

# MAIN STREET NEWS & VIEWS

Main Street Bowie - 201-A Walnut - Bowie, TX 76230 - 940-872-6246

## DOWNTOWN OPEN HOUSE



On Saturday, March 6, 2010, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., a variety of properties in downtown Bowie will be for tour during an Open House. Coordinated by Main Street Bowie, the Open House will feature buildings and businesses for sale, as well as properties for lease.

Open House Headquarters will be at 210 N. Mason (former Antique Express). Maps will be available at the headquarters, showing participating Open House properties. There will also be basic information sheets for each featured property.

Properties on tour will be noted by large Open House posters in their windows. There will also be representatives at each property to answer questions.

Participating properties to date are: 124 N. Mason, 203 N. Mason, 205 N. Mason, 210 N. Mason, 212 N. Mason, 220 N. Mason, 207 N. Smythe and 204 W. Wise. Other properties may be added by the March 6<sup>th</sup> event.

## SIGN UP FOR A MAIN STREET COMMITTEE

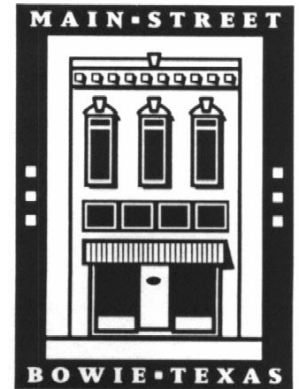
It's a new year and with that comes Main Street Committee sign up! Everyone in the community is welcomed and encouraged to work on a Main Street Committee. Board Members---Don't forget that you are required to sign up for at least one committee per year! Committee options are as follows:

- Chicken and Bread Days Heritage Festival
- Design Committee
- Economic Development Committee
- Promotions Committee

A description of each committee is available at the Main Street Bowie office or at [www.mainstreetbowietx.com](http://www.mainstreetbowietx.com). Contact Shannon Skiles at 872-6246 for information or to sign up.

## NITE AT THE RACES & TASTE OF THE TOWNS SUCCESS

We would like to give a huge 'Thank You' to all of our race sponsors, horse sponsors, prize sponsors, restaurants, and caterers that made the first annual, "A Nite At the Races & Taste of te Towns" a smashing success! This event was a new fundraiser for the City Auditorium Revitalization Project. It was so much fun and we are looking forward to doing it again next year!



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## MAIN STREET NEWS & VIEWS

### MARCH WORKSHOP - TAX TIME TIPS

The March 11th *Business Tool Kit Topics* will consist of a presentation given by John Greenlee, a tax professional at our local H & R Block here in downtown Bowie. He will be providing *Tax Time Tips* for small businesses as well as individuals. Greenlee also intends to discuss current tax law changes, including the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

*Business Tool Kit Topics* are sponsored by Main Street Bowie, the Bowie Economic Development Corporation, and the Bowie Chamber of Commerce. Admission is free, and no reservation is required. Bellmire Healthcare Facilities is sponsoring pastries this month! Participants should note that this month's workshop will be back at the Legend Bank Community Room.

#### **This Month's Workshop...Tax Time Tips**

Thursday, March 11, 2010

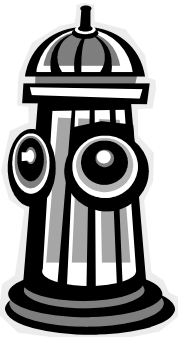
8:00-9:00 a.m.

Legend Bank Community Room - 307 N. Mason - Downtown Bowie, TX



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### FIRE SAFETY FOR BUSINESSES



The following information contains excerpts from a *Business Tool Kits* Workshop presentation, given by Doug Page, City of Bowie Fire Chief and Fire Marshal.

Fire codes are important to a community for three primary reasons: (1) to ensure the welfare of citizens; (2) to maintain lower insurance rates; and (3) to provide safety for buildings that in turn maintains the financial integrity of businesses. A fire code is defined as a set of rules prescribing minimum requirements to prevent fire and explosion hazards arising from storage, handling, or use of dangerous materials.

#### **Common Code Violations:**

- Locked/Blocked Exits
- Inadequate Aisles: Aisles are supposed to be clear and unobstructed so people can easily reach an exit.
- Extension Cords and Multi-plug adaptors: These can only be utilized temporarily, when used as a permanent power solution, they become dangerous.
- Exit/Emergency Lighting
- Accumulation of Combustible Materials
- No Certificate of Occupancy

#### **Fire Official's Role**

A fire official can render interpretations, adopt policies and procedures/rules, review applications and plans, and possess the right of entry during reasonable hours.

