

Main Street In Motion

August 2010-October 2010 The Main Street West Union Newsletter Volume 4, Issue 3

Special Points of Interest:

- What's happened in four years?
- Committee reports & information
- Governor's Awards photos
- WU-Stock
- West Union's Promotional Projects

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Tooting our own horn - near & far!

By Troy Johansen, Business Improvement Committee Chair



The West Union Downtown Streetscape Project is quickly approaching, and the Business Improvement Committee is still working to promote its current and future businesses in West Union.

One project completed so far this year is the hotel-motel binder placed in every hotel room in West Union. They are basically a business map of the community, designed by this committee and mass-produced with the help of the wonderful staff in the Main Street office. These binders are guides for travelers to find out what services and amenities are available in West Union and how to contact them.

The next project completed is a promotional DVD of West Union. This DVD includes an overview of West Union amenities via still photos and video clips. It highlights some of West Union's major assets, like the spacious library, beautiful Rec Center Complex, our awesome hospital and healthcare system, as well as our excellent school system. The DVD also highlights our parks system, along with the Jensen Trail (Echo Valley Environmental Nature Trail) and trout streams, and shows what our community has to offer a potential new business or family. This DVD is an awesome way to showcase West Union and will soon be available for distribution to prospective new businesses and families looking for a great place to call home.

New projects we are working on include a Facebook training class coming up in September. This class will teach local business owners/operators how to use this web resource as a way to promote their business. Those attending will be trained on how to establish a Facebook page, how to update it, and how to use the world wide web to promote their business. Anyone interested in the class should contact the Chamber/Main Street office at 422-3070.

The Business Improvement Committee is also going to be helping the Upper Iowa students move into Fayette this fall. We know that West Union can offer things to the students at the college that may not be available to them in Fayette. A little help can go a long way to let UIU students know that West Union is also here to assist them however it can in the course of their continued education. Any volunteers who would like to assist on August 21 & 22 should contact the Chamber/Main Street office. If you'd like to be a part of our committee, we are always looking for new members wanting to promote West Union!



An exciting new beginning for West Union!

By Dick Woodard
MSWU Board President

Thank you to the property owners who are spending their hard-earned dollars to improve the exteriors of their buildings. It is fun to see that pride is contagious, and these efforts do spruce up our community.

By the time you read this newsletter, the downtown street project should be proceeding or very nearly to the point of starting. It is an exciting new beginning for West Union! Not since the early days have we seen an endeavor of this magnitude, and for those of us over age 50, we may never see something like this again.

The stars have aligned for our community in regard to financing opportunities, allowing our citizens to save dollars during the construction period and in the future as the shared geothermal heating/cooling system serves as a hedge against rising fuel costs.

There have been some healthy debates throughout the planning process, but now is the time to embrace the project, watch with interest as we see new technology unfold, and also take time to have some fun.

This is also a key time for the Main Street West Union organization as the annual Pledge Drive is in progress. We harp on this message constantly, but I still need to spell out clearly the Main Street West Union is NOT the street improvement project.

Please help us to continue to do the good things we do by supporting us financially at a level at which you feel comfortable. Without pledge dollars, we would not have business façade grant money available, free design help for commercial property owners, scholarships for students, seminars for businesses and their employees, and much more.

Please call the Chamber/Main Street office (422-3070) if you have not been contacted and care to make your generous donation. We are looking forward to continued success with our Main Street program and encourage you to join us on this path toward community revitalization. The even better news is that we have fun along the way!

* Design Committee Update

“Addressing” the Downtown

By Jon Biederman, Design Committee

The Design Committee has been promoting the downtown building numbering program. This is an excellent program for our local businesses to take advantage of in order to get an address number on the front of their building and comply with the current City Code. You will notice several businesses now have their address displayed on their front doors. This will assist visitors and new shoppers in locating these business locations.

Our committee's next project will be working on alley signage during the course of the streetscape construction. Rear building entrances will become more important as construction is taking place adjacent to building fronts, and these building rears are not as identifiable as the fronts. We hope the alley signage project will be of great assistance to the downtown businesses and their customers.



