



Main Street Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

MAY 2007 • COMMUNITY HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION • P.O. BOX 12276, AUSTIN, TX 78711 • 512/463-6092

Spotlight on... Electra

Electra Rolls Out Centennial Plans

Celebrating a birthday will be a year-long affair in Electra this year.

October 2007 marks 100 years since the opening of the townsite, the sale of lots that led to the development of a town around the Fort Worth and Denver railhead from which W. T. Waggoner shipped cattle. Many community events this year will focus on celebrating that history, with a Centennial Homecoming weekend set for October 11–14.

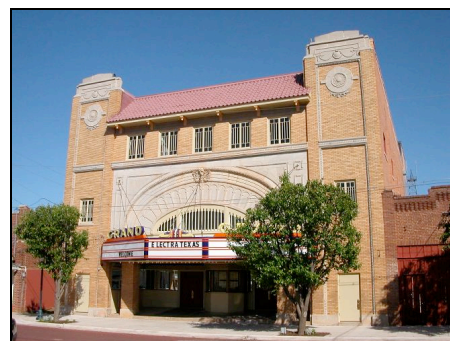
Electra's Main Street project volunteers, active since 1998, planned



Centennial Banners for downtown.

early for the celebration of Electra's 100th anniversary. Work to secure Texas Historical Commission (THC) Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) status for the historic Grand Theatre was completed in 2006, and the marker dedication will be a part of formal Centennial ceremonies on October 13, 2007. The organization also secured Texas Department of Agriculture's Texas YES! Beautification Grant funds for half the cost of a new set of downtown banners. New Centennial street lamp banners went up in January, ushering in the celebration. Main Street's contribution to Centennial weekend events will be a tour of historic Electra homes, with proceeds helping to defray Centennial expenses and Grand Theatre rehabilitation efforts.

Spring 2007 has brought a long-term solution to the community's water problems with the completion of a \$7 million treated water supply project funded by local bonds and a USDA Rural Development grant and loan package. Electra turned on the water from regional supplier Wichita Falls through a new 22-mile pipeline shared with City of Iowa Park during April 16th celebrations. And just in time for Centennial visitors, Electra will complete its second Texas Capital Fund Main Street Improvements Grant project, extending earlier grant-funded streetscape improve-



Historic Grand Theatre in downtown.

ments to additional areas of downtown.

Other notable downtown improvements include Atteberry Studio, Stuart Smith's residence recognized by Texas Downtown Association as Best Adaptive Reuse in November 2006; the renovation of 101 N. Waggoner, a building vacant since a fire in 2004, to house the Antique Emporium; improvements to Municipal Court; and, repairs of winter wind damage to Dickey, McGann and Rowe Insurance. Main Street design staff consulted on all these projects, providing much-needed expertise to local building owners.

Local organizations, businesses, churches, volunteers and elected officials will cooperate to make the Centennial year a memorable one. A Centennial Queen and Court were introduced at the February Chamber of Commerce meeting. Queen Elizabeth Decker Sachse and members of the Court, each with long ties to the area, will pre-



Volunteers install Electra's Preserve America Sign

side over various events during the year.

An unusual Centennial event set for May 9th brings EllynAnne Geisel, author of *The Apron Book*, to town for a presentation titled "A Century of Aprons." The free event, co-hosted by local book club Twentieth Century Club, the Centennial Committee, and Pandora's Box: Antiques and Books, is a special gift to the region, so rich in history and family traditions. Reservations are recommended to carolyn Gilbert1@yahoo.com or 940/495-3166 for the 2:30 p.m. free event at Electra Junior High School Cafeteria on Highway 25 South. A book signing will follow the program.

Throughout the year, volunteers will host festivals, a quilt show, the annual Goat Barbecue, children's activities, veterans' recognitions and historical exhibits such as Heritage Walk, vignettes of Electra's past displayed in downtown storefronts. A book on Electra's history is in production, along with other projects planned to recognize the town's unique role in the area's development.

Highlights of Centennial Homecoming Weekend, October 11-14, 2007, will include class reunions, football, golf, tennis, and domino tournaments, receptions for local authors, former school personnel

and Homecoming royalty, a Homecoming parade featuring cars from each decade of Electra's 100 years, dedication of the Grand's historical marker and Centennial time capsule, a tour of historic homes, entertainment, a Centennial stamp cancellation, street vendors, and a street dance and fireworks display.

Consider this your personal invitation to Electra's party!

Thanks to Jannis Hayers, manager of the Electra Main Street Program, for providing this article.

