



News Release

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Laura W. Bush dedicates Lorenzo de Zavala building as Literary Landmark

Lorenzo de Zavala
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Peggy D. Rudd

Assistant State Librarian
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information
work
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Texans*

AUSTIN, Texas – Laura W. Bush, former U.S. and Texas First Lady dedicated the Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library Building, the headquarters of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC), as a national Literary Landmark, Thursday afternoon. The landmark designation was issued by the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations (ALTAFF).

“Today’s dedication recognizes the inspiration that this building and the resources it houses, has provided for great writers for decades,” said Mrs. Bush. “The Zavala building was the first central repository to house and protect Texas’ priceless historical treasures and to support and improve library services in the state.”

Gail Bialas, manager for the Texas Center for the Book, along with Mrs. Bush, presented the designation plaque to Peggy D. Rudd, Texas State Library and Archives Commission director and state librarian. Rudd thanked Mrs. Bush and the Texas Center for the Book for their work in the nomination and designation of the building.

The Lorenzo de Zavala building is the fourth structure in Texas to receive the national Literary Landmark designation. Other recipients include the O. Henry House and Museum in Austin (1999); the Menger Hotel in San Antonio (2000); and the Katherine Anne Porter Home in Kyle (2002).

In the lobby of the Lorenzo de Zavala building, the Texas State Archives is exhibiting, materials and works used by James Michener, author of *Texas*; Jack “Jaxon” Jackson, author of graphic novels on Texas history; and Walter Prescott Webb, author of *The Texas Rangers*. ALTAFF cited that each author used resources and materials that are now located in the building to create their works.

“Visitors from around the world can appreciate the treasures at the Texas State Library and Archives that have been made available here,” said Mrs. Bush. “From the papers of Stephen F. Austin, the father of Texas, to Travis’s letter from the Alamo, to Matamoros Battalion flag captured at the battle of San Jacinto, the archives provide a window into Texas history.”

The Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library Building located in Austin, just east of the Texas State Capitol, opened in 1961. The building is currently undergoing a major renovation thanks to a \$15.5 million appropriation from the Texas Legislature and private funds raised by the Friends of Libraries & Archives of Texas. It is expected to be complete in the spring of 2010. Renovations have been completed on the ground, first and second floors, which are now open to the public to give patrons new and modern research environments. Construction continues on the third and fourth floors and upper stacks.

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“It is what is inside that is the real treasure,” said Rudd. “For decades researchers and students of Texas history have mined gold, historical gold, and they have found it in abundance.”

The ceremony opened with music from Erik Hokkanen, on the fiddle along with guitarist Jeremy Wheeless. The Scottie Singers, from Austin’s Highland Park Elementary School performed Texas songs including “Texas Our Texas.” A choir made up of state employees performed during the reception after the ceremony.

This event is the culmination of a yearlong celebration recognizing the act creating the Texas Library and Historical Commission. On March 19, 1909, Governor Thomas M. Campbell signed the bill that created the agency. The bill directed the new agency to aid and encourage public libraries and collect materials related to Texas history. TSLAC has selected "1909 – 2009: A Century of Service to Texas" as the slogan for its 100th anniversary.

Renamed in 1979 as the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC), the agency continues its mission to safeguard significant resources; provide information services and support research, education and reading; and enhance the capacity for achievement of current and future generations.

Today, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission also supports the 563 public libraries that operate 878 outlets in providing library services in Texas.

The Friends of Libraries & Archives of Texas, Texas Center for the Book, ALTAFF, joined the Texas State Library and Archives Commission in supporting this literary landmark event.

ABOUT THE TEXAS STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COMMISSION

TSLAC helps Texans find the information they seek. The people of Texas use TSLAC services and programs to effectively use information and materials that improve their lives, the lives of their families, and their communities. Since 1909, TSLAC has carried out a commitment of making information work for all Texans by providing history and genealogical services, federal and state government documents, electronic research, and library services to Texans of all ages who are unable to read standard print material due to visual, physical, or reading disabilities. For more information, go to www.tsl.state.tx.us.