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+ LIFE



‘NEVER UNDERESTIMATE Lubbock’

Planning a road trip to this historic Texas city



Think, Texas
Michael Barnes
Austin American-Statesman
USA TODAY NETWORK

We hit pay dirt in Lubbock. • Or rather, we hit pay dirt on the subject of a future road trip to Lubbock. • On June 3, I asked for tips about the historical, cultural and gustatory treasures of that High Plains city. • Naturally, I received a few snarky remarks via social media. That is in the nature of social media. • On the other hand, I received more than 100 ecstatic endorsements, especially for places to eat. • In fact, for a few minutes after my initial Twitter post, “Lubbock” was trending in Texas. • Admittedly, some of those tweets pasted the word “Lubbock” over glam shots of snow-covered mountains or tropical beaches. • I ignored those. I’ve been to Lubbock. Its pleasures are more subtle and not always readily appreciated.

If the place is in Texas, however, I’ll find things to like. Especially with dozens of expert tips in hand.

“Never underestimate Lubbock,” says Janet Maykus.

Message received.

Now it’s your turn to send in more sage advice. Deliver your Lubbock tips — and, most importantly, the reasons for your advocacy — to mbarnes@gannett.com.

Buddy Holly and all that

If you know nothing else about Lubbock history, you know that it was the hometown of the infectious rocker Buddy Holly, who died Feb. 3, 1959 in an airplane crash.

Unsurprisingly, the one stop almost every

Lubbock lover mentioned was the museum at the Buddy Holly Center, which contains a good deal of memorabilia about Holly and other local culture.

Nearby are the West Texas Walk of Fame and a much-photographed statue of Holly.

Fans also recommended the Buddy Holly Hall of Performing Arts and Sciences, which I hear comes with amazing acoustics and not a bad seat in the house.

Besides these prominent sites, one may visit Holly’s gravesite at Lubbock Cemetery, where one can also pay respects to Mac Davis’ memorial.

“Don’t forget Lubbock High School, Buddy Holly’s and my alma mater,” musician Bob Liv-

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Buddy Holly, the most famous of Lubbock’s singers, now is remembered by a statue across the street from the Buddy Holly Center.

A-J MEDIA FILE PHOTO

TOP: The sun sets on Robert Bruno’s Steel House in Ransom Canyon, a residential community east of Lubbock. TROY OXFORD/THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

Legendary Broadway musical ‘Hairspray’ dances into Austin in June

Kelsey Bradshaw
Austin American-Statesman
USA TODAY NETWORK

The cast of “Hairspray” will be the nicest kids in town next week when they say good morning, err, evening to Austin during its five-day run here. Did we use enough song titles in that sentence? Should we tell you to run and tell your friends about the show?

OK, seriously. “Hairspray” is coming to Bass Concert Hall and we can’t wait. Shows will run June 13-18. Tickets start at \$30 and can be purchased at: texasperformingarts.org. Jack O’Brien and Jerry Mitchell, the show’s original director and choreographer, respectively, are directing and choreographing this tour.

A little “Hairspray” history for you: The musical debuted as a movie in 1988

and starred drag queen Divine as Edna Turnblad, mother to main character Tracy Turnblad. The show follows Tracy Turnblad as she dances on to television in 1960s Baltimore, Maryland, and fights for integration and social change. “Hairspray” opened on Broadway in 2002 with Harvey Fierstein as Edna Turnblad.

Andrew Levitt, AKA drag queen Nina West, will take on the iconic role of Edna in Austin. Levitt competed as West in the 11th season of “RuPaul’s Drag Race.”

“Hairspray” is, I think, one of the great American musicals. It is so much fun and it’s a beautiful show that’s packed with an incredible message,” Levitt said. “The 1988 film, John Waters’ movie, is all about a girl wanting everyone to have an opportunity to dance on a show together,

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“Hairspray” runs June 13-18 at Bass Concert Hall. PROVIDED BY TEXAS PERFORMING ARTS



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Barnes

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ington interjects. He also mentions the West Texas Walk of Fame, “of which I am an inductee.”

It is a well-established fact that other musicians — Jo Carol Pierce, Joe Ely, Natalie Maines, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Lloyd Maines, Butch Hancock, Mac Davis and Terry Allen among others — started out in Lubbock.

Memories linger. “I attended Texas Tech as a freshman 1965 as a football ‘walk on’ and aspiring journalist from Lake Highlands High,” filmmaker Jed Riffe remembers. “I got into the Koko and other private-club venues as a roadie for the Twilights. Joe Ely was lead singer.”

