

Main Street Matters

JULY / AUGUST 2018 • A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS MAIN STREET PROGRAM

LAREDO'S 10TH



By Priscilla Iglesias, Laredo Main Street Manager

Editor's Note: With a successful turnout at New Manager Orientation and All-Manager Professional Development in Amarillo and Canyon, we decided to combine the months of July and August for the next issue. For this month's Main Street Matters edition, we asked both Priscilla Iglesias, the Laredo Program Manager, and Barbara Friedrich, the Gonzales Program Manager, to write a spotlight on their communities.

In 1998, Laredo Main Street, originally known as Streets of Laredo Urban Mall Inc., was founded as a non-profit organization by a handful of downtown community advocates looking to attract locals to downtown Laredo. They hosted the very first Jamboozie Street Festival, closing down one block, inviting vendors, local music entertainment, and the community free of charge. This was the first time a group of downtown advocates organized to

create events and projects to enhance Laredo's historic downtown.

This year we will be celebrating our 20th anniversary of the UETA Jamboozie Festival, attracting more than 10,000 local, regional, and international visitors to downtown Laredo. This event is known to be one of the largest street festivals in South Texas. The event spans 15 blocks of downtown Laredo and showcases some of the most historic places you will find in our state. Keeping true to our roots, the event is still coordinated with the local downtown businesses in mind. Many tell us that Jamboozie Day is the most lucrative day of the year for them.

Since its inception, the organization has maintained its original mission and ideals – to economically stimulate diverse business and residential development in downtown while preserving its historic resources. In 2007, Laredo applied to become a Main Street city
(Cont. on page 2)



The Laredo Main Street Program coordinates the only state certified farmers market, El Centro de Laredo Farmers Market, that takes place in the historic plaza in downtown Laredo. Due to its rising popularity, it now takes place twice a month.



and was officially designated in 2008. Today, Laredo celebrates 10 years of consecutive Main Street Program participation.

The past 10 years have been filled with hard work and support from not only the downtown business community, but the City of Laredo and Webb County governments. Laredo Main Street is a non-profit organization that relies heavily on the support of the local community and local foundations that are inspired to contribute to downtown Laredo because of our mission and accomplishments.

Laredo Main Street also coordinates the only state certified farmers market in Laredo, known as the El Centro de Laredo Farmers Market. Originally hosted only once a month, this year we have expanded our market, adding a second date and location. Our beautiful Farmers Market takes place at the two historic plazas in downtown Laredo. This event attracts anywhere from 100-300 attendees at a given market. We consider our market to be a small business incubator, giving local small businesses a space to develop and sell their services or products to our local community.

In recent years a large chain grocery store closed, leaving our downtown in a food desert crisis and forcing downtown residents to travel more than five miles to the nearest grocery store. Many of these residents are elderly without access to transportation and living on fixed incomes. Laredo Main Street, together with the City of Laredo and other local advocates, strategized on how to remedy this situation. The first thing was providing more produce at our Farmers Market. One of the ways that we were able to do this was advocating for an Urban Agriculture ordinance in the City of Laredo. Once we were successful at that, a local food policy council was created to analyze and advise our city on our local food system. Through the success of both these efforts, we were able to expand our El Centro de Laredo Farmers Market, providing another source of food accessibility to our downtown residents in this crucial time.

Laredo Main Street's largest successes have been from our advocacy efforts in the past 10 years. Through our efforts we have rezoned our downtown to accommodate for a Central Business District and Arts and Entertainment District. We have partnered with the City of Laredo Community Development



When you visit downtown Laredo, make sure to attend the UETA Jamboozie festival (top image and middle image) and the El Centro de Laredo Farmers Market (bottom image). Both events are located in downtown Laredo, and attract large audiences.



Before



After

Improvements along Iturbide Street in downtown Laredo were funded by the Façade Improvement Program. This property and five others have been improved in recent years.

Department to create a Façade Improvement Program for downtown Laredo. Through this program, \$77,467.50 has been invested into downtown Laredo and six façades have been improved. In the recent years we have successfully advocated for the creation of a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone in our district. We advocate with other local organizations and community members to create economic development incentives for our downtown district.

The last 10 years of accomplishments would not have been possible without the assistance of our dedicated board of director, downtown stakeholders, local community advocates, and the many local organizations that we partner with. The heart of our city is downtown, and we will continue to work on improving our district and providing a place where both our community and visitors can shop, stay, and play.

Main Street is Economic Development

Over the past 12 month period, Texas' 87 designated Main Street communities reported reinvestment into their Main Street districts.

\$353.96 MILLION TOTAL



PRIVATE

\$154.86M



PUBLIC

\$199.10M

453

small businesses and 2,557 jobs were created.



