

## Ring in the holidays with Texas State Parks

Texas State Parks is kicking off the holiday season with close to 100 special seasonal activities happening across the state. Starting this month, visitors of all ages can enjoy themed guided walks, crafting events, educational opportunities and more.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) highly encourages anyone planning a trip to a Texas State Park to reserve their day pass in advance since some parks are expected to reach their capacity limit. Reserve day passes online or over the phone by calling (512) 389-8900.

For more information about all holiday activities at Texas State Parks and TPWD sites, visit the TPWD calendar page on the web.

### November

Get creative with corn husks from 10 am -11 am on November 25 at Goliad State Park and Historic Site. Corn husks have been used for hundreds of years to make dolls for children. Participants in this family friendly event can use their imagination and creativity to create a doll or angle of their own to take home.

If you find that you want to burn off some calories after your Thanksgiving feast or just want to spend some quality time outside on November 24, Texas state parks have a variety of outlets for you to do so.

Hit the water from 10 am - 12 pm or 2 pm - 4 pm November 24 at Galveston Island State Park to learn about kayaking, safe boating practices and the joys of paddling. You could also join rangers from 10 am - 12 pm for a trek through Closed Canyon at Big Bend Ranch State Park to learn how geology of the canyon makes way for life to emerge. Additional parks across the state have opportunities for you to opt out of the biggest shopping day of the year by spending time outside.

### December

Join us from 1 pm - 3 pm December 2 at Sea Center Texas for an underwater holiday spectacular at the Christmas with the Fishes event. Sandy Claus and his aquatic elves will dive and decorate the Gulf Tank while Mrs. Claus reads a fishy Christmas story. Santa will be available to answer all your aquatic-related questions straight from the tank. Participants can write their letters to Santa, play Christmas games and receive a Christmas craft if they bring a canned good to donate.

Bring your holiday spirit and creative side from 1 pm - 3 pm December 9 to Caddo Lake State Park for A Crafty Caddo Christmas. Join park staff as they deck the halls, sip hot chocolate, snack on cookies and make ornaments. All supplies will be provided.

We may not have Santa's reindeer in our parks, but we have plenty of their relatives. All ages are welcome to join rangers from 2 pm - 3 pm December 9 at Ray Roberts Lake State Park to learn about the deer that call

our parks home. Experience the holidays on the coast during Christmas in the Park from 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm December 9 at Goose Island State Park. Visitors are invited to enjoy a free drive through the live oak forest to see campsites decorated in lights and join park staff at Santa's Village for holiday crafts, games, hot chocolate around the campfire and more. Campers who agree to decorate their campsite will have their fees waived from December 8 - 9.

Whether you just got off a cattle drive or climbed out of a vehicle, you're invited to sit back and relax with us for Cowboy Christmas Music and Poetry. Bring your best singing voice from 6 pm - 7 pm December 9 to Copper Breaks State Park to join in the festivities.

Learn how to make a sweet holiday treat from 1 pm - 2 pm December 16 at the Lockhart State Park Taffy Pull. Join us as we get our hands messy and learn how to make taffy. You can eat it as soon as it cools down or save it to give away to a loved one. All ages are welcome.

Experience the holiday traditions of the borderlands at our annual Posada from 6 pm - 8 pm December 16 at Fort Leaton State Historic Site. Posada means "inn" or "shelter" in Spanish. This traditional Mexican Christmas tradition tells the story of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem through skits and songs. Following the procession through thousands of luminaries, there will be traditional holiday drinks, snacks, piñatas and mariachi. Participants can wander the halls of the candle-lit fort on their own or take a guided tour.

Come enjoy the 54th Annual Tree Lighting, a tradition started by President and Mrs. Johnson, from 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm December 17 at Lyndon B. Johnson State Park & Historic Site. Listen to carolers, view the live nativity, visit Santa Clause, partake in holiday refreshments and take in the spectacular tree.

