

Main Street In Motion

May 2009 - July 2009 The Main Street West Union Newsletter Volume 3, Issue 2

Special Points of Interest:

- "March Madness"
- Committee Reports & Information
- Meet our AmeriCorps VISTA member
- Rebate program announced
- Lending WU a Helping Hand
- Streetscape Update

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Join Main Street West Union for:
Sale, Sips & Samples!
 Saturday, May 9th, 2009
 at the Echo Valley Banquet Center, West Union

Sale, Sips & Samples?

By Dick Woodard
 Business Improvement Committee

What's with the weird name? Well, mark your calendar for **Saturday, May 9**, for a Main Street event to be held at the Echo Valley Banquet Center. Serving as a fundraiser for the West Union "Great Places" program, Main Street West Union is hosting this day of fun!



The Sale

Currently auction items are being solicited from local residents and businesses. As people are doing their spring-cleaning or simply wish to part with items not being used that may be of interest to others, many are considering donating to this special auction. To date, a number of quality items have been donated, including things like tables, wicker furniture, building materials, exercise equipment, etc. (Unfortunately no tires or clothes will be accepted.)



The actual sale will run from approximately **11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** with auctioneering donated by Skretta Auction Service. Lunch and bar service, provided by Echo Valley Banquet Center, will be available during the sale.

Sips and Samples

Following the sale, Bemiss Distributing and H & H Foodservice are graciously donating their staff and products for an event running from **3 to 5 p.m.** For a \$5 entry donation, participants may sample a wide array of new beers that Bemiss Distributing has to offer, plus tasty appetizers available from H & H Foodservice. Please come join the fun and learn more about the new products available from our local companies!

See you May 9th!



Have we got some fun for WU!

By Amie Johansen, Promotions Committee

Mark your calendars – the Promotions Committee has been busy planning events for some FUN in West Union!!

WU-Light Specials

Our first WU-Light Special at Miss Drew's Closet/Spirits & Such & Stephen's Windows went **SO well**, we've had another one, plus have two more booked for June and August!

The second gathering was held at Unionland Feed and Supply on April 30. Great treats and specials were available, and a door prize was presented to one lucky winner. Gary and Justin Steinlage enjoyed hosting this fun event.

In June, Haven Electronics & McJ's Embroidery Accents will be our spotlights; NAPA Auto Parts will be featured in August. Watch for dates and further details to come!

If you would like to get on our list of hosts, please call the Chamber/Main Street Office at 422-3070. We would like to feature a business every other month, and we would love to do one at *your* business. It's a great way to showcase your business with the help of our great Promotions Committee!!

Ladies' Night Out

One of our new events for this year is a Ladies' Night Out. The date has been set for Friday, May 29, at TAP'T Out with some "Cocktail Therapy" to start at 5:30 p.m. and dinner about 6:30 p.m., with a program to follow.

Register at the Chamber/Main Street Office by Friday, May 15, to be in a drawing for a FREE Extreme Makeover for the day of the event. Some local vendors will also be set up for your shopping pleasure. Call all your friends & plan to attend – This will be SO much fun!!

WU-STOCK

WU-STOCK is set for Saturday, Aug. 29, this year, and lots of planning is underway. The event will begin at 1:00 p.m. with the 2nd Annual Bean Bag Tournament. CEW Wrestling will follow from 2:30-5:30 p.m. with our very own **Shawn Peterson** featured to entertain all ages.

Directly following the wrestling will be two live bands. "Swing Crew" was here for RAGBRAI and is ready to come back and put on another great show... you might even get to go on stage and be a part of their act – they love crowd participation! "Bad Habits" will be our headliner for the night. Beau and the guys are preparing a great mix to listen and "groove" to until 11 p.m.

If your organization would like to have a part in the celebration, please contact the Chamber/Main Street Office at (563) 422-3070. It takes a lot of volunteers to make this a great event, so we welcome any and all to help with it.

As always, we welcome new, energetic people to join our team in the fun of planning events here in our great town of West Union – just let us know!

