

SAN MARCOS | BUDA | KYLE

Buda to host three weekends of festivals in April

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By Jordan Gass-Pooré | 6:00 AM Apr. 13, 2012 CDT

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Photo courtesy of Buda Lions Club

As the weather heats up, the City of Buda is hosting events in April to help residents and visitors keep their cool.

From 11 a.m.–11 p.m. April 14, the sights, sounds and smells of Louisiana will permeate Buda City Park for the 18th Annual Louisiana Swamp Thing and Crawfish Festival.

French Smith, Roadway Productions event organizer, said the annual festival moved locations from downtown Austin to Buda City Park two years ago because of the amount of free parking next to the event grounds and the park's large covered pavilion.

The festival initially started with an emphasis on Louisiana-style music and has grown

to encompass food.

"It was kind of a novelty at the time and more about the music initially, to kind of introduce [the] Austin Area to a very unique kind of music that comes out of Louisiana that's the origin of many kinds of music that we have today," he said.

Smith said organizers are anticipating about 8,000 guests at the 2012 festival. Roadway Productions staff worked with the City of Buda Parks and Recreation Department to bring 7,000 pounds of crawfish, free for guests with the price of admission, and more than 44 food and art vendors to town.

Family-friendly options, such as bounce houses, playscapes, pony rides and petting zoos, can be enjoyed to the tunes of Cajun and zydeco music.

Smith advised that attendees come to the event early to be able to eat more crawfish, and to bring a blanket and chair.

Wildflower Festival

Buda continues its festivities April 21–22 with the inaugural Hill Country Wildflower Festival at Buda City Park.

Jerry Shelton, Texas Market Guide owner, said the event was started because he feels arts and crafts events are underserved in Buda and the surrounding areas.

Shelton said his daughter, Lewanna Campbell, Hill Country Wildflower Festival show director, worked with the city to plan and organize the festival.

He said the city wanted an event that would bring in floral and garden-related items because most of the festivals in Buda are music-related.

Shelton said nearly 100 Texas-based arts and crafts vendors will be present at the event as well as a traveling potter from Missouri, a North Dakota vendor who makes jewelry from flowers and a gourmet food company from Louisiana.

Wiener Dog Races

The month of festivals concludes April 28–29 with the 15th Annual Buda Lions Club Country Fair and Wiener Dog Races.

Nancy Handrick, president of the Buda Lions Club, said there were 450 canine participants in last year's races, and organizers hope for the same this year.

The event attracts visitors from throughout Texas and the nation, laying claim to Buda's trademarked status as the "Wiener Dog Capital of Texas."

Handrick said 10,000 people attended the event throughout the weekend in 2011. The weekend also features a pet parade and awards, and the Buda Country Fair includes a barbecue cookoff and dessert bake-off, and arts, crafts and food vendors.



By Jordan Gass-Pooré

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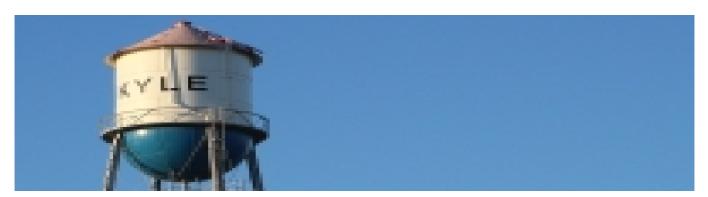
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The election was called after Council Member Daphne Tenorio resigned.



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