

# Main Street In Motion

November 2010-January 2011 The Main Street West Union Newsletter Volume 4, Issue 4

\* From the Director

## Share Your Ideas: How should we use the bus barn?

By Robin Bostrom  
Main Street West Union Program Director

As many of you may know, Main Street West Union is the proud new owner of the former North Fayette bus barn building in downtown West Union. This historic building has served the community in many ways over the years, including a car dealership, a bowling alley, and most recently, as the bus storage facility. Many have asked why we would want such a building and what are we going to do with it?

Main Street programs across the country are formed to help revitalize communities through historic preservation, which means finding new and innovative ways to reuse the beautiful historical buildings found in our communities. There are many benefits to rehabbing these structures, including not having all of the building materials end up in the landfill, which is an increasing problem for many counties, including Fayette County, and preserving the historic architecture found in older buildings.

Main Street West Union will be hosting several meetings and open house events in the building in the future weeks to allow the community to walk through the building and offer their input on what residents would like to see happen with the building. Many ideas have already been shared, including a movie theater, community meeting space, a health club or workout facility, and loft-style apartments.

Another idea is to create a shared retail space in which several small businesses or home-based businesses could have a storefront location but share the costs with several other businesses. Think of it as a mini mall-type of facility that could house several different types of offerings, including items from local artists, coffee, ice cream, North Fayette logo merchandise, or local craft items. The ideas are endless if we "think outside the box" and work together.

We will be looking at the market analysis information done for West Union last year to help identify opportunities.

If you have an idea of something you would like to see in the building, stop by the Main Street office, send an e-mail, or talk to any of our board members. Once we have a list of community ideas, we will be asking you to vote for your top three ideas to help us narrow down the list and start to study the feasibility of what can happen in the building. Our goal is to have this building improved physically and aesthetically, so that it is once again a building that contributes to the tax base and can be enjoyed by the community.

We hope you will join us along the journey.



Bus Barn - What are we going to do with it?

### Special Points of Interest:

- WU on the World Wide Web!
- Pledge Drive
- Fundraising Events Planned
- FREE Gift Wrapping
- Downtown Amenities

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## WU on the World Wide Web

By Troy Johansen, Business Improvement Committee

The Business Improvement Committee has been busy trying to do what's best for the local businesses in West Union. The promotional DVD that was made featuring West Union and what it has to offer has been a great hit! Soon we even hope to have this short, filmed advertisement on YouTube for all to see on the World Wide Web (WWW). This DVD will be sent out to future businesses and persons looking for a quality town like West Union to call home.

Speaking of the WWW, the Business Improvement Committee recently hosted a training class on how to get your business Facebook page set up and running. Approximately a dozen people gained the knowledge, dove right in, and conquered the sometimes scary world of Facebook and thoughts of the magnitude of people who use it.

Facebook is one of the largest-growing Internet issues that can be accessed and used by businesses to contact many more people and potential customers. Com-

pared to other advertising strategies, the WWW can reach out to many more people than television, radio and newspaper. Facebook won't make these three forms of communication obsolete, however, because we all need and support our local means of advertising our communities and their events.

Give Facebook a try! Maybe if there is enough interest, we will host another training session in the future.

The Business Improvement Committee is also working on establishing a line of communication through Facebook to provide updates on the Green Pilot Downtown Street-scene Project.

Our Business Improvement Committee meets monthly and is always looking for new blood to join!



### Please turn in volunteer hours ASAP

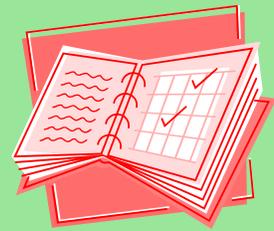
MSWU board members, committee members, and other volunteers are reminded to please submit your volunteer hours promptly each month to Robin Bostrom.



Remember, these hours are used in calculating matching funds for grants, so it's important to get them turned in each month as you accumulate them.

If you need a form to keep track of your hours, they are available at the Chamber/Main Street office.

Thanks for your help!



## Mark Your Calendars...

### November

- Nov 3-4 - Main Street Iowa Fall Workshop-Dubuque
- Nov 9 - Promotions Committee and Board Meeting
- Nov 16 - Design Committee Meeting
- Nov 25 - Happy Thanksgiving - Office Closed
- Nov 26 - Festival of Lights Event

### December

- Dec 2 - Santa Comes to Town
- Dec 7-8 - Main Street Workshop - Marshalltown
- Dec 9 - Ladies' Night Out
- Dec 11 - Fayette County Tourism Center Open House
- Dec 14 - Board Meeting
- Dec 16 - Men's Night Out
- Dec 21 - Design Committee meeting
- Dec 24 - Christmas Eve - Office Closed
- Dec 31 - New Year's Eve - Office Closed

### January

- Jan 11 - Board Meeting
- Jan 18 - Design Committee meeting
- Jan 22 - Community Awards Banquet - Echo Valley Banquet Center

For more information on these events, contact the Main Street/Chamber Office, 422-3070.

