

TEXAS FOLKLORE SOCIETY



WINTER 2024

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Tarleton State University

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TexasFolkloreSociety.Org

Established 1909

The Texas Folklore Society collects, preserves, and shares the practices and customs of the people of Texas and the Southwest.



From the Director

Kristina Downs, PhD

Hey there, Paisanos!

It's starting to feel like spring in Stephenville, but I have enough experience with the Texas weather to know winter probably isn't quite done with us yet.

This fall, I taught a Texas Literature course. It was the first time **Tarleton State** offered such a course. As many of you know, our own **J. Frank Dobie** was a pioneer of teaching Texas literature, insisting it had an important place in the literary canon. Our syllabus included everything from cowboy songs to contemporary novels and past Paisanos such as Dobie, **Jovita González**, and **Américo Paredes**.

In October I joined TFS members in presenting at the East Texas Historical Association's fall meeting. **Scott Bumgardner** presented on the draw of stories in genealogical research, **Darrel McDonald** discussed legendary Texas

horticulturalist and humanitarian Henry Stringfellow, and I shared my research on Texas's legends of not-quite-dead outlaws. Richard Orton chaired the panel. We're currently organizing a panel for ETHA's 2024 meeting, and I hope some of you will participate.

I enjoyed meeting several of you at the Texas Book Festival in Austin in November, special thanks go out to **Bernadette Nason** for organizing and hosting our first FolksGiving. We hope to host more events like this in the future.

Our 105th annual meeting is almost here! We have an amazing lineup of presentations as you will see in this newsletter. I particularly love that this meeting is going to bring together the future of Texas folklore through our New Voices panel with discussions of some of our past luminaries, **John Lomax** and **Américo Paredes**.

Hoping to see many of you very soon!

All the best!

Kristina



5 Ways to Support our Annual Meeting

1 Attend. Join us at our **105th Annual Meeting March 28–30 at The Westin San Antonio North**. Event registration is available online [here](#), and a print form is on the back page of this newsletter. Hotel information is on page 2.

2 Invite! Share your excitement about the Annual Meeting. Bring friends, colleagues, and family members.

3 Create. Door prizes are a big hit. Consider assembling a gift basket representing your local community, highlighting your culture, celebrating your favorite traditions, or featuring your craft.

4 Donate. Make a one-time, designated monetary donation. Tax-deductible donations can be made online, via telephone,

and by mail. Your contribution will add to the general meeting fund and help TFS with meals, entertainment, awards, and other related costs. Contact the home office at (254) 445-5447 for more information.

5 Sponsor. Consider sponsoring any of our events, such as the President's Pre-Hoot Reception, one of the sessions, or the annual banquet. Sponsorships are great for businesses, organizations, and families; they can also be made to honor a loved one. They include recognition through event signage, programs, social media promotions, and event mentions. Email TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com for information.

REGISTER Today!

Book a Room and Stay Awhile

Registration for our 105th Annual Meeting is now open, and you can register online [here](#) or print and complete the registration form (included on the back page of this newsletter) and mail it to Texas Folklore Society, Box T-0295, Stephenville, TX 76402. If you haven't had the chance to pay your 2024 dues, you can include your renewal with your online or mail-in registration—a single payment and you're done.

Paisanos traveling from out of town can book a room in the TFS block at our host hotel. **The Westin San Antonio North** is a nineteen-story luxury hotel located not far from San Antonio International Airport at **921 Colonnade Boulevard**.

The venue offers complimentary on-site parking, an indoor swimming pool, and free Wi-Fi service. Check-in time is at 3 p.m., and check-out is at noon.

If you're traveling from out of town or want to stay closer to the event, **reserve a room in the TFS block online [here](#) or call the hotel at (210) 691-8888** and mention Texas Folklore Society.

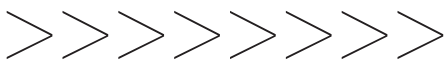


105th Annual Theme: Celebrating Folklore & Culture

Coming up with a theme for our 105th Annual Meeting that captures the true spirit of San Antonio was a no-brainer for the Program Committee, according to Chair **MaryAnn Blue**.

"Our meeting, 'Fiesta Folklórica,' scheduled for March 28–30, is not long before the beginning of Fiesta® San Antonio," MaryAnn explained. "What better time to celebrate Texas Folklore Society, our passion for folklore, and our vibrant host city? Our Annual Meeting is a true fiesta!"

