

Inside Main Street

News and information on Bastrop's Main Street Program June 23, 2010

'Third of July' festivities slated

Bastrop goes full dress red, white and blue the first weekend each July to mark Independence Day—"The Fourth of July"—and this year's celebration on July 3 continues that enthusiastic tradition.

Commemorating the 234th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, the festivities begin with the Saturday morning Pet and Pal Parade on Main Street and culminate that evening with the annual patriotic music festival and fireworks display at Fisherman's Park.

Pet and Pal Parade

Saturday morning is all about patriotic pets (and human friends)...dressed up in the Independence Day finery and making their way up Main Street for the fifth annual Pet and Pal Parade.

Produced by the Downtown Business Alliance, the event is free and open to all. Registration is required and will begin at the Bastrop County Courthouse gazebo at 8:30 a.m. Motorized vehicles will not be allowed in the parade, but pals can pedal a bike or tricycle and pull wagons. All dogs must be on leashes and in the control of their owners. Pals are responsible for cleaning up after pets. [Entry forms may be obtained online at www.bastropdba.org/pets.html.]

Judging will occur between 9:30 and 10 a.m. in nine categories: best trick, most patriotic pet, most patriotic pal, most creative pet, most creative pal, best costume pet, best costume pal, most unusual pet and cutest pet and pal "couple".

At 10:30 a.m., the parade will be off and running, trotting, crawling, rolling and—in the case of "Odo", J.J. Jackson's huge tortoise—creeping slowly up Main Street to the Opera House. During the parade, judges will shift their attention to identifying two additional categories: the "best vehicle" and "best family unit." Once at the Opera House, pets, pals and spectators alike will find refreshments and music, and judges will announce prize winners.

This year's event is sponsored by Bastrop's Sonic Drive-In with additional support by AT&T, the First National Bank of Bastrop, Frontier Bank and the Bastrop Main Street Program.

Patriotic Festival

As many as 3,000 people are expected to convene at Fisherman's Park for the Chamber of Commerce's Annual Patriotic Festival, a tradition of more than 25 years' standing. Food booths, snow cones, and other concessions will open at 6 p.m.—also the kick-off time for activities and games for children and families and for performances by the Highway 304 Band, the Bastrop Community Orchestra and newly formed Bastrop Community Chorus and Band.

Speakers will include Mayor Terry Orr, County Judge Ronnie McDonald, Congressman Lloyd Doggett and a representative of Soldiers' Angels, a national nonprofit providing aid to members of the U.S. armed services, veterans and their families. At 8 p.m., the Austin Symphonic Band takes to the stage with patriotic music and will continue to provide the musical accent throughout the fireworks display at dark.

Admission to this event is free to the public and, according to Chamber CEO Susan Wendel, would not be possible without the generous support of event sponsors underwriting event costs and the many volunteers.

Sponsors enlisted so far include (platinum sponsors) Bluebonnet Electric Co-Op, H-E-B and Soldiers' Angels; (gold sponsors) Aqua Water Supply, Bastrop Lost Pines Nursing and Rehab Center, Classic Bank, First National Bank and Greater Texas Federal Credit Union. Silver sponsors include Frontier Bank of Texas, Insurance Network of Texas, K. Friese & Associates and LCRA Lost Pines Power Project; bronze sponsors are the Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort and Spa, Bastrop County Precinct 1 Commissioner William M. Piña, Bastrop Lawn Care, Roscoe State Bank, Schlotzsky's/Cinnabon, Smithville Regional Hospital and Trust Texas Bank. In-kind sponsors include the Bastrop Community Chorus and Orchestra, Highway 304 Band, G&C Printing, Pine Forest Golf Club, Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort and Spa, Wright Distributing, Guardian EMS and the City of Bastrop Public Works, Police and Fire Departments.

To offer your support as a sponsor or volunteer, contact the Chamber at 303-0558. Food vendor space is still available and applications can be picked up at the Chamber office. Further information can be found in the May Chamber of Commerce newsletter, available online at www.bastrop.tx.us/chamber.com/virDirEditorAssets/BastropTX/chamberAccess/newsletter/201005.pdf

Way to go, BEDC!

Within days, work on the Chestnut Street Improvement Project will conclude...and the Bastrop Main Street Program will host a July 17 ribbon cutting to celebrate this BEDC project and to unveil the 19 historic medallions embedded in new sidewalks along Chestnut.

While the work—new curbing and sidewalk surfaces with inset medallions, period lighting—significantly improves the physical appearance of this corridor into Bastrop and the central business district, the work is more than skin deep. It entails a massive upgrading of utility infrastructure, an upgrade needed to support revitalization and further commercial development along this thoroughfare—running from TX 95 on the east to TX 71 on the west.

