

# Texas Folklore Society



## *Paisanos,*

This January Newsletter has most of the “usual” information (member news, highlights of the upcoming meeting, a Member Spotlight, etc.), but the overall format is a bit different. Inside, you’ll find a couple of pages dedicated to the new website, including instructions on how to use it most effectively. This new technology offers lots of opportunities manage your membership to stay connected.

This year, we’re meeting for the first time in Tyler, Texas, the Rose Capital of America. The Registration form is on Page 5; tear it out and use it to help us plan for the meeting, as well as update your personal information.

### Inside this issue:

New Website Instructions	2-3
TFS Folks, Miscellaneous News, and Upcoming Events	3
2017 TFS Meeting Details	4
Meeting Registration Form	5
2017 Meeting Program	6
Member Spotlight	7

## It’s time to pay your 2017 Dues... And to register for the upcoming meeting.

Many of you have already used the new website to pay your 2017 Dues online. You can still call the office and pay over the phone, and some have mailed in a check the “old fashioned way,” and that’s great, too! No matter how you do it, it’s that time. It’s also time to begin making preparations to attend this year’s meeting, which will be April 21st-23rd.

We voted at last year’s meeting to increase the cost of Registration from \$10 to \$25, as the costs for putting on our events have risen in almost every area. However, this year we’ve been able to make some special arrangements with the Tyler CVB and the hotel we’re using, and you’ll find that some costs have actually *gone down*. The tour is free, as is the President’s Pre-Hootenanny Reception, where we’ll provide snacks and beverages—thanks to the generous sponsorship from Schreiner University. The cost of the banquet is also only \$25, and room rates are just \$104—both are the lowest they’ve been in years.

To prepare for the transition to our new website, I worked with **Charlotte Blacksher**, our new Office Secretary and Treasurer, to validate each membership we had on record. We sent out the usual “done letters” to folks who hadn’t paid their Dues by the end of August, but we also reached out to some long-time members who seemed to have drifted away. Several renewed their memberships, at least partly because of the new online payment method. At the close of 2016, our membership was at **336**. Help us by paying as soon as possible, in any way you choose, and send in your Registration for the 101st Annual Meeting now. Also, don’t forget to tell others about the TFS, and invite a friend to the meeting.

## **FYI: [www.texasfolkloresociety.com](http://www.texasfolkloresociety.com)**

When we launched the new website back in October, we sent each member an email explaining how to log in to the system, as well as a few things that you'd be able to do. Here is more information on some of the available features, as well as detailed instructions on how to use them.

### **Manage Your Membership**

This website is *interactive*; members can log in and keep current with their own TFS memberships. On the home page click on the "login" button at the top right. Your "user name" is your primary email, and everyone was issued a temporary password via email when the website was first launched. After logging in, you can change your password to something that you will remember and others can't easily "hack." If you have not yet logged in, the password may have expired. You can always contact us in the main office and we'll send a new, temporary password. (These are randomly assigned, and we don't know *anyone's* passwords.)

Once you have logged in, click on your name at the top right of the page; you'll be taken to a page called "My profile." There, you can select the "Edit profile" button and update your address, phone number, email addresses, or family members' names. You can even change your membership level. For clarification, each "membership" is issued one account; a member can pay for a Single membership, and he or she can still provide multiple family members' names on the contact information—listing the names just helps us know more about you and who is connected to each membership. However, if you pay for a Family membership, everyone in that member's family would need to use the email and password issued to that membership account.

### **Pay Your Dues**

Although we've had online payments available for years, that was only through PayPal. This new system is easier—you won't be taken to a different login screen—and it's just as secure. Of course, you can still send us a check, or call us on the phone and give your card information to **Charlotte**. You DO NOT have to make Dues payments online. This is merely an option. One option we had included but later made unavailable is the "auto-renew" feature, which would allow members to have a deduction taken out of their bank account each year, whenever it came time to renew their Dues in January. This seems to be an "all or nothing" feature—either ALL members do it, or none can. We'll keep working on this with Wild Apricot and keep you posted.

If you're already a member, you will receive a "heads up" email notice in December, saying that your Dues for the upcoming year will need to be paid soon. On January 1st of each year, you'll receive another notice, saying that it's now *officially* time to pay your Dues (which run by calendar year). Go to the "My profile" page and click on the button that says "Renew to January 1, 20xx" (depending on the year). DO NOT click on the "Join TFS" button on the home page—that is only for new members; clicking on it generates a new account.

