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Then & Now  
 1823 - 2023  
 TRHFM  
 Newsletter



September 2023

### 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

### Summer Renovations

Thank you to our summer visitors! Following years of improvements to Interstate 35, and the COVID pandemic, visitors returned in substantial numbers. The TRHFM has recovered to about 65% of attendance levels before COVID and construction to make much needed improvements to Interstate 35. The visitors from around the world have been gracious and supportive, and our June revenues increased 36% above June of last year. These monies fund our nonprofit operations, educational, preservation and research programs.



Replacement of State historic attraction signs on I-35 has helped considerably. The new brown directional signs were installed in April 2023.

We are especially grateful to our staff who have provided first-rate experiences for visitors. From learning about the museum through the web and social media, to their arrival, exhibit tours, educational programs, and shopping in the store, the staff has been instrumental in ensuring that visitors have a great time.



If you haven't visited in a while, escape the summer heat, and spend an afternoon in the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame.

### Three New Texas Ranger Interviews

Every summer, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum hosts "Texas Ranger Talks" enabling the public to listen to presentations by active-duty Texas Rangers. Rangers also participate in an on-camera interview as part of the "Discovering the Legend" program, produced by MyWacoTV and Municipal Information. These videos are now available to watch online, on TV and are circulated to 50+ cable channels across the State.



Discovering the Legend #48  
(Ranger Laura Simmons)



Discovering the Legend #47  
(Ranger Troy Wilson)



Discovering the Legend #46  
(Ranger John Lingle)

**Episode 46:** Ranger John Lingle talks about his experiences as a Texas Ranger, his Ranger inspirations and how he balances investigations with paperwork.

<https://mywacotv.com/video/dtl-ep46-ranger-john-lingle/>

**Episode 47:** Ranger Troy Wilson discusses his experiences as a Texas Ranger, his Ranger inspirations, life-work balance of being a Ranger, and his specialty as a drone and scanner operator.

<https://mywacotv.com/video/discovering-the-legend-47-ranger-troy-wilson/>

**Episode 48:** Ranger Laura Simmons talks about her experiences as a Texas Ranger, how she became a Ranger, and balancing motherhood with being a Ranger.

<https://mywacotv.com/video/discovering-the-legend-48-ranger-laura-simmons/>

Thank you to Rangers John Lingle, Troy Wilson, Don Stoner and Laura Simmons for your presentations during our annual *Texas Ranger Talks*. In addition, we owe a special "Thank You" to Lieutenant Patrick Peña for coordinating the Rangers' schedules.

### Fly Over Video

Enjoy a bird's eye view from a drone on a flight from the grounds outside and into the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum, soaring through exhibits, the rotunda, gift shop, the Lone Ranger exhibit, and Knox Center. The video airs on MyWacoTV station, on City of Waco - Public Information and TRHFM Facebook as well as on the Museum's website.



[Please click here to watch the fly over on Facebook.](#)

### Two New Majors

Beginning September 1st, Wende Wakeman became the Major of Company "F" in Waco and Billy Jack Mims the Major of Company "D" in Weslaco. Major Wakeman becomes the first female Texas Ranger to command a company. Congratulations on your promotions.



Wende Wakeman



Billy Jack Mims

### Story Time & Craft Days Return

Our *Story Time & Craft Days* return this fall to finish out the 2023 Bicentennial year celebrations. Activities run 10am-1pm on the second Saturday of the month and are

included with regular museum admission.

October 14- Spooky Campfire Tales  
November 11- Veteran's Day  
December 9- Cowboy Holidays



Join us on Saturday, December 9th  
10am to 1pm for our final monthly  
Story Time & Crafts Day: Cowboy Holiday!

Bring a donation for Compassion and receive  
FREE admission from 9am-1pm (one item per person).  
Compassion is a transitional home for families in Waco  
and is seeking gifts for children and parents as well as  
household supplies and toiletries for the apartments.

[www.texasranger.org](http://www.texasranger.org)

<https://www.facebook.com/CompassionWaco/>



### Melba Saenz Day in City of Palmview

Please join us in congratulating the first female to make Captain of the Texas Rangers. August 2nd was formally recognized as Melba Saenz Day in Palmview to recognize her accomplishments and leadership in law enforcement. Captain Saenz is from Palmview also began her career as a Police Explorer in the city. Mayor Rick Villarreal and the Palmview City Council presented the honor.



[Please click here to read the full article on the day.](#)

### Retiring as Advisory Board Chairman



Hank Whitman

Henry "Hank" Whitman has been a member and Chair of the Hall of Fame and Museum Advisory Board since 2012, contributing to many projects and improvements.

He has an extensive background in law enforcement, having served as a Texas DPS Trooper, Criminal Intelligence Investigator, and Texas Ranger. He rose to the rank of Chief of the Texas Rangers, and after retirement served as Commissioner of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. He was recently elected County Judge in Wilson County.

During his tenure as Board Chair, he helped to facilitate the opening of the Armstrong Texas Ranger Research Center, the 50th anniversary of the Hall of Fame and Museum, several major gifts of artifacts and funds, and the ramp up to the Texas Ranger Bicentennial. We are grateful for his support and guidance and he will continue his association as an Emeritus member of the Advisory Board.

### Fall Lecture About Bonnie And Clyde


Please join Historic Waco on Tuesday, September 19th for a fall lecture on Bonnie and Clyde. The lecture will be free for Historic Waco members and \$5 for general admission. Please call Historic Waco at (254) 753-5166 for more information.


HISTORIC WACO FALL LECTURE:

**BONNIE AND CLYDE**


Admission is \$5 and free for HW members or students with a valid school ID.

Tuesday, September 19th, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm  
Lee Lockwood Library 2801 West Waco Drive






historicwaco.org  
(254) 753-5166



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Historic Waco Foundation



Sponsored by the  
McLennan County  
Historical Commission

### Gift Shop Feature: Ladies T-shirts

For our monthly gift shop feature, we are excited to share our new ladies cut t-shirts. The Museum shirt features either a yellow or pink acid wash background. \$25.00 + Tax

The Waco shirt features a daisy with "Waco, Texas" in script as the stem. It is available in light blue and light green. \$18.00 + 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!

### Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Bicentennial™ Support

Contribute to the TRHFM in honor of the Texas Rangers Bicentennial™ in 2023.

With a \$100 contribution, you will receive:

1. A limited-edition enameled bronze pin featuring a Texas Ranger Bicentennial™ seal
2. A certificate signed by an active or distinguished retired Texas Ranger
3. Your name or family name on the online roster of Bicentennial Supporters™
4. A one-time-use family admission ticket (admits 4) to the Museum.

\$90 of the contribution qualifies as a charitable contribution. The Texas Ranger Hall of Fame is a 170(c) government-owned nonprofit.

Please [click here](#) to learn more about the program.



Texas Ranger Hall of Fame Bicentennial Pin

Trademarked by the Texas Dept. of Public Safety  
Designed by the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum



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ENJOY  
\$2.00 OFF

Expires 9/30/2023

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

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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