



Main Street! Matters

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

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Spotlight on Waxahachie

(population 25,454)

Standing tall as the mighty anchor in downtown Waxahachie is the Ellis County Courthouse. Built in 1895, and rededicated in 2003 after restoration through the Texas Historic Commission's Courthouse Preservation Program, it is one of the most photographed structures

in the state. Designed by J. Riely Gordon, the courthouse emulates the Romanesque Revival style popular during the latter half of the nineteenth century. A tour of this stately courthouse will be offered during the Texas Main Street Annual Meeting on February 17.



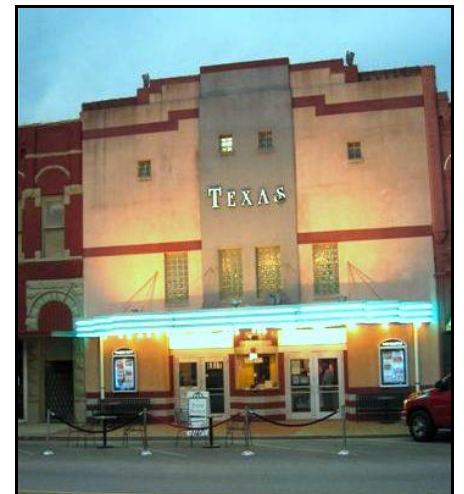
Restored Ellis County Courthouse, one of the most photographed structures in Texas

Waxahachie after Dark

Like many places, it seems that for years downtown Waxahachie rolled up the streets at five o'clock. All of that is changing now. Several venues are offering evening entertainment to suit any taste and on any given night you can find *something* to do downtown.

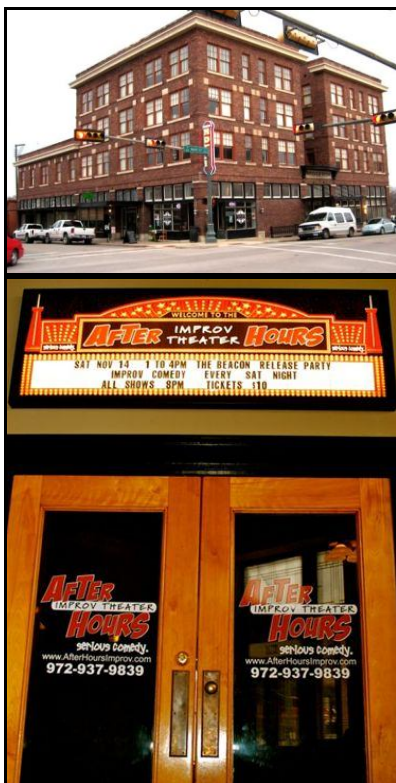
Last year the City of Waxahachie purchased the Texas Theater to prevent it from being turned into office space. Requests for proposals were issued to lease the building and keep it as an entertainment venue. A proprietor was found and the theater opened in May and has already had a baseball themed film festival (celebrating 100 years of baseball in Waxahachie), two plays—*Pump Boys & Dinettes* and *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* (in conjunction with the Ellis County

Children's Theater), and lots of live music including Michael Martin



The Historic Texas Theater

Murphy, Gary P. Nunn and Ray Wylie Hubbard. Wednesday night is open-mic night and Thursday

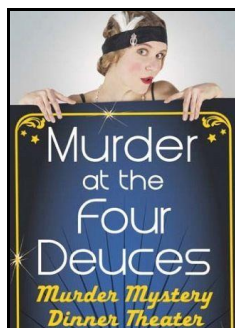


After Hours Improv theater group (bottom) performs in the Historic Rogers Hotel ca 1911 (top).

through Saturday feature live Texas music most weekends. The hopes the City had for the theater are being realized—it is providing entertainment and community access to the citizens—and, it is contributing to the overall revitalization of the downtown. For more details on theater offerings, check out the Texas Theater website at www.texasmusictheater.com.

The Rogers Hotel has recently been purchased and it has undergone an amazing transformation. No longer a hotel, it now houses offices, meeting rooms, retail, and two new entertainment venues. One of the new venues is Zula's Coffee House featuring great specialty coffee drinks and live entertainment. Monday night features the 512 College Tea House pickers. Thursday night is poetry night—students from the local universities as well as the general public come to read and listen to poetry. They have live music playing in the coffee house on some weekends and free WiFi all the time—and did I mention the **great** coffee?