WELCOME AND FAREWELL

Farewell to Charles Thomas in Carthage—we hope you enjoy retirement!

Welcome to Debbie Pierce in Carthage, Zach Carlton in Pittsburg and Don Williams in Irving!

EVENTS

May 5, Beeville

The Cinco de Mayo celebration will be held in downtown from noon to 6 p.m. Festivities will include merchant promotions, food, music, dancing and more.

May 5, Brenham

Tempt your taste buds with the delectable fun of the Ice Cream Festival, Saturday, May 5th from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in historic downtown. Festivities include the annual ice cream eating contest, the Little Mr. and Miss Scoop pageant, strolling entertainment, children's activities and arts and crafts. The fun doesn't end there! Swing into the evening with a street dance beginning at 7 p.m. with the swingin' jazz sounds of the Jive Sisters. Bring your bobby sox and your best girl and

dance the night away in the streets of downtown Brenham! The downtown merchants will have special sales and discounts, plus ice cream-related activities and displays. Email brenhamfestival@yahoo.com or call Suzie Kelley at 979/277-0913 for more information.

May 5, Huntsville

More than 300 quilts will be displayed throughout downtown in Huntsville's Airing of the Quilts. Call 936/294-0212.

May 5, San Marcos

Viva! Cinco de Mayo and state menudo cook-off to be held on the grounds of the Hays County Civic Center. Friday enjoy the carnival and live music. Saturday enjoy a downtown parade, carnival, ballet folklórico performances, Miss and Little Miss Cinco de Mayo pageants, menudo and fajita cook-offs, hot sauce contest, car show and more live music. Sunday entertainment includes the VIVA! Cinco de Mayo Slug Fest (boxing), carnival and more great live music. Call 512/461-7337.

May 5, Taylor

Family-oriented Bloomin' Festival includes arts and crafts, children's activities, horticulture exhibits and demonstrations, agricultural exhibits, heritage entertainment, music, food and more. Historic Downtown Taylor. Call 512/352-5448 or email jean.johnson@ci.taylor.tx.us

May 5-6, San Marcos

2007 marks the 32nd anniversary of the Heritage Association's Historic Home Tours. Eight spectacular private homes will be opened to allow the public a glimpse into San Marcos' elegant past. Tours are conducted by Heritage Association docents, many of them in costume and all of them knowledgeable about the history of the area. Call 512/393-5900.

May 12, Gladewater

The downtown antique district brings back fond memories with Apron Strings: Ties to the Past. The district will be lined with fabulous old aprons sure to warm the heart. Email gladewatercoc@cox-internet.com or call 800/627-0315.

May 18-20, Grapevine

Celebrating the great outdoors is the theme of the 23rd annual Main Street Days. Enjoy the outdoor grilling demonstrations, rock climbing, KidZone, Artisan's Village, street dancing carnival rides, and short sampler runs on the Grapevine Vintage Railroad. All on Main Street in Grapevine! Want to have even more festival fun? Then become a festival volunteer. Call 817/410-3185 or see www.grapevinetexasusa.com.

May 19, Comanche

The John Wesley Hardin Days Festival includes an early morning annual 5K and 10K fun run, formal dedication of the restored Old Cora cabin, reenactments of the famous Hardin gunfight with Sheriff Charlie Webb, heritage demonstrations, craft and food booths and children's activity area. Courthouse Square. See www.johnwesleyhardindays.com or call 325/356-2032.

May 19, La Grange

The Texas Czech Heritage Cultural Center May Fest will include music, dancing and Czech cultural demonstrations at 250 W. Fairgrounds Road. Email czech@cvtv.net or call 979/968-9399.

May 19, Marshall

The Stagecoach Day Festival includes live entertainment, domino tournaments, a horseshoe throwing contest, classic car show and arts and crafts. Historic downtown Marshall. Email marshallevd@hotmail.com or call 903/935-7868.

May 19, San Marcos

Sit back, relax on the banks of the San Marcos river and enjoy the sounds of Texas western swing legends at the Texas Natural and Western Swing Festival. Food, crafts, fun and plenty of western swing entertainment. Call the San Marcos Main Street office at 512/393-8430.

May 19, Waxahachie

Mini Grand Prix miniature car race in historic downtown.

May 27-28, Llano

The Texas Proud Festival will include sanctioned fun fights, living history, encampments, wild west performers and John Wayne movies.

May 29, Livingston

A musical extravaganza, Main Street Live!, will be presented at the Livingston high school auditorium at 7 p.m. All proceeds will benefit the Main Street program.

