Main Street News

CITY OF LA PORTE MAIN STREET

Volume 4, Issue 1 January/February 2012

Industrial District Projects Add to La Porte Customer Base

If you visit a La Porte restaurant during the lunch hour on any given weekday, chances are good that you will have to wait in a long line of hungry patrons. Chances are also good that many of those patrons are employed by one of the more than 100 companies that make up the City of La Porte's Battleground and Bayport Industrial Districts.

The companies often overlooked as a source for potential customers, but local business owners know that in many ways, the industrial districts are their lifeblood. Many businesses depend on the chemical and petrochemical manufacturing companies to make their business run, and others rely on the disposable income of the more than 30,000 workers in the La Porte, Pasadena, and Deer Park Industrial districts who contribute

a combined total of \$12 billion per year to the regional economy.

Joe Escobedo, Manager of Antonios on Fairmont Parkway says that a majority of his 250-300 person lunchtime crowd is made up of customers from the two industrial districts. He said those businesses are the source of the majority of his overall business. "The industrial districts plus the



The La Porte, Deer Park, and Pasadena Industrial Districts employ more than 30,000

school district contribute to the majority of our patrons, especially during the lunch hour."

Many of the business located along SH 146 are businesses that provide services and goods directly to the industrial district industries. Many companies that service the industrial districts locate in or near the districts simply because their customer base is within shouting distance. On such company is John Crane, an international company that designs and manufactures seals and associated products mainly for the oil & gas, chemical, pharmaceutical, pulp & paper and mining sectors. John Crane moved into their location in the Bayport Industrial District because of its close proximity to their major

customers, and it has proven to

be a good business move for the

company. (CONTINUED)

Partnerships Help Spread the Word about City Amenities

As an active member of the Houston Bay Area community, the City of La Porte has partnerships with many organizations that help spread the word about the city's amenities and visitor attractions.

The La Porte-Bayshore Chamber of Commerce provides leadership to promote business, growth and development of the La Porte - Bayshore community. Their goals and objectives include promoting the community and encouraging people to shop in La Porte, as well as communicating the value of local businesses to the community and maintaining a coordinated economic development strategy.

If you enjoy the tank art that you see on SH 225 coming into La Porte, you can thank the Economic Alliance Houston Port Region for their efforts in that regard. The Alliance, which is located in the City of La Porte, provides professional economic development services on behalf of 16 communities surrounding the 25-mile Houston Ship Channel.

The Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership is a member-driven organization that provides the leadership to stimulate regional economic development and employment. Members include business partners encompassing 13 cities, Galveston and Harris counties, and the Port of Houston Authority. (CONTINUED)

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Heritage Society News

If you are interested in learning more about the history of Main Street and La Porte, The Sylvan Beach Depot Museum and Library are an excellent resource. Managed by the La Porte Bay Area Heritage Society, the Depot Museum and Library tell the history of La Porte and the surrounding area. The museum is open every Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and on weekdays by appointment. For information about the Heritage Society or the Depot Museum, call (281) 471-0493.

Following are excerpts from the Heritage Society's monthly newsletter:

- NEW OFFICERS: On January 16 the Board of Directors for the La Porte Bay Area Heritage Society
 elected a new slate of officers: Stacey Osborne is the President, Ann Malone is Vice President, Janis
 Wiley is Secretary, and Ron Parker will remain as treasurer. Ray Nolen, who has held the President
 position for the past four years, has completed two terms and will now serve in an advisory capacity.
- CABOOSE REPAIRS: Much-needed repairs are currently being completed on the Caboose. The repairs should be finished by the end of April; the Heritage Society appreciates your patience as we limit access to the caboose during this time.
- OLD PHOTOGRAPHS OF LA PORTE: The Heritage Society is always in the process of trying to obtain old photographs of La Porte for the museum archives. We scan and give the original photos back to you. All of the photos that we already have are in the process of being cataloged for future reference and use.

Partners, Continued

Visitors who come to the Bay Area often find out about La Porte and the other cities in the region through the Bay Area Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau (BAHCVB). The BAHCVB is a regional organization that markets the seven cities making up the Houston Bay Area to business and leisure travelers as well as to travel groups and travel planners. The organization also offers membership in the Texas Travel Industry Association (TTIA) to all of the hospitality professionals in the member cities.

For information about the City of La Porte's partners, please call (281) 470-5017.