# Positive things continue to happen in WU

By Dick Woodard  
MSWU Board President

Here we are nearly at the end of the year with numerous accomplishments in the books and quite a few projects and goals still in the works.

The Main Street West Union program passed its annual program review with the state officials with positive comments about what we have done, along with suggestions as to how to make our organization even better. With the support of the citizens of West Union, we hope to reach these new goals.

Each of the four standing committees, representing the Four-Point Approach of Main Street, has been busy this year. The committee chairperson will highlight

the accomplishments elsewhere in this newsletter, but I will briefly touch on a few things.

The Business Improvement Committee will have held its Facebook class for local business people by the time this newsletter is published. The intent of the class was to help businesses receive communication about the street improvement project and also have the opportunity to talk back and forth about promotions, sales, etc. that might be of interest to fellow merchants and service folks.

The Design Committee continues to work on alley signage, which will be helpful during the street construction period. This com-

mittee and the entire group of Main Street volunteers will be working hard to help residents and business people work through the inconveniences that typically pop up during a street improvement project.

With the generosity of the North Fayette school board, Main Street West Union has become the new owner of the former bus barn at 131 S. Vine Street. The thinking caps are already on, but we encourage your thoughts as to what use would best serve our community. If you have a suggestion, please forward it to the Chamber/Main Street office, or contact one of our volunteers.

# WU-Stock ends summer with a bang!

By Erin Heins  
Promotions Committee

The MSWU Promotions Committee is winding down for the year. But we have had a very successful year once again, and look forward to the holiday season that will be fast approaching.

We ended the summer with a bang at WU-Stock! We had a great crowd downtown to watch the firemen's water ball competition, listen to some wonderful live entertainment, and enjoy some free ice cream from the Lions Club. The sounds of a barber-shop quartet, Bruce Bearer and Left of Center filled the air. They were all a big hit, and we even hope to bring Bruce back to WU soon.

The youngsters enjoyed a plethora of fun and games. They bounced their way through the obstacle course, went down the extreme slide, and even got a little wet in the super-soaker zone. "Minute to Win It" was a big attraction with the adults, and I think many laughs were had by all when watching the participants try to complete some of the funny tasks.

Keep watching in The Union for upcoming WU-Light Specials and other events that will be taking place throughout the next couple of months.

We appreciate the help of everyone who volunteered for Main Street over the last few months, especially those who gave of their time at WU-Stock. Our committee couldn't survive without your help.

We're always open to anyone looking to become a part of Main Street, no matter how big or small a role you'd like to take.



Scenes from WU Stock 2010

# Pledge Drive continues

Main Street West Union's pledge drive is ongoing in an effort to raise funds for our organization's operating budget. We need to raise \$35,000 in order to sustain our program, so we need your help!

If you've not been contacted by an MSWU board member or volunteer, please call the Main Street office, 422-3070, to make your pledge.

We're hoping you will consider making a three-year pledge, but contributions for any amount or duration are gratefully accepted.

Perhaps you'll consider donating in a friend or loved one's name as

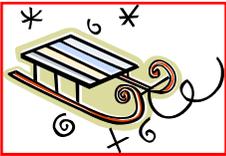
a gift, especially during holiday time. For those who are hard to shop for because they already have everything they need - a donation to Main Street West Union in their names would be perfect!

If you've already contributed, we thank you sincerely. We'd also love for you to encourage other family members and friends to join you in your support of our outstanding program. It's folks like you who help us to help our wonderful community.

Many thanks!



Just a friendly reminder that the Main Street Office will be closed on the following days:



Thursday, November 25th - Thanksgiving

Friday, December 24th - Christmas Eve

Friday, January 31st - New Year's Eve



## Thanks a bunch, Ben!

Our Main Street West Union organization would like to sincerely thank Ben Lewis, an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer, who has worked the Chamber/Main Street/Economic Development office for the past year.

His contributions to not only our MSWU program, but to numerous community projects, have been invaluable. The "green" projects and events Ben initiated have been especially fun and so important to West Union's sustainability goals; participants have enjoyed themselves while learning new ways to "live green."

Ben has been a true team player in so many ways, and his hard work and creative ideas have been very much appreciated.

His VISTA year in the office came an end in November. How quickly the time has flown!

We wish you the very best, Ben, wherever your life takes you. You have much to offer to other communities. We'll miss you, so come back and see us sometime!

Ride on!