Mark Your Calendars...

August

- Aug 3 - Organization Committee Meeting
- Aug 5 - Promotions Committee Meeting
- Aug 10 - Board Meeting
- Aug 12 - Marketing & Branding Workshop at TAP'T Out
- Aug 14 - Compost Workshop at Fairgrounds
- Aug 15 - IT Workshop at Schera's In Elkader
- Aug 21 - UIU Move In Day
- Aug 22 - UIU Move In Day
- Aug 23 - Yard Waste Pick-up Day
- Aug 24-25 - Iowa Downtown Summit in Davenport
- Aug 28 - WU-STOCK!!

September

- Sept 1 - Organization Committee meeting
- Sept 6 - Labor Day - Office is CLOSED
- Sept 8 - Business Improvement Committee meeting
- Sept 14 - Board meeting
- Sept 21 - Design Committee meeting
- Sept 23-25 - Fall Retail Open Houses
- Sept 25-26 - Fayette County Mystery Tour

October

- Oct 1-2 - NEIA Artist Studio Tour
- Oct 6 - Organization Committee
- Oct 12 - Board meeting
- Oct 13 - Business Improvement Committee meeting
- Oct 15 - Newsletter articles due
- Oct 19 - Design Committee meeting



Governor's Volunteer Awards!

July 22, 2010, Cedar Falls, IA



Greg Ptacek, pictured to the right with Governor Chet Culver, was honored as one of the 2010 Governor's Volunteer Award Winners! He was honored in a special ceremony on July 22nd at the University of Northern Iowa's Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center. Program Director Robin Bostrom and VISTA Volunteer Ben Lewis were also award winners but were unable to attend the ceremony. Greg & Robin were nominated by Jane Seaton, State Main Street Program Coordinator with the Iowa Department of Economic Development. Ben was nominated by Jamie Nagel with the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service. Congratulations to Greg, Ben, and Robin! Thanks for all you do for our local Main Street Program.



* [Promotions Committee Update](#)

Let us entertain YOU!

By Erin Heins, Promotions Committee

It was a beautiful Thursday evening on the courthouse square when we welcomed Chad Elliott and his "One Horse Town Tour" recently. There was a good crowd there to listen to the free concert that Chad put on for us that night. He is an extremely talented singer/songwriter that we are hoping to have come back in the near future. And we hope that everyone will take the opportunity to come listen to some amazing music.

Now it's time to get our rears in gear! The Promotions Committee is gearing up for our Downtown Streetscape Project to launch soon. We are working with our downtown businesses to make customers aware of their back entrances for use when construction is in full force. We want to make it as easy as possible

for everyone to access the places that we all love to shop downtown.

We had hoped to hold our first-ever Alley Fest but Mother Nature had other plans as we were rained-out. Stay tuned, though, as there will be future Alley Fests. These will be great opportunities to stop in the back entrances of our downtown businesses to say hello. We think this will be a fun way for everyone to get through the inconvenience of the streetscape construction.

Also keep in mind that WU-Stock is just around the corner and will be here before we know it! The entertainers have been booked, and the games and activities have been planned.

*Thanks a bunch,
Karla!*

The Main Street West Union Board of Directors and committee members would like to sincerely thank Karla Organist for all of her outstanding work for the MSWU program while working in the FCED/Chamber/Main Street office. The projects she assisted with are too numerous to mention. However, special appreciation is expressed to her for the outstanding job she did in taking the rough copy for each quarterly MSWU newsletter the past four years and turning it into a fabulous publication each time!

Karla accepted another job opportunity in July, but fortunately she will still be an active volunteer in our MSWU program. We wish you the best in your new position, Karla, and thanks again for all your hard work in the office!

Connecting with the Community

By Sue Wolf

Organization Committee

In the past several months our committee has been busy working on the annual **Pledge Drive**. Between now and September 1, MSWU board members, committee members and other volunteers will be canvassing the community as we seek funds to enable us to sustain our Main Street West Union program. The Pledge Drive funds will pay for MSWU's operating budget; in short, it allows us to remain a viable organization. We are seeking to raise \$35,000 - a lofty goal, but a necessary one.