The celebration is a public event and will begin at 9 a.m. on July 17, under the trees on the southeast corner of Chestnut and Water Streets. Following brief presentations—on the project's scope, funding and role in anchoring economic development and on the historic medallions newly inset in the sidewalks—the ribbon will be snipped and nearby historic medallions will be unveiled. Attendees will be given a brochure describing the historical figure or event depicted on each medallion along Chestnut Street and may take a walking tour at their leisure. Participants also will be invited to jump aboard shuttle buses for the short run to the Deep in the Heart Art Foundry, 405 S. Jackson Street in the BEDC Industrial Park, where the medallions were cast. Once there, medallion designer and foundry owner/operator Clint Howard will host an open house showcasing the foundry's newly expanded facilities and gallery.

He and his staff will also conduct tours to explain how bronze works are made. The Foundry's Open House is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on July 17th. Shuttle service will be available to return attendees to the ribbon-cutting site.

The Chestnut Street Improvement Project, completed at a cost of \$800,000, was entirely funded by BEDC through the one-half cent sales tax dedicated to local economic development as authorized by voters in 1995. BEDC Executive Director Joe Newman noted the project supports revitalization of the central business district, creates a pedestrian friendly pathway from the new convention center site to downtown and affords an excellent springboard for further private investment along Chestnut, investment that will strengthen the Bastrop economy and help relieve residential property taxation. "It's a real plus for citizens in terms of return on investment: more than 70 percent of BEDC's sales tax revenues are generated on goods and services sold to persons who are not otherwise Bastrop taxpayers and the project—undertaken at a time when the economy had driven down the cost of construction—came in at a cost significantly lower than originally anticipated."

Foundry expansion a Bastrop success story

Each of the 41 bronze medallions inset along Chestnut Street represents a full circle for the Deep in the Heart Art Foundry, celebrating its latest expansion with an open house in tandem with the ribbon cutting event.

The foundry was established in 1980, in downtown Bastrop and has since built a national reputation for its creativity and the quality of its work. The foundry moved in 2002 to BEDC's Industrial Park just south of the intersection of TX 71 with TX 95. A growing clientele and a series of large commissions prompted the recently completed expansion. That expansion includes a gallery, sculpture garden and monumental metal facility.

The open house will include a demonstration of bronze casting and will highlight some of the foundry's recent commissions, both small and huge in scale. Smaller works include sculpture and jewelry by prominent metal artists and, of course, the Chestnut Street medallions. For monument works, participants in the Chestnut Street ribbon cutting need only look across the street to the downtown fire station to see one of the foundry's creations, the *In Moments of Valor* tribute to firefighters designed by foundry owner, Clint Howard. Other widely heralded monumental works elsewhere include the 6500-pound *Aggie Ring* on the Texas A&M campus, the 40-foot *Jacob's Dream* bronze at Abilene Christian College and the newly installed bronze *Phantom Warrior* sculpture at Fort Hood. The foundry also produced a fiberglass version of this sculpture that is deployed with the III Corps at their headquarters in Saddam's palace in Iraq. Its introduction last year was a crowd-pleasing entry in the 2010 Lighted Christmas Parade.

For further information about the foundry, bronze casting and photographs of some of the foundry's commissions and projects, visit www.deepintheheart.net.

Business mix continues to grow

The roster of new businesses in the 65-block Main Street Program Area along Main Street and Chestnut from Highway 71 to Texas 95 continues to grow:

- **The Now and Then Gift Shoppe** has moved to 106G Chestnut (The Crossing). For further information, call 321-7111
 - **Best of Bastrop**, at 901 Main, reopened in June after a hiatus for interior refurbishing. The shop will now be open Wednesday-Saturday. Further information on the shop—featuring antiques, collectibles and gifts—is available at 321-4399.
 - **Spin City Wash House is now open on Chestnut Street** – totally renovated with new washers, it is open daily at 1104 Chestnut (the new owner is Neil Jones)
 - **Hula Hoops Soda Shop** just opened on June 19th at 711 Pine Street, adjacent to ElectraFried Chicks and Tommy Gunns. The shop features an old fashioned soda fountain, desserts and will eventually offer a grill/diner menu. For further information, call (512) 332-2944.
-

Bastrop garners travel headlines

The Washington Post

Bastrop's unique "Deep in the Heart of Texas" ethic and historical assets rated star billing in the June 6 *Washington Post* as that publication kicked off a month-long series on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2010 "Distinctive Destinations".

Post writer Zofia Smardz, in a recent field visit with her husband, gathered details on Bastrop's historical heritage, enjoyed a local B&B, chatted with the "locals", savored Bastrop cuisine and took in the Visitor Center's downtown walking tour. What she found was "a shiny little gem of preservation and restoration. Gorgeous Victorian houses, many with a historic connection, line the well-groomed residential streets. Original storefronts...house shops and eateries along Main and Chestnut Street."

