



Main Street Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

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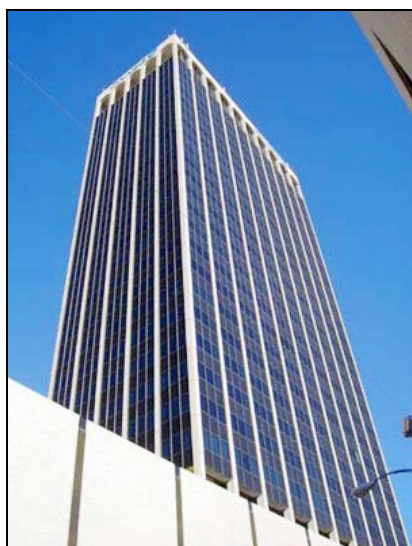
Spotlight on Amarillo

Population 186,000

All roads lead to Center City

Downtown Amarillo is now officially Buffalo Country. On Aug. 19, Dr. Patrick O'Brien, president of West Texas (WT) A&M University, used the university's eternal flame to symbolically cut a red ribbon dedicating the WT's new downtown campus in Amarillo.

The university classroom center will occupy two floors of the 31-story



31-story Chase Tower, home of the new downtown WT campus means more people downtown every week to eat in restaurants, shop at retailers and trade at downtown businesses.

Chase Tower in the historic downtown area.

The story of West Texas A&M University's 17-mile trip north from Canyon to Amarillo began three years ago. Center City, a Texas Main Street City, joined with the city of Amarillo to commission a long-range action plan to chart downtown's future.

Gideon-Toal, the Fort Worth architecture firm behind the rebirth of Sundance Square, developed the plan after more than two years of research. The plan outlines the revitalization of the downtown area as a place for people to: live, work, play, learn and worship.

While work continues in each of these areas, the "learning" component of downtown moved to the fast track almost as soon as Dr. O'Brien took the reins of WT. City leaders began talks — formal and informal — with university decision-makers about the possibility of an Amarillo campus.

WT hired a consultant to research the feasibility of an Amarillo campus. Even before gasoline hit \$4 a gallon for the 17-mile commute from Amarillo to Canyon, the consulting firm recommended that WT establish an Amarillo presence.

Early indicators narrowed the search to a site near the medical center, that



Dr. Patrick O'Brien, president of West Texas A&M University uses the university's eternal flame to symbolically cut the dedication ribbon for the new downtown Amarillo campus.

would strengthen nursing and health-related programs, and a downtown site.

The downtown plan gained momentum when a tailor-made site became available. McCartt and Associates had outfitted two floors of the 31-story Chase Tower as classrooms to train personnel for a new Blue Cross-Blue Shield call center, which was under construction in west Amarillo. The rooms had state-of-the-art "smart" classrooms with all the technological gadgets modern classes demand.



WT Cross Country Women's Track Team ran 17 miles from Canyon to Amarillo carrying the university's "eternal flame" in a relay to pass to Dr. O'Brien for the dedication.

Once the Blue Cross-Blue Shield personnel moved west, the university had a new home in downtown Amarillo.

The Amarillo Economic Development Corporation approved an expansion grant for West Texas A&M University to receive more than \$2 million during the next five years to support its new downtown Amarillo extension campus. The grant will pay for five years of rent and the first year of operation expenses for the new location.

The university set a goal of having 400 students enrolled by Aug. 15. Already more than 500 students have enrolled in the new downtown center.

The new campus means more people downtown every week to eat in restaurants, shop at retailers and trade at downtown businesses.

In announcing the plan, Dr. O'Brien said that West Texas A&M University signed a three-year lease, but

would look at building a free-standing university center in the future if growth continues.

One city official said that the long-range impact of WT's downtown campus will have an impact equal to or greater than bringing in a new major industry to Amarillo.

To celebrate the new campus, the WT Cross Country Women's Track Team ran 17 miles from Canyon to Amarillo carrying the university's "eternal flame" in a relay. They gave the torch to Dr. O'Brien who ceremoniously burned a red ribbon to dedicate the new facility. More than 300 people joined the downtown celebration, which included an appearance by the live buffalo mascot for WT, the WT show band, the WT cheerleaders and several sports teams.

Center City of Amarillo put the icing on the cake by announcing a \$10,000 façade grant to help WT with a new 16-foot sign, which will shine from the roof of the 31-story Chase Tower to tell people from miles around that WTAMU now has a new home in downtown Amarillo.

