

The Flivver Flash

The Official Newsletter of the Space City T's - Houston, TX

2022 Hallettsville Texas T Party

by Debbie Marino

After facing triple digit weather in much of Texas during the summer, tour participants attending the 45th annual Texas T Party were treated to sunny skies and high 80's during the day, and a hint of fall finally making its way with high 50s to low 60s at night. The annual event, sponsored by the Space City Ts, the Houston chapter of the Model T Ford Club of America, was held in Hallettsville, Texas from September 28 to October 1, 2022. Chairpersons Jeff and Farrah Cordes and Jim and Sandra Ruhmann volunteered their time for months to secure lodging accommodations, plan routes and arrange catered meals for 95 registered cars and 180 people. There are so many little details in planning an event this large, and with the chance of last-minute changes at any time, it seems an impossible task, but the four-day tour went smoothly thanks to their dedication in making the tour a success. Many thanks to them.

Even though the first official tour day was Wednesday, most riders came into town the day prior to have a chance to take their Model Ts out of their trailers, settle into their hotels, and stop by the hospitality room to check in. This last part is crucial because included in the registration packet is the forty-plus page tour book. The guide contains important phone numbers, restaurant suggestions, a list of all the registered participants and

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their cars, and most importantly, the step-by-step directions of daily routes. While visiting the hospitality room, one could pick up snacks and beverages for that day's journey and meet up with members of other chapters that might only get to see each other in person once a year at this event.

Besides a large reusable Igloo insulated tote serving as the goodie bag, entrants were also treated to a beautifully designed T-shirt commemorating the annual event. Extra shirts were available for purchase.

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The host hotel was Hotel Texas in Hallettsville, but as most of the annual T parties are in smaller rural areas, other nearby hotels, as well as an RV campground served as overflow accommodations. Every morning, a driver's briefing was held on the covered back porch of the hotel, giving the chance to relay any last-minute changes to routes, fuel opportunities on the journey, and timing of the various stops because no one wants to miss lunch or an ice cream break!

Every year, a few modern-day vehicles are utilized as the "vulture wagons" in case of breakdowns, so that the affected Model Ts can be trailered back to the hotel (and hopefully repaired in the parking lot to be able to join the group the following day). Usually, these vehicles are late model pickup trucks with a towing package, but this year the helpers were a 53 Ford and a 54 Ford driven by Jeff and Luke Cordes. The beautiful weather was probably a contributing factor of them only having to tow in 4 vehicles during the entire tour, which was quite remarkable.



The first stop on Wednesday was the town of Yoakum, the self-proclaimed "Leather Capitol of the World", at

the Double J Saddlery. In operation since 1991, three generations are involved with the handcrafted saddle-making business in their factory and showroom. Smaller scraps that had once ended up on the workroom floor are now being used to make accessories currently selling in their retail store. The group was treated to a personal tour of the workroom to see the artisans create, embellish, and mold the leather pieces as they make the company's customized saddles.



The next stop that morning was Cuero, Texas. Some of the Model T's parked in the center of town barricaded off just for the cars, while the overflow parked at the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum. The museum focuses on the region's agriculture and cowboy histories of ranching and cattle drives with self-guided interactive exhibits.



There were also tours being offered at the DeWitt County Courthouse, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, completed in 1896 and still in use today after being restored in 2008. The flooring in the halls and courtrooms were obtained by the one remaining tile company in England that had furnished the original tile. The pressed tin ceiling tiles in the District Courtroom were reconstructed from original ones found during the restoration. Some of the glass is original, and both the clock and bell assembly are those from 1896.



Thursday was a busy day for participants. The first activity was "Picture Day", where the cars and their occupants were photographed at the Courthouse Square in the center of Hallettsville. Known as the "City of Hospitality", Hallettsville serves as the county seat of Lavaca County.



With so many Model T's waiting for their turn at the camera, the old Lavaca County Jail was open for viewing at the same time to alleviate some of the traffic congestion. The jail, which was built in 1885, was one of the oldest continuously operating jails until the county closed its doors in 2005 when the new jail was completed. As was common in early times, the jailer had an office and living quarters on the first floor, with the medieval flat bar jail cells on the second floor.

