

Waxahachie

H A P P E N I N G S

CITY OF WAXAHACHIE NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2010

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*From the desk of
Mayor Ron Wilkinson*

Mayor's Message

Another fall season has come and gone and we are now looking forward to the upcoming holidays. Just like every year, there is no shortage of activities for our citizens and their families to enjoy. The first two weekends in December, the Candlelight Home Tour and Bethlehem Revisited both offer a great experience for all ages. On Saturday, December 5, Downtown Waxahachie will host the annual Christmas Parade at 10am. The historic downtown also offers carriage rides, entertainment at the Texas Theater and skating on the EZ Glide Ice Rink.

These local activities are just a few of the things that Waxahachie has to offer this holiday season. There are many shopping and dining options right here in our backyard. With the current economic downturn, local businesses in many cases have seen a dramatic decrease in profits. The city has also experienced a sharp decline in sales tax revenues, which is the largest source of revenue that the city receives.

In response to this decline, local forces have come together to encourage our residents to buy locally when they shop. The City of Waxahachie, along with the Chamber of Commerce and Waxahachie Independent School District, have joined together to launch the "Choose Waxahachie" campaign. This campaign outlines reasons why shopping locally is important, and how strengthening our local economy helps us all enjoy a better quality of life.

There are some exciting projects nearing completion with the City. The second phase of the Sports Complex will be completed in January, with two new youth baseball fields and one adult baseball field. The addition to the complex also offers a two-and-a-half mile walking trail that encircles the complex and will be open for public use.

In addition, the road expansions at Parks School House and Broadhead Roads are nearing completion. Both of these streets are now four lane thoroughfares complete with medians and dedicated turning lanes. These two expansions are the largest road expansions to be carried out in the City of Waxahachie. Both will allow for increased traffic and serve our growing community well.

During this special time of year, I extend my warmest wishes for a joyous, safe and blessed holiday season to you and yours. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

*Ron Wilkinson
Mayor*



City Council

Ron L. Wilkinson
Mayor

N.B. "Buck" Jordan
Mayor Pro Tem

Joe Jenkins
Council Member

Chuck Beatty
Council Member

John Wray
Council Member

City Management

Paul Stevens
City Manager

Michael Scott
Assistant City Manager

972-937-7330

Metro: 972-938-2101
www.waxahachie.com

For comments or questions regarding the City's newsletter or other communications, please contact Amy Hollywood, Community Relations Manager, at ahollywood@waxahachie.com, or call 972-937-7330, Ext. 284.

WAXAHACHIE RECEIVES NATIONAL MAIN STREET RECOGNITION

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) and the National Trust for Historic Preservation recently recognized Waxahachie as one of the 56 National Main Street Cities in Texas. Other 2010 National Main Street Cities, which represent the real places of Texas, include: Amarillo, Bastrop, Bay City, Beaumont, Bowie, Brenham, Bridgeport, Canyon, Carthage, Celina, Clifton, Colorado City, Comanche, Corsicana, Cotulla, Del Rio, Denison, Denton, Electra, Elgin, Farmersville, Gainesville, Georgetown, Goliad, Gonzales, Grapevine, Greenville, Harlingen, Henderson, Hillsboro, Kerrville, Kilgore, La Grange, Levelland, Livingston, Llano, Longview, Lufkin, McKinney, Mineola, Mount Pleasant, Mount Vernon, Nacogdoches, New Braunfels, Odessa, Palestine, Plainview, Royse City, San Angelo, San Marcos, Seguin, Sonora, Taylor, Texarkana, and Tyler.

“A lot of hard work goes into achieving this recognition. Main Street communities exemplify the Texas mystique and this recognition honors the many people, including Main Street managers and volunteers, who put in countless hours to make their Main Street programs work. The result is an active and successful downtown revitalization effort that benefits not only the Main Street district, but also the entire community,” said Debra Farst, state coordinator of the Texas Main Street Program.

The cities were honored at the recent Texas Downtown Association/Texas Main Street Conference in Tyler. The National Trust for Historic Preservation’s National Main Street Center will honor these cities at the 2010 National Main Streets Conference to be held in Oklahoma City in May.

