

WACO &
**THE HEART
OF TEXAS**

Welcome. Enjoy. Explore.

**SHE'S
NEW!**
AT THE **ZOO!**

The **Beat**

INSIGHT AND INFORMATION FROM
THE **HEART** OF TEXAS

A publication of Waco & the Heart of Texas

VOL. XVII, ISSUE 4 | **fall 2014**

Meet.
Batari



Carla Pendergraft

2015 WETLANDS CALENDAR PHOTO CONTEST

Submit a photo of the Lake Waco Wetlands by September 30, and your entry could be chosen for the 2015 calendar. For more information contact **Nora Schell 254-848-9654**

MEET BATARI!

Cameron Park Zoo announces that Mei and Kerajaan (KJ) are the proud parents of a Bornean baby orangutan, born May 17. The baby's name was chosen by Zoo supporters who voted with their dollars. \$462 was raised for the Association of Zoos and Aquariums Great Ape Taxon Advisory Group Conservation Initiative.

OUR BIRDS WERE A HIT!

Over 60 meeting planners were greeted by a beautiful kestrel and red-tailed hawk at our Customer Appreciation luncheon in Austin, thanks to Duane McGregor, Marketing Director of the Cameron Park Zoo. (Next year she promised a kookaburra – so don't miss it!)

We also had a successful sales blitz in the Austin/San Antonio area in July. Thanks to all meeting planners who participated in both of these events! We appreciate you! Thanks also to our sponsors,

Cameron Park Zoo and Hilton Waco/Courtyard by Marriott.



Elizabeth Taylor

STRAIGHT FROM THE

HEART



UNBELIEVABLY BELIEVABLE!

I am witnessing a community transformation that could not be imagined when I arrived over 20 years ago. I not only see it, but feel the excitement and expectation of progress. For the past two decades, we have experienced a steady growth of new hotels, restaurants, shops and tourist attractions, but lately, it's been an explosion of new possibilities with visions quickly turning into reality.

The most notable addition to our community is the impressive McLane Stadium! You can't miss it if you come to Waco because it has dramatically changed our skyline. Located at I-35 and the Brazos River, the stadium has boat access that will allow many visitors to travel from hotels and restaurants via the river. Pretty cool. Our downtown area is also transforming in anticipation of a greater influx of visitors.

With the change comes excitement, but also questions. One I hear often is "What about parking?" I hear you, and I admit I am spoiled. On the one hand it is nice to park your car in front of your destination and walk right in. On the other hand, we have to weigh the tremendous benefit of new restaurants, retail and downtown living space, additional tax dollars into our economy plus an alive and vibrant downtown community. Maybe walking a few extra steps to park is not so bad. To make it easier, our parking is inexpensive, and we've provided new signage which offers visitors clear directions to parking areas and jazzy new banners designating the downtown area.

It is truly exciting to be living in Waco & Heart of Texas during this unprecedented period of transformation. In the words of one of Waco & Baylor's favorite sons, Robert Griffin III, "This is unbelievably believable."



POSITIVE PRESS

One of my favorite assignments is networking with travel writers at the Travel Media Showcase each August. I met one-on-one with 28 top journalists, many of whom will travel to Waco for a press tour and ultimately will write positive articles on Waco & the Heart of Texas.

Speaking of positive press, "Heart of Texas on the Road" is kicking off with the first luncheon/sales call combo in Dallas/Fort Worth September 10 and 11. From there, we will continue on to Houston and Austin. **Homestead Heritage Traditional Crafts Village, Cameron Park Zoo and Mayborn Museum Complex** will be partnering with us to highlight their attractions at the luncheons. We are looking forward to the great press these events will garner!

Interested in our new Marketing & Communications Plan? Beginning in October, it will be available to download under the About Us tab at wacoheartoftexas.com.



SHARE THE LOVE – BECOME A HOTLINE VOLUNTEER!

The City of Waco is needing volunteers to enhance the Waco & Heart of Texas visitor experience by being friendly, available, and knowledgeable about events, restaurants, hotels and more. If you LOVE Waco, you could help by working information tables at conventions and events, acting as a step-on guide for tour groups and helping at special events downtown and at area attractions. Volunteers are also encouraged to honestly review local restaurants, attractions and events and post about them through social media and on travel-focused websites. If you are interested, please complete the application form on our website or contact Susan Morton at **254-750-8610** or susanm@ci.waco.tx.us.



