The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum received a shot in the arm this summer, with the announcement that the project has been awarded a $1 million grant from the Economic Development Administration.

_**EDA Awards Museum $1 Million Grant**_

Architect’s rendering of the restored Knights of Pythias Hall, with planned addition

The grant funds will support the renovation of the historic building that will house the Museum, gift shop, research library and community facilities, and construction of a new two-story building adjacent to the original building.

"The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum offers an enriching glimpse into a little-known piece of Texas history, and this investment will go a long way toward preserving this heritage for generations to come," Hinojosa said in the release. "Not only that, but it provides a wonderful opportunity to boost the local economy by attracting tourists interested in Texan and American heritage sites."

**U.S. Congressman Ruben Hinojosa** (Democrat, Mercedes), issued a news release making the announcement in June 2007.

**Robert Oliver**, chairman of the museum’s board of directors, also said in the news release that “the grant will allow our organization to create a cultural center that celebrates the rich ranching and agricultural heritage of this area.”

"But, just as important is the economic value of having a museum of regional significance that will draw people into the town and into the area," added board member **John Hildebrand**.

Continued on back page.
Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, announced earlier this summer that the committee approved the FY2008 Department of Interior Appropriations bill, which includes $350,000 Senator Hutchison secured for the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum. These appropriations, which were awarded to the organization as “matching funds,” are earmarked for the restoration of the historic second floor spaces of the former Knights of Pythias Hall and will be administered through Save America’s Treasures, a federal program established in 1998.

**Community Meeting Spaces an Important Amenity**

The second floor of the Hall was designed for the ceremonial and recreational needs of the Knights of Pythias organization, who constructed the Romanesque Revival building in Cuero in 1903. Measuring approximately 5,000 square feet, the upper floor was designed with several large spaces, including the organization’s meeting, recreation and dining rooms. Once restored, the board of directors of the CTHM envisions the upstairs spaces to be utilized as multi-purpose community facilities. Meetings, lectures, small conferences, continuing education classes, traveling exhibits, and children’s summer camps, for example, can be accommodated on the upper floor; these are community needs that are currently not met.

**Save America’s Treasures**

The Save America’s Treasures program, established approximately nine years ago as a public-private partnership that included The White House, the National Park Service and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, focuses on a “national effort to protect America’s threatened cultural treasures, including historic structures, collections, works of art, maps and journals that document and illuminate the history and culture of the United States. Dedicated to the preservation and celebration of America’s priceless historic legacy, Save America’s Treasures works to recognize and rescue the enduring symbols of American tradition that define us as a nation.”

Senator Hutchison remarked, “The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum will help preserve Texas’ rich ranching legacy and this funding will use a beautiful building for a wonderful new purpose.” The museum organization, together with support from Senator Hutchison and other local, state and federal government officials and funding partners, will succeed in achieving the collective goals of Save America’s Treasures by fostering pride in our American heritage and educating Americans on preservation problems facing the buildings, sites, monuments, objects and documents that represent America’s diverse cultural legacy.

Our Place in History

Cuero’s historic Knights of Pythias Hall was placed on the National Register in 1986 and is a contributing structure to Cuero’s National Register “Downtown Commercial Historic District.” Also of great importance to Cuero and this region of Texas, Senator Hutchison sponsored legislation in the U.S. Senate designating El Camino Real de los Tejas as a National Historic Trail. President Bush signed the legislation as a means of protecting the trail and heightening public awareness of its place in Texas history. 

Shown above, snapshots from our multi-phase restoration plan.

“The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum will help preserve Texas’ rich ranching legacy and this funding will use a beautiful building for a wonderful new purpose.”

– Senator Hutchison
The Milestone Checklist marks the progress steps the Museum has taken so far, and the Completion Goals Checklist looks ahead to the milestones needed to complete the building and make it ready to receive visitors. From the organization’s grassroots beginnings, to the purchase of the Knights of Pythias building, to establishing our Seven-Phase Restoration Master Plan and improvements, we have made significant progress.