Digging up unique sites

More than one correspondent suggested that we visit Lake Lubbock Landmark, a dig that celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

“Paleo location of ancient buffalo kill site by paleo natives,” reports H. Holder about the Lake Lubbock site. “It has life-size statues of animals that lived here post ice-age.”

Birder and author Jennifer Bristol endorsed Ransom Canyon, an astonishing little lake at the base of the Caprock that I stumbled on while tracing the forks of the Brazos River. This former ranchland is also the site for Robert Bruno’s whimsically weird Steel House.

Maybe the No. 1 old-school attraction in Lubbock is the Prairie Dog Town, home to thousands of burrowing rodents.

“Prairie Dog Town is a sentimental favorite,” says actor Janelle Buchanan. “It was the first place Jo Carol Pierce took me when we made an epic visit to her hometown some 30 years ago.”

I’m also attracted to the newer American Windmill Museum, formerly known as the American Wind Power Center.

Suggesting a side trip, Louie Bond sent a short note about touring the big geological wonders of the Panhandle area.

“Rent a convertible,” he says. “Pick the correct soundtrack. Head out to Caprock and Palo Duro Canyon.”



ABOVE: A runner passes the American Windmill Museum in Lubbock. It's one of the must-see stops on any roadtrip to the High Plains city. MARK ROGERS/FOR THE AVALANCHE-JOURNAL

LEFT: Lubbock's Cotton Court Hotel in the 1600 block of Broadway has attracted plenty of out-of-town fans. PROVIDED

Cultural venues of the Llano Estacado

Our Think, Texas SUV always stops for museums and other cultural venues.

More than one Lubbock devotee recommended a walking tour of the Texas Tech University campus. Previously, I've glanced at the school's modernist fringes, but there's a cluster of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture at the heart of the campus.

Others suggested a tour of the public art on campus, especially the pieces by Jesús Morales.

An exhibit at the Museum of Texas Tech University currently celebrates the 100th anniversary of the school. Some of its other attractions this summer: “Wildlife Photographer of the Year” and “The Diamond M Collection: Unfolding.” Multiple Lubbock buffs lobbied for a

visit to the National Ranching and Heritage Center.

“See how the early settlers used to build a huge ag industry that we all benefit from today and into the future.” Stoney Jackson says. “Makes you appreciate Lubbock and the South Plains even more.”

Another agricultural museum, Fiber-Max Center for Discovery, “takes you from horse drawn implements to the tech-savvy, computer GPS, driven equipment and farmers of today.”

Lynn Haley recommended the Silent Wings Museum, which is housed in the 1950s-era former air traffic control tower and terminal building of Lubbock's airport. It focuses on the glider pilots of World War II.

Journalist and author Joe Nick Patoski, knowing my weakness for historical archives, suggested a visit to the the

Southwestern Collection at Texas Tech, “if you want to get lost for a week.”

Another Tech collection that receives votes from the research crowd is the Vietnam Center and Archive.

“Check out the new theater building at Tech,” says lawyer Tim Crowley, a high school buddy of mine who is credited with leading the revival of Marfa. He was a drama major at Texas Tech almost 50 years ago. “You will be impressed. If you want a tour, call me.”

Sometimes, it is wise to mix culture with hospitality. As such, the Cotton Court made the must-do lists of several contacts on social media.

“We stayed at the Cotton Court Hotel last time we drove back from Colorado,” says Meg McGrew Meo. “Great place with live music. First time we had heard live music since before COVID. Wasn't expecting such a cool place in Lubbock.”

For a completely different type of culture, John Slate told me that I should look up Tim Kohtz of Inkfluence Tattoo, the city's oldest ink parlor, established in 1995.

Slate: “I bet he knows stuff off the beaten path.”

Where to grab a bite

Sorry, there's no longer a Stubb's Bar-B-Q in Lubbock, but there's a statue and memorial dedicated to C.B. Stubblefield, known as “Stubb,” in a pocket park at the original site of the small eatery.

Stubb moved to Austin in 1986, where you can still munch on barbecue — and hear live music — at Stubb's on Red River Street.

Meanwhile, there seems to be no shortage of well-sauced spots in the Hub City:

- Mateo Barnstone is a fan of Evie Mae's BBQ.

- Kyle Hook says: “Go to the Spoon — get a cold schooner and some BBQ.” (It is also known as Texas Café & Bar.)

- Kevin Hopson recommends Tom and Bingo's Hickory Pit Bar-B-Que on 34th Street for brisket sandwich.

- Stuart Williams' choice for ideal smoked meats is Wiley's Championship BBQ.

- John Myers: “Go get a steak at Cagle Steaks & BBQ.” (Glad to have choices.)

