

for cowboys and dudes



Photos by Cathy Saathoff and Debbie Nelson

Hailey said. In two weeks, he said, the store receives more than 4,000 pairs each of Wranglers and Levi's.

Hailey said that Wrangler is the most popular brand of jeans now, but in the past Lee, then Levi's, were the favorite.

The women's department has the big three of Levi's, Wranglers and Lee, in addition to Dee Cee jeans and overalls, Cinema, Diane von Furstenburg, Kenny Rogers and others.

Women's Levi's sell for \$21.50, Wranglers for \$17.85. One wall holds fancy western shirts a la Urban Cowgirl, and name belts are stamped while you wait.

Remnants of The Fair's early days as a general store include linens and men's and children's unmentionables.

Big bucks from cowboy fad
The demand for western clothing has become phenomenal. The Western Fair did a booming business of \$6 million last year, Hailey said.

Hailey attributed the store's success to the fact that the buildings are all owned by the business, not rented.

"It'd be hard to sell some of the stuff at the prices we sell if you had to pay rent in a shopping center," he said.

Due to the western craze, prices on some items, especially boots, have risen. Lately, The Fair has sold 300 to 500 pairs of the better-priced men's boots per week, Hailey said.

In the boot departments, Tony Lama, Justin and Nocona account for the most sales.

Greater customer demand for boots has created a shortage of exotic leathers, Hailey said, and inflated prices. But the figures on the price tags seem to be rising a little slower now. The most popular exotics are lizard, snakeskin, anteater, elephant and antelope.

Getting a customer fitted in comfortable boots is essential, Hailey said. The clerks are patient about bringing out boxes and boxes of boots to make sure the customer has a good fit, which makes for long lines for service and a "please take a number" dispenser.

But Hailey's philosophy is, "Once you get a person in a pair of boots ... you've got a customer for life."



Getting there is half the fun
Lott is a prime destination for a road trip. The route is mostly curving country backroads and you're sure to get stuck behind at least three slow-moving farmers driving heavy equipment. But coming home with a

trunkful of new duds is worth it. To get to The Fair, take the Highway 6 Bypass northwest to Hearne and turn left on Rt. 485 just past Hearne. Then take a right on 77 and continue till you reach Lott. Don't blink. Upon reaching the town, turn right at

Lott, Texas is a sleepy town with one major claim to fame — The Western Fair.

Offering everything for the well-dressed cowboy, the Fair specializes in western fashion at lower-than-usual prices.

The opposite page shows stacks of hats and racks and racks of shirts waiting to be plucked up by a cowboy, real or otherwise.

Customers can find the Western Fair by looking for the rows of cars lining the street. Parking can be hard to find, especially on Saturday.

Pictured on this page is one of the many rows piled high with blue jeans in the entire back room at The Fair.

Below, Fair employee Donte Payne steams and creases a felt cowboy hat.



the light. (There's only one.) The Fair is on the left, parking on the right.

The Fair accepts most checks with credit card identification, and Hailey said he hopes to have an Impact machine installed outside before Christmas, to give people ready cash for their

shopping. Anyone thinking of buying Christmas presents at The Western Fair should heed this warning: The Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving are traditionally the store's two busiest days. But if you don't mind standing in line ...

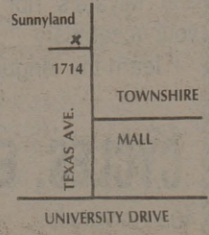
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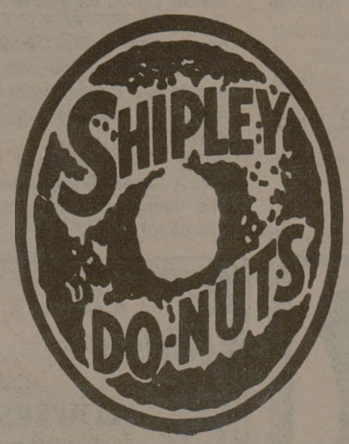
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