Divas & Dining



Spend a relaxing evening among friends & engage in some cocktail therapy!

*Where: Tap't Out Stein-n-Dine
When: Friday, May 29th, 2009
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Cost: \$12.00, Dinner & Entertainment
Cash bar available*



Mark Your Calendars...

May

- May 9th** - Sale, Sips & Samples!
- May 10** - NF Baccalaureate
- May 11** - WU Trash Pick-up Day
Ribbon Cutting at NF track
- May 12** - MS Board Meeting
- May 13-14** - Main Street Training, Ottumwa
- May 17** - NF Graduation
- May 17-22** - Small Business Week
- May 18** - Web Strategy Workshop
- May 25** - Memorial Day, office closed
- May 28** - Rain Barrel Workshop
- May 29** - Divas & Dining!
- May 30** - Aquatic Center opens

June

- June 2-4** - Streetscape Design Sessions
- June 6** - Dairy Day!
- June 9** - KCRG TV's "Our Town" visit
MS Board Meeting
- June 11-12** - Market Analysis Training
- June 16-18** - Streetscape Design Sessions
- June 18** - WU-Light Special @ McJ's & Haven Electronics
- June 27-28** - WU Triathlon

July

- July 3** - Independence Day observed, office closed
- July 4** - Independence Day Chamber Fireworks
- July 14** - MS Board Meeting
- July 28-29** - Main Street University
- July 28-31** - Fayette County Fair

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



Energy Audit Program - Best Energy Saving Practices Implemented in the Downtown



Parking Lotto - Best Business/Financial Assistance Program or Event

MAIN STREET AWARDS!



Volunteer of the Year!



3-year program recognition



National Main Street Conference - Chicago!



WEST UNION IS GETTING GREENER!

By Michelle Zander, Green Pilot VISTA

Green is becoming more than just a buzz word or change in season for West Union residents, businesses and youth. The interest and excitement about protecting our environment is contagious. After I presented information to our seventh graders on storm water detention they were inspired to start their own rain garden. While our demonstration project will end up being much smaller scale than what the kids wanted, I've already witnessed them sharing their knowledge. Even the principal grabbed a shovel to dig in and get green!



After hearing about permeable paving solutions from Curt Richey and Borgert, businesses and home owners were laying out plans to apply pavers to their own sidewalks and driveways. Using Aqua-Bric permeable pavers by Borgert, we can realize the benefits of Bio-Aquifer Storm Systems (BASS). The pavers meet ADA standards, EPA storm water requirements, and achieve significant savings over other paving alternatives. The system outperforms others without cracking and deteriorating from freeze/thaw cycles.



Several people have expressed interest in growing a green roof since Moss Roofing, ER & Prairie Systems presented energy efficient roofing solutions. Many options are available besides planting sedum on your roof. Stop by the Chamber/Main Street office to see paver samples, pick up brochures, to learn more about funding opportunities, or just to visit about green practices.



The rain barrel workshop was such a success that we've scheduled another for May 28th at 7pm at the Fayette County Fairgrounds in the 4H building. RSVP by calling 422-3070 before May 22nd. To cover the cost of supplies, good will donations are being accepted by Main Street West Union.



Please extend gratitude to the Fair Board and Fairgrounds Manager, Jeff Thoms for facilitating many of our "go green" events and for donating the use of land for a community garden.

From basketball season to pledge season

By Sue Wolf, Organization Committee

Our committee spent several months planning for our recent Main Street annual meeting/fundraiser, held on March 27. This year we chose a "Main Street March Madness" basketball theme.

After brainstorming ideas for a theme, much time and effort goes into preparing for such a big event – the food and beverages, the entertainment, the ticket sales, promotion/publicity, the venue, and, perhaps most importantly, rounding up *lots* of willing and enthusiastic volunteers to help carry out all the various tasks involved!