June 1-2, Seguin

Fiestas Juan Seguin includes a street dance, food booths, carnival and games in downtown Seguin. Call 800/580-7322.

June 2, Del Rio

Main Street Taste of the Town will be held 6-10 p.m. in historic downtown Del Rio.

June 2, Denton

The 14th Annual Dog Days of Summer features a dog parade, dog show, stupid pet tricks, dog/owner singing contest, Glamfur Shots of pets, dog/master look-alike contest and more. Hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Courthouse-on-the-Square Lawn. Call 940/349-8529 or see www.dentonmainstreet.org.

June 2-3, McKinney

Celebrating the Arts and Jazz in Downtown McKinney will include

more than 100 local and regional artists and crafters representing every mix and medium of art while enjoying the sounds of jazz and strolling throughout historic downtown. There will also be a wine tasting extravaganza featuring eleven north Texas wineries.

June 2-3, Seguin

Rural Heritage Days includes antique cars and tractors, quilts, demonstrations, blacksmith shop, wine making and more. Hours are 4 to 8 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday. Texas Ag. & Heritage Center. Email cvb@seguintx.org.

June 2-3, Waxahachie

The annual Gingerbread Tour of Historic Homes includes a special selection of vintage homes as well as an arts and crafts fair in Getzendaner Park. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

AROUND THE STATE

As part of preservation month activities, **Denison** 4th graders will enjoy a downtown tour including gallery tours, history of businesses/buildings, meeting the mayor and a picnic in the downtown park.

Grand Saline Main Street was awarded the honor of organization of the year by the Grand Saline Chamber of Commerce. Also, the new and recently rehabilitated Hunter Hill Apartments and Bed and Breakfast in downtown Grand Saline won Business of the Year.

The **Hillsboro** Main Street is very excited about the grand opening in June of the Texas Musician Museum in the Main Street district. This is the first museum dedicated exclusively to Texas music.

Mount Vernon is featured in the June/July 2007 issue of *Backyard Poultry* for their priceless bird egg

exhibit in the Old Fire Station Museum. Historical enthusiast B. F. Hicks was instrumental in seeing this exhibit come to fruition. The exhibit features more than 140 species of bird eggs including some that represent extinct birds. As stated in the *Backyard Poultry* magazine, "...this exhibit is the envy of almost any museum in America."

Despite the chilly temperatures and stormy skies, Heart of Tyler had more than 40 people participate in Clean-Up Day downtown. They picked up litter, sprayed weed killer over what seemed like acres of weeds and rid downtown of 45 bags of trash!

CONFERENCES/ WORKSHOPS

Grant Writing Workshops

Save the date — The Texas Historical Commission will co-sponsor its annual grant writing workshops with the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission and the University of Texas Hogg Foundation the week of June 25–29. Two sessions will be held: **June 25–27**, and **June 27–29**. Participants are encouraged to bring a proposal or idea to the class on which to work. You will leave with a grant proposal almost completed. Laptop computers will be necessary on the last day of each workshop. If you have never written a grant, or you are interested in current trends, this is the workshop series for you. See

www.the.state.tx.us/grantsincent/work.html.

Keep Texas Beautiful Conference

Save the date — The 40th Annual Keep Texas Beautiful Conference will be held **July 10–13th**, San An-

tonio at the Westin Riverwalk. See www.ktb.org/programs/conference/.

GRANTS

My Hometown Helper Grant Program

Hamburger Helper, a General Mills food brand, is looking to lend a helping hand to neighborhoods throughout the United States with its My Hometown Helper grant program.

Submit a written essay describing how the "My Hometown Helper" grant would improve a community project. Awards will be based on the merit of the project, including its impact and support within your community. Examples of possible projects include: lights or bleachers for athletic fields; repairs to a band shell; computers for the local school or library; playground equipment for a park; holiday decorations for Main Street; money for choir, band or science trips; new uniforms for Little League teams; clean-up projects; and training for volunteer firefighters.

Applicants can request a one-time award ranging from \$5,000–\$15,000 during any single month. All requests for funding must be sponsored by a municipal or civic organization or public school. The program will award "helping hand" grants each month from online applications received through May 2007. Applications will be evaluated monthly. Funds will be awarded based on the merit of the project, including its impact on and support within the community. For details, see www.myhometownhelper.com/

National Preservation Fund Grants

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is currently accepting grant applications from nonprofit organiza-

tions, public agencies for our Preservation Fund grant programs, formally named Preservation Services Fund (PSF). Grant programs are designed to encourage preservation at the local level by providing seed money for preservation projects focused on planning or education efforts. National Trust Preservation Funds (in TX the Fondren Fund, in OK the Mayo Fund) range from \$500 to \$5,000. Deadline for application is **June 1, 2007**. This is a postmark date.

