

SUNNY DELIGHT

By Julie Catalano



Sweet, tart or somewhere in between, lemonade is the official liquid harbinger of summer. Plain, fruit flavored, garnished, served up kid-friendly or as the citrusy basis for an adult beverage, a frosty swig of lemony lusciousness on a hot day is pure heaven — and just maybe the happiest drink on earth.

For Elias Carofilis, it really did start with a lemonade stand. As a senior at San Antonio's MacArthur High School in 2007, the young entrepreneur was casting about for a business to start when a friend joked, "If all else fails, sell lemonade." "I laughed it off, but then the stars kind of aligned, and I became really passionate about bringing back one of my favorite childhood drinks," says Carofilis, owner of The Lemonade Company (www.thelemonadeco.com, San Antonio, 210-310-6741).

Setting up roadside stands and tables at school events, Carofilis worked his way up to catering and bartending for corporate events and private functions. Ten years later, and selected Lemonade Company products are now found at San Antonio establishments like Rosella's Coffee, Smoke Shack, Cheesy Jane's, the grocery store at Hotel Emma and Blue Star Provisions (by the time you read this, their products should be at Central Market).

For lemonade with a kick, Carofilis specializes in handcrafted cocktails for their catered events, with set-ups featuring big Mason jars of fresh lemonade, original and flavored —



strawberry lemonade is a special favorite in San Antonio. Their low calorie stevia lemonade also earns raves.

"People are looking for more health conscious drinks," he says, "so we offer a lemonade with activated charcoal powder and reduced sugar content." Carofilis says it's been a big seller and anticipates the same for their upcoming maccha lemonade which should be out by summer.

Leave it to star chef Jason Dady to go far beyond the Arnold Palmer (half lemonade, half iced tea) and the Tippy Palmer (same as above but with gin or vodka) with his very own craft cocktail, the Limonade — complete with upside-down lemon or lime paleta as the finishing touch.

As owner of Shuck Shack Oysters & Such (www.shuckshack.com, San Antonio, 210-236-7422), Dady says the idea was to "do something different and playful" for those 100-degree days in July. Lemonade, he says, was a natural starting point for the Limonade, using Deep Eddy Lemonade, a hand-crafted Texas vodka (www.deepedyvodka.com, Dripping Springs, 512-994-3534). The paleta was a fun touch to keep the drink cold and enhance the flavor. "We top it off with Topo Chico so you get that nice, natural effervescence," says Dady. "It's a clean, easy, everyday backyard type of cocktail and that was the spirit behind it."

There is spirit aplenty at Austin City Lemons (www.austincitylemons.com, Austin, 512-569-1000) — of the nonalcoholic kind, that is. As a kid, founder and owner Grant Sanregret never had a lemonade stand, but he's got one now, and it's a doozy. A former bartender with a journalism degree, Sanregret went looking for something different and found it — a giant fiberglass lemon cart, which serves as his solo location and headquarters at the corner of Austin's South Congress and Elizabeth Street.

Dubbing himself "The Lemon Dude," Sanregret brings boundless energy to the simple act of making, shaking and serving countless cups of fresh lemonade a day. Joking and laughing with customers, Sanregret's high-octane positivity is not an act. As he writes on his website, "We are here to remind you that no matter the challenges that you face on a daily basis, you should always take some time for yourself and just be happy."

Sanregret knows from challenges: His young son was born with cystic fibrosis (CF) around the time Sanregret was morphing into The Lemon Dude. In his search for information, the concerned father became "inspired by the CF community and their optimism. I wanted to share that optimism in a cup of lemonade." Sure enough, his strictly lemonade menu features the original Cup of Happiness and the frozen version called Great Day, with seasonal flavors like Blueberry Bliss and Lavender Love. He says his signature drink is intentionally light on sugar. "I wanted something parents could give their kids with a clear conscience."

In the world of lemonade history, Texas is best known for being the birthplace of Lemonade Day (www.lemonade-day.org, National Headquarters, Houston, 713-626-5437),



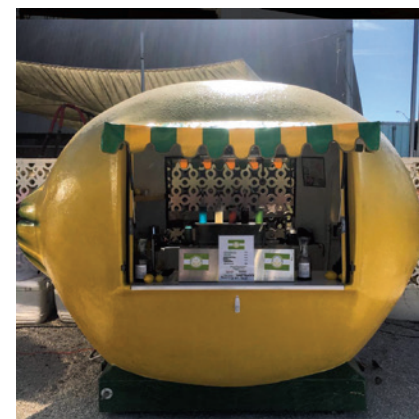
a young entrepreneur phenomenon started by Houston philanthropist Michael Holthouse after his young daughter had an eye-opening experience on the realities of the business world with her first lemonade stand.

Celebrating its 10th year, the annual Lemonade Day uses its Young Entrepreneur Youth Workbook and other experiential programs to prepare young people for business and community success in more than 61 cities nationwide, 17 of those in Texas.

"Since its founding in Houston in 2007 with about 2,700 registered kids, more than one million young people have participated in the program," says Debbie Nazarian, national director of cities. The program, she says, gives kids the chance to "see more possibilities for their future. Owning

and operating their own lemonade stands instills them with a sense of confidence, gives them communication skills and exposes them to philanthropy." Truly a community event, "Lemonade Day speaks to the power of what this program can do, not just for the kids but for businesses and organizations."

In the spirit of giving back while making money and having fun, kids are encouraged to "spend some, save some and give some." This year, Lemonade Day is on May 6, 2017, during daylight hours. Watch for it in a city near you, and have a cup or two for a worthy cause. ♦



Lemonade Day!™