

Main Street Matters

MAY 2017 • A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

PITTSBURG

*Written by Amanda McCellon, Main Street Manager,
Pittsburg Main Street Program*

Located in the piney and hardwood forests of Northeast Texas, Pittsburg is a great place to live, work, start a new business, or get away for a weekend. Located on Hwy 271, one of the busiest highways in East Texas, Pittsburg sits in the geographical center of Northeast Texas.

Designated as a Main Street city in 1986, Pittsburg's charm is evident in its unique shops, the newly

constructed Pilgrim Plaza, and the Prayer Tower with Paccard bells from France that chime on the hour with melodies that can be heard through the historic downtown. The Prayer Tower was dedicated to the city in April 1992. Our Main Street boasts a variety of unique, independently owned shops including men's and women's clothing, an all-natural soap shop, antiques, and gift shops.

When coming into the Main Street District, you are first greeted by Witness Park. The 75-foot tall Prayer Tower, made of Indiana limestone with a Vermont slate roof, features four Paccard bells and a chapel adorned with stained glass that never closes. *(Cont. on page 2)*



Pittsburg's charm can be found in their unique shops downtown and the Prayer Tower in Witness Park. The prayer tower is a 75-foot structure composed of Indiana limestone with a Vermont slate roof. It features four Paccard bells from France and a chapel adorned with stained glass that never closes.

The park features a large, gurgling fountain and a life-sized bronze statue of Jesus washing the disciple Peter's feet. Witness Park is always aflutter with activity—you may see a wedding happening, family pictures being taken, girls dressed for their Quinceañera, or visitors wandering the grounds. Prom day is always fun, when Witness Park becomes the gathering place for the senior class and their dates to come together and take pictures prior to leaving out for the evening—a tradition that has been happening for many years.

Directly across from Witness Park is the newest addition to Main Street: Pilgrim Plaza. This new green space and community gathering area was a private investment by Pilgrim Bank. After building a new location directly behind their old location, they demolished their old (non-historic) building and chose to put in a community space for downtown. The half-acre space includes a small creek with three small waterfalls, a covered pergola, sidewalks, and heavy landscaping. It is all lighted throughout for evening use as well. This plaza has become the centerpiece for many Main Street events, including our inaugural Home for the Holidays event held in November, and the annual Arts & Wine Festival will be growing into the space on May 27. This has also become the place for Movies in the Plaza that our Main Street hosts, and our new Main Street Gym and Market will be hosting Yoga in the Plaza starting this month. It has truly become a gathering place for our community in downtown.

One of the things our Main Street is best known for is our world-famous hotlinks at Pittsburg Hotlinks on “back street.” Made famous in 1918 by Mr. Charlie Hasselback, today the hotlinks of Pittsburg are served much like they were originally, on butcher paper with saltine crackers and a bottle of hot sauce on each table. Pittsburg Hot Links have been described as East Texas caviar. It's not a surprise to see some sort of media here each week doing a story on our famous eatery. In the last month, we have hosted Chet Garner from *The Daytripper*, and most recently *Texas Chronicles: History, Mystery & Adventure* made a pit stop. The Pittsburg Hotlink brand has become a Texas tradition and brings people near and far to our Main Street for lunch and dinner. Now owned by the Warrick family, the business takes up a block of our Main Street. In the last year, the family has taken full advantage of grant programs our Main Street offers. They completed a full exterior façade renovation and started renovations on



The Pittsburg Hotlink Brand has become a Texas Tradition and brings people near and far to our Main Street for lunch and dinner.

the interior of all their buildings as well.