Center City of Amarillo is a Texas Main Street City and a member of the Texas Downtown Association. The offices are located in the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce Building at 1000 S. Polk St. in downtown Amarillo.

Thanks to Beth Duke, Executive Director of the Center City Amarillo Main Street Program, for providing this article.

NEWS

Texas Archeology Month

Each October, Texas Archeology Month (TAM) celebrates this spirit

of discovery. It's an opportunity for Texans to understand the:

- Depth and richness of our heritage, from the former dwelling sites of prehistoric hunters to ancient shipwrecks and Civil War sites
- Historical significance of the state's archeological sites
- Importance of proper archeological practices
- Contributions of professional and vocational archeologists

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) is proud to sponsor Texas Archeology Month in association with the Texas Archeological Society and the Council of Texas Archeologists. Activities will include rock art tours, public digs, archeology fairs, storytelling and more. Descriptions of planned events along with dates and locations are available on the www.thc.state.tx.us/archeology/aaW/ord/tam_clndr_08.doc.

AROUND THE STATE

Grapevine will be sending 12 people to the National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma Oct. 21-25. This is an excellent statement of Grapevine's investment in their historic preservation ethic.

In downtown **Greenville**, the Landmark Group from Winston-Salem, NC was awarded tax credits for the renovation of the former Washington Hotel. Built in 1926, the Washington was once one of the finest hotels in Texas but has been vacant for many years. At a cost of approximately \$6 million, the building is expected to be ready for occupancy in the summer of 2010.

Waxahachie showed the Bee Movie at their Summer Moonlight Movie

series this summer. The sales manager for Burlerson's Honey, a local business, found out about it and donated four cases of honey to pass out to movie goers. They publicized this and had their biggest crowd ever.

The Master Gardeners in **Waxahachie** sponsored two events in September at the downtown Farmer's market. The first weekend, they gave away 1000+ iris bulbs to customers in celebration of the iris having been recently declared the official flower of Waxahachie. The second weekend, the Master Gardeners grilled fresh vegetables and served them to market customers.

EVENTS

Please remember if you want one of your Main Street events posted here to send an email to jill.robinson@thc.state.tx.us at least a few weeks ahead of the issue in which you want the posting.

Beaumont's Dogtober Fest

Oct. 11, Beaumont

Join in Beaumont's Dogtober Fest beginning with the Strut Your Mut Parade! Festivities include dogger-size, paw readings, Nieman Barkus sales tent, Bone Appetit food court (snicker poodle cookies), cakewalk your dog, dog house raffle, etc. See www.beaumontmainstreet.com

Oct. 11-12, Luling

Enjoy visiting the past as an array of beautiful quilts line the downtown sidewalks and buildings of historic Luling at the Davis Street Quilt Show.

Oct. 11, Carthage

The East Texas Oil and Gas Blast is celebrating the natural resources of Panola County by creating family entertainment with an event honoring the oil and gas industry through Economic Development promoting

community pride through education and tourism. The Arts and Crafts Show promises lots of friendly oil and gas folks with plenty of East Texas hospitality, and the best country music in Texas. Come help us celebrate this great day. Don't miss out on this all day Saturday fun! See www.carthagetexas.com/Chamber/blast.htm

Oct. 11, Bridgeport

Join in the celebration of Bridgeport's history at the Coal Miner's Heritage Festival and car show. Festivities will include heritage demonstrations, arts, crafts, music, car show contests, entertainment, food and evening street dance.

Oct. 18, Lufkin

Lufkin's Heritage Festival was begun five years ago with the city's Undoing Racism Task Force. Come enjoy a celebration of ethnic diversity through entertainment, food and family fun at Pitser Garrison Civic Center from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Oct. 3-5, Gonzales

Come celebrate history with us! *The Come and Take It* annual Celebration will highlight the first shot fired for Texas independence on Oct. 2, 1835. Held in downtown Historic Gonzales, festivities will include arts and craft booths, car show, carnival, food booths, biergarten, battle re-enactment, parade, Texas T-Bone cook off, chili and bean cook offs and musical entertainment. Call 888/672-1095 or visit www.gonzalestexas.com

