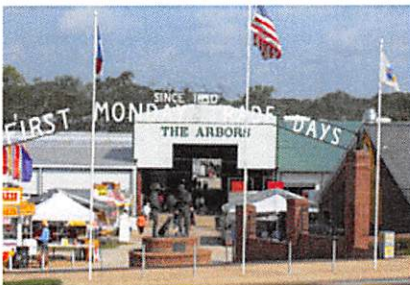


M. – Festivals and Events

Festivals and Events

Chandler is fortunate to be surrounded with a vast array of festivals and special events, only some of which are listed below:

First Monday Trade days - Canton



What started more than a century ago as a flea market has become home to some of the most exciting, cutting-edge home furnishings, antiques and collectibles that can be found anywhere. Over the past 150 years, lots of things have changed in the Original First Monday Park, but, the genuine, down-home human relationship between vendors and shoppers is the reason people keep coming back. This is a place where you can slow down, visit and ask questions, talk to collectors and antique

dealers, and meet the artists and craftsmen who create one-of-a kind items.

The world's largest outdoor trade days takes place Thursday through Sunday before the first Monday of every month in Canton, Texas. Every month, thousands of vendors from across the country turn this friendly East Texas community into a shopper's paradise where you can find rare antiques and collectibles, furniture, fine home decor, arts and crafts, clothing, jewelry, tools, produce, and much more.

The Four Winds Faire – Whitehouse

It is acclaimed to be one of the most historically authentic faire experiences in Texas. Some might call it a “fair” others a “festival” but the bottom line is it is all about family, food and fun! At Four Winds, you walk into a kingdom of entertainment, feasting, games and costumed characters.



Annual Hog Fest - Ben Wheeler

Since 2008, Ben Wheeler has been putting on the Fall Feral Hog Festival, which includes a morning parade, an afternoon cook-off and a follies show the night prior to the festival. The feral hog theme of Ben Wheeler's weekend festival is meant to poke fun at the expanding state-wide-population of wild hogs. Feral (wild) hogs are a large problem in Van Zandt County (the county Ben Wheeler resides in) and much of Texas and North America. Additionally, the omnivores eat plants and other animals and are a multi-million-dollar problem because they can disrupt both

livestock and farming operations by damaging facilities and fences, and trampling and eating crops. They also are popular table fare and, in some areas, compete with the white-tailed deer as an animal to hunt. The festival is a way for the community to make a little lemonade out of lemons for a day.

The Passion of Christ - Chandler

Experience the meaning of Easter by attending The East Texas Regional Production of the Passion of Christ. For eleven years, a number of area churches have come together to perform the Passion of Christ. The outdoor, interactive play has grown to be an east Texas draw. The production tells the story of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The word "passion" traditionally refers to the suffering that Jesus experienced as he gave his life for all of humankind. This story tells about the compassion that Jesus showed as he lived, taught, healed, forgave and loved. The play is performed by an ecumenical group of various area churches. Some of the local actors have performed year-after-year at the Amphitheater on the Lake at Lake Palestine United Methodist Church in Chandler. The setting for the play at the Amphitheater has a beautiful view of Lake Palestine.

**Rose Festival - Tyler**

Visitors who come to Texas expecting to see only oil wells and cactus are amazed by the flourishing beauty of East Texas. What seems even more surprising to the Old West ideal are the famous Tyler Roses. Approximately one-fifth of all commercial rose bushes produced in the United States are grown in Smith County, while over one-half of the nation's rose bushes are packaged and shipped from this area.

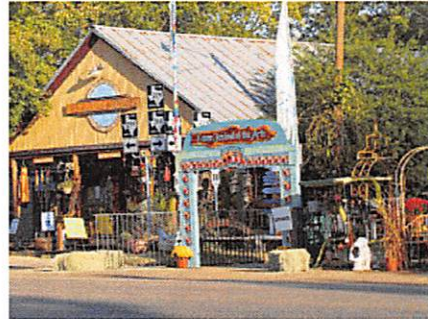
This burgeoning industry, which began at the turn of the century, has established Tyler as the "Rose Capital of the Nation." It is only fitting that the "City of Roses" is home to the nation's largest Municipal Rose Garden. From late April until frost, the Tyler

Municipal Rose Garden blooms with nearly 40,000 rose bushes exhibiting approximately 500 varieties of roses. Over 100,000 people from around the world visit the Rose Garden annually.

