



Main Street Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

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Spotlight on Luling

A new park, events, programs and communications show how truly busy things are in Luling. Two years ago the Luling Main Street program began making plans to improve the aesthetics of downtown and enhance communications with residents and businesses. Aug. 9, 2007 was a special anniversary for our community as 85 years before that date, “wild-catter” Edgar B. Davis made the first oil discovery in Luling. From that day forward oil has meant “big business” and commerce for this small Texas town. The Main Street Program envisioned this as an opportunity to remember the individuals and businesses that built our legacy. The idea was to create a memorial park, with a 15-foot oil derrick water fountain that could be enjoyed by all. The



Luling citizens standing in front of the oil derrick fountain looking for their bricks at the newly dedicated Edgar B. Davis memorial park in downtown commemorating the local oil heritage.

Texas Main Street design staff created a rendering allowing the community to visualize our overall idea for this 22' x 55' eyesore that was once a street crossing. Memory bricks were sold as a fundraiser to create this memorial. Luling Main Street raised \$42,000 to complete the project. The schools even pitched in with a penny drive in February 2007. These children brought in \$1500 in pennies. The campus that brought in the most weight in pennies received a special memory brick that can be seen in our park today as well as T-shirts for the class that brought in the most (Mrs. Schuelke's Kindergarten class collected 81 pounds in pennies). The park was dedicated to the community and Edgar B. Davis on Oct. 12, 2007. The Davis Street Park has two disability accessible ramps, a 15' oil derrick wa-



Davis Street Quilt Show in downtown Luling.



ter fountain, two picnic tables (one with disability access), four lamp pots, red brick pavers and granite pavers.

Luling Main Street (LMS) has taken on the task of creating and overseeing the city of Luling web site www.cityofluling.net. This is another way to improve communications with both residents and businesses. Adding to our new forms of communication, LMS, the city of Luling, and LCRA formed the *Luling City Journal*, see www.cityofluling.net/pdfs/LulingCityJournal1.pdf. Printed by LCRA and distributed to over 3500 utility customers, this newsletter covers every-



New signage for downtown.

thing from energy saving tips, current events, and information from city departments.

The Luling way finding program is in the beginning stages. In the spring of 2007, a group of representatives from local organizations, that wanted to promote Luling and all it has to offer, formed a tourism task force. Representatives from the Oil Museum, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Corporation, Zedler Mill, Foundation Farm, Golf Association, Library, Main Street and the city were present at these meetings. This group reviewed the area and came up with a plan to promote Luling and assist tourists with finding our major points of interest. The first phase of the plan included a way finding program to guide tourists to the Paddling Trail, Zedler Mill, Golf Course, Oil Museum, Parks and the Main Street district. Signs were installed at Zedler Mill, Parks, Visitor's Center and Golf Course in the fall of 2007. The next set of signs is to be installed along Davis Street this month at local businesses.

The Davis Street Quilt Show and Cocoa and Caroling proved to be successful events in 2007 for the entire community. Businesses were encouraged to extend their regular hours and participate in these events. Quilts from across the state were on display, during the Davis Street Quilt

Show, at four locations for this two day festival October 12–13. Shops noted record turnout and sales the night of our Cocoa and Carols event. Santa was out and about that evening and dropped in to the 12 participating shops and wished them holiday greetings.

Business is booming as well! We have welcomed four new businesses to Davis Street since November. Two businesses moved into locations that had been vacant and are better suited for their needs. One business changed owners and has made positive visible changes to their building.

Thanks to Misty Halliburton, manager of the Luling Main Street Program, for providing this article.

NEWS

Building Political Will

Building political will is vital to a downtown's residential development. Support by third parties perceived as neutral to a developer's bottom line can be vital in galvanizing political will for downtown's development. A good case in point is a recent rezoning of a blighted area behind downtown Boonton, New Jersey (pop. 8,500), from Industrial to High-Density Residential. The rezoning was necessary to enable a proposed residential redevelopment of the site as a 148-unit apartment complex. Here are documents that Boonton Main Street distributed in support of the controversial rezoning: a statement endorsing a rezoning of an industrial area for residential redevelopment, a Q&A fact sheet distributed by Boonton Main Street addressing common concerns about the proposed residential redevelopment, a letter from Boonton Main Street presenting the town's board with signatures of downtown merchants and business

owners in support of the BMS trustees' supportive stance toward the zoning change, a letter from Boonton Main Street to the town's Board, essentially advocating for the inclusion of a formal community benefits agreement process in negotiations with the proposed developer. (*Downtown Idea Exchange*.) The above referenced documents can be found at <http://www.downtowndevelopment.com/drcdocuments.php>.

WELCOME

We welcome Trisha Urban to Main Street as the new manager in Del Rio, Rex White as the interim manager in Grand Saline and Valerie Garza Brown in Rio Grande City.

AROUND THE STATE IN MAIN STREET

Eastridge Elementary School students in **Amarillo** visited numerous historic buildings in downtown including the historic Chamber of Commerce and Santa Fe buildings. They heard about the Hoof Prints project, the Paramount Sign and about downtown revitalization. They are working on a project called "100 Places to See in Amarillo Before you Turn 12."

Beginning last month (January), **Elgin** initiated a citywide comprehensive planning process.

Georgetown Main Street got some wonderful exposure with this article <http://Impactnewspaper.com/www/docs/471.2159> in the local *Community Impact* newspaper. This newspaper covers Georgetown, Hutto and Taylor.