We sincerely thank all of you who helped us in any way with our fundraiser this year – whether you volunteered your time and talents, purchased tickets and/or attended our event. *Your loyal and generous support is invaluable to our Main Street West Union program!*

After filling up on tasty maid-rites, hotdogs, fish sandwiches and the various accompaniments, those who attended then enjoyed the Granny Basketball games against some brave local talent – our high school varsity basketball girls and some of the guys from the Wednesday Night League. If you've never watched Granny Basketball before, it's quite different from today's basketball – just ask those who participated!

And how about all those talented Danceline and Just for Kix dancers who entertained the crowd during the halftimes? Weren't they terrific? And where will you find cuter, more enthusiastic cheerleaders?

We're also fortunate to have such a fine high school facility in which to host some of our events.

The proceeds from our "March Madness" fundraiser will be reinvested in Main Street West Union community projects.

Thanks again, one and all!

State officials visit

On March 17-18, Debbie Flanders of the Iowa Department of Economic Development and Janet McCannon, a Main Street consultant from Burlington, visited West Union.

In addition to meeting with MSWU board members, the two women talked with each of the four MSWU committees, as well as city officials. Debbie and Janet went through our records and our project work plans; they shared ideas with us; they let us know how we can continue to build on the strengths of our program. Most of all, they offered plenty of encouragement to keep up the good work.

This visit was yet further evidence of how much support Main Street Iowa gives to its local community programs.

Pledge Drive

The Organization Committee is also in charge of the annual Pledge Drive. We are in the planning stages of that endeavor at the moment.

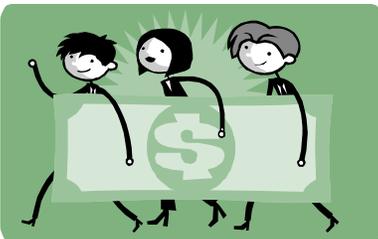
It is through this important Pledge Drive that we collect vital funding to operate our Main Street West Union program. **Without the Pledge Drive, we would have no Main Street program; it's that simple.**

Many of you have been faithful contributors to our Pledge Drives, and you are so very appreciated!

When the Pledge Drive begins (likely in the next month or so), we hope you will offer your financial support, either through an annual contribution or, better yet, through our three-year pledge program. We also ask you to encourage your relatives, friends, neighbors, and co-workers to contribute to our Pledge Drive, as well.

We acknowledge that we are all experiencing difficult economic times right now. Maybe you can't contribute as much as you'd like to our Pledge Drive; that's OK – every little bit helps!

We feel very strongly that our Main Street program is essential to the growth, strength and vitality of our community. An investment in our program is an investment in ourselves, our families, our future.



Promotional DVD in the works

By Dick Woodard
Business Improvement Committee

The Business Improvement Committee has a number of projects in the works for 2009. We are working cooperatively with the Organization and Promotions committees on the upcoming "Sale, Sips, and Samples" event to be held on Saturday, May 9. (See article on front page for details.)

Our committee was thrilled to receive financial assistance from the Fayette County Foundation to assist in the cost of producing a **promotional DVD**, which will highlight many of the positive features and quality of life in West Union. DVDs will be made available to individuals and companies inquiring about moving to our community.

Also in the works is a fun campaign to encourage folks to **shop locally**. With the assistance of the Promotions Committee, we hope to line up a fun program, working hand in hand with our local merchants. Watch for details in the upcoming weeks to see how you may earn discounts on purchases made right here in West Union!

The Business Improvement Committee will also be involved with the upcoming **market analysis** to learn more about products or services that may be needed in West Union. With that information we hope to pass on the details to our local merchants and give them an opportunity to expand their product lines to meet these needs, or use the data to encourage new businesses to come to our community.

WU-LIGHT SPECIAL!

4:00 - 6:00 p.m. June 18th

McJ's Embroidery Accents
Haven Electronics

Mystery Picture: The Avalon stood on Vine Street in a location which is now the south dining area of Gus & Tony's Town House.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Greg Ptacek, MSWU Board President

For this newsletter I promise to be brief.