Fiesta is Spanish for an event or festival marked by celebration. San Antonio's ten-day celebration is marked with parades, a pilgrimage to the Alamo, "A Night in Old San Antonio," an oyster bake, and more.



Fun Facts About San Antonio

1 San Antonio is one of the most haunted cities in the nation. A long list of locations that are purportedly haunted includes the Menger Hotel, the Alamo, Victoria's Black Swan Inn, Woman Hollering Creek, the Spanish Governor's Palace, and the Emily Morgan Hotel.

2 San Antonio's Market Square is the largest Mexican market outside of Mexico. Located on West Commerce Street downtown, the three-block outdoor plaza has been around since the 1700s.

3 The city is home to the state's only UNESCO World Heritage Site, the San Antonio Missions, which include the Alamo, Mission Concepcion, Mission San Jose, Mission San Juan, and Mission Espada.

4 San Pedro Park is the oldest park in Texas, and the second-oldest in the United States; it was established in 1852.

Places To Go	
•	MURAL RIDES BIKE TOUR
•	THE RIVERWALK
•	WITTE MUSEUM
•	NATURAL BRIDGE CAVERNS
•	MAJESTIC THEATRE
•	MCNAY ART MUSEUM

Fiesta® San Antonio was started in 1891 when a group of citizens decided to honor the memory of the heroes of the Alamo and the Battle of San Jacinto with a Battle of Flowers Parade. That historic commemoration still takes place, but for more than a century, Fiesta® has grown into a celebration of San Antonio's rich and diverse cultures and is one of this nation's premier festivals. This year, the event will be held April 18–28. Visit fiestasantonio.org for more information on the city's annual event.





105th Annual Program: *The Locals*

When considering the location for this year’s meeting, **San Antonio** was the only choice. We missed the chance to gather in the city in 2020, and in addition to providing a sense of place like few other cities can, San Antonio is a crossroads of cultures—Mexican, European, and Southwestern—and offers a unique personality. It is also a bustling city of about 1.5 million people, with tons of talent. Luckily for TFS, some of the talented folks rooted in the city—**Tish Hinojosa**, **Naomi Shihab Nye**, and **Cary Clack**—are participating in this year’s program.

“Many thanks go out to Program Committee Chair MaryAnn Blue, the committee, and Paisano **Dr. Robert “Bob” Flynn** for pulling together a fantastic lineup of professional and laymen folklorists for what is shaping up to be another fantastic gathering,” TFS Executive Director Kristina Downs said.

Honoring TFS history, San Antonio native, Mexican-American Singer-Songwriter, and master of folk music, Tish Hinojosa, will share insight on her once-in-a-lifetime apprenticeship with celebrated writer and folklorist Américo Paredes (1915–1999). A Brownsville native who authored *With His Pistol in His Hand* along with several other books of scholarship, fiction, and poetry, Paredes served as TFS president from 1961–62.

And, just as exciting as her presentation, Tish will also perform during Friday night’s banquet. Her music catalog now includes more than a dozen studio albums, as well as live albums and retrospectives. She has played at the White House and the Texas governor’s mansion. She was inducted into the Texas Songwriters Association Music Legends Hall of Fame in 2018 and awarded membership to the Texas Institute of Letters—the second songwriter to receive the honor of membership—in 2019.

The vibrant city of San Antonio is not the only common thread, Naomi Shihab Nye and Cary Clack—like several of our Paisanos past and present—are also members of the esteemed Texas Institute of Letters, a nonprofit Honor Society founded in 1936 to celebrate Texas literature and recognize distinctive literary achievements.

Long-time San Antonio resident, Trinity University graduate, and poet and songwriter Naomi Shihab Nye is also a master of her craft. Her honors include awards from the International Poetry Forum and the Texas Institute of Letters, the Carity Randall Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Lifetime Achievement Award, and four Pushcart Prizes. She has been a Lannan Fellow, a Guggenheim Fellow (like Américo Paredes), and a Witter Bynner Fellow. In 1988, she received the Academy of American Poets’ Lavan Award.

Naomi’s presentation, “Poems are Little Pockets of Folklore in Our Lives,” will feature her poetry and poems from children.

