



*Established 1909*

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

## From the Executive Director

Kristina Downs, PhD



Howdy, Paisanos!

In my last note, I talked about how rainy the spring had been. Well, now I'm all set to complain about how hot and dry the summer has been! Here in Texas, I suppose, we do most things in extremes, and as they say, if you don't like the weather, wait five minutes.

Like most college towns, Stephenville is noticeably quieter in the summer, but here at the home office we've stayed busy. In May I attended the annual meeting of the International Society for Contemporary Legend Research (ISCLR) on the campus of Utah State University. One of ISCLR's early leaders was former TFS president Sylvia Grider, who was this year awarded the Linda Dégh Lifetime Achievement Award. Utah State is home to valuable folklore archives including the Wayland Hand Archive of American Popular Beliefs and Superstitions. My favorite gem from this collection was, "A bottle of water from Texas, placed

at the back of the kitchen cabinet of the water commissioner will end a city's drought." This bit of wisdom was mailed to the New York City Water Department Commissioner along with a bottle of water.

Things are starting to take shape for our 106th Annual Meeting as you will see in this newsletter. We hope to see all of you there, and we hope that you'll bring friends.

In the meantime, TFS will be participating in events around the state. You can read about some of these events in this newsletter and I hope you will volunteer to assist with them. Volunteering is a great way to spend time with fellow paisanos while spreading the word about our society. We're particularly excited to host John Lomax III's *Lomax on Lomax* here on the Tarleton campus in October and hope some of you will attend.

Stay cool, my friends (if that's possible)!

## Call For Papers

### Presenters Sought for Annual Meeting

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? Tell us all about it!

The Texas Folklore Society welcomes proposals for presentations at our **106th Annual Meeting on April 17–19, 2025**, in **Fort Worth** at the **Radisson Fort Worth North-Fossil Creek**.

For those of you 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 presentations of papers, shared meals, social gatherings, and evening hootenannies.

If you already have a draft paper, submit it. If not, your proposal can be an abstract that explains the topic of your paper, with a summary of the content and a description of the style of your presentation. Go into enough detail so the committee can clearly understand your presentation. As you plan your presentation, you're welcome to incorporate whatever you need to make it come alive or to demonstrate your craft. Presentations must be 15 to 20 minutes in length.

What aspects of folklore are you interested in? Are you an expert in a particular craft? Are you an artist, a storyteller, a musician? Do you have expertise in a specific area of folklore? We would love for you to share it with us. Presenters from our 105th Annual Meeting are welcome to submit, but preference will be given to those who did not present in 2024. While we will accept proposals on all folklore-related topics, we strongly encourage submissions with clear connections to Texas and the Southwest. Proposals are **DUE OCTOBER 16**.

Presenters must be TFS members. Not a member? No problem! It's easy and affordable. Annual dues start at just \$15 for students and \$25 for individuals, with options for family, organization, and lifetime memberships.

The Program Committee—**Jo Virgil** (Chair), MaryAnn Blue, and Kristina Downs—eagerly await your proposals. **Please send your proposal to [TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com](mailto:TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com) by October 16.**

# SAVE THE DATE

106th Annual Meeting

**April 17–19, 2025**

Radisson Fort Worth North-Fossil Creek



## It's Always a Hoot!

Paisanos lined up to share stories, music, and merriment during our 105th Annual Meeting in San Antonio earlier this year. There are two evening hootenannies during the Annual Meeting, and everyone is invited and encouraged to join in the fun.



**Clifton Fifer, Jr., Jean G. Schnitz, and Chuck Smith**



**Scott Bumgardner**



**Shirley Johnson**

## 5 Ways to Support Our Annual Meeting

**1 Attend.** Join us at our **106th Annual Meeting** on April 17–19, 2025, at the Radisson Fort Worth North-Fossil Creek. Save the date, and we will share registration information in early 2025.

**2 Invite!** Share your excitement about the Annual Meeting with friends, colleagues, and family. Bring them along for two days of folklore presentations and our evening hootenannies.

**3 Participate.** The call for papers has been issued. If you have folklore research to share, make sure to submit your abstract by the October 16 deadline. For more information, see page 1.

**4 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. Donations are tax deductible.

**5 Sponsor.** Sponsorships are great for businesses, organizations, and families; they can also be made to honor a loved one. Sponsors receive recognition such as event signage, programs, social-media promotions, and mentions during the event. See page 8 for more information, print, and share sponsorship details with business owners and community leaders you know who might be interested in helping TFS further our mission of collecting, preserving, and sharing the customs and practices of the people of Texas and The Southwest.