Our Main Street is home to two award-winning museums, the Depot Museum and the Farmstead Museum. The Pittsburg Depot was obtained by the city from the Southern Pacific Railroad and now houses a fascinating array of antiques and artifacts. The on-site Caddo Indians are the focus of an archeology exhibit. Other exhibit areas feature a working telegraph station, an 1894 telephone switchboard, a printing press, Model T Ford, and a 1909 surrey. In one building are a firetruck, a steam engine, and a small art gallery. The feed store that launched Pilgrim's Pride, the largest chicken producer in the world once headquartered in Pittsburg, sits directly off Main Street. Sitting empty for quite some time, but retaining its original structure, this building is currently under renovation to become a brewpub and Texas dancehall. The new owners are carefully restoring the feed store to its original splendor, giving Main Street one more historical place for the community and visitors alike to enjoy.

The Ezekiel Airship is the real crowd pleaser in the Depot Museum. Reverend Burrell Cannon, a part-time preacher and inventor, built the flying machine in 1902. He based his design on descriptions from the Book of Ezekiel in the Bible. A test flight was reported in 1902, before the Wright Brothers were airborne. The original craft was destroyed while being transported to St. Louis for the 1904 World's Fair. The full-size replica that is housed at the Depot Museum was built by the Pittsburg Optimist Club in the 1980s.

Our Main Street takes bragging rights to the largest Coca Cola mural in the state of Texas. Restored in 2014, it takes up an entire wall on Mount Pleasant

Street directly in the center of downtown. We also have a recently restored Dr Pepper mural.

On January 16, 2014, Main Street suffered a severe loss when a fire gutted the interior of two buildings. Both historic buildings had structural and façade repair work done with the help of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. However, since then, the buildings have been empty shells. By the end of 2016, these buildings were bought and received a \$300,000+ renovation for the grand opening of the Main Street Gym & Market, our newest addition to Main Street. The gym is a 24-hour facility with showers, group classes, and a staffed front desk. The market has a full



Murals (top left and right) in downtown Pittsburg have been recently restored. Pittsburg is known for the largest Coca Cola mural in the state of Texas. After a 2014 fire, renovations were made and Main Street Gym & Market (bottom) opened its doors late in 2016.

coffee bar with a smoothie and sandwich/salad menu using only fresh, simple, and healthy ingredients.

Downtown Pittsburg is a National Register Commercial Historic District. The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. The turn-of-the-century buildings, historical homes and the churches with breathtaking stained glass windows make a visit downtown a memorable trip. Tracing your East Texas ancestors is easy in the large genealogical section of the public library and the friendly Camp County Court House. Historic graveyards abound in the area, many with marked graves dating back to the 1850's. Camp County has over 25 historic markers within its boundaries.



Pittsburg offers various festivals and events downtown and around Pilgrim Plaza. The Art & Wine Festival (top) and Movies in the Plaza (bottom) are just some of the many events visitors can enjoy.

The Pitts family cemetery, located just west of downtown on Quitman Street, sits at the very end of the Main Street district and was established by William Harrison Pitts, founder of Pittsburg. According to family history, the earliest burial on this site was in 1862 of Sarah Richardson Harvey Pitts, the third wife of WH Pitts and mother of their daughter Ella. Confederate Cpl. Joseph H. Pitts was buried here in 1863. Others interred here include WH Pitts' mother, Drucilla Neal Pitts, and five of his eight siblings. These members of the large Pitts family left their Georgia plantations and reestablished their households here on the Texas frontier in the mid-19th century. They shaped early Camp County and saw Pittsburg grow into a thriving village. The cemetery remains a chronicle of early Camp County history and culture. Pitts Cemetery is now preserved as a historical site and burials are no longer permitted.

Pittsburg Main Street offers festivals throughout the year for visitors to enjoy. The Art & Wine Festival takes place annually on Memorial Day weekend and offers live music, wineries, local artisans, and food vendors downtown around Pilgrim Plaza. This year on May 27, Main Street will hold its fifth annual Art & Wine. This serves as Main Street's main fundraiser for the year and helps pay for projects. Downtown Pittsburg Outdoor Market is a series of open-air markets in historic downtown. With a country fair flavor, the markets provide a venue for individuals to market goods and products to consumers in a community friendly environment. Four markets are held per year, each with its own unique theme. Home for the Holidays happens Thanksgiving weekend for all the family to enjoy. An ice skating rink, open air market, movies in the plaza, and other activities take place Friday through Sunday downtown.

