



WHAT'S INSIDE:



Wild West Fest Raises Money for Harrison Ranch Park, Founders Day Festival Continued.

PAGE 2



A Focus on Farmers Market Vendors; How We Count America, Focus Group Meetings Scheduled.

PAGE 3



Farmers Market 2010 Schedule Announced, Obtain a Permit First Before Hanging Banners.

BACK PAGE

City of Dripping Springs Community Newsletter

THE Gateway

WINTER 2010

Sign Ordinance Success



After the City of Dripping Springs adopted a new Sign Ordinance at the end of 2008 for the corporate limits of the City and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), the business community has stepped up to make voluntary compliance efforts all in the name of safety, uniformity and beautification.

The Sign Ordinance set specific standards that are easy to understand for any new commercial signs. Some of the provisions set in the ordinance include a reduction in the maximum area or height of signs, an increase in the types of prohibited signs and the addition of cumulative sign limitations. The Council's intent was to ensure future signs are properly constructed and maintained, compatible with the historic, rustic and architectural character of Dripping Springs, as well as meeting driver and pedestrian safety guidelines as authorized by the laws of the State of Texas. City Administrator Michelle Fischer said the Council wanted to make certain that the size and heights of any new signs erected were more uniform and in line with the lower monument style of signs that are in place at many existing businesses.

Fischer said one business that recently worked with the City to come into voluntary compliance with the ordinance was Good To Go Oil Center, an express oil change and scheduled maintenance facility, located at 1160 Hwy 290 East. Mike Perdue, Owner and President, of Good to Go Oil Center said after being in business for more than six years, his pole sign was in need of repair. "Given the opportunity to repair our sign or conform to the ordinance, we chose to build a new sign and follow the ordinance requirements," Perdue said. Fischer said Perdue's willingness to work with City Staff on his new sign was a wonderful example of balancing the needs of the businesses and town residents.

Businesses are encouraged to read the Sign Ordinance before planning, installing or requesting a permit for new signs. The ordinance is available at the Dripping Springs City Hall by request or on the City website at www.cityofdrippingsprings.com.



FOUNDERS DAY Set for April 9 - 11

The 23rd Annual City of Dripping Springs Founders Day Festival has been set for April 9 -11. The annual celebration is held on Mercer Street and the surrounding area in downtown Dripping Springs and commemorates the founding of our community by the Moss, Wallace and Pound families. Admission to the festival is free to the public.

Plan to bring your entire family for Dripping Springs "biggest celebration ever" with arts and crafts booths, a carnival, children's activities, delicious food, local musicians and up and coming

continued on page 2

regional talent.

The Grand Parade will go on rain or shine on Friday. Only dangerous weather conditions will cause a cancellation. Plan on bringing a lawn chair to watch the parade.

On Saturday morning, the 2010 Tiger 5K run promises to be a fun-filled event. Participants will run or walk through picturesque

Founders Day Festival gives every organization in the community an opportunity to fund raise and then put that money back into the community.

neighborhoods in Dripping Springs. All proceeds will benefit Dripping Springs High School Tiger Band.

Dripping Springs Cook Off Club provides one of the greatest attractions to the festival with approximately 75 different teams showing off their skills of cooking fajitas, chicken, ribs, brisket, chili, salsa and potluck. Get ready to try some delicious food while you relax and enjoy lively music and the company of your friends and neighbors.

Sponsors and volunteers are needed to continue this annual hometown celebration which is free to the public. Please call Parks Director Ashley Seay at 512-858-4725 if you would like to volunteer your time or services. Sponsorship forms, vendor applications, and Tiger 5K Run information is available at City Hall or on the Founders Day Festival event website at:

www.foundersdayfestival.com

WILD WEST FEST RAISES MONEY FOR PARK



Wild West Fest Steering Committee pictured from left to right are Lynn Dickinson, Donna Moore, June Baumuel, Kristi Green, Melodie Greider, Ashley Seay & Brenda Dewitt.

The first annual Wild West Fest in October was not only a huge success as far as the great number of festival goers from the Dripping Springs community and region, but it also raised more than \$11,000 for the development of Harrison Ranch Park.