# TFS Talks *Local Legends*



**TFS Secretary-Editor/Executive Director Kristina Downs talks local legends with an adult audience at the Dublin Public Library as a part of its summer reading program.**

## New Director Joins TFS Board

While it's hard to nail down exactly when **Karen Trikilis** (Austin) joined the Texas Folklore Society, she has been a member for at least six years. Her good friend Jo Virgil, current TFS Vice President, introduced Karen to the Society. Recently, Karen was appointed to the TFS Board of Directors to serve the final year in an unexpired term recently vacated by Dina Lopez (Lubbock).

Born and raised in Houston, Karen retired after 43 years working at a busy downtown Austin law firm. She received her bachelor of arts degree from the University of Texas at Austin. Karen's hobbies include sailing and reading. Her proudest accomplishment is her 34-year-old daughter, Therese, a UT alumna living in Portland, Oregon, and working for Nike.

Karen is on the board of directors for the Brush Square Foundation, which supports the O. Henry and Susanna Dickinson museums. She is enrolled in UT OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) classes; her group, "Forum,"

meets every Friday. She also enjoys volunteering weekly at the Blanton Museum and participating in numerous discussion groups.

When asked about her folklore interest, Karen said she favors the arts.

"My primary interest is the preservation of history through art media," Karen said. "The written word of the hootenanny music and the storytelling make a wonderful patchwork quilt of memorable history."



**Karen Trikilis**



## We Need You!!!

### *Join a Committee Today*

We need your help getting TFS committees up and running! While we would love to see some new faces step up to serve, Paisanos with past committee experience are also encouraged to volunteer. Most, if not all, committee meetings will take place via Zoom. You don't have to be a CPA to serve on the Finance Committee or have written a ton of grants to join the Grants Committee. If you're interested in one of these areas, we'd love to hear from you.

**Marketing, Membership, and Communications Committee**—Chair: **Jim Matthews**. This committee will be instrumental in finding new outreach opportunities, attracting newcomers, and assisting with our newsletter and marketing efforts.

**Sponsorship Subcommittee**—Chair: **Mary Margaret Campbell**. This committee plans and expands sponsorship opportunities for TFS and assists with soliciting sponsors for our organization, Annual Meetings, and other events.

**Grants Subcommittee**—Chair: **VACANT**. This committee explores grant possibilities and assists the office with the application process.

**Financial, Banking, and Development Committee**—Chair: **Blaine Williams**. This committee is seeking a member with a bookkeeping, finance, or related background.

**New Voices in Folklore Subcommittee**—Chair: **VACANT**. This committee assists with the recruitment of student papers for our Annual Meeting and the selection of presenters. Ideally, volunteers should currently work with university students or have done so in the past.

# Saying Goodbye to a TFS Giant

We are mourning the loss of one of our own. **James Ward Lee**, a past president and Fellow of the Texas Folklore Society (2005) passed away Monday, July 8. We are sending peace and comfort to his loved ones while celebrating “Jim” as an integral part of TFS History and champion of Texas folklore.

Jim paid his first dues, making him an official TFS member, in 1958 and remained a lifetime member through his final days. He read his first paper in 1959 and always brought a unique wit and wisdom to folklore. Through the decades, Jim’s contributions to TFS and our publications were numerous and he was long known as the Society’s favorite lecturer.

In our 2005 publication, his biography states that Jim was a native Texan born in the Woodlawn Hospital in Birmingham, Alabama. Jim declared himself a native Texan in 1986 during the Sesquicentennial when he discovered he was the only person who could pronounce the word on the first try.

“He was so warm and so funny,” Kay Arnold recalled. “He has gone on to the Great Hootenanny in the Sky, wearing funny socks and going on about his love of pie. [I] Will really miss him.”

In a 2015 interview, Jim said his greatest honor was being named a Fellow of the Texas Folklore Society a decade earlier. The honor recognizes leaders in the Society whose contributions include promoting the organization, recruiting members, fundraising, giving outstanding papers, writing for our publications, mentoring new members, and serving on the board of directors.

“Fly away to glory, Jim,” Elizabeth Duncan, 2023 Fellow of the TFS, said. “You leave a rich legacy for us.”

Read some of Jim’s contributions to TFS publications online, here:

1961, [“Arkansas Variants of Some Texas Folksongs”](#)

1968, [“The Penny Dreadful in the Man’s Magazine...”](#)

1982, [“The Glamor of Gay Night Life: The Classic Honky Tonk”](#)

1994, [“Legends in Their Own Time: The Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders”](#)

1997, [“Eating Over the Sink and Other Marital Strategies”](#)

If you would like to make a donation to TFS in Jim’s memory you can do so by contacting the home office or clicking [here](#). You can designate if you would prefer that the funds be used for specific purposes (such as student travel stipends).

