

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!
Fall is a great time for folklore—from Halloween, to Thanksgiving, to tailgating, to harvest. It seems like yesterday we were waving farewell outside the Hilton Waco. The 104th annual meeting was definitely a success. It was fantastic to meet so many of you—I truly felt welcomed to this big TFS family. We are now well underway in planning our 105th annual meeting, which will be held at the Westin San Antonio North in March 2024. We can hardly wait to gather again.

In the time since our last meeting I've been carrying the TFS banner all over the world (okay, the banner part is a metaphor, but the travel isn't)! I traveled to Sheffield, England to present at the International Society for Contemporary Legend Research annual meeting. I spoke about social media responses to the Dallas Zoo animal thefts—it's always fun to show how traditions emerge even in

very contemporary spaces. More recently I've been at events in San Antonio and Granbury, telling everyone how much fun we have at TFS meetings. Very soon I'll be meeting up with several of you in Nacogdoches for the East Texas Historical Association Annual Meeting.

But I haven't been the only one representing TFS at events around the state! Special thanks go out to Jim Harris and Mary Harris, Gayle Modrall, Peggy Gaskamp, Roy Sanders, Dean Reed, Angela Reed, Carol Hanson, Jacob Stanglin, and John Pelham for attending events and making sure people know about TFS.

Hoping to see many of you very soon!

All the best!

Kristina

SAVE THE DATE

105th Annual Meeting

March 28–30, 2024



Longtimer Lee Haile is being celebrated with back-to-back honors. Haile received the Hermes Nye Hootenanny Award at the 104th Annual Meeting and will receive Fellows honors in 2024.

Proposal deadline extended

Ok, Paisanos, it's time to prepare to share! What's your folkloric passion? Food? Folk music? Folk Tales? Crafts? Family Lore? Folk Art? Celebrations?

The Texas Folklore Society welcomes proposals for papers for presentation at our 105th Annual Meeting on March 28–30, 2024, at the Westin San Antonio North. For those unfamiliar with our Annual Meeting, it's a time when folklore scholars and enthusiasts come together to share their love of the folklore of Texas and the Southwest through a series of paper presentations, shared meals, social gatherings,

and evening hootenannies.

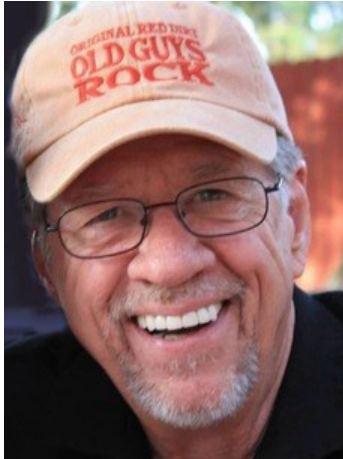
If you already have a draft paper, that is perfect to submit. If not, your proposal can be an abstract explaining the topic of your paper with a summary of the content and a description of your presentation. Incorporate whatever you need to make your presentation come alive or to demonstrate your craft; we can help you with any audio-visual needs.

Paper presentations must be 15 to 20 minutes in length. **Please submit proposals to TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com by the extended Nov. 15 deadline.**

MEMBERSHIP

FAREWELL, *Paisano*

Paisano **David L. Orton** (Austin), 79, passed away on June 8, 2023. David was born on August 6, 1943, in Longview. He is survived by his wife, fellow Paisano Mary Fogel whom he called his soulmate, best friend, and travel companion.



David retired from funeral service as a licensed Funeral Director and Embalmer in 2014 and was honored by the Texas Funeral Directors Association for having been licensed in the State of Texas for 50 years as a licensed Funeral Director and Embalmer.

David worked at the old Cook Funeral Home in downtown Austin when Charles Whitman went to the UT Tower on August 1, 1966 and began shooting. He drove an ambulance from the funeral home that day, taking injured people to Brackenridge Hospital ER, and was later on the team that embalmed Whitman and several of his victims. He wrote a paper for the Texas Folklore Society about the events of that day in August. It was presented, by him, at the Annual Meeting of the Texas Folklore Society, of which he was a proud member, and at the Texas State Historical Association meeting.

