

# ALL THE "NEWS" OF TEXAS

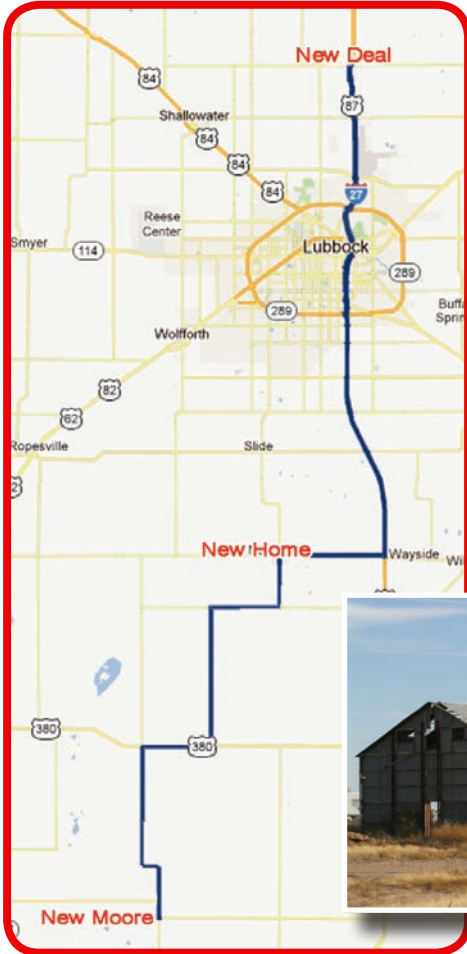
By Shelly Horan, Editor/Owner

It's a New Year, so we thought we'd do something a little different. We're highlighting the "New" towns of Texas! They're all over the state, so we offer you four regional maps. Ironically, most of the "new" towns are old and many are considered Ghost Towns, with less than 500 in population.

"New" town names are common around the world. In America, many of these towns are named after favorite old-world locations from which the immigrants come, like New Berlin and New London. Some "New" towns are named after other popular towns in the U.S., such as New Boston and New Bluffton. Wikipedia describes a "new town" as a specific type of community, planned from inception, rather than an ad hoc development. Many of these towns are ghost towns and/or have been integrated into another town/city. We offer only those destinations that offer something to still see. It may be a small, bustling community; a memorial park marking the site; or simply the lone cemetery left behind. So for those enjoying Texas history and old cemeteries and such, this is the set of maps for you!

## Starting in the Panhandle, around Lubbock...

**New Deal** is located on Highway 27 at FM 1729. It is on the Santa Fe Railroad line, eleven miles north of Lubbock.



New Deal

The town was initially founded in 1906, when the railroad track was laid from Plainview to Lubbock. It was originally named Monroe after Monroe Abernathy, a local resident and railroad promoter. In 1935, the four rural schools combined to form a new school district, named "New Deal" after Franklin D. Roosevelt's programs of the time. When the town went to establish a post office in 1949, Monroe was already in use. So the name was changed to New Deal, after the school district. The town incorporated in 1970 to avoid annexation by Lubbock.

**New Home** is south of Lubbock, at the juncture of FM Roads 211 and 1730. The small agricultural community was part of the Deuce of Hearts Ranch, which opened for settlement in the 1890s. When a new church was built, the residents felt the need for a new name. New Home was suggested because all the homes were new to their occupants. The best known business was, and is, New Home Co-op Gin, which processed 12,000 bales of cotton in 1985.

**New Moore** is just a bit further south, at the intersection of FM 213 and FM 179. Also known as Nurmoore, the town was first settled in the mid 1920s, when the Slash-L Ranch sold off its lands to incoming farmers. The name is a combination of two founding fathers, G.A. (G.O. in some reports) Newman of the Newman Development Company and W. McCarty Moore, who bought land from the ranch. While it was still listed as a community in 1990, the 2000 census reports the population as only 10. Today, all that is left is a closed community center building, a working cotton gin, and a dilapidated old school house.

