



# Main Street Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

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## Spotlight on... Waxahachie

### Waxahachie, the Picture Perfect Town



Welcome...

Waxahachie is 26 miles south of Dallas but a visit here will convince you that you are a world away. Our beautiful tree lined streets are the perfect accent for the gracious Victorian homes with their “gingerbread” trim. There are so many of them that we have earned the name “The Gingerbread City”. In fact, 20 percent of Texas’ listings in the National Register of Historic Places are in Waxahachie!

The historic downtown boasts many unique buildings, not the least of which is the Ellis County Courthouse, built in 1895 and designed by James Riely Gordon. Recently restored, it is one of the most beautiful and photographed courthouses in Texas. It is also the center of a vibrant downtown.

The Historic Rogers Hotel, on the northeast corner of the square, has

new owners with plans to turn it into a premier boutique/event hotel. It will house restaurants, retail and a piano/jazz bar in addition to the rooms for rent. It will also bring the *first winery to downtown Waxahachie!* Future plans include a full service spa and restoring the rooftop dining. All of these things will help bring the hotel back to its former glory and restore its standing as an anchor of the downtown.

The holidays are a perfect time to visit Waxahachie! Starting with Veteran’s Day weekend in November through the Christmas season, there are activities that will appeal to everyone. On November 9 and 10 our historic downtown will be transformed into the town of Nancy, France circa the 1940s. Over 150 WWII re-enactors will set up camps—German and Allied—and relive the experience of the second great war. There will be military vehicles, cars, battles, USO services and a victory dance Saturday evening. Everyone is encouraged to



*Historic Rogers Hotel to become a premier boutique/event hotel.*



*Ellis County Courthouse on the downtown Square.*

wear 1940s attire, stroll the streets, and interact with the performers.

Thanksgiving weekend is the start of the Victorian Christmas celebration, which will also take place the first two weekends in December. Vendors in period costume will set up on the south end of the courthouse and will sell unique wares for sale. Merchants are encouraged to dress in Victorian costumes and they each will have a display or promotion in keeping with their store. Entertainment is scheduled all day and **Cast in Bronze**, America’s only traveling carillon, will be returning to perform the two weekends in December. The Down-



*Historic Eriksen Home.*

the historic homes decorated for the holidays are like walking through a real dollhouse and an experience you do not want to miss! Tickets are available at the chamber of commerce

(www.waxahachiechamber.com) or at any of the homes on the tour.

Visitors may also attend **Bethlehem Revisited** the first two weekends in December. Nineteen local churches work together to recreate the town of Bethlehem on the night of Christ's birth. A walled city is the main area where street merchants, money changers, tax collectors, shepherds and townsfolk bustle about doing business. Watch as Mary and Joseph make their trek to the inn, then the manger, while wise men on live camels appear at Herod's Court before bringing gifts to Baby Jesus. This event is free and complimentary cider and hot chocolate are served. It is located behind Central Presbyterian Church on College Street just north of the downtown.

Come to downtown Waxahachie for the holidays! Enjoy a multitude of events while finding just the right gifts in our unique stores. Savor a meal in one of our many restaurants, which offer everything from fine dining to home-style cooking, and soak up the beauty and history of the **Picture Perfect** town. See you soon!

*Thanks to Anita Kornegay, downtown development director and manager of the*

*Waxahachie Main Street Program, for providing the preceding article.*

## NEWS

### 2008 Main Street Cities Announced

At the quarterly meeting of the commissioners of the Texas Historical Commission in San Antonio on Oct. 26, the new 2008 official Texas Main Street cities were announced. Congratulations to Laredo and Royse City. Also coming back into the program as recertified cities will be Longview and Palestine. These additions will all be effective Jan. 1, 2008.

### Nationally Recognized Texas Main Street Cities

On October 17, the 2008 Nationally Recognized Texas Main Street cities were announced at the Texas Downtown Association (TDA) /Texas Main Street Annual Conference in Fort Worth. The National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center will honor these 59 cities at the 2008 National Main Streets Conference to be held in Philadelphia in March. Cities recognized were: Amarillo, Beaumont, Beeville, Bowie, Bridgeport, Canton, Canyon, Carthage, Celina, Clifton, Colorado City, Comanche, Corsicana, Cottulla, Denison, Denton, Electra, Elgin, Fairfield, Farmersville, Freeport, Georgetown, Goliad, Gonzales, Grand Saline, Greenville, Harlingen, Henderson, Hillsboro, Huntsville, Kerrville, Kilgore, La Grange, La Porte, Levelland, Livingston, Llano, Lufkin, Luling, Marshall, McKinney, Mineola, Mount Vernon, Nacogdoches, New Braunfels, Odessa, Paris, Pharr, Plainview, Rio Grande City, San Angelo, San Marcos, Seguin, Sonora, Spur, Taylor, Tyler, Waxahachie and Winnsboro.