MILESTONES 2000-2005

- Organizational development; Board of Trustees established
- Membership organization created
- Identification and purchase of historical building, Knights of Pythias Jewel Lodge No. 103, c. 1903
- Obtained Registered Texas Historic Landmark designation for building
- Board retains David Hoffman, preservation architect, to create master plan, and hires The Douglas Group to design exhibit spaces
- Taste of the Trail launched as major fundraiser
- Cuero Development Corporation and Johnson Foundation contribute funding for building purchase
- Full ownership of building is obtained
- Board ratifies Hoffman’s Seven-Phase Restoration Master Plan
- National Trust for Historic Preservation, Texas Historical Foundation, and the Lower Colorado River Authority award grants for Phase One Restoration

**Completion of Phase One Restoration:** Second floor window restoration

- Texas Historical Commission, Texas Preservation Trust Fund, and Cuero Visionaries in Preservation award funding for Phase Two Restoration

**Completion of Phase Two Restoration:** Restoration of East & South façades

- Economic Development Administration (EDA) funds Economic Impact Analysis and Feasibility Study
- Congress earmarks $350,000 through the Appropriations Committee for Museum development
- In a landmark funding milestone, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) funds $1 million grant for restoration and new construction

COMPLETION GOALS 2005-2008

- Knights of Pythias Hall exterior fully restored to 1903 appearance
- Construction of 4,500 sq. ft. addition on north side of building. Addition provides compliance for ADA requirements, including elevator, restrooms, and fire egress
- Second floor restoration, including protection of original wood floors, wood wainscot, windows and doors
- Knights of Pythias Hall to receive new wiring, plumbing, HVAC, fire suppression system and new roof
- Parking and landscape improvements on adjacent North lot
- Interior renovations to provide multi-use community space on second floor for lectures, receptions, meetings, children’s summer camp, and other educational purposes
- Museum to begin building permanent collection: acquire and conserve historical artifacts and “material culture” relating to the great cattle drive era and ranching history from the late 19th century
- Permanent exhibit and collections to be installed on ground floor. Main entry to Museum provided through historic building; secondary entry through addition
- Establish permanent endowment
- Naming opportunities are available to memorialize Capital Campaign gifts of $10,000 and above. Contact any board member for more information.

Restoration construction work continues: In this photo, taken earlier this month, carpenters prepare for custom millwork on the rear façade of the building.
For approximately three years, the CTHM has been working in partnership with the Economic Development Administration (EDA), an agency in the U.S. Department of Commerce, to determine the economic benefits of the proposed museum institution for Cuero and South Central Texas. The EDA first awarded the organization $30,000 in matching funds for an Economic Impact Analysis and Feasibility Study, which was implemented in mid-2005 and completed in the spring of 2006. After a second application to the EDA in early 2007 for funding “to implement the project,” the CTHM learned in July of the agency’s award of $1 million in matching funds to support the completion of renovating the historic building and construction of a new two-story, 4,500 square foot annex to house the new museum and multi-purpose community facilities.

**Heritage Tourism Offers Economic Opportunity**

Congressman Ruben Hinojosa, a staunch supporter of the exemplary public facilities project remarked, “The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum offers an enriching glimpse into a little-known piece of Texas history, and this investment will go a long way toward preserving this heritage for generations to come. Not only that, it provides a wonderful opportunity to boost the local economy by attracting tourists interested in Texas and American history.”

Board member John Hildebrand echoed Hinojosa’s remarks, “This grant will allow us to create a cultural center that celebrates the rich ranching and agricultural heritage of this area. But just as important is the economic value of having a museum of regional significance that will draw people into our community and the area. We appreciate the efforts of Congressman Hinojosa and his staff for making all this possible. He has been a tireless advocate of the Museum and all his efforts are very much appreciated.”

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**Completion Milestones for Museum**

To date, the CTHM has completed three phases of the seven-phase master plan for restoring the Knights of Pythias Hall and construction of a new 4,500 square foot addition. The addition is designed to accommodate the facility’s restrooms, elevator, storage, catering and office needs. All four of the building’s facades have now been restored to their 1903 appearance.