CLEANING FABRIC AWNINGS

Article written by Sarah Blankenship, Project Design Assistant, Texas Main Street Program

Awnings or canopies are regularly added to buildings in design renderings for downtown structures. Often, the question comes up of which awning/canopy style is the best option for the building. The answer depends on a few factors. The most historically correct option would

be to consult historic photographs and see what the building once had; then, replicate the details. However, historical replication is not the only option, and budget is often a factor. Fabric awnings can provide a pop of color to tie in to the current business. They are also less expensive than metal and wood canopies. The main problem with fabric awnings is that they do not last as long as their metal or wood counterparts because the material itself is not as durable. However, their lifespan can be extended if they are maintained regularly. This article focuses on the importance of cleaning your fabric awnings and how to do it.

Why clean the awnings?

- The most obvious answer: A dirty awning isn't attractive or inviting for customers.
- Replacing the awning will be much more expensive than cleaning it.
- Not cleaning causes your awning to weaken and age prematurely. The environment and vehicles cause deposits that will make awnings look dirty and old. Even more problematic, if these deposits (auto exhaust, air pollution, mold, mildew, bird droppings) are left on the awning for extended amounts of time, they can cause deterioration of the awning particularly in the threads and seams.
- Regular cleaning will keep stains from becoming permanent.

How often should you clean?

- Once a month, an awning should be hosed off with clean water to get some of the pollutants off. However, hose washing will not be able to get the pollutants that are already embedded into the surface of the fabric.
- Don't consider rain (when you are lucky enough to get it) to count as a cleaning. Rain water can have an acidic effect on the fabric, trapping the dirt and grime.
- A brush and mild soap (Ivory, Dreft, Woolite) solution cleaning is recommended quarterly or at the very minimum, two times annually. The owners can do this themselves or contract a company.
- Every two to three years, a professional

cleaning is recommended. This could involve cleaning the awning in place, or removing the fabric and having it sent to the company for cleaning and water repellent solution.

How should you clean?

- The first thing to do is check the manufacturer's specifications. If there is a warranty on the awning, using the wrong cleaning method or solution can void the warranty. There can also be methods/solutions that work best with different materials.
- For example, bleach (helpful in ridding mold/mildew) is recommended on the Sunbrella material, but may fade non-Sunbrella materials. For Sunbrella, bleach is recommended in a diluted mixture of one cup bleach, one-fourth cup mild detergent, and one gallon of water. Thoroughly washing out all bleach is important, especially to avoid damage of non-Sunbrella components. Sunbrella's full cleaning procedures can be found here: <https://www.sunbrella.com/en-us/how-to-clean/clean-sunbrella-shade-fabrics>.



(Top left) Historical photo from Sherman, Texas, showing fabric-retractable awnings. (Top right) This building has been heavily modified over the years. The deep recess and darkly tinted windows made the business difficult to see and not very inviting to pedestrians. (Bottom left) The pink awning (as well as the pink bench and bike) addition in 2015 helped to brighten both the building and business. (Bottom right) In 2017, the awnings show significant dirt and a dreary appearance for the building. Cleaning the awnings would significantly improve the overall appearance.

- Mild cleaners such as Ivory, Dreft, and Woolite are recommended.
- Do not use harsh detergents because they can cause color blending in some fabrics.
- There are some companies that advise never using chlorine products on the awning because it will cause it to rot or deteriorate. However, checking with the manufacturer is important since some materials, such as Sunbrella, can withstand chlorine.
- The following products are considered too harsh and not recommended: janitorial cleaners, floor cleaners, bathroom cleaners, and cleaner degreasers. Cleaners with butyl cellulose will cause the materials to become brittle and shorten the life span because it will strip essential oils that keep them flexible.
- Power washing is not recommended. The water pressure is higher than an awning is designed to withstand, causing scarring and stretching (and can nullify a warranty).
- For the underside of the awning, periodically brushing it with a clean household broom is recommended.



