254) 750-8631 or visit [www.texasranger.org](http://www.texasranger.org).

Newsletter Compiled by Christine Rothenbush, Marketing & Development Specialist

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