Cities chosen as National Main Street Cities must show above average performance in 10 categories. The selection criteria focus on planning, staff and volunteers, preservation ethic, training and program assessment. For additional information, visit the National Main Street web site at www.mainstreet.org and the National Trust for Historic Preservation web site at www.nationaltrust.org.

For more information on the Texas Historical Commission’s Main Street program visit www.thc.state.tx.us. The THC’s Texas Main Street Program is a revitalization program for historic downtown and neighborhood commercial districts. It is based on a four-point approach — organization, design, promotion and economic restructuring, all within the context of historic preservation. Implemented in 1981, the program has assisted more than 140 communities throughout the state. For more information, contact Debra Farst at 512/463-5758.



Pictured L-R: Julian Read, husband of the late founder of the Texas Main Street Program; Audrey Holt, Texas Main Street design assistant; Debra Farst, Texas Main Street Program state coordinator; Anita Williamson, Waxahachie Director of Downtown Development; Wayne Bell, Texas Main Street Program architect

City Launches New Web Site!

Visit www.waxahachie.com to surf the all new City of Waxahachie Web site. While you’re there, register to receive e-mail news updates!

10 Things You Can Do to Prevent Stormwater Runoff Pollution

- Use fertilizers sparingly and sweep up driveways, sidewalks, and gutters
- Never dump anything down storm drains or in streams
- Vegetate bare spots in your yard
- Compost your yard waste
- Use least toxic pesticides, follow labels, and learn how to prevent pest problems
- Direct downspouts away from paved surfaces; consider a rain garden to capture runoff
- Take your car to the car wash instead of washing it in the driveway
- Check your car for leaks and recycle your motor oil
- Pick up after your pet
- Have your septic tank pumped and system inspected regularly



For more information, visit
www.epa.gov/nps or
www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater

JOE GALLO APPOINTED MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE



Joe Gallo was sworn in as Municipal Court Judge on November 16, 2009 at the Waxahachie City Council meeting. He was appointed by the City Council on November 2. Gallo was one of eleven applicants for the position, which became open in September following the resignation of previous Judge Sylvia Lopez-Beaver. Gallo was appointed unanimously.

Following Beaver's resignation, City officials began planning for the process of appointing a new Municipal Judge. Judge Jackie Miller Jr. was appointed as the Interim Municipal Judge in October, at which the same time city officials began the search for a permanent judge.

"Finding a permanent judge has been a very high priority," said Mayor Ron Wilkinson. "It was important to conduct a thorough search, while also moving swiftly. We feel Joe Gallo is well qualified and will make an outstanding judge," said Wilkinson.

"I am keenly aware of the important role and responsibility that the Waxahachie Municipal Judge plays in being a representative of our city," said Gallo. "I give my word to do my best to make the Waxahachie Municipal Courtroom a place of honor and justice," he said.

Gallo graduated Magna Cum Laude from St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, Minnesota with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice Studies. In 1996, he graduated from Baylor University School of Law located in Waco. Since obtaining his license to practice law, he has worked in both public and private practices.

What's in it for *you*... when money is spent locally?

CHOOSE! *Waxahachie!*

Choose Waxahachie is a new campaign launched by the City of Waxahachie, along with WISD and the Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce. The primary goal of the campaign is to communicate to citizens the “big picture” reasons why local spending is important, and how all members of our community can benefit when we stimulate our local economy. Each week will feature a different reason why spending locally is important.

All across our community, through newspaper articles and ads, radio spots, posters, emails, and social networking sites, these local entities are working hard to illustrate to our citizens how each of us benefit when we choose to spend our money locally.

For every dollar spent in Waxahachie, one and a half cents of sales tax goes to the City's general fund. Sales tax is the largest revenue stream for the City, helping to maintain roads, parks, emergency services, and many other areas that all of us rely on for our quality of life. When we spend money elsewhere, our purchases help fund the quality of life for another city.

When local businesses are successful, it creates a healthier economic cycle. When local companies are thriving, there is a greater need for employees, and when more people are working, more money is being spent, and a positive economic ripple effect is felt throughout our community.