Another wonderful entertainment addition to the Rogers (now 100 NoCo) is the *After Hours Improv (AHI) Theater*. There is live stand-up comedy on Friday nights and improvisational comedy on Saturday nights. The improv show is very interactive and audience driven. Audience members write suggestions on cards before the show and that is what the group uses as a basis for the skits. They also solicit input from the audience during the performance. It's great fun and very en-



tertaining. Managers attending training in Waxahachie in February will be treated to a special Thursday night performance of *After Hours Improv* courtesy of Citizens National Bank and the Waxahachie Downtown Merchants Association. Plan to have a great time!

The AHI group hosted its first interactive murder mystery dinner theater in December. They originally planned it for once a month but it has been so popular they had to increase it to two times a month—and they are still selling out! February's dates for *Murder at the Four Deuces* are the 12th and 19th. Attendees to the February conference should plan on staying through Friday night to experience a night of murder in the 1920s. But make your reservations early if you want to take part—it looks like another full show. Tickets and more information can be found at www.afterhoursimprov.com.

Another great venue in downtown Waxahachie is the College Street Pub. Patterned after a traditional English pub, it has served as the main source of downtown entertainment since 2003, which allowed them to build an ardent and loyal following. They have live music most Wednesday nights and some other nights as well. A local favorite band that performs is the Baithouse Stompers. Experience the authentic taste of English food and top it off with a selection from the full service bar or extensive beer selection. The pub also boasts three flat screen televisions that show all sports all the time and they organize and sponsor the annual Mardi Gras event in downtown. See the web site for pub food and music highlights and Mardi Gras updates at www.collegestreetpub.com.

Visitors to downtown Waxahachie can now enjoy shopping, dining,



College Street Restaurant and English Pub

and beautiful scenery all day long—and stick around for an array of entertainment in the evening.

Waxahachie is excited about hosting the Main Street managers for the annual meeting February 17–19, 2010. We have lots of new things to show you, so even if you've been here before, you won't be disappointed. See you soon!

Thanks to Anita Williamson, manager of the Waxahachie Main Street Program, for providing this article.

NEWS

Bastrop Named Distinctive Destination by National Trust

Since 2000, the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Dozen Distinctive Destination program has recognized cities and towns that offer an authentic visitor experience by combining dynamic downtowns, cultural diversity, attractive architecture, cultural landscapes and a strong commitment to historic preservation, sustainability and revitalization. In each community, residents have joined together and taken action to protect their town's character.

Texas is very proud to have Bastrop on this prestigious list for 2010! An official announcement was made at the historic Bastrop Opera House on Tuesday, Feb. 3. The other ele-

ven cities keeping good company with Bastrop on the list are:

Cedar Falls, Iowa;
St. Louis, Missouri;
Marquette, Michigan;
Fort Collins, Colorado;
Provincetown, Massachusetts;
Simsbury, Connecticut;
Rockland, Maine
Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania;
Huntsville, Alabama;
The Crooked Road: Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, Virginia; and, Sitka, Alaska

Be sure to go to www.preservationnation.org/travel-and-sites/travel/dozen-distinctive-destinations/ and vote for your fan favorite from the list of twelve distinctive destinations! We won't tell you which to vote for, but...

First Lady, Anita Perry, to Welcome New Main Street Cities

Sponsored by the Independent Bankers Association of Texas, each year, the First Lady of Texas helps kick off new Texas Main Street Programs in grand style. This year Wills Point enters as a new city in the Texas Main Street Program. Eagle Pass enters as a re-certified city (having been in the program for a short one year back in 1981.) Adding to the excitement this year, we also celebrate two milestone anniversaries with Mrs. Perry in Corsicana (25 years in Texas Main Street) and Denton (20 years in Texas Main Street.) We hope that as many of your managers as possible who are near any of these locations will come support your fellow Main Street cities. The schedule is:

Wed. Feb. 10:
10:30–11:45 a.m., **Eagle Pass** (Maverick Co. Courthouse, 501 Main St.)

2–3:15 p.m., **Corsicana** (Palace Theater, 110 West 6th St.)

Thurs. Feb. 11:
10:30–11:45 a.m., **Denton** (Campus Theater, 214 West Hickory)

1–2:15 p.m., **Wills Point** (First Baptist Church, 125 E. James)

Receptions will follow each of the ceremonies. Come join in the celebrations!

Urban Design Expert, Noré Winter to speak in Waxahachie

The Texas Main Street Program and Preserve America are pleased to bring **Noré Winter**, principal of the nationally acclaimed Winter and Company

www.winterandcompany.net/home.html of Boulder, Colorado, to Texas to lead a preservation seminar that is open to anyone with an interest in downtown revitalization and historic preservation. This free, full-day seminar will be held in Waxahachie on February 18, 2010. The seminar will be of interest to city management, planners, architects, community volunteers, preservation staff and volunteers, elected officials, chambers of commerce and economic development organizations.

