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# Welcome to our community!

he Cedar Creek Lake Community is more than a collection of cities tied together by Cedar Creek Lake. It is a community tied together by shared experiences, values, events and most of all, heart.

Never has this been so evident as with the coronavirus pandemic and the ensuing difficulties with shutdowns and restrictions. Our community members wrapped their arms lovingly (figuratively, of course) around each other to take care of all the community members.

Healthcare workers stepped up with measures to counteract the spread of the virus, caring for the ill with unprecedented dedication and compassion, putting their own lives and safety on the line for their patients. Our police, fire departments and EMS worked tirelessly to protect the community during times of great adversity.

Our essential businesses stepped up, rising above the fear and uncertainty to be there for the community members to depend upon. Our grocery stores increased capacity, fought through supply line issues and stepped up Curbside shopping opportunities. Our restaurants served their customers with drive-through and curbside service, with many providing bulk grocery items, including things that were hard to find in grocery stores, all at fair prices, even though their profits were compromised.

Other businesses operated with constraints and closures and waited patiently (or not) for normal to return. Food pantries responded to increased demand, increasing times and food supplies as they could to make sure needs were met. Our churches and faith community reached out to their flock and held drive-in services and Facebook Live worship to give spiritual comfort.

Our schools tackled the arduous task of converting the last three months of school to online and packet learning, while missing the students they love. Teachers reached out with notes of encouragement, phone calls and even Facebook live singing to their students to let them know they are loved. Our high school seniors endured missing their friends and cherished events and rites of passage to celebrate their last year of high school with



drive through graduations, social distancing events and virtual congratulations on their accomplishments. Athletes sacrificed the end of season events, banquets and competitions and practiced critical skills alone. Parents and caregivers became teacher, principal and coach while they juggled all their other responsibilities.

As our state begins to recover, re-open and return to normal activities, I am filled with pride for our community. Whether you are a resident, have a weekend home here, or are a first-time visitor, we bid you welcome to OUR Community, OUR Cedar Creek Lake.

 $\mathcal{D}$  hope you feel the love!

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# Working Together for Community Unity

he year 2020 and COVID-19 have already brought many changes to the Cedar Creek Lake Area Chamber of Commerce and to our community, but as Cedar Creek Lake starts to open up, we believe we're ready for the challenge of navigating the uncharted waters together as our "new normal" is defined. The chamber Board of Directors, staff, members and volunteers are moving forward with confidence in our future and appreciation of all the wonderful things we have to be thankful for.

A major adjustment this year has been the March cancellation of our popular annual Awards Banquet. The event, serving as a forum to recognize and honor volunteers in our community, would have been the 20th banquet for the unified chamber. Even though we won't be able to have a traditional banquet this year, we'll proudly recognize the 2020 winners at a luncheon or other event as soon as possible. We invite everyone to mark their calendar for March 15, 2021, as we plan to return to our traditional banquet date of the third Monday in March.

Proudly serving as a vital source of support for the Cedar Creek Lake community, the Cedar Creek Lake Area Chamber of Commerce was established in 2001 to bring together three existing chambers of commerce in the lake area. We now oversee three chamber of commerce chapters representing Gun Barrel City, Mabank and Tool/ Seven Points/Kemp.

The popular Cedar Creek Lake Car Show & Crawfish Boil that's traditionally held on the first Saturday in May at Mabank Pavilion, has been postponed until August 29, 2020, with a "rain date" of September 12. The Car Show will return to its regular schedule on May 1, 2021. The Cedar Creek Lake Art, Music, & Food Truck Festival on historic Market Street, always hosted by the Mabank Chapter of CCLACC in May, had to be postponed and a new date is expected to be announced in the near future. The Gun Barrel City Chapter of the chamber hosts a Fall Business Expo in October, offering 50 vendors under one roof at the beautiful CR Legacy Event Center in Gun Barrel City. Call the chamber office for more details.

On October 3, the chamber will host their fall fundraising event that always features a fun theme with entertainment, auctions, and dinner. A traditional fundraising golf tournament, the Red Hot '18' benefits the chamber and is always held at a member golf course the last Monday in July.

Networking events such as the monthly chamber luncheon, Business After Hours, and various networking meetings hosted by the different chapters have been put on hold since the beginning of COVID-19 "social distancing", but they will reconvene as soon as it's safe to do so. These popular gatherings offer an opportunity for member-to-member interaction, and are meaningful for exchange of business information, ideas and community support.

As we work through unavoidable postponements and cancellations and come out on the other side, you'll find fun, interesting, and exciting activities at Cedar Creek Lake, with events to fit every season, taste and demographic. If planned events aren't your thing, look to fishing, boating, bird watching and just relaxing. We love company.

Don't forget to follow the chamber's active Facebook page at Cedar Creek Lake Area Chamber of Commerce. Also "Like" the Gun Barrel City Chapter of the Cedar Creek Lake Area Chamber of Commerce for information from that Chapter.

If you're an individual or company planning a move, or just considering a visit, you're encouraged to contact or visit the chamber of commerce and let us help you discover all that the area has to offer.

The friendly chamber staff is on hand at our office at 101W. Eubank St. Ste F Mabank, Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. and 1 - 5 p.m., closed Saturday, Sunday and holidays.

For information on becoming a member of the Cedar Creek Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, joining a Leadership Cedar Creek Lake class, details of networking events, or other chamberrelated programs or events, call 903.887.3152 or email info@ CedarCreekLakeChamber.com. You can also download a membership application at www.CedarCreekLakeChamber.com. We welcome your inquiries.

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Jo Ann Hanstrom

Cedar Creek Lake Area Chamber of Commerce

President.



Sunday - 9:30 Bible Classes 10:30 Worship Wednesday - 7:00 Adult Bible Study/Prayer 7:00 Big Splash Kids 7:00 Retro Youth

John 10:10 The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance [to the full, till it overflows]. AMP



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#### **City of Gun Barrel City**



ounded in 1969, Gun Barrel City is one of the only cities that truly bears its name, playing on the city's motto: "We shoot straight with you." Despite having a name that evokes images of the Texas frontier, Gun Barrel City takes its name from the former road Gun Barrel Lane. Now known as State Highway 198, Gun Barrel Lane was originally just a mud road shortcut that allowed residents to cross Cedar Creek Lake to Seven Points, Trinidad and surrounding areas. The community developed after construction of the lake in 1969 and guickly grew from having only 60 residents to its current population of over 5,600 residents. The first city council meeting was held on June 17, 1969 in the home of Mayor Roscoe Welch. The first year of council meetings were held in the Mayor and Councilmember's homes until the construction of City Hall was completed on February 23, 1970.

With the city being 55 miles southeast of Dallas on the eastern shore of the Cedar Creek Lake, Gun Barrel City has something to offer for everyone. The city has a large concentration of retail stores, which includes a busy Walmart Superstore, Ivan's Furniture Store, Tractor Supply Company, Lowe's Home Improvement Center and nationally recognized restaurants.