105,

333

volunteer hours were contributed to local Main Street programs.

WHY I LOVE SHOP SMALL, SHOP LOCAL

DEBBIE CHARBONNEAU,
HUNTSVILLE MAIN STREET MANAGER

I absolutely love this campaign and was thinking one day of how I could make it a little bit better for my downtown businesses.

So, I came up with the idea of doing it for the entire month of November, and doing a "blow out" on Small Business Saturday as well.

Here's how it worked: participating businesses paid \$25 per 100 tickets, which they ordered to distribute to their customers for every \$20 they spent. I wasn't out to make a profit, but it helped with the printing of the tickets. I ordered 1,000 tickets since I didn't know how it would be received so I only ordered enough tickets for 10 businesses to participate.

Well, to my delight, that didn't last long because I had 10 businesses that wanted to participate within two days, so I had to order more tickets. I ordered 1,500 more. There were a few more businesses that came in, but many of the first 10 original businesses were having to order more tickets.

Visit the Online Resource Library at txms-resourcelibrary.org to download the rest of this article under the Small Business Saturday section and see other resources.





The history of the famous “Come and Take It” phrase originates from the Battle of Gonzales in 1835, when a flag sewn from a woman’s wedding dress included those famous words, a lone star, and the image of a cannon. [Source](#)

GONZALES’ 30TH



By Barbara Friedrich, Gonzales Main Street Manager

Come and Celebrate It! What a better reason to celebrate than the 30th Anniversary of Gonzales Main Street?

Main Street’s 30th anniversary started off with a big celebration at the San Antonio Distillery, located at 715 Saint Paul Street. Being a new business in town, they were more than happy to provide the venue for this celebration. Over 100 guests joined them. When they arrived, they were offered a shot of the newly

brewed Immortal 32 Rum and the tasting bar was opened. Egon Barthels, board chairman, gave a big welcome to all our guests, and recognized the mayor, city councilmen, past Main Street managers, and past board members. He spoke of some of the accomplishments over the past 30 years. Everyone enjoyed a video clip of former First Lady Rita Crocker Clements’ visit to Gonzales, and a slide show of happenings on Main Street for the last 30 years. Andrea Marie & The Magnolia Band provided entertainment for the party. It was a night to relive the past, enjoy great food, and dance to great music, and it was enjoyed by everyone.

Over the past 30 years, many things have been accomplished through the Main Street Program. The City of Gonzales received four Texas Capital Fund Main Street Improvements grants through the Texas Department of Agriculture, which eliminated flooding in downtown, allowed parking and landscaping on two of our historical squares, and replaced infrastructure and sidewalks in the 300 block of Saint George Street. With partnership of the Gonzales Economic Development Corporation, Main Street has awarded 42 Business Improvement Grants and six utility relocation grants. Leveraging \$410,488.59 with private funds of \$815,683.65 resulted in a reinvestment of \$1,226,176.24 public/private funds in our downtown through our grant program.

One of the first major projects in downtown Gonzales was the restoration of the Gonzales County Courthouse. It was built in 1894 by architect J. Riely Gordon. Judge Henry Vollentine was instrumental in securing funds for the restoration work. Work began on the project in 1995 and was completed in 1999.

An anonymous donor funded \$2 million for the purchase and renovation of the Wells Fargo Bank building, which has become the Robert Lee Brothers, Jr. Memorial Library. The library is not only a place of books, but houses the DuBose collection of over 700 weapons, holsters, trench art, commemoratives, flags, helmets, and swords. On July 4th, the library celebrated the unveiling of the Vickie Bushong Memorial collection of over 60 original documents and photographs primarily from the Texas revolution.

Another great renovation project was the purchase of the HEB building in downtown Gonzales, which was renovated for The Gonzales Primary Academy. This project was awarded the Texas Downtown Association President's award for Best Renovation/Rehabilitation under 50,000 population in 2016.

Throughout the years, Main Street has held various events to bring visitors and citizens to our downtown area. We have celebrated with events such as a Piano Gala, Wassail Trail, Ice Cream Trail, Trade Days, Happy Fall Y'all, City Wide Garage Sale, Christmas in July, Winter Fest Lighted Christmas Parade, and Main Street Concert Series & Star Spangled Spectacular.

Gonzales Main Street has celebrated for the past 30 years and now we invite you to "Come & See It!"



(Top image) The Gonzales County Courthouse, circa 1894, was one of the first major renovation projects in downtown Gonzales. Work began in 1995 and was completed by 1999. (Middle image) The Robert Lee Brothers, Jr. Memorial Library was renovated and funded by an anonymous donor. (Bottom image) Gonzales hosts various events throughout the year, with their Main Street Concert Series & Star Spectacular event being the most popular during the summer time.

