



COLLEGE, MILITARY AND BUSINESS representatives set up tables to visit with Fairfield high school students last week at a career and college night held at Johnson Activity Center.

# Texas Perimeter Hike

by S. Matt Read

by Smatt

"I'm still in the tarp. It's still raining. It's still windy. Everything's freezing... still. And now I have to use the restroom. And [I don't mean] pee." - The author's audio journal entry from January 28, 2010

Perhaps the most common question I receive about my trip is "Where do you sleep?" When I reply, it's like being an accident on the side of the road with all the rubbernecks watching. With my backpack extending from my waist to the back of my neck, people already know the answer. Many start grimacing before I even start to respond. But like a lover with solid evidence of a transgression, they just want to hear me say it. I camp. Out there.

It's the latter phrase that gets people. While I have stayed with family, friends, and in the occasional hotel, I've camped about 80% of the time. In the beginning of the trek, I was a little embarrassed to admit this. I had never camped on roadsides before and wasn't even entirely sure about the legality of it. I was slow to realize it's not the legality that people are curious about. It's mainly the getting eaten or killed.

Animals, weather, other people. These are the fears of my inquiring public. I could also throw in the US-Mexico border, but since it's another thousand miles to El Paso, I'll put that one on hold. I can't control any of these things living as I am on the road, but then I can't control them living in a city either. However, I can be smart about them.

If I'm doing my job, you will never see me leave the road in the evening, nor reenter it the next morning. I prefer wooded areas but will make due with what I have. I have seen homemade NO TRESPASSING signs, and I take those and all other kinds very seriously. In some cases, my assessment of a potential risk means having to walk several more miles. I once



THE AUTHOR'S CAMP set up off U.S. 287 in western Hardeman county.

hiked 16 miles on top of 16 I had already done because I didn't feel safe.

I've also made some adventurous camping decisions, like walking straight into a forecasted ice storm. While not exactly smart, I nonetheless wanted to experience the weather. Did I really come all this way only to sit out the Panhandle fun?

This camping tale is particularly memorable. When I left Quanah, Texas, I was pumped up, fat on food and high on hospitality, and no little ice storm was going to rain me out of a good time. I made it about halfway to Childress and, obeying all of my general camping rules, found a nice spot close to the train tracks and away from the road.

I set up my tarp like an open-ended tent, staked it down, and rolled out my sleeping bag. The day had been bright and sunny, and the nighttime wasn't all that different. I ate some snacks and went to bed.

It was good sleeping until 2:30am.

I should have known the gig was up when the wind started ripping my stakes out of the ground. I fought that storm about ten hours for my dry little space, but the winds, rains, and ice all conspired to kick me out. I eventually had to relieve myself, which is a terrible situation to be in while camping in a storm. However, seeing the state of my tarp from the outside was enough to convince me to pack up.

I walked 15 miles to Childress in that storm. When I finally reached a hotel, I was covered in ice. So, yes, I camp. Out

there. Though this icy episode may sound terrible, I was in high spirits the entire time. I'm not kidding. I may have lost my dry little space to the storm, but when I finally took my pack and coat off, the ice shattered and fell to the floor. All that remained was me.

Smatt is the penname of S.Matt Read. A writer, inventor, baker, and hiker, he is currently hiking the entire outline of the state. Follow his adventure here and at [www.texas-perimeterhike.blogspot.com](http://www.texas-perimeterhike.blogspot.com) and [www.twitter.com/perimeterhiker](http://www.twitter.com/perimeterhiker).

## Vietnam vets meet Tuesday in Palestine

Vietnam Veterans of America and Associates of Vietnam Veterans of America, Palestine Chapter 991, held their regular monthly meeting Tuesday.

The meeting starts at 5:30 p.m. at the Disabled American Veterans Hall, 927 Gardner Drive, Palestine.

On tap are a gumbo meal along with a membership drive.

Information will be given on an upcoming fundraiser, along with updates on nursing home visits, Adopt a Unit Program and scholarships to be awarded this spring.

VVA membership is open to U.S. armed forces veterans who served on active duty for other than training purposes in the Republic of Vietnam between Feb. 28, 1961 and May 7, 1975, or Vietnam era veterans in any duty location between Aug. 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975. Meetings are open to everyone.



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## For a change, let's talk about tools that help you lose weight.

If you're severely overweight and neither dieting, exercise nor smaller portions have been effective, weight-loss surgery by Dr. Hugh Babineau and the experts at ETMC could be important tools to help you manage your weight for years to come.

We offer two forms of weight-loss surgery: gastric bypass and the LAP-BAND® System. Gastric bypass surgery reduces the size of the stomach by 90 percent. The LAP-BAND® System involves placing a band around the top part of the stomach to reduce food intake. Neither procedure guarantees weight loss, but both serve as tools to help you manage your weight in the long term.

Whichever surgery is called for, Dr. Babineau makes decisions on a patient-by-patient basis. What's more, the Surgical Review Corporation of the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery has designated ETMC Tyler and Dr. Babineau's surgical practice an ASMBS Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence.

To learn more about weight-loss surgery at ETMC Tyler, call 903-594-2407 or 1-866-886-3835.

The ASMBS has designated ETMC Tyler and Dr. Babineau's surgical practice as a Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence



East Texas Medical Center Regional Healthcare System

Hear Dr. Hugh Babineau discuss the details of weight-loss surgery on the ETMC KnowledgeFirst podcast at [www.etmc.org/kfpodcast](http://www.etmc.org/kfpodcast) or by power searching for "ETMC" at the iTunes Store.

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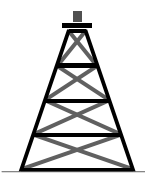
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## OIL & GAS NEWS



**Freestone County**  
Operator:XTO Energy Inc.  
Lease & Well #:Penn-Senter Gas Unit, #5  
Field:Teague(CV-Bossier Cons.)(Unknown)  
Permit Depth/Type: 13400 ft, Drill  
Location & Acres:4.9 miles SE from TEAGUE Survey: LAWRENCE, J, 688.15 acres  
Date Issued: 1/29/2010

Lease & Well #:Rogers Gas Unit, #19  
Field:Teague(CV-Bossier Cons.)(Unknown)  
Permit Depth/Type: 12800 ft, Drill  
Location & Acres:4.0 miles SW from TEAGUE Survey: HB, CARUTHERS, 702.83 acres  
Date Issued: 1/25/2010

**Limestone County**  
Operator:XTO Energy Inc.  
Lease & Well #:Hales Unit, #6  
Field:Teague(CV-Bossier Cons.)(Unknown)  
Permit Depth/Type: 13800 ft, Drill  
Location & Acres:3.0 miles NE from TEAGUE Survey: NELSON, RA, 640.0 acres  
Date Issued: 1/28/2010

Operator:Stroud Petroleum, Inc.  
Lease & Well #:Rogers Gas Unit, #5  
Field:Wildcat(Unknown), Personville(Travis Peak), Oletha(Travis Peak),...  
Permit Depth/Type: 12000 ft, Drill  
Location & Acres:8.7 miles W from DONIE Survey: PALACIOS, MR, 330.4 acres  
Date Issued: 1/26/2010

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