## PANHANDLE

- New Deal
- New Home
- New Moore

## EAST TEXAS

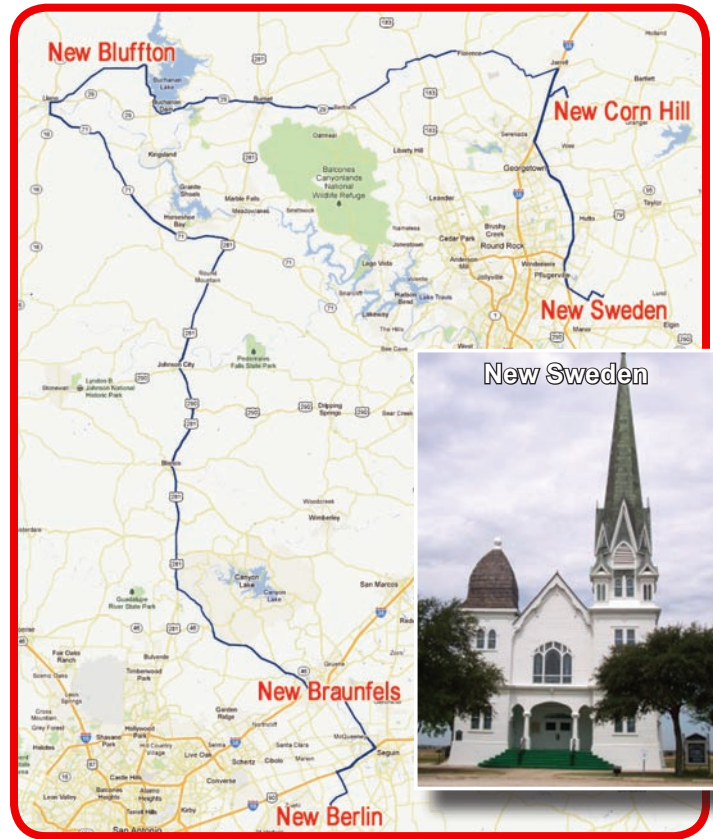
- New Hope
- New Chapel Hill
- New Summerfield
- New London
- New Diana
- New Boston

## HILL COUNTRY

- New Berlin
- New Braunfels
- New Bluffton
- New Corn Hill
- New Sweden

## GULF COAST

- New Gulf
- New Bielau
- New Uim
- New Wehdern
- New Kentucky
- New Caney
- New Waverly
- New Baden



New Sweden

## Moving down to the Hill Country, starting just east of San Antonio...

**New Berlin** is among a favorite "new" name, sharing sister towns in 14 other states. It is located at the intersection of FM Roads 2538, 415, and 775. Originally founded in the 1870s, Ed Tewes built the first store and is considered the founding father. The community served as a shipping point for cotton, cottonseed, corn, and oats. The town's name comes from where you think... German immigrants thinking of home. Here you'll find Bohannon's Brietzke Station, a favorite local stop with really yummy homemade pies! If you like old cemeteries, the Concrete

RIDE MAP

Cemetery is one of the best kept, located south of New Berlin on FM 775, outside of La Vernia.

**New Braunfels** is probably the most well known of our destinations. Named for Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels who contracted to settle the "western lands" of the New Republic of Texas. Carl didn't stay long, returning to Europe in 1845, never to return. Immigrants found rough conditions and a war-torn area. During the Mexican War and Civil War, New Braunfels was the fourth largest city in Texas and it continued to grow through the late 1800s. There is plenty to see and do in New Braunfels, the Sphienburg Museum (where Carl initially planned on staying to govern his people), the Comal County Courthouse, New Braunfels Square, the Lindheimer Home, and so much more.

**New Bluffton** (or Bluffton) is located on FM 2241 near the western shore of Lake Buchanan. The original town site is located under the waters of the lake, submerged when the Buchanan Dam was completed in 1939. The area was originally settled in 1852 by Billy Davis, followed by a relative, IB Maxwell in 1853. The town was named by Maxwell for his hometown, Bluffton, Arkansas, probably because of the bluffs facing the new community on the east bank of the Colorado River. In 1883, a fire destroyed the town, thought to be caused by drunken cowboys. It was rebuilt about a half mile north of its original site. In 1937, when the dam flooded the site, the town moved again, this time five miles west. Most recently in the news, thanks to the draught (some good things can come from awful situations), the original town site under Lake Buchanan can be seen.