Mr. Winter is well known across the country for his expertise in design, preservation, sustainability and community livability. The seminar will cover a variety of topic areas under two main segments: *Basic Principles of Design on Main Street* (morning) and *Current Planning Issues on Main Street* (afternoon). The seminar will be held at the Texas

Theater in downtown Waxahachie, 110 West Main Street, Waxahachie, TX 75165-3710.

To register, please fill out the registration form at www.thc.state.tx.us/mainstreet/mswork.shtml

AROUND THE STATE

Del Rio

The groundbreaking of the FBI regional headquarters in downtown Del Rio will serve Del Rio's federal courthouse also in downtown. The \$2MM project will bolster downtown's role as a government hub in Del Rio.

Mount Vernon

The City of Mount Vernon is partnering with Brookshire's Grocery Store to offer a plastics recycling bin downtown.

EVENTS

Please remember if you want one of your Main Street events posted here, email jill.robinson@thc.state.tx.us at least three weeks ahead of the month in which you want the posting.

Feb. 12–14, Kerrville

The Kerrville Arts and Cultural Center's Chocolate Fantasy weekend includes an elegant dinner, live music, dancing and auction on Feb. 12. On Sunday, Feb. 14, there will be a buffet of decadent chocolate delights, chocolate recipe contest, and a silent auction. Proceeds go to the Kerr Arts and Cultural Center in historic downtown. Call 830/895-2911 or see www.kackerrville.com/chocolatefantasy.html

Feb. 13, Waxahachie

Join in the fun of the Mardi Gras on the Square. Enjoy themed floats,

Cajun music, food and fun. Downtown Waxahachie. See www.collegestreetpub.com/pub%20website_007.htm

Feb. 22, McKinney

It's going to be hearts and hounds on Valentine's Day at the Art Institute of McKinney's annual Krewe of Barkus parade Sunday, February 14th. This year's theme is "Barkus Does Romance." Costume prizes will be awarded in several categories. For more information, see www.artinstituteofmckinney.com/Artistic%20Krewe%20of%20Barkus.htm

March 27-28, Mineola

Mineola Main Street is taking reservations for its popular railroad tour and wine tasting, with three Amtrak cars set aside for partygoers on the March 27-28 road trip. The reservation deadline for the Mineola Main Street/Amtrak Wine Festival is Feb. 26. Tickets cost \$100 per person, which includes a round-trip ride from Mi-

neola to Fort Worth and back to Mineola on Amtrak's Texas Eagle, food and tastings of Texas wines. Profits from the rolling wine festival benefit community projects in Mineola, which is about 85 miles east of Dallas. Call 903/569-6983 or see www.mineola.com/main-street.html

CONFERENCES/ WORKSHOPS

League of Historic American Theaters Convention

The national convention of the League of Historic American Theaters is coming to San Antonio July, 14-17, 2010. The first day of the conference is a special workshop for planning a theatre project titled: Historic Theatre Renovation: A Framework for Planning Successful Projects. More conference information can be found at www.lhat.org.

NOMINATIONS/AWARDS

National Trust Preservation Award Nominations

Each year the National Trust for Historic Preservation celebrates the best of preservation by presenting National Preservation Awards to individuals and organizations whose contributions demonstrate excellence in historic preservation.

We invite you to nominate a deserving individual, organization, agency, or project for a National Preservation Award. The postmark deadline for all award nominations, including the Trustees' Awards, National Trust/Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Award, National Trust/HUD Secretary's Award, the Peter H. Brink Award for Individual Achievement, and National Preservation Honor Awards, is March 1, 2010. See the list of 2009 awards at www.preservationnation.org/take-action/awards/2009-national-preservation-awards/

2010 Calendar of Events

- **Feb. 17-19, Waxahachie, Texas**
Preserve America Workshop (one day, Feb. 18) combined with Main Street Annual Meeting
 - **Apr. 22-24, Houston, Texas**
Texas Historical Commission 2010 Annual Historic Preservation Conference, see www.thc.state.tx.us
 - **May 2-5, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**
National Main Street Conference, see www.preservationnation.org/main-street
 - **Oct. 26-30, Austin, Texas**
National Preservation Conference, see www.preservationnation.org
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Web Sites of Interest

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: www.achp.gov
African American Heritage Preservation Foundation: www.aahpfdn.org
(The) Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation: www.ahlp.org
American Institute of Architects: www.aia.org
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.tshaonline.org/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
National Main Street Center: www.preservationnation.org/main-street
National Park Service: www.nps.gov
National Trust for Historic Preservation: www.preservationnation.org
Texas Department of Rural Affairs: www.tdra.state.tx.us
Preservation Easement Trust: www.preservationeasement.org
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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real places telling real stories