



# Main Street Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

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## Spotlight on... Freeport

### Freeport Goes Blue

For the third year in a row, Freeport threw a party to celebrate the end of a long, hot summer. The Summertime Blues Festival continues to be a success — one positive note in a city plagued by negativity. As Freeport continues to pin its revitalization hopes on a planned marina adjacent to the historic downtown, Main Street strives to put its district on the map.

Freeport is the end of the road. Casual passers by do not come here unless they have a reason. During the 1980s, a single company gobbled up all the available office and retail space in the downtown area, forcing out smaller businesses that could not pay the higher rents this company



*Bikers enjoying the festival.*

offered. When the company left town, Freeport's downtown became a virtual ghost town, and it has remained that way for over a decade. Small enterprises have come and gone, but because there is no traffic to bring people to the area, it is very difficult to make a small business succeed here.

Main Street Freeport decided that it had to make the downtown a destination. If it couldn't open a business, it would throw a party. The first step was to define the festival's purpose: to raise funds for street furniture and to attract tourists and visitors to the downtown, creating interest in the Main Street Program. The plan was to attract a demographic of folks who were a bit older, a bit nostalgic and had disposable income. Perhaps a few of these folks would remember Freeport in its heyday, buy an old building and start a new business.

A banana festival was the original idea, hoping that its goofiness would have wide appeal, and that the local port authority and its clients, Dole, Turbana and Chiquita, would be major sponsors. However, the port declined to participate, so the festival became Summertime Blues instead. This was a change for the better, as it turns out.



*Big bikes, children and downtown—building memories during the Summertime Blues Festival.*

Main Street chose blues as its musical theme because it generally draws an older crowd. Bikers were targeted because these are folks who have money to spend on expensive, weekend toys, and who like to explore and do adventurous things. What could be more adventurous than opening a business in a historic downtown?

Main Street decided early on that this would be a family-friendly festival. Children's activities are plentiful, and though beer is available, the mellower music and older crowd ensure that the atmosphere is comfortable for children. Many folks have commented that unlike some biker events, they are happy to be able to include their families in one of their favorite pastimes. There is even Biker Billy's "Hog Wild on a Harley" comedy Cooking Show, as well as dog contests (ugliest, best-dressed, most talented and owner-pooch look alike). The next step was



Enjoying the blues!

adding a triathlon which, while raising funds, also attracts a well-educated and demographically desirable group of visitors and showcases the area's natural attractions such as the Old Brazos River and Bryan Beach. Most of the folks who come to the festival say that they have never before visited Freeport.

The festival is just in its third year and although it has not shown huge profits, it is growing. We have accomplished our goal of purchasing the street furniture and now any proceeds go to façade grants and other Main Street projects.

Nearly every city department steps up to assist with the event, from the parks crews who manicure the park and sweep the streets, to the police who patrol the event. It's a community effort in every sense. And while no one has come forward to open a new business, the people who visit are very supportive of the project. It's a small first step in Freeport's downtown revitalization. To view more details and pictures of the Freeport Summertime Blues Festival, see <http://freeportmainstreet.com/summertimeblues.aspx>.

*Thanks to Mary Lee Stotler, manager of the Freeport Main Street Program, for providing the preceding article.*

## NEWS

### Sponsorships and donations from your local chain restaurants:

#### Sonic Drive-in

Your local Sonic Drive-in offers donations and sponsorships to be a good neighbor and have a positive impact on their community. There are community organization sponsorships as well as official corporate sponsorships for 501c3 non-profit organizations.

For the corporate 501c3 sponsorships, proposals are accepted throughout the year. The quarterly deadlines are: February 1, June 1, October 1 and December 1.

For details on both types of Sonic sponsorships, see [www.sonicdrivein.com/business/community/index.jsp](http://www.sonicdrivein.com/business/community/index.jsp)

#### Dairy Queen

Dairy Queen donations seem to focus on youth and school functions. You might ask for food or ice cream donations for Main Street events where you have a strong youth educational component (maybe they would provide food for a Saturday clean-up day involving youth). See [www.dairyqueen.com/en-US/About+Dairy+Queen/Corporate/Community+Involvement/Educational+Partnerships.htm](http://www.dairyqueen.com/en-US/About+Dairy+Queen/Corporate/Community+Involvement/Educational+Partnerships.htm).

#### Subway

Subway Restaurants provide various sponsorships or food donations. A few examples are:

- In May 2006, Subway restaurants throughout Arkansas donated five cents from each foot-long sub purchased to Arkansas Children's Hospital Foundation – the seventh year they've done so, raising more than \$57,000 since 1999.
- Subway is a national sponsor of the American Heart Association and its many local Heart Walks, helping to raise funds to support heart disease and stroke research, and health/wellness educational programs in the community.
- In May 2006, Subway teamed up with Special Olympics Canada promoting awareness of sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

Whether it's donating sandwiches to a local event, providing relief to disaster victims, sponsoring a regional symphony orchestra, supporting charitable causes, thousands of dedicated Subway franchise owners around the globe are proud to give back to the people that support them.