He was also proud to be a veteran of the United States Navy serving aboard the USS Nantahala (AO-06) during the Cuban Missile Crisis, standing on the bridge along with the Captain and Executive Officer as they watched missiles on board; his ship was also on the recovery team for John Glenn's Mercury flight.

Rest easy, David.

TFS sends much love to Mary and the family.

TFS shares information about the passing of our beloved Paisanos when information is known or provided. If you have information to share, please send it to TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com

Committees Get Busy

Many thanks goes out to the marathon of Paisanos who have flocked to support TFS and the home office by volunteering on one of our new subcommittees. The Storyteller Outreach Subcommittee—Chair **Donna Ingham, Bernadette Nason, MaryAnn Blue, Gary Whitaker, and Kristina Downs**—has held a couple of meetings and have organized a small gathering slated for Sunday, Nov. 12, for which you can find details below. Meanwhile, the Library Outreach Subcommittee held its initial meeting. The group—Chair **Justin Swink, Margaret Cox, John Pelham, Gwen Dixie, Gayle Modrall, Donna Savage, Dean Reed, Carol Hanson, and Betty Peters**—is establishing a plan to attract public libraries into our membership. Thank also goes out to members of the Marketing and Communications subcommittee who assisted with our fall newsletter. That group will hold its first meeting in the near future.



FOLKSGIVING

NOVEMBER 12



2:30-5 PM

**At the home of Bernadette Nason
7933 Vinewood Lane, Austin 78757**

Several of the state's finest storytellers will share tales!
Refreshments will be served.

Space is limited.
Please RSVP to (254) 459-5445 or TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com
no later than Friday, Oct. 20.

SPOTLIGHT ON NEWCOMERS

Newcomer **Vanessa Y. Rogers** (San Antonio), host of the *Fabric of Folklore* podcast, says she is much like the folktales she and her guests explore on the podcast.

"I am a tapestry of traits and characteristics," she says. "I am a dreamer, an adventurer and a storyteller. I am a teacher, a life-long learner, and a writer. There are many strands of fabric, of histories and experiences woven together to bring me to host the podcast."

After obtaining a communication degree from the University of Texas at Austin, Vanessa taught English overseas. She



earned an International MBA from the University of Texas at San Antonio following several years of traveling and teaching. Today, she is a writer, wife, mom, podcaster, and lover of folktales.

"I am particularly drawn to folk stories because

they represent what we, as humans, hold dear," she says. "Folktales attempt to explain the mysteries of the world and name the magic that stitches our world together. They have always been some of my favorite stories to read to my children, because they speak to our desire to understand our shared life experiences."

Vanessa has welcomed a lineup of esteemed folklorists and scholars to the show, including TFS Secretary-Editor/ Executive Director Kristina Downs, Ph.D., (episode 2) who spoke on true crime and folklore, and lifetime

member Norma E. Cantu, Ph.D. (episode 15), who shared her research on Los Matachines, a dance-drama tradition with Indigenous and Hispanic roots that is hundreds of years old.

Vanessa invites other fellow Paisanos with a piece of folklore to share—through an appearance on the podcast or submitting an article for the show's blog—to send their ideas to vanessa@fabricoffolklore.com

It's great to have you, Vanessa!

Kathleen Brown (Southlake), who joined TFS in June, has lived in North Texas since 1986 and came via her birthplace, Chickasha, Oklahoma, the San Joaquin Valley of California, and Austin. Along the way, she has collected over 500 vintage aprons—some of her own, others from family, and many that remain anonymous.

As a single in Austin, Kathleen was a founding member of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association and a first co-president of the Austin Women's Soccer League. In 2006, after her children started college, she taught vegetarian

cooking classes at a local recreation center. She also began hosting an annual local Apron Celebration, a tradition which, after 13 years, took a hiatus during the global pandemic.

Kathleen continues to wear her apron and encourages others to do the same through her Facebook page, My Apron Story. She was married to her "clothesline architect," John, for 42 years. The couple shared a passion for local history and wood, paper, and textile collecting. Her son and daughter have "made-in-heaven" spouses and blessed her with two grandsons and



two granddaughters. In her limited spare time, Kathleen wears an apron as she plays piano, cooks, gardens and works her power tool, the sewing machine.