I'll be forced to space my visits to

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TODAY'S CROSSWORD | ANDREWS MCMEEL

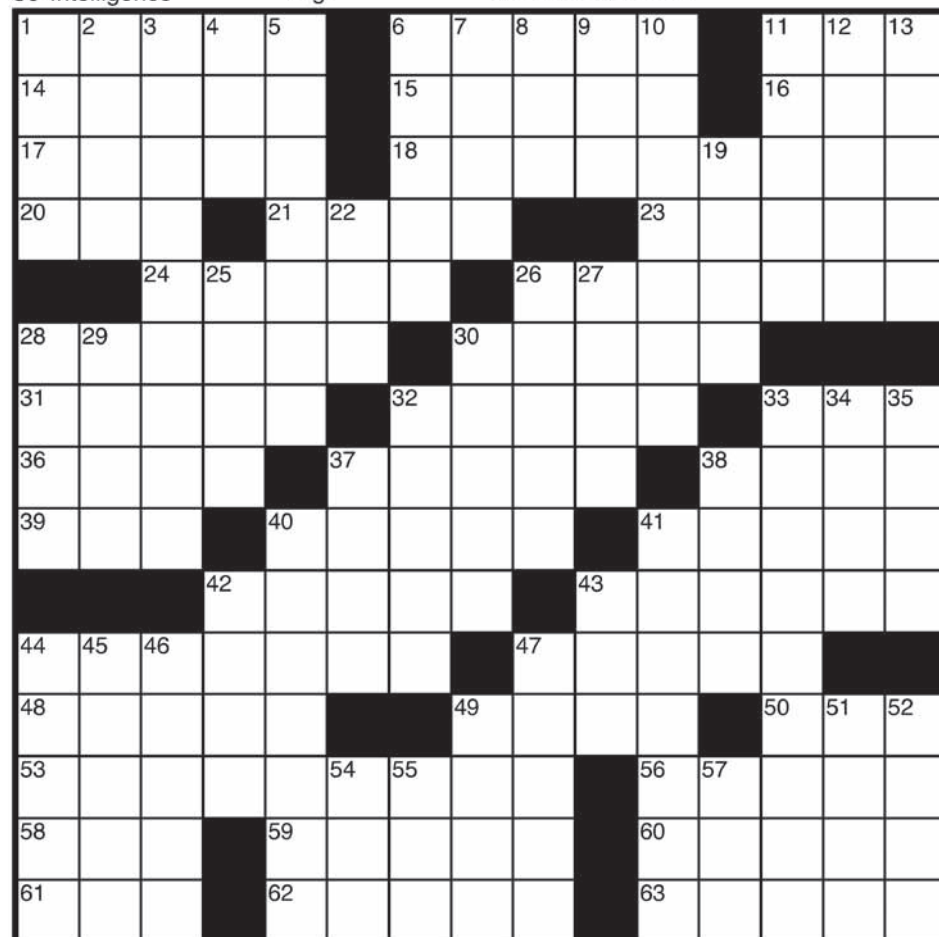
- ACROSS**
- 1 Roughs it
 - 6 Not wild
 - 11 Trim a doily
 - 14 Elite (2 wds.)
 - 15 Chicago airport
 - 16 — Hagen of films
 - 17 Italian specialty
 - 18 Naysayer
 - 20 Ride the bench
 - 21 Juice a grapefruit
 - 23 “The Little Engine That —”
 - 24 Political bash
 - 26 Extremely
 - 28 Thorns
 - 30 Very thin
 - 31 Fern or moss
 - 32 Hotel staffers
 - 33 Cheery greetings
 - 36 Fast food drink
 - 37 Cite
 - 38 Car lifter
 - 39 Magazine fillers
 - 40 Chicago five
 - 41 Composer — Anderson
 - 42 Staircase parts
 - 43 Longs for
 - 44 Chooses
 - 47 Instrument with pedals
 - 48 Trick
 - 49 Cry from the sty
 - 50 Intelligence
- DOWN**
- 53 Retinue
 - 56 Crop up
 - 58 A fifth of DX
 - 59 Beeping device
 - 60 They may be spliced
 - 61 Novelist — Follett
 - 62 Footwear
 - 63 Goes very slowly
 - 1 Uniform toppers
 - 2 Asian mountains
 - 3 Results of some errors
 - 4 Wash. time
 - 5 Film hopeful
 - 6 The present
 - 7 “Excuse me!”
 - 8 Get tangled
 - 9 Use poor judgment
 - 10 Church officials
 - 11 Ballerinas' attire
 - 12 Coral island
 - 13 Overdue
 - 19 Break-even amount
 - 22 Subway opposites
 - 25 Tolstoy heroine
 - 26 Trot and gallop
 - 27 Ungraceful
 - 28 Pet adoption org.