It is important that we all do our part to help our community through the downturn, and we will all reap the benefits. Whether through driving on better maintained streets, taking our children to play in a well manicured city park, or even enjoying a community program such as the free summer movies in downtown, these are things we all enjoy, and are reasons we have chosen Waxahachie as our home.

Choose Waxahachie. It helps our quality of life.

Applications Due For Historic Property Tax Exemption

APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC OR ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

This application covers property you owned on January 1 of this year. You must file this completed January 1 and April 30 of this year. Be sure to attach any additional documents requested. You must re-apply every year; it will not be automatically renewed.

Step 1: Owner's name and address

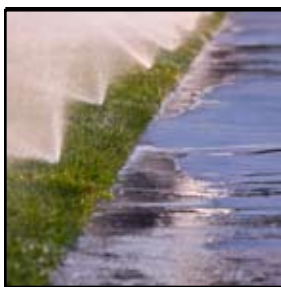
Step 2: Describe the property

Step 3: List taxing units that have granted an exemption on the property

Step 4: By signing this application, you certify that the information is true and correct to the best of your knowledge.

If you were approved for the Historic Property Tax Exemption on the City portion of your property taxes last year, it is now time to apply for the 2010 tax year. Each homeowner that received the exemption for the 2009 tax year should have received a letter in the mail notifying you of this along with your application for the 2010 year. All completed applications must be received before March 15, 2010 (Ordinance #2288). No late applications will be considered for the exemption.

If your home is at least 50 years old you may be eligible to receive an exemption on the City portion of your property tax. In order to qualify, your property generally must be in near original condition including original windows, doors and other architectural features. This application is for the 2010 tax year and must be re-applied for each year. For information regarding this program contact Anita Williamson, Heritage Preservation Officer, City of Waxahachie, 972-937-7330 x 198.



Please remember to check timers on sprinkler systems to avoid icy patches on city streets and sidewalks during the colder weather. Doing so will help avoid dangerous conditions for motorists and pedestrians!



Mr. Gene O'Donnell served as the Honorary Council Member for the month of November. Mayor Pro Tem Buck Jordan presented Mr. O'Donnell with a certificate of appreciation for his participation.



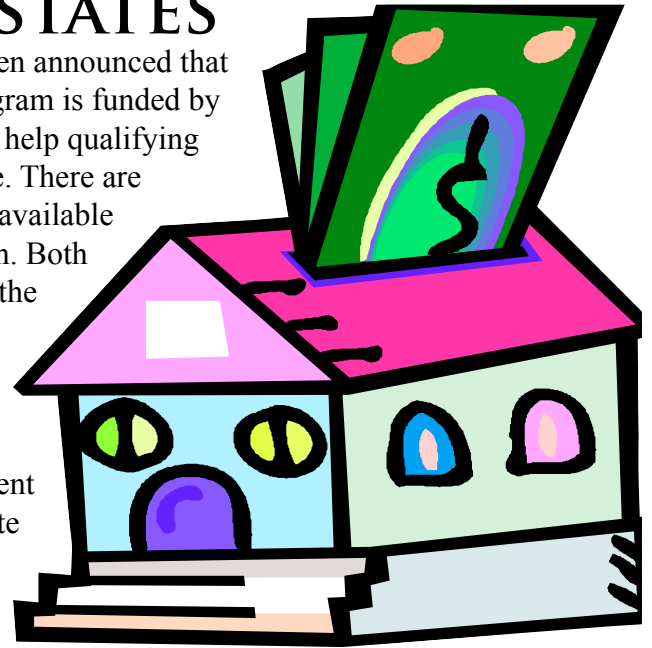
Chief David Hudgins looks on as four Waxahachie Firefighters are sworn in. Micah Owens, Chris Donelson, Zac Zahirniak and Terry Nava were sworn in after completing one year of probationary service with the Waxahachie Fire Department.



DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE OFFERED ON HOMES IN CLIFT ESTATES

A new down payment assistance program has just been announced that is only available in the Clift Estates neighborhood. The program is funded by a grant from the state of Texas. This income-based grant can help qualifying home buyers with up to \$18,200 in down payment assistance. There are currently several lots available to build new homes on. Also available is one inventory home that is complete and ready for move in. Both the available lots and completed inventory home qualify for the down payment assistance program.

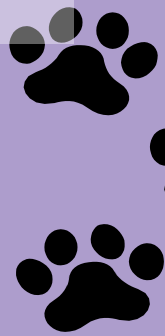
Pricing in this subdivision ranges from \$94,000 to \$129,000. In addition to this down payment assistance program, the Federal Tax Credit program has also been extended and can be used in conjunction with the down payment assistance. These two programs coupled together can translate into a large amount of savings for potential homeowners. For more information on either of these programs, please contact Jana Kerby-Ratcliff at 972-937-7065 (office) or 972-765-8995 (cell). Those interested may also visit in person at 638 Jordan Lane in Clift Estates, Waxahachie.



Waxahachie Firefighters raised thousands of dollars for cancer research and support with their "Cares Enough To Wear Pink" T-shirt campaign. The firefighters sold shirts throughout the month of October at both fire stations and various events, including a special broadcast at KBEC 1390 in Waxahachie.



Students from First Christian Day School participated in the City's Annual Tree Planting Ceremony in October at Freedman's Memorial Plaza. The second grade class led the crowd in the Pledge of Allegiance and the choir performed "God Bless America."



Featured Furry Friends

To adopt one of the featured pets, visit the city Animal Control Center at 191 Lions Park Road or call 972-937-1802 for more information.

"Ginger"

Female
12 weeks
Shepherd Lab Mix



"Buddy"

Male
2 years
Heeler Mix



"Tullie"

Female
18 weeks
Collie Mix



"Gabby"

Female
2 years
Border Collie Mix



Community Calendar

December

- December 4 - Best Little Christmas Pageant Ever, Texas Theater, 7pm
- December 4-6 - Bethlehem Revisited
- December 5 - Best Little Christmas Pageant Ever, Texas Theater, 3pm & 7pm
- December 5 - Christmas Parade, Downtown 10am
- December 5 - WJSL Gift Market, Civic Center 10am-5pm
- December 5-6 - Candlelight Home Tour
- December 7 - City Council Meeting, 7pm
- December 10 - Davin James at Texas Theater, 7pm
- December 11 - Best Little Christmas Pageant Ever, Texas Theater, 7pm
- December 11-13 - Bethlehem Revisited
- December 12 - Best Little Christmas Pageant Ever, Texas Theater, 3pm & 7pm
- December 12-13 Candlelight Home Tour
- December 14 - City Council Meeting, 7pm
- December 17 - Taylor Hodak Band at Texas Theater, 7pm
- December 18 - Best Little Christmas Pageant Ever, Texas Theater, 7pm
- December 19 - Best Little Christmas Pageant Ever, Texas Theater, 3pm & 7pm
- December 24-25 - City Offices Closed for Christmas
- December 28 - City Offices Re-open
- December 31 - New Year's Eve Bash at Texas Theater with Jamie Richards

January

- January 1 - City Offices Closed for New Year's Day
- January 4 - City Offices Re-open
- January 4 - City Council Meeting, 7pm
- January 9 - Robert Donahue Band, Texas Theater
- January 18 - City Offices Closed - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- January 19 - City Council Meeting, 7pm
- January 21 - Tommy Alverson & Friends, Texas Theater
- January 22 - Dirt Road Gypsies, Texas Theater
- January 28 - Voodoo Blue at Texas Theater
- January 30 - Charla Corn at Texas Theater

February

- February 1 - City Council Meeting, 7pm
- February 5 - Jim Bush at Texas Theater
- February 7 - The Big Football Game on the Big Screen, Texas Theater
- February 13 - Richard Bowden w/ Moon and the Starz, Texas Theater
- February 15 - City Council Meeting, 7pm
- February 19 - Texas Theater Opry
- February 20 - Annual Mardi Gras Parade, Downtown
- February 20 - Tres Medlock, Texas Theater
- February 27 - Red Oak Opry, Texas Theater