According to Carolyn Terry, curator of the 4,000+ collection of aprons at the

Apron Museum in Iuka, Mississippi, Kathleen is one of a handful of apron collectors in the United States who regularly shares and shows her private collection. Kathleen offers private "apron celebrations" at historical societies, museums, libraries, and women's groups and does small celebrations at retirement and assisted living communities. You may view her apron clothesline on her Facebook page or contact her at myaprons-tory@gmail.com for more information

Welcome, Kathleen!

MEMBERSHIP

BIENVENIDOS

NEW MEMBERS! >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Little Elm Public Library

Carrie Elzie, San Antonio

Shanna Pepples, Amarillo

Magana Family, El Paso

Joe Chacon, Laredo

Helmick-Richards Family, Dallas

Simpson Family, Austin

Caroline Crimm, Huntsville

Rick Davis, Seguin

Rachel Gonzalez-Martin, Austin

Valerie Kimble, Norman, Oklahoma

Cory McCray, Stephenville

Jaye McLaughlin, Denton

Colin Urwin, Ballymena, Ireland

Betty Peters, Red Rock

Charles Wukasch, Austin

Charles Eichenberger, Houston

Kent Rush, San Antonio

David Thompson, Austin

Kathleen Tower, McQueeney

Coyote Shook

Matt Murphy, Prosper

Jayden Franke, Liberty

Harva Kuykendall, Jacksboro

Maria-Luisa Ornelas-June, Houston

Harriet Lomax, Houston

Noah Bearden, Weatherford

Eldrena Douma - (Laguna, Tewa-Hopi)

A Professional Storyteller residing in Canyon, Eldrena is a writer and author who travels throughout the United States sharing stories and presenting workshops on creative writing and storytelling. Her experience as a storyteller began as a child, listening to her family members and other adults in her community tell stories about life experiences, history and folktales.



For her contributions to storytelling in the Southwest, she is a recipient of the John Henry Faulk Award from the Tejas Storytelling Association located in Denton. Today, Eldrena continues to develop stories of her unique creation, which stand to become as much a part of her rich heritage as the traditional stories she grew up with.

We're excited you've joined us, Eldrena!

Dollar inducted into TX Institute of Letters

Congratulations to TFS newcomer **Heath Dollar** (Fort Worth), on his recent induction into the Texas Institute of Letters!



Heath's work, *Old Country Fiddle: Stories*, won the Texas Institute of Letters (TIL) Jesse H. Jones Award for Best Book of Fiction in 2022. He was inducted into the distinguished honor society at the institute's annual banquet on April 29.

Heath has also won the *Texas Observer* Short Story Contest and the Gary Wilson Short Fiction Award, been named a finalist for the TIL's Kay Cattarulla Award for Best Short Story, and twice been recognized as a semifinalist for the American Short(er) Fiction Prize. He is also the author of *Waylon County: Texas Stories*

Heath's work, which has appeared in numerous literary journals, is also included in *A Fire to Light Our Tongues: Texas Writers on Spirituality*. He lives in Fort Worth.

Bravo, Heath!



Harris recognized for contributions to the arts



Hats off to 2022 TFS Fellow **Jim Harris** (Hobbs, NM) for being among the recipients of the 2023 (New Mexico) Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts.



NM Department of Agriculture, and as an NM Eminent Scholar. He taught college literature and writing for 31 years, spent 21 years as a museum director, and has written more than 1,500 weekly newspaper columns on art and history.

"I want to congratulate the 2023 Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts winners," said Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham announcing the honor in August. "This year's recipients come from every corner of the state, showcasing the immense possibilities of the arts across New Mexico. These artists are musicians, authors, sculptors and designers who push the boundaries of telling stories about the state and their lives through art. I am proud to recognize and show off such talent to the rest of the world."

"I don't feel like I belong in the same room or gallery with the many great artists and writers who have received the Governor's Award, the painters such as Georgia O'Keefe, Peter Hurd, and R. C. Gorman, and the writers such as Rudolfo Anaya, Tony Hillerman, and Max Evans," said Jim. "However, it 'sure feels fine' and fulfilling to be on the list, and I am humbled by and thankful for the award."

Jim's prior honors include accolades from the New Mexico (NM) Association of Museums, NM Humanities Council,

On October 20, NMA a pair of events will recognize Jim and other recipients of the Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts.

Congratulations, Jim!