A fire official cannot wave a requirement of code or allow less measures to be taken regarding a specific code violation.

If you have questions about Bowie's fire codes or special safety considerations for downtown buildings, contact Doug Page at 872-2122. The Bowie Fire Department is here to help keep you, your building and your business safe.

## HOW VISIBLE IS YOUR SMALL BUSINESS?



**Excerpts from an article by Connie Edwards, Business Consultant for the University of Georgia Small Business Development Center.**

**The article appeared in the Savannah Morning News.**

**Savannah, GA** - Customers can't buy from you if they don't know your business exists. This is an obvious statement, but I have found that many small business owners who are trying to increase their sales don't realize how "invisible" their businesses are.

Small business owners should spend some time investigating just how visible their business is and what they can do to increase their visibility. The following are some things you would want to consider.

### Advertising

How visible is your advertising to your target market? To answer this question, you first need to be able to describe your targeted customers and understand their habits. Then take a look at your advertising methods and compare that with what your customers read, watch, listen to, etc.

The right people need to see your message about your business and understand that you can meet their needs. Conducting a thorough "marketing audit" of your business can help you determine the best advertising methods to implement to be more visible to the right people.

### Location

How visible is your actual physical location to your customers? One way to gauge this is by simply asking customers who do come in whether they had trouble locating the business, and if they did, why.

Another way is to really take an objective look yourself. Is your sign highly visible? How easy is it to read, not only from nearby but from the street? Are you taking advantage of traffic flow?

How attractive is your building or your portion of the building? Is there anything obstructing the view of your business and can you change that? You can also have persons unfamiliar with your business do some "mystery shopping" to see what they have to say about the visibility of your location.

### Internet

How visible is your business to those searching the Internet for your product or services? Don't just put yourself out there and hope for the best. It takes money, time and effort to increase the chances that your business will be found by the right people.

Your Web site's ranking with the search engines is affected by things such as the domain name that you use, your use of pictures, the content of your text, your use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter, the age of your Web site and more. You need to get professional assistance to be sure your Web site is properly designed and maintained for maximum benefit.

Also, you could have some "mystery shopping" of your Web site done to find ways to improve its visibility and effect on your bottom line. And always be sure to direct potential customers to your Web site through your other promotional methods.

### Community

How visible are you and your business in your community? You can get so busy working on the everyday operation of your business that you don't take the time to get out and do some needed networking.

Are there organizations in your community in which you should become involved? This could be a chamber of commerce or business association but not necessarily.

Are there organizations with goals that you truly care about with which you could become involved? Are they in any way related to your business? How can you make a contribution to the improvement of your community?

The above are a just a few examples of opportunities to improve the visibility of your business and increase sales revenue.



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## UPCOMING MAIN STREET EVENTS...

**March 1 - Main Street Board Meeting** - 6 pm - Main Street Office

**March 6-7 - Second Monday Trade Days** - Pelham Park & Trade City

**March 6 - Downtown Open House** - 10 am-2 pm - Downtown Bowie - Open House Headquarters at 210 N. Mason

**March 11 - Tool Kit Topics Workshop - Tax Time Tips** - 8 am - Legend Bank Community Room

**March 11 - Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours** - 5-7 pm - NCTC Bowie Campus - 10th Anniversary Celebration

**April 10 - Allure of Light Antique Lamp Show** - 9 am-4 pm - Legend Bank Community Room

**April 10-11 - Second Monday Trade Days** - Pelham Park & Trade City

**April 15 - Tool Kit Topics Workshop - Topic to be announced** - 8 am - Legend Bank Community Room

**May 3 - Main Street Board Meeting** - 6 pm - Main Street Office



Thank you for reading! We hope you have found this month's newsletter interesting and helpful.

If you have any suggestions for the following months, please let us know by e-mail or give us a call.

Also, if you would like to receive this newsletter electronically via e-mail, please contact us with your e-mail address.

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Check out our website for more information on Main Street Bowie goals and committee projects...[www.mainstreetbowietx.com](http://www.mainstreetbowietx.com)

