

EDITOR'S NOTE



Sightseeing From Memory

I T'S OFTEN NOT UNTIL I LEAVE A place that I fully appreciate how much it has to offer. It is so easy to take the city you live in for granted in the busyness of daily life. As I drove from Houston to Austin one recent Wednesday evening to join the staff at *Texas Highways* the next day, I began to compile a list of local sites I would miss the most. And while considering my favorite Space City spots, it struck me that our memories are intrinsically tied to places.

Hermann Park is perhaps my favorite place in Houston, offering a green oasis in the heart of a sprawling city. My husband proposed to me there, and we took our now 2-year-old son there on his first outing as a newborn. Though I was sleep-deprived and bleary-eyed, I still vividly remember the way his face lit up and his eyes widened as I rolled him in his stroller up and around the 30-foot garden mount in the then-new McGovern Centennial

Gardens. And every time we circled past the whooshing waterfall, he sighed appreciatively, letting me know he approved of our choice for his first sightseeing trip. When places blend with fond memories, we start to feel like part owners, and those places become “our” places.

Now that it's part of my job to highlight new and interesting destinations to explore, I am excited about broadening my list to locales throughout the state. And I want to hear from you. What's on your list of must-visit attractions in Texas? Whether it's a place you might take for granted because it's in your neighborhood or one you save up to visit on vacation, I look forward to sharing them together in these pages.

Emily R Stone

EMILY ROBERTS STONE, Editor

The McGovern Centennial Garden at Hermann Park features an arid garden, a rose garden, a woodland garden, and an interactive family garden.

EDITOR'S NOTE



Fall in Love with Texas Waterways

RIVERS AND LAKES DEFINE Texas. The mighty Rio Grande forms the southern border from El Paso to the Gulf of Mexico, and the Red and the Sabine mark our northern and eastern boundaries. The state's 80,000 miles of watercourses have played essential roles in settlement, agriculture, ranching, and transportation. Hydroelectric dams along the Colorado River created the Highland Lakes and provided the first electricity to many towns in the Hill Country. But beyond their historical and economic significance, Texas' lakes and rivers also make really fun vacation spots.

Whether you spend a day swimming in the Nueces (see Page 54), launching a boat to discover the pristine views at Fall Creek Falls (see Page 8), or relaxing on the serene shores of Inks Lake (see Page 32), don't let the summer pass without taking advantage of Texas' many scenic waterfronts.

I'm lucky enough to live nearby

Pedernales Falls State Park, which has become a family favorite. On our first family drive to the park this spring, few clues emerged as to what lay ahead. As we traversed the rolling Hill Country, stands of oak and juniper obscured the river and its broad limestone falls. But a short downhill hike from the trailhead revealed the splendor of this Texas gem.

As with all state parks, there's something for all ages and desired activity levels from swimming, fishing, and birding to wilderness camping and hiking (my 2- and 4-year-old children ably hiked the trails down to the falls, awed by the huge rocks and tall outcroppings on the opposite bank).

Whatever corner of Texas you find yourself in this summer, seek out your favorite waterway and dive in!

Emily R Stone

EMILY ROBERTS STONE, Editor

While wading and swimming is prohibited at the falls, Pedernales Falls State Park offers swimming in designated areas.

EDITOR'S NOTE



Texas Strong

The survival of the Big Tree—a more than 1,000-year-old live oak in Goose Island State Park near Rockport—became a symbol of Texas' resilience in the wake of Hurricane Harvey.

AS WE WERE FINISHING THIS issue, Hurricane Harvey made landfall on the Texas coast. After battering coastal treasures like Rockport and Port Aransas, the hurricane caused unprecedented flooding that affected millions of Texans. While we only had to contend with heavy wind and rain here in Austin, we watched in horror as the storm left many dead, countless injured, and vast areas of homes and businesses flooded or destroyed. We checked in with family members, friends, and colleagues in Houston, Kemah, Port Arthur, Corpus Christi, La Grange, Wharton, and elsewhere. And we thought of you, our dear readers, many of whom live in Houston and were certainly affected by this devastating turn of events. As a former Houstonian, I was heartbroken to see the images of entire neighborhoods underwater and residents being rescued by boat after having to abandon their homes.

But alongside the photos of flooded roadways and damaged homes, Texans' resilience and bravery were also on display. A convoy of H-E-B rigs headed from San Antonio to Victoria to deliver food, water, and

generators to the city of nearly 70,000 residents. Private boat owners took to flooded streets in the Houston area to rescue stranded families. Restaurants prepared meals to hand out to tireless first responders. And neighbors, despite facing their own troubles, continued to be neighborly, offering whatever they were left with—a dry home to wait out the storm, extra supplies of food and water, or simply an encouraging word or prayer as the hours and days of uncertainty dragged on. This characteristic strength and charity will be essential to carrying Texas through the difficult recovery ahead. The full extent of Harvey's destruction is still unknown as I write this, but for our part, we promise to keep you updated when attractions and destinations are restored and again ready for visitors. Travel and tourism will be a vital component of rebuilding these beloved Texas communities.

EMILY ROBERTS STONE, *Editor*