**New Corn Hill** split off from (Old) Corn Hill because the old portion was absorbed into Jarrell, while enough of the residents of Corn Hill chose to move east and retain the name. The new town is located on FM 1105 where rolling pasture and prairie converge at the historic Holy Trinity Church. Recently, Monk Ivicic, a retired Texas Department of Transportation employee, took it upon himself to get signs for New Corn Hill posted. So now you'll know where you are! Still there to see, the beautiful Holy Trinity Church, some old houses and outbuildings, and an abandoned two-story structure that was once a hotel.



**New Sweden** is a small unincorporated community originally established in 1873 as Knight's Ranch. The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation was established in 1876 and the area became known as Manor. In 1887, the town was renamed as New Sweden, for the New Sweden Lutheran Church. Today the church holds the honor of "most photographed church in Texas."

## Moving over to the Houston-Gulf Coast area...

**New Gulf** (Newgulf) is situated southwest of Houston, near Boling. It is on top of the Boling Dome, the largest inland deposit of sulphur in the world. Considered a ghost town by TexasEscapes.com and not often shown on maps, you can find New Gulf just east of Boling. The Texas Sulphur Company built the town in 1928, comprised of 400 small, single family homes constructed by the company and leased by employees. The name was determined through a contest in which only employees could submit. Reaching its height in 1940 with 1,586 residents, the town declined after WWII, as demand for sulphur decreased.

Today, the mine site landmark twin smokestacks can still be seen.

**New Bielau** was named after Bielau, Germany, a prosperous Germany city from which many of the settling German immigrants came from. Being so close to larger Weimar, the town had stunted growth over the years. Located at the junction of FM Roads 155 and 2144, three miles south of Weimar, the site was first settled in the mid-1800s. Today, the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church completed in 1888 still stands and the community has a few historical markers of interest.

**New Ulm** is one of the premier German settlements in Texas, located at the intersection of FM Roads 109 and 1094. [EDITOR'S NOTE: If you're running the map as proposed here, you'll go through Frelsburg and at the corner where FM 109 takes a sharp turn, you'll see a piece of my immigrant heritage – the Heinsohn Country Store.] The original name, Duff's Settlement, went by the wayside when the first settlers, Anglo-American, sold out to German buyers who arrived by the boatload (most through Galveston). The new settlers named the community New Ulm for the first post office in 1852, after the well-known city of Wurtemberg, Germany, the province from which most of the early inhabitants originally immigrated. Many 19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings remain and the town hosts the annual British & European Motorcycle Rallye (28<sup>th</sup> Annual, May 18-20, 2012), one of the biggest vintage events in the state.

