

State announces sales tax holiday for Aug. 4-6

Texas families have an opportunity to stretch their clothing budgets during the second annual Sales Tax Holiday, Aug. 4-6, Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander said.

"On the first Friday, Saturday and Sunday of Aug., no state or local sales tax will be charged on most clothing and footwear priced under \$100," Comptroller Rylander said.

The timing of the Sales Tax Holiday is intended to help parents outfit their children for the new school year. However, the tax break is not limited to children's school clothes.

Highlights include:

•Most clothing and footwear priced under \$100 is exempt from sales taxes. Consumers may purchase as many tax-exempt items as they wish.

•Clothing and footwear used primarily for athletics or protective wear, such as golf cleats or football pads, are not tax exempt. However, athletic clothes that are commonly used as street wear, such as tennis shoes, baseball caps and jogging suits, are eligible for the tax exemption.

•Not included in the Sales Tax Holiday are accessories, such as jewelry, and watches, and items that are carried rather than worn, including handbags, briefcases, wallets and

backpacks.

"This year, I was able to make one administrative change. Customers who put clothes and shoes costing less than \$100 on layaway during the Sales Tax Holiday weekend will be permitted to take those items out of layaway at a later date without paying sales tax," Comptroller Rylander said.

"This will allow hard-working families with limited budgets to pay for their purchases a little bit at a time

and still receive the tax break."

"In the future, I think backpacks should be tax exempt, because kiddos need them for school," Comptroller Rylander added. "I would also like the Sales Tax Holiday to include fabric, buttons, zippers and other items used to sew clothes, and I would like to see the Sales Tax Holiday last a couple of weeks, instead of just three days."

"But any change in the list of tax-exempt items or the number of tax-

free shopping days must wait until the Legislature meets next year."

Last year, Texans spent more than \$400 million on tax-exempt clothes and shoes during the three-day Sales Tax Holiday, saving more than \$32 million in sales taxes.

Retailers statewide reported crowds comparable to the Christmas shopping season.

The Sales Tax Holiday applies to all state and local sales taxes. Local

communities were allowed to opt-out of the event this year, if they notified the Comptroller by March 31.

Only Sunset Valley, a small community near Austin, chose not to waive local sales taxes. Qualifying purchases will be exempt from the

state sales tax.

For more information about the Sales Tax Holiday and a list of tax exempt and non-exempt items, see the Comptroller's website at www.window.state.tx.us; or call the tax assistance hotline at 1-800-252-5555.

Historical Commission has grants

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) recently announced the availability of Heritage Tourism Partnership Grants for the Texas Independence Trail Region (TITR). Proposals are due July 20.

A total of \$30,000 in grant money is available to enhance heritage tourism in the 28 counties of TITR.

The development and promotion of the TITR is a project of the THC's Texas Trails Regional Program, which sponsors this grant opportunity.

The THC designed the grant program to help communities fund prod-

ucts that will lead to a more fulfilling visitor experience at cultural land historic sites and events.

Grant recipients will be announced in Aug. Grants will not exceed \$5,000 and a one-to-one matching contribution is required.

"Communities and tourism or preservation organizations are eligible to receive grant money for projects that promote and enhance this region as a heritage tourism destination," said Jane Headrick, director of the THC's Heritage Tourism Program. "Projects could include interpretive exhibits, special events highlighting historic sites, brochures that take travelers off

the beaten path, educational materials and much more."

The THC's Texas Travel Trails Regional Program provides training, education, technical and financial assistance to targeted regions.

In 1998, the THC introduced the Texas Forest Trail Region in West Central Texas, one of 10 Texas Travel Trails originally developed by the Texas Department of Transportation as the pilot project for the new program.

To receive grant guidelines and an application, contact Headrick at 512-463-5754.

Comptroller to hold online auction of unclaimed property

Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Rylander's Unclaimed Property Auction is coming up July 22 in San Antonio.

But buyers who can't wait to bid on jewelry and other valuables from abandoned safe deposit boxes will have an opportunity July 10-13 when Comptroller Rylander will hold her next Online Auction of Unclaimed Property.