The city also offers many small businesses that give residents a small-town feel, even though it is one of the largest in the Cedar Creek Lake Area, offering businesses like W Haus Decor & More, Coffee Love and Hector's Mexican Restaurant.





#### Gun Barrel City means business

With nationally recognized stores and restaurants, Gun Barrel City is a destination for shoppers from every

lake-area community as well as other areas. The city has experienced

exponential growth over the past year adding such restaurants such as Golden Chick and W456 as well as Zen Bar yoga studio, Vanity Salon and Lucky 11 tattoo.

Service facilities added include Tip Top Automotive (formerly in Payne Springs), and Discount Tire (opening soon). Shopping venues include Pickers & Pinchers Resale, P & P Home Furnishings and W Haus Village, now with several shops to please even the most discriminating shoppers looking for a special something.

#### Happy Anniversary Gun Barrel City!

With fireworks, carnivals and a little help from Vanilla Ice, Gun Barrel City celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2019. As part of the 50th anniversary celebration, Mayor David Skains received a Texas flag from State Representative of District 4 Keith Bell and a representative from District 3 State Senator Robert Nichols' office. The flags were American and Texas flags that flew over the State Capitol on the 50th anniversary of Gun Barrel City. The 50th anniversary celebration continued with a letter of recognition from Governor of Texas, Greg Abbott and 45th President Donald Trump.





If you're looking for a city that shoots straight with you, Gun Barrel City is the place to call home!

The slogan "We Shoot Straight With You" was created by resident Jim Malone in 1975. As part of the competition Malone was rewarded a \$50 bonus for his idea. Other honorable mentions were "Happiness is living in Gun Barrel City" and "City of Square Shooters". As part of the 50th anniversary celebration, Gun Barrel City hosted an Open House and awarded Malone a key to the city and a certificate of recognition.



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Located on U.S. 175 and State Highway 198, Mabank is home to the largest school district on the lake, most developed park and youth recreational facility that hosts baseball, softball and soccer year-round and a quaint shopping area known as Market Street that offers something for everyone.

Mabank was first settled by Lorenzo D. Stover in 1846, but other settlers soon moved to the area to begin its growth. When the area was purchased by John R. Jones in 1887, he named the area "Lawn City," after a popular cotton dress material he sold. He later changed the name to Lawndale around November 1887 after the creation of the town's first post office. When the Southern Pacific Railroad went through the area, it was bypassed by one-mile by G.W. or 'Dodge' Mason and Thomas Eubank (owners of the Mason-Eubank Ranch), who quickly decided to name the one-mile-square area past Lawndale as Mabank. Because of the popular railroad and fertile soil, the businesses and residents of Lawndale believed it was time to give up their area and add it to Mabank.

The City of Mabank has a rich history and celebrates its Western Heritage each year in June with Western Week and Rodeo, a week-long celebration, culminating with a two-day rodeo. This year, the coronavirus pandemic has caused the city to cancel the event but will bring it back in 2021.

The city celebrated its Centennial in 2000 but this year the Mabank Fire Department is 100 years old. Mabank Fire Department, organized in 1920, began when four downtown buildings were destroyed by fire in September of that year. The Bucket Brigade was not enough to save them.

Mabank Fire Department consisted of 36 members with W.H Covey serving as the first fire chief. The first firefighting device used was a two-wheeled, two-drum chemical cart with pressure built by a mixture of soda, water and sulphuric acid and discharge made through a one-inch hose. A water system was installed in 1926 and in 1927, a fire station was built next to city hall at a cost of \$1,000. location on Third Street to the city offering multiple delicious restaurants like Dickey's Barbecue and Jack in the Box to the beautiful three-story Quality Suites, previously known as Comfort Suites, hotel offering tons of space for Dallas-Fort Worth visitors, Mabank continues to thrive on its economic base.



Today Mabank Fire Department has three stations, several fire engines, including brush trucks to fight grass fires. There are 35 members, dedicated volunteers who leave their families behind to put themselves in danger to save the lives and property of their neighbors, under a seasoned, experienced and qualified Fire Chief Ricky Myrick. Theirs is a history of bravery, selfless volunteerism and the grit and character that makes Mabank such a special place to live.

In 1910, Mabank had only 412 residents populating the area. Now, Mabank has over 3,447 residents. As one of the older and larger cities located on the northeastern edge of the Cedar Creek Reservoir (also known as Cedar Creek Lake), the city of Mabank continues to expand.

With it gaining a larger Brookshire's Grocery chain next door to its former

The Mabank Independent School District, with its exemplary rating, boasts three elementary schools, Central Elementary, Southside Elementary and Lakeview Elementary; Mabank Intermediate School, Mabank Junior High School, and Mabank High School that offers top education programs for any student.

The people of Mabank make the city really stand out.

Much of the history in this article came from Mabank's own historian Dick Bramblitt. Visit the Tri-County Library on Market Street to see his books and DVDs and collections of vintage photographs detailing Mabank's rich past.







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#### **City of Kemp**

Kemp got its name after Sarah Kemp Nobel, mother of the city pioneer, Levi Nobel. Levi was appointed the first Kemp postmaster May 27, 1851. Kemp is also the hometown of America's Got Talent semifinalist, Kadie Lynn Roberson. Kadie Lynn isn't the only celebrity of Kemp. Years ago, the infamous Bonnie and Clyde strolled into town, which followed in the subsequent capture of Bonnie Parker, who was temporarily held in the old city jail, still behind the current city hall.

The City of Kemp is situated on the northern face of Cedar Creek Lake, just shy of 50 miles away from Dallas. In the spring, the city boasts beautiful bluebonnets that bring in fields of visitors hoping to get the perfect family photo. In April, the residents of Kemp come together to celebrate the Wildflower Festival.

What makes Kemp truly shine are the beautiful wildflowers that pop up each year. The festival promotes the revitalization of the historic town and is sponsored by many companies based in Kemp and features more than 50 vendors, food trucks and several kidfriendly activities. The Wildlower Festival also hosts a lively show with many local musicians performing on the old bridge.

The town is a mix of old, along Main Street and modern situated along State Highway 274, and the \$23-million Kemp High School next to Yellowjacket Stadium. The town's residents are filled with school pride- win or lose - but happier when they're winning.

Kemp has seen growth over the last few years with the addition of Spring Market for hometown grocery shopping. New businesses expected include two new salons and a nutrition center. And work continues on the new Lakeside Health and Wellness Center that will bring another excellent care facility to Kemp.

Kemp has seen the arrival and departure of the railroad. When the lake was being built in the early 1960s, the tracks and trains still came through town. The trains continued for about 10 years after the lake was filled, and then the tracks were taken up.

Kemp always has something blooming for those that want to stop by and visit the historic small town.





ustace appeared when the Texas and New Orleans Railroad connected its line from Kemp to Athens in 1900. Businesses from several communities relocated to be alongside the rails. W. L. Moseley, who had sold the railroad a right-of-way and sold lots in the developing town, modestly named the new community Mosely. The name was later changed to Eustace, to honor Virginian Capt. W. T. Eustace, a Confederate veteran who relocated to Henderson County in 1867.