Cary Clack is a columnist and editorial board member with the *San Antonio Express-News*, where he was the first Black metro columnist and the first Black member of the editorial board. He has covered local and national news, events, and social issues for three decades. In 2017, he was inducted into the Texas Institute of Letters. The Texas Associated Press Managing Editors awarded him opinion writer of the year in 2021, followed by awards for editorial writing in 2022 and both general column writing and editorial writing in 2023. He is the author of *Clowns and Rats Scare Me* and *More Finish Lines to Cross*. He lives in San Antonio.

Cary’s presentation will center on his latest book, *More Finish Lines to Cross*, a collection of his best columns since returning to the *San Antonio Express-News* in 2019. It includes more than

eighty pieces about the issues of the day, from Donald Trump, Joe Biden, and the war in Ukraine to the impact of COVID, the death of George Floyd, and the mass shooting of schoolchildren in Uvalde.

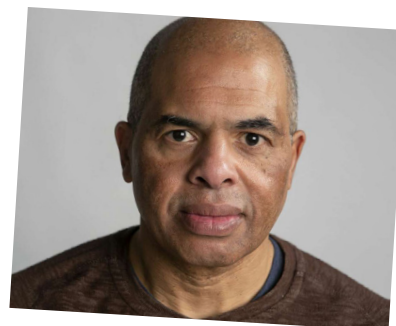
Local special guests also include representatives of The Alamo Trust and The Esperanza Peace and Justice Center.



Américo Paredes and Tish Hinojosa



Naomi Shihab Nye



Cary Clack

A Program Full of Folk and Lore



Kim Lehman



Jill Davis



Mary Harris



Jim Harris

The life and works of a Texas Folklore Society cofounder, folk art and architecture along the border, and the interplay between traditional culture and a pop culture franchise are among the topics taking the stage at the 105th Annual Meeting of the Texas Folklore Society.

Newcomer and storyteller **Kim Lehman** (Smithville) will employ her craft to honor pioneering musicologist **John Avery Lomax**, who co-founded the Texas Folklore Society with **Leonidas W. Payne** in 1909 and served as president for two terms, 1940–42. Lomax, who grew up in Bosque County, collected and preserved tens of thousands of folk songs.

TFS Fellows **Jim Harris** and **Mary Harris** (Hobbs, NM) will reflect on their travels along the borders of Texas, New Mexico, and Mexico with vivid images of desert folk art that highlight the traditions, customs, and practices of the people of the region.

Newcomer **Jill Davis**, an instructor at Tarleton State University, will share research on the interplay of Texas cowboy culture and the Star Wars Universe. Both are powerful and enduring cultural phenomena with distinct myths, symbols, and narratives, and Jill will explore their connections and influences on Texas folklore today.

With dozens of submissions to consider and a limited number of spots to fill, Chair MaryAnn Blue (San Antonio) said the Program Committee’s job was not easy.

“The response to our call for papers was overwhelming,” MaryAnn said. “We had twelve places to fill in our program and more than forty abstracts to choose from. The abstracts were exceptional, well-written, and on time. Our decision was extremely difficult.”

See the complete program on Page 7.

Let’s get together for Folklore, Fun, and a Hoot or Two!



Clockwise from top left: Blanca Jenkins, Shirley Johnson, Carol Bolland, Eric Morrow, Jean G. Schnitz, Lee Haile, and Jacob Stanglin at our 2023 meeting.

The Alamo Trust Invites TFS on a Private Tour

Sight seekers won't want to miss this year's tour, but you'll need to act fast! Our Paisanos over at the **Alamo Trust** have signed on as sponsors of our 105th Annual Meeting and graciously donated a **private guided tour of the Alamo**. But, space is limited to the first 50 registrants.

"We are grateful for this generous donation from the Alamo Trust providing us a rare opportunity for a personal experience at one of the state's most revered sites," Program Chair MaryAnn Blue said. "You may have visited the Alamo in the past, but chances are you have not had the opportunity to see it like this."

Led by Alamo experts, the private guided walking tour explores the outdoor battlefield and iconic Alamo Church and concludes with entry into the Alamo Exhibit at the Ralston Family Collections Center.

The charter bus will load at the Westin San Antonio North at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 28, so make plans to be at the hotel early to register for the Annual Meeting before departing for the Alamo. The tour is set to start around 2:30 and wraps up at 4:45. Following the tour, the bus will return to the hotel, giving tour attendees a little time to freshen up before the evening's President's Pre-Hootenanny Reception and much-anticipated Hootenanny.