Won't you please help us? We will gratefully accept donations of any amount - whatever you feel you can afford. It all adds up! If you and your family think you could donate \$8.34 per month, that's \$100 per year! That's a big help to our program! Maybe it means collecting your spare change each month, or giving up a couple of cups of coffee or bottles of pop per month, or redeeming cans. If you could maintain the \$100 pledge for three years, that's a very generous \$300 donation to our Main Street program!

If you would like further information about our Main Street organization and all that it has accomplished within your community in the past four years, we have put together a terrific packet about our program. You'll be amazed at all we've done, and we think you'll agree that the return on any investment you make in MSWU is spectacular! We hope you'll give serious thought to pledging. If you are willing to donate and haven't been contacted, please call the Main Street/Chamber office (422-3070).

Last month we also had a booth at the Fayette County Fair. We shared space with the Chamber of Commerce, Fayette County Tourism Council and the West Union Police Department. All four groups are so proud of our community and our corner of northeast Iowa, and we wanted to share that with fairgoers. We also wanted to share our accomplishments through photos, brochures and conversation, as well as our vision for the future of West Union and Fayette County. We had fun visiting with so many people who stopped by our booth, and they had a good time playing our ring toss game to win neat prizes. Thanks to all of you who stopped by!

Next we look forward to WU-Stock on Saturday, August 28. Hope to see all of you there.

Sharing West Union

By Robin Bostrom

Main Street West Union Program Director

Summer is one of my favorite times of year. Those of you who know me, know that I don't like to be cold, so this summer with all it's hot and humid days suits me just fine! I love all the things that happen during the summer months: vacation with family and friends, family reunions, camp fires & gooey smores, fresh fruits and vegetables from the garden or farmers markets, boating - the list goes on and on. As we have traveled a bit this summer I always try to look at what draws people to the places we are visiting. Is there something unusual or a beautiful natural resource to enjoy? Is there great recreation or fabulous shopping? And is it really anything different that what we have at home? I think one of the things I realized is that we have so many of the same things right here in West Union, we just need to share them! For example, we had a recent email from a couple that was planning to visit our area and they wanted to know if there were any farmers or industries who gave tours of their operations here in West Union. They enjoy that type of activity when they travel and were looking for information. We are getting more and more requests for information like this and really need to think about how we can better share what we have here in West Union with others. Tourism dollars can provide significant income for a community, and while we might not think anyone would want to come here to look at dairy cows, a manufacturing plant, or porous pavers, we need to be open to the opportunities that lie right outside our front door.

Our marketing & branding workshops, sponsored by Main Street West Union, are helping us develop a plan to market the community to visitors highlighting many of the things we take for granted every day. Many residents and business owners participated in the in-take sessions with the team from Main Street Iowa and on August 12th the state team will return to share their ideas and advertising examples with the community. I think you will really like what they have developed including a new logo along with a marketing and advertising plan that everyone can adapt and use to share the story about what makes West Union a great place. Several Main Street committees have already completed projects that are helping direct visitors including the website, hotel/motel binders, and the promotional DVD. We hear over and over again that West Union is such a friendly place - those who took part in the in-take sessions kept saying "I don't know how to explain it - it's just the people." I think the marketing and branding team has done a great job of capturing that for us. I hope you'll come see their presentation, and continue watching for the ads and promotional materials to start rolling out this fall. There's so much good happening here in WU - we just have to share it!

main street west union presents the fourth Annual:

•music•

•Food•

•Friends•

WU•STOCK

AUGUST 28th, 2010

DOWNTOWN
west union

BRAWU Bike Ride

Crazy game shows!

Beanbag

Tournament

music by:

Left of center

Bruce Bearinger

Lion's club

Ice cream social

Food!

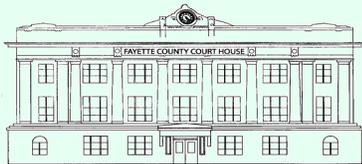
Super Soaker zone!

Beer garden

This Bud's for 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!