Located between Mabank and Athens on U.S. Highway 175, Eustace takes pride in its historic Town Square and original pioneer cabin. The beautifully landscaped courtyard, a center for its gatherings including its historic Pioneer Day and its Parade of Lights Christmas Celebration give context to its history. Located just three miles north of the town is Purtis Creek State Park, providing visitors with camping facilities, fishing piers and champion-size black bass fish and the opportunity to experience the great outdoors.

While the Eustace residents enjoy the slower pace of small-town living, they are not afraid of showing just how tough they are. On April 29, 2016, a large, destructive tornado came barreling through the town. The Eustace residents quickly helped one another to prepare any damaged area and collected items for those whose homes were destroyed by the storm.

Eustace was also featured in a 2009 movie called Fire from Below with scenes being filmed in the gazebo on the town square, a restaurant and nearby private lake. Several Eustace residents were even used as extras!



# <image>

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Begun as a resort community, Log Cabin offers a spacious lakeside marina and a wooded environment. Visitors attend the fishing tournaments held there, enjoying the city park's 18-stall RV facility, each with access to water, electricity and sewer service, or at nearby hotels. Log Cabin is located just off State Highway 198 between Gun Barrel City and Malakoff with 714 residents.

When lake levels are down, you can count on the boat ramp in Log Cabin City Park to launch your boat. Last year, city residents and volunteers banded together to complete improvements to the park, including repainting the vintage playground equipment and installing new picnic tables and charcoal grills. The park office was also updated with new bathrooms including showers for campers staying in the park.

The park is home to nearly yearround fishing tournaments including the KCKL Big Bass Tournament that draws fishermen from several states away.

In 1969, a company called Areaco Inc. began developing the company's second resort community. Its first resort was built in Missouri. It found the perfect spot, near Malakoff and called it Log Cabin Estates. The original concept was to build a recreational resort, where people could get away from the city and take their families for vacations and weekend getaways. Some lots were offered for sale and others became contractual memberships.

Log Cabin Estates incorporated Jan.17,1987, and became the City of Log Cabin. The Red Barn is a gathering place for the community to hold annual events and family gatherings. Log Cabin City is a tightknit community and at Thanksgiving they hold a community dinner at the Red Barn where everyone brings food to share in the true spirit of the holiday. Lots of memories are made at the Red Barn.

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reserving a southern small-town atmosphere while retaining the many qualities of a larger city, the City of Athens has an air of nobility that long heritage tall trees and grand brick structures convey to a successful and longestablished city.

Located 75 miles southeast of Dallas, it is close enough to enjoy the amenities a large metropolis has to offer. Athens is surrounded by a number of quality lakes and parks making it a paradise to boaters, fishermen and animal and nature lovers. The Athens Independent School District serves the city of Athens and is home to the Athens High School Hornets, while Trinity Valley Community College serves residents with higher education and a prominent championship sports program.

With a variety of familyfriendly destinations like the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center, East Texas Arboretum and Botanical Society, Henderson County Regional Fair Park Complex and more, you're sure to embark on an activity that will satisfy the entire family!

Other claims to fame include the Home of the First Hamburger and the Black-Eyed Pea Capital of the World. In addition, it was selected as one of the first Certified Retirement Communities in Texas.

Other attractions in the city include the Athens Scuba Park, The Texan: A Landmark Venue, Henderson County Historical Museum, Henderson County Performing Arts Center, NY-TX Zipline Adventures and more!



#### City of Malakoff

he community took on its Russian name after applying for a post office under the suggested name of Mitcham or Purdon in 1854. Both names had previously been used, so postal officials in Washington suggested the name Malakoff, after a Russian fortification where the battle of Malakoff took place during the Crimean War. Only a few towns in Texas have a Russian name.

The mining operation was given a jump when the Texas Power and Light Company decided to build a coal-powered electric generating station nearby. Between 1920 and 1940 the town's population grew rapidly. In October 1942, TP&L decided to convert its generator to natural gas. The Malakoff Fuel Company began laying off employees soon thereafter and closed its operations in 1945. Not until the Tarrant County Water Board began constructing nearby Cedar Creek Reservoir in the mid-1960s did it begin to grow again.

During the 1930s Malakoff gained prominence for the discovery of a large prehistoric carved head, known as the "Malakoff Man," found in the excavation of a gravel pit in 1929. Lignite mining was revived in the area, this time to fuel the TP&L Forest Grove Plant, under construction two miles northeast of the business district.

With a population of over 2,324 people, Malakoff has seen immense growth over the years. It has great fast food restaurants, a candy shop, several gorgeous wedding and event venues, convenient shopping centers, the Red Waller library and a progressive school district.

Students at Malakoff ISD Elementary and Intermediate schools have both achieved national Blue-Ribbon School status with a high percentage of students performing at commended levels on the state's standardized tests. The high school has also been known for its many award-winning programs and college preparatory plan.

#### **City of Tool**



With a population of 2,240, according to 2010 census, Tool is the third largest city in Henderson County. It straddles SH 274 near the southern end and western shores of Cedar Creek Lake. Tool is a modest and economically stable bedroom community of well-dispersed citizens in numerous lakeside subdivisions. Each addition offers its own special views of the lake and quiet country neighborhoods, some with their own boat launches and the public Lone Star Marina.

Located in the far northwest corner of Henderson County, the Tool area was settled by planters during the mid-1850s. Named after George Tool, who owned and cultivated the land in the area from 1860 to 1920, Tool is proud of its Oran White Civic Center, where the city council meets, and many community activities are held. The business community, driven by the cotton industry, grew to 100 in 1940, but by 1957, had dwindled to just one store – the Cecil Young Grocery and Gas Station. The construction of Cedar Creek Lake in the early 1960s sent the city into the spotlight again and it celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2019.

The City of Tool has made many strides in recent years to continue to improve life for its citizens including a comprehensive plan to improve roads. A housing development for senior citizens, new park and improvements to city buildings are planned.

The city strongly supports the Tool Elementary School, part of Malakoff ISD, with volunteers and community involvement.

Besides boating and gardening, square dancing is a popular pastime at Promenade Hall on SH 274, offering lessons for beginners and social dances for experienced dancers several times a month.

Attempting to get an authentic history of the Trinidad area has not been an easy task and takes much work, reading and chronologically lining up dates and names. But most agree the Cotton Belt Railroad and water had a lot to do with the making of the little town of Trinidad. It may not be the smallest town in Henderson County, but it most likely has the smallest school, complete with grades from kindergarten (or pre-school) to seniors.

In modern times, the discovery of lignite coal, made it the place for a power generation plant where the stacks from the coal-burning that once served the area are still visible. Later, it was converted to a steam-operated plant.

Known for several of its lake area developments, such as Key Ranch Estates, Trinidad continues to improve its services for residents.

The main school, which has kept up with modern times and is still intact with more improvements, has seen three and four generations graduate from it. Four building programs have added to the original brick building, all behind the first complex which once housed all 12 grades.