The total cost to you for the tour transportation is \$15 per person, but remember **participation is limited to the first 50 guests**. Individuals registering online will have the opportunity to add the optional tour. Those mailing a print form are asked to first call the TFS home office at (254) 459-5445 to reserve your ticket before mailing in your registration form.

Don't Miss Saturday's Finale

While Friday, March 29 offers a day full of events and entertainment, attendees at our Annual Meeting are being reminded that the fun and folklore do not end at that evening's hootenanny. Three papers you won't want to miss and the annual business meeting are scheduled for Saturday, March 30, including **Kim Lehman's** piece on the life and works of John Lomax, **Tish Hinojosa's** presentation on Américo Paredes, and "Jane Long: Mother of Texas" by historian and storyteller **Darci Tucker** (Williamsburg, VA). The Annual Meeting wraps up around noon on Saturday.



Thank You, Sponsors!




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Honoring Fellows, Passed Paisanos

Everyone is invited to Friday's **Celebration Luncheon**, where we plan to honor a few folks and remember others.

Fellows of the Texas Folklore Society who were named in 2023—**Jack Duncan** and **Elizabeth Duncan** (both of McKinney) and **Lee Haile** (Tarpley)—will be presented with their awards. For many of us, when we think about TFS and our fellow Paisanos, lifetime members like Jack, Elizabeth, and Lee come to mind. They write, read, and breathe folklore. They're familiar faces at meetings, but they are also instrumental behind the scenes—at our annual meetings and through their contributions to our publications and service as past presidents, as well as their tireless efforts to attract newcomers to the Society.

Fellows are elected by the TFS Board of Directors, and the award is reserved for TFS members who have done outstanding work for the society and in the field of Texas and Southwestern folklore.

The Celebration Luncheon is provided at no cost to you and sponsored by the TFS Past President's Club, a new tradition

started at last year's Annual Meeting as a time to gather together and applaud honorees, but TFS Vice President and Program Committee Chair MaryAnn Blue said it's also the perfect time to remember Paisanos who have passed away since our last gathering. Following the presentation of awards, we will honor the Paisanos we've lost in the last year, including **David Orton**, who passed away in June. His wife, **Mary Fogel**, is expected to present a rendition of his paper, "Growing up at Brown's House in South Austin." David and Mary had both planned to present papers at our 104th Annual Meeting last April in Waco, illness prevented their attendance.

Everyone is invited to attend the Celebration Luncheon, set from 11:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. on Friday, March 29. While the meal is provided at not cost, make sure to include your participation on your registration form so we can get a headcount for the meal.

If you know of a Paisano who has passed away since our last meeting, please call home office at (254) 459-5445.



Elizabeth & Jack Duncan



Lee Haile

"New Voices" to share folklore research

Family traditions and verbal and material culture are among the research to be shared by participants in the New Voices Student Panel, Session Four, at our Annual Meeting. When we sent out a call for papers from undergraduate and high school students, we received more than a dozen proposals; a handful of them were selected to share their folklore studies.

"We are delighted to bring students back to our Annual Meeting," Program Committee Chair MaryAnn Blue said.

Board members **Linda Spetter** (Eastland) and **Kaitlyn Chacon** (Laredo) and Secretary-Editor/Executive Director **Kristina Downs**, all professors, led

the effort to recruit and rank student submissions.

"It is exciting to see the interest in folklore studies and the sharing of customs, traditions, and beliefs from a new generation," Kristina said. "Student participation is not only encouraging for folklore studies as a whole, it is also great news for TFS. I am excited to welcome these presenters as new members of Texas Folklore Society."

Gabby Walker, a recent graduate of Texas A&M International University (TAMIU), received special recognition for her research on the evil eye superstition and a time-honored folk remedy. Gabby will kick off the student panel at 3 p.m.

on Friday, March 29, with her presentation, "One within the Same."

You won't want to miss what else "new voices" have in store.