Following the photo sessions, a trip to Shiner, Texas, and the Spoetzl Brewery, started in 1909, was planned. Shiner is probably best known today for Shiner beer. The German and Czech immigrants that settled in the area wanted a beer like they had known in their home countries, so Kosmos Spoetzl, who had trained in Germany as a brewmaster, was hired. When he had the opportunity to purchase the brewery, he changed it to his own name but kept the Shiner beer name.



Despite the old history of the brewery, today it is a state-of-the-art facility using robotics in the process. The tours utilize video, visual displays, and window viewing above the assembly process, as well as knowledgeable tour guides. Each tour participant received a Shiner Beer tote bag with a Shiner Beer bottle opener key ring, a Shiner Beer souvenir glass, and most importantly 3 tokens. These tokens could be exchanged for any number of their beers and hard seltzers, including their flagship beer, Shiner Bock, in full size glasses.

After the tour, a catered home style lunch was served at the nearby Shiner Central Station event venue. On the way was an opportunity to visit the Saints Cyril & Methodius Catholic Church, also in Shiner. The current church, completed in 1921, is a beautiful example of the Romanesque revival style of architecture, featuring six stained glass windows imported from Munich, Germany and a large painted mural of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane overlooking the altar. It has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places since 1983.



Another optional stop was the Edwin Wolters Memorial Museum featuring not only collections of Shiner's history, but an eclectic mix of American history from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s. The main building was the Wolters' family two-story home built in 1915. However, the immense collection extends behind the house with the smaller George Herder home of 1882, a city jail, a general store, and an implement shed.



Later that evening, a hit and miss ice cream maker appeared at the Hotel Texas, and everyone was treated to ice cream with peach cobbler, while enjoying live music from local musicians on the back porch.



Friday would begin the longest journey of the tour with an estimated 108 miles roundtrip. An initial visit to the City of Weimar's Park Pavilion served as a meetup of all the Model T's and a morning coffee break with locally made fruit kolaches. Following this fellowship, the route took the cars over Piano Bridge, named for the sound emitted when driving over the piano-wire truss design. However, a 2012 renovation where boards were nailed down silenced the old iron bridge built in 1885.

Two optional stops on the way to lunch were part of what are known as the "Painted Churches of Texas". The Czech immigrant history of the Texas Hill Country area influenced the churches in this area, by adorning them with hand-painted stencils and trompe-l'oeil effects that mimicked decorative molding, natural stone, and marbling. The Saints. Cyril & Methodius Catholic Church in Dubina, Texas, was the first parish of seven in Texas having these two Apostles as their patrons. It is known for its hand painted frescoes of angels and vines and sky-blue ceiling with over 3000 gold leaf stars. The St. John the Baptist Czech Catholic Church in Ammansville, Texas, is known as the "Pink Church" for its dusty rose walls and ceiling, along with subdued stained-glass panels that allow the natural light to come through the

windows. Both churches are on the Natural Register of Historic Places.

A catered barbeque lunch was served in Plum, Texas, at the Saints Peter & Paul Catholic Church Hall. After lunch, the Model T's headed over to nearby CMB Classics' car collection. Several buildings housed all types of antique vehicles including even a Model T! They welcomed the group with beverages, cookies, and decorated cakes. The next stop was the Lyric Theater in Flatonia, Texas. The vintage 84-seat venue is a single screen theater with a connecting ice cream parlor. The theater played old footage of Model T era times.



An optional stop at another painted church, St. Mary's Church of the Assumption – Praha in Flatonia, Texas, is also on the Natural Register of Historic Places. Built in 1895, it is one of the oldest painted churches, with brushed-by-hand foliage, soft greens and blue colors adorning the ceiling. Other additional stops included two wineries, Moravia Winery and Majek Winery, and the Moravia Store.

The Moravia Store is a link to the area settlers' homeland, Moravia, Czechoslovakia. Originally built in 1889, it once had a grocery and mercantile supplies in

the rear and a saloon in the front. A second story, since torn down, was a dance hall. Now the building is a bar, pool and dance hall with the walls covered in fun signs and pictures.



The final day of the tour, Saturday, led the Model T's to the Henneke Fish Hatchery in Hallettsville, Texas. The hatchery is a 30 plus year business supplying feeder fish and fish stocking for small ponds to large lakes. T party participants were able to view the tanks and ponds where various fish such as bass, catfish, crappie, minnows, shad, sunfish, and tilapia were being raised. Their aquaculturists also provide pond and lake management services for new designs or existing bodies of water by managing aquatic vegetation and stocking desired species for the natural ecology of those waters.