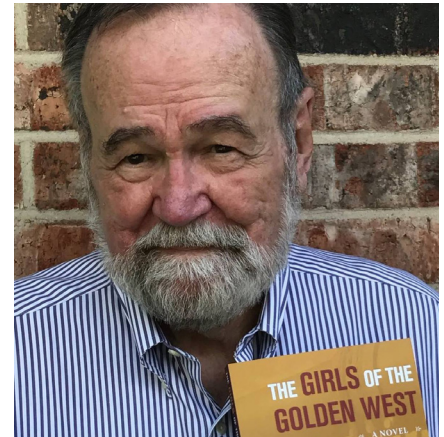
## James Ward Lee 1931–2024

Jim was born in Leeds, Alabama to Mamie Earnest and Clarence Grady Lee. He attended Leeds public schools until high school when he attended boarding school at St. Andrew’s School in Sewanee, Tennessee, graduating in 1948.

Jim enlisted in the Navy in 1950 upon learning that the G.I. Bill would pay for his future education. He served on the destroyers USS Renshaw and USS Radford during the Korean Conflict. After the end of hostilities, aboard the Radford, Jim participated in Operation Castle and Operation Ivy, escorting and observing above-ground hydrogen bomb tests in the South Pacific.

Following the end of his enlistment in 1954, Jim obtained a BA in English from Middle Tennessee State University, an MA from University of Arkansas and a PhD from Auburn University. Jim began his employment at North Texas State University (now UNT) in 1958, rising through the ranks from Instructor to Assistant Professor, full Professor and eventually as Chairman of the English Department. Jim retired in 1999 after 41 years at UNT.

Jim was also an author and editor with the UNT Press, a press specializing in publishing works about the South or by Southern authors. Jim was the editor of



**James Ward Lee**

*Texas Goes to War*, and author of *Texas my Texas*, *The Girls of the Golden West*, and *A Texas Jubilee* among others. Jim drew upon the colorful characters of his boyhood in rural Leeds, Alabama, fictionalizing and resetting them in his adopted home state of Texas.

Upon leaving UNT Jim moved to Ft. Worth, swearing he would never live in Denton again and worked as an Editor for the TCU Press. After the release of his last book, *The Girls of the Golden West* in 2017, Jim led a quiet life in Ft. Worth until 2024 when he abruptly recanted and moved into a retirement home back in Denton.

Jim was just settling in to his new home when a bout of pneumonia landed him in the hospital. Despite the best efforts of the staff at Texas Health Denton’s ICU staff, Jim passed away in the early morning hours of July 8th from heart failure.

Jim is survived by his sons Steve and John, his granddaughter Alyssa, his great granddaughters Adeline and Violet and Steve, John, and Alyssa’s partners Susan, Anne Marie, and Zac.

Jim requested there be no service or memorial. He will be interred in the family plot at the Bold Springs Presbyterian Cemetery in Leeds, Alabama, alongside his parents.



# Lomax Family Story Takes the Stage

## John Lomax III to Bring Solo Act to TFS, Tarleton State

The Lomax legacy will take the stage at Tarleton State University this fall. Texas Folklore Society (TFS) and the Department of English and Languages are excited to welcome **John Lomax III**, grandson of TFS co-founder and pioneering musicologist John Avery Lomax, to the university's Stephenville campus on October 10. "[The Lomax on Lomax Show](#)" features Lomax III and tells the story of four generations of Lomaxes, who have found, recorded, preserved, promoted, and presented unique American Music for over 140 years.

"I sing some of the best known of the cowboy songs John Avery Lomax discovered as well as selections by my father, John Avery Lomax Jr., Uncle Alan, and Aunt Bess Lomax Hawes," Lomax III, 80, says of his solo, acapella show. "I talk about the songs, the circumstances of their discovery, and I mention the work of some of the lesser-known Lomaxes."

John Avery Lomax and his son Alan obtained more than 17,000 field recordings of American songs, stories, church services, narratives, and children's play-party games that became the basis

of the American Folk Song Archive at the Library of Congress. Collectively, the Lomax family has produced fifty-two books, dating from John Avery Lomax's 1910 *Cowboy Songs & Other Frontier Ballads* to Anna Lomax Wood's *Songs of Earth* published in June 2021.

The performance will bring Lomax III close to the old family homestead in Bosque County, near Meridian. The Lomax family arrived in Texas from Mississippi by covered wagon in 1869 and settled on a small farm near the Chisolm (cattle) Trail.