HAPPY TRAILS LUCIE IN SAN ANGELO

By Del Velasquez, San Angelo Main Street Director

Lucie Hofheins began her career with Downtown San Angelo, Inc. in 2005, the very year we became a Main Street City. She was the administrative assistant to the executive director.

Lucie left in 2010 to take on a position at the Convention Visitor's Bureau, where she was the Visitor's Center and Volunteer Coordinator.

Hofheins returned to Downtown San Angelo, Inc. in September, 2014 as assistant director, taking on additional responsibilities. Hofheins has been instrumental in the development of two projects which have impacted our organization.

The Sheep Spectacular Project is a fundraising and promotional program that has played a major role in community involvement. The fiberglass statues have become one of the most popular projects in our community.

The Downtown Stroll began in 2007 at the "Art Walk" upon her return to DSA, Inc. Hofheins has been the lead coordinator, executing this monthly event with creative themes and colorful flyers.

As executive director I've relied on her skills and abilities to the point I've dubbed her "the backbone of our organization"!

Lucie will be missed and our entire organization "Wishes her the very best in her retirement"!!!



Lucie Hofheins (left) and Del Velasquez (right), the staff of Downtown San Angelo, Inc, accepted a proclamation from Mayor Brenda Gunter (middle) recognizing May as National Historic Preservation Month in San Angelo.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

LEAH CARRIZALES,
PEARSALL MAIN STREET MANAGER



1. What is your hometown?

Born and raised in Pearsall

2. What Main Street City do you represent and how long have you been there?

Pearsall became a Main Street City in January of 2018. We are very new! I started on February 15, 2018. So I have been Main Street Manager for going on 6 months! I love it!

3. What is your favorite spot in your downtown and why?

If I had to pick a favorite spot, it would be on Oak Street either looking at the Masonic Lodge through Oaks Theater (Texas First Lady Rendering) or Sindons building directly across the street. Fingers crossed the pocket parks should launch soon, so this might be one too!

4. What do you enjoy the most about the Main Street program?

I have a Bachelor's Degree in architecture, so being able to say that I am helping revitalize my downtown has always been a dream for me! I want to make a difference and this to me is great first step!

(cont. on next page)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

TEXAS DOWNTOWN CONFERENCE

The 2018 Texas Downtown Conference will be held November 6-9, 2018 in Corpus Christi. Join TDA and TMSP staff for great sessions, tours, and events. Registration to open soon!

MAIN STREET IN ACTION



(Top) The June meeting of the Llano Main Street Advisory Board was held in the historic Lantex Theater, and an invitation was extended to the community to come out and learn more about Main Street. Almost 50 people attended.

(Bottom) The Rio Grande City Main Street Advisory Board and staff, along with the local Preservation Commission and Historic Preservation Officer, held a joint meeting in June to give the boards an opportunity to learn more about each program. Following the combined meeting, each group held a separate meeting for individualized training and planning.

5. What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?

To never give up on any of your dreams, because everything is possible if you believe in them!

6. What's your favorite tip for someone in our economic development/downtown revitalization industry?

Even though there are buildings that need some love, being able to see it at the worst point means that you will eventually see it at its best and it will all be worth it!

7. If you could plan a vacation to anywhere in the world, where would it be and why?

Bora Bora, I have always wanted to go there!

8. Who has been the most influential person in your career?

My mother – she has always believed in me and that is something that I will always be thankful for!

9. Who would you switch places with for a day?

You know to be honest, I wouldn't want to switch with anyone. I am happy just the way I am.

10. What's your favorite inspirational quote?

"Reach for the Stars!" Yes, Toy Story.
"She believed she could, so she did."

11. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Mostly being with family. I love going fishing, bowling, shopping, sleeping, etc. Anything that means you can go to sleep at the end of the day and say I had a great day today!