### **Keep Informed, and Share Information**

We've reduced the number of pages linked to the home page, but you can still click on buttons that tell about our History, our Publications, our Meetings, and Upcoming Events (which you can link to your online calendar) related to our organization or our members. Updates are made more easily now, directly from our office, so we can add new events, photos, or special announcements as soon as you send them.

## In the Future...

What can we do with this website in the future? Well, there are many possibilities, but we're considering a few at the very least. Not all will work for what we do, and some lead to legal complications that we're still trying to sort out. We will notify everyone as soon as any of these features can be used.

### Online Meeting Registration

We're using the traditional Registration Form (located on page 5) this year, but we plan to have an online form available next year. It takes a bit of creativity—and technical expertise—to get an online form that looks similar enough to what our members are comfortable with and also does what we need it to.

### Discussion Forums

Wild Apricot has built-in “forums” that we will be able to activate so members can discuss various topics of interest. We're making arrangements with a few members who may be willing to manage these forums.

### Membership Directory

We know that some of you would like to have access to other members' contact information, but it's not as easy as it sounds. There are also legal considerations. We are reviewing the privacy settings to see how to limit access to information on each membership account. Again, not everyone wants their phone numbers or addresses available to just anyone. We want to do what's best for all members with each of these features.

## TFS Folks, Miscellaneous News, and Upcoming Events

**Charlie McCormick** has officially taken over as President at Schreiner University; we congratulate him on his new position—and we thank Schreiner for its continued sponsorship of the President's Pre-Hootenanny Reception on Friday evening at the annual meeting. In other news, **Floyd Elliott** is making available e-editions of his book *Tangled Trails* to any TFS member; holler and we'll get you connected.

Please help us to remember those members we've lost in recent months, including **John Oglesbee**, **Betty Miller**, and **Sarah Greene**. Just days before this went to print, we learned that **Jerry Young** had also died; **Jerry** had been a member since 1998, and had given papers at meetings as well as published articles in our books, and he was currently a Councilor on the Board. Memorial contributions can be made in honor of any of these members, and you can designate your funds to go to specific purposes; for example, **Sarah's** daughter Sally has requested that contributions in her name be used for Student Travel Stipends.

We're always looking for new ways to expand our “outreach” efforts—to *any* group that might have folks who would be interested in what we do in the Texas Folklore Society. If you are going to be speaking or performing at an event, let us know in the main office; we will supply you with brochures, handouts, and any other materials you may need (even books for display). This past fall we had TFS members share information with thousands of folks at a variety of events, including the National Cowboy Symposium in Lubbock, the East Texas Historical Association meeting in Nacogdoches, and at the George West Storyfest. We also have our regular session coming up at the Texas State Historical Association meeting in March.

## 100th Annual Meeting, in Austin

The 101st annual meeting of Texas Folklore Society will be in Tyler on April 21, 22 and 23, 2017. We have never met there before, but I can guarantee that we have a lot of exciting events planned. You will recall that at last year's meeting we voted to increase the Registration fee to \$25 to cover the increasing costs of hosting the meetings. Don't let that prevent you from coming! Take a look at the program and you'll see that you don't want to miss any of the papers or presenters that will be at this meeting.

We had over 180 people registered for the meeting in Austin, and I hope we can have at least that many this year, so make your plans now—and invite some friends to come with you. **Charlotte Blacksher** and I have been working with Tyler's city and hotel representatives, who are really excited to be hosting us. For the Friday Afternoon Tour, we'll be visiting the Tyler Rose Museum and the Tyler Municipal Rose Garden (all in one stop). The Tyler CVB is providing an ice cream social, along with a barber shop quartet for our enjoyment while we're there.

All events will be held at the Holiday Inn Tyler—South Broadway:  
5701 South Broadway, Tyler, Texas 75703.

This hotel has free parking, and it features a full-service restaurant, a pool (with an in-door kids' pool), and all the typical 21st Century amenities, including a Sundry Shop, a Fitness Center, and a Business Center and high-speed Internet service.

It's also easy to locate; South Broadway is also Hwy 69, which runs North/South through Tyler, and the hotel is just blocks away from the mall. Visit the hotel's web site or use your gps for directions. Normal check-in time is 3:00 p.m., and checkout is at noon; call for other requests.

Make your reservations by April 7th and ask for the TFS rates: just \$104 for all standard rooms with a King or two Queens.