Then journey back in time visit the Sauer-Beckmann Farm at dusk. The ambiance created by the lantern-lit path, the real Christmas Tree in the parlor, and the live music transports you back to what an authentic Texas-German Christmas was like at the turn of the century.

Outdoor explorers and armchair adventurers: get the best of the Texas outdoors dropped into your mailbox 10 times a year. A subscription to Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine is just \$20 a year and includes full access to our digital app library featuring more than 800 stories spotlighting the best of Texas' wild things and wild places. Visit <https://tpwmagazine.com/specialoffers> to subscribe today.

### Texas farmers, ranchers welcome fall rains

By Emmy Powell  
TFB Communications Specialist  
After a long, hot and dry summer, scattered rains finally fell across the Lone Star State this fall. Rain totals have ranged from four to 12 inches.

The moisture has been

beneficial for pastures and winter crops.

John Connaway, who raises cattle in Brown County, received about four inches.

"We're still not in great shape on a lot of our tanks, but some of our smaller tanks caught some water," he said. "Because we were so dry before, just about everything soaked in."

Connaway noted his pastures are in fair to poor condition, but better than last year. He continues to hold onto hope for more rain this fall and winter.

"We're hoping for the El Nino weather pattern and some good, steady rainfall," he said. "Then maybe our winter grass will help us through."

Early summer rains in May helped fuel optimism for farmers and ranchers like Connaway. He was able to cut some hay, but he wasn't able to get a second cutting like usual.

"We went through the whole summer with at least two months of no rain and triple-digit heat, so we didn't grow much grass and hay through the summer. We were counting on a second cutting or going in with a lot of

grazing, but it was just too dry," said Connaway, who serves on Texas Farm Bureau's Beef Cattle Advisory Committee. "We are better than last year, though."

Because of the ongoing dry conditions, many farmers and ranchers were delayed in planting wheat and oats.

But the rainfall helped improve conditions in some areas of the state.

Now, Texas winter wheat is over 80% planted and nearly 70% of the crop has emerged.

"This year, we've been awfully dry," Ben Scholz, Collin County wheat farmer, said.

The rains brought relief, but the state is still facing drought conditions. The Texas Water Development Board's weekly water report shows 65% of Texas remains in drought.

"The rains we get are few and far between, and they're three or five inches at one time. Things dry out, and we don't have a lot of grass cover, and then you get the big rain and then we see more erosion. The last two years it has really been feast or famine for rain, but mostly famine," Connaway said.

Deadline to submit information to *The Observer/Enterprise* is Monday at 5 pm.

Send in your news to *The Observer/Enterprise* at *ObserverEnterprise@gmail.com*.  
*\*Please discontinue use of our previous email address of o-e@wcc.net.*

# IVEY MOTORS

**2017 Ford F-350 Lariat Dually \$49,900**

*White w/Black Leather! Navigation, Ventilated Seats, & Bed Liner! Beautiful Truck! 127K Miles!* #A828A

**2019 Ford Mustang GT Premium \$35,900**

*White w/Black Leather! Adaptive Cruise, Blind Spot Monitor, Navigation, & Ventilated Seats! Super Sharp Ride! Only 38K Miles!* #Y663C

**2019 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 LT \$35,500**

*Red w/Black Cloth Seats! Crew Cab! 4x2! 50K Miles! Good Condition!* #7174A

**2021 Toyota 4Runner SR5 \$32,500**

*Silver w/Black Cloth! Tow Package & 3rd Row Seating! Great Shape w/50K Miles!* #A846A

**2017 Chevy Silverado 1500 LT \$26,900**

*Black w/Cloth Seats! 4x2 & 5.3L V8! Navigation, Remote Start, & Tow Package! 101K Miles!* #A834A

**State Inspections  
Oil Changes  
Tires \* Vehicle Repair &  
Maintenance \* Accessories**

***Special Financing  
Options Now Available!***

**453-4561**

Ask For:

***Cole Flanagan • Buddy Wallace • Kagan Maxcey***

