Certified Retirement Community
Community Assessment

Tab 2-M Festivals and Events

West Columbia is the First Capitol of the Republic of Texas and is part of the original settlement of Stephen F. Austin making the city rich in early Texas History. Many of the festivals and events in the area celebrate that history and encourage family fun.

West Columbia has a weekly **Farmer's Market** open every Saturday from 8am to 1 pm on the grounds of the West Columbia Chamber of Commerce. Local vendors offer a variety of fresh vegetables, baked goods, jellies, honey, plants and more. Booth rentals are $25 for six months due January & June. Every week brings something new and different!

The **San Jacinto Festival** is held the third week of **April** each year. The two-day event, which is held at the beautiful First Capitol Park, begins on Friday with a barbecue cookoff and live concert with dance. Carnival rides for the children are open Wednesday through Sunday. A variety of arts & craft booths and food booths wind throughout the park under the trees. Saturday morning the parade starts at 10 am and crowning of the Belle of the Brazos and Little Belle pageants follow. Live entertainment and activities from 10 am – 4 pm include: washer tournament; bingo; helicopter rides; local dance studio performances, Brazosport Jazz Band; singing; Art presentation by students of Columbia-Brazoria ISD; petting zoo and pet parade; historical programs by the youth. Historical tours of the Columbia Museum and Varner Hogg Plantation are also available. In conjunction to the festival, the **West Columbia Rotary Shrimp Boil** is held at the American Legion Hall.

The **Pumpkin Patch** is held at the West Columbia Chamber of Commerce on the 2nd through the 3rd weekend in **October**. Hundreds of pumpkins of assorted shapes and sizes are on display. School children enjoy roaming through the pumpkins and photos are available or bring your own camera.

The **Light Up the First Capitol** is held the first weekend in **December** to mark the beginning of the holiday season. The activities start Friday night with a parade at 7 pm (or dusk). On Saturday from 8 am to 4 pm, the Farmer's Market is expanded to include arts & craft vendors. Other activities include: performances by the local dance studios, church choirs, and caroling; pictures with Santa; story telling by Mrs. Claus; and many other activities.

Surrounding Areas:

ANGLETON:

Brazoria County Fair – The largest county fair in Texas! It is a 9-day annual event that takes place in **October** of every year is known for its old-fashioned fair atmosphere and traditional fair entertainment such as carnival rides, CPRA rodeo, concessions and agriculture displays. Live concert performances are also scheduled. Enjoy exhibits including artwork, photography, crafts, baked goods and many others.

Austin Town Days – 1st weekend in **November**. Go back in time to a day in the year 1832 at the time when Stephen F. Austin colonies were being established here. Experience every day life for the settlers as performed by actors in period clothing.

Christmas on the Square – 1st weekend in **December.** A gift back to the community ~ Enjoy all activities free. Children activities including Santa, free cookies, entertainment by local dancers and choirs; parade; enjoy the tree walk with rows of decorated trees; participate in the Jingle Bell Fun Run.

BRAZORIA:

Heritage Celebration - The Brazoria Heritage Festival is held the first weekend in **March** celebrating the Texas heritage of the area. Events include a cattle drive and parade, historical demonstrations, auto and tractor shows and more.

Migration Celebration - Southern Brazoria County contains a part of the Columbia Bottomlands forest and is a major neotropical migrant stopping point in spring and fall. Habitats such as the forest, fresh and salt water marshes, coastal prairie, beach, bays and Gulf all contribute to the diversity of birds found in the area. The annual Migration Celebration is held the third weekend in **April** each year with a variety of events for birders. There are bird banding demonstrations, refuge tours, birds of prey demonstrations and more. Migration Celebration activities are centered on the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge near Brazoria.

No Name Festival -The Brazoria No Name Festival is held each **June** with events including a carnival, barbecue cookoff, craft booths, food, horseshoe and washer tournaments, a parade, auction, live entertainment and much more.

Heritage Ball - The Brazoria Heritage Ball is held every **July.** Step into another era and celebrate various events from Brazoria's history with a fabulous meal, entertainment and live auction.

San Bernard Boat Parade – a **December** tradition - A beautiful lighted boat parade down the San Bernard River.

CLUTE:

Great Mosquito Festival – in **July** a 3-day festival of family fun including arts & crafts booths, food, barbecue cookoff, carnival rides, games, petting zoo, contests, tournaments and live concerts.

LAKE JACKSON:

Festival of Lights – in **November**, downtown Lake Jackson. Food & craft booths, pet parade, car show, petting zoo, pony rides, snowland, rock climbing, carnivals, and a variety of live entertainment and performances

SWEENY:

Sweeny Pride Day - Sweeny Pride Day is in **May** each year. It includes a parade, craft and food booths and a variety of entertainment throughout the day.

BAY CITY:

Bay City Market Days - Market Days on the Square is held on the third Saturday of each month on the courthouse square in downtown Bay City from 8:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. Market Days draws more than 100 venders from across the state and thousands of visitors.