See [www.subway.com/subwayroot/AboutSubway/helpingSociety/index.aspx](http://www.subway.com/subwayroot/AboutSubway/helpingSociety/index.aspx).

#### McDonalds

Locally, McDonald's restaurants participate in a wide range of civic and charitable programs within their communities. Requests for local donations should be directed to your neighborhood franchise.

#### 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 avocational 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 [TAM 2007 Calendar of Events](#) (pdf). Also see [www.thc.state.tx.us/archeology/aata.html](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/archeology/aata.html) for more information.

## AROUND THE STATE IN MAIN STREET

**Amarillo** held its 12<sup>th</sup> annual Polk Street Block Party with a crowd of 18,000 attendees. More than 70 volunteers and 25 board members were involved. Ten community nonprofits adopted ticket gates, soft drink or beer booths to help raise funds for their organizations. Youth groups (i.e. Camp Fire, Scouts, etc.) had booths at the first-ever children's stage. The Amarillo College Lamplight Youth Theater provided entertainment.

**Brenham** is holding a scarecrow decorating contest downtown in October. Scarecrow forms are distributed to the local businesses to decorate and prizes are awarded.

More than 200 people attended the last summer event of Tunes at Noon in **Canyon** with the West Texas A&M marching band.

**Colorado City** was awarded \$2,000 at the West Central Texas Workforce Workshop in Abilene for benches to be used in their Inspiration Park that is being built. The park will be in downtown, have public restrooms and will be landscaped by the local garden club. This was an application process and it was a privilege for Colorado City to be selected to attend the workshop.

**Grand Saline** had almost 400 people at its National Night Out in August. There were 21 booths for activities including fire extinguisher demos, fire truck and ambulance tours, etc. There were many competitions, including a casting contest and a chocolate fight. The chocolate fight involved two teams throwing liquid chocolate from small paper cups in dodge ball fashion — determining the winner was difficult, but the event was successful nevertheless.

Main Street **Levelland** and the Levelland Chamber of Commerce provided lunch for all of the city staff to say thank you and express appreciation for all they do for Main Street events throughout the year.

**Seguin's** Texas Theatre restoration project received a \$25,000 donation from the Rotary Club.

Mary Ann Kay, **Sonora** Main Street manager is now on a billboard in Eldorado, Texas advertising the Sonora La Mexicana restaurant.

## EVENTS

### Oct. 6–7, Colorado City

The Frontier Junktique Jamboree will feature great junktique merchandise, chuckwagon breakfast, western glam-o-rama photo ops, guest speaker Tumbleweed Smith, live movie star camels, cowboy church, live auction featuring trash to treasure items, and tastes and sounds of Texas. Proceeds will fund downtown façade grants. See [www.junktiquejamboree.com](http://www.junktiquejamboree.com).

### Oct. 12–13, 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. 13, 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! Contact Sandra Sirratt at 903/297-4017 or [sirratts@bp.com](mailto:sirratts@bp.com).

### Oct. 13, Gainesville

Step on board as the 21st Annual Depot Day celebration rolls into the courthouse square downtown. From antique cars to Legend and Lore tours, to musical performances and 5K fun run, to all types of bounce houses, pony rides and activities for children, entertainment for the whole family awaits visitors at this celebration. Hosted by the Main Street Program, the festival kicks off at 10 a.m. and steams out-of-town at

5 p.m. Admission is free. See [www.gainesville.tx.us](http://www.gainesville.tx.us)

### **Oct. 13, Luling**

Night in Old Luling under the Thump Pavilion offers old fashioned family entertainment; Start the day off with a pumpkin pancake breakfast. Enjoy a beautiful autumn festival that plays host to a huge cake auction, mummy wrap, pumpkin roll, cow parade, live entertainment, antique car show, domino tourney, pumpkin bake off, petting zoo and much more. Call 830/875-9239.

### **Oct. 13, San Angelo**

Art-ober-fest is a free community event with hands-on activities, craft booths and vendors at the San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts. An exciting new addition this year to the festival is the Sheeptacular — approximately 20 painted fiberglass sheep (painted by local artists and sponsored by local businesses) will be parading through downtown San Angelo starting at 10 a.m. These sheep will then be put on display so people can vote on their favorite Miss Wool. Local artists will have their art on display and bands will play downtown throughout the day. That evening there will be a Shepherds Shindig and a Baa-b-que. Afterwards, the painted sheep will then find their homes at sponsors' businesses. There will also be a pancake breakfast, sidewalk sales, and free outdoor concerts. Call 325/655-1234.

### **Oct. 13, Mount Vernon**

Countryfest will include a fiddlefest, stew cook off, fine arts show, needlework show, car show, Don Meredith exhibit, national bird exhibit and more.

### **Oct. 14, Cotulla**

Celebrating Transportation through the Ages car show in downtown.

### **Oct. 17–20, Gilmer**

The east Texas Yamboree will celebrate its 70<sup>th</sup> year with a huge homecoming celebration, coronation and pageant for Queen Yam, parades, fiddler's contest, marching band contest, etc.

