

65th Annual Autumn Trails

Serving Winnsboro & the East Texas Piney Woods Region

The Autumn Trails Association

3 pages | October 2023

East Texas Traditions of Autumn Trails *Fall Foliage, Trail Rides, Arts & Crafts, Trades Days, Contests, Fords & Fun*



By **C.G. WILLIS** | Editor, TCR

Autumn Trails celebrates its 65th anniversary this year. The annual month-long east Texas celebration was the brain-child of Howard Rosser, former editor of *The Winnsboro News*. In the early years, about 1958, the Trail Ride gathered thousands of horse lovers with their covered wagons and campsites at city park, and leisurely trail rides throughout the winding country roads.

Over the decades, the Autumn Trails Association has added “Old Car Weekend”, a Classic Car show, Jeptoher, beauty pageant, Art and Crafts Market, Trades Days / Swap Meet / Flea Market, youth and mule rodeos, various contests from Chili Cookoffs, Pie and Baking, Beard and Moustache, Pets, Corn Hole, 42 dominoes, tournament, live music and bands, and this year, the first every region “Dallas Belt: The Lone Star Pepper Palooza” hot pepper eating contest, hot sauce contest and vendors.

The first weekend 2023 includes a combined Autumn Trails Pageant on Saturday, October 7, at 6 p.m., with entrants in four categories ranging from ages 4-18. Earlier that day, with a two different runs beginning at City Park. One, is a 5K run (\$15 adults, \$10 kids under 18), hosted by the Winnsboro ISD Interact (Rotary) Club at 8 a.m. Then at 10 a.m. is a second .05K “run” (literally ONLY 164 feet), for other folks of any age, toddling, young old, using strollers, canes, walkers, wheelchairs. This .05K benefits the local area food pantry. The entry fee is simply a can a food.

The second weekend includes the Youth Rodeo on Saturday, October 14, beginning at 9 a.m. until it ends, at the Winnsboro Rodeo Arena, adjacent to city park, at 937 Wheeler Drive, Winnsboro, TX.

The third weekend, the longest most traditional weekend, is “Trail Ride” Weekend. Trail Ride Weekend is set with an inaugural parade on October 20, at 4 p.m., in Winnsboro, winding through downtown and ending at City Park. The trail rides are set for Saturday and Sunday, varying from 15-about 16 miles each day. The trail ride maps are on the ATA’s website at www.WinnsboroAutumnTrails.com.

About the 1963 and 1964, “Uncle Bob” Willis, then 33, and his good friend J.B. Vaughn, decided to drive their Model A Ford cars around downtown. They made their own two car parade and honked their horns and hollered, and had a grand ol’ time getting merchants and customers at the sidewalk sales to wave at them. The next year, “Uncle Bob” brought friends from the Dallas & Ft. Worth Model A Ford Clubs. Each year, on the 4th Saturday in October, more As and old cars from all around Texas entered the impromptu Autumn Trails Antique Car parade. Townsfolks, young and old, lined Broadway and Main Street to see the grandeur and often silliness of entrants, some dressed in hillbilly attire and apparel from the early 1900s -1930s. Over the decades, the tradition has continued, with as many as 400 antique vehicles from five states, entering in the traditional parade, and attendees turning the love of old vehicles

(Continued, next page)