***Holiday Inn Tyler—  
South Broadway***

**1-903-561-5800** (direct)

**1-866-744-4621** (toll free)

They recommend calling the direct line, and make sure that you ask for the special group rate for the TFS. For reference, our group code is **A96**. If you are reading this electronically, click on the following hyperlink to make your reservations directly with the hotel online:

**[Book your group rate for Texas Folklore Society April 21-23, 2017 here](#)**



***The Purple Hulls***

Travel in Tyler is simple, so we are not contracting with a bus for the tour; we'll simply have a caravan from the hotel. If you plan to go, meet in the hotel lobby at 2:30 that afternoon and we'll carpool and head over in two waves to arrive in time for the tour which will begin at 3:00. Once we arrive, we are going to split into two groups—one will tour the Museum while the other goes through the Garden, and then we'll switch. As usual, we'll be finished by 5:00 so that you can return to the hotel to rest a little or go eat at a favorite restaurant before the other activities begin.

Schreiner University is hosting a President's Pre-Hootenanny Reception, from 7:00-8:00 on Friday. Check the space on the Registration Form to let us know if you'll be there, just so we will know an approximate head count, as there will be not only beverages, but also finger foods available.

The Saturday night banquet will feature a buffet with three entrée choices, and kids meals are only \$5. **The Purple Hulls** will provide music while we eat—with our traditional second-night Hoot afterwards.

2017 Texas Folklore Society Meeting, Tyler, TX

April 21-23, 2017

Qty.

\_\_\_\_\_ Adult Registration(s) at \$25 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Adult Banquet Ticket(s) at \$25 each \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Youth Banquet Ticket(s) (chicken strips, fries, fruit, and a drink) at \$5 each \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Friday Afternoon Tour(s) (FREE, but we'd like a head count) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Friday President's Pre-Hootenanny Reception (FREE) \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Method of payment (**circle one**): Check    MasterCard    Visa    Discover    American Express

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ code on back \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) for Meeting Registration: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) for Banquet: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) for Tour: \_\_\_\_\_

Update Membership Information

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone, Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*Remember to call or email to request table space if you wish to display books, tapes, or other wares.\*\*\*

Meeting Registration fees must be received by **April 14th**. If you have questions or comments, contact us via email at tfs@sfasu.edu or call us at 936-468-4407. Please mail this form and your payment to the Texas Folklore Society office: **P. O. Box 13007-SFA Station, Nacogdoches, TX 75962-3007.**

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**101st Annual Meeting of the Texas Folklore Society  
Tyler, Texas—April 21-23, 2017**

**All paper sessions in the Constellation Ballroom at the Holiday Inn Tyler—South Broadway**

**Friday, April 21**

- 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. Registration, in the hallway outside the Constellation Ballroom  
3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Tour of the Tyler Rose Museum and Tyler Municipal Rose Garden (meet in Hotel Lobby at 2:30)  
7:00 to 8:00 p.m. President's Pre-Hootenanny Reception (sponsored by Schreiner University), Constellation Ballroom  
8:00 p.m. Hootenanny, Constellation Ballroom

**Saturday, April 22**

- 8:00 a.m. to Noon Registration, in the hallway outside the Constellation Ballroom  
8:15 a.m. Welcome: TFS President Meredith Abarca and local dignitary

Session 1 (8:30 to 10:00 a.m.) Chair: Vicky Rose, Elgin

- "Refrain from Prison: How the Texas Music Prison Program Connected the Incarcerated and 'The Free'" Ruth Massingill, Huntsville  
"J. Mason Brewer and Texas Folklore" Milton Jordan, Georgetown  
"Shhhh—It's a Secret: The Lore of Texas Freemasonry" Scott Bumgardner, Houston  
"My Last Cattle Drive" Floyd Elliott, Overton

Session 2 (10:15 a.m. to 11:45) Chair: Linda Wolff, Victoria

- "Nature Lore from the Texas Hill Country" LeAnne Sharp, Rio Frio  
"The Simple Stick and String" Tyler Green, Nacogdoches  
"Tummies and Tanks: Filling Up at Texas Gas Stations" Erin Scott, Austin  
"What Nostalgia Tastes Like: Tribute Cooking in the Twenty-First Century" Gretchen Lutz, Houston

Board Luncheon (Noon) Northstar Room

Session 3 (1:45 to 3:15 p.m.) Chair: Jerry Ingham, Spicewood

- "The Stalactite Speakeasy: Legends and Lore of Longhorn Caverns" Erin Marissa Russell and Matt Gibson, Denton  
"Davy Crockett: Fact, Fiction, and Folklore" Bill Groneman, Kerrville  
"Buffalo Soldiers of the Frontier" Clifton Fifer, Kerrville  
"Texas Sized Pranks" Karen Haile, Tarpley