The Model T's continued onward to the Hallettsville Municipal Airport where the Texas Barnstorming Museum was holding their 8th annual fly-in and pig roast. The museum's planes were on display, along with those flying in, and the Model T's became a part of this year's activities as well with a reserved parking area for the group to display and visitors to view all of the cars. During the fly-in, the group was treated to pulled pork sandwiches and other fixings in an open hanger with views of the planes.



An optional stop on the way back to the hotel was the historic Cole Theater on the Hallettsville Courthouse Square. Opened in 1929 as a silent film theater, they offered to show Laurel and Hardy shorts in the afternoon for the Model T group.

It was a shortened tour day because Saturday evening was reserved for banquet night, also held on Hallettsville's Courthouse Square in The Kochian Building. The banquet is the culminating event of the end of the tour and offers one last time to see everyone attending from the various chapters before packing it up the next morning. This was also an opportunity for some to dress up in period clothing. After a social hour complete with live music and dancing, the mayor of Hallettsville, Alice Jo Summers, greeted the attendees. She thanked everyone for coming to Hallettsville and told the group that her 90-year-old mother was once a Model T driver back in the days! After a blessing, lines were formed for the catered dinner of pork, BBQ, squash casserole, potatoes, green beans and bread pudding or peach cobbler.

Once everyone had been served and had a chance to finish their meal, Space City T's of Houston club president, Dave Lucas, acknowledged past presidents of the Model T Ford Club of America that were in attendance: Larry Azevedo, Tim Eyssen, and Russ Gruenwald. He also thanked Jeff and Farrah Cordes and

Jim and Sandra Ruhmann for all their work to make the Texas T Party a successful tour. Presentation of this year's awards then followed. The unofficial category of Farkle Tournament winner (played on Friday night in the hotel's breakfast area) went to Naomi McCracken of Tomball, Texas. Remaining category winners were awarded to:

Jerry Giebler, Gatesville, Texas: Attendance (He's been to every Texas T Party tour since the first one in 1978!)

Luke Cordes, Schulenburg, Texas: Farthest Driven in a Model T (30 miles)

Don & Kim Donohue, Earl Park, Indiana: Farthest Trailered Model T (roughly 1,115 miles)

Austin & Christine Bromley, London, England: Farthest Traveled to the T Party (approximately 4,924 miles)

Julius Neunhoffer, Kerrville, Texas: Most Congenial

David & Nancy Carter, Houston, Texas: Member's Choice (a 1914 Touring)

Russ Gruenwald, Benbrook, Texas: Oldest Driver (92 years old)

Holly Ingram, Royse City, Texas: Youngest Driver (23 years old)

Brinson & Ginger Burks, Gladewater, Texas: Hard Luck award (a minor fender bender, but apparently exciting enough to make the Victoria, Texas, news channel)

Alan Harding, Sugarland, Texas: Raffle winner (free entry to next year's T-Party – rumored to be in Rockport, Texas in 2023)

The Texas T Party has been held all over Texas in its 45 years, a different location being picked each year by the volunteers that chair the event. It is quite incredible to realize that the Space City T's of Houston have been sponsoring this tour since 1978. A big thank you goes out to their club members and the countless volunteer hours they give each year to assist with the Texas T Party and other club activities and responsibilities.

And another thank you goes to everyone that attends the Texas T Party, whether it be making a first timer feel welcomed to the group, assisting with a breakdown on the side of the road, or meeting up with old friends made at previous years' tours. These things make the annual event a memorable time. See you in 2023!

The Flivver Flash is published by the Space City T's chapter of the Model T Ford Club of America in Houston, Texas twelve times per year. This newsletter is produced for the education and enjoyment of members and those expressing interest in joining the Space City T's. Said education and enjoyment is as it pertains to the Model T Ford automobile. The Flivver Flash is also shared with other antique auto clubs. Other clubs may use articles from this publication with credit to this newsletter or the original source. News, articles, ads or anything of interest to the club must be submitted to the editor by the 25th of the month preceding the month of publication. Emailing takes place the last week of the month. Annual club dues are \$25 per year.

