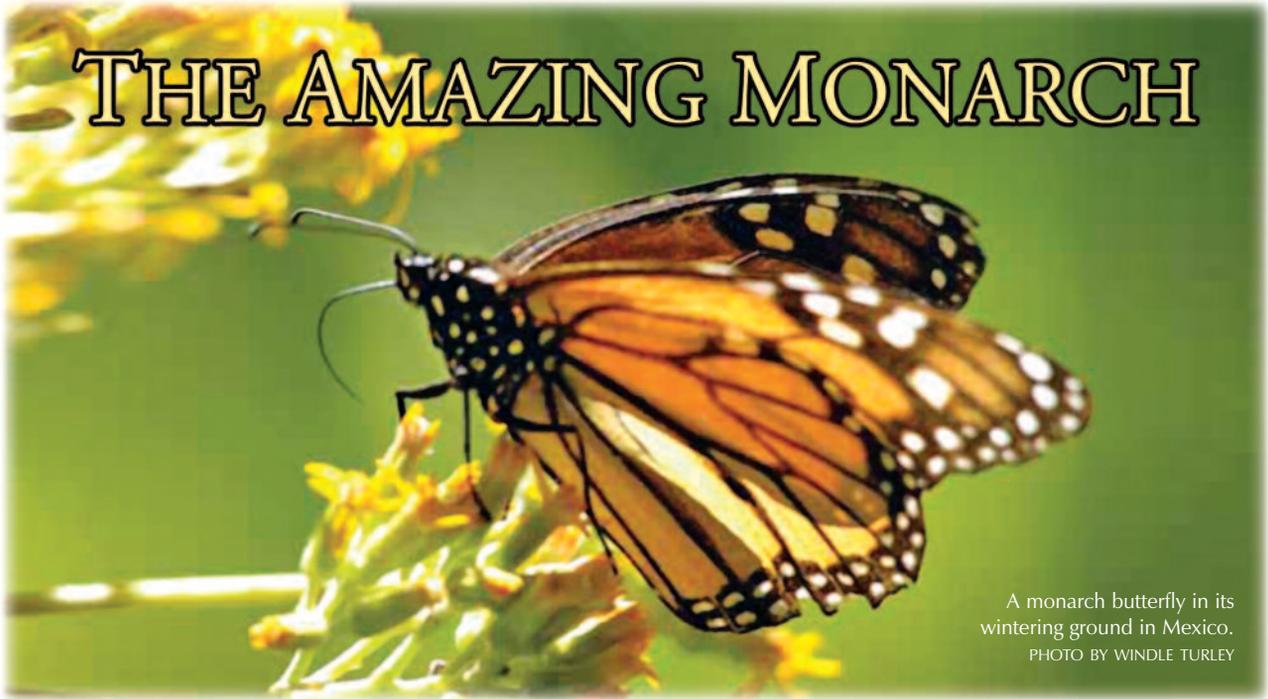




# THE AMAZING MONARCH



A monarch butterfly in its wintering ground in Mexico.  
PHOTO BY WINDLE TURLEY

Dallas attorney **Windle Turley** spends a lot of time waiting for the light to become just right. One hundred and fifty miles west of Mexico City, he got lucky. “The sun came up and hundreds of thousands of monarch butterflies began to cascade, or fly down, like a golden waterfall. They blackened the sky and there was a crescendo of noise, like a wind going through pine trees.” This is just one of many moments that Turley documents in his new book about the migration of the monarch butterfly, *The Amazing Monarch: The Secret Wintering Grounds of an Endangered Butterfly*.

Turley’s law practice provided his first foray into photography. As a trial attorney, he was used to taking photos of vehicles and people. But by the mid-1980s, he had moved on to different mammals: Silverback gorillas in Africa’s Lake Baringo National Park, orangutans in Borneo, and polar bears in the Arctic. “I had never been drawn to birds or insects at all,” Turley says. “But then I found out what interesting little creatures monarch butterflies are and I became hooked. They really are the most amazing creatures on earth.”

Turley’s research led him to the Transverse Neovolcanic Mountains in Mexico, the monarchs’ wintering grounds. “Their winter home has been known to outsiders since 1975,” Turley says. “With a little research, it was easy to find.” Over the course of three years, he took 5,000 photographs of the butterflies. Conditions weren’t always easy. Turley rode a horse as far as he could up the mountain, and then walked the rest of the way, so he wouldn’t disturb the butterfly habitat. “I was standing with a tripod on a very steep slope for several hours at a time. And we did have changing weather conditions — thunderstorms, hail,” Turley says.

The difficulty was worth it. *The Amazing Monarch* has more than 100 pages of glossy photographs — extreme close-ups of butterflies, pictures of trees covered in thousands of monarchs, and even the Mexican Federal Police slowing traffic at a designated Monarch Crossing. “Originally, I didn’t have plans to write a book,” Turley says. “I thought I would assemble the pictures into a little booklet for my family and maybe include an article or two about the monarchs’ migration.” This effort soon snowballed. “I started spending months researching scientific articles and boiling them down to lay language. And then I thought, ‘Maybe there’s something more to this.’”

