

LIFE & STYLE

Austin American-Statesman statesman.com ■ austin360.com

THURSDAY, JUNE 10, 2010 ■ SECTION D

NEW FILMS

'Please Give,' 'The A-Team,' 'The Karate Kid' open ■ **Friday in Movies & Life**

HIKING

Exploring a park's nature trails, with a bit of haiku along the way ■ **Sunday in Life & Arts**

MUSEUM ■ EXHIBIT

Texans are known for tall tales, but the true stories about our Governor's Mansion are some of the best

A house with a history



AUSTIN HISTORY CENTER, AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY, PICA 18257

The People's House

(photo above circa 1860)

What: 'Texas Treasure: Inside Our Governor's Mansion'
When: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays-Saturdays, noon to 6 p.m. Sundays, through Aug. 1. Closed holidays.
Where: Bullock Texas State History Museum, 1800 Congress Ave.
Cost: Adults, \$7. Seniors, military and college students, \$6. Youth 5-18, \$4. Ages 4 and younger, free.
Information: 936-8746, www.the-storyoftexas.com



By Denise Gamino

AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

It's the most public house in Texas, though most people never get the chance to visit.

The Texas Governor's Mansion has been a home, hospital, wedding chapel, playpen, concert hall, suicide scene, menagerie, victory garden and political prize since its doors opened in 1856.

One governor (E.M. Pease) answered the door partially dressed one day. Another (Jim Hogg) hammered tacks into the banister on the sweeping 'Gone With the Wind'-like staircase after one of his children fell off while sliding down. One first lady died of cancer in the library. Sam Houston's 6-year-old son used the mansion as a hideout after locking all the state senators in their chamber in the Capitol and caching the key.

The mansion is home to history, the good, the bad and the ugly.

Just before 2 a.m. June 8, 2008, an intruder tossed a Molotov cocktail at the Greek Revival-style landmark across the street from the Capitol.

There is never a good time for a fire, but the elusive arsonist tossed his flammable brew during a restoration of the mansion. Gov. Perry and his wife, Anita, were living in a rental house, and the historic treasures and state heirlooms were safely in storage.

See **MANSION**, D6

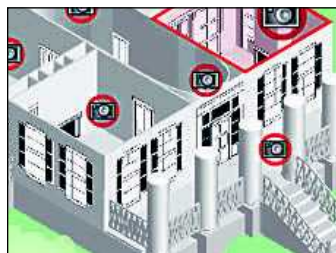


DOLPH BRISCOE CENTER FOR AMERICAN HISTORY, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN, PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS COLLECTION

First pets

People aren't the only ones to fall in love with the Governor's Mansion. Gov. Joseph and first lady Lena Sayers lived in the mansion during his term of 1899-1903. But as they moved out for the new governor, their St. Bernard, pictured above, refused to budge. He was attached to the mansion. Incoming Gov. S.W.T. Lanham allowed the dog to stay and adopted him as his own pet. Other gubernatorial families have had pets ranging from cats, dogs, fish, rabbits, horses and birds to the more exotic, such as raccoons. One family had a pet mountain goat. Gov. Dan Moody had pet deer that he kept in an enclosure on the south lawn. Gov. Jim Hogg owned a green-and-white parrot named "Jane." He walked home for lunch from the Capitol. The bird greeted him with a loud cry of "Papa! Papa!"

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Check out our interactive guide to the Texas Governor's Mansion, including photo galleries of the main rooms and a video history lesson with Texas First Lady Anita Perry at statesman.com/go/governorsmansion.

The sky is falling

The Governor's Mansion has had more repairs and renovations than you can shake a jackhammer at. Gov. Price Daniel, above, narrowly escaped injury when a 24-pound piece of plaster fell from the mansion's ceiling. The governor came downstairs to meet guests and stepped off the bottom stair to shake a woman's hand. Just then, the chunk of ceiling fell and landed where he had been standing moments before.

ARCHIVES AND INFORMATION SERVICES DIVISION, TEXAS STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COMMISSION.

A COFFEE WITH ... MICHELLE HACHÉ

Soprano brings opera to Gilbert & Sullivan musical

By Jeanne Claire van Ryzin
AMERICAN-STATESMAN ARTS WRITER

Soprano Michelle Haché might have lived — and performed — in just about every corner of the nation, from the Pacific Northwest to Florida, from New York City to Oklahoma City. But if you had asked her a few years ago if Austin might provide her the opportunity

to exercise not just her singing talents but her aptitude for dancing and acting, too, she might have been surprised.

"I feel incredibly lucky to be here," the lively Haché says over coffee recently at Mozart's Coffee Roasters. "And yet I feel like even though I've been here a year, I'm still getting to know everything."

Everyone will have the chance to

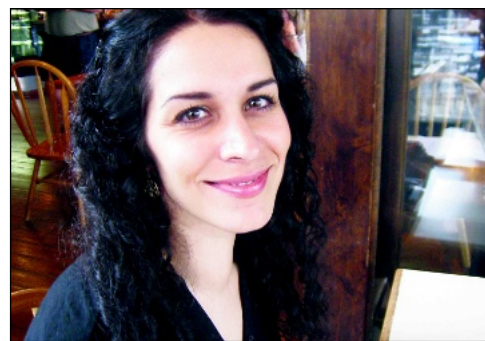
get to know Haché beginning this weekend when she takes on the female lead in "The Yeoman of the Guard," in the annual production of the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin.

Set in the Tower of London during the 16th century, "Yeoman" is considered one of the darkest of Gilbert & Sullivan's Victorian comic operettas, and the one more

close in style to a traditional grand opera.

Yes, it has the same topsy-turvy storyline and witty one-liners that make the 14 works of the 19th-century British collaborators a theatrical genre all their own. As Haché points out, "there's only a little of the 'wink-winking' going on, but

See **COFFEE**, D7



Jeanne Claire van Ryzin AMERICAN-STATESMAN
Michelle Haché took a break at Mozart's Coffee Roasters from 'The Yeoman of the Guard.'

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