TFS Makes Headlines

Make sure to check out the next edition of **Authentic Texas**, "the heritage magazine of Texas," which is expected to hit newsstands this month. *Authentic Texas*, is dedicated to state heritage and culture, preservation efforts, and travel, and the next edition of the quarterly statewide publication will shine a light on Texas Folklore, and TFS was invited to submit a feature article.

The article shares information on the storied history and bright future of TFS. The piece highlights the Lomax, Dobie, and Abernethy legacies, as well as recent membership growth, ongoing outreach efforts, and our annual meeting.

Authentic Texas is available by paid digital subscription as well as paid print subscription for home or office delivery and can be found for sale at retail outlets throughout the state. It's also available at more than 100 visitor centers, historic sites, museums, and select cultural and heritage sites in the Lone Star State.

ROAD TRIPPIN'
Have an event to share? Please submit to:
TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com

American Folklore Society Annual Meeting • November 1–4 • Portland, Oregon

Dobie Dichos • November 3 • Oakville

Texas Monthly BBQ Festival & BBQ World's Fair • Nov. 4–5 • Lockhart

Texas Book Festival • November 11–12 • Downtown Austin

39th Annual Texas Storytelling Festival • March 7–10, 2024 • Denton

Texas Folklore Society 105th Annual Meeting • March 28–30 • San Antonio

Prefer Print?

If you prefer to receive a print copy of the TFS Newsletter, give us a call at (254) 459-5445 or shoot us an email at

TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com

Meet the Executive Committee

TFS President Meredith E. Abarca (El Paso) is a food scholar and English professor at the University of Texas at El Paso. A past TFS president who served her first term in 2016–2017, Meredith defines herself as “a child of the kitchen.”



Meredith one day found herself getting a doctorate and writing about the transformative power that food holds in our lives. She has continued to research and write about this power in the books *Voices in the Kitchen* (2006); *Rethinking Chicana/o Literature Through Food: Postnational Appetites* (2013), *Latin@s' Presence in the Food Industry: Changing How We Think about Food* (2016), and in numerous articles in scholarly journals and edited collections.

Meredith is the founder and curator of El Paso Food Voices, an open-source digital archive and the *El Paso Food Voices* podcast series.

Interim Treasurer Blaine Williams (Dripping Springs) and his significant other, Elaine Davenport, joined TFS around 2000. Blaine, a native of Tyler, is interested in genealogy and family lore.



Blaine is a consultant in the field of grant-based housing rehabilitation programs. His hobbies include golf, genealogical research, and travel. A fun fact about Blaine's golf game is that he has had two holes-in-one, two years apart during 4th-of-July week.

Past President Donna Ingham (Bertram) is a retired English professor turned author and storyteller. She has the dubious distinction of having been named the Biggest Liar in Texas, but sometimes she tells the truth. A recipient of the John Henry Faulk Award from the Tejas Storytelling Association and the Oracle Award for Regional Excellence from the National Storytelling Network, she is also on the Texas Commission on the Arts touring roster. Donna and her husband, Jerry, live in a cabin in a clearing on 22 acres just outside of Bertram.



Vice President MaryAnn Blue (San Antonio) is a retired Spanish teacher with 45 years of experience in the classroom. She is also a storyteller and a teacher of youth tellers. She has given keynotes and workshops at language conferences on using storytelling in language acquisition and has been a featured teller at the Texas Storytelling Festival, the George West Storyfest, and the first annual Dobie Dichos.



She is a recipient of two awards from the Tejas Storytelling Association: the John Henry Faulk Award for her outstanding contribution to the art of storytelling in the Southwest, and the Colson-Herndon Educator's Award in appreciation for her advancement of storytelling in education. She continues to work as a Spanish tutor, storytelling and public speaking coach, and consultant. She is married to David Coffman, and together they have nine grandchildren, ranging in age from three to 22.



Secretary-Editor/Executive Director Kristina Downs (Stephenville) is the daughter of a Texan and a Louisianan, but she grew up all over the United States courtesy of the Air Force. She tried out a variety of disciplines and careers before discovering that folklore studies was what she had been looking for all her life. She holds a doctorate in Folklore from Indiana University, a master's in folklore from George Mason University, and a bachelor's in Latin American Studies from the College of William and Mary.