**New Wehdem** is located just south of Brenham on

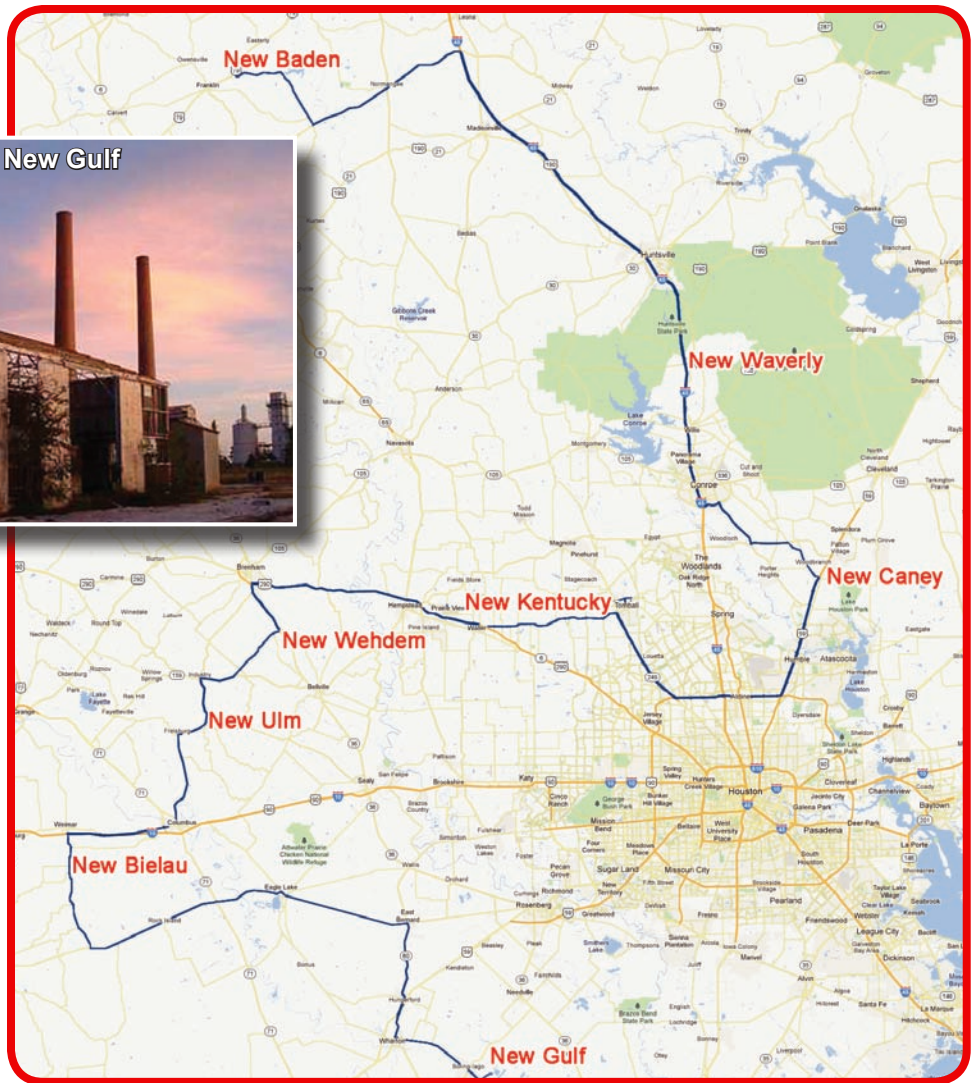
Highway 36. However, it is not to be confused with the New Wehdem of the 1890's. That New Wehdem was located a few miles to the northwest and was also simply known as Wehdem. The current New Wehdem was created when residents of the original Wehdem moved into the vicinity and carried the name with them. Today, the only remaining building to see is the St. James Lutheran Church and is still has a very active congregation.

**New Kentucky** is an abandoned ghost town established in the early 1800s. Before it was abandoned in the 1840s, it was a thriving trade town. Today, the site is honored with a park and marker outside of Tomball, off FM 2920.

**New Caney** is located at the junction of FM 1485 and Highway Loop 494, 17 miles southeast of Conroe. It was founded in the 1860s and in its earlier years, was known as Presswood for pioneers Austin and Sarah Waters Presswood. The community became a shipping point for livestock when the Houston, East and West Texas Railway came into town in 1877-78. The station was called Caney Station after the dense canebreakers on Caney Creek. When a post office was created for the area, the town took on the name of New Caney.

**New Waverly**, as with many small towns reinventing themselves when the railroads came in, began as simply Waverly. The Houston and Great Northern Railroad Company entered the area, but didn't have one of the best reputations. So the company was denied right-of-way by

*Continued on Page 29...*



RIDE MAP

# ALL THE "NEWS" OF TEXAS ... continued

RIDE MAP

the locals. Then, as railroads did, they simply obtained right-of-way nearby, about ten miles west of town, and established "Waverly Station" in 1870. Residents of Waverly were drawn to the new community in order to access the rest of the world through the railroad. So, New Waverly was born. Today, the small community is still bustling, primarily driven by the lumber trade.

**New Baden** is part of the fraternity of Texas towns named after former cities in Germany; in this case, after Baden-Baden. Located on Highway 79, four miles east of Franklin, the town was founded in 1881 by three German immigrants, trustees of the Texas Land and Immigration Company. They built an initial two-story structure to handle new arrivals until they could build their own residences.

## Now up into North Texas, starting outside Dallas and traveling into the East Texas Piney Woods...

**New Hope** is one of many New Hopes through the northern part of Texas over the years. I counted as many as 13 that I could Google! For our purposes, we're going with the one that appears first when mapping New Hope. It should be noted that many of the other New Hope's town sites are worth visiting for old buildings and cemeteries. This New Hope is known as The Town of New Hope, located just east of McKinney. It was established in the early 1850s as a school and church community for area farmers. Today, it is a "bedroom community" for residents who commute to and from McKinney and Dallas.