**Help Along the Way: Visionaries in Preservation and Preserve America**

Board chair Robert Oliver recalled, “Cuero’s designation as a Preserve America Community in 2004 provided the pivotal opportunity to learn about funding through the EDA.” He added, “After Cuero’s acceptance into the Texas Historical Commission’s “Visionaries in Preservation” program in 2001, several meaningful relationships developed between community leaders and the historical commission staff. In particular, Visionaries Co-Chairs Kerry Rhotenberry and Pat Hedgcoxe and then-Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Sara (Post) Meyer effectively led Cuero through a visioning process that ultimately resulted in Cuero’s application and designation as a Preserve America Community at the Texas Historical Commission’s annual preservation conference in Fort Worth in May 2004.”

“The board of directors of the Museum recognized this unique opportunity of matching the goals and objectives of the CTHM with the ideals and principles of the Preserve America initiative and moved forward with defining ways in which our project could translate into a healthier economic landscape for the citizens of Cuero and all of South Central Texas. The Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration had recently posted funding opportunities for Public Works that supported the Preserve America initiative and we decided to pursue this funding goal with the assistance of Gandolf Burrus and Sal Valdez of Grant Development Services in Austin.”

Oliver added, “These awards do not come as isolated successes achieved by any one person or organization. We are grateful to Congressman Hinojosa, Senators Hutchison and Cornyn, the many local and state organizations, agencies and institutions of higher learning, the multitude of people in Cuero and most importantly our members, who have faithfully supported this project through the years.” ★
The WilDer aw a rDs
Museums
The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum recently received a Wilder Award, the Texas Association of Museums (TAM) highest honor, for the design of capital campaign materials. Awards were announced at the state museum conference held in Austin, Texas this spring. The capital campaign materials, “Blazing New Trails,” designed by Jenny McChesney/Zeitgraph Inc of San Antonio earned a gold merit award. The honor matched the achievement of other select museums in the state, such as the Blanton Art Museum, Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, Fort Worth Museum of Science & History, Museum of the Big Bend, Witte Museum and Houston Museum of Natural Science. The recognition, awarded at TAM’s Closing Awards Luncheon, drew judges’ remarks such as “clever, intriguing, and memorable.”

Named in honor of the founding Director of the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth who was a staunch advocate of excellence in museum publications, the Mitchell A. Wilder Awards were established by TAM to recognize achievement in graphic design and media production.

BRONZE QUILL AWARD
In addition to the prestigious TAM Wilder Award, the International Association of Business Communicators / San Antonio announced that the Museum’s “Blazing New Trails” capital campaign materials have been selected as an IABC San Antonio 2007 Bronze Quill Award winner in the Design Print and Online Publications category.

The materials (including a specially designed logo, appeal letter, project milestones piece, eight-page color brochure, pledge card and return envelope) were generously underwritten by Wells Fargo Bank. Denis Mueller, President of the South Central Texas Region of Wells Fargo Bank remarked, “Wells Fargo Bank was delighted to support the efforts of the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum and their capital campaign – the design of the materials fit perfectly with the marketing image of Wells Fargo and our goals for institutional excellence.”

You still have time to secure a permanent spot in the Museum by contributing to the Capital Campaign. Pioneer Circle members ($2,500 and above), and Trailblazers ($500 to $2,499), will be honored in permanent public memorials within the Museum.

Remembering Fred Pottinger
The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum lost a dear and generous friend several weeks ago. Fred Pottinger, former owner of Horse of a Different Color in San Antonio, passed away after a long battle with cancer. Fred was an avid supporter of the museum project, donating funds to complete the purchase of the historic Knights of Pythias Hall in 2003. Pottinger never refused our requests for live-auction items, several of which were sold at our Taste of the Trail events.

As co-owner of one of the most unique antique dealerships and interior design businesses in the state, Fred’s trademark style graced the pages of many of the country’s leading design magazines. His interiors were published in Architectural Digest, Texas Homes, Veranda, and Southern Accents.

Horse of a Different Color offered select pieces of Mexican Colonial furniture, Western art and museum-quality Texana prized by collectors. His signature look graced a multitude of South Texas ranches, homes and businesses. He also generously donated several pieces of rare Texana to the Museum’s permanent collection, which will be featured in the Museum.

