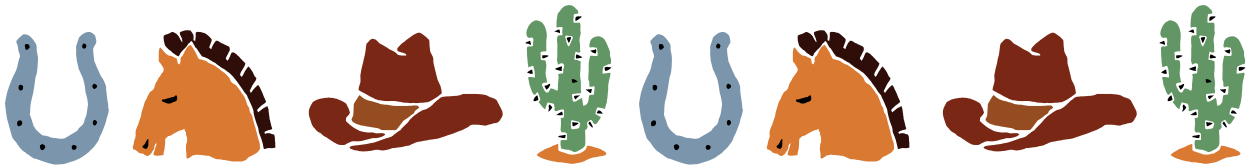


Volunteer & Docent Training Manual



A WESTERN TREASURE!

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National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum (Formerly National Cowboys of Color Museum) Mission Statement

The primary mission of the **National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum** is to offer the visitor a true and complete historical perspective of the people and activities that built the unique culture of the American West. The work of artists who documented the people and events of the time through journals, photographs and other historical items are part of this new collection. These long overlooked materials tell, perhaps for the first time, the complete story. *The American West* of today still operates on many of the principles and cultural relationships begun so long ago. We hope that our visitors will share in the enjoyment of a **new vision** and leave with awareness that today's West came into being through the struggles and triumphs of diversity.

The National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum was founded by James N. Austin, Jr. and Gloria Reed Austin to give recognition to the outstanding pioneers who played a role in settling the early American western frontier. The National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum also acknowledges individuals that have contributed to the western culture and tradition and play a part in keeping this important piece of American History alive.



National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum: A New Vision

The National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum is “an idea whose time is long overdue,” say those in the museum, scholastic, and business communities. Through artwork, historical records, and current events, this collection offers a true perspective on the people and activities that built that unique culture, *The American West*. Actual history is far removed from sterile depictions in decades of 20th Century movies and television. Original societies were diverse, as is the West of today, a variety of highly complex indigenous populations. Then, from the very first exploration recorded by Europeans, people from Africa, Asia, and the Americas contributed mightily to the process of history. This is a story of many displaced individuals and groups, all of whom became caught up in the enormous adventure of *The American West*.

National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum History



Fort Worth, Texas community activist husband and wife team of James N. Austin and Gloria Reed Austin founded the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum in 2001. The current location of the museum building once housed Fort Worth’s first dedicated Alzheimer’s care center, opened and operated by Johnnie Benson. The 24-year old building off East Lancaster Avenue was built with a large central room with a high ceiling surrounded by a perimeter of several smaller rooms that were the housed individual patients’ rooms. The building’s layout with the large central room easily accommodates many chairs for storytelling, meetings and speakers. The smaller rooms are specifically themed with topics like the Buffalo Soldiers, Native American and Hispanic contributions to the settlement of the American western frontier. Other rooms are dedicated to the Hall of Fame inductees, research of potential nominees and the Tuskegee

Airmen. The museum is peppered with art and artifacts (including championship saddles donated or loaned by rodeo winners and a full circus cowboy costume).

The National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum is a non-profit 501© (3) organization that operates through the generosity of gifts and grants from individuals, corporations and foundations located throughout the United States. Many elementary and middle schools with disadvantaged populations have been able to benefit from the important educational experience that museum has provided through seminars, workshops, classroom visits and field trips.

Future Home of the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum



The future holds promise for National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum and a \$6 million Capital Campaign is underway to secure funding for the renovation of a new location. The future home of the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum will be located at 3520 East Berry Street Fort Worth, Texas 76105. The site consists of a 30,000-square foot building and four acres of land. The donated facility was at one time a supermarket, which is projected to be remodeled in order to accommodate the museum's growing need for more exhibit space. The new location along with providing more square footage for exhibits also sits in a high traffic area on Interstate 287. With the idea that neighborhoods are the focal point of community development, the East Berry location (as opposed to a location in the Fort Worth cultural district) provides a perfect setting for delivering the message of the museum to the target audience of city youth in their own backyard.

National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum

Volunteer & Docent Program

Volunteer Program at a Glance

COME JOIN OUR TEAM!!!