A link to this story may be found on the Main Street website:
www.cityofbastrop.org/departments/main_street/in_the_news.html.

The Fort Worth Star-Telegram

The *Post* feature follows close on the heels of a *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* story headlined "Bastrop: A River Runs Through It", a story also triggered by Bastrop's "Distinctive Destination" designation by the National Trust.

The *Star-Telegram* story, by staff writer Karla Uecker, recounts a March visit to savor Bastrop's "small town charm" and focuses more broadly on the many natural attractions of the "Lost Pines" region—from McKinney Roughs to the Colorado River as well as the Bastrop and Buescher State Parks—and area attractions such as the Sherwood Forest Faire near McDade and Paige.

The *Star-Telegram* story is accessible through the Main Street website:
www.cityofbastrop.org/departments/main_street/in_the_news.html

Austin American-Statesman

And, just this past weekend, Austin American Statesman staff writer Helen Anders devoted her travel column to Bastrop, “spitting distance” down the road to Austin. While “spitting” (as in off the Old Iron Bridge) gets its indecorous due, so do Main Street restaurants, local B&Bs, the historic neighborhoods, the soon-to-be-unveiled bronze medallions along Chestnut Street as well as the Lost Pines and the State Park up the hill. The writer takes in McKinney Roughs and the Hyatt Lost Pines Resort and Spa and appears to have put the July 3 Independence Day celebration in Fisherman’s Park on her personal calendar. Check out this latest story at http://www.cityofbastrop.org/departments/main_street/in_the_news.html

Do you think they’ll check in wearing those costumes...

CBS’ long-running mix of zany attire and great prizes—“Let’s Make a Deal”—has become a Bastrop booster as well. On June 14, two contestants, in description defying costumes, won a vacation at the Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort and Spa. The audience responded (entirely) appropriately with oos, ahhs and energetic applause.

Main Street Advisory Board appointments made

The Main Street Advisory Board is now at full strength, following action by City Council June 8 and 22.

Reappointed for two-year terms were current members Debbie Denny, Steve Dewire, Frank Huffman and Dock Jackson. New appointees include Martha Granger, Debbie Moore and Shawn Pletsch.

Both Martha and Shawn serve on the Organization Committee, of which Shawn serves as chair. Martha and Shawn fill positions vacated by Reid Sharp and Dan Hays-Clark who did not seek reappointment at the June 1 completion of their terms. Martha and Shawn’s terms will expire in June of 2012.

Debbie served on the original MSAB when it was established in 2006 but relinquished her position to attend to family responsibilities out of state. She returned to Bastrop in 2008 and immediately rejoined the Design Committee. Debbie fills the seat vacated by Tim Shuminsky, who resigned earlier this spring, and completes the one year remaining in that term.

Other members of the MSAB are Jane Hunt and Dick Smith, whose terms expire in June of 2011. *Ex officio* members include Marilyn Whites (Historic Landmark Commission), Christy Kosser (Planning and Zoning Commission), Joe Newman (BEDC), Pat Crawford (BEDC), Susan Wendel (Chamber of Commerce), Kay McAnally (City Council) and Mike Talbot (City Director).

Wood named to Brazos Trail Region board

Nancy Wood, Director of the Bastrop Main Street Program, has been named to the Board of Directors of the Texas Brazos Trail Region for a three-year term. The Texas Brazos Trail Region is an 18-county area of Central Texas and a part of the 10-region Heritage Trails Program of the Texas Historical Commission. The Texas Brazos Trail seeks to promote heritage tourism, historic preservation, and economic development for its partner counties. For more about the region visit www.texasbrazostrail.com.

BEDC launches revamped website

Take a look at www.bastropedc.org: BEDC's redesigned website, culminating months of hard work, launched earlier this month.

The revamped site reflects extensive revisions, graphically and functionally. It offers business representatives researching possible relocation to Bastrop detailed information on the economic vitality and pathways to find potential retail and industrial sites. The homepage pinpoints the location of Bastrop on a Texas map and presents, at first click, a more comprehensive array of topics and information, including the "Bastrop: We're On The Way" video. The previous site required navigation through multiple pages to access comparable information.

The BEDC site was developed in collaboration with World Economic Development Alliance and, according to BEDC executive assistant Angela Ryan, includes links to the largest businesses in the area, aerial photos of industrial sites and better area maps. New features include a photo gallery, document library, geo-mapping and a searchable database of commercial property. The redesign project includes a means of issuing electronic newsletters and updates, a cost effective alternative to printing and mailing hardcopy. Angela notes that the site is evolving, with new information being added almost daily, and welcomes any suggestions for polishing the site. (Contact her at angela@bastropedc.org.)