Please contact Denise Alexander denise_alexander@nthp.org for more information on these grants and to request an application.

National Trust Diversity Scholarship Program

Many nonprofit preservation organizations and community development corporations are concerned about the lack of diversity within their ranks. The National Trust Diversity Scholarship Program can help address this by increasing the diversity of participants at the annual National Preservation Conference and in the preservation movement generally. The program provides financial assistance to approximately 60 community leaders from diverse social, economic, racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds to attend the conference. The National Trust seeks culturally diverse applicants whose attendance at the conference will benefit their communities and whose commitment to historic preservation will be reinforced by their participation. The 2007 scholarship deadline is **June 1**. See

www.nationaltrust.org/scholarships/diversity_scholarship.html.

American Greenways Awards Program

The Conservation Fund, Eastman Kodak Company and the National Geographic Society are accepting applications for the 2007 Kodak American Greenways Awards program through **June 1**. The program awards seed money to stimulate greenway, blueway and trail planning and design. Award recipients will receive grants of \$500–\$2,500 to support pioneering work in linking the nation’s natural areas, historic sites, parks and open spaces. Grants can be used for public outreach, planning, design, construction, technical assistance, legal and other costs but not for academic research, general institutional support, lobbying or political activities.

Local, regional and statewide non-profits, as well as community-based and municipal government organizations are encouraged to apply. In 2005, Kodak, The Conservation Fund, and the National Geographic Society awarded 47 community grants. An online application, grant guidelines and additional program information are available on The Conservation Fund’s website www.conservationfund.org under “Award Programs.” For more information, call 703/525-6300, or email greenways@conservationfund.org.

Save Our History Grant

Inspire the youth in your community to become the preservationists of tomorrow. Museums, historic sites, historical societies, preservation organizations, libraries, and archives are invited to partner with a local school or youth group and apply for funding to help preserve the history of their communities. Each year, the

History Channel awards \$250,000 in grants of up to \$10,000 to organizations that partner with schools or youth groups on community preservation projects that engage students in learning about, documenting and preserving the history of their communities. Application deadline is **June 1, 2007**.

Grant winners are also eligible to receive an additional \$10,000 award at the Save Our History National Honors Event, when the best grant winners are recognized for their outstanding community preservation projects.

The **\$10,000 Save Our History American Express Award** is given to the organization that best demonstrates the ability to engage students in preservation activities and educate them about the importance of historic preservation.

The **\$10,000 Save Our History Lowe’s Community Award** is given to the organization that demonstrates the best outreach to and participation in the project by local community members including government officials, business leaders, local cable affiliates, the media, etc.

And, finally, the **\$10,000 Save Our History Newsweek Classroom Award** is given to the organization that partners with a school system and achieves the highest level of active student participation in a preservation initiative.

See the Save our History web site for prior winners and more grant information at:

www.history.com/minisite.do?content_type=Minisite_Generic&content_type_id=51650&display_order=3&mini_id=51103

JOBS

There are three regional coordinator positions open in the Texas Heritage Trails Program:

Texas Tropical Trail
Regional Coordinator,
Texas Plains Trail Regional Coordinator, and the
Texas Independence Trail Regional Coordinator

The regional coordinator position is the facilitator for the development, execution and documentation of the heritage trail regional program. They are the advocate, motivator, guide and resource for the communities of the region. In working with local organizations and partner agencies, the regional coordinator strives to enable and empower people, groups and organizations to gain knowledge and skills, assume responsibility and develop and implement ideas for building better heritage tourism destinations and attractions throughout the region. Salary \$28-\$30,000 annually depending on experience. For complete job descriptions, see www.thc.state.tx.us/jobs/jbdefault.html.

2007 Calendar of Events

- **June 25–27, and June 27–29**
Grant Writing Workshops in Austin sponsored by the Texas Historical Commission and the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission. See www.thc.state.tx.us/grantsincent/grawork.html.
 - **August 6, McKinney**
Main Street Interim Training for new managers.
 - **August 7–9, McKinney**
Main Street Summer Workshop.
 - **October 16–18, Fort Worth**
Texas Downtown Association/Texas Main Street Annual Conference.
-

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

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



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

www.thc.state.tx.us