CTHM Board of Directors
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Robert Oliver Chairman
Helen Walker Chair-Elect
Kay Kerr Walker Vice-Chair
Bill Blackwell Treasurer
Sue Sulsar Secretary
Board Members
Tom Batts
Errol John Dietze
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Gerard Gonzales
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Patsy Goebel
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Administrative Assistant and Membership Coordinator
Kerry Rhotenberry

A Message From Membership Coordinator Kerry Rhotenberry
Every name we add to the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum membership helps us in two ways:
1. Your valued name helps influence your neighbors to join.
2. The more support we can demonstrate among our community, the better we are able to leverage that support into government and institutional funding.

So, every name counts, big time!

Membership Levels are $25, $50, $100 Business, $100 Family, $250, and $500 per year. To join, email me at <membership@chisholmtrailmuseum.org> or leave me a message at the Museum’s number, 830-236-5533.

The CTHM Board offers special thanks to Pat Elder, Tempi McLeod and Diana Burrow, whose dedication, hard work, and faith in the museum project have been instrumental in our success.

Welcome new directors Tom Batts and Walter Fisher to the museum board. Their skills and talents are valuable additions to the museum effort.”
Membership Appreciation Party

top left: Secretary of the CTHM Sue Sulsar welcomes members and guests to the membership appreciation party, held June 8, 2007, at the beautiful Errol John Dietz farm.

center left: Don and Mattye Stiles enjoy cold spirits and hot salsa with other guests.

bottom left: Judy McAda, district director for US Rep. Ruben Hinojosa, checks out a model of the completed Museum, shown by Robert Oliver.

center: Lovel Blain entertains with The Legend of the Longhorn.

top right: Members Glenn Ruschaupt, Dr. John Davis, and Earl Wyatt swap some tall tales about early cattle drives.

bottom right: That would be our guest of honor, Thornton.

The recent announcement of the $1,000,000 Economic Development Administration award for the restoration and construction of museum facilities requires matching funds of $450,000 from private contributors to the museum. With construction scheduled to commence at the beginning of 2008, fundraising activities become a major museum priority and resulted in the decision to move the “Taste of the Trail” from the fall of 2008 to the spring of the year.

Funds raised at “Taste of the Trail” will provide a portion of the $450,000 dollar match to the EDA award. According to board member Shay Iacoponelli, “The Spring 2008 ‘Taste of the Trail’ is our most important fundraising effort to date. We are planning a great event, with a delicious menu and outstanding entertainment as a fun opportunity for the community to demonstrate their support for the Museum.”

Robert Oliver will host the “Taste of the Trail” at his Bellevue Ranch, and cowboy poet, storyteller, and singer Red Steagall will provide entertainment at the event. Mmm, smell that BBQ… Mark your calendar now for the April 19, 2008, Taste of the Trail IV!
Museum Receives EDA Grant for $1 Million

continued from cover

GRASSROOTS BEGINNINGS

According to the news release, the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum began development in 2000 with a small group of concerned citizens interested in preserving the region’s ranching and agricultural heritage.

Its mission is to tell the story of South Central Texas’ contribution to the twin legends of the Texas cowboy and the Longhorn and aims to make a significant cultural, social and educational contribution by interpreting the historical events.

In 2002, the historic Knights of Pythias Hall was purchased for the purpose of establishing the museum. Later that year, the organization hired renowned preservation architect David Hoffman to create a seven-phase master plan for the rehabilitation of the building.

“The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum project is a great model for other communities who wish to expand their economies and attract tourism by preserving local architectural assets and strengthening their local educational opportunities,” Hinojosa said. “I commend the dedication and work the community has shown so far and look forward to visiting the Museum when it is completed.”

Thank you, Capital Campaign Contributors! This list represents donors as of August 2007.

Mission Statement

The Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum’s mission is to preserve the ranching and Western culture of South Central Texas through interpretive exhibits, research, and educational programs.

The CTHM is a 501(c)(3) corporation.

ChisholmTrailMuseum.org