\* Organization Committee Update

## *Fun projects, events ahead for MSWU*

By Ben Lewis  
Organization Committee

Our Organization Committee has been busy brainstorming ideas for new fundraising events and projects in 2011! We've settled on a couple ideas for the immediate future.

First of all: It's official! The old bus barn is now a...?

What a fun question to be able to ask the community: What sort of business would you like to see move into the historic location? The volunteers of Main Street West Union are now the proud (and daunted) owners of the building and focused on bringing back the luster and character of the building and, of course, bringing a new business to town.

Right now, the needs are very apparent. The plaster is cracked and the wallpaper is peeling, giving the old apartments the appearance of a haunted house; some doors need to be replaced; and one very important structural post needs to be reinstalled. New windows need to be placed along the second story, so that tenants can once again move in upstairs.

This first step was a **community visioning gathering held on Thursday, October 28, inside the bus barn**. Hopefully you were able to come in, wander about, and then write down your ideas on the poster boards provided. Another open house will be held to whittle down the suggestions to the most popular.

Fortunately, there is so much potential for the building that the ideas are limited only by the involvement of the community. So, please share your dreams for the future of this building.

Secondly, we will be partnering with the Fayette County Historical Society on a **project to educate folks on historical aspects and persons in relation to our downtown**. This project, which will be in the form of a fun weekly contest, will continue throughout the 18-24 months of WU's Green Pilot Downtown Streetscape Project. Watch the Union for details, and then plan to participate!



\* Design Committee Update

## *Decorative and historical amenities for downtown*

By Jon Biederman  
Design Committee

Other items we are reviewing include trash receptacles, benches, and bicycle racks. In addition to being functional, these items will be a great finishing touch to downtown West Union.

There is still funding remaining for the Façade Grant program.

Any building owners considering work to their buildings should investigate this program prior to starting their project. Several great projects have been partially funded this year. If interested, please contact the Main Street office at 422-3070.

The MSWU Design Committee has been focused on items relating to the downtown reconstruction project.

We are working with a local craftsman to design and build metal banners for the new street-light poles. These will be decorative and incorporate historical components relating to West Union.



## *Free Holiday Gift Wrapping!*

Main Street West Union's Promotions Committee is offering free gift wrappings in December. The Chamber is sponsoring a Ladies' Night Out on Thursday, December 9 and Men's Night Out on Thursday, December 16 from 5:00 until 7:00 both evenings. Select stores will be open late for your shopping convenience. Stop out at Lilac Plaza, where volunteers from the Promotions Committee will be gleefully wrapping your purchases for **FREE!** Enjoy refreshments while you wait. We look forward to seeing you on the 9th and the 16th!



**WU**  
Main Street  
West Union



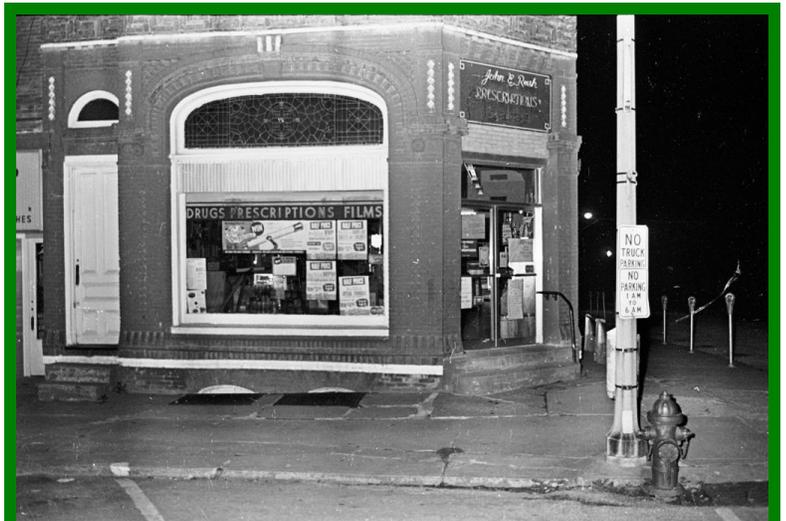
101 North Vine Street • West Union, IA 52175

## Main Street West Union Mission Statement

The mission of Main Street West Union is to preserve and enhance the vitality of our downtown through the education and encouragement of all citizens to work together to promote our community as a vibrant place to shop, work and live.

## Main Street West Union Board Members

Dick Woodard, President  
Gail Hackman, Vice President  
Carolyn Havenstrite, Secretary  
Robin Bostrom, Executive Director  
Sean Singewald  
Ron Saboe  
Jon Biederman  
Erin Heins  
Mike Lauer  
Greg Ptacek  
Sue North  
Troy Johansen  
Michael O'Brien



## Mystery Building

Can you guess where this building is, and what is located there now?

The answer is hidden somewhere in this issue!