Her research focuses mostly on legends, particularly the ways legends interact with history, literature, news, and digital culture. Her dissertation examined representations of Indigenous heroines in the United States and Mexico.

Introducing 2023–24 Directors



John Pelham (Granbury) was raised on a small livestock farm outside the Central Texas town of Whitney. It was the 1950s when his dream of ranching seemed out of reach, so he decided to pursue his secondary goal of teaching Vocational Agriculture to high school students.

Two years at Tarleton State College, followed by two years at Texas A&M College yielded him a bachelor's in Agricultural Education, a Texas teaching certificate, and a commission in the United States Army. Following his military service, teaching jobs weren't available, so John took a job as a 4-H agent with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, which became his career home. John served in both the Texas and Missouri extension systems, completing his Master's and Doctorate degrees from Texas A&M and Mississippi State along the way.

Retirement has brought him and his wife, Rita—also a Tarleton alum—back to Texas to be close to their two sons, their wives, and five wonderful grandchildren. They travel a lot, primarily to cowboy poetry gatherings, where John pursues his retirement passion, poetry composition and performing. Since retirement, he has published six books of original poetry.



Linda Spetter (Eastland) first joined TFS in the 1980s but took a hiatus for several years while teaching in Japan. Her areas of folklore studies and interest include folk narrative and the Japanese and Mexican-American cultures.

Linda was born and raised in Sweetwater, home of the world's largest Rattlesnake Roundup. She worked in newspapers for 10 years before going to graduate school and becoming an English professor. Linda has an M.A. in English from Texas Tech and a Ph.D. in folklore from Indiana University. She spent 17 years (1996–2013) teaching at a university in Shimonoseki, Japan, before returning to Texas in 2013 to become an English professor at Cisco College, where she also teaches Mass Communication and Journalism courses and supervises the *Wrangler Express*, which is the student-produced social media publication. Linda's hobby is sports photography.

Richard Orton (Nacogdoches) joined TFS in 2020 and brought a well-developed interest in East Texas Freedom Colonies, saying he also enjoys storytelling that takes him to different frames of reference and allows him to learn from people of differing backgrounds.



Richard is a Nacogdoches native who spent 15 years working in Austin and with the State in sexual assault prevention and crisis services. He is also a documentary photographer who spent four sessions photographing the Texas House of Representatives. He returned to Nacogdoches in 2007.

In the late 1980s, Richard visited the Community of County Line for the first time and “became aware of a world he did not know existed as a white man.” After many visits, Richard compiled a historical photography book, *The Upshaws of County Line: An American Family*, that includes more than 50 images and was published in 2014.

Richard enjoys road trips, loves the American Southwest, and finds family wherever he can.



Award-winning storyteller/actress/author, **Bernadette Nason** (Austin) hails from England but performs all over the world. She is acclaimed for her spirited retelling of multicultural folktales and her personal stories pulled from the contrasting lifestyles of places she's lived, including England, Africa, Saudi Arabia, and America.

Bernadette brings a theatrical flair to everything as an artist and in life. She has appeared in many movies, the most famous of which is *Miss Congeniality*. A company member of Austin Playhouse and an alumnus of Austin Shakespeare, ONSTAGE Theatre, and Pollyanna Theatre Co., she's regularly seen in regional theatre productions.

Bernadette has been a touring artist with the Texas Commission on the Arts since 2002. She presents programs annually to as many as 30,000 audience members of all ages, but predominantly K–12 students.

LEADERSHIP

Dina Lopez

(Lubbock) joined TFS in 2017, bringing with her an interest in Mexican-American folklore in West Texas and education.

Dina was born in Roswell, New Mexico, and affirms that she has heard all the alien jokes. She moved to Huntsville, Alabama, which she still considers her hometown, when she was ten months old. Dina attended high school in Oklahoma, college in Texas, and married her husband Jose in Puerto Rico where they lived for ten years.

As a teacher, mother, homeschooler, translator/interpreter, college instructor, and university-press editor, Dina brings many talents to the TFS board. She was also a taekwondo martial arts instructor and competitor for about ten years.

Dina is a creator and loves to repurpose items, including old blue jeans and she crafts all sorts of things such as doormats, planter bases, and quilts. She also likes to make things from wood, whether from scratch or repurposed.