Colorful awnings in Farmersville tie into the business identity colors. Shade is provided for both the first and second floor.

In general, the following steps are recommended when cleaning an awning:

1. Brush off loose dirt.
2. Hose down with plain water.
3. Prepare a cleaning solution of water and mild soap such as Ivory Snow, Dreft, or Woolite. Remember no detergents.
4. Use a soft bristle brush to clean with extension pole if needed. Work from the bottom up. Gently scrub in a circular motion, creating suds.
5. Wash no more than 8 square feet at a time to avoid drying of the solution.
6. Rinse thoroughly until all soap residue is removed.
7. Air dry.
 - If the mild soaps do not work, there are other products out there that are used by many companies. We are not endorsing these companies, but simply providing them as a reference: <http://awningcleaning.com/products.htm>, <https://cleancanvas.com/>
 - Always spot test in an inconspicuous area before using any product on awnings.
 - Before cleaning, check the stitched seams to see if they can withstand cleaning.
 - Some fabrics recommend a fabric guard after

cleaning. Again, check the manufacturer’s recommendation for the most appropriate finish.

How long should awning fabric last?

The life-span of the fabric can vary. In extremely harsh environments an awning may only last 5-7 years. In a more favorable environment the same awning may last 10-15 years.

The National Park Service Preservation Brief #44: provides an in-depth article on the history of awnings as well as documented successful cleaning methods - “The Use of Awnings on Historic Buildings, Repair, Replacement and New Design” - <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/44-awnings.htm>

SPECIAL VOLUNTEERS

We continue to spotlight in each edition of *Main Street Matters* those volunteers whose contributions and dedication are important to the success of local programs. If you would like to honor a special volunteer with a spotlight, please send a short narrative and image to sarah.marshall@thc.texas.gov.

Emily Andrus, Carthage Main Street Program

Taking an active role in her community has always been a big part of Emily Andrus' life. Emily grew up attending Carthage Main Street events such as Breakfast with Santa thanks to her parents Ken and Belinda Andrus. That involvement in her community sparked a love for volunteerism and all things Main Street.

As a freshman at Carthage High School, Emily tried out for and made the Bulldog Belles Drill Team. The Bulldog Belles are very involved with Carthage Main Street and help each year with events and activities, such as Breakfast with Santa, The Mom & Me Quilts & Tea Party, Halloween on the Square, the Halloween costume contest, and the Texas Country Music Hall of Fame Celebration weekend. They also perform in the Christmas parade, Potlatch, and Christmas events downtown.

At the end of Emily's junior year in high school, Carthage Main Street announced the formation of the Carthage Main Street Youth Advisory Council (YAC). Emily was voted YAC chair at the first

meeting and has not stopped since. She spent many hours last summer researching events and projects for YAC. At their planning meeting, Emily proposed a downtown Homecoming Street Dance to YAC, which was unanimously approved by them as well as by the Carthage Main Street Advisory Council.

With Emily's leadership, all members of YAC took an active role in this event, by selling sponsorships, and being involved in the planning. YAC members started listening to up-and-coming bands, and Emily emailed them to get pricing.

The YAC members finally decided on the band Shotgun Rider—a band from Austin that made a name for themselves with the college crowd. Emily then enlisted the help of a local band to open the show, having them learn 20 new songs so that the YAC members could lead the crowd in line dancing. Emily even held a practice day the Saturday before the show to go over the line dances. Emily also enlisted the help of the CHS TV instructor to shoot a commercial downtown to be shown on the big screen at the homecoming football game the night before the event.