Trinidad's school system captures the flavor of yesteryear's community school and is within a short drive of nearby Trinity Valley Community College in Athens, Tyler Junior College in Tyler and Navarro College in Corsicana. Trinidad's resident children are served by the Trinidad Independent School District.

Residents of Trinidad enjoy easy access to larger communities such as Athens, Tyler, Dallas, Corsicana, Hillsboro and Waco, as well as Cedar Creek Lake.

The tiny town is the gateway to the Lakes of East Texas. It is a place where one can sit on a porch and enjoy the natural beauty the area offers.



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he unique convergence of State Highways 334 and 274, FM 85 and Pritchett, Kelly and Veterans lanes in Henderson County gives the growing city its appealing geographic name for the city, meeting as the point between seven highways and roads.

The city has also grown a reputation for fun, family gatherings featuring Whatz-Up Family Fun Park, a family entertainment park, Cedar Creek Brewery, and plenty of perfect swimming and fishing holes.

#### Other family-oriented centers

include The Library at Cedar Creek Lake with a busy conference room, hosting book clubs, community organizations such as the Daughters of the American Revolution, and many other groups. The beautiful, modern building has computer access with lots of peaceful nooks and crannies to relax the body and fire the imagination. The Library at Cedar Creek Lake is the perfect summer hangout for families with children and teenagers with a wonderful summer program, storybook reading hour, crafts, performances from magicians, ventriloquist, movie nights and more!

Seven Points is the first lakefront city coming from Dallas/Fort Worth, giving it gateway status. The U.S. Census Bureau 2010 data figures the population of 1,455 for Seven Points.

The city is served by both the Kemp and Mabank school districts and has a growing list of retail stores and an eclectic gathering of secondhand shops grouped in two flea markets to attract the eager treasure hunter for that elusive one-of-a-kind object. A Brookshire's grocery, located near the downtown intersection, serves as a frequent gathering place for residents and visitors.

The city offers many clubs appealing to retirees including the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4376 and the 49er's dance club. A variety of parks for RVs are also located in the area.

## **City of Seven Points**



### City of Payne Springs



ayne Springs was named for William K. Payne, a Confederate veteran and delegate of the Texas secession convention, who settled in the area in 1850, and served in Company E of the Thirteenth Texas Cavalry. It was founded along the original trails used by ox-drawn freight wagons hauling goods toward the Bazette and Porters Bluff crossing to the Trinity River.

When the post office was established in 1890 the area was known as Payne's Spring. The name was changed in 1894 to Payne Springs, and the post office continued to operate until 1905.

It is a small community of 767 residents, according to 2010 Census data, with the amenities of local shopping and has the lowest sales tax rate of any location on the lake.

The Payne Springs community center is in the old school building that served the locals shortly after the turn of the century. The town has had an outstanding volunteer fire department and a new city hall was built on property adjacent to a large new fire station, along State Highway 198.

Payne Springs children are served by two school districts, with most students going to Eustace and some to Mabank.





### **City of Kaufman**



he City of Kaufman was founded as the "King's Fort" named after Dr. William P. King, who established the fort in 1840 as a protection for a group of surveyors. The community was later renamed as "Kingsborough" after five years of growth. In 1852, the community was finally renamed the city of Kaufman after it became the county seat. Kaufman County was named after U.S. Representative and noted Texas Patriot David S. Kaufman.

The majority of Kaufman residents are served by the Kaufman Independent School District. KISD is a public school district that has been recognized multiple times by the Texas Education Agency. Those looking to continue their education can enroll at Trinity Valley Community College. One of the most progressive two-year institutes in Texas offers a long list of training and education.

One hidden gem of Kaufman is the Kaufman Poor Farm Project which has been undergoing restoration as a valuable tool to engage citizens in the farming heritage of the area. The farm is believed to be the only one left in Texas that is still owned by the County. The property includes a stock pond, original buildings, and old jailhouse. Demonstrations of time-honored crafts such as spinning yarn from wool attract visitors to the Poor Farm when the Historical Commission holds events there.

What makes Kaufman so unique is that it is one of the last four lane divided highways out of Dallas that it is not nearly built out. Kaufman is still surrounded by mini-ranches, working agricultural land and rural estate living. But this community of 7,000 employs over 4,000 people. Half of the residents commute into the City for their work and over half our daytime employment commutes in from the surrounding area.

Kaufman is a community that is surrounded by incredible growth yet still maintains a small town heritage.

he City of Kerens, at the junction of State Highways 31 and 309 and Farm Roads 667 and 3096, 14 miles east of Corsicana in eastern Navarro County, was established in 1881 when the St. Louis Southwestern Railway of Texas built through the county. It was named for Judge R. C. Kerens of St. Louis. The railroad bypassed the nearby settlement of Wadeville, and within a short time all of the businesses from Wadeville moved to the new town.

Kerens is known as the "Birthplace of Big Tex" — although that's not who he was when he started! But Big Tex started life in Kerens as the world's largest Santa Claus.

He was built and erected by local citizens and stood in the middle of Colket Avenue, the Kerens main street during the years of 1948 and 1949. From there he warmly welcomed passersby during the holidays. After two years, however, he was adopted by the State Fair of Texas and became Big Tex.

Kerens is also known for the annual Cotton Harvest Festival which takes place the third Saturday in October and draws folks from near and far to join in the festivities. Each autumn the cotton crop was gathered and culminated months of work and worry for area farmers and their employees. Until recently, the cotton crop was the main source of income for Kerens folks. Fall meant cotton picking time; the three gins were running, people had a job and they had money in their pockets. After a week of hard, hot work, Saturday was the day to come to town, see your friends, sample some special treats and have some fun.

The Kerens Cotton Harvest Festival relives the excitement of those long-ago Saturdays. Now that cotton is harvested mechanically, the red brick main street comes alive with vendors, quilt show, chili cook off, live entertainment, arts and crafts, food booths, children's games and rides. Old and young alike enjoy the highlight of the Fall season.

## **City of Kerens**



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## Venues & Entertainment

### W Haus Village

W Haus Village offers a gorgeous and comfortable place to sit, relax and have a glass of wine with friends, family and acquaintances in the W Haus Gardens. The garden space is perfect for a quaint private party, club meetings or engagement celebrations. W Haus Gardens can accommodate small and large parties with the help of the staff and event planning team ready to assist with perfecting every detail necessary.

In August 2019, W Haus Gardens celebrated their grand opening of The Windsor Room with live entertainment, full bar and specialty food service provided by World Famous chef Tom Welther. W Haus Village also offers The Windsor Room, adjacent

to the Gardens to accommodate a large group or offer versatility. The addition of their elegant restaurant W456 makes W Haus Village a perfect place to enjoy lunch or dinner.

W Haus Village is located at 454 S. Gun Barrel Lane, Gun Barrel City, TX, 75156. For more information, call 903-887-HAUS or check their website, www.whaus.com.





### Gun Barrel City Park and Pavilion

The Pavilion hosts many unique events throughout the year from JulyFest to Gun Barrel City's Monster Mash. Recently, the pavilion hosted a special holiday ice-skating event called Winter Wonderland Festival.