Session 4 (3:30 to 5:00 p.m.) Chair: Carol Hanson, Cedar Hill

- "Cowboy Songs to Vietnam Songs" Ken Baake, Lubbock  
"Family Trees, History, and Stories" Dina Lopez, McKinney  
"Acoustic Music Festivals in Texas" Jean Granberry Schnitz, Boerne  
"Fun and Folklore at Family Reunions" Peggy Wedgeworth, Nacogdoches

6:00 p.m. Cash Bar, Constellation Ballroom

7:00 p.m. Banquet, with Entertainment by The Purple Hulls, Constellation Ballroom, followed by a Hootenanny

**Sunday, April 23**

Session 5 (8:45 to 11:45 a.m.) Chair: Acayla Haile, Maxwell

- "The Tet Festival in Texas" Nguyen Nguyen, Pearland  
"Geronimo the Steer" Mary Margaret Daugherty Campbell, George West

Business Meeting: President Meredith Abarca presiding (followed by a short break)

- "Texas around the World" David Schnitz, Orange Grove  
"Games We Never Should Have Played" Ken Untiedt, Nacogdoches

Closing Ceremony: President Meredith Abarca

## Member Spotlight: Clifton Fifer

When the TFS met at Kerrville in 2015, a new member walked in and practically took over the Friday night Hootenanny—and everyone there was glad he did. **Clifton Fifer** has been a fixture at the meetings ever since, and this year he'll be giving a paper. Here is your chance to know him better.

**Clifton's** family moved to Texas in 1871, and they will celebrate 150 years of being Texican in 2021. He was raised in the beautiful Hill Country, which makes him Kerrville born and Kerrville bred.



**Clifton Fifer.**

**Clifton** speaks of having the best of both worlds as a child. His parents and grandparents lived next door to each other, so he ate at mom and dad's, but when it was time to go to sleep he slept at grandma and grandpa's house. It was there that he developed his love of music, history, and folklore. Grandma sang spirituals, Grandpa told tales, and there was always something on the stove or cooking on a pit in the yard. Everyone who came by had a story to tell.

There were a number of churches in the community, as well as six juke joints. One was owned by **Clifton's** aunt and uncle: The Green Door. Country and Western, and Blues was the music of the day.

His early education came from his grandparents and parents: lessons of love, and of life. His formative years were at a segregated school, Doyle High. After integration he attended Tivy High School, and then he attended college and graduated from Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, where he played football and ran track.

In 1977, he completed his bachelor's degree in history, and health and physical education. He was blessed to teach in the Kerrville Independent School District for 33 years. The first 21 years he taught Texas History and coached. When his grandmother fell ill he stopped coaching and was re-assigned as a teacher so more time could be spent at home.

**Clifton** had success as a teacher. His accolades included receiving the Daughters of the Republic of Texas Teacher of the Year, the first Golden Apple Award as Teacher of the Month in Kerrville (presented by the *Kerrville Daily Times*), the Mirabeau B. Lamar Award of Excellence, Region 20 Teacher of the Year, the National Citizenship Education Teacher Award Texas VFW District 13, and the George Bush Outstanding Education Award.

Everybody is famous in a small town—for legends, lies, their history and folklore—so it is with **Clifton**. He is known as a storyteller, but others have told their own stories of *his* adventures, like the time he fought a bear and lived to tell about it, when he chased and caught a deer just because, and when he outran the football team backwards as they were running forwards.

**Clifton** enjoys woodworking, visiting nursing homes, singing, dancing, camping, and sharing time with his son, granddaughter, nieces and nephew, and with the Lord.



**Clifton showing someone how to play the tub bass.**

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## Texas Folklore Society

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Member address

*The Texas Folklore Society—preserving  
and presenting the folklore of Texas  
and the Southwest for over 100 years.*

# Join us in Tyler, Texas for the 101st Annual Meeting of the TFS!

The Texas Folklore Society has met in 33 different cities over the last century, but we've never held a meeting in Tyler—until now. Make plans now to attend the 101st Annual Meeting of the Texas Folklore Society, and see what the Rose Capital of America has in store for our members.

How about a tour of the Tyler Rose Museum and the Tyler Municipal Rose Garden? City representatives are also planning an ice cream social and a barber shop quartet for our entertainment during the Friday afternoon tour—which is all free! To top it all off, we have the lowest prices for room rates and the Saturday night Banquet that that we've had in the last several years.

We have a Program that includes papers on prison music, cattle drives, bow making, cave lore, Buffalo Soldiers, Davy Crockett, family trees and reunions, and folk games no kids should have ever played. Visit our website ([www.texasfolkloresociety.org](http://www.texasfolkloresociety.org)) to learn more. If you're not a member, you can join online, and if you are a member you can look inside this newsletter to learn about all the different things you can do with this new, interactive website.