Festival of the Arts - Edom

Forty years ago potter Doug Brown setup his pottery studio in downtown Edom where he still creates and sells pottery. He encouraged other artists to build studios in town and many took his invitation. Throughout the years Edom has been home to a glass blower, wood workers, potters, jewelers, and leather crafters.

Potter Brown started the Edom Art Fair, which ran annually for more than 20 years. The Edom Art Fair became known as the premier venue for artists and a popular event for the community, but after so many years of work, the resident Edom artists decided to stop hosting the Art Fair. In 2000, local merchants formed the Edom Area Chamber of Commerce, and their first goal was bringing an art festival back to Edom. The Edom Festival of the Arts began in September of 2001 in the tradition of the original Art Fair: a juried art show featuring the best artists in the state and beyond.



The East Texas State Fair - Tyler



The fair has been providing education and entertainment to the local community for over 90 years. Each year brings additional attractions for the entire family to enjoy.

The East Texas State Fair is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes through the operation of an annual event promoting education, entertainment and the spirit of competition. The fair is committed to agricultural heritage, families and service to the community.

Their mission is also to create commerce for Tyler and Smith County by providing venues for others to utilize and by drawing participants to the complex.

Lake Palestine

Chandler is located at the headwaters of Lake Palestine a 25,600 acre recreational destination on the Neches River. With a total length of 18 miles, 135 miles of shoreline and an average depth of 16.25 ft, Lake Palestine offers plenty of room for fishing, boating, skiing and much more! The water is clear and has a good number of coves that provide good protection from the wind.

The dam is owned and operated by the Upper Neches River Authority for industrial, municipal, and recreational purposes. Construction of the original dam was started in 1960 and was completed on June 13, 1962. An enlargement project was begun in 1969 and completed on March 3, 1972.



The lake is very popular for largemouth bass tournaments due to its consistent success. Both white bass and hybrid striped bass are present. White bass are particularly popular during their spring run up the Neches River and Kickapoo Creeks. Channel and blue catfishes are abundant and flathead catfish provide great opportunity for trophy-sized fish. Most vegetation and inundated timber are located above the Texas Highway 155 bridge in the main lake, Highsaw and Ledbetter arms, in Kickapoo and Neches River arms and in Flat Creek. Anglers have placed brush piles in many locations between the dam and the bridge and these can be found using graph recorders. The bridge itself provides excellent structure on the main crossing between Dogwood and Coffee cities and over Highsaw/Ledbetter creeks.

Lake Tyler



The lake was constructed in 1949 and covers approximately 2,400 surface acres. This lake has served as the major source of water supply for Tyler since its construction. Lake Tyler also serves as a major recreation center for this area and is under strict sanitary controls. The Lake Tyler Department maintains six recreational areas adjacent to the lake. Lake Tyler is located on Prairie Creek, a tributary of Mud Creek, and lies in the Angelina River watershed. It has storage capacity of over 15 billion gallons (43,500 acre feet) at spillway elevation and has

an average depth of 17.6 feet. It has a watershed area of 42 square miles (27,000 acres).

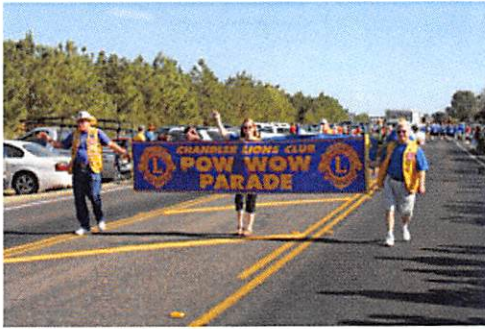
Quilts Of Valor – Ben Wheeler

Honoring those who serve and keeping service men and women top of mind is the reason behind the Quilts of Valor Quilt Show at the Old Elwood School House in Downtown Ben Wheeler which is about 18 miles from Chandler. Over 75 Quilts of Valor made by local East Texas quilt guilds are displayed in the recently restored Elwood Schoolhouse for one day before they are shipped to wounded veterans in Veterans Affairs hospitals across the U.S. and Europe.

Additionally, there is a Country Store stocked with fabric, quilting notions, kits and supplies courtesy of Beverly Stringer's shop, The Needle Niche in Athens, Texas.

A display of award winning quilts along with antique quilts from the 30s and 40s, some of which will be for sale, is also on hand. During the show, there is a group of ladies providing information about the quilts. There is also be an area available for anyone who wants to help sew a block for a quilt.