"More than 112,000 items, valued at more than \$500,000, will be sold at the traditional-style auction in San Antonio. I held back a few treasures for this online auction, to give buyers a glimpse of the beautiful abandoned property that has been turned over to the state. These items must be auctioned when the owners can't be found," Comptroller Rylander said.

Rylander has contracted with three online auction companies, e-Bay, Yahoo and Amazon.com, to sell 24 items, including jewelry, coins and silver serving pieces. The items have an estimated value of \$4,800.

Nine items will be sold on the Yahoo auction site, including a carved coral brooch and an art nouveau style silver bowl.

Eight items will be auctioned on Amazon.com. The most valuable is a Mexican 20-pesos gold coin.

Seven items will be sold on e-Bay. The list includes a .91 carat pear-shaped loose diamond valued at more than \$1,500, a vintage pocket watch in its original box and a retro Bakelite bracelet.

The easiest way to preview or bid on items in the Online Unclaimed Property Auction is through the Comptroller's Web site at www.window.state.tx.us. That site will provide direct links to the unclaimed property up for bid on e-Bay, Yahoo and Amazon.com.

Unclaimed safe deposit box contents are turned over to the state by banks that are unable to locate the property owners.

The Comptroller has published the owners' names in newspapers and on the Internet, but they have not claimed their property.

This will be the Comptroller's second online auction. Last Dec., Texas became the first state to auction unclaimed property online, with a sale that offered 81 items and raised more than \$12,000.

After that successful sale, Rylander committed to hold more online auctions as part of her e-Texas effort to conduct more state business via the Internet.

"Online auctions allow more people to see and bid on unclaimed

property. The bidding can become more competitive and some items sell for a higher price than they would at our live auction," Comptroller Rylander said. "That's the bottom line... getting the best possible price on behalf of the missing owners of unclaimed property. If the owners or their heirs ever turn up, they will receive the proceeds of the auction."

The Web will also play a role in the July 22 live Unclaimed Property Auction in San Antonio. The theauctionchannel.com will, for the first time, simulcast the traditional-style auction in real time on its Web site.

Bidders will be able to hear the auctioneer in San Antonio, follow the bids on their computer monitors and submit bids with a click of the mouse.

Texas is the first state to simulcast an unclaimed property auction on the Internet.

"My e-Texas Commission will soon make recommendations for smaller, smarter, faster government, including using technology to make services more convenient and accessible to the public," Comptroller Rylander said.

"Providing 24-hour access to the Unclaimed Property List on the Internet and auctioning unclaimed items online are part of my office's effort to make government available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week."

For more information about the July 10-13 Online Auction of Unclaimed Property, or the San Antonio Unclaimed Property Auction on July 22, call 512-463-0988.

To find out whether the state is holding unclaimed money or other valuables in your name, search the Unclaimed Property List online at www.window.state.tx.us or call 1-800-654-3463.

Keeping an Eye on Texas

Forgotten Treasures to be Auctioned Live and in Cyberspace July 22

More than 112,000 items from abandoned safe deposit boxes will be auctioned to the public on Saturday, July 22 in San Antonio and via a real-time Internet simulcast at theauctionchannel.com. Texas is the first state to conduct an Internet simulcast of an unclaimed property auction. The items up for bid include:

- ◆ 3,072 pieces of jewelry valued at \$222,099
- ◆ 1,228 loose stones valued at \$107,839
- ◆ 733 gold coins valued at \$69,068
- ◆ 95,381 coins/currency valued at \$76,268
- ◆ Most valuable item is a 3.2-carat loose diamond valued at \$25,000

For more information and to view the auction catalog, go to www.window.state.tx.us

SOURCE: Carole Keeton Rylander, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

El bienestar de Texas

Subasta de tesoros olvidados en vivo y en ciberespacio 22 de julio

Más de 112,000 artículos provenientes de cajas de seguridad abandonadas se ofrecerán en subasta al público el sábado, 22 de julio en San Antonio y vía transmisión simultánea por Internet en theauctionchannel.com. Texas es el primer estado en realizar una transmisión simultánea por Internet de una subasta de propiedades no reclamadas. Los artículos que serán subastados incluyen:

- ◆ 3,072 piezas de joyería con un valor de \$222,099 dólares
- ◆ 1,228 piedras preciosas sin montura con un valor de \$107,839 dólares
- ◆ 733 monedas de oro con un valor de \$69,068 dólares
- ◆ 95,381 monedas/billetes con un valor de \$76,268 dólares
- ◆ El artículo más valioso es un diamante sin montura de 3.2 quilates con un valor de \$25,000 dólares

Para mayor información y para ver el catálogo de la subasta, vaya al www.window.state.tx.us

FUENTE: Carole Keeton Rylander, Contralora de Cuentas Públicas de Texas.

ABOUT TOWN...

•Dr. & Mrs. Ray Cantu and family were welcomed to the community by the doctors and clinic personnel of the Thomas Clinic on Sunday, July 2, with a picnic at the home of Dr. & Mrs. Len Bornstein.

Volleyball and other games were followed by typical 4th of July fare. Also attending were Mr. & Mrs. David Keith, administrator; and Mr. & Mrs. Charles Glueck of Cat Spring, parents of Mrs. Cantu.

•Due to circumstances beyond his control, John Canaris will no longer be able to teach swimming lessons after this week. Call John at home if you have any questions.

•Cathy Fearing, daughter of Publisher Jeannine Fearing, returned Monday night from a quick, four-day trip to Phoenix then San Francisco with her sister, Amy, and father, John.



Foot Facts

By Dr. Eric R. Tepper, Podiatrist
WALKING TIPS FOR SENIORS

As a person ages, the foot undergoes changes and requires extra care during exercise. The feet tend to spread with age, and fat padding deteriorates, so they have less shock absorption and become more prone to stress fractures. Walking is popular among seniors, and these tips will help prevent injury. Before and after walks, remember to stretch. This will increase circulation and prevent any stiffness, muscle strain, and pains. Wear properly fitting shoes designed for walking. To decrease shock and help prevent stress fractures, choose softer walking surfaces - grass, dirt paths, or outdoor tracks. Move your walks indoors, to the mall or indoor tracks, during cold weather. When the temperature drops, so does the ability to feel trauma and injury.

We believe in helping you help yourself. We'll make recommendations as to how you can help keep your feet healthy and happy whatever your age or preferred sport. From choosing the appropriate foot wear, to preventive care, to dealing with hereditary concerns, to simple pampering, we'll always take the time to answer your questions. We want you to be as informed about, and actively involved in, your foot health care as we are. Call our office at Rice Medical Center for a Tuesday appointment at 234-5571.

P.S. Check your feet's appearance periodically and report any redness, swelling, or sensations of burning, tingling, or numbness to your doctor.



Twirling Lessons

starting July 17 for
**Beginner, Intermediate
& Advanced**
*Using One and Two
Batons & Novelties*
For more information, call
234-2350
Ask for Brandy or leave message.

Ford Lincoln Mercury

Evinrude, Johnson, Mercury, Honda, Shallowater, Dargel, Shallow, Carolina Skiff and Hawk Bass & Bay Boats

Kawasaki ATV - Mule

VONDERAU

1912 N. Mechanic • (979) 543-2753 • 1-800-441-5554
vonderau@wcnet.net • www.VonDerAuFLM.com

Steve Taylor

Are you worried about the upcoming rice market?

Our system may not be the cure to this problem... but it can make your marketing plans easier to handle.

Rice Belt Warehouse Inc.
P.O. Box 1545
El Campo, Texas
(979) 543-6221 or 1-800-759-2387

www.ricebelt.com

Rice Belt Warehouse Inc. is now Online with the Latest Technology for marketing your rice.

You as well as potential buyers can browse our website 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For more information contact our El Campo office.

Visit our website at www.ricebelt.com

Rice Belt Warehouse Inc.

P.O. Box 1545
El Campo, Texas
(979) 543-6221 or
1-800-759-2387
www.ricebelt.com
e-mail us at ricebelt@wcnet.net