



Views Around The Lake

by Cindy Klopsteck

"We drove up in the big dirt parking lot, already full with cars and pick-ups. As we walked in the door of the big white frame building sprawled out under the trees, I could hear the oompah-pah of the polka the band was playing. I smelled the strong smells...and walked into the big hall. The dancers were swirling and dancing round and round the room, and I could see the walls lined with benches, people sitting there, talking and watching the dancers."

—from "Dance Halls in Texas" by Lois Zook Wauson

Anyone who has ever driven up to a Texas dance hall for an evening of fun, friendship, music and dance knows the feeling of Ms. Wauson's words in describing her dance experiences in 1948 south Texas.

To me you can just add two more words to complete the memory from my past: "Paul Jones!"

As I was learning to waltz and polka in the early 1960's, those words meant two things to me:

I absolutely KNEW I was going to dance the next dance (I didn't have to be asked, but could just pop onto the floor at the sound of the bandleader's whistle) and by the sound of the next whistle, I could hopefully have maneuvered my dance partner over to the cute young boy I had spied dancing earlier in the evening, with the hope of him being my next dance partner.

Growing up in Sealy, the "big white frame building" of choice for me was either the Fireman's Hall in Sealy or the church parish hall in Frydek.

Unfortunately, it turns out that many of the old dance halls of Texas, holding memories and music of the past within their aging "big white frames," are facing troubled times. Some of them, like the Raisin Hall eight miles south of Victoria, have met recent demise. Many residents in and near our neighboring town of Nada hope this will not happen to the Nada Hall.

Built in 1924 by the Nada KJT's, the building and its four acres of land were given on October 29, 1992 to the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish Church. Presently the Nada Community Center Inc. rents the hall and leases it for events.

I spoke with the board's president, Tony Janis, at his Lake Lumber worksite about a benefit concert and dance for the hall. "It will be held this Sunday, April 18", beginning at 2 pm, at the hall," he informed me.

Tickets are \$8.00 each for music by the Red Ravens. We hope everyone will come out to support the hall."

The Texas Dance Hall Preservation Inc. is also hoping for great local support. "Saving Texas dance halls one two-step at a time," the organization's mission is "committed to saving historic Texas dancehalls and the authentic music and culture that is still found in them." Board member Steve Dean loves old dancehalls and what they stand for.

He's seen most area dance halls and hopes the Nada Hall can be preserved. "Texas is known for dance halls. It's part of our culture and heritage. Our

organization wants to preserve not only the halls, but also the rich history within those walls." Their website www.texasdancehall.org documents some 700 Texas halls and has 450 pictured.

He says in many instances, as these historic halls age, the owners have been able to work with local businesses and individuals to provide alternatives to tearing down history.

A local family with strong ties to the Nada Hall are lifelong Nada residents Lawrence and Edna (Korenek) Shimek. Living just one mile north of the 86-year old landmark, the Shimeks share a rich history with the hall.

The couple met at Nada Hall at a parish festival in 1949. They married in 1952 and held their wedding dance within its walls. The Shimeks celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at Nada Hall in 2002, and four of their eight children also held their wedding receptions there.

Speaking personally with both of them, this couple can't imagine those near-sacred wooden walls not being there.

And the stories those walls and the family can tell! Mr. Shimek said the hall closed during World War II. Then from the mid to late 1940's, at the end of the war, our fighting men came home and the dances began.

There was a wedding almost every week. With few telephones and slow word-of-mouth communication after the war, area residents knew there would be a dance that night if the flagpole boasted the American flag for all to see.

The Shimeks each learned to polka and waltz at an early age. Mrs. Shimek's father Adolph Korenek was a KJT member and hall manager for years when that organization still held ownership. Mr. Shimek remains a member to this day.

Having danced at a few area dance halls in my life, all this interest and information encouraged me to borrow a key and view the hall firsthand.

Driving up alone to the building, I was impressed with the neat spacious grounds. Sure the dance hall could use a fresh coat of paint, but it looked like a sturdy old building to me.

The hall's architecture immediately and amazingly reminded me of the famed Gruene Hall (yeah George Strait!) near San Marcos. That's definitely NOT a bad thing.

But it was when I walked through one of the hall's sturdy front doors that I stood enthralled at the large vacant expanse of the dance floor and that lovely multiple-arched ceiling.

Arch upon arch curved through the hall, and I wondered about the very few times I had ever stood alone in an empty dance hall, which was usually loud and bustling with activity.

Now, it was quiet but I could hear the echoes of decades of music. Except for sunlight pouring through side windows, there were no lights on in the hall but I could see the potential of dozens of twinkling white lights that now hung darkly from the arches.

There was no movement but I could see dozens of laughing, thankful servicemen, back from the war, circling the floor with the lovely ladies for whom they were so happy to return home.

There was no air or heat in the building but I could feel the warmth of family and friends as wedding receptions, family reunions and private events were held year upon year within these now silent walls.

I wanted to sneak out quickly and leave the strong sense of memories and ghosts behind.

But it was as I was turning back to the door from which I entered that I spied a large clock near the bar, hands quite still, in need of repair or an updated battery. Symbolically, one would hope the clock could be maintained and not discarded.

Time may have seemed to stop within the walls of this historic building, holding onto the past, but area residents of the present can work to ensure that this lovely building will be preserved for the future.

"We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us."