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED



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- 29 Trudge
- 30 Liverpool lockups
- 32 Reflects deeply
- 33 Frightful
- 34 Mouse target?
- 35 “The — the limit!”
- 37 Say uncle
- 38 Harlow or Simmons
- 40 Substitutes
- 41 Rowboat problem
- 42 Las Vegas rival
- 43 — and yang
- 44 Mote
- 45 Bert's Muppet buddy
- 46 Livy's language
- 47 Jetties
- 49 Pointed arch
- 51 “Gotchal” (2 wds.)
- 52 Thomas Hardy heroine
- 54 Stadium noise
- 55 Way back when
- 57 Ruby



BRIDGE | FRANK STEWART

Free tricks

A loser-on-loser play is a “buy-one-get-one-free” deal — and everyone likes those. You lose an unnecessary trick but are trading one loser for another. In the process you develop an extra winner.

Such plays gain in many situations. Today's West leads the ace of diamonds against four hearts. Say South ruffs, draws trumps and leads a spade to dummy's ten. East takes the queen and leads the jack of clubs, and the defense gets three clubs. Down one.

FIRST TRICK

South has the material for 10 tricks — seven winners in trumps and three in spades — but he must not let East get in for a club shift. At the first trick, declarer discards a spade, trading a diamond loser for a possible spade loser.

If West shifts to a trump, South wins, takes the A-K of spades and leads the jack. If East covers, South ruffs, leads a trump to dummy and discards a club on the high ten of spades. If instead East follows low, South pitches a club. He loses at most three tricks however the cards lie.

DAILY QUESTION

You hold: ♠ 8 7 ♥ 2 ♦ A J 8 6 4 3 ♣ A Q 10 8. Your partner deals and opens INT. The next player passes. What do you say?

ANSWER: In an unfamiliar partnership, with no special bidding agreements, you would have to bid five diamonds or 3NT. Regular tournament partnerships would have a way to look for the best contract. For instance, responder might start with a bid of two spades as a “transfer” to 2NT, then bid three diamonds to suggest a strong, unbalanced hand.

South dealer
N-S vulnerable

NORTH
 ♠ A K J 10
 ♥ 9 7 5 3
 ♦ K
 ♣ 7 5 3 2

WEST
 ♠ 8 7
 ♥ 2
 ♦ A J 8 6 4 3
 ♣ A Q 10 8

EAST
 ♠ Q 9 3 2
 ♥ Q
 ♦ Q 10 9 7 5 2
 ♣ J 9

SOUTH
 ♠ 6 5 4
 ♥ A K J 10 8 6 4
 ♦ None
 ♣ K 6 4

South 4♥
West Pass
North Pass
East Pass

Opening lead — ♦ A
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BOGGLE BRAINBUSTERS

INSTRUCTIONS: Find as many words as you can by linking letters up, down, side-to-side and diagonally, writing words on a blank sheet of paper. You may only use each letter box once within a single word. Play with a friend and compare word finds, crossing out common words.



BOGGLE POINT SCALE

- 3 letters = 1 point
- 4 letters = 2 points
- 5 letters = 3 points
- 6 letters = 4 points
- 7 letters = 6 points
- 8 letters = 10 points
- 9+ letters = 15 points

YOUR BOGGLE RATING

- 151+ = Champ
- 101-150 = Expert
- 61-100 = Pro
- 31-60 = Gamer
- 21-30 = Rookie
- 11-20 = Amateur
- 0-10 = Try again

Boggle BrainBusters Bonus
 We put special brain-busting words into the grid of letters. Can you find them? Find AT LEAST SEVEN NUMBERS in the grid of letters.

Answers to Monday's Boggle BrainBusters:
 TIGER HORSE SLOTH SHREW OTTER

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Can't wait for your answers?
 Find all the puzzle answers at
answers.usatoday.com

Hairspray

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but this show becomes so much more. It becomes about joy and love and equality and acceptance.”

Levitt has watched the story affect audiences in different ways since he took on the role in 2021. Those first shows felt like talking about a post-George Floyd world, Levitt said. Floyd was killed in May 2020 in Minnesota by a police officer who knelt on his neck for roughly 9 minutes. Floyd’s death led to protests and demonstrations against police brutality that summer.

Now, Levitt said, the show’s meaning has evolved for audiences after red states, like Texas and Florida, began introducing anti-LGBTQ+ bills in their legislatures, he said. What’s happening is what happened when Levitt saw the show right before it opened on Broadway in 2002.

