

# Word Up! *Writers hone their skills at Mayborn*



Some Mayborn Conference participants return as published authors.

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## AS I PLANNED TO ATTEND THE MAYBORN

Literary Nonfiction Writers Conference of the Southwest, I anticipated the opportunity to rub elbows with renowned authors and established journalists as well as fledglings like myself.

The conference, sponsored by the Mayborn School of Journalism at the University of North Texas but held at the DFW Hilton in Grapevine, provides an intimate setting for literary enthusiasts who want to share their experiences in the journey of writing.

I spoke to George Getschow, a UNT journalism professor and former writer for *The Wall Street Journal*, who spearheads the conference as the writer-in-residence. Getschow explained how the conference caters to those who want to elevate the quality of their writing, regardless of age, skill set, or experience. "If you want to be a storyteller, Mayborn is the place for you," he said.

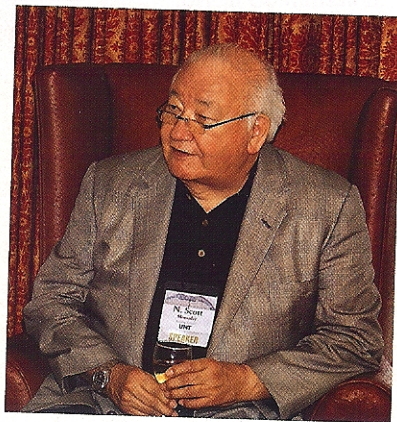
Participants visit with some of the finest writers in the world, learning about their journeys, their obstacles, and what it takes to keep going. Literary figures such as Joyce Carol Oates, Hampton Sides, and N. Scott Momaday have shared their experiences and expertise in years past, addressing not only the importance of quality, but the necessity

of connection among writers. In the evening, we strengthened that connection over dinner, sharing laughter as stories echoed across the banquet hall. Everyone had a common bond: a love for the written word.

"They all understand each other even without speaking," Getschow explained to me later. Seeing the beginnings of relationships and the authors' fondness for storytelling made it easy to understand the group's tribal quality.

The Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Writers Conference of the Southwest is held at the DFW Hilton Lakes Executive Conference Center in Grapevine on July 24-26, 2009. See [www.themayborn.unt.edu](http://www.themayborn.unt.edu) for details.

— Julie Copenhaver



Pulitzer Prize-winning author N. Scott Momaday shared his literary perspectives at the Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Writers Conference.

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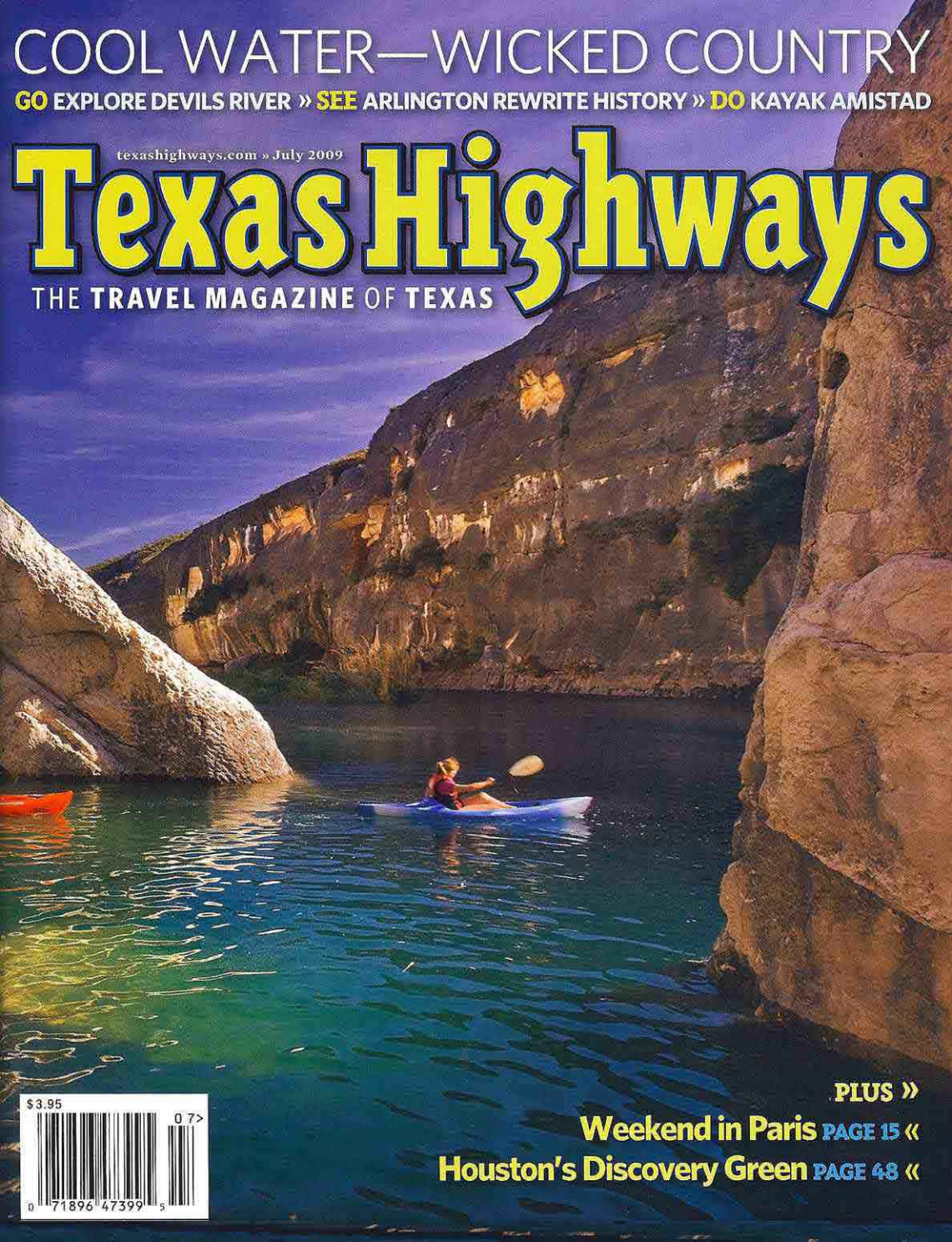
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