Starting any new festival is a risk. Hoping to make proceeds from that festival in the first five years is often times a dream. The Wild West Fest Steering Committee has been just bowled over by the overwhelming support received from the Dripping Springs Community while creating a new festival with the sole purpose of benefiting the development at Harrison Ranch Park.

The first signs of the festival's impending success came before the event itself. Wild West Fest Steering Committee Chair June Baumuel said businesses and individuals were happy to donate money, their time or resources when they found out that the proceeds from the event were going to benefit the park.

"Lone Star Paving, Southwest Custom Constructors, Industrial Asphalt/ Ruby Pit and S&T Ranch Services donated materials and labor to construct the new entrance to Harrison Ranch Park that was critical before hosting a large event," Baumuel said. Other businesses that stepped forward to help include Austin Outhouse, ARW Contracting, Caballo Creek Ranch, Capitol Tent Rental, CORE Health Care, D.S. Rental Center, DS Party Rentals, Joe Bland Construction, Joy and Bob Purcell, Nio Graphics, Opa's Smoked Meats, Pedernales

Electric Cooperative, Print Plus, Recon Services, and Super S Grocery.

The Dripping Springs Lions Club sold beer to a thirsty crowd while the DS 4-H Club and the Ag Boosters sold sausage wraps. Meanwhile, the FFA put forth tremendous effort for the very successful playday, goat show and ranch rodeo.

Steering Committee member Joseph Syring rounded up friends to help cook BBQ which was sold by the plate. The Cowboy Church of the Hill Country grilled hot dogs and sausages, and provided cooking demonstrations in their authentic chuck wagon while also giving guests a hitch on the hayrides.

City of Dripping Springs Parks Director Ashley Seay said others that came forward to help with the big day included many individual volunteers, Constables David Peterson and Ron Hood who donated their own time, and Boy Scout Troop #280 and Dripping Springs High School Leos group provided many volunteers and help with clean up. "Of course, if we didn't have such excellent leadership and participation from our Steering Committee, the event would have never come together as strongly as it did," Seay said.

With more than 1,500 festival goers and \$11,000 gross profits from the event, Wild West Fest

gave the festival organizers something to really celebrate. The \$11,000 will go toward the building fund for new amenities at Harrison Ranch Park. New park developments will include a multi-use, open air pavilion suited for equestrian and other events, a playground, primitive tent campsites, a crushed granite pedestrian trail for walkers, hikers and runners, a path which will support bicycles and wheelchairs, open play area, equestrian trails, an 18-hole course for disk (Frisbee) golf, two regulation horseshoe and washer courts and designated picnic areas.

The next fund raiser for the park is a Playday Buckle Series to be held once a month from April to September. Competition is open to Pee Wees age 9 and under and Juniors (10 - 13), Seniors (14 and over) and Novice (novice riders age 14 and over). The Steering Committee also has plans for a ranch rodeo in late Spring or early Summer.

The second annual Wild West Fest has been scheduled for October 23, 2010.

For information regarding Harrison Ranch Park activities or to make a tax deductible donation, please call City of Dripping Springs Parks Director Ashley Seay at 512-858-4725.

Focus Group Meetings Scheduled To Gather Additional Public Input on Community Plan

With two town hall meetings and a community survey completed, additional focus group meetings are underway for more targeted discussion on specific issues and topics that will be addressed in the City's Comprehensive Plan update.

As part of the planning process, two focus groups including the City of Dripping Springs Economic Development Committee and the Historic Preservation Committee met in December to provide input on issues that were raised in either the town hall meetings or community survey. After lengthy discussions on downtown development, a joint meeting with both committees was held in January.

Additional focus group meetings have been set for 6 p.m. at City Hall on the following dates:

February 10 - Infrastructure
February 15 - Housing
February 18 - Land Use *
February 22 - Downtown Property Owners
February 24 - Parks and Recreation
*** February 18 Land Use meeting will be held at Dripping Springs United Methodist Church.**

Interested citizens are encouraged to attend any of the focus group meetings. Contact City Staff at 512-858-4725 if you would like to participate in any of the above listed meetings.