The area is a large and open space for events of many sizes from small birthday parties to large family reunions. After spending time together, enjoy time in the park, whether you play a quick baseball game on one of the three ball diamonds, take a swing in the playground area or walk the track. The park is also home to a brand-new disc golf course. The park is the perfect place to burn off some energy after loading up on cake, candy or hot dogs.

The Gun Barrel City Park is located at 301 Municipal Drive Gun Barrel City, TX 75156, which is across from the Central Fire Station.

#### The Texan: A Landmark Venue

Athens is celebrating generations of old memories by making them alive again with the restructure of The Texan:A Landmark Venue. The Texan was first established as a movie theater in downtown Athens in 1948.

With the help of the City of Athens, the movie theater was transformed into a unique venue space. The space now takes reservations for private events like business parties or weddings. The Texan's staff and crew can offer a seating layout for events with guests from 100 to over 400 people. The space also offers the upstairs mezzanine with gorgeous cocktail tables and barstools, stage, lobby and free parking in the lot behind the venue space.

From concerts to award shows to prom, The Texan can host any type of celebration.

For more information on the event space or to reserve the space for a party today, visit http://thetexanathens.com/ private-events/. The Texan is located at 209 E Tyler St, Athens, TX 75751.



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#### Cedar Creek Country Club

The Cedar Creek Country Club in Kemp is more than a beautiful place to live, it's a perfect place to host an event. As one of the most popular private golf and country clubs in East Texas, the country club offers a variety of event packages, elegant catering options and facility rentals to help anyone throw an impressive event. For weddings, a bride and groom can choose to host their ceremony under the wedding pavilion, a beautiful wood beam structure surrounded by towering oak trees, or the stunning ballroom, with accented floor to ceiling windows to give a stunning view of the club.

If you're interested in holding a wedding or other event at the club, call Madison Grubbs at (903) 498-6761 to discuss any needs. The Cedar Creek Country Club is located at 18392 Country Club Dr., Kemp, TX, 75143. For any information on hosting events or club membership, email membership@cedarcreekcountryclub. com or check the website at cedarcreekcountryclub.com.

## Mabank Pavilion

The Pavilion is a giant space perfect for bed races or a chili cook-off during Mabank's Western Week or to view gorgeous old cars and snack on crawfish during the Cedar Creek Lake Car Show and Krawfish Boil. The event spaces can also be seen being filled with ghosts and goblins on Halloween during the annual Trick or Treat event at the Pavilion.

The Pavilion is located at 214 Easley Pkwy, Mabank, TX 75147.







### Shiloh on the Lake

Looking for a family-friendly place to hang out on the lake? Look no farther than Shiloh on the Lake's 48-acre campground with cabin rentals and meeting venues. Situated along the southeast side of Cedar Creek Lake with more than 2,000 feet of shoreline, Shiloh on the Lake's wooded sites, lighted fishing piers, volleyball court and playgrounds are the perfect setting for your lake getaway.

The customer service-oriented staff will help ensure your stay is pleasurable from start to finish. Just a few of the extras offered to every guest include guided escort to your site, 24-hour on-site staff, fire pits, and a bundle of firewood to get you started.

Spending the day out on the water? The property offers trailer parking on-site, a fish cleaning station for your catch of the day and a grassy waterfront to spread out a picnic.

Located at 14638 Travis Pkwy, just off SH 198 in Caney City, you'll find Shiloh on the Lake a convenient drive from D/ FW, Shreveport, Waco, and beyond. Reservations may be made by phone (903) 489-0639 or online. Advanced deposits are required to guarantee a reservation. You'll find photos and much more on the website, Shilohonthelake.com.

### Triple N Winery

With an opening date of early July, Triple N Winery offers weekend wine tastings of their Texas grown grapes and wines. Showcasing three generations of Texas heritage through the ranch and winery, Triple N Ranch and Winery is excited to bring you wines that capture the spirit and sophistication of the Texas ranch lifestyle.

A sample of the wines offered are a 2019 Riesling Vintage, which holds perfumed aromatics of peach melon with honeysuckle notes. A 2019 Viognier Vintage Texas High Plains cousin to Chardonnay with characteristics of buttery pears and peaches. A 2019 Malbec Vintage bold in color and in flavor with plum, spice and cherry characteristics. All wines offered at the winery except two have an Appellation of Texas.

Plan to visit the winery, and as you sip your wine, you will look out across a beautiful East Texas pasture and may even be greeted by longhorn, since this is a working longhorn ranch.

The winery is only open for wine tastings Saturday noon to 6 p.m. and Sunday noon to 4 p.m. Triple N Ranch hopes to offer concerts, chef dinners, pairings and a wine club in the near future so stay updated by following them on Facebook and Instagram at triplenranchandwinery for updates.





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### Whatz Up

Whatz- Up Family Fun Park is Cedar Creek Lake's party headquarters featuring go carts, batting cages, bumper cars, rock climbing wall, laser tag, arcade, paintball, miniature golf, pool tables and brain werkz escape room.

The park is equipped to host several types of parties and events and has multiple party rooms with an event facility big enough for more than 500 guests.

Whatz-Up also offers many lock-ins throughout the year with the attendees getting the chance to dine on a pizza buffet and have unlimited access to the attractions. From mid-August through May, the park is open only to private events Monday through Thursday, opening on Friday 4 p.m. to 11 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. and Sunday noon to 8 p.m. The park will open for the summer season May 29 and remain open until mid-August Sunday through Thursday from noon to 8 p.m and Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. The park is also open during the spring and winter breaks.

Whatz-Up is located at 700 East Cedar Creek Parkway, Seven Points, TX 75143. For more information, contact the park at (903) 432-9955, whatz@wuffp.com or by visiting www.wuffp.com or www.facebook.com/ whatzupfamilyfunpark.



#### Cleveland Amory Black Beauty Ranch

The world-renowned animal sanctuary and home to the Doris Day Equine Center is open to the public one to two times per month for small, prescheduled guided tours.

Sitting on over 1,400 acres, the ranch is home to more than 800 domestic and

exotic animals, many that were rescued from near-death situations such as slaughterhouses, biomedical research laboratories and trophy hunting ranches. Others have been rescued from roadside zoos, victims of the exotic pet trade, or came from public lands where they were threatened by extermination. The ranch consists of bison, cattle, horses, burro, antelope, apes, reptiles and tigers.

Cleveland Amory Black Beauty Ranch is located at 12526 County Road 3806 in Murchison, 75778. For more information, contact the ranch at (903) 469-3811, blackbeautyinfo@fundforanimals.org or visit www.fundforanimals. org/blackbeauty/ or www.facebook.com/BlackBeautyRanch.

#### Big Daddy's Flea Market

With over 200 vendors supplying tools, crafts, clothes, appliances, tires, furniture, antiques, computers, games, toys, dolls, fishing gear, produce, plants, collectables, home décor, accents and more, Big Daddy's has something for everybody.

