



# CHAMBER NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2020

## BUSINESS ANNIVERSARIES

### **Davis Welding**

Established September 1, 1997

### **Hooker Medical Clinic**

Established September 15, 2014

### **The Dallas Mayer Gallery of Fine Art**

Established September 28, 2019

Congratulations to these hometown businesses and members. We appreciate your membership and your contribution to our community.

## Who Powers You? Nominations Needed

Touchstone Energy is holding the 2020 "Who Powers You" contest beginning Sept. 8. We encourage everyone to nominate someone from our community for the chance to win up to \$5,000 for doing good for others. Go to this webpage to submit your nomination:

<https://www.touchstoneenergy.com/who-powers-you>

Fill out the form and submit a photo of your nominee. Then tell how that person is making a difference in your community. Winners will be selected by a panel of judges based on the impact your nominee has on the community.

## Upcoming Events will Change

This year has been a challenge for making plans. Some events were cancelled, some postponed, and some re-configured. Chamber officers have attempted to keep as much of our normal event schedule as we felt we could, but the health and safety of our community comes first. With that in mind, and with the number of Covid-19 cases increasing in our county in the past few weeks, we decided at the September Membership meeting that it would be best to postpone the chamber golf tournament. If things look better in the coming months, we will consider setting a date for a make-up tourney, possibly in the spring.

We have decided to look at how we can re-configure the remaining 2020 chamber events to help our community celebrate the holidays in a safe manner. With all the disappointments of this year, we do not want to plan for normal events that may also end up being cancelled. Below are some of the ideas we have discussed. I encourage all chamber members to let us know their ideas as well.

### Halloween

Hold decorating contests for businesses and residences.

Parade Alternatives:

- Option 1 – drive-through downtown trick or treat. would need business owners to be downtown to offer treats
- Option 2 – decorate pavilion, have photo booth and treat bags. would be available from 4 – 5:30 pm to help reduce crowd

### Christmas

Hold decorating contests for businesses and residences.

Christmas Parade Alternatives:

- Option 1 -- regular parade with viewing along entire route turkey and ham drawings-need not be present to win
- Option 2 – decorate pavilion, Santa set up at pavilion. old fashioned goody bags from Santa handed out 3-5 pm

Cookie Crawl:

At this time we think the cookie crawl would still be pretty much the same, with perhaps some changes to the registration and drawings.

## EDB Grants Available

The Hooker Economic Development Board has approved a 50/50 grant for local businesses. The board will award two grants a year, each up to \$2,500 to match business funds to pay for expenses of structural improvements, aesthetics or equipment. The deadline to apply will be early 2021 and the businesses will need to prove they spent the total to receive the grant funds for half the cost, up to \$2,500. Buddy explained there is a 90-day completion window but during this pandemic that is not feasible since it takes longer to receive supplies and materials, so they are working on bumping that up to six months. Applications are reviewed by the Hooker Economic Development Board which votes on the applications. The grants are funded by the City of Hooker which includes the Economic Development Board in their annual budget to support local businesses. For more information contact Buddy Holbert at (580) 522-1221.



### September Ribbon Cuttings

None Scheduled

If you know of a business that may want to join the Chamber we would appreciate your assistance in referring them to one of our officers.

## Planning for 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

June 2021 will mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hooker Chamber of Commerce. That's something to celebrate! Chamber officers are looking for your ideas to commemorate our organization's centennial. Let us know how you think we should celebrate. We would also like to know if members have any chamber memorabilia or photos from past years that may be included as part of our celebration.

## October Membership Meeting

Mark your calendars to attend our Membership Meeting on Thursday, October 1<sup>st</sup> at noon. We will be discussing our upcoming holiday events. Your input and ideas are needed.

### 2020 Chamber Officers:

Mary Beth Puyear, President  
Brenda Romero, Vice President  
Craig Adams, Treasurer  
Sheila Blankenship, Secretary

### Hooker Chamber of Commerce

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### 2020 Chamber Events

Events are subject to change and updates will be made as needed.

--October 31<sup>st</sup> -- Halloween Parade

--December 5<sup>th</sup> -- Christmas Parade

--December 10<sup>th</sup> -- Christmas Cookie Crawl

**CHAMBER COMMERCE CASH IS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR FOR GIFTS, PRIZES AND AWARDS. GIVE A GIFT THAT PROMOTES SHOPPING LOCALLY! SEE FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF HOOKER TO PURCHASE. NO PURCHASE FEES. ALL CHAMBER MEMBERS CAN ACCEPT COMMERCE CASH.**

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### Member Business Promotion

Gold and Silver Chamber members are eligible for 2 promotions per year on our website and member communications. To request a promotion, contact Mary Beth Puyear at (580) 522-1655 or email

[mail@hookerokcofc.net](mailto:mail@hookerokcofc.net)

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**Hooker Chamber of Commerce**  
**Thursday, September 3, 2020**

The Hooker Chamber of Commerce membership luncheon was held on Thursday, Sept. 3 at 12 noon at the Hooker Community Center to better allow for social distancing. Lunch was available from Pizza On Broadway for \$5 per meal. Present were Leslie Kraich, Wendell Mills, Linda Brown, Mary Beth Puyear, Brenda Romero Buddy Holbert and Sheila Blankenship.