CAMERON PARK ZOO

October 25, 6 PM – 10 PM: Brew at the Zoo – Tap into your wild side at the Zoo’s annual beer tasting event. ‘Stroll the zoo until 8 PM sampling different beers from around the world. From 8PM – 10PM, the party continues with great food and cash bars as you dance under the stars. **October 31, 6 PM – 8 PM: Zoo Boo** – It’s spooky how much fun your family will have! **November 8, 7AM – 10 AM: HEB Great Zoo Stampede** – Run for the animals on 5K, 10K and one-mile certified courses. For more information visit cameronparkzoo.com or call 254-750-8423

FARMERS MARKET 3-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

**November 15,
9AM – 1PM:**
3 Year Anniversary Party. Festivities include prizes, celebratory drinks with the Dancing Bear Pub, special events and music.



THE HEART OF TEXAS AIRSHOW

September 27, TSTC Airfield: Experience thrilling entertainment with jets, helicopters, airplanes, warbirds, a wing walker, skydivers, radio control aircraft and more in the sky and on terra firma. Flights in helicopters, airplanes, historic war birds, and biplanes will be offered to the public throughout the day. Don’t stay on the ground, get in the air! Enjoy food, exhibits, vendors and kids activities. Online discounted tickets now available.



DR PEPPER MUSEUM

October 24: 10-2-4 Day: Sing a Dr Pepper jingle for free admission to the Dr Pepper Museum on this special day.

SIP & SWIRL SATURDAYS

Enjoy good wines, fun and live music at the **Valley Mills Vineyards from 8 PM – 11 PM.** The tasting room is located at 8532 N State Hwy 6. Check valleymillsvineyards.com for an updated list of performers.

WACO ART CENTER

October 24: Opening day of the exhibit, *On the Road with Texas Highways* by photo editor, J. Griffis Smith.
November 1: Dia de los Muertos event at the Art Center Waco includes crafts for the kids, food and music.

JUBILEE THEATRE

September 19 – 21: Stick Fly - The affluent, African-American LeVay family is gathering at their Martha’s Vineyard home for the weekend, and brothers Kent and Flip have each brought their respective ladies home to meet the parents . . .
November 14 – 16: The Piano Lesson - A lesson is learned when Boy Willie tries to defy his stubborn sister and sell the family piano to buy land.

The Beat GOES ‘ROUND



THE MAYBORN MUSEUM

Free First Sundays on the first Sunday of every month from 1PM – 5PM. This fall, the dates are **September 7, October 5 and November 2.** But don’t wait! If you haven’t seen the summer exhibit, *Be the Dinosaur*, make plans to attend before the final day, September 3. For more information, call 254-710-1110.



The Beat GOES 'ROUND



TEXAS RANGER HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM

August 29, 6 PM – 7:30 PM: Opening reception of Texas Roots exhibit. Refreshments will be served. For more information, please contact the museum staff at **254-750-8631**. **August 29 – January 11:** *Texas Roots - The Art of Lee Herring*. The exhibit features over 20 works of art by the 2007 State of Texas Artist. Mr. Herring is a master at capturing the American West.

September 27: Boots and Badges – Celebrating 50 Years. Saddle up and join the celebration of 50 years of the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame & Museum in John Knox Center at the Museum | **5:30** – Round Up: Mix, mingle and view our new exhibit, *Texas Roots: The Art of Lee Herring* | **6:30** – Dinner Bell Rings: Prime rib and fixins served by On the Spot Catering | **6:45** – Presentations to Texas Rangers including Major Frank Malinak | **7:30** – Dance 'til the Cows Come Home: Music by the Chris Low Band

November 11: TRHFH Honors Veterans & Active Military. Active duty personnel, retirees and Veterans will receive FREE admission to the Museum while their family will receive discounted admissions. A valid id or documentation of service – medals, service records and photographs are accepted as proof of service. **December 13, 1 PM – 3 PM:** **5th Annual Big Texas Christmas Present.** Bring donations for Gifts for Grannies and receive free admission to the Museum (one admission per item donated!) The Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum, Friends for Life, Big 95 KBGO and Mi Familia Car Club have teamed up to provide items to the elderly and people with disabilities. For more information, call **254-750-8631** or visit texasranger.org.