# ROAD TRIPPIN'

Have an event to share? Please submit to:  
[TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com](mailto:TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com)

<a href="#">McKinney Literary Fest</a> • August 17–18 • McKinney
<a href="#">East TX Historical Assoc. Fall Conference</a> • September 26–28 • Nacogdoches
<a href="#">Tarrant County Harambee Festival</a> • October 4–5 • Fort Worth
<a href="#">The Lomax on Lomax Show</a> • October 10 • Tarleton State University, Stephenville
<a href="#">American Folklore Society Annual Meeting</a> • November 6–9 • Albuquerque
<a href="#">Dobie Dichos</a> • November 1 • Oakville
<a href="#">Billy the Kid Film Festival</a> • November 1–3 • Hico
<a href="#">Texas Monthly BBQ Festival &amp; BBQ World's Fair</a> • November 2–3 • Lockhart
<a href="#">Texas Book Festival</a> • November 16–17 • Downtown Austin
<a href="#">Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering</a> • February 20–22, 2025 • Alpine
<a href="#">40th Annual Texas Storytelling Festival</a> • March 6–9, 2025 • Denton
<a href="#">San Antonio Folklife &amp; Dance Festival</a> • March 29–30, 2025 • San Antonio
<a href="#">Texas Folklore Society 106th Annual Meeting</a> • April 17–19, 2025 • Fort Worth



**John Lomax III**

"Texas Folklore Society is thrilled to honor the Lomax legacy by bringing John Lomax III and the family's story to Stephenville," Executive Director Kristina Downs said. "Theirs is a story rich with folklore and history and at the heart of our mission to collect, preserve, and share the customs and traditions of the people of Texas and the Southwest."

"The Lomax on Lomax Show," which will be held on the first floor of the O.A. Grant Humanities Building at Tarleton State, is free and open to the public. The performance begins at 6 p.m. on October 10.

# McKinney Outreach Planned

## TFS Leaders Line Up For Literary Fest

A new event is taking shape in McKinney, and TFS leaders are preparing to share their work and information about the Society with book lovers and aspiring authors. The **McKinney Literary Fest** will be held August 17–18 at the Roy and Helen Hall Memorial Library, 101 E. Hunt Street in McKinney.

“With our 106th Annual Meeting being held in Fort Worth, this event presented the perfect opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals in the area,” Secretary-Editor/Executive Director Kristina Downs said.

The first day of the event invites attendees to meet local authors sharing works in fiction and storytelling, poetry and creative writing, and non-fiction and memoirs. Presenters will include TFS board member **Heath Dollar** (Fort Worth), author of *Waylon County: Texas Stories* and *Old Country Fiddle*, which won the Texas Institute of Letters 2021

Jesse H. Jones Award for Best Book of Fiction and was named the March 2022 Read of the Month by *Southern Literary Review*.

TFS Fellows and past presidents **Robert “Jack” Duncan** and **Elizbeth Duncan** (both of McKinney) will share their non-fiction works presenting papers from past annual meetings. Elizabeth’s paper, “Before I Was Five,” recalls memories of a young child during and shortly after WWII. Jack will share “Did I Stay Too Long at the Fair,” highlighting a few bizarre events experienced during the State Fair of Texas in the 1940s and 1950s.

On day two, Jack and Secretary-Editor/Executive Director **Kristina Downs** (Stephenville) will discuss

the preservation and evolution of Texas folklore and how these stories continue to influence contemporary literature.

Find more information about the McKinney Literary Fest and register as an attendee [here](#).



## Volunteers Needed for Texas Book Fest

With fall on the horizon, it’s time to start thinking about one of our largest outreach events of the year, the **Texas Book Festival**. Slated for **November 16–17** in downtown **Austin**, the festival attracts droves of bibliophiles and draws a crowd of folks interested in learning more about TFS.

Book festival outreach is low-pressure and a whole lot of fun! Typically, volunteers sign up for two-hour shifts, and we try to have two or three folks at the booth at all times. No experience is necessary, and talking points are provided. The goal is to share information on joining TFS and our 106th Annual

Meeting next year and to have a good time. The event offers an opportunity to hang out with longtime Paisanos and meet new and prospective members while sharing information and the good news about TFS.

You can learn more about the festival on the [event website](#). Pro tip: true book lovers schedule their shifts around their favorite authors and attractions.

We hope you will join us this year! If you can help, please let us know no later than Monday, Sept. 30 by replying to this email or by calling the TFS Home Office at (254) 459-5447.