The street dance was a success, and YAC was off to a great start, thanks in large part to Emily's leadership. The end of 2016 was exciting for the students in YAC as the Carthage Bulldogs football team went all the way to state and a state championship. Playing up until Christmas kept the YAC students busy with their other activities.



(Left) YAC members help clean and rake Anderson Park in downtown Carthage. Left to right: Chaitali Patel, Emily Pyle, and Emily Andrus. (Middle) YAC members help with renovations to the Esquire Theater in downtown Carthage. (Right) Members of the Carthage Main Street YAC shoot their commercial in downtown Carthage. Left to right: Chaitali Patel, Natalie Twomey, Payton Travis, Emily Andrus, Peyton Jones, and Drew Jackson.

2017 has seen YAC involved in many activities, all of which Emily has been passionate about. YAC helped with the renovations of the Esquire Theater downtown, painting and cleaning, helped rake and clean the park downtown, and worked the grand re-opening of the Country Music Hayride at the Esquire Theater. Emily worked many more hours in the Carthage Main Street office (including her entire Spring Break) helping get the decorations ready for the Mom & Me Quilts and Tea Party, as well as getting the application packets ready for YAC for the coming year.

As a final project for the year, Emily is working on a proposal to purchase, build, and maintain a life-sized chess board in Anderson Park in the downtown Carthage square. This may be a project that has to carry

over to the next school year, but all of her research and planning will be the catalyst to get it done.

Emily brings constant ideas and enthusiasm, continues to work many hours in the Carthage Main Street office (above and way beyond the requirements set forth for YAC) and led the Carthage Main Street Youth Advisory Council through a successful first year. In February, at the Panola County Chamber of Commerce annual banquet, Emily was awarded the Carthage Main Street Shining Star Award for outstanding and dedicated contributions furthering the goals of the Carthage Main Street Organization. This was the first time a teenager received this honor.

In May, Emily will graduate from Carthage High School, and in August will be leaving Carthage for Texas A&M University to pursue a career in nursing. However, in June, July, and most of August, you will find Emily at the Carthage Main Street office. She will be spending most of her summer there, ever the shining star!

IN THE NEWS



The Texas Main Street Program was honored to receive the Innovation on Main Street Award from the National Main Street Center for its 2016 Celebrate Main Street Sweepstakes project. The national award was sponsored by Edward D. Jones Co., and presented at the national Main Street Now conference in Pittsburgh, Pa. on May 3. Debra Drescher and Sarah Marshall accepted the award from Patrice Frey, President/CEO of the National Main Street Center. Also present were our partners in the effort who provided travel packages: Kyle Kramm (Seguin); Sarah O'Brien (for the Marshall package); Donna Dow (Denison); and Julie Glover (Denton). You can enter the 2017 contest to win a trip to Harlingen throughout May through the Texas Historical Commission website or Facebook page. Harlingen Main Street. Contest sign-up runs the month of May and will be featured on THC Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

TEXAS FIRST LADY CECILIA ABBOTT VISITS 2017 MAIN STREET CITIES

Texas First Lady Cecilia Abbott continued the grand tradition of the Texas Main Street Program's First Lady's Tour, and welcomed Buda and Linden as the 2017 Texas Main Street communities. During the visits, Mrs. Abbott was joined by Vice-Chairman John Crain of the THC, state and local officials, local business owners and volunteers, and dozens of local residents eager to see the Main Street vision for their respective towns. The First Lady's design renderings, done by the design staff of the Texas Main Street Program, is a tradition of the annual event, and was unveiled at the ceremonies. The architectural drawing shows the potential and showcases possibilities for the historic downtown by demonstrating how prominent buildings in the Main Street district can benefit from design improvements.

Special thanks to the [Independent Bankers Association of Texas](#) for sponsoring this year's First Lady's Main Street Tour. They have been the sponsor for the last 23 years, and we could not do it without them!

We are looking forward to next year's tour and finding out which cities will join the program in 2018.