Volunteers play a crucial role in the daily operations of the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum; whether it's providing one hour a month or twenty. We invite you to become a part of our volunteer program and join us in helping others discover the western treasure that is the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum, and investigate and enjoy the inspiration the rich history of the lives of the American cowboys of color.

Every volunteer can be a part of the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum by assisting in a variety of roles, whether working with the public or behind the scenes.

Volunteer Opportunities:

- **Front Table** - Volunteers are needed to tend the front table and greet museum guests as they enter the museum during normal museum operating hours. With some training, volunteers should be able to work the cash register for taking admission fees and assist museum guests with any questions they may have about the museum and its facilities.
- **Gift Shop** - Volunteers are needed to run the gift shop during normal museum operating hours. With proper training, volunteers should be able to suggest and sell museum merchandise to museum guests, keep merchandise stocked in/on the display shelves in the gift shop, maintain the cleanliness and overall organization of the gift shop and operate the cash register in order to ring up the museum guests' purchases.
- **Museum Facility Maintenance** - Volunteers are needed to help maintain the overall cleanliness and organization of the museum building. This entails dusting displays and bookshelves, setting up chairs in central conference area, sweeping/mopping floors, vacuuming carpet, washing windows, wiping down the kitchen counters, washing any dirty dishes in the kitchen, emptying trash bins throughout the museum building and restocking the restroom facilities with supplies (i.e. soap, paper towels, toilet paper, air freshener, etc.) as needed.

- **Administration** - Volunteers are needed to make copies, do miscellaneous filing, faxing information, updating mailing lists, stuffing invitations, stuffing gift bags, mailing out information, answering telephones, sending thank you letters to donors, cutting out newspaper articles for museum scrapbook, conduct internet searches of history for museum exhibits, research sources to add to the museum library, research new merchandise to sell in the gift shop, and translating museum signage into Spanish.
- **Gallery Attendants** - Volunteers are needed to watch over the museum exhibits, displays and artifacts and report any problems to a museum staff member.
- **Tours** - Volunteers are needed to lead and/or assist with tour groups. You may want to consider becoming a docent and giving guided tours of the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum. Volunteers interested in becoming a docent will need to attend a docent training session in order to prepare them to give guided tours through the exhibits. Bilingual docents are especially needed.
- **Museum Visits/Hunts** - Some groups may also choose to walk through or “visit” the museum without a docent. For these self-guided tours, sometimes the groups are quite large and may require volunteers to help guide them through the museum (you do not need to be a docent to help with “visits”). School groups may also choose to follow a “scavenger’s hunt” (curriculum based on the exhibits). These “hunts” may also require volunteers to help guide the group through the museum exhibits (you do not need to be a docent for this).
- **Children’s Storytelling** - Volunteers are needed to read stories to children at the museum every Saturday from 11am-1pm.
- **Special Events** - During the times that the museum hosts special events, volunteers are needed to help with the set-up of chairs and tables, running the registration table, greeting museum guests as they arrive, directing museum guests to the restroom facilities, watching over the museum exhibits, displays and artifacts, and answering museum guests’ questions about the museum (the building and the exhibits).

Volunteer Benefits:

People volunteer at the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum for many reasons. Volunteering at the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum allows you to continue learning about the history of the American men and women of color who helped to settle the western

frontier, meet people with similar interests, share knowledge and interests with other museum staff and guests and support the growth of the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum.

Active volunteers receive complimentary general admission into the museum, a 10% discount in the museum gift shop and online store, volunteer and docent training, outstanding volunteer recognition in the museum's newsletter, special invitations to museum events, opportunities to meet new and interesting people with similar interests and inner satisfaction of helping to educate a community about the many significant contributions that the cowboys of color have to American history. We encourage you to come and explore the museum on your own to learn more about the museum and the exhibits. You must wear your nametag and sign-in upon entering the museum to take advantage of this policy.

We look forward to further acknowledging volunteers through a formal recognition program, thank-you letters, earned admission tickets, additional training and special invites to social events.

Schedules:

Volunteer opportunities will either be emailed, US mailed or given verbally over the telephone to all volunteers who have registered at the museum to be a volunteer. Volunteers should sign up for shifts in person at the museum with a museum staff member, by emailing a museum staff member or calling the museum staff. Volunteers are responsible for keeping up with the calendars and scheduling themselves. We will not always call to confirm your assignment unless we have overscheduled or changes have been made.