The book also includes snippets of poetry and prose about butterflies, from Hans Christian Anderson (“‘Just living is not enough,’ said the butterfly. ‘One must have sunshine, freedom, and a little flower.’”) to Carl Sagan (“We are like butterflies who flutter for a day and think it’s forever.”). Shooting the monarchs did make for a contemplative experience, Turley says. “It just took your breath away. It was a very spiritual feeling.”

How does a busy trial attorney find the time to photograph wildlife and write a book? “I don’t do much of anything else — I don’t golf or fish or hunt,” he laughs. But, according to Turley, there is a correlation between practicing law and wildlife photography. “In a trial, it’s your job to assemble the raw facts to form a persuasive composition using evidence and communication. In photography, I’m trying to capture images I think are beautiful. It’s all a matter of communication.”

For information on monarch butterflies, or Turley’s book, visit [www.theamazingmonarch.com](http://www.theamazingmonarch.com). ☺



# Christmas Rocks!



Bayless & Stokes legal assistant Shawn Teague, and attorneys **Bobbie Bayless** and **Dalia Stokes** on the back porch of their law office and Christmas store, Christmas Rocks.

Five years ago, Houston attorneys **Bobbie Bayless** and **Dalia Stokes** found themselves with extra space in their law office. The first floor of their office, once home to the firm's law library, was now empty. Rather than sublease the floor or relocate to a smaller space, the resourceful attorneys gave the area a cheery uplift with a Christmas store, aptly called Christmas Rocks.

Located in the Upper Kirby District of Houston — on a street well-known for its selection of high-end French antiques — Christmas Rocks is open year-round. The store is just 1,200 square feet, but houses almost 7,000 items. "We have to be very careful in deciding what we are going to carry," Stokes says, adding that the shop carries items "for people of all walks of life."

While Christmas stores around the country are struggling to compete with discount store holiday items, Christmas Rocks has found a niche by offering high-end and difficult-to-find items, as well as moderately priced ones. There you can find J. Brooke Patterson diorama eggs and Wilhelm Schweizer col-

lectible pewter ornaments that are hand-painted in Germany. You'll also find sock monkey ornaments. "I think the thing that people really enjoy about coming into our store is that they find a lot of different ornaments as opposed to just a lot of red and green stuff," Stokes says.

The store offers more than just Christmas gear. The store's website boasts: "Drop by not just for Christmas shopping, but also Halloween, Thanksgiving, Americana, Valentine's, Easter, Spring, and Western décor, and gifts for any occasion."

The store is run by Bayless, a business litigator; Stokes, an estate and probate attorney; and the firm's legal assistant, Shawn Teague. While maintaining a Christmas store in addition to a full-time law firm is a lot of work, Stokes says she's happy with the decision to open the store. "The holidays are a very pleasant time of year," she says. "And when you are practicing law, it's really fun to be around people who are full of cheer."

For more information about the store, visit <http://christmasrocks.us/>. ❖

## TEXAS PEOPLE

**Norma V. Cantu**, a professor at the University of Texas School of Law in Austin and former assistant secretary of education for the U.S. Office of Civil Rights under President Bill Clinton, was appointed to the advisory committee of the new American Bar Association Commission on Hispanic Legal Rights and Responsibilities. The commission will hold public hearings throughout the year in order to generate testimony from a broad coalition of lawyers, judges, legal and social science scholars, and elected officials in the Latino community.



**Sharla J. Frost**, managing partner in Powers & Frost, L.L.P. in Houston, has become president of the Litigation Counsel of America, a trial lawyer honorary society composed of less than one-half of 1 percent of American lawyers. Active in issues related to women in the law, Frost has served on the Supreme Court Nominee Evaluation Committee for the National Association of Women Lawyers for each of the nominee evaluations over the past five years.



**James H. "Blackie" Holmes III**, a partner in Burford & Ryburn, L.L.P. in Dallas, was the first recipient of the Civil Justice Preservation Award given by the Texas Association of Defense Counsel. The award honors an individual who has served to protect and preserve the civil justice system in Texas. Holmes, past president of the TADC, has served to protect and preserve the civil justice system in Texas for more than 40 years, including co-authoring the Texas Lawyer's Creed in the late 1980s.



Former State Bar President **Richard Pena**, of the Law Offices of Richard Pena, P.C. in Austin and McAllen, was named the 2010 recipient of the American Bar Association's General Practice, Solo and Small Firm Division Difference Makers Award in the category of "Service to the Profession" for his significant contributions to the legal profession through service to the profession. Pena is immediate past president of the American Bar Foundation and has recently served on the ABA Board of Governors.