2007 Texas Downtown Association Awards  
 Congratulations to Main Street Texas Downtown Association Award Winners. 2007 design, achievement and special recognition awards were announced at the TDA/Main Street annual conference in Fort Worth. Congratulations to the winners in our **Texas Main Street cities:**

- Best Commercial Interior, BeadBoard UpCountry, **Brenham**
- Best Adaptive Re-use, 116 West Erwin/Balance Pilates Studio, **Tyler**
- Best Marketing Program (co-winner), North of Ordinary, **Denton**
- Best Marketing Program (co-winner), Sincerely Yours, **Georgetown**
- Best Community Spirit, McKinney Performing Arts Center, **McKinney**

We are also very proud that **Texas Main Street cities** represented these two very special honors:

- Newcomer of the Year, Rick Hocker, **Corsicana**
- Downtowner of the Year, Thomas A. Bullock, Sr., **Brenham**

Texas Recycles Day  
 November 15, Texas Recycles Day, is a statewide public awareness campaign that aims to educate Texans on the environmental and economic benefits of waste reduction and recycling. Its success served as the model for the development of America Recycles Day. To see how

you can participate, visit [www.texasrecyclesday.org/](http://www.texasrecyclesday.org/).

and...Main Street Recycles  
In keeping with Texas Recycles Day, isn't it time to clean out those stacks in your office? Most of you have had events this spring, summer and fall and may have some extra brochures/flyers left over. Please send us your extra copies (40 copies would be great, but anything is appreciated) of promotional materials so that we can give plenty of examples to new managers at January Basic Training. Please send to: Jill Robinson, Texas Historical Commission, Texas Main Street Program, P. O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711.

## AROUND THE STATE IN MAIN STREET

**Bridgeport** added some new highly successful activities to this year's Coal Miners Heritage Festival including Ballet Folklorico dancers from Fort Worth, a rock crusher tour, Bridgeport Rocks run and bike ride and more. They made \$500 for Main Street façade improvements with their Guitar Hero and Text Message contest — they promise to share the details on this soon.

**Carthage** Main Street partnered with the Carthage Book Club to publish a walking map of historic Main Street and highlighting the projects of the book club's 100-year existence. The map was unveiled at the book club's 100-year celebration held in the new Senator Margie Neal Park. The map has been widely distributed in the city as well as to travel information centers.

**Grand Saline** Main Street conducted 134 retail shopping surveys at the high-school football game in September. To get people to par-

ticipate, they offered a ticket good for a \$50 cash drawing at half-time if they would answer three questions! The purpose was to gather information on the shopping habits and opinions of local shoppers. They decided the largest local gatherings were at the football games so they decided to do the surveys there. The Main Street Program will use the information to guide retail recruitment for the district and will share information with the local merchants in an upcoming better business seminar.

Resulting from the **Huntsville** Main Street's summer film festival, more than \$2,400 was cleared to go into the sign grant fund.

The seventh grade Texas history students in **Kilgore** took on a project downtown. They broke into groups to research and write essays on their favorite buildings. Beginning in October, the newspaper featured ten of the essays (two per week) with each students picture.

American Heritage Railways began operation of the Texas State Railroad in September. American Heritage owns and operates the Durango and Silverton narrow gauge railroad in Colorado and this operation is expected to triple the tourists around **Palestine** and Rusk to around 180,000 within 18 months.

In August, the Guadalupe Cemetery became the third in **Pharr** with a Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) Designation from the state. The other two are El Capote and Eli Jackson. That makes Pharr the city with the most HTC designations in the County of Hidalgo. Among a total of 154 cemetery records, only eight have this designation in the county.

**Tyler's** annual Festival on the Square in September brought a fantastic net profit of around \$12,000 utilizing 1,000+ volunteer hours donated by board and community members. The Festival After Hours Texas Music Concert brought in a record-breaking crowd of 2,500 for the evening.

## EVENTS

### Nov. 3, Bridgeport

The Bridgeport Art Walk will include a display of local art in downtown businesses from 1:30–6 p.m. This will be a complement to the Off 380 production at the Bridgeport State downtown.

### Nov. 9–10, Waxahachie

WWII re-enactment weekend will take place in historic downtown. Downtown will be transformed into the town of Nancy, France circa 1940s. There will be the Allied and German camps, USO shows, a battle and a victory dance. Visitors are invited to dress in clothing of the period and interact with the participants.

### Nov. 10, Henderson

The Heritage Syrup Festival includes old time mule-driven syrup making on the depot museum grounds along with folk artist demonstrations and musical entertainment. Enjoy hay rides to the national register historic downtown where there will be arts and crafts, cloggers, square dancers, antique and classic cars, bluegrass and gospel music, petting zoo and childrens activities. Take in a performance presented by the Henderson Civic Theatre in the restored Opera House.

### Nov. 10, Nacogdoches

22nd Annual Downtown Art Walk. Join with local galleries to celebrate



artists from around the world. Hours are 6–9 p.m. A list of participating galleries is available at the Visitors Center, 200 E. Main St. Downtown. Call 936/564-2066.