Founded in 1991 by Larry and Shirley Hart, the trader's market is an allweather flea market under roof and open-air design



featuring free admission and free parking.

Big Daddy's Flea Market is located at 2513 N Tool Dr, Tool, 75143 and is open every weekend Saturday and Sunday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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#### Kerens Cotton Harvest Festival

Held on the third Saturday of October, the Kerens Cotton Harvest Festival is a way to relive the excitement of those long ago Saturdays when you came to town after a week of hard hot work in the fields, saw your friends, sampled special treats and had some fun.

Now that cotton is harvested mechanically, the red brick main street comes alive with vendors, quilt show, chili cook off, live entertainment, arts and crafts, food booths, children's games and rides.

The Kerens Cotton Harvest Festival will be held starting at 8 a.m. October 17 and will be held at 121 Colket Street, Kerens, 75144. For more information contact 903-396-2665 or visit www. kerenscottonharvestfestival.com.







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#### Mabank ISD – Panthers

Mabank Independent School District will provide a collaborative learning environment for educators and students leading to the understanding that we are all part of something bigger than ourselves. We will produce within each student the development of a creative mind, healthy body and a servant's heart enabling each Mabank graduate to contribute to our global society in positive and significant ways.

Central Elementary, 903-880-1380 Lakeview Elementary, 903-880-1360 Southside Elementary, 903-880-1340 Mabank Intermediate School, 903-880-1640 Mabank Junior High, 903-880-1670 Mabank High School, 903-880-1600



#### Eustace ISD – Bulldogs

Eustace Independent School District exists to provide a challenging and comprehensive educational program in a way that: Unites family and community, ensures a safe environment, fosters maximum academic achievement for the individual, and offers a variety of opportunity for development so that students are productive, lifelong learners equipped to succeed in a competitive society.

Eustace Primary, 903-425-5191 Eustace Intermediate, 903-425-5181 Eustace Middle School, 903-425-5171 Eustace High School 903-425-5161

#### Kemp ISD – Yellowjackets

Providing innovative educational opportunities so students achieve their potential.

903-498-1400









#### Athens ISD – Hornets

The purpose of the Athens Independent School District is to graduate every student on time, college and work ready.

Bel Air Elementary, 903-677-6980 Central Athens Elementary, 903-677-6960 S Athens Elementary School, 903-677-6970 Athens Middle School, 903-677-3030 Athens High School, 903-677-6920



#### Malakoff ISD – Tigers

Great things are happening at Malakoff Independent School District! Our promise to this community is that we will seek excellence in everything we do!

Malakoff Elementary School, 903-489-0313 Tool Elementary School, 903-432-2637 Malakoff Middle School, 903-489-0264 Malakoff High School, 903-489-1527

### Trinidad ISD – Trojans

We strive to help develop the complete child (physically, academically, socially, morally, and ethically). The district implores all stakeholders (staff, students, parents, businesses, and community members) to be

involved in planning, and implementing programs to ensure its continued success. There is a place for you.

903-778-2673.

#### Cross Roads ISD – Bobcats

Our mission is to emphasize the social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of each child and strive to instill high standards for academic integrity. We are committed to excellence!

903-489-2001

#### Kerens ISD – Bobcats

In partnership with parents and community, we strive to teach rigorous and engaging curriculum, in a safe and orderly environment, preparing our students for future success.

903-396-7941 Secondary 903-396-2931









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hile you may be able to book that international flight, there is no guarantee the hotel, restaurant and landmarks near your destination will be open. "While we love nothing more than to book our clients on their vacations, we are proceeding with caution and advising with caution," said sEaSCAPE Travel and Events owner Renee Weaver.

To accommodate travel bugs, Weaver suggests "Staycations" and U.S. destinations. "We are currently offering these trips in about 100 cities around



the lower 48 states and adding more as we go," says Weaver. This allows travelers to see what our beautiful country has to offer, things we might never

time to visit and especially during economic hard times, it is a lower price point and logistics are easier. "For parents who have been at home with their kids since March, we are suggesting educational trips for parents looking to extend distance learning to outside the home and leisure trips for those needing a mental break," suggests Weaver.

If you are craving a cruise getaway, International lines, like Carnival, Royal and Norwegian are planning to set sail later in the summer. Travel agents recommend planning now for the 2021 season, as most lines have amended their once strict cancellation policies. suggests Judy Esslinger of It's YOUR Time Travel.

"While we cannot see what the next year will look like, we know that travel is a very meaningful part of modern life. History has shown us, travel is one of the most resilient industries, and as we look ahead to what travel will be like, one thing is certain... people love to travel, people need travel for business and mental health. Travel will be back and stronger than ever," said Weaver.



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Welcome to W Hans Village



When David Westerfield and Thomas Weigl brought their unique boutique, W Haus Décor & More to Gun Barrel City in 2017, it truly was a unique shopping experience. Upscale clothing, jewelry and décor, without being too pricey, and a customer service experience unrivaled. They not only knew their customers by name but knew their preferences and remembered things about their lives, making sure each customer felt valued and special, all while carrying a selection of items from the fun to the fabulous.

So, what do you do when you have something truly great? You expand on it of course! And that is just what they did. First, they created the gallery where art can shine in an elegant setting and opened it up to local artists and photographers, hosting showings and benefits, as well as displaying unique pieces, welcome in homes all over the lake area.

Then they opened the garden, taking a plain side yard and transforming it into a wonderland of plants and seating areas to gather with friends to enjoy hors d'oeuvres and drinks. It's a great place to enjoy friends and nature in a cotting remini

"It's like no other store around Cedar Creek Lake and the surrounding area. We are thrilled to bring this type of quality and style to the lake area."
- David Westerfield.

Joe Hessley said, "After much conversation with our friends David and Thomas at W Haus we felt that we were ready to grow Mister Sweet Tooth further and so expanding into the W Haus Village made a lot of sense. We love seeing the growth that has happened at W Haus and are excited to be new community partners with all of the businesses there." Vanilla Fringe Boutique moved their shop from downtown Mabank

to their new location at W Haus Village, which gave them a chance to expand and carry an even larger selection of clothing and accessories. They opened their first location in August 2018 and were soon voted "the best clothing store" in *The Monitor* Readers' Choice ballot. Kathy, Amber and Heather said, "Vanilla Fringe is never the same store twice! New merchandise arrives almost daily, keeping shopping exciting for our customers. We carry a wide variety of styles for women of

all ages, embracing individual taste from mother to daughter, or even grandmother! We feature the most sought-after styles and trends that will help create a stunning wardrobe." They promise their attentive

friends and nature in a setting reminiscent of European garden cafes.

They brought in a famous chef, Tom Welther who gained fame as the Executive Chef at the Hilton Anatole in Dallas to help create their new restaurant W456 and the Windsor Room that can be turned into a lovely spot for private functions such as a wedding reception or business celebration. The Windsor Room opened in August 2019 and W456 is currently open for lunch and dinner.

They have welcomed more new businesses into the fold in the building next to the shop, creating W Haus Village with three unique shops to entice and satisfy even more shoppers.