Industry, Continued

Businesses that locate within the two industrial districts have an industrial district agreement, or IDA, with the City, in which they agree to pay a fee in lieu of taxes, and the city agrees not to annex those businesses. Over the years since the IDA was instituted in 2007, it has proven to be a "win-win" for both the businesses and the City--the companies are able to move forward with their business operations without having to undergo annexation by the City, and the city collects a substantial fee and does not have to expend City resources for a large entity that may use up more than the lion's share of City resources. But an additional benefit for the City that often goes untouted is the industrial districts impact on local businesses.

For information about the City of La Porte Industrial Districts, please call (281) 470-5017.

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Half-Marathon, Photography Focus of Morning Brew

Main Street Morning Brew is a monthly program designed to introduce La Porte business owners and tenants to each other, and to educate them on the fundamentals of economic development in the community. The hour-long gathering includes coffee, refreshments, and a short presentation about topics pertinent to La Porte's economic development. All La Porte business owners and tenants are welcome to attend.

The January Main Street Morning Brew will be held on Wednesday, January 25 at Mainly Drinks, 223 W. Main Street, from 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. A representative from the La Porte by the Bay Half Marathon will be there to speak about the popular event in La Porte and other events in the region, and how businesses can be involved.

The February event will be held on Wednesday, February 29 at the Economic Alliance Houston Porte Region, 908 W. Main Street. Photographer Chris Kuhlman will show some of his recent photographs of the City.

If you would like to host a future Main Street Morning Brew at your location, please call (281) 470-5017.



BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Main 101 Grill and Bar (www.main101.com)
101 East Main St.
(281) 470-8484



M - Th 10:30a - 9:00p F- Sa 10:30a - 10:00p Closed Sun (except for special occasions and catering events)

Since it opened in September 2006, Main 101 has been one of the premiere restaurants in La Porte, offering a unique contemporary American fare. Owner Joe Burtuglia tells us about doing business on Main Street in La Porte.

Q Why did you choose the Main Street district in La Porte?

HOURS:

- A Between the setting of the building, the industry and the community surrounding this site, I felt this would become a destination location. I always challenged myself to create concepts that will be needed and embraced by the community that I choose to invest in. I felt La Porte was in need of a new cuisine and dining experience. I embraced the challenge of bringing a new cuisine and dining experience to the area.
- Q How do you get the word out about your business?
- A I find the best type of advertising is word-of-mouth. Those are the

- customers that patronize you overand-over again and bring friends. Good food, good service, give good results. I believe all advertising dollars should be spent on the plate. What I mean is, I give the highest quality, the freshest ingredients and good service all wrapped up in a moderately-priced menu.
- Q Who do you consider to be your target patron?
- A Anyone within a 10 mile radius. Any foodie, anyone that appreciates their food cooked à la minute. We hope it is everyone that wants a great meal in a quiet atmosphere. Our bar is also a great place to run into a lot of locals from La Porte, Shoreacres, Morgan's Point, Seabrook, Kemah,

- etc. to others from foreign countries that appreciate this intimate comingling locale. My restaurant has been referred to as the Times Square of La Porte.
- Q What do you envision for your business in the next year?
- A With the proposed growth of the Port, the near-opening of the Panama Canal and the surrounding housing push, we hope for a powerful spike. We consider ourselves well positioned logistically, while having a strong business and neighborhood reputation, the freshest ingredients and good service all wrapped up in a moderately-priced menu.



MAIN STREET. BY THE BAY.

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Upcoming Events

January 23 City Council City Hall Council Chambers 6:00 p.m.

February 3 Art Walk Main Street 6 - 9 p.m.

February 13 **Economic Development Corporation Meeting** City Hall Council Chambers 5:00 p.m.

February 13/27 City Council City Hall Council Chambers 6:00 p.m.

Calendar events are posted online at www.laportetx.gov.



Wednesday, January 25

8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Mainly Drinks 223 W. Main Street PRESENTATION: La Porte by the Bay Half Marathon/Bridge Series

Wednesday, February 29

8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Economic Alliance, Houston Port Region 908 W. Main Street PRESENTATION: La Porte in Pictures

Main Street Morning Brew is presented free of charge by the City of La Porte. All La Porte business owners are welcome to attend.

For more information, call (281) 470-5017 or email osbornes@laportetx.gov.