Gabby Walker

105th Annual Meeting Program – 2024



Thursday, March 28

12–6 p.m. **Registration**
 12–2 p.m. **Board Meeting**
 1:30–5:30 p.m. **Private, Guided Tour of the Alamo**
 6–7:30 p.m. **President’s Pre-Hootenanny Reception**
 7:30–? **HOOTenanny**

Friday, March 29

7:30 a.m. **Friday Morning Mingle**
 8:30–10:15 a.m. **Welcome**

Session 1

Chair: Kay Arnold (Austin), with introductions by Dr. Robert “Bob” Flynn (San Antonio)
 “Lost Legacy of Letters,” Jean G. Schnitz (Boerne)
 “More Finish Lines to Cross,” Cary Clack (San Antonio)
 “Poems are Little Pockets of the Folklore of Our Lives,” Naomi Shihab Nye (San Antonio)

10:30–11:45 a.m.

Session 2

Chair: Mary Margaret Campbell (George West)
 “Telling the Story of La Bahia Through Myths and Legends,” Scott McMahon (Goliad)
 “The Interplay and Influence of Folklore and Popular Culture on Historical Costumed Interpretation and Living History,” Andrew Gray (Georgetown)
 “Alamo Plan: Update on The Vision for One of Our State’s Most Revered Sites,” Kate Rogers, Executive Director, Alamo Trust (San Antonio)

11:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m.

Celebration Luncheon, sponsored by the TFS Past Presidents Club: Installation of the Fellows of the Texas Folklore and Remembering of TFS Members Who Have Left Us. Presentation of “Growing up at Brown’s House,” by David Orton, read by Mary Fogel (Austin)

1:30–2:45 p.m.

Session 3

Chair: Chris Morrow (Stephenville)
 “Arte Es Vida: Esperanza’s cultural grounding work in San Antonio’s Westside,” Graciela Sanchez, Director, Esperanza Center for Peace and Justice (San Antonio)
 “Folk Art and Folk Architecture of the Big Bend,” Jim Harris and Mary Harris (Hobbs, NM)
 “Lone Star Wars: Examining the Interplay in Texas Cowboy Folklore and the Star Wars Universe,” Jill Davis

2:45–3 p.m.

Friday Afternoon Break & Refresh

3–4:15 p.m.

Session 4

Chair: Blanca Jenkins (Marshall)
 New Voices in Folklore Student Panel, featuring Gabby Walker and Kelly Olson (Texas A&M International University) and Tali Russell (Texas Tech)

5–6 p.m.

Happy Hour Cash Bar

6–7:30 p.m.

Dinner Banquet, Special Entertainment by Tish Hinojosa (Austin)

7:30–?

HOOTenanny

Saturday, March 30

8:30–9 a.m.

Saturday Morning Mingle

9–10:15 a.m.

Session 5

Chair: Vanessa Rogers (San Antonio)
 “Recognizing the Life and Works of John Lomax,” Kim Lehman (Smithville)
 “Jane Long: Mother of Texas,” Darci Tucker (Williamsburg, VA)
 “Un Collar de Perlas and a Most Memorable Mentor,” Tish Hinojosa (Austin)

10:15–10:45 a.m.

Break

10:45–11:45 a.m.

Business Meeting

Alternates:

“Stradivarius Folklore,” Jeri Martin (Dublin)
 “Heroes or Villains: The Mythos of the Texas Rangers,” Jim Matthews (San Antonio)



105th Annual Meeting
 March 28–30, 2024
 San Antonio, Texas

Qty.		
_____	Registration at \$35.00 each	\$ _____
_____	Thursday Tour at \$15.00 each. <i>Space is limited. If you are mailing in your registration and payment, please call (254) 459-5445 to verify availability.</i>	\$ _____
_____	Thursday President's Pre-Hoot Reception (Free but need a headcount)	FREE
_____	Friday Celebration Luncheon (Free but need a headcount)	FREE
_____	Friday Banquet Adult at \$30.00 each	\$ _____
_____	Friday Banquet Child at \$10.00 each	\$ _____
_____	Membership Dues <i>(if you are a newcomer or have not paid annual dues)</i> <i>Rates: Student, \$15; Individual or Organization, \$25; Family, \$30; Paisano Grande, \$30; Individual Lifetime, \$500; Family Lifetime, \$750</i>	\$ _____
	TOTAL:	\$ _____
_____	Sponsorship <i>Please Specify: Past Presidents' Club, Corporate/Organization Sponsorship, or Individual Contributors</i>	\$ _____
	GRAND TOTAL:	\$ _____

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Please mail check payments to Texas Folklore Society, Box T-0295, Stephenville, TX 76402. Meeting registration fees must be received by **March 21**. If you have questions or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out to us at TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com or **(254) 459-5445**.