Mr. Sweet Tooth of Malakoff has opened a second sweet shop here at W Haus Village to showcase their delectable confections. They will serve their famous chocolate truffles, along with a selection of brownies, cupcakes and beautiful cakes. The shop features a comfortable sitting area, where patrons can sip coffee, snack on tempting treats staff will assist shoppers to find just the right style for a great look.

The third shop in the building is a new addition David and Thomas created called "WALLZ." This new space is inspired by an International flair and a more contemporary vibe. Thomas Weigl, said "with the many new homes that are being built around Cedar Creek Lake, we are experiencing more and more demand for contemporary style, and WALLZ is keeping up with the market place to offer unique, larger pieces of art, that will be suitable for any home." The "museum feel" is a new experience, accented with Indonesian, hand-crafted accessories, where you can sit back and take in the hand-selected pieces of art, allowing the subject matter to speak to you. "It's like no other store around Cedar Creek Lake and the surrounding area," said David Westerfield. "We are thrilled to bring this type of quality and style to the lake area."

A trip to W Haus Village will be an experience you are not soon to forget, a one-stop shop for drinks, dining and shopping. It's sure to become your favorite place!



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Although these institutions vanished long ago from the Texas landscape, the state's last vestige of a county poor farm remains situated on a 27-acre patch of land less than two miles from the Kaufman County Courthouse.

Buildings – some still sturdy, others hopelessly dilapidated – form potent reminders of a place that once housed sick and destitute people as well as vagrants and petty criminals. Vintage farm implements and rusty old contraptions cast aside by the modern world conjure a self-sufficient, bygone enterprise powered by sweat and ceaseless toil. The poor farm's cemetery holds the remains of the scores who died there.

In Texas, the existence of poor farms dates back to 1869, when the state placed the care of paupers in the hands of counties. Many county governments here and across America established poor farms, where people could live and work to support themselves. Cities and towns created poorhouses. Kaufman County's 408-acre poor farm was established in 1883, according to historical records.

Soon after opening, the Kaufman County Poor Farm also began taking in people convicted of minor crimes. These scofflaws were required to work off their sentences, said Pam Corder, a project manager for Kaufman County.

"They tell stories about men on horseback, working the cotton fields with shotguns laid across their saddles. It was a pure working farm," said Precinct 3 County Commissioner Mike Hunt.

Although most people sent to the poor farm were required to



work, there were exceptions. Many people in ill health ended up living on the poor farm, according to a historical account by Kathy Kelley Hunt of the Kaufman County Historical Society.

"In 1886 Dr. W.H. Pyle reported to the county commissioners that he had found at that time 33 people living on the Poor Farm and that to that date they had suffered no epidemics or contagions. He did report that there were a few persons there suffering with chronic diseases, such as phthisis and consumption, with the latter causing two deaths since 1883. He had recorded at the time that two persons were suffering from the habits of opium, and that a death had occurred from heart disease, but that most of the infirm residing at the Poor Farm suffered from broken down constitutions, or general lack of health. He diligently wrote to the commissioners in a report: 'I have done what is in my power to mitigate the sufferings of these unfortunates and smooth their pathway to the tomb,'" according to Kathy Hunt's account.

The poor farm took on a new role in the years around 1900, when it served as an epidemic camp. An outbreak of smallpox had hit Kaufman County, and tents were erected to house patients and any family members exposed to the disease.

In 1931 amid the Great Depression, the poor farm was used in the Farm Demonstration Program. Acreage was set aside under the jurisdiction of the county agent.



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Today, the poor farm serves a historical site and hosts a number of community endeavors. Several of its buildings have been stabilized, but others have deteriorated to the point of no return.

Commissioner Hunt says he doesn't believe the poor farm will ever truly reflect the way it looked all those decades ago.

"Realistically, I don't think that'll ever happen," he said, citing the cost of restoration and making the buildings ADA accessible.

"What I envision is it being some place like a green belt, where there'll be walking trails," said Hunt. "There's a lake down here where (people) can go fishing. Just a place where families can get together, and we'll have information about the historical significance of all these buildings out here that they can learn about."

Today, the poor farm hosts school tours, and the Kaufman County Master Gardeners grow vegetables and flowers at the site. Honeybees are kept at the poor farm, which also hosts Vintage Market Days, according to Corder. Last October, school kids celebrated Archeology Day out at the poor farm, where they dug for artifacts such as arrowheads. A Wild West gun show also was staged at the site.

According to several histories about poor farms and poorhouses, they began to fade away after the Social Security system was enacted in 1935. Kaufman County began selling off its poor farm acreage in the early 1970s, and more land was designated for other uses such as the county Livestock Pavilion and Fairgrounds, the Sheriff's Office and jail, the County Appraisal District Office and Kaufman County Library.

In 2012, the Kaufman County Poor Farm was designated by Preservation Texas as one of the state's most endangered historical sites. Only a few short years ago, the entire 27 acres were overgrown with trees and brush, and the elements were exacting a heavy toll on the few buildings worth saving.

"A lot has happened in three years here," noted Hunt. "This used to be all woods and the buildings were all run down. We've painted and re-roofed and done repairs with all the buildings. Cleaned away all the underbrush. This was all wooded. We cleaned out around the lake – added wrought iron fencing."

Still, much remains to be done.

"It just takes time," said Hunt. "We don't have a lot of funds to make it happen."

Recently, the Friends of the Kaufman County Historical Commission donated \$9,873 toward fencing at the poor farm. Perhaps some day, Hunt's vision of a park-like location may come to fruition.

"I'd like to see something like that so we don't lose what's here," said Hunt. "It means a lot to the city of Kaufman, especially; and I think it means a lot to the whole county."

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## Parks & Activities



### Gun Barrel City Municipal Park

Gun Barrel City Park and Pavilion isn't just a great place to host a party or small event it's also a great place to spend the day and have fun. The park has a skate park, small fishing pond with pier, playgrounds for kids, lighted baseball field, basketball court, soccer field, horseshoe pit, tennis courts, a jogging/walking trail, and disc golf.

Each July, the Gun Barrel City Park is the place to be when JulyFest offers area residents the opportunity to listen to great music and ride exciting carnival rides.

The park is located at 301 Municipal Dr., Gun Barrel City, TX, 75156.

### Tom Finley Park

The park consists of two chamber islands with boat ramps, plenty of trailer parking, a wheel chair accessible fishing pier, swimming area, and huge pavilion. The park doesn't allow camping, pets, or glass containers.

Tom Finley Park offers many events year round from fishing



tournaments to Parrot Head Club Poker Run, July 4th celebration, and other community activities. With ongoing process of the new Hwy 334 and with new restuarants opening on Hwy 334, Tom Finley Park is a great place to watch the continous growth of Gun Barrel City.

The park is located at TX-334, Gun Barrel City, TX, 75156.

### Big Chief Park

Even though it is called Big Chief Park, it is more a great fishing area than park. Big Chief is a great boat launch for anyone to spend the day on the lake fishing and relaxing. The park also offers a small picnic area.