POW WOW Festival- Chandler

The Chandler Pow Wow is always the second Saturday in October and is at Winchester Park on Fm 315 S. The parade is scheduled for 10:00 AM and it begins at the intersection of Hwy 31 and Fm 315 and proceeds to the park. The parade is coordinated by the Chandler Lions Club to honor this organization and their service to the community. The Brownsboro High School Band leads the parade of floats, vehicles, marchers and horses that open a day of celebration and fun.

One highlight of the event is a Chili Cook-off, but Chili isn't the only food available. The booths host a wide variety of crafts, art, food, knives, purses, jewelry, and novelty items for your shopping pleasure.

Old Fiddlers Contest and Reunion -Athens

Known nationwide and is the oldest such contest that has run continuously year after year.

The main attraction is the Fiddler's Contest. This is broken into five divisions - Ages 18 and Under; Ages 19 - 30; Ages 31 - 65; Ages 66 and above; and Ladies' Division. Each division pays five places. There will be a play-off between the 1st place winner of each of the five divisions. The winner of this round will be recognized as the Grand Champion.



Concession and novelty vendors are set up along the sidewalks. In addition to vendors, there are carnival rides for younger guests.

The festivities begin at 9:00 a.m. and continue until early evening. Following the competition, a Street Dance is held in front of the bandstand. Athens is 30 miles from Chandler.

Azalea Trail - Tyler

A highlight of each spring season in East Texas is the 10-mile long Azalea Trail in Tyler. Visitors are guided through neighborhoods of quaint brick streets, historic homes, and residential gardens filled with blooming azaleas, dogwoods and tulips. The first azaleas were planted in Tyler in 1929 by Maurice Shamburger in the Lindsey Lane area. Other neighbors soon followed, and the area became well known for its springtime beauty. Over the years the word spread across East Texas and beyond about Tyler azaleas. In 1960, the first marked tour routes were established to help guide tourists. The Azalea Trail today hosts over 100,000 people from all over the USA.

The trails also display a high concentration of white and pink dogwoods, redbud trees, Japanese maples, and spring bulbs such as tulips and daffodils. Featured along the trails is the **Azalea National**

Historic District established in 2003 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It comprises about 950 homes built in the first half of the 20th century, with a large concentration of structures from the 1930s when the oil boom had a huge economic impact on Tyler.

The Azalea Belles - Tyler

The official greeters of the Azalea Trail are known as the **Azalea Belles**, young women from the Tyler area who dress in antebellum gowns. The belles are chosen each year from area high schools or home school families. Freshman and sophomore girls residing in Smith County are eligible to apply. It's an honor to be chosen as one of the Azalea Belles, a tradition that dates back many years. The young women have an opportunity to promote Tyler, greet tourists and pose for photographs in front of scenic azalea bushes in the historic brick street district.



Kiepersol Estates Harvest Festival & Grape Stomp - Bullard



Celebrate Texas Wine Month with a family event at the heart of the East Texas vineyard. Activities include unique wine festival games, interactive vintage harvest "tintype" photographs, karaoke, a self-guided walking tour of the vineyard, a food festival, wine tasting, homemade sangria, and wine-a-ritas. The grape stomp is the highlight of the festival where participants can "make wine" and mark their own commemorative teeshirt. Participants should bring their cameras and can submit photos of the event for competition. Kiepersol Winery is about 20 miles from Chandler.

PIONEER DAY - Parrott Park, Lindale

Events include:

Petting Zoo "Country Critters from Shawnee Creek Ranch"; displays from Brookshires Wildlife Museum & Smith County Historical Society; blacksmith demonstrations by Shadowhawk Blades; character actors in period costumes give tours and equipment demonstrations; a wild west shoot out is performed by "The Outsiders" of Crossbrand Cowboy Church; a cowboy poet entertaining with poetry and stories; food & drink vendors; face painting and carnival style games for the kids to enjoy; gift shop; and live bands. Lindale is 32 miles from Chandler



Chandler Community Thanksgiving Service – The Ministerial Alliance of Chandler and Brownsboro sponsor an annual community Thanksgiving meal with special speakers and music. It has been held in the Fellowship Hall at Faith Baptist church.

Tyler Azalea Quilt Show is held on the third or fourth weekend of March to coincide with Tyler's Annual Azalea & Spring Flower Festival. The event is held at the Harvey Convention Center in Tyler. It is sponsored by The Quilters' Guild of East Texas.