All volunteers are asked to please arrive 10-15 minutes early so that they can be in place at the beginning of their shift. If you cannot show up when you are scheduled to volunteer at the museum, please contact the museum staff office at (817) 534-8801 with as much advance notice as possible. Volunteers are an essential part of our daily operations. Without your participation and commitment we will not be able to open our doors and spread our message each day.

What to Wear:

- ✓ A big smile!
- ✓ Name tag: This will be provided by the museum and is considered part of the uniform. All volunteers should wear their name tag whenever volunteering at the museum.
- ✓ Attire: Clothing should be clean, pressed and somewhat conservative in nature.

For Women:

White Blouse or collard shirt

Khaki, navy or black pants or skirt (No shorts)
Comfortable shoes

For Men:

White collard shirt
Khaki, navy or black pants (No shorts)
Comfortable shoes

Parking:

Free parking is available in the Tandy Village Parking Lot located at 2601 Tandy Avenue, directly north of the museum entrance.

Checking-In:

Signing-in is important for keeping track of the hours each volunteer gives and also for the museum staff to know where volunteers are working. Please make sure that you sign-in into the volunteer book upon arrival at the beginning of each shift at the museum. Due to the limited storage space of the museum, volunteers should try to leave their personal belongings outside of the museum if possible. Some personal belongings such as purses can be stored in back office if need be, but it is the volunteer's responsibility to ensure the safety of their items as the museum staff cannot be responsible for watching over everyone's belongings.

Museum Etiquette:

When volunteering at the museum, please use speech and manners of refinement. All volunteers should be poised and professional at all times. Volunteers are asked not to drink alcoholic beverages (if provided during an event) while serving at the museum. Likewise, for catered events held at the museum, volunteers should partake of catered food only after receiving approval from a museum staff member.

Working with Museum Guests:

Please treat all museum guests just as you would like to be treated. Make the visitors to the museum feel as though they are important, like a guest in your home. Thank each guest for coming to visit the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum. If a guest has a question that you cannot answer, please refer them to a museum staff member. Please encourage all museum guests to fill out a visitor comment/suggestion form located near the front entrance as they leave the museum and invite them to come visit the museum again in the future.

Safety Procedures:

If there is a fire alarm, request that everyone stay calm. An announcement will be made with instructions on how to exit the building (if necessary) or if it is a false alarm. Museum staff members will be available to assist in this procedure. If a museum guest is injured or in need of medical attention, please alert a museum staff member immediately.

Lost and Found:

Place any lost or left behind items in the lost and found box located in the back staff office of the museum. If a museum guests reports that he/she has lost an item, get a description of the item and then go and check the lost and found box for the item.

Website:

Check out the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum website at www.cowboysofcolor.org. It's a great way to learn about the museum, its history and upcoming events.

Training:

The volunteer/docent manual will inform volunteers/docents of the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum programs, services and facilities. In some exhibits, the information is quite extensive and volunteers/docents are not expected to know and remember everything. Our hope is that volunteers/docents and all museum guests will learn something new with every visit to the museum.

Above all, we want your volunteer experience at the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum to be educational, exciting, rewarding and pleasant. If you feel the job you've been assigned to do isn't working out, please talk to a staff member about getting a new assignment. Your suggestions and ideas are always welcome.

Policy Statement of Disqualifications for Volunteer/Docent Hire

NATIONAL MULTICULTURAL WESTERN HERITAGE MUSEUM POLICY STATEMENT FOR DISQUALIFICATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH CRIMINAL BACKGROUNDS

1. POLICY STATEMENT - The National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum (NMWHM) offers its visitors a true and complete historical perspective of the people and activities that built the unique culture of the American West, providing educational experiences through seminars, workshops, classroom visits and field trips. In recognition of the increasing incidents of crimes against children by volunteers of organizations to which the children belong, the NMWHM has determined that certain individuals should be disqualified from participating with the youth in our programs. The NMWHM Board of Directors reserve the right to disqualify any applicant who has ever been convicted of any disqualifying offense, been on probation or received deferred adjudication for any disqualifying offense, or had presently pending any criminal charges of any disqualifying offense before a determination of guilt is made, including any person who is presently on deferred adjudication.