HISTORIC WACO FOUNDATION

Now through December 14: "Facing the Flames" at the Fort House Museum. Learn the exciting history of Waco's fire department, from antique tools to historical photographs. \$3 admission. **September 7, 2 PM – 5 PM** "Fire! Fire! Sunday Skadoo!" Families will learn the history of firefighting, meet local firefighters, play games and enjoy crafts at the Fort House Museum. \$5 admission for the family. **September 4, 11, 18, 25, 6 PM:** "September House and Family Lectures" features a presentation of the history, furniture and architecture of each house (in alphabetical order each Thursday) Free admission. **October 4 – November 2, 2 PM – 5 PM:** "Sitting up with the Dead – Victorian Funeral Exhibit" at East Terrace House Museum. See a Victorian home in mourning and learn about historic funeral customs and their effect on funerals today. General admission tours Saturdays and Sundays 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM, Twilight Tours Saturdays 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM. Reservation required. **October 21:** "100 Years of the Hippodrome: An Evening to Celebrate." Enjoy songs from Les Miserable performed by the Waco Civic Theatre, beverages and hors d'oeuvres and exclusive tours of the recently renovated theatre. **November 16, 2 PM – 5 PM:** "Victorian Harvest Time Sunday Skadoo" at the Earle-Napier-Kinnard House Museum. This will be a fun family day with activities, games, crafts and refreshments. \$5 admission for the family.

HOLIDAY EVENTS AT HISTORIC WACO FOUNDATION

November 14, 11 AM: "Dickens on the Brazos Annual Style Show" at Ridgewood Country Club. Come enjoy brunch while viewing modern and Victorian fashions. Reservation required.

November 29 – December 14: "Christmas on the Brazos" at all HWF houses.

McCulloch Holiday Showcase Home November 29 – December 14. All other HWF Houses: **December 6 & 7, 13 & 14 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM.**

November 29, 10:00 AM – Noon: "Secrets for Santa."

WACO MAMMOTH SITE

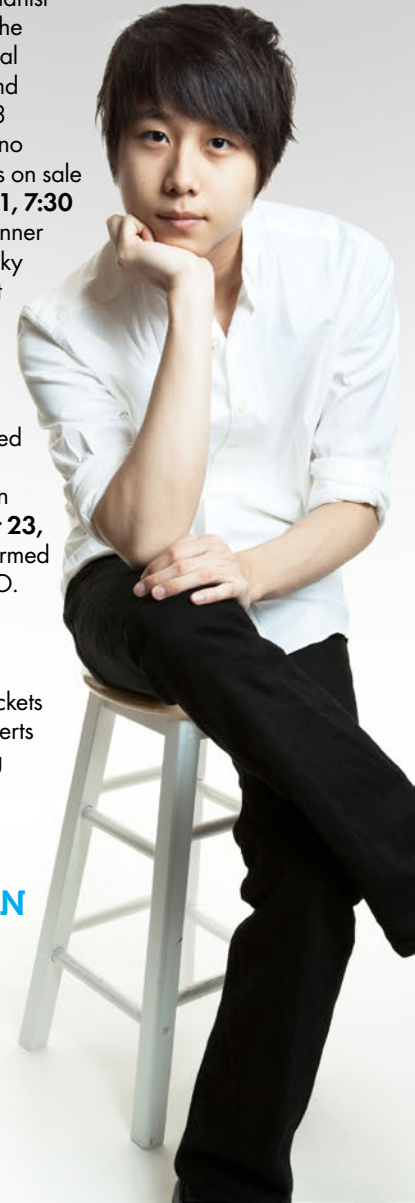
October 18, 10 AM – 4 PM: The Annual Fall Fossil Festival features arts and crafts, food, fun, live animals and an art contest. Free admission to festival. Paid tours to in-situ fossil remains.

WACO SYMPHONY

September 30, 7:30 PM: Pianist Steven Lin, silver medalist at the Arthur Rubenstein International Piano Master Competition and an award winner at the 2013 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition performs. Tickets on sale **September 8. November 11, 7:30 PM:** Violinist Jennifer Koh, winner of the International Tchaikovsky Competition and the Concert Artist Guild Competition performs along with the Baylor A Cappella Choir who will be paying tribute to veterans and those who served in World War I on Armistice Day/Veterans Day. Tickets on sale **October 1. November 23, 2 PM:** *The Nutcracker*, performed by Ballet Austin and the WSO. Tickets on sale now.

