
Kilgore's Main Street earns national honor

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Kilgore's Main Street program has earned national honors for the third year in a row.

The Texas Historical Commission and the National Trust for Historic Preservation have recognized Kilgore as one of the 56 National Main Street Cities in Texas.

The cities were honored at the Texas Downtown Association/ Texas Main Street Conference in Tyler, which continues all week. 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.

"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 chosen cities must show above average performance in 10 categories. The selection criteria focus on planning, staff and volunteers, preservation ethic, training and program assessment.

"This is an honor, that's for sure," said Fallon Burns, Kilgore's Main Street manager. "This has been a big year for us. We implemented a lot of new programs, including 'Friday After 5,' the downtown summer concerts, a Downtown Recognition Banquet in May, and our streetscape construction. It's great to be recognized for everything we are doing."

She added this year's Farmers Market, held downtown April through August, was also a great success.

The Main Street manager said she credits the support of downtown business owners and residents, the Main Street board of directors, the city council, and even local newspaper coverage for winning recognition.

"It's about how the program is implemented but it's also about downtown as a whole and the partnerships that are formed and how we work together," Burns said.