2. DETERMINATION OF DISQUALIFYING CRIMES - The determination of whether a particular crime involves moral turpitude, which results in the right to disqualify, shall be made by the NMWHM in its sole discretion.

Without in any way limiting those crimes, which the NMWHM may determine to involve moral turpitude, the NMWHM offers the following examples as guidelines.

- A. Crimes involving moral turpitude include **sex** related offenses, child related offenses, drug and alcohol related offenses, weapons offenses, felony robbery/burglary offenses, fraud related offenses and crimes against persons and property.

 - B. Crimes that do not involve moral turpitude include minor traffic violations if limited in number, shoplifting misdemeanors if limited in number, **and misdemeanor** matters arising out of organized civil disobedience activities.
-
3. GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING Disqualification - If the NMWHM determines that an applicant has a background of one or more disqualifying crimes, the NMWHM may in its discretion disqualify the applicant from all further association with the NMWHM Volunteer/Docent Program. The NMWHM recognizes that there may be instances where previous criminal conduct does not pose a threat to the children involved in the NMWHM programs and should not result in disqualification from the NMWHM Volunteer/Docent Program.

Without in any way limiting the discretion of the NMWHM to determine on an individual basis whether or not criminal conduct should result in disqualification, the NMWHM offers the following examples as guidelines:

A. AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATIONS - Sex related offenses, child related offenses, murder, felony burglary/robbery offenses. These would result in automatic disqualification regardless of the existence of any extenuating circumstances.

B. All other offenses not described above may result in disqualification in the discretion of the NMWHM Board of Directors.

Determining factors of disqualification would include the following:

1. The nature and severity of the criminal conduct
2. The length of time since the criminal conduct occurred
3. The age of the applicant at the time of the criminal conduct
4. Personal references
5. Job History
6. Standing in the community
7. Other factors the NMWHM may deem appropriate under the circumstances

4. PROCEDURES - In order to screen prospective volunteers and docents to identify and disqualify those who have criminal conduct histories, the NMWHM shall utilize the following procedures:

A. VOLUNTEER/DOCENT APPLICATION - Must be completed by every individual applying to volunteer in the NMWHM Volunteer/Docent Program. This includes a disclosure in writing of any previous criminal history.

B. REFERENCES - Each prospective volunteer/docent shall provide two or more character references and shall authorize the NMWHM to contact those references to make inquiry concerning the applicant.

C. PERSONAL INTERVIEWS - Each prospective volunteer/docent may be interviewed by members of the NMWHM Board of Directors.

D. VOLUNTEER TRAINING MANUAL - Each prospective volunteer/docent will be given a copy of the Volunteer Training Manual and will be expected to adhere to this Training Manual during their service with the NMWHM Volunteer/Docent Program.

E. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS - Each prospective volunteer/docent shall give written authorization for a criminal background check by the Volunteer Center of North Texas pursuant to the Criminal History Information Act as adopted by the 73rd Texas Legislature and as amended from time to time (the "Criminal Information Act").

Welcoming the World

Working with International Visitors

The National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum brings people from all backgrounds together to learn about the history of the American men and women of color who helped to settle the western frontier. As a volunteer, you want to make everyone's visit pleasurable and assisting international visitors is a new opportunity for many.

The following tips on greeting and interacting with international visitors are very general. There is no way to include every culture's customs. Yet a general awareness of the differences that exist between our own customs and those of our visitors can reduce misunderstandings. Your cultural sensitivity, coupled with your personal warmth and friendliness, will prove to be effective tools in ensuring our international visitors enjoy their experience at the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum.

- Please remember to speak clearly but not loudly. Enunciate your words properly, avoiding slang and jargon. Slang and jargon words are difficult for a non-fluent visitor to understand and may be misunderstood or give offense.
- Think twice before you conclude that a guest's behavior is rude, evasive, too personal, suggestive or improper and remember that an innocent remark or gesture on your part could similarly be misinterpreted.
- People of some cultures enjoy a good discussion and very often get very animated and excited. They may appear angry or impatient but are simply expressive in making a point. Do not feel insulted if you find yourself being interrupted.
- Americans are often taught to "look people in the eye." This type of eye contact may make individuals from some cultures feel uncomfortable. Therefore, do not assume that a visitor is rude if eye contact is avoided.
- Saying "Good morning/afternoon/evening" and "Good-bye" is more appropriate than "Hi" and "Bye." Also use welcoming terms such as "Please," "You are welcome" and "Thank You."
- Gestures: Minimize hand movements. The following gestures may be considered rude or inconsiderate: Hand up, palm down, fingers spread or pointing with one finger. Many cultures also consider it rude to point with one finger at a person or object. Instead, try to point by using the full hand, palm up.