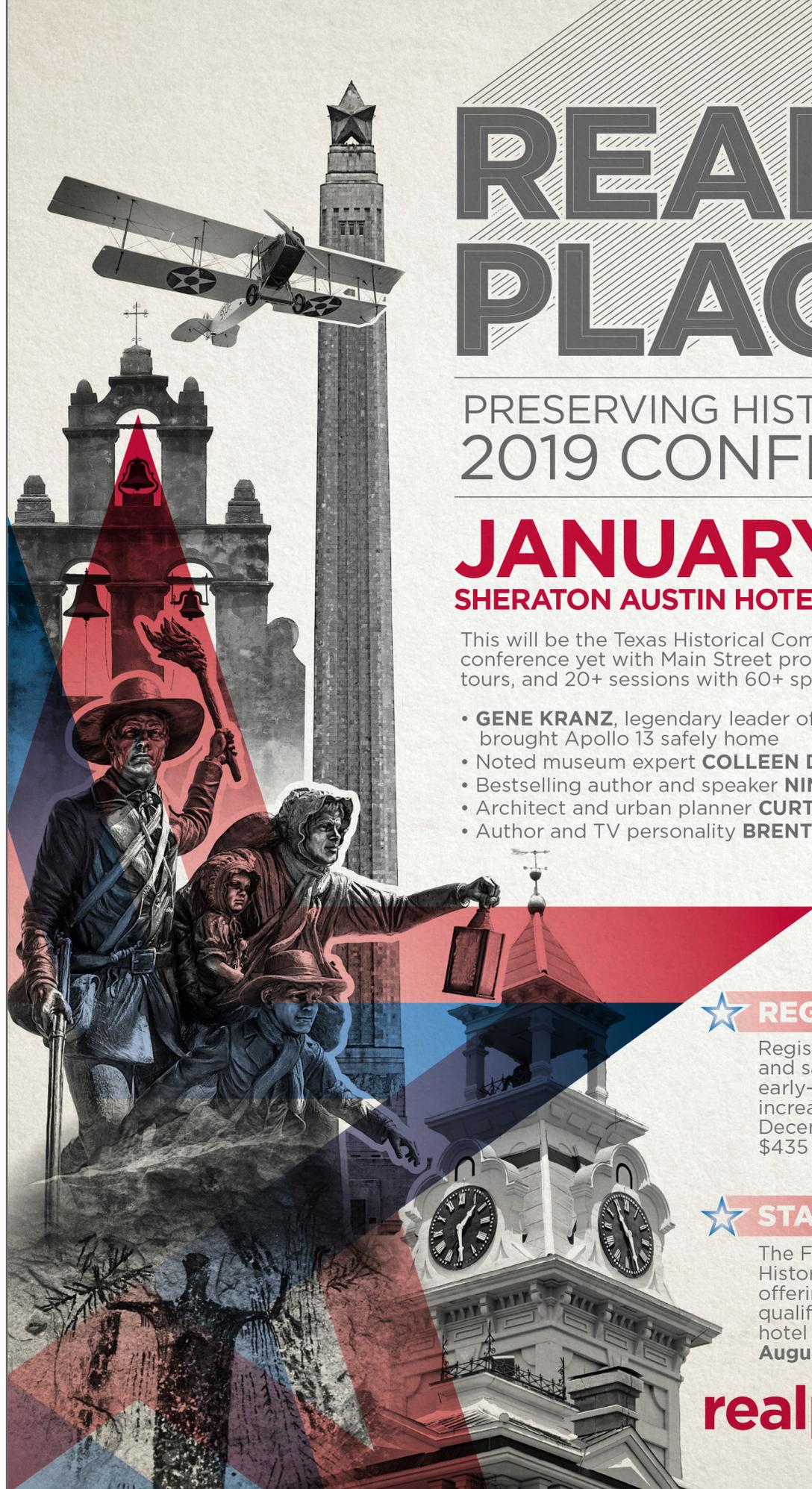
In June, the Texas Main Street and Town Square team visited Pearsall, a new 2018 Main Street community, to conduct its traditional resource team visit and provide recommendations as they move forward on laying the foundation for their local program.

AMARILLO / CANYON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS



A big "Thank You" to Beth Duke in Amarillo, as well as Evelyn Ecker and Kirstie Patterson in Canyon for hosting a phenomenal training in July. Managers joined together in downtown Amarillo with colleagues, THC / TMSF staff, and Norma Ramirez de Miess from the National Main Street Center for some educational sessions and fun events. After catching a special performance of *Texas the Musical* in Palo Duro Canyon under the stars, managers traveled down the road to Canyon the last day to catch a morning brunch before heading back home.





REAL PLACES

PRESERVING HISTORIC TEXAS
2019 CONFERENCE

JANUARY 16-18
SHERATON AUSTIN HOTEL AT THE CAPITOL

This will be the Texas Historical Commission's biggest and best conference yet with Main Street programming, workshops and tours, and 20+ sessions with 60+ speakers including:

- **GENE KRANZ**, legendary leader of the flight team that brought Apollo 13 safely home
- Noted museum expert **COLLEEN DILENSCHNEIDER**
- Bestselling author and speaker **NINA SIMON**
- Architect and urban planner **CURTIS DAVIS**
- Author and TV personality **BRENT HULL**

★ **REGISTER NOW!**

Register by **September 14** and save \$125! After the early-bird deadline, rates increase to \$400 through December 7, and will be \$435 at the door.

★ **STAY FOR FREE!**

The Friends of the Texas Historical Commission is offering stipends to assist qualified applicants with hotel costs. Apply by the **August 20** deadline!

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