

Military museum open to all

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I first met Brent Mullins some nine years ago when I got a private tour of his spread in South College Station. Make no mistake, his parcel of land pushes the word "unique" to a whole different level. How many people do you know have a World War II Higgins Boat in their front yard, or a dozen or so restored World War II tanks in their warehouse? A Vietnam Huey chopper or PBR River Boat in the back? How about a World War I vintage French 75 mm Field Gun in the garage?

For a living, Mullins sells jeep parts on the Internet. For a passion, he buys, restores and displays possibly the most remarkable private collection of military equipment and artifacts anywhere.

This Friday and Saturday, his "Museum of the American GI" will host its 8th Annual Open House, on the site that he hopes some day will be an actual brick-and-mortar museum, where he can display his collection year-round.

The two-day open house will, according to operations director Robin Silva, showcase the museum's fully restored military vehicles, host a military vendors market, and present a World War II battle re-enactment. It will all happen on the grounds of the museum's 40 acre site, located about a half-mile south of Santa's Village (Take the Texas World Speedway Exit and stay on the service road).

The event is a fundraiser for the museum's latest and largest restoration project, the USS Iwo Jima LPH-2 Island, the ship that picked up the crew of Apollo 13 following its near fatal mission in 1970. According to the museum's Web site, the sections of the Iwo Jima's restoration are already at the property. When it is assembled and restored, it will lay alongside the parking lot of the museum with the parking lot resembling the flight deck. Mullins says it will stand 125 feet tall upon completion.

Gates open at 8 a.m. each day and close at dark, with the showstopper being the World War II re-enactment Saturday at 2 p.m. There will also be a replica of Gen. George Patton's mobile office and quarters on display.

There's an admission charge of \$5 and parking is free, but this is a fundraiser. Says Silva, "In order to defray our \$3,500 worth of expenses to host this fundraiser, we are appealing to members of the community to contribute in honor of American G.I.s, so that they will be remembered and honored in a manner befitting their service."

For more information about the open house and the museum, go to www.magicstx.org.

'Angel Street' in Brenham

Unity Theatre in Brenham opens a three-weekend run of the murder mystery *Angel Street* on Thursday night. New owners of the house on Angel Street get more than they bargained for when the murderer of the previous owner returns for the loot he had to leave behind.

Performances are Thursdays at 7:30, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 4 p.m. at the theater at 300 Church St. in Brenham. Following Thursday's opening performance, the audience is invited to stay and chat with the cast. Prior to Saturday's curtain, the audience can come early to meet the director at 7:30, when he'll give a pre-show briefing. On March 29, patrons are invited to stay and enjoy dinner with the cast following the show. Tickets are \$25 for the show. Season pass holders can enjoy the dinner for an extra \$30. Non-season pass holders can see the March 29 show and eat for \$60. For more information, call 979-830-1480 or go to www.unitybrenham.org.

Magnolia Music Festival

Originally scheduled for last September, Hurricane Ike had other plans for the Magnolia Music Festival. Now, some six months later, it has been rescheduled for this coming Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the Magnolia Ridge Master Planned Development at 1755 FM 1488 (Magnolia Parkway) in Magnolia. There will be a barbecue cookoff, fun for the kids and some 15 musical shows over the three-day celebration, including headliners Johnny Lee, Johnny Rodriguez and Aaron Watson. Billed as "The Original Urban Cowboy," Johnny Lee will perform Friday from 8 to 9:30 p.m. Rodriguez and Watson will be on stage back-to-back Saturday starting at 8 p.m. Other performers on Friday are the Charlie Lucas Band and Jarrod Birmingham. Saturday entertainment goes all day and starts with Texas Road Cats from 10 to 11:30 a.m., followed by Darrell Lee Rush, Sheila Marshall/Seth Candon and 90 Miles In. Sunday features Cortez Brothers and Avizo F/Jimmy Edward. Tickets for the festival are \$15 for adults, \$10 for children younger than 12, and children younger than 3 get in for free. Parking is \$2. Armbands can be purchased in advance at Magnolia City Hall at 18111 Buddy Riley Blvd. in Magnolia. For more information, including vendor information and volunteer opportunities, go to www.magnoliamusicfest.com or call 281-356-2266.

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Save the date

* **Friday-Saturday:** International Festival Institute at Round Top presents 4th Annual Herbal Forum (979-249-3129, festivalhill.org)

* **Monday-March 26:** Brazos Valley Arts Council presents "Juried Member Art Show", Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (696-2787, acbv.org)

All month

* Children's Museum of the Brazos Valley offers various programs, including Monday Madness, from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (779-5437, www.mymuseum.com)

* Through August: George Bush Library and Museum presents "Beyond The Moon: NASA's Continuing Mission" exhibit, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and noon to 5 p.m. Sundays (bushlibrary.tamu.edu)

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