



**¡Pachanga!**



Come Celebrate  
Columbus Day Weekend  
in  
Sanderson , Texas

Presented by  
Sanderson Arts  
& Education Alliance

Call the Terrell County Visitor Center  
for exact date and time: 432-345-2936

# Pachanga!

If it's Columbus Day Weekend,  
it must be Pachanga time!

Terrell County, Texas has been designated the Cactus Capital of Texas. To celebrate that honor, we throw a big pachanga the weekend nearest Columbus Day. Webster's Spanish Central dictionary defines pachanga as "party, bash" but local definitions go way beyond that. Pachanga in Mexico is a festive time with a slightly raucous, mischievous twist. Our celebration is a little more sedate, but we do have a good time.



For Sanderson and Terrell County, the official title "Cactus Capital of Texas," is actually a very fitting declaration. Although Texas and the Great Southwest are areas filled with many types of cacti, the geological location of Sanderson and Terrell County places it squarely in a convergent zone between the Chihuahuan Desert, the Edwards Plateau, the southern Great Plains, and to a lesser extent, the thorn-scrub of the Rio Grande Valley and the Apachean floristic region of southeastern Arizona. In this area one can find cacti representative of those great ecological biomes.

Arid mountain ranges loom up, sprinkled with dwarf forests of piñon pine, punctuating the hori-

zon and framing the dry alluvial plains. Arroyos and canyons cut through the landscape, providing escape for the infrequent rains. Though dry for most of the year, the desert blooms when Pacific and Gulf hurricane systems drive far inland and bring monsoon to a thirsty land.



At the eastern boundary of the Chihuahuan, the desert comes crashing to a halt with the vast uplift of the Edwards Plateau. Geological forces have raised that huge area far above the plain, and erosion forces are gradually wearing it down. Flat-topped mesas separated by deep canyons provide a different habitat for cacti, plants and animals.

Though the 11" annual rainfall is about the same as the Chihuahuan, the canyons, outcroppings and limestone soils retain the moisture and create a more humid environment. Mosses, ferns and lichens grow freely in the shadow of lime-



stone boulders and canyon walls. Forests of yucca cover the hills and valleys. The omnipresent prickly pear cactus, in all its variations, grows so profusely that travel by foot or horseback in some places is almost impossible.

But go a little way to the north and the rugged hills begin to relax, becoming the southern reaches of the Great Plains. Here begins another habitat for different cacti which don't grow in the canyons or in the Chihuahuan. Dry, hilly landscapes turn into vast prairies of short and tall grasses and...cacti. Prickly pear, in some form or another, grows all the way into Canada.



So, our abundance of cacti truly makes us the cactus capital of Texas, and we like to celebrate that with our annual Pachanga! Come join us for good food, good drink and a fun time. Various events are associated with the Pachanga including a piñata contest and cactus coloring contest for the kids, lectures and presentations on cactus collecting, horticulture and gardens, a silent auction and a fabulous catered evening meal.

Come join us and help celebrate Terrell County, the Cactus Capital of Texas.