The park is located at 141 Big Chief Dr., Gun Barrel City, TX, 75156.

### Purtis Creek State Park

Purtis Creek State Park, located just three miles north of Eustace, is the perfect place to hike, bike, camp, geocache, picnic or paddle a kayak or canoe down Purtis Creek State Park Lake. The lake features champion-size black bass that brings in visitors from all over the state. Even though the lake is strictly catch-and-release on bass, fisherman do have the option to take home crappie and catfish. Fisherman have many places to look for the best spots to fish with there being multiple fishing piers, fish cleaning stations and boat ramps.

The park also offers rods, reels and tackleboxes for use during visits. The park also offers 59 campsites with water and electricity, five walk-in tent sites, or 13 primitive hike-in sites. The park is located at 14225 FM 316, Eustace, TX, 75124. The park is open daily, but offices hours are only Saturday through Thursday from 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. and Friday at 8:15 a.m. to 7:45 p.m.

For more information on Purtis Creek State Park call 903- 425-2332 or visit https://tpwd.texas.gov.Eustace, TX, 75124.





### Jake's Skate Park & Malakoff City Park

The unique skate park offers the younger residents of Malakoff a great way to learn skate tricks and ride around. The 4,800 sq. ft. park was created in the memory of Tom and Estella Lyon's son, Jacob Ronald Ward. Before his passing, Jacob was an avid skater so his parents, along with the help of donations from local businesses and individuals, decided to build the park. The skate park is also in the center of the city park. The city park offers playground sets, slides, and swings.

The park is located on Highway 198, Malakoff, TX, 75148.

### Kiwanis Park

The park is Athens' dedicated children's park with slides, playground equipment and the famous rocket climbing jungle gym. During the summer, the park offers a splash pad area for children to keep cool.

Kiwanis Park is loacted 406 South Prairieville St., Athens, TX, 75751.

### O.D.Baggett Park

O.D. Baggett Park consists of two basketball courts, baseball field, a pavilion and playground equipment. The park is named in memory of Judge Baggett, a member of the Athens community, who worked in governmental capacities during his time including the Athens City Council, Justice of the Pace and as a mentor.

The park is located at 1015 North Hamlett Street, Athens, TX, 75751.

### Cain Park

Cain Park boasts 85 acres of recreational facilities, sports fields and traditional park and open spaces. The park also offers softball fields, fishing pond, multiple walking trails, and a disc golf course. Each summer the park is home to an annual "Ready, Set, Glow" 5K Race, where runners dress in glow in the dark gear and run around the park at dusk.

The park is constructed of three "phases" with each phase located only a few blocks away from each other. Phase 1 of the Cain Center is located at 920 Robbins Road, phase 2 is located at 940 Robbins Road, and phase 3 of Cain Park is located at 960 Robbins Road.

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relocated to the Arboretum several years ago, or under the Pavilion or beside the Key Garden. The Arboretum offers so much to make your event special and beautiful.

The Arboretum is located at 1601 Patterson Rd. Athens, TX 75751. Coleman Park

Coleman Park is the primary athletic complex in Athens with huge baseball and soccer fields. In 2016, the park's concession stand and facilities were upgraded due to the demand of the many baseball and soccer assocations that use the park for practice and games. The park also offers a small playground and an outdoor pavilion for park patrons to use.

The park is located at 1950 East College Street.

### George Watts Memorial Park

The park offers residents a place to relax and enjoy a day in Mabank. George Watts Memorial Park offers a soccer field, covered picnic area, playground, grills and benches.

The park is located at 405 West Walnut St., Mabank, TX, 75147.







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## Cedar Creek area offers outdoor experiences

With much of the world on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Cedar Creek Lake area still offers tons of sights and experiences.

With pandemic restrictions being lifted more and more each week, Cedar Creek Lake becomes more of a summer destination for people to escape the realities of everything happening in the world.

Cedar Creek Lake remains one of the largest man-made lakes in the state of Texas. With over 1,000 square miles to explore, the area is a popular weekend getaway for those in living in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex.

For those living in Kemp, Mabank, Gun Barrel City, Payne Springs, Enchanted Oaks, Eustace, Caney City, Malakoff, Star Harbor, There are many things to do in the Cedar Creek Lake area, and with summer approaching, many look forward to the outdoors and the fresh air.

Trinidad, Tool and Seven Points, many have called this area home for a long time.

Construction began in 1961, finishing in 1965. The lake covers both Henderson and Kaufman counties and attracts many in the area, including those who have lakeshore homes.

For many, fishing maintains a popular sport around the area for the everyday man or the serious fisher. You can catch-and-release, or you catch your food for the afternoon cookout with friends and family.

The predominant fish species of Cedar Creek Lake are blue catfish, channel catfish, flathead catfish, largemouth bass, white bass, hybrid striped bass and crappie. The best fishing areas for largemouth bass are in the southern portion of the lake, where the water is clearer, especially the southern third of the lake in the large



Docks are a main place to catch the large bass. Always use Texas rigged worms, frogs, buzzbaits and crainkbaits. Jigs are a huge

coves and inlets on Texas rig worms and top waters.

as rigged worms, frogs, buzzbaits and crainkbaits. Jigs are a nuge plus at the docks. Grass beds can also be found in the southern end producing plenty of largemouth bass, spinner baits and worms. Catfish can be found everywhere, with more blues than channels. Fishing is particularly good in the spring and into summer. Due to the many smaller streams, creeks and run-offs flowing into the lake, running jug lines in the channels of the many coves using goldfish, shad and small sunfish makes for very good blue catfish and flathead (yellow) catfish fishing grounds.

For many that wonder what the catches can look like, the lake's record largemouth bass weighed in at 14.65 pounds. That's good eating for many that spend hours

out either in their boat on the lake, or on the shore casting their rods and reels.

Tom Finley Park is a main ramp take off for those that enjoy the lake. For those that want to stay on land but still enjoy the waters, the park offers picnic tables and grilling areas with shaded patios for those that want to escape the Texas summer heat. Visitors can also enjoy the shade trees while fishing from the shore.





For outdoor or trail enthusiasts, just outside of Gun Barrel City lies Purtis Creek State Park in the small town of Eustace.

You can still take part in Cedar Creek Lake, or you can enjoy swimming, canoeing and camping at Purtis Creek State Park. You can also rent a picnic pavilion for your family and friends gathering.

You can enjoy catch-and-release largemouth bass, as well as catfish and crappie that you can take home. The park has fishing piers, fish cleaning stations and multiple boat ramps. Unless you are camping overnight, the cost for overnight fishing is just \$2.

Visitors can also hike and bike in the trails that encompass the park. The park includes the 4.1-mile Wolfpen Hike and Bike Trail. It also includes the 1.7-mile Beaver Slide Nature Path that takes hikers along the lakeshore or the short, easy Solar Trail along the dam.

There are many things to do in the Cedar Creek Lake area, and with summer approaching, many look forward to the outdoors and the fresh air.



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