



Texas North Star Sams Area 17 – 2006

March Newsletter

The President's Corner



Kathy Helwick

What fun we had in the valley! Jim was our unofficial tour guide, planning trips to a mission, a basilica, a shoe store, Mexico, South Padre Island, a hand-pulled ferry, flea market, fruit market, Ropa Usada, and great restaurants (I'm sure I left something out). Our many thanks go to him for all his time and effort. Thanks also to Brian for traveling ahead of us to hold restaurant tables for 12. Thanks also to Marge and Cheryl for opening their respective homes to us.

It's hard to describe the valley to someone who's never been there. The best visual image I can give you is that we had an orange tree right outside our (new) RV in the campground!

Taking such a long trip was a first for the club, and obviously not everyone could take that much time away from home. We'll have to discuss whether we want to include a long trip in next year's schedule. But, the trip this year was a good idea.

As always, feel free to contact me with questions and/or comments.

Khelwick@msn.com - 972-416-6727

Officers:

President: Kathy Helwick
Vice-President: Steve Young
Treasurer: Jim Bailey
Secretary: Del Duerr
Wagon Master: Lew Foitek

Newsletter Editor: Sherry Moran
Special Projects: Pat Foitek
Sunshine/Chaplain: Sherry Young
Web Master: Tim Moran

February Meeting:

The February meeting was held at the MacPherson's new home in the Valley. Due to the brevity of the meeting, the minutes were so short that the Acting-Secretary can't find them!

Wagonmaster

Lew Foitek



March Campout:

March 17, 18, 19 at Destiny RV Resort in Corinth, TX.
Hosts – Lew and Pat Foitek

Pat is doing a “Mardi Gras” theme, so check with her about what you should bring.

Juan and Barbara Delgado will be joining us at Destiny. They are the Good Sam Assistant State Directors for our area.

See www.ntahc.org/northstarsams –
“[Upcoming Events](#)” for more details and a map

April Campout:

April 21, 22, 23 at Hickory Creek, Lake Lewisville, TX
Hosts – Jim and Marge Bailey

Reminder: Be sure to make your own reservation ASAP by calling 1-800-444-6777 or go to www.reserveusa.com and make your reservation.

See www.ntahc.org/northstarsams –
“[Upcoming Events](#)” for more details and a map

May Campout:

May 19, 20, 21 at Cedar Mills - Gordonville, TX

Happenings:

Lots of things going on with the group this month! The Youngs named their new puppy “Shadow” and bought a new RV while down in the Valley! Dave & Kathy Helwick took their new rig on its first really “long” trip. The Morans had a run-in with a highway “gator” which meant Tim got up close and personal with the waste & sewage system of their RV.

Once back at home, the group “Meet & Eat” was well attended and fun at Abuela’s.

Tim & Sherry Moran’s Excellent Adventure

We took a sight-seeing trip on our way to the Valley. We traveled the western leg of the **Texas Forts Trail**. Starting in Jacksboro at Ft. Richardson, we went south to Ft. Belknap, near Graham, through Throckmorton, home of former Dallas Cowboy Bob Lilly & an 1890 courthouse.



At Ft, Griffin, near Albany, we visited the State Herd of Longhorns.

On to Ft. Chadbourne, a fort on private land, where we met the owner, Garland Richards, and got a great tour of the museum. In San Angelo, we passed a mule-drawn caravan headed to Ft. Concho and were there when the caravan arrived. Ft. Concho has more original buildings than any other fort and some can be rented overnight. Re-enactments are held several times during the year. They also have 1 of only 2 remaining Gallows Frame telephones made by Alexander G. Bell – the other is in the Smithsonian!



The next stop was Bandera where they were going to have a Cowboy Mardi Gras parade but it was too cold for us to stop! We definitely want to go back, as it looked like it has some great shops and an 1868 courthouse!

In Uvalde, we stopped for lunch at the Rexall Drug Store, which still has a working 1950's lunch counter. It was mentioned in the AAA magazine.

In Crystal City, the Spinich Capital of the World, we saw a tribute to "Popeye."



We didn't stop in Laredo, just passed through on our way to Falcon State Park. This park is not like any of the parks we've been in. They have a café, handicraft and other classes, movies on Sat. night, guided bird walks, observation blinds, and many, many birds I've never seen before. It's a great park! After spending the night, we headed on to Donna, Tx.

After our trip to the Baileys and the MacPhersons in the valley, we headed up the Coast toward Port Aransas for the Whooping Crane Festival. There is so much to see in Texas! We passed through Kingsville, the home of the King Ranch and then around Corpus Christi. **The cold weather followed us.** We met the Foitek and the Helwicks at the Pioneer Resort RV Park in Port Aransas. It's just over the dunes from the beach.