Gayle Modrall

(Lubbock) was born and raised in Houston, where she attended public schools. She obtained a bachelor's degree in elementary education with minors in reading and history from the University of Texas and a master's in librarianship and information management from the University of Denver.

Gayle's professional experience includes serving as the children's programming coordinator and interim branch manager for the Fort Bend County Library System and working at various school libraries in the Houston and Lubbock areas over the years.

Now retired, Gayle volunteers with the Friends of the Lubbock Library and for the curator of clothing and textiles at the Museum of Texas Tech University. She is a member of Covenant Presbyterian Church, where she crochets prayer shawls and attends many activities.



Lucy Fischer-West

(El Paso) grew up in El Paso, the daughter of a Mexican mother and a German father. Her memoir, *Child of Many Rivers: Journeys to and from the Rio Grande* was published in 2005 by Texas Tech University Press. It received a Border Regional Library Association Southwest Book Award, a WILLA Literary Finalist Award from Women Writing the West, and a Violet Crown Special Citation from the Writer's League of Texas.

Her essays have appeared in *BorderSenses*, *Password*, and five Texas Folklore Society publications. She is featured in *The Best of Texas Folklore Volume 2* from Writer's AudioShop, *Literary El Paso*, and *Grace and Gumption: The Women of El Paso*.

In 2014, Lucy, a career educator, was named Teacher of the Year of the El Paso Diocese. In 2015, Humanities Texas presented her the Outstanding Teaching of the Humanities Award. She attended her first TFS meeting in 1971 and is a past president.



Justin Swink (Watauga) was born and raised in the Fort Worth area and currently works as the Reference/Technical Services Librarian at the Little Elm Public Library. Justin holds a master's in English Literature and a Master of Library Science with an Information Organization focus, both obtained at the University of North Texas, Denton.

Outside of work, Justin spends time with his family. He is the proud father of two amazing daughters, Violet and Catalina, and has been happily married for 16 years. Justin and his wife, Renee, met while working at Half Price Books in 2003.

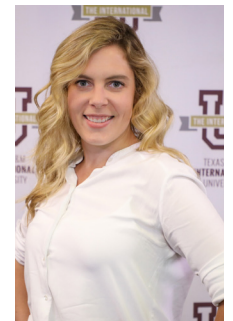
In his spare time, Justin can be found with his nose in a book or traveling around Texas with his family. He enjoys camping, fishing, and hiking. Justin's interests include the history and literature of Texas and the American West.

Justin started exploring the treasures of Texas and American folklore a few years ago.



Kaitlyn Chacón (Laredo), Assistant Professor of English at Texas A&M International University, holds a doctorate from Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. She is a specialist in early modern English literature, with particular interests in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, poetry, early modern folklore, and cultural geography.

Her teaching interests include British Literature from the Medieval and Early Modern periods. Her current research project, titled, "Fairies in Modern English Drama: Fictionality and Theatrical Landscapes, 1575–1615," focuses on changes to fairy characters in English dramatic texts across the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries.



PAISANOS Flock to Waco

Folklore, fellowship, food, and fun took centerstage at our 104th Annual Meeting, the first since prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The long-anticipated return to in-person gatherings beckoned longtimers and newcomers to the Waco Hilton on April 6–8. The grand fete kicked off with the President’s Pre-Hoot Reception, sponsored by the College of Liberal & Fine Arts at Tarleton State University, and a long-awaited hootenanny, led by **Lee Haile** and featuring many familiar faces and several new ones, too.

More than 100 attendees were at the event, which included an informative and entertaining program with presentations on topics like accordions in Texas cultures, the coming-of-age custom of cruising the drag in small-town Texas, and preserving folklore through food stories. Attendees also heard papers on “fiestas on the border,” the quarrel between seminal folklorists and its impact on the history and folklore of South Texas, and odd stories behind Texas towns’ names, to name a few.

At Friday’s Celebration Luncheon, sponsored by the TFS Past Presidents Club, **Jim Harris**, **Mary Harris** (both of Hobbs, NM) and **Jean Schnitz** (Boerne) were installed as 2022 Fellows of the Texas Folklore Society. Lee Haile received the first-ever Hermes Nye Hootenanny Recognition Award. Friday evening’s banquet featured a delectable

buffet, with door prizes awarded throughout the event.