All concerts take place at Waco Hall on the Baylor University campus. Season tickets and tickets to individual concerts may be purchased by calling **254-754-0851** or online at wacosymphony.com.

STEVEN LIN



Welcome GROUPS

WACO & THE HEART OF TEXAS IS PROUD TO WELCOME THE FOLLOWING GROUPS

Please note: This is not a complete list of all convention groups coming to the Waco area, but rather a list of groups we assist with hotel rooms and/or convention meeting space. **For a more comprehensive list, please click on the calendar links below.**

DATE	GROUP & EVENT	EXPECTED ATTENDANCE
9/5-9/7	Texas Livestock Project Conference	300
9/6-9/7	Play Hard-Play Sunday Girls Fast Pitch Tournament	500
9/13-9/14	American Sporting Events' ASE Baseball Tournament	500
9/20-9/21	Bring it Girls Fast Pitch Tournament	500
9/22-9/25	Texas Baptists—Retired Ministers Retreat	300
9/24-9/26	Texas District of the Institute of Transportation Engineers Fall Meeting	250
9/27-9/28	American Sporting Events' ASE Baseball Tournaments	500
9/30-10/4	Texas Tree Conference	420
10/4-10/5	American Sporting Events' ASE Baseball Tournaments	500
10/5-10/7	TAPPS 2014 State Cheer & Dance Competition	3,000
10/7-10/9	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality TCEQ Training	150
10/16-10/19	Federation of Insurance Women of Texas Annual Mid Year Conference	300
10/18-10/19	American Sporting Events' ASE Baseball Tournaments	500
10/19-10/23	Missionary Baptist General Convention of Texas Annual Fall Session	5,000
10/21-10/24	Texas Association of County Auditors	250
10/23-10/26	Women's Professional Rodeo Association 2014 WPRA World Finals	1,000
10/24-10/30	Texas Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officials Annual Conference	1,200
10/25-10/26	Monster Bash Girls Fast Pitch Tournament	1,000
11/1-11/2	American Sporting Events' ASE Baseball Tournaments	500
11/3-11/9	Jr. League of Waco Deck the Halls Gift Market	3,000
11/6-11/8	Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion	50
11/8-11/9	Thanks 4 Giving Girls Fast Pitch Tournament	1,000
11/15-11/16	American Sporting Events' ASE Baseball Tournaments	500
11/22-11/23	American Sporting Events' ASE Baseball Tournaments	500

Spotlight on Melissa Verive

Melissa Verive is the newest full time tourism counselor at the Waco Visitor Information Center and Gift Shop.

Melissa brings extensive retail and customer service experience to the job. Though not a native Texan, she moved to Texas as a child, dug her boot heels in, and held on. She loves meeting people from around the globe, and the opportunity to share her enthusiasm about Waco & the Heart of Texas with visitors. In addition to providing valuable information to our visitors, Melissa is responsible for keeping our calendar of events current. Be sure to direct information about any upcoming events to her at melissah@ci.waco.tx.us. She is the proud mother of two sons: Wyatt works for the City of Mansfield, and Morgan is serving on the USS Harry S. Truman.



WELCOME TO DEBBIE LOWE,
new Sales Manager, Holiday Inn & Suites Waco Northwest

Masonic Grand Lodge Closing for Construction
The Library and Museum on Columbus Avenue in Waco is closed for construction through October 31. For information call 254-753-7395 or email gs@grandsecretaryoftx.org.



Waco & the Heart of Texas *The Beat* is published quarterly by the City of Waco. It is distributed to business, civic, and association leaders, those in the travel industry and those interested in the tourism business. If you would like to receive a digital copy, please contact us by email at lorik@wacoheartoftexas.com or by phone at 254-750-5810 or 800-321-9226.

Social Networking
Waco & the Heart of Texas has both a Facebook page and a Twitter page! You can see all the upcoming events and information at the Facebook page: facebook.com/WacoCVB or the Twitter handle: twitter.com/WacoAndTheHoT

- Feedback**
- If you have changed your email address, please let us know by emailing lorik@wacoheartoftexas.com or call 254-750-5804.
 - We Welcome comments and contributions! Please send to Lori Kasparian at lorik@wacoheartoftexas.com
 - A Special Thanks to all who contributed!

For more information on what is happening in the Waco Convention Center, [CLICK HERE.](#)



For more information on what is taking place in Waco & the Heart of Texas, [CLICK HERE.](#)