Oct. 16-19, Beeville

35th annual Western Week Kick Off: Bee County's Sesquicentennial Celebration will be hosted by Beeville Main Street, Bee County Historical Commission, the Hall-Rialto Preservation Association and the Bee County Western Week Committee in downtown Beeville. The event will

include an historical pageant that depicts important scenes from Bee County's History. Professional re-enactors will act and be accompanied by local music groups. Food and arts and crafts vendors will also be on-hand. See www.westernweek.org

GRANTS

Preservation Training and Technology Grants

The National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) seeks innovative projects that advance the application of science and technology to historic preservation. The PTT Grants program funds projects that develop new technologies or adapt existing technologies to preserve cultural resources. NCPTT does not fund "bricks and mortar" projects or straight-forward documentation projects using well-established methods. Learn more about the PTTGrants program by reading the 2009 Call for Proposals and complete a grant application by **October 15, 2008** for a matching grant of up to \$25,000. See www.ncptt.nps.gov/Grants/Default.aspx for the application.

History Museum Grants

The Texas Historical Commission is now accepting applications for History Museum Grants. Please help us spread the news of this grant opportunity to the local history museums in your community. Small history museums can apply for up to \$1,000 (50% matching grant) for conservation and preservation projects including, but not limited to, acid-free storage materials, archival storage units, environmental monitoring equipment, artifact conservation and collections management software. To view the eligibility requirements and to download an application, visit www.thc.state.tx.us/grantsincent/gramus.shtml. (Scroll down to bottom

of the web page for the application form.) Application deadline is **Nov. 5.**

GO TEXAN Grants

Note: for both of the following grants, you must be a GO TEXAN member to apply. Certified membership is open to non-metropolitan counties or cities located in rural Texas. Counties and cities eligible to apply for the GO TEXAN Rural Community Program must be located in a non-metropolitan area or a city with a population under 20,000.

Preserve America Grants

What do Nacogdoches, Fredericksburg, Marshall and the Texas Main Street Program have in common? They are the latest Texas recipients of Preserve America grants totaling \$873,615 to be used in creative ways to share their stories and historic places with residents and heritage travelers alike.

The Preserve America matching-grant program provides planning funding to designated Preserve America Communities to support preservation efforts through heritage tourism, education, and historic preservation planning.

Through these grants project our country gains a greater shared knowledge about the Nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of our communities. Applications are due Tuesday, **Nov. 18.** See www.nps.gov/history/hps/hpg/PreserveAmerica/index.htm

Hometown STARS Grant Program

The Hometown STARS (Supporting

Tourism and Rural Success) matching fund reimbursement program through the Texas Department of Agriculture is designed to help rural communities leverage the dollars they have available to promote tourism events, in turn boosting local economies and attracting new jobs and dollars. The program will reimburse GO TEXAN Rural Community Program certified members for half of approved promotional costs up to \$10,000. Hometown STARS is a matching fund program for communities with experience managing their tourism programs and a budget that will accommodate the matching dollars required. See

www.texasyes.org/ty/channel/render/items/0,1186,827_846_0_833,00.html.

Bootstrap Bucks Grant Program

The Bootstrap Bucks reimbursable funding program through the Texas Department of Agriculture is designed to help rural communities promote tourism events. Approved GO TEXAN Rural Community Program certified members can use up to \$2,500 in reimbursable funds for one of four eligible promotional items: banners, posters, newspaper advertisements and radio/television spots. Bootstrap Bucks is a reimbursable funding program for communities just beginning their tourism programs or communities adding new elements to their programs, and it has no matching fund requirement. See www.texasyes.org/ty/channel/render/items/0,1186,827_2608_0_833,00.html

CONFERENCES/ WORKSHOPS

Texas Economic Development Council (TEDC) Events

TEDC will hold the following upcoming events:

- **Oct. 24,** Economic Development Sales Tax Workshop, Fort Worth
- **Dec. 12,** Economic Development Sales Tax Workshop, Fort Worth

For more information on these workshops, see www.texasedc.org.

Texas Leadership Institute Workshops

The Texas Leadership Institute (TLI), a nonprofit educational consortium, was formed to enhance the ability of the small to medium size communities in Texas to plan for sustainable economic activity by building a team of trained leaders. TLI will be offering the following workshops through September:

- **Oct. 15,** The Role of city and County Officials in Community and Economic Development. Buchanan Dam
- **Oct. 23,** Retail Strategies for a Balanced Approach. Bastrop
- **Oct. 30,** Tourism Public Relations and Communications. Bastrop
- **Nov. 19,** Developing a Historic Preservation Program. Bastrop

For more information on TLI or to view agendas for these workshops, see www.texasleadership.org.