During the annual business meeting, members confirmed the nominations for incoming directors. **Meredith Abaraca** (El Paso) was named 2023–24 TFS president, **MaryAnn Blue** (San Antonio) was appointed Vice-President, and new directors—**Kaitlyn Culliton** (Laredo), **Justin Swink** (Watauga), **Gayle Modrall** (Lubbock), and **Bernadette Nason** (Austin)—were also confirmed. More than two-dozen past TFS presidents, including outgoing President Donna Ingham, lined up to pass the gavel to the incoming president.

Meeting arrangers included **Kay Reed Arnold**, **Lori Najvar**, **Jillian Tyler**, and **Amanda Jenkins**.

Many thanks go out to door prize donors, including Larry Joe Taylor’s Rhymes & Vines Music Festival (Erath County), The Home Place at Ace (Stephenville), Stephenville Main Street, Kay Arnold (Austin), Stephenville Tourism & Visitors Bureau, Dublin Bottling Works, Lucky Vines Vineyard & Winery (Dublin), Office of Development at Tarleton (Stephenville), College of Liberal & Fine Arts, and the W.K. Gordon Center for Industrial History of Texas (Thurber).



Lifetime members John Pelham and Charles Williams



Herb Bolland, Carol Bolland, and Chuck Smith



Elaine Smith, Laura Niland, Lucy Fischer West, and Shirley Johnson

HAPPENINGS

RANCH VERSE: *Outreach & Entertainment*



Cowboy songster Andy



Special guests Dave Stamey, Randy Rieman, and Andy Wilkinson entertain.



Paisanos Dean Reed, Gayle Modrall, Angela Reed, Jacob Sanglin, and Mary Harris line up to share information about TFS.

Texas Folklore Society leaders and members made great connections at the inaugural “**Ranch Verse: Poetry, Song, and Storytelling**” in early August. The event, held at the National Ranching Heritage Center on the campus of Texas Tech University in Lubbock, was hosted by cowboy songster and poet Andy Hedges.

Daytime events were free and open to the public and featured working cowboy stories, cowboy poetry, western music, and discussions on ranch culture; there was also a sold-out nighttime performance, benefitting the ranching heritage center. TFS signed on as an event sponsor, and a marathon of Paisanos flocked to support the outreach and recruitment effort.

“Texas Folklore Society leaders are excited to support the efforts of the National Heritage Ranching Center in bringing folks together for a fun and informative day highlighting the state’s ranching heritage while discussing the folklore—customs, traditions, and

practices—of working cowboys and their influence on the humanities in Texas and beyond,” said Executive Director Kristina Downs, Ph.D.

Special guests included Boots O’Neal, a working cowboy from 6666 Ranch in Guthrie; Randy Rieman, a working cowboy,

rawhide braider, and master reciter from Missouri; Dave Stamey, a working cowboy and western entertainer out of California; the legendary Red Steagall, actor, musician, and cowboy poet from Azle; and Andy Wilkinson, singer, songwriter, and poet from Lubbock. TFS sponsored a discussion on the poetry, music, and art emerging from Western culture featuring Steagall, Hedges, and Stamey.

“Gratitude goes out to event organizers and a huge thank you to each of the Paisanos who volunteered to promote TFS at this successful and celebrated first-year event,” said Amanda Jenkins, TFS Office Manager/Membership and Volunteer Coordinator. “We appreciate TFS volunteers like these who invest time, travel, and related expenses while sharing the good news about TFS.”

Members representing TFS at Ranch Verse 2023 were 2022 Fellows of the Texas Folklore Society **Jim Harris** and **Mary Harris** (Hobbs, NM), board member **Gayle Modrall** (Lubbock), **Peggy Gaskamp** and **Roy Sanders** (Caldwell), **Dean Reed** and **Angela Reed** (Stephenville) **Carol Hanson** (The Colony), and **Jacob Stanglin** (Hurst).

“Volunteers had the opportunity to share information about the Society, our annual meeting, and mix and mingle with entertainers, presenters, and cowboy culture enthusiasts,” Amanda added. “Many folks at Ranch Verse were excited to know we are still going strong after almost 115 years. They also got to meet individuals who were learning about our organization for the first time.”

Photos by Jim Harris