(Top) Mrs. Abbott signs Legend of the Bluebonnet for local students for their library in Linden; (2nd to Top) Linden rendering by project design assistant Marie Oehlerking-Read; (3rd to Top) Mrs. Abbott addresses the audience at the Buda ceremony; (Bottom) Buda rendering by project design assistant Sarah Blankenship.

CALENDAR

FRIDAY 5.5

- Canton: Downtown Movie Series (8:30-10:30 p.m.)
- Celina: Historic Celina Square 1st Friday (6-9 p.m.)
- Rockwall: Cinco de Mayo Celebration (5-8 p.m.)
- Waxahachie: Cinco Salsa Sip' N Stroll (4-9 p.m.)

SATURDAY 5.6

- Denton: Cinco de Mayo (10 a.m.-10 p.m.)
- Farmersville: Farmers & Flea Market (9 a.m.-3 p.m.)
- Hillsboro: Cinco De Mayo Celebration (12-7 p.m.)
- Kingsville: United Community Festival (6-9 p.m.)
- La Grange: Historic Walking Tour (9:30-11:30 a.m.)
- Longview: Movies on the Plaza (7:30-9:30 p.m.)
- Paris: Farmer's Market (8 a.m.-1 p.m.)
- Rockwall: Movers, Shakers & Makers (8 a.m.-2 p.m.)
- Waxahachie: Cinco de Mayo Festival (11 a.m.-11 p.m.)

THURSDAY 5.11

- Beaumont: Main Street 25th Anniversary Celebration (6-7:30 p.m.)
- Rockwall: Night Owls Late Till 8! (5-8 p.m.)

FRIDAY 5.12

- Ennis: FFA Farm Fresh Dinner & Dance (7-10 p.m.)

SATURDAY 5.13

- Georgetown: Market Days (9-4 p.m.)

SATURDAY 5.20

- Elgin: Art Studio Tour (10 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- Georgetown: Marking History Walking Tour (10 a.m.-12 p.m.)

SUNDAY 5.21

- Elgin: Art Studio Tour (12-4 p.m.)

FRIDAY 5.26

- Ennis: National Polka Festival (7:30-11:30 p.m.)

SATURDAY 5.27

- Ennis: National Polka Festival (7 a.m.-12 a.m.)

SUNDAY 5.28

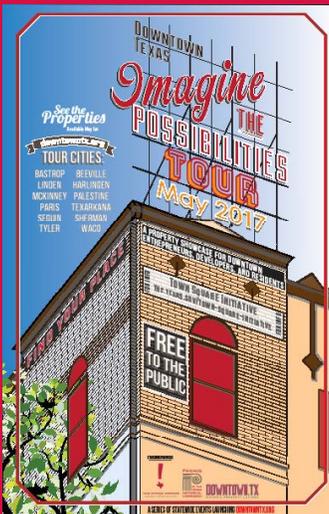
- Ennis: National Polka Festival (9 a.m.-11:30 p.m.)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Main Street boards and staff from Mount Vernon, Clarksville, and Winstboro came together in April in the newly rehabilitated M.L. Edwards building for a Main Street 101 training. The M.L. Edwards & Co was a general store located in Mount Vernon. For over 100 years, M.L. Edwards & Co has served as the local go-to for everything from dry goods to hardware, furniture, and other items. It also served as the town's licensed undertaker up until 1957. Today, it is home to a modern version of the general store and also has a restaurant and event space.

PRESERVATION MONTH ACTIVITIES



For the month of May, Preservation Month, there is a lot happening around the state. Effective May 1, the DowntownTX.org website will go live. (Left) The Imagine Possibilities tour will be taking place throughout the month of May, and we hope to see you at one of the many stops. See our [website](http://www.downtowntx.org) for dates. (Right) We are once again promoting our "Celebrate Main Street" sweepstakes by celebrating Harlingen Main Street. Contest sign-up runs the month of May and will be featured on THC Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.