We all stayed for three days during which we ate more good seafood, took the Whooping Crane boat tour (it rained, but we saw 6 Whooping Cranes!), walked on the beach and rode the free Trolley to town and back.

Leaving Port A., we moved through Rockport-Fulton and on toward College Station for the Railroad Train Exhibit at the Bush Library. Fascinating history of trains and their impact on this country! We also took a side-trip to Washington-on-the-Brazos St. Park and I didn't have enough time! The gift shop is the BEST source of Texas things I've seen and the Museum needs at least an hour to go through. We missed the 170th celebration of Texas Independence and the signing of the Texas Declaration by 3 days!

We visited our granddaughters in Troy and met up with a highway "gator" on our last day. This trip was full, fun and I'm worn out just writing about it!

Past Events

The big event was the trip by four of our couples to the Rio Grande Valley to visit the Baileys and the MacPhersons! The Helwicks got in on Sat., Feb. 18; the Foitek and the Morans arrived on Sun., Feb. 19; and the Youngs came in on Mon., Feb. 20. The cold weather we fled in Dallas, arrived right behind us!

As Kathy mentioned, Jim had the itinerary set up and it was a busy one! No sleeping-in or being lazy for this group!

Sunday – supper get-together at the Baileys.

Monday – Some of us went to Progreso, Mexico for shopping and lunch; others went to Camping World and Wal-Mart.

The biggest event was going to a Ropa Usada (Used Clothing)! Clothing was in bales and sold by the pound – Sherry Moran got a great looking green leather jacket for \$3!

Then on to a tour of the historic Old Pump Station in Hidalgo – this is one of many pump stations that provided water to irrigate the Valley and allowed it to become such a prolific fruit and vegetable center.



Cheryl, Sherry M,

Dave, Marge, Kathy



Cheryl & Brian on the porch

Tuesday – Early start by visiting the MacPherson's new home and having breakfast in the restaurant of their RV Park. On to Brownsville for a trip to the SAS shoe store and spending of money!



Arrived at Padre Island and had lunch at "Dirty Al's" (huge boiled shrimp for \$8 a lb!) Walked on the beach and the Youngs and Lew Foitek did some jeep-driving on the beach. As the weather became better, we took a tour of the Port Isabel Lighthouse.



Wednesday – The Weslaco Flea Market and Fruit Market was an eye-opener! Lots of pineapple, oranges, limes, etc. at great prices. Some of us also now have wooden signs to put outside our rigs. Our big tour was the Basilica of the Virgin of San Juan – the bells, the statue of the Virgin and the worshipers all survived a suicide hit by a small plane in the 1950's. Beautiful altar and building.



Next, we headed over to the Old Mission for which Mission, Tx., was named. Lunch was at Pepe's on the Rio Grande River with good barbeque.

Thursday – Our last day was spent touring some more. We went to Los Ebanos to the last hand-pulled ferry in the U.S. It holds about 3 cars and several passengers. This is a real International crossing .



Lew and Jim paid the 50 cent fee to go across. Next, on to Rio Grande City to see the La Borde hotel, built in the 19th century and used as a B&B now.

We ate lunch at the Texas Café across from the Grotto which is like the Grotto at Lourdes, France. We finished the evening back at the MacPhersons for dinner. WOW! We were tired!

Happy Birthday!



Sherry Moran
March 23

Happy Anniversary!



Steve & Sherry Young
March 9

And they ask why I like retirement....??????

Question: How many days in a week?

Answer: 6 Saturdays, 1 Sunday

Question: When is a retiree's bedtime?

Answer: Three hours after he falls asleep on the couch.

Question: How many retirees to change a light bulb?

Answer: Only one, but it might take all day.

Question: What's the biggest gripe of retirees?

Answer: There is not enough time to get everything done.

Question: Why don't retirees mind being called Seniors?

Answer: The term comes with a 10% percent discount.

Question: Among retirees what is considered formal attire?

Answer: A clean T-shirt and tied shoes.

Question: What is the common term for someone who enjoys work and refuses to retire?

Answer: NUTS!

Question: Why are retirees so slow to clean out the basement, attic or garage?

Answer: They know that as soon as they do, one of their adult kids will want to store stuff there.

Question: What is the best way to describe retirement?

Answers: The never ending Coffee Break.

Question: What's the biggest advantage of going back to school as a retiree?

Answer: If you cut classes, no one calls your parents.

Question: Why does a retiree often say he doesn't miss work, but misses the people he used to work with?

Answer: He is too polite to tell the whole truth.

From the Editor:



Sherry Moran

Please send any news you'd like included in the newsletter to me before the last week of the month.

sjmoran@ticnet.com