# Donation Program Rolling

## Unwanted Vehicles Benefit TFS

Do you have a long to-do list this summer? Does it include figuring out what to do with that car that's been sitting in your driveway for months? Don't sweat it, donate it! Texas Folklore Society can use the proceeds from your unwanted vehicle to help further our mission.

Here's how it works:

1. Call **855-500-7433** (855-500-RIDE) or complete the online donation form [here](#). The Vehicle Donation Support Team is available seven days a week and will happily answer any questions.
2. Schedule your free pick-up: A licensed tow company will pick up your vehicle when it's convenient—at no cost to you.
3. Receive your tax receipt: When the vehicle sells, you'll receive a thank you letter and documentation for your tax-deductible gift.

## BIENVENIDOS NEW MEMBERS!

Shala Scarlato, Mineral Wells

Shawna Prather, Post

Jose Sanchez, South Padre Island

Keaton Raney, Austin

Heidi Yarger, Waco

Gomez-Maxey Family, Houston

Douglas Elliott, Houston

Bob Ward, Austin



Planning for our 106th Annual Meeting is underway, and the Local Arrangers Committee is seeking assistance. Local arrangers are responsible for event planning in Fort Worth, where the meeting will be held April 17–19, 2025. The committee assists with arranging a tour, planning entertainment, determining a theme and décor for the event, and more. Due to the nature of the committee, volunteers should live in Fort Worth or the surrounding area.

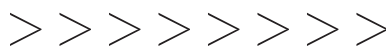
Individuals interested in serving as a local arranger should contact Heath Dollar, committee chair, at [heathddollar@yahoo.com](mailto:heathddollar@yahoo.com) or call the TFS Home Office at (254) 459-5445.

# TFS Seeks Harambee Fest Volunteers

Another new event has been added to our calendar, and we're seeking volunteers to assist in manning an outreach and information booth. The **15th Annual Tarrant County Harambee Festival**—presented by the Tarrant County Black History & Genealogical Society—will be held **October 4–5 in Fort Worth**.

The outreach and information booth will be set up 9 a.m.–6 p.m. on Saturday, October 5. Volunteers are asked to commit to two- to three-hour shifts and the goal is to have multiple volunteers present for each shift.

Aimed at bolstering “unity in the community,” the two-day event includes a Friday night social with seafood, chicken, and the blues. Saturday will feature, vendors, artisans, a poetry slam, live music, a parade, and more. You can find more information about the Tarrant County Harambee Festival [here](#). The event will be held in and around the William M McDonald YMCA, at 2701 Moresby Street in Fort Worth.



Email [TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com](mailto:TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com) or call (254) 459-5445 to volunteer.



It's almost time for the oldest state folklore organization to do what it does best—gather to share folklore, fun, and fellowship. Founded in 1909, the Texas Folklore Society will hold its **106th Annual Meeting** from **April 17–19, 2025**, at the **Radisson Fort Worth North-Fossil Creek**. A nonprofit organization and partner of Tarleton State University, Texas Folklore Society is calling on individuals, organizations, businesses, educational institutions, and families to support our mission of collecting, sharing, and preserving the practices and customs of the people of Texas and the Southwest by sponsoring our Annual Meeting. The event includes a conference with five sessions of folklore papers. The evening Hootenanny includes music, storytelling, and merry-making into the night. Sponsorship opportunities are as follows:

<b>FOLK LEGEND</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two event registrations</li> <li>• Two banquet tickets</li> <li>• Name/logo will be included in the meeting program and follow-up newsletter</li> <li>• Live mentions during the 106th Annual Meeting</li> <li>• Special 106th Annual Meeting signage, on display</li> </ul>	
<b>FOLK ICON</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One event registration</li> <li>• One banquet ticket</li> <li>• Name/logo will be included in the meeting program and follow-up newsletter</li> <li>• Live mentions during the 106th Annual Meeting</li> <li>• Special 106th Annual Meeting signage, on display</li> </ul>	
<b>FOLK HERO</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One event registration</li> <li>• One banquet ticket</li> <li>• Name/logo will be included in the meeting program and follow-up newsletter</li> <li>• Live mentions during the 106th Annual Meeting</li> </ul>	
<b>FOLK FANATIC</b>	<b>\$250</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name will be included in the meeting program and follow-up newsletter</li> <li>• Live mentions during the 106th Annual Meeting</li> </ul>	
<b>FOLK FRIEND</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listing in the meeting program and follow-up newsletter</li> </ul>	

We appreciate your time, consideration, and support and hope to see you in Fort Worth. **For more information or to secure a sponsorship, please contact TFS at [TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com](mailto:TexasFolkloreSociety@gmail.com) or (254) 459-5445.**