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WTGS to celebrate centennial with expanded conference

By **Mella McEwen**, Editor

July 25, 2026



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The West Texas Geological Society will be celebrating its 100th anniversary with a combined WTGS and Southwest section American Association of Petroleum Geologists conference.

Courtesy West Texas Geological Society



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WTGS to celebrate centennial with expanded conference

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The West Texas Geological Society is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, and preparations are underway for a special celebration at its September convention.



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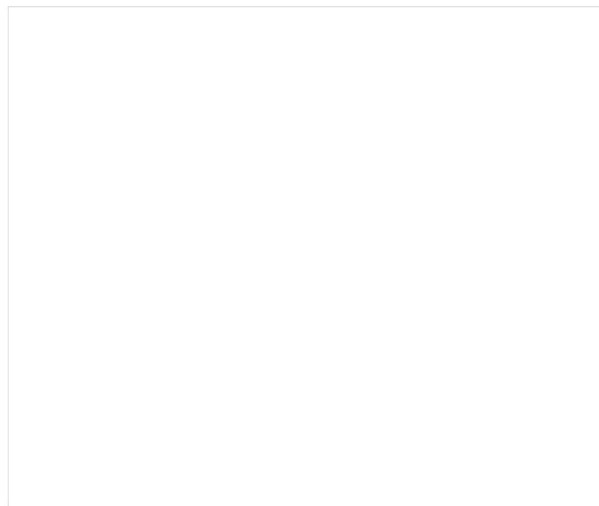


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“It will be a huge celebration,” said Ashton Bruyere, general co-chair of the conference. The event will be a combined WTGS and Southwest Section of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists event. The conference will include technical talks, social events, short courses, luncheons and more.

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“One hundred years is a big milestone, and what we’ve learned while providing a spring turn the Permian Basin from a super basin to Harbison, conference co-chair.

Digital archives will showcase oilfield activity,

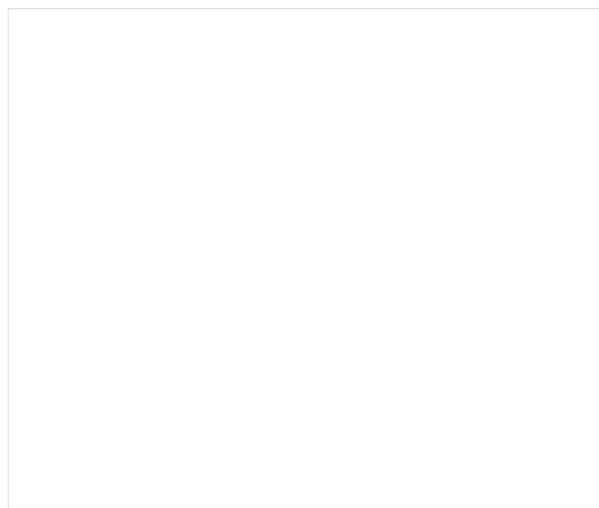
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said Kaitlyn LeFleur, a co-chair.

Keynote speakers will include Scott Tinker, director emeritus at the Bureau of Economic Geology at the University of Texas at Austin. Jim Reilly, a geologist and former astronaut, will link the study of geology on Earth and on Mars.

A highlight of the conference will be a 100-year core workshop featuring cores from the original field discoveries that made the Permian Basin what it is today.



“As the 100th anniversary approached, we decided to go back 100 years and find the original discoveries,” said Bob Lindsay. “We found 17 field cores.”

The cores will be displayed on separate tables, and some will be accompanied by well logs.

Some of the cores come from discovery well Big Lake field, which produced 1 million barrels

“Another Big Lake core is from what was the first well drilled in 1928. The operators were on the verge of a

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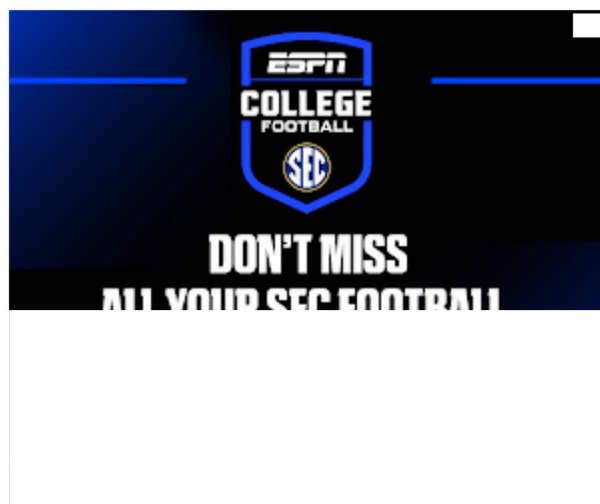


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them a fortune. The driller asked to drill a few more feet. We call it the million-dollar crank because he drilled into the reservoir that brought on the Ellenburger and opened Paleozoic stratigraphy,” Lindsay said.

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“There will be a lot of cores to lay out, but it will be worth it so visitors can see what made the Permian Basin a super basin,” he said.

Pat Welch said the society received 59 abstracts and could only accept 28. The three days of technical talks will address the Eastern Shelf, the Midland and Delaware basins, outcrops, 3D seismic and more. A panel discussion will center on how geoscience built the Permian Basin and its continuing role.

“The talks will be about technology and the Permian Basin and how geologists harness

The field trip, led by Charlie Kerans and Xav Bureau of Economic Geology, will take parti the Sierra Diablos, Shumard Canyon and th



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Guadalupe, Franklin and Sacramento mountains to view multiple outcrops from the Woodford through the upper San Andres.

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The celebration also includes a one-day STEM workshop for K-12 science teachers.

The legacy luncheon will feature J. Michael Party, president of Beryl Oil and Gas, speaking on “The Permian Basin and the West Texas Geological Society: Growing Old Together.” The networking luncheon will feature Charles A. Sternbach, president of Star Creek Energy, addressing “Rocks to Riches: A Journey of Joyful Networking.” Bill Keffer, professor of energy law at Texas Tech University, will speak at the ethics luncheon.

In a nod to the Permian Basin pioneers who conference will also host a casino night.

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OIL EDITOR



Mella McEwen is the oil editor for the Midland Re

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