### **Oct. 20, Goliad**

Main Street will sponsor dinner and a movie on the square the night before the big Goliad County Chamber of Commerce Missions Tour de Goliad bike ride which attracts 600 riders in this tiny community. Proceeds from the dinner fund the Main Street paint, façade and sign grant fund.

### **Oct. 27, Elgin**

Elgin turns hogwild for the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Hogeye Festival in the downtown national register historic district. Enjoy the Pearls before Swine art show, barbecue pork cook off, in a pig's eye dart tournament, pig puns all day, hogeye hoedown talent show, road hog car show, hogalicious desert contest, the sowpremes, great food, and arts and crafts. Proceeds benefit Elgin downtown revitalization. See [www.elgintx.com/coefestivalshog.html](http://www.elgintx.com/coefestivalshog.html).

### **Oct. 27, Paris**

With last year's attendance topping 10,000 people, the annual Festival of Pumpkins continues to attract record crowds. Enjoy pet/owner look alike contest, motorcycle competitions, children's hay maze, pumpkin painting, shopping, live music and more. Festival will be held 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. See [www.festivalofpumpkins.com](http://www.festivalofpumpkins.com).

### **Oct. 27, Waxahachie**

The Texas Country Reporter festival will be held downtown with featured music by the Bellamy Brothers. Bob Phillips, Texas Country television show host, will be there along with

persons featured on the program throughout the past year.

### **Oct. 27, Marlin**

Texas State Technical College Waco and the Heart of Texas Workforce present Freedom Fest Knowledge is Power: Impacting Lives to Create Leaders! Freedom Fest provides local and area citizens an opportunity to participate in Heart of Texas Workforce Job-a-Thon and preview area establishments that can aid in health and wellness, importance of credit, higher education, social services, financial stability, job opportunities, arts and cultural events, performances and motivational speaking, and more. The event is taking place from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Marlin Football Stadium.

### **Oct. 31, Halloween Events**

Many cities have Main Street Scare on the Square and Trick or Treat Halloween activities—have fun!

## **GRANTS**

### **History Museum Grant**

The Texas Historical Commission is now accepting applications for the 2008 History Museum Grant program. Up to \$1,000 is available to small Texas history museums for collections conservation and preservation projects. Application deadline is **October 23**. For more details and the application form, see [www.thc.state.tx.us/grantsincent/gramus.html](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/grantsincent/gramus.html).

## **CONFERENCES/ WORKSHOPS**

### **Texas Downtown Association / Texas Main Street Annual Conference**

From Downtown to Wow-Town is the theme for the 2007 Texas Down-

town / Texas Main Street annual conference **October 16–18 in Fort Worth**. The conference is a great opportunity to learn the best strategies for revitalizing your downtown. Kennedy Smith, former director of the National Main Street Program, is one of the nation's foremost experts on commercial district revitalization and development, independent main street businesses, and economically and environmentally sound community development.

## **NOMINATIONS**

### **2008 Preserve America Presidential Awards**

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) is accepting nominations through Nov. 1, 2007, for the 2008 Preserve America Presidential Awards that are now open to all exemplary historic preservation and heritage tourism efforts meeting award program criteria.

Formerly, preservation projects had to be primarily privately funded to qualify for the awards program. Beginning with this 2008 call for nominations, publicly funded preservation projects may also be considered. This means that preservation efforts meeting Preserve America Presidential Award criteria that are funded by private, federal, state, city, county, or tribal means, or any combination of funding sources, are now eligible.

Nominations for outstanding and innovative heritage tourism projects and programs based on sustainable use of cultural and natural historic resources also are sought in addition to preservation efforts.

Four Preserve America Presidential Awards will be presented during Preservation Month in May 2008. Nomination forms and guidelines, as well as information on past winners

and the overall Preserve America initiative, are available at [www.preserveamerica.gov/papaward\\_s08.html](http://www.preserveamerica.gov/papaward_s08.html).

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## **2007 Calendar of Events**

- **October 16–18, Fort Worth**  
Texas Downtown Association/Texas Main Street Annual Conference
  - **October 26**  
New 2008 official Texas Main Street cities announced
  - **January 7–9, 2008**  
Basic Training for new managers, Austin
  - **February 5–8, Austin**  
Basic Training for new managers on the 5<sup>th</sup> and morning of the 6<sup>th</sup>. Main Street Annual Meeting is Feb. 6–8 (beginning after noon on the 6<sup>th</sup> and ending at noon on the 8<sup>th</sup>)
  - **February 6–8, Austin**  
Main Street Annual Meeting (begins the afternoon of the 6<sup>th</sup> and ends by noon on the 8<sup>th</sup>)
  - **March 30–April 2, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**  
National Main Streets Annual Conference (Always excellent — consult with your city manager or your boards now to see if you can fit it into your budgets)
  - **May 1–3, Corpus Christi**  
Texas Historical Commission Annual Conference
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## Web sites of Interest

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

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Texas Main Street Program  
Texas Historical Commission  
P.O. Box 12276  
Austin, TX 78711-2276  
512/463-6092, Fax 512/463-5862



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HISTORICAL  
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*The State Agency for Historic Preservation*

[www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us)