HOW WE COUNT AMERICA UNITED STATES CENSUS 2010

(U.S. Census Bureau) -- In March of 2010, census forms will be delivered to every residence in the United States and Puerto Rico. When you receive yours, just answer the 10 short questions and then mail the form back in the postage-paid envelope provided. If you don't mail the form back, you may receive a visit from a census taker, who will ask you the questions from the form.

Answers to the Census are safe, protected by law and strictly confidential. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share an individual's census questionnaire responses with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities.

The US Constitution requires that a census be conducted every 10 years. All U.S. residents must be counted - people of all races and ethnic groups, both citizens and non-citizens.

Here's why it is important:

* Every year, the federal government can allocate more than \$400 billion to states and communities, based, in part, on census data. From information

contained in the census, communities receive funding for hospitals, job training centers, schools, bridges and other public works projects and emergency services.

* Census data affect school budgets, including the distribution of Title 1 funding and college tuition grant and loan programs.

* Community planners use census data to determine where to build new schools, develop public transportation and create new roads.

* Census data affect your voice in Congress as well as the redistricting of state legislatures, county and city councils and voting districts.

* The Census helps ensure that your community will receive its fair share of political representation and government funding.

With only 10 questions, the 2010 Census questionnaire is one of the shortest questionnaires in history and takes just 10 minutes to complete.

More information on the 2010 Census is available at www.2010census.gov.



A Focus on Farmers Market: Bella Verdi Farms

Growing year round in their 13,000 sq. ft. state of the art greenhouse located in Dripping Springs, Bella Verdi Farms offers the finest micro greens, culinary herbs, lettuces and specialty greens available on the market today. Owner and proprietor Darrell Joseph said the concept of Bella Verdi Farms (Italian words meaning "Beautiful Greens") was conceived in 2003 out of his desire to leave the high tech world and do something revolving around a passion for fine food while being involved in the local community.

With a mission and a clear vision in mind, Joseph began operations at Bella Verdi Farms in 2004. The farm rapidly flourished and now distributes its fresh produce to the finest dining establishments, caterers, and retail grocers throughout Texas. Some of the places you can purchase their produce include Dripping Springs Farmers Market, Central Market, Wheatsville Co-op, Greenlining Organic Delivery, and Farmhouse Delivery.

Joseph said, "we focus on growing the highest quality, healthful gourmet micro greens, lettuces and herbs using our hybrid hydroponics growing process that follows the principles of organic food production."

By utilizing only the best, all natural (non-genetically altered) seeds available, their crops are grown in a controlled greenhouse environment that dramatically reduces exposure to disease and pests. As a result Bella Verdi Farms uses no pesticides or herbicides on their produce. The system yields superior quality produce and also has the distinct environmental advantage of not directly impacting the earth with full strength fertilizers. Also earth friendly, the farm utilizes captured rainwater from a filtered collection system which provides the most natural and pure water for the greenhouse.

While actively participating as a committee member in the Dripping Springs Farmers Market Association, Joseph said he is seeking a more permanent retail outlet in the community where people can easily find their products anytime throughout the year.

www.bellaverdifarms.com

Need to Hang a Banner For Your Next Event? Obtain a City Permit First!

Banners in the City of Dripping Springs City Limits and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) are subject to provisions in the City's Sign Ordinance. Prior to installing any sign or banner, a person must obtain a permit from the City. Remember, banners are prohibited from being installed on trees or on residential property. In addition, no free standing banners are allowed. They must be affixed to a vertical structure. Responsible parties must remove the banner within three days following any event to which they call attention. Fees are based on an individual or annual basis. An annual permit authorizes placement of up to four banners a year, with each banner standing for no more than 30 days. For more information on provisions related to banner signs, such as time limits, maximum surface area and height restrictions, please call the City at 512-858-4725 or go to the City of DrippingSprings website at www.cityofdrippingsprings.com.



2010 Dripping Springs Farmers Market Schedule Saturdays 9 a.m. to Noon

March 20	August 7, 21
April 3, 17	September 4, 18
May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	October 2, 16
June 5, 12, 19, 26	November 6, 20
July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	

** Schedule may change. Check City of Dripping Springs website at www.cityofdrippingsprings.com for updates.*

Inside Next Issue:

Founders Day Festival
Farmers Market
Summer Programs
Harrison Ranch Park
Comprehensive Plan Update

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