#### **Nov. 14, Palestine**

Jon Schallert, nationally renowned business expert who teaches communities how to turn themselves into a destination, will be presenting his Destination Business seminar from 8 a.m.–2 p.m. The price is a great bargain at \$70. For more information on Jon Schallert, see [www.jonschallert.com/](http://www.jonschallert.com/). To register, contact Neely Plumb in Palestine at 903/731-8442 or email [nplumb@palestine-tx.org](mailto:nplumb@palestine-tx.org).

#### **November 17–18, Brenham**

Historic Homes Tour and Trunk Show. Tour four historic homes and shop for holiday gifts. Admission is \$7 and is good for both days. Call 1-888-BREHAM or see [www.mansion-brenham.com/](http://www.mansion-brenham.com/)

#### **Nov. 23–25, Waxahachie**

Victorian Christmas festival and Candlelight Home Tours begin. See vendors in period dress around the courthouse square, live entertainment, pictures with Santa and other fun activities.

#### **Nov. 23–25, McKinney**

Dickens of a Christmas is an old-fashioned, Victorian Christmas atmosphere with horse drawn carriages, traveling carolers, visits with Santa Claus, a tree lighting ceremony and a chance for holiday shopping in over 100 boutiques, art galleries, apparel stores, gift stores and antique stores.

#### **Nov. 27, Lufkin**

Annual Christmas parade and courthouse holiday lighting will attract more than 3000 people to downtown. Santa will greet everyone and pictures will be taken.

#### **Nov. 29, Levelland**

The second annual Ladies Night Out will be from 6–9 p.m. and will include horse drawn carriages downtown transporting ladies from one shopping opportunity to the next. Local residents dressed in Charles Dickens costumes will be the doormen for the evening. Local business customer lists will help form the invitation lists. The focus is for ladies to come and make out their Christmas wish lists.

#### **Nov. 30–Dec. 1, Brenham**

Holiday Homecoming festivities in downtown will include the Kristkindl Market, Santa's Stroll, Christmas Through the Years Parade of Lights, Jingle Bell Fun Run and the Gingerbread Auction. See [www.downtownbrenham.com/holiday.html](http://www.downtownbrenham.com/holiday.html)

#### **Nov. 30–Dec. 1, Gonzales**

The Winterfest Lighted Christmas Parade on the evening of Nov. 30 will include lighted floats, cars, bicycles, horses and Santa. After the parade, everyone will gather around the downtown Christmas tree and the Christmas lights on the square will be officially turned on. Businesses will be open late for shoppers. On Dec. 1, there will be an arts and crafts show, breakfast with Santa, historic homes tour and a history show "Gonzales: the Beginning."

#### **Nov. 30, Dec. 1–2, 7–9, Paris**

Holiday in Paris "Tis the Season" will include music, vintage scenes, carriage rides, miniature horse cart rides for the children, art walk, Garden Club tour of homes, carolers and hand bell choirs, Christmas village, tastes and smells of Christmas and more. Cas Haley, runner up in America's Got Talent, will perform a free concert during the event (he is from Paris!) The Winder Wonderettes will also be at the Paris Community

Theatre. Contact Bethany Golden at [bethgolden@paristexas.gov](mailto:bethgolden@paristexas.gov) or call 903/784-9293.

## 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](http://actrees.org/site/stories/act_launches_monthly_webcast_series.php#subscribe).

Cultural and Heritage Tourism Alliance Conference  
The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Cultural Heritage Tourism Alliance Conference will take place Nov. 28–Dec. 1 at the **Grand Hyatt** in Seattle, Washington. The field of cultural and heritage tourism continues to grow. But that growth comes with change in the industry and consumer expectations. Join professionals from across North America as they learn, network and discover new opportunities in cultural and heritage tourism. See [www.chtalliance.com/conference.html](http://www.chtalliance.com/conference.html)

## GRANTS

Texas Rural Communities Grant  
Texas Rural Communities, Inc. (TRC) is accepting grant proposals from non-profit community-based

organizations to fund educational programs in rural areas. Educational programs are defined as activities or programs that impart knowledge or skill for any age group.

TRC will award \$15,000 in grants which may be awarded in one grant or a combination of grants. Applicants may propose several funding options or combination of options for consideration by TRC Grant Committee. Applications will be due **Nov. 30, 2007**. For more information, contact Sandra Tenorio at [www.texasrural.org](http://www.texasrural.org) or see the application instructions sent out on the Main Street list serv.

### Interpreting America's Historic Places Grants

Interpreting America's Historic Places implementation and planning grant applications due **Jan. 23, 2008**.

#### Implementation Grants:

[www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/IAHP\\_Implementation.html](http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/IAHP_Implementation.html)

#### Planning Grants:

[www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/IAHP\\_Planning.html](http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/IAHP_Planning.html)

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## 2008 Calendar of Events

- **January 7–9, Austin**  
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, 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 Annual Conference, 2008 theme: Explore the Sights and Stories of Texas.
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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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*The State Agency for Historic Preservation*

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