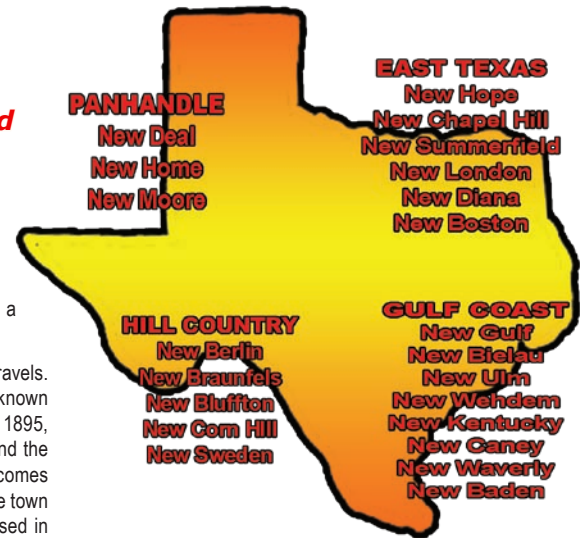
**New Chapel Hill** is not to be confused with the Chappel Hill near Brenham. This one is located in East Texas, on Highway 64 about eight miles southeast of Tyler. The area was settled by the late 1800s and Texas poet Therese Kayser Lindsey was born here in 1870. In 1945,

the community of Chapel Hill began when the Bascom and Murph schools merged with a new school as part of the Chapel Hill Independent School District was created. In 1968, the community incorporated as New Chapel Hill. Today, there isn't much to see, but there is still a small community of about 500 residents.

**New Summerfield** takes us southeast in our travels. First settled in the 1850s, the town was originally known as Union Chapel, after a union church built there. In 1895, Caley Amos Summers donated land for a school and the town of Summerfield was born. The town's name comes from literally being in Summer's field. By the time the town opened its second post office in 1938 (the first closed in 1905) another county had appropriated the name, so the town became New Summerfield. Aside from the small town, you can also visit two old cemeteries established in the 1850s, the Union Chapel and McDonald Cemeteries.

**New London**, as with other towns that came in and out of existence through their formative years, this one originally began as simply London in 1855 (first post office). The area was built on agriculture, primarily cotton and vegetable farming. When the East Texas oilfield came into existence, everything changed. A new post office opened with a new name – New London – in 1931 and Humble Oil established their district headquarters here. Everything changed again when a gas explosion lifted the London High School off its foundation and killed 311 of the 540 students and teachers. It was March 1937; the explosion was blamed on a natural gas leak beneath the school that was ignited when a teacher started up a sanding machine. Within weeks of the disaster, the Texas Legislature passed a law requiring an odor to be added to natural gas. Today, a monument and historical marker remember the tragedy and a local museum that honors the victims.

**New Diana** was formed in the 1930s when oil was



discovered three miles south of the original town site of Diana. Located at the junction of Highway 154 and Highway 259. Today, the small town is still a commercial center for the area farmers and ranchers.

**New Boston**, the last on our list, is a small "Main Street America" community. They are proud of their seasonal events that take place in the downtown park. The town has a similar, yet different, background related to the railroad. Boston, located just north of New Boston, was named for an early store keeper, WJ Boston. It is the geographical center of Bowie County, and is the county seat. When the railroad built a depot about four miles south, New Boston was born. At this point, Boston became Old Boston and the courthouse was moved to Texarkana. In the 1880s, Bostonians got the courthouse back, but it was located in between the two Bostons. When the post office named the courthouse location as Boston, it caused Bowie County to sport three Bostons: Old Boston, New Boston, and Boston.

We are always looking for new map ideas. Our 2011 Reader Survey indicates that the monthly Ride Map is one of the most popular and widely used features in the magazine. If you have a favorite road, route or theme, please consider sharing it with our readers. Send your information to [Shelly@ThunderRoadsTexas.com](mailto:Shelly@ThunderRoadsTexas.com). If we use your idea, you'll get credit, a complimentary copy of the magazine in which the map is used, and a Thunder Roads Texas T-shirt!

