

ELGIN JUNETEENTH 2009

By Elaine Joiner

2009 is a milestone in the history of Elgin, as we celebrate the 10th Annual Elgin Juneteenth Festival and the 100th Anniversary of the NAACP. We have many things to celebrate and commemorate. Our town has come a long way to becoming more diversified and working toward being a city of "Unity". Our Juneteenth mission is "Let's put unity back into the community". The Juneteenth Festival Committee invites everyone to join in the celebrations and help make Elgin's Juneteenth Celebration the best in Texas. June 12 & 13, 2009 are special days where everyone can enjoy the festivities, celebrate and be thankful for friends family and freedom.

Friday night, June 12 at 7pm begins the evening festivities with a street dance on Depot Street with hip hop, blues, R&B, zydeco, and music for all ages. Dance the night away 'til midnight. Veteran's Park will have booths with all types of vendors offering great food, clothes, crafts, jewelry and more. Saturday, morning, June 13 at 10am is the annual parade beginning at Booker T Washington Elementary on Martin Luther King Blvd. and ending at Veteran's Park. Opening ceremonies begin at 12pm at the Veterans' Park gazebo with the Buffalo Soldiers. The celebration continues all day with a car show, music in the gazebo, food vendors, bingo/raffles and kids activities. Registration for the parade, please contact Bettye Lofton (512) 963-2721 or bettylofton@prodigy.net. Vendor booth rental or information for "Juneteenth Celebration in the Park", please contact Eloise Wright (512) 281-5838/Pauline Jackson (512) 281-4978/Debbie Lundrigan (512) 229-8100 or the following ewright23@austin.rr.com/rprose@sbcglobal.net.

The Elgin Juneteenth Organization welcomes new members, volunteers and sponsors. For more information and to join in on all the fun, please contact Elaine Joiner (512) 285-6321, zentumbler@aol.com or Coach Bishop Mayes (512) 303-3608. The Festival committee meets on the 4th Tuesday, 7pm at the First National Bank on Hwy 290.

JUNETEENTH TRAIL RIDE

By Elaine Joiner

The kickoff event for this year's 10th Annual Elgin Juneteenth celebration begins with a weekend Trail Ride event full of fun and excitement. Bring your sleeping bags and tents, dust off that Dutch oven and enjoy a campfire supper with trail ride music starting on Friday, May 1st, 7pm-11pm. One of the funniest stories from last year's ride, is from Bettye Lofton, who tells the story of her tent being blown over by the wind around 1am, putting her air mattress on the top of her car and heading down the hill with her headlights on, to find other counselors to spend the rest of the night with. She did not anchor her tent, so she reminds everyone to be sure to anchor your tent. Saturday morning, May 2nd begins at 8am with a Chuck Wagon Breakfast and then on to the trail ride beginning at the Elgin VFW. Riders will enjoy 10 miles roundtrip. Cost is \$15/pp. Saturday evening, May 2nd, 7pm-12am, ends the weekend with a Trail Ride Dance with "DJ Music of all genre & Dancing" at the Elgin VFW. Cost \$7/pp. Polish your boots and come swing with your partner! Proceeds from both events benefit the Juneteenth Organization which produces the Juneteenth Festival. For information/tickets, please contact Bettye Lofton (512) 963-2721/William Russell (512) 789-7987 or the following bettyelofton@prodigy.net.

JUNETEENTH PAGEANT

By Elaine Joiner

The Juneteenth Pageant will be May 15 & 16 and is expanding this year to include three pageant categories – Miss Juneteenth, Little Miss Juneteenth and Little Miss Princess, ranging in age from 6-22. Each category will have two runners-up and a variety of prizes and trophies will be awarded. Byron Mitchell's daughter, Jessica Mitchell was crowned Miss Juneteenth, which he believes gave her confidence to participate in Miss Western Days as well as confidence to pursue other opportunities in her life. Jessica is now 18 and will graduate in May. The Pageant is being held at the Middle School Auditorium and promises to be a fun event with entertainment you won't want to miss. For Juneteenth Pageant Information, please contact Reverend Garner (512) 229-8187/Elsie Williams (512) 281-6322 or the following wwbc290@yahoo.com or elwms2001@yahoo.com.