TTIA Tourism Workshops

TTIA will be conducting a series of workshops designed to help Texas communities foster the development and growth of tourism.

The Saddle Up! Rein in the Power of Tourism for Your Community workshops will be conducted in select cities throughout the state through November. The presenting sponsor for the workshop series will be the Texas

Department of Agriculture's GO TEXAN program, which promotes the products, culture and communities of Texas.

Upcoming workshop locations and dates are as follows:

- **October 8**, Tyler
- **October 15**, Plainview
- **October 22**, Marble Falls

For more information regarding the workshops, contact David Teel with the Texas Travel Industry Association at 512/476-4472 or see www.ttia.org/regional/index.html.

National Preservation Conference

The 2008 National Preservation Conference will be in downtown Tulsa, Oklahoma. This conference provides innovative ideas, education and inspiration to preserve and revitalize America's historic treasures. Conference dates are **Oct. 21–25**. See www.nthpconference.org.

NOMINATIONS

2009 Texas Most Endangered Places Nominations

Preservation Texas is seeking nominations for its 2009 Texas' Most Endangered Places list. The list can play a vital role in preserving the rich character, identity and heritage of our communities, but we need your help! A wide range of sites will be considered — commercial, residential, public, and religious buildings, as well as neighborhoods, bridges, monuments, and landscapes. The list will be announced in February 2009.

Download a nomination form at www.preservationtexas.org. Nomination forms must be postmarked by **Friday, Oct. 10, 2008**. For more in-

formation, please call 512/472-0102 or email info@preservationtexas.org.

Preserve America Presidential Awards

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is accepting nominations for exemplary heritage tourism and historic preservation programs and projects that meet 2009 Preserve America Presidential Award criteria. Nominations must be postmarked no later than **Nov. 1**. This award is honorific non-monetary. See www.preserveamerica.gov/papaawards09.html.

Calendar of Events

2008

- **November 11–14, Temple/Belton/Salado**

Texas Downtown Association/Texas Main Street annual conference. The 2008 theme is: Howdy, Partner! Creating Partnerships for Downtown.

2009

- **January 12–14, Austin**

Texas Main Street training for new managers.

- **February 10–13, Austin**

Completion of Texas Main Street training for new managers. Texas Main Street Annual Meeting will begin on Feb. 11.

- **February 11–13, Austin**

Texas Main Street Program Annual Meeting.

Web Sites of Interest

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: www.achp.gov
African American Heritage Preservation Foundation: www.aahpf.org
(The) Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation: www.ahlp.org
(The) Alliance for National Heritage Areas: www.cofc.edu/~heritage
American Institute of Architects: www.aiaonline.com
American Planning Association: www.planning.org
American Society of Landscape Architects: www.asla.org
(The) Cultural Landscape Foundation: www.tclf.org
Handbook of Texas Online: www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online
Institute for Cultural Landscape Studies: www.icls.harvard.edu
Keep Texas Beautiful: www.ktb.org
League of Historic American Theaters: www.lhat.org
Livable Communities Task Force:
www.blumenauer.house.gov/issues/CaucusSummary.aspx?NewsID=1077&IssueID=11
National Main Street Center: www.mainstreet.org
National Park Service: www.nps.gov
National Trust for Historic Preservation: www.nthp.org
Office of Rural Community Affairs: www.orca.state.tx.us
Preservation Easement Trust: www.preservationeasement.org/home
Preservation Directory: www.preservationdirectory.com
Preservation Texas: www.preservationtexas.org
Project for Public Spaces: www.pps.org
Rails to Trails: www.railstotrails.org
Sacred Places: www.sacredplaces.org
Scenic America: www.scenic.org
Texas Commission on the Arts: www.arts.state.tx.us
Texas Downtown Association: www.texasdowntown.org
Texas Folklife Resources: www.texasfolklife.org
Texas Historical Commission: www.thc.state.tx.us
Texas Parks and Wildlife: www.tpwd.state.tx.us
Texas Rural Leadership Program: www.trlp.org
Texas State Preservation Board: www.tspb.state.tx.us
Urban Land Institute: www.uli.org

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