Also, please remember to:

- Take time in greetings.
- Refer to the museum guests as “international visitors,” not “foreigners.”
- Follow the visitor’s lead and **be flexible at all times.**

Assisting People with Disabilities

People with disabilities are as different as people with no disabilities. Simple adaptations in service can often solve accessibility issues. The same principles of basic respect and consideration apply equally to persons with disabilities as to the general public.

- Address the person directly, without using a third party, whenever possible.
- Be considerate and attentive. It may take more time for the guest to say or do things.
- Observe what types of aids they are using (cane, sight dog, wheelchair, etc.). Keep this in mind when giving directions to the exhibits, bathrooms and other public facilities.
- Don’t be shy to ask the museum guest if they need help.
- The wheelchair is a part of a person’s personal space, and as such, should not be handled without the person’s permission.
- Speak directly to the visitor in a normal tone of voice, even if they are hearing impaired.

National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum

Tour Program Overview

The objectives of the tour program are to:

- Provide museum visitors with a comprehensive overview of the museum's exhibits and collection.
- Educate museum visitors on the many accomplishments and contributions of a multicultural group of people throughout the history of the settlement of the western frontier.
- Take museum visitors from "inspiration to action."
 - (The tour program should inspire visitors to take the knowledge that they have acquired during their museum experience and share it with their family, friends, coworkers and other community members.)

UNDERSTANDING THE MUSEUM VISITOR

Docents are a vital part of museum education. Docent training is critical because the docent may be the only museum representative with whom visitors interact, aside from the person who collects their admission fee.

It is the image of the docent and the tour experience that visitors take away with them. The tour experience will determine whether or not a visitor will return to the museum in the future.

When working with groups, especially adults, it is important to remember that your tour group will be comprised of four (4) types of people:

- **Knowledge Seekers** - "I wanted to learn something new and I was very interested in the subject."
- **Socializers** - "My friend, relative or community group suggested that we participate in a tour together." (This group will participate in exhibit openings, gala events, etc.)
- **Skill Builders** - "I am over a department and I thought it would be a good idea to participate in a tour and a museum leadership class in order to become a more effective leader."
- **Museum Lovers** - "I wanted to be involved with the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum because it is a wonderful western treasure; an excellent addition to

Fort Worth and the Museum community. (This group will participate in museum related programs: gallery talks, lectures, demonstrations, etc.)

Here are the top ten (10) reasons why visitors participate in a tour and/or attend a museum program:

1. For the joy of learning
2. To pursue a long-standing interest or hobby
3. To meet people and socialize
4. To engage in creative activity
5. To pursue a new interest or hobby
6. To fill time productively
7. As part of a search for meaning and wisdom
8. To fill blanks in previous education
9. For community service
10. To help in a present job or to prepare for a new job/career

Tour Tips for Docents

- Docents should work with the Tour Coordinator/Volunteer & Docent Coordinator to confirm the type of tour that is being offered. Where possible, docents can find out how much time the group has for the tour and if the group has a particular interest.
- Each docent should take the time at the beginning of each tour to introduce themselves. Then ask the group to tell about themselves, how they learned about the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum and why they were interested in visiting the museum.
- A good explanation is really needed at the front entrance - how the museum came about, a good description of the history of the museum/hall of fame and a brief description of the future site of the museum.
- For children groups, it may be helpful to have each child find something interesting in one of the exhibit rooms and ask a few of them (2 to 3) to tell what they found and why they found it interesting.
- Don't try to cover the entire exhibit in your "spill" - pick out several points to highlight each exhibit room. While docents are expected to know the exhibit content they are not expected to be the "authority" on everything. Docents should feel comfortable learning how to say, "I don't have that answer but I imagine that you can find it by...Internet research, etc. (If this is an important issue, notify the Tour Coordinator/ Volunteer & Docent Coordinator for follow-up).