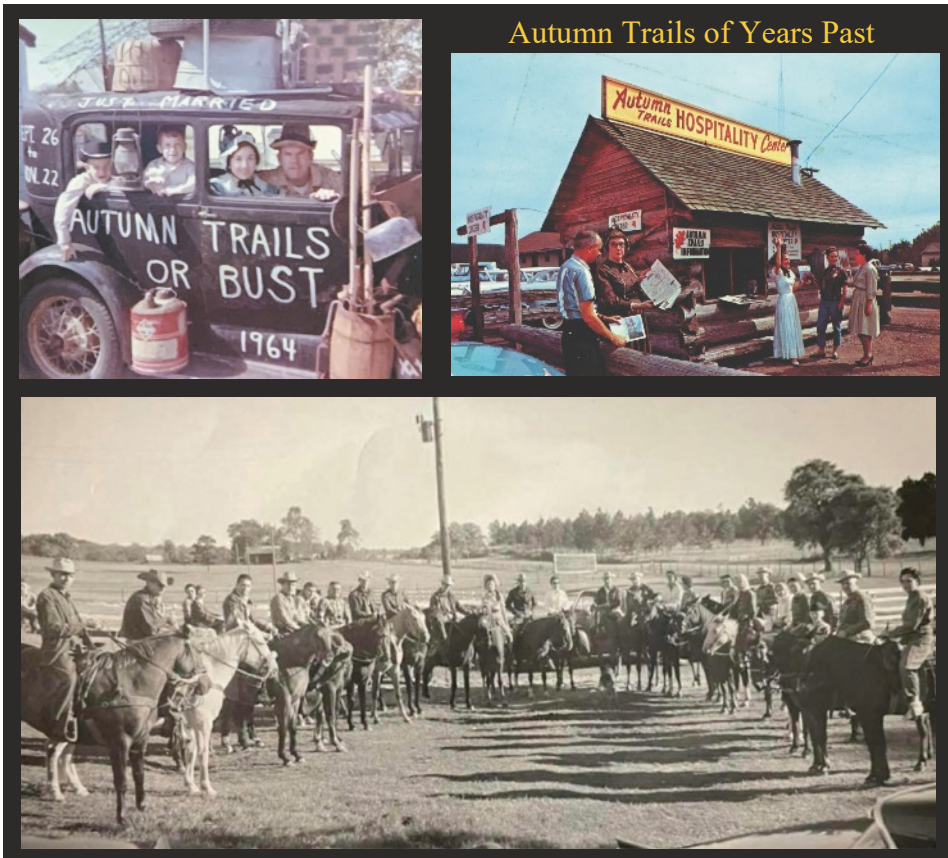


The splendour of Autumn in Trails



The many tree-canopied roadways rolling and winding through the tri-county area near Winnsboro provide a wonderful and often colorful autumn backdrop to a leisurely drive for old Ford Model A vehicles, as they chug along on their annual Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning road tours the fourth weekend of each October for the past 56 years. For folks without a “A”, sometimes “modern irons” often join in the driving trails of memories.

(Lower left collage) Autumn Trails is celebrated each October in East Texas, and Winnsboro rolls out the red carpet for tourists and citizens alike. (Left photo, top, circa 1964) “Uncle Bob”, (right) is shown here with his oldest sons (l-r) Joe, then 7 and Ronnie, 5, with their mom Ledo. “Uncle Bob” was one of four sons (Johnny, Tom and Arthur) of Brad & Isabel Willis, who settled in Winnsboro in the 1930s on a 40-acre farm on Mitchell Street in the northern part of town, also known as Glade Branch Road. (Left photo, top right, back in the day) the old Winnsboro “Hospital Center” cabin was located at the crossroads of Hwys. 37 & 11 (Main & Broadway). (Left photo, bottom, circa 1958) Trail Riders gathered to camp out at Winnsboro City Park and go on trail rides through bending and rural east Texas Piney Woods trails.



into a weekend long affair. The Ford Model A weekend includes an opening stew for the Model A clubs Friday night, weekend driving tours through the piney woods, a BBQ for the Model A car clubs, and a public Trades Days / Flea market all weekend.

For this decades-long popular east Texas tourism tradition, the Autumn Trails Association hopes you join the community, business sponsors and the city of Winnsboro and Wood County in celebrating the wonder and beauty of Autumn Trails.

Autumn Trails Association President David 'Tex' Willis Welcomes You to East Texas

Autumn Trails Association President

Welcome to the 2023 Autumn Trails festivities! This year marks 65 years since a handful of Trail Riders met in the Piney Woods of East Texas, organized and called their gathering Autumn Trails. It was the keystone event the catapulted a collection events each October in the Winnsboro area, known as "Autumn Trails."

I invite you to get out, go back in time and enjoy our events. We hope to please every participant of most any age, individuals and families, in some way! Surely there will be something for everybody.

It can be a day trip just an hour and half from the DFW metroplex, Texarkana or Shreveport, or a staycation with the over 60 lodging choices (hotels, motels, cabins and B&B) within 30 minutes of our town.

Our website has the finer details at WinnsboroAutumnTrails.com, or go to that site and request a printed brochure to be mailed.

Thanks to area businesses that support our cause, our Autumn Trails™ Board of Directors for their time and sacrifice, volunteerism and everyone that makes this special time of year possible.

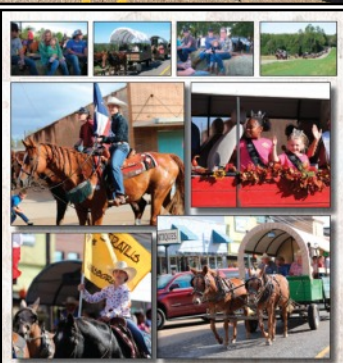
We hope to see ya around town!