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2022 Space City T's Christmas Party

SUNDAY DECEMBER 4, 2022

CHRISTIES SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

5:00pm

Please RSVP for a head count to:

Dave Lucas at: (713) 299-3059

Men should bring a man's gift and women bring a woman's gift with a value of \$20 to \$25.

You may also bring a new unwrapped Toys for Tots gift, as an option, if anyone wishes to bring one.

The Space City T's Club is the Houston, Texas chapter of the Model T Ford Club of America. All questions concerning membership, The Vintage Ford magazine, the MTFCA library, chapter insurance, purchase of manuals, back magazine issues, or store items can be directed to the following:

Model T Ford Club of America

309 N. 8th Street, PO BOX 996

Richmond, IN 47375-0996

Phone: 765-855-5248

Email: rachel@mtfca.com

\$40 annual dues includes six issues of the Vintage Ford

Join MTFCA at: www.mtfca.com

FLIVVER FLASH INPUTS NEEDED

Do you have something to share? A barn find, funny or not so funny Model T stories? Tour photos, or articles about Model T's? Your Model T acquisition stories, restoration photos or swap meet finds? A special interest article?

Please email ads, articles, [photos](#), stories, [videos](#), or [links](#) to: topkick7@outlook.com

Check your **Email** to see if our
November 9, 2022 Meeting is a Zoom
 and/or a Demeris BBQ & Lifebrook
 Church Meeting



Dine with Friends at
 Demeris BBQ at 6:00 P.M.

located at

1702 West Loop North,
 Suite A, Houston, TX 77008

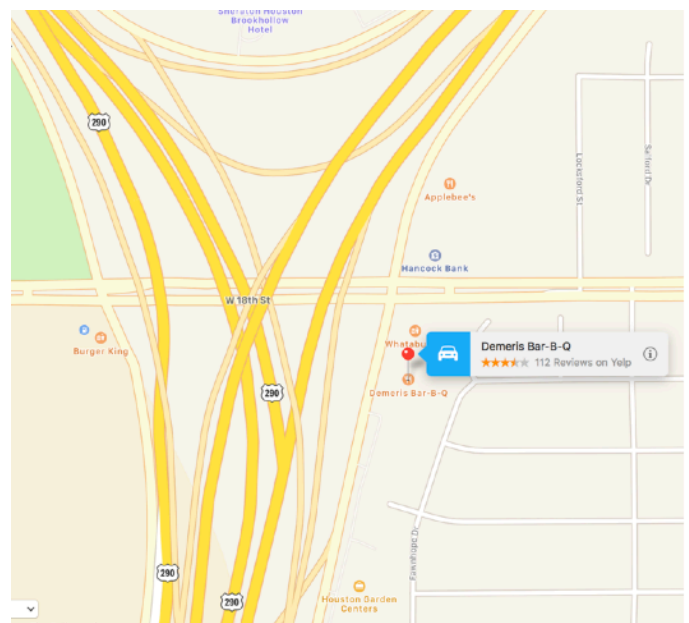
Then attend the
 Space City T's Meeting at 7:30 P.M.

Place:

Lifebrook Church
 1822 West 18th Street in the
 Heights

Website: www.spacecityts.org

Email: modelt@spacecityts.org

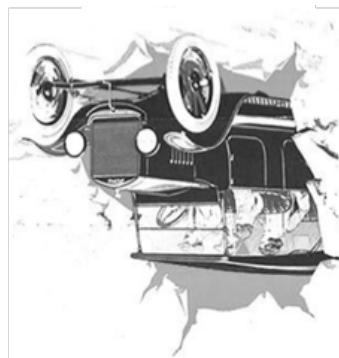


Directions to Demeris BBQ

From the east or west on I-10 or the south side of downtown, take the I-610 West Loop North and get off at the 18th Street Exit. Demeris BBQ will be immediately on the right after Houston Garden Nursery.

From the west on Highway 290, exit at Mangum and turn right to 18th Street. At 18th, turn left, cross under West Loop and turn into the Whataburger parking lot on the right. Proceed to Demeris BBQ after the Whataburger.

From the north on I-45, take the 610 North Loop West around to the I-610 West Loop South to the Hempstead Highway exit. Make a U-turn under I-610 and proceed north on the frontage road to just before 18th Street, Demeris BBQ will be on your right after Houston Garden Center.



First Class Mail



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