- If a member of a tour contradicts something - **PLEASE DO NOT GET INTO A DEBATE.** Allow the visitor to speak and move on to the next topic. Be polite, pleasant and courteous...your role is to serve as a guide not a dictator - **REMEMBER TO BE FIRM BUT FLEXIBLE** when face with difficult or challenging situations.
- Docents should engage museum visitors in personal reflection by referring to the *“Visual Studies Questions”* sheet provided in the docent-training manual.
- When offering adult tours, do not require every adult to participate in the tour presentation. It is quite possible that one or two may wander from the group - and other adults may join the group - Again, **REMEMBER TO BE FLEXIBLE.**

Docent Script

Hello and welcome to the National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum. My name is _____ and I'll be your docent for today. The National Multicultural Western Heritage Museum brings people from all backgrounds together to learn about the history of the diverse group of American men and women who helped to settle the western frontier. In order to enjoy the exhibits without harming any of the valuable historical objects in the collection, there are a few guidelines that you should remember while on your museum visit:

1. No food, drinks, candy, or gum are allowed in the exhibition galleries.
2. Enjoy the museum but please do not take any pictures while inside the museum exhibit galleries. The bright light from flash photography is harmful to sensitive papers and fabrics.
3. Walk respectfully while in the museum. Never run or jump.
4. No roughhousing, pushing, shoving, climbing or throwing of any objects.
5. Talk in quiet indoor voices in order not to disturb other museum visitors.
6. Do not talk while the docent is speaking. If you talk while the docent is speaking, other people won't be able to hear. If you have questions or comments, raise your hand and the docent will call on you.
7. Listen to what the docent is saying. Treat the guides and volunteers with respect and courtesy like do with your teachers.
8. Be curious! Ask lots of questions. Sometimes the docent doesn't tell you everything there is to know. If you are curious about something, please ask. If your docent doesn't know the answer to your question, they will find out.

***Note:** The Group Leader and chaperones are responsible for keeping the group together and maintaining proper behavior.



MUSEUM LOCATION:
3400 Mount Vernon Avenue
Fort Worth, Texas 76103-2525

(817) 534-8801 - Museum Phone
(817) 534-6277 - Museum Fax

WEBSITE:
www.cowboysofcolor.org

BUSINESS OFFICE LOCATION:
2401 Scott Avenue
Fort Worth, Texas 76103-2228

(817) 922-9999 - Business Office Phone
(817) 923-9304 - Business Office Fax

EMAIL ADDRESS:
info@cowboysofcolor.org

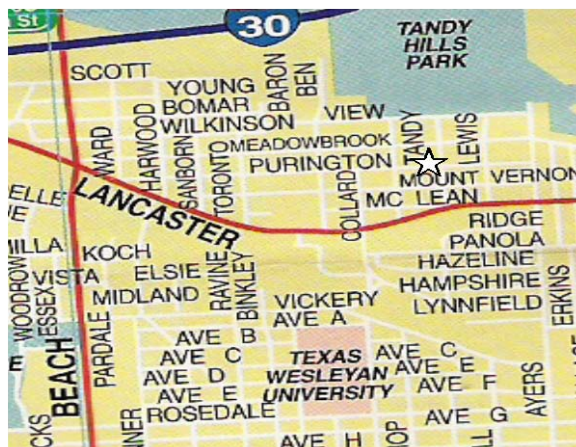
HOURS OF OPERATION: Wednesday through Saturday from 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

ADMISSION:
\$6.00 for adults, \$4.00 for senior citizens, \$3.00 for students with I.D., children 5 and under are free. Group discounts and free parking available.

DRIVING DIRECTIONS:
From I-30 exit at Oakland Blvd. Travel south to Lancaster Ave. Travel west onto Lancaster Ave. Turn right at Tandy Ave. and travel north to 3400 Mount Vernon Ave.

From I-820, take TX-180W/US-80 W. Lancaster Ave. ramp. Travel west on Lancaster Ave. Turn right at Tandy Ave. and travel north to 3400 Mount Vernon Ave.

Free parking is available in the Tandy Village Parking Lot located at 2601 Tandy Ave. directly North of Museum Entrance.





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