Tex Willis, ATA President

DAVID 'TEX' WILLIS



AUTUMN TRAILS YESTERYEARS



TRAIL RIDE

Oct. 20-22, 2023

WELCOME PARADE
Friday, October 20, 2023 - 4:00pm
Water Tower on Hwy 11

TRAIL RIDES - 10am
Saturday, October 21, 2023
Sunday, October 22, 2023

THE LONESTAR PEPPER PALOOZA

October 28th at Autumn Trails in Winnsboro, TX

LEAGUE OF FIRE
CROSSROADS

Contest and Color Cruise
Trophies and Raffle Prizes
WinnsboroAutumnTrails.com

Youth Rodeo 2023
9 a.m. Saturday Oct. 14th

Mule Rodeo 2023
7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21
Winnsboro Rodeo Grounds
937 Wheeler Dr. Winnsboro, TX

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www.WinnsboroAutumnTrails.com | 903-342-1958 | 115 W. Elm, Winnsboro, TX 75494

WINNSBORO AUTUMN TRAILS ASSOCIATION WELCOME 2023

REGISTRATION FORMS FOR CONTESTS at WinnsboroAutumnTrails.com

For Last Minute Event Changes, Please Check WinnsboroAutumnTrails.com

Event Addresses in Winnsboro, TX

"Downtown" Hwy. 11 @ Hwy 37
Also known as Main @ Broadway, Winnsboro, TX
"The Depot": 100 Broadway / Hwy. 11
"WRA Rodeo Arena", 937 Wheeler Dr.
"City Park & Civic Center", 900 Wheeler
"Bowery Pedestrian Park", 100 Market St.

Saturday, October 7, 2023

- 8 a.m. Interact Club 5K Run @ City Park
- 10 a.m. ~ .05K (164 FEET) Fun Run @ City Park

Saturday, October 7, 2023

- ONE PAGEANT, Same Day, Location: Winnsboro Jr. High, 409 Post Oak
- 6 p.m. ~ Autumn Trails Pageant
 - LITTLE MISS (AGES 4-6)
 - AUTUMN PRINCESS (AGES 7-9)
 - JR. MISS AUTUMN (AGES 10-13)
 - QUEEN AUTUMN TRAILS (AGES 14-18)

Saturday, October 14, 2023

- Youth Rodeo, 9 a.m. ~ Ends; Morning start off, Winnsboro Rodeo Arena

Friday, October 20, 2023

- Trail Ride Welcome Parade
4 p.m. - Water Tower on Broadway; Horses, Mules, Wagons (No Stallions please) Hwy. 11 @ FM 852 (Water Tower), west side of town, thru Downtown back to City Park

Saturday, October 21, 2023

- 10 a.m. - 42 Dominoes Tournament @ Civic Center, 900 Wheeler Dr.
- 9 a.m.-10:30 registration, show & awards, then country drive /ride 12:30-1 p.m.
- Jeepober Jeep Rally @ Downtown Depot Parking Lot, Hwy. 11 Broadway @ Hwy. 37
- 10 a.m. ~ Trail Ride Saturday, starts @ City Park through town & the rural country sides
- 7 p.m. - Mule Rodeo, WRA Rodeo Arena @ City Park, 967 Wheeler Drive

Sunday, October 22, 2023

- 10 a.m. ~ Trail Ride SUNDAY, starts @ City Park through town & the rural country sides

Autumn Trails Association,
115 W Elm St, Winnsboro, TX 75494
903-342-1958

Saturday OCTOBER 28, 2023

CORN HOLE TOURNAMENT

CONCERT / BANDS
HOT PEPPER EATING CONTEST

Arts & CRAFTS

Saturday Oct 28
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Elm & Market

FLEA MARKET

Trades Days & Swap Meet
Winnsboro City Park (\$30 for 3 1/2 days)
900 Wheeler Drive, Winnsboro, TX

Oct. 26-29, 2023
Thursday 1 - 5 p.m.
Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Host: Autumn Trails Ass'n Model A Ford Club & ATA

WINNSBORO AUTUMN TRAILS ASSOCIATION

Winnsboro TX
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

WINNSBORO TEXAS

Established 1854

Wood County
THE TEXAS YOU EXPECT IN A COUNTY YOU'LL LOVE

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Welcome

TOUR NO. 1 - SOUTHEAST: The original Autumn Trails road tour covers about 30 miles. Its route: City Park (start), Winnsboro Municipal Airport, Cater's Lookout, Latta Park and Plaster Shop, Mt. Zion Cemetery, passed the old 4-D Guest Ranch, Bent Pine Gallery and Smyrna Church.

TOUR NO. 2 - SOUTH: Tour covers about 30 miles. Its route: Carl Azbell Memorial Park at intersection of FM 515 and SH 37 (start), Trails Inn Motel, Lake Winnsboro, Lions Park, Pleasure Point, Capt. Henry Stout Roadside Park and Stout Family Cemetery, East Point Lookout, Big Woods Springs, Ogburn Community and back to American Legion Park.

TOUR NO. 3 - NORTHEAST: Tour covers about 24 miles. Its route: City Park (start), Chalybeate Springs, Texaco Oil Refinery, Lake Cypress Springs, State Roadside Park with natural spring, Peckerwood Flats winding road, Lake Franklin and return to Winnsboro.

Autumn Trails Tours

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