Sweet...and for a 'great cause'

The Richard Family Bakery, at 1014 Main, will be making its mark—literally—on the Austin grocery store scene.

Cookies bearing the bakery's imprint—along with that of the "Great Cause Coffee and Cookie"—will soon be found on the shelves of H-E-B, Central Market, Sprouts and other central Texas grocery stores. "Great Cause" is a fundraising initiative of Faith Family Services, Inc., a Round Rock based nonprofit that donates a percentage of every sale to community charitable initiatives. Recipients include children's homes, women's shelters, youth clubs and camps, homeless shelters, community projects, family support services and food banks.

According to bakery owner/operator Mark Richard, the cookies will be made with organic, health conscious ingredients and will be sold under the brand names of Pavlos Cookies and Amy's So Good Cookies. Pavlovs Cookies will feature flavors of anise walnut, vanilla nut and chocolate-chocolate chip. Amy's Cookies will feature anise walnut, vanilla almond and chocolate chip. The logo for the Richards Family Bakery will be at the bottom of each label. [All have been taste tested by Nancy and Dick and are certified conclusively to be most excellent!]

In the works...

The Bastrop Main Street Program is driven by its four all-volunteer citizen committees, working in close collaboration with BMSP Director Nancy Wood and meeting monthly or more frequently.

- The Organization Committee has been finalizing nominations for Main Street Advisory Board Members, charged with coordinating the efforts of the four standing committees. The nominations, with MSAB approval, are submitted to the Mayor for consideration; the Mayor in turn advances nominations to City Council for its approval. The Committee also has been planning the July 17 public event to mark the completion of the Chestnut Street Improvement Project. (See story in this newsletter.)
- The Promotions Committee has begun plans for promoting to regional and statewide audiences Bastrop as the place to visit over the activity-rich December 10-12 weekend. Look for further details on the “Lost Pines Christmas” weekend in the July issue of *Inside Main Street*. The Committee is also generating a database of business contacts throughout the 65-block BMSP area.
- The Design Committee continues to explore “wayfinding”, creating and installing signage to point highway travelers into the central business area and, through a combination of street and pedestrian signage, direct them about the area. The Committee will be meeting with an Austin-based vendor about the possibility of developing a comprehensive solution.
- The Economic Restructuring Committee is actively recruiting new committee members, researching business mentoring programs and laying the groundwork for drawing new business and business reinvestment into the Chestnut Street corridor.

Committees welcome community participation in all committee work—either through adding your time, talents and energies to the mix by joining one of the four standing committees (Promotions, Economic Restructuring, Design and Organization) or by attending committee meetings. Please contact Nancy Wood at Mainstreet@cityofbastrop.org if you would like to volunteer or need additional information.

Come on in and take a seat...

Bastrop Main Street Program volunteers and other members of the public are welcome to attend any Committee and Advisory Board meeting in which they have an interest. Holidays and scheduling conflicts among participants may prompt changes in meeting, time and place; please check with Nancy Wood at Mainstreet@cityofbastrop.org for updated information. The calendar thus far includes:

June 30	Organization Committee, noon in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room
July 12	BMSP Advisory Board meeting, 6 p.m., Bastrop Public Library
July 14	Economic Restructuring Committee, 5:15 p.m. in Chamber of Commerce Conference Room
July 15	Design Committee, 5 p.m. in City Hall

July 19 Promotions Committee, 5:30 p.m. in Chamber of Commerce Conference Room
July 28 Organization Committee, noon in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room
August 2 BMSP Advisory Board meeting, 6 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers
August 11 Economic Restructuring Committee, 5:15 p.m. in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room
August 16 Promotions Committee, 5:30 p.m. in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room
August 19 Design Committee, 5 p.m. in City Hall
August 25 Organization Committee, noon in the Chamber of Commerce Conference Room

For information about upcoming community activities, consult the events calendars at www.bastropchamber.com and www.visitbastrop.org. Advance stories on upcoming events also may be posted at <http://bastropadvertiser.com/category/events>.

Inside Main Street

is an electronic newsletter to keep Bastrop Main Street Program participants informed on program activities and to provide news on events, plans and issues affecting the 65-block BMSP area.

Produced monthly (except December), ***Inside Main Street*** is compiled and edited by BMSP volunteer Dick Smith. Feedback and suggestions welcomed! Contact Dick at soyrps@gmail.com or Nancy Wood at Mainstreet@cityofbastrop.org.

Please share this newsletter with others who have an interest in learning how Bastrop's Main Street Program is making a difference. Past newsletters are available online at www.bastroptxmainstreet.com.