“It spoke to me as a gay person and I said, ‘Oh my god, there’s a place for me, I fit in somewhere,’” Levitt said.

He explained “Hairspray’s” effect like

If you go

When: June 13-18

Where: Bass Concert Hall, 2350 Robert Dedman Drive

Tickets: Tickets start at \$30 and can be purchased at texasperformingarts.org.

this: Toward the end of the show, Edna busts out of a big can of hairspray and goes through a transformation. She’s confident now and sings “You can’t stop my happiness because I like the way I am.”

The song goes on to say “‘Cause you can’t stop the motion of the ocean or the rain from above,” which is ultimately about integration and how progress will happen no matter what. Levitt says it’s timely for now, too, as being a man in a dress feels like a statement as transgender people across the U.S. are attacked.

“I think that a man standing in a dress on stage in Omaha, Nebraska, or wherever we’ve been throughout this country — Orange, Texas; Auburn, Alabama; Los Angeles, California — the power in this time period of a man at the



Nina West has been playing Edna Turnblad for two years. PROVIDED BY TEXAS PERFORMING ARTS

end of the show standing in high drag saying, ‘You can’t stop my happiness because I like the way I am,’ it’s powerful and has been conveyed to me through

the emails, cards, messages and DMs from fans who come to the show.

“To me, that is powerful and transformative,” Levitt said.

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these tempting joints over multiple road trips, since barbecue is not the only food game in town.

For more eats, Walter Riggs suggests that we wander around the Depot District on the south end of downtown. “Triple J Chophouse and Brew Co. is my favorite,” Riggs says, “but there’s a plethora of places that’ll tickle your fancy.”

“Cooks Garage is a cool venue on the south edge of town,” Riggs adds. “They frequently have live music. The decor and feel celebrates vintage automobiles many of which are on display.”

Now, what’s a Texas road trip without Mexican food? Lynne Skinner and Russell Guthrie prefer Abuelo’s, advertised as “Americas #1 Mexican Restaurant.” There’s a lot of competition for that title.

For instance, Wells Mason points us toward Cocina de La Sirena. Others like

the Lubbock outlets of Chimy’s or Fuzzzy’s Taco Shop, both popular in other Texas college towns.

As for fine dining, Trish Foreman Wevich says “The Nicolett is very delicious and lovely.” Texas Monthly features editor Kathy Blackwell agrees: “Definitely eat here!”

Sarah Beck endorses the calzone at One Guy From Italy (two locations) and everything from Taco Villa. “Look for August’s fried pies at the gas stations,” Becks adds. Luis Delgadillo: “You have to go eat breakfast at Chicken Run.”

I don’t know what to make of this, but more than one contributor raved about the cheese sticks at Spanky’s.

Would you like wine with that?

For a long time, Lubbock was drier than the Chihuahuas Desert. Meaning, one could not purchase an adult beverage without getting in a car and going somewhere else, or by joining a private club.

Now, thanks to research done by Texas Tech University agriculturalists, the

surrounding High Plains are among the most productive grape wine regions in the state. And while many of the grapes — and the resulting wine — are sold five hours away in the more picturesque Hill Country, a good number tastings wink at the visitor to Lubbock.

“I graduated from Tech with an undergraduate degree in horticulture,” says Austin civic leader Melanie Barnes, “and my professors used to always tell us they were planting grape vines in their spare time so they could retire on the profits and drink wine. Those vines became Llano Estacado wines, arguably the best Texas has produced.”

Tweeter “Debbie” sent me a guide to 13 Lubbock-area wineries with visiting information. Some familiar names — McPherson, Llano Estacado, Pheasant Ridge — popped out.

More beverage tips:

- Joyce Bird highly recommends La Diosa Cellars.
- Paul Tubbs sent me a winery checklist that includes English Newsom Cellars and Burklee Hill Vineyard.
- He also advocates for breweries

such as Two Docs Brewing Co., The Brewery LBK, Good Line Beer Co., Frost Brewhouse. and Mano Negra Brewing Co.

Soak up the local color at First Friday

One last endorsement, this one from my USA Today Network colleague Brandi Addison at the Lubbock Avalanche-Journal.

“I would highly, highly recommend you plan your trip so you can visit the First Friday Art Trail,” Addison says. “So many great artists, performances and food trucks and restaurants to experience, and you can hit them all in one place!”

Michael Barnes writes about the people, places, culture and history of Austin and Texas. He can be reached at mbarnes@statesman.com. Sign up for the free digital newsletter, Think, Texas at statesman.com/newsletters, or at the newsletter page of your local USA Today Network paper.

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