Irving's coffee break networking for its heritage district merchants has been successful with approxi-

mately 30 businesses represented. Sponsors and speakers are incorporated into these growing monthly events.

Congratulations to Eric Turner for receiving the 2007 Rookie Employee of the Year award in **Plainview**.

EVENTS

Feb. 2, Waxahachie

Join in the fun of the Mardi Gras parade and party. Enjoy themed floats, Cajun music, food and fun. Downtown Waxahachie.

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Enjoy the 2nd annual Odd Fellows Charity Masquerade Ball on the square in historic downtown.

Feb. 16, Waxahachie

The Seethearts and Orphans Classic Car Show will be held on the square in historic downtown.

Feb. 3, McKinney

The 6th annual Krewe of Barkus is right around the corner. Dress your four-legged friend in celebrity style and head to historic downtown McKinney for an afternoon of Mardi Gras fun including a parade and costume contest and rock and roll paw of fame. Patterned after the legendary Mystic Krewe of Barkus in New Orleans. Call 972/529-6872 or email info@artinstituteofmckinney.com.

Feb. 5, Kerrville

Mardi Gras on Main Includes fine art, wine, cuisine and music. Downtown Kerrville on Water Street. Call 830/792-8343 or email events@kerrvilletexascvb.com.

Feb. 8, Kerrville

The Eighth Chocolate Fantasy includes elegant dinner, live music,

dancing, live and silent auction. Kerr Arts & Cultural Center, 228 Earl Garrett. Call 830/895-2911 or see www.kackerrville.com.

Feb. 9, McKinney

Second Saturday Around the Square includes a stroll around historic downtown McKinney seeing outstanding art and enjoy award-winning wine and jazz. A festive evening celebrates the ever-growing cultural resources within the historic district. Hours are 7 to 10 p.m. Historic Downtown McKinney. Call 972/548-7830 or email blyndachristian@sbcglobal.net.

Feb. 14, Seguin

On Austin features more than a dozen businesses and restaurants along Austin Street, from the Palace Theatre to Craig's Saute & Grill, offer refreshments, entertainment and more. Hours are 6 to 10 p.m. Austin Street. E-mail: cofc@seguintx.org or call 800/580-7322.

Feb. 16–17, La Porte

Remember the Maine pays tribute to Americans who fought in the Spanish American War and to the first U.S. Navy ship to wear the name "Texas," which played a crucial role in the American Naval victory in Cuba. Includes small arms demonstrations. Visit encampments depicting various eras of our nation's military history. Memorial service is held on the bow of the ship at 3 p.m. Saturday and noon Sunday. Battleship "Texas" State Historic Site. Call 281/479-2431.

CONFERENCES/ WORKSHOPS

Free Monthly Trainings from The Alliance for Community Trees

The Alliance for Community Trees offers a free monthly training

(webcast) for anyone interested in issues pertaining to preserving and planting their urban canopy. The series is geared for volunteer organizers, community groups, and others who work with the public. Registration is required. More information, including the list of topics that will be covered through March 2008, can be found at http://actrees.org/site/stories/act_launches_monthly_webcast_series.php#subscribe.

2008 National Main Streets Conference

Who attends this conference? Everyone interested in community revitalization. Beginner or expert, small town or urban business district, people who work, volunteer or are interested in community revitalization will value this educational and networking experience.

The 2008 National Main Streets Conference **March 30–Apr. 2** in Philadelphia, PA will explore the ways entrepreneurship and diversity enrich commercial districts. These qualities add to the local flavor, create a true reflection of a community, contribute to an authentic identity and exciting business mix — all essential motivations that bring customers, tourists, new residents and cool businesses to your district. See <http://conference.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=11247&site=13>

GRANTS

Texas Preservation Trust Fund

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) is accepting Texas Preservation Trust Fund Grant Program applications for fiscal year 2009.

Application forms are now available on the THC web site, www.thc.state.tx.us,

www.thc.state.tx.us/grantsincent/graptf.shtml (specific web page) or by contacting the THC at 512/463-6094.

The Texas Preservation Trust Fund Grant Program is your opportunity to save and protect Texas' threatened historic structures and significant archeological sites. Grant awards may be used for restoration work, architectural planning, archeological investigation, preservation planning, curatorial, resource survey and heritage educational training.

The following Texas Main Street cities received awards in the 2007 grant round: **Bowie** City Auditorium \$30,000, **San Angelo** City Hall \$24,978, **Spur** Palace Theater \$23,500, Old **Nacogdoches** University Building \$30,000, **Rio Grande City** Moth Ball project \$10,600 and **Beeville's** Rialto Theater \$23,238.

JOBS

New Braunfels

The New Braunfels Main Street manager job is vacant. We expect a posting to be available by Feb. 8.

2008 Calendar of Events

- **February 5–8, Austin**

Basic Training for new managers is on Feb. 5 and the morning of Feb. 6. Main Street Annual Meeting is Feb. 6–8 (beginning after noon and ending at noon on the 8th)

- **February 6–8, Austin**

Main Street Annual Meeting (begins the afternoon of Feb. 6 and ends by noon on Feb. 8)

- **March 30–April 2, Philadelphia, Pa.**

National Main Streets Annual Conference, 2008 theme: Enriching Main Street Through Entrepreneurship and Diversity. This conference is 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's 2008 Annual Historic Preservation Conference: Explore the Sights and Stories of Texas.

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 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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**TEXAS
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The State Agency for Historic Preservation

www.the.state.tx.us