—Winston Churchill

Comments are welcome at cindyj_k@hotmail.com

Rice Junior High Track Results

Jr High Zone Meet - April 8 8th Boys

- Shot put - Huvar - 3rd place 38' 4 3/4"
- Discus - Huvar - 1st place 130'
- Long Jump - Hodge - 3rd place 16' 9"
- High Jump - Jones - 1st place 5' 2"
- High Jump - Hodge - 5th place 4' 6"
- 4 x 1 Relay - J'Markus Hodge, Jordan Garner, Jon k Huvar, David Jones 2nd place 49.78sec
- 110m Hurdles - Jones - 1st place 17.15sec
- 100m Dash - Jones - 3rd place 12.07sec
- 100m Dash - Hodge - 4th place 12.41sec
- 4 x 2 Relay - Huvar, Korenek, Ferguson, Juarez 4th place 200m Dash - Hodge - 4th place 26.51sec
- 200m Dash - Garner - 5th place 27.10sec

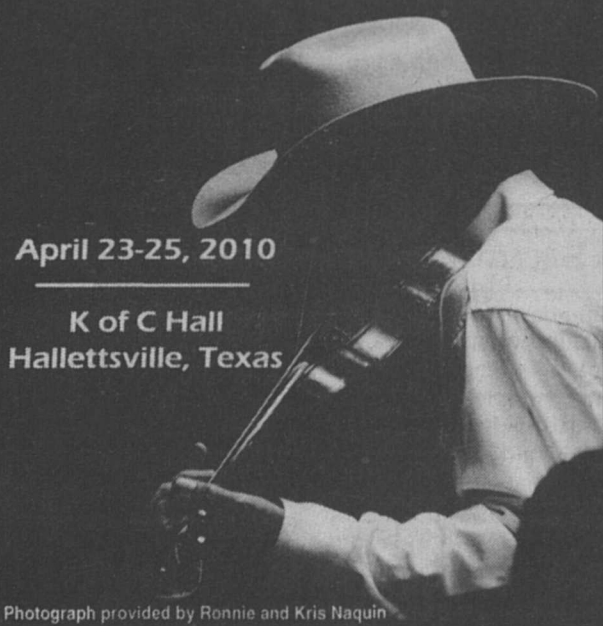
7th Boys

- Shot put - Gonzales - 2nd place 34' 8"
- Discus - Mattoon - 1st place 92' 7 3/4"
- Discus - Gonzales RJ - 4th place 89' 10"
- Discus - Gonzales AL - 6th place 76' 2 1/2"
- Triple Jump - Johnson - 1st place 32' 10 3/4"

- Triple Jump - Almanza - 5th place 30' 5"
- High Jump - Johnson - 4th place 4' 8"
- High Jump - Parsons - 5th place 4' 6"
- High Jump - Mattoon - 6th place 4' 2"
- Pole Vault - Labay - 1st place 8' 6"
- 2400m Run - Bozant - 2nd place 10:32.50sec

Continued on page 8

Texas State Championship FIDDLERS' FROLICS



Photograph provided by Ronnie and Kris Naquin

April 23-25, 2010

K of C Hall
Hallettsville, Texas

Friday, April 23

- 6:30 p.m. Fiddle Contest Senior Division
- 7:30 p.m. Anything Goes Fiddle Contest
- 9:30 p.m. Fiddlin' Frenchie Burke

Outdoor Activities (Free)

- 5:00 p.m. Cajun Fun Night
- 6:00 p.m. Songwriters' Serenade (Prelim)

Saturday, April 24

- 9:00 a.m. Forest Craig Freshman Div.
- 1:00 p.m. Gone to Texas (Out-of-State Comp.)
- 8:30 p.m. Dance featuring members of

Ace in The Hole Band & Rhythm of the Road

Outdoor Activities (Free)

- 1:00 p.m. Texas Songwriters' Serenade Finals
- 1:00 p.m. Wilfred Chevis (Cajun / Zydeco)
- 4:45 p.m. Texas State Championship Sausage Cook-Off -- Jackpot BBQ

Sunday, April 25

- 9:30 a.m. Guitar Accompanist Contest
- 10:30 a.m. Texas Fiddlers' Hall of Fame
- 1:00 p.m. Texas State Championship
- 5:00 p.m. Championship Play-Off

Outdoor Activities (Free)

- 10:30 a.m. Barbecue Showmanship
- 1:00 p.m. Patrick Murphy & Murphy's Law
- 1:00 p.m. Texas State Championship Barbecue Cook-Off Judging

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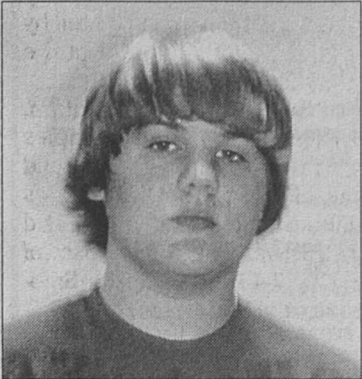
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Raider of the Week



Freshman Matthew Trahan is the Raider of the Week. He is the son of Ronnie Trahan and Marie Acker of Eagle Lake.

Matthew has excelled in academics this year. He is an honor roll student who takes pre-advanced placement classes. Math is his favorite subject. He participated in UIL number sense.

Band is also where Matthew shines. He has advanced to state in UIL Solo competition on the trumpet.

After high school, he is interested in attending the University of Texas where he wants to major in mechanical engineering.