Camp Ford Civil War Reenactment Weekend (Tyler) Camp Ford Living History Weekend includes history and heritage events, talks, and lectures. It includes Civil War era events, military re-enactors, civilian exhibits and camps of that era. The event takes place under tall pine trees and rolling hills of the former POW - Camp Ford, ½ mile north of Tyler Loop and intersection of Hwy 271, (6288 Hwy. 271). This annual event is fun and educational for all ages that want to learn more about the Civil War in Texas. **Scheduled exhibits** included are a period blacksmith, medical hospital, cavalry camp with horses, and a campaign camp with pup tents. There are also displays of women's and children's clothing, toys, household items and period flags. **Over the weekend two cannons** are fired periodically and several infantry men walk around the grounds. Keep your eyes peeled for any prisoners that might start a skirmish by trying to escape! For more information see: Smith County Historical Society



The Society is also the official caretaker of [Camp Ford Historic Park](#). This Civil War history park is located on the original site of the largest Confederate prisoner camp west of the Mississippi River. An annual on-site reenactment is held each spring by outside organizations. Established in August of 1863, the camp was not closed until May 19, 1865. At its peak in July 1864, over 5,300 prisoners were detained there. The site of the camp stockade is now a public park, owned by Smith County, Texas, and managed by the [Smith County Historical Society](#). The park features a kiosk with extensive graphics detailing the history of the camp, a walking trail with more interpretive signage, a picnic area, and a reconstruction of the cabin of Lt. Col J.B. Leake.

Book Fair - The Smith County Medical Society Alliance is best known for their bi-annual Book Fair, April and October, located at 4410 DC Drive, which raises money for allied health scholarships at Tyler Junior College and the University of Texas at Tyler. SCMSA has been involved in community health in many other ways as well. They helped to start Parents Anonymous of Tyler – an affiliation of a national child abuse prevention organization, published a cookbook – Azaleas to Zucchini's – to fund Hospice library

furnishings, and a 3-D body Puzzle for the Discovery Science Place, and have assisted monetarily the Bethesda Clinic, St. Paul Children Foundation, and the Cancer Foundation for Life.

East Texas Horticultural Field Day –Plant Trials & Open House at Texas Agri-Life Research & Extension Center at Overton.



The field day begins at 8:30 a.m. at the center's North Farm site. The tour continues at the site until about 10:30 a.m. then moves to the Overton center's headquarters building, where a demonstration garden is located. A free lunch is served at about 11:45 a.m. Indoor presentations begin at 1:00 p.m., and the program concludes by 3 p.m. The trials include thousands of square feet of plots planted with purple, pink, red and white flowers. Visitors vote for their favorite flowers with pennant flags. Dr. Brent Pemberton designed the tests to help

local growers, but the event has become popular with local gardeners too, with hundreds typically attending, including seed company industry representatives. The center is located 1 mile north of downtown Overton on Farm-to-Market Road 3053.

The **East Texas Bedding Plant Greenhouse and Garden Performance Trial Program** began in 1994 at the Overton Center with the goal of generating and providing information on greenhouse and field performance of bedding plant varieties to the local bedding plant industry and consumers of these products. The program began with local trials that have now expanded in scope with the Smith County and Rusk County Master Gardeners Associations playing an integral role in performing the trials. Overton is 32 miles from Chandler.

Mineola May Days Activities include a carnival, live entertainment, arts & crafts, wiener dog races, pet parade and obedience demonstrations, talent contest, Cinco de Mayo celebration, and more. The event takes place at Mineola Civic Center.

Chief Bowles' and Texas Cherokee Memorial Cherokee Chief Bowles tried repeatedly to negotiate land for his tribe. Chief Bowles and about 800 Indians were killed in the Battle of Neches in 1839. The historical marker erected in 1936 is 13.5 miles west of Tyler, Texas, off SH 64. Turn right on Van Zandt County Road VZ 4923 and follow the signs for 2.4 miles. Turn right just before the Tyler Fish Farm.

Stagecoach Stop

Burwell H. Hambrick built the first cotton gin in Van Zandt County. For many years a stone building there served as a stagecoach stop and a change station for horses. The stagecoach stop was located halfway between Dallas and Shreveport and is located five miles east of Edom in southeast Van Zandt County at 2601 State Hwy 64W, Ben Wheeler, TX. Hambrick also built Roseland Plantation, an antebellum home plantation home.