Mary Beth called the meeting to order and one correction was made to the August minutes. Buddy made the motion to approve the minutes as corrected, Wendell seconded and the motion passed. She distributed copies of the treasurer's report and noted the Chamber is in good on funds. Wendell made the motion to approve the treasurer's report, Leslie seconded and the motion passed.

Mary Beth asked about the golf tournament scheduled for Sept. 18, explaining that some volunteers do not want to participate because of the pandemic and that it has been recommended that the event be canceled since COVID-19 numbers are climbing in the county. The Chamber is not in need of the fundraiser and few people have responded to enter or provide prizes. Buddy made the motion to postpone the golf tournament until spring with the hope that the COVID-19 danger will be less by then. Brenda seconded and the motion passed. Mary Beth added that she didn't like it but we need to be safe.

Mary Beth gave a brief report on the drive-in circus and said that although few people attended, it was good for the community and that the performers are just doing what they can during the economic down turn.

It was announced that the only new member is the Hooker Fights Hunger food pantry on Highway 54 that was honored with a ribbon cutting in August. She added that although we have new businesses, she has not been able to schedule a ribbon cutting for Smitty's or for Floor Crafters.

The upcoming fall events including the Halloween parade and the December Cookie Crawl and Christmas parade were discussed with options to reduce crowds. It was advised we work with the churches that traditionally host trunk-or-treat to plan for some kind of drive around downtown where kids would stay in cars while stopping at booths or car trunks to receive treats. Also discussed was hosting a Halloween decorating contest for businesses and possibly also for residents. Ideas included having people nominate a decorated home with a Facebook post or email or doing some kind of photo scavenger hunt or post photos and ask "Where is this?" to get people to drive by the various locations and vote. Buddy made the motion to host a residential and business Halloween decorating contest with plans finalized at the Oct. 1 meeting. Brenda seconded and the motion passed. Leslie agreed to find decoration formats from other communities for ideas and it is planned to offer Chamber Commerce Cash as prizes.

Concerning the Christmas parade, it was discussed that we have a long parade route that would allow spectators to practice social distancing and maybe have Christmas music playing all along the route. It was suggested that maybe we need to have the parade when it is lighter out so people can see the floats and the people on the floats. The traditional turkey drawings were also discussed to avoid people bunching up to hear the winning names drawn. One suggestion is to have drawing tickets with a phone number so those present can enter but the winners would be contacted the following Monday. The Chamber hosted Christmas decor contests for many years and it was suggested that we do that again this year, possible with people voting on the winners and awarding one winner in each of three categories. Plans will be finalized later.

Mary Beth announced that Aaron Witt has generously donated Hooker, OK postcards to the Chamber featuring photos he has taken. She also announced that the City of Hooker is far behind in our response to the Census and that we need to find ways to get people to stand up and be counted. Any ideas may be sent to Mary Beth and she will share them. Leslie announced that the Touchstone Energy Cooperative is holding the 2020 "Who Powers

You” contest beginning Sept. 8 and she encouraged everyone to nominate someone from their community for the chance to win up to \$5,000 for doing good for others.

Buddy Holbert, Hooker city superintendent, was the guest speaker at the meeting. He announced that the Hooker Economic Development Board has approved a 50/50 grant for local businesses. The group hopes to award two grants a year, each up to \$2,500 to match business funds to pay for expenses of structural improvements. The deadline to apply will be early 2021 and the businesses will need to prove they spent the total to receive the grant funds for half the cost, up to \$2,500. Buddy explained their is a 90-day completion window but during this pandemic, that is not feasible since it takes longer to receive supplies and material so they are working on bumping that up to six months.

Applications are reviewed by the Hooker Economic Development Board which votes on the applications. They also are looking at a second phase of the local grant program to add a category for equipment to the aesthetics grant. The grants are funded by the City of Hooker which includes the Economic Development Board in their annual budget to support local businesses. The board is also considering the possibility to hire a grant researcher/writer for the City of Hooker and local entities. Buddy added that if the board could do that, it would not only create a part-time or maybe even a full-time job here in town but also would fill a need for the community because finding and applying for regional, state and federal grants have become a burdensome task.