As many of you may know, Main Street West Union is a strong supporter of the proposed Downtown Streetscape Project. Currently the project is going through a research and development phase to determine the cost and feasibility of various facets of the project.

During the next few weeks, a number of meetings will be held in West Union, both day and evening, to allow residents to become updated on the progress of the project, as well as to offer suggestions and voice concerns about the project. Now is the time to have your voice heard, so please try to attend one or all of these meetings. This project is not for Main Street; it is for West Union and all of its citizens.

Hard at work

In addition to the Streetscape, all of the Main Street West Union committees are hard at work on other projects.

The Design Committee is continuing with its Façade Grant Program and once again will partner with the Boy Scouts to help Michael O'Brien with his Eagle Scout project. Michael is working on the design and construction of

a community kiosk for downtown West Union.

The Promotions Committee is putting together some great retail promotional activities, in addition to working with the Chamber on Dairy Day activities. (Be sure to see Amie Johansen's article in this newsletter for more details.)

The Organization Committee is developing plans for the upcoming Pledge Drive and is also partnering with the Business Improvement Committee for an MSWU auction event on May 9 to raise funds for the "Great Places" program. (Dick Woodard's front-page article in this newsletter tells you all about the fun auction/beer-tasting event on May 9.)

"March Madness," our annual fundraiser which was recently held, raised approximately \$2000 for the "Great Places" projects.

The Business Improvement Committee will also be the driving force in the Market Analysis project that will begin shortly.

Truly, the four points of the Main Street philosophy are at work in West Union to make the community a better place to shop, work and live.



'A positive, welcoming West Union'

By Robin Bostrom, MSWU Program Director

As I am writing this article today, I can't help but think about the closing of one of our major employers, Atwood, which closed its doors April 17, 2009.

Concerns about the employees, their families, and the impact the closing will have on our community have been talked about among community leaders and residents alike. These are good, hardworking people who are the most recent examples of a struggling national economy. "What could we have done to prevent this?" is a question many of us have wrestled with, and now we must address how to move our community forward.

Your help needed with Market Analysis

One way that Main Street West Union is looking to assist is through an in-depth Market Analysis study that we have recently started. The State Main Street staff will be assisting us in this process of evaluating our local economy, the current trends, and help us determine what types of business are the best fit for West Union. It is important that we take the time to really talk to customers, business owners, and evaluate Census data to help us determine what types of business and industry we should be focusing on in our recruitment efforts for West Union.

We hope that if you are contacted in the next few months about the study that you will participate as much as you can. And if you would like to help in this process, we will be needing volunteers to help in many ways.

Putting out the welcome mat

It is also important to note that the responsibility of making West Union a thriving community does not just rest with one entity. While elected city officials play a major role, it is really all of us working together that will help our community grow. As we work to find a new company to fill the Atwood building, it will be important to remember that we must put out the "Welcome" sign right away. Site selectors for new companies often visit communities without anyone even knowing they are here, in order to get a good feel for the vibe of the city. They will gauge the friendliness of a community by the way they are treated in the local businesses and on the street and by the way a community looks as they drive around town. Let's all work to make sure that what they see, hear, and feel is a positive, welcoming West Union!

The word on the street is ...

By Jon Biederman, Design Committee

The Streetscape concept and schematic design are well underway. We have had two workshops with the design team, city staff, and the public. These meetings have focused on background information, cross-section components of the new street and how they are proportioned, intersection layout, and storm water management concepts.

We are fortunate to have a wide street right of way in the downtown area. Building front to building front is 100 feet. This gives us many possibilities in proportioning the sidewalk area, parking lanes, and travel lanes. Much discussion has taken place as to the width of these entities, with an emphasis

on usability for the whole population and maintenance.

The **street cross-section** is not finalized, but the current plan has the following:

- * 15-ft. sidewalk area (8-ft. pedestrian zone, 7-ft. amenity zone);
- * 16-ft. parking;
- * 5-ft. bicycle lane;
- * 10-ft. travel lane;
- * 8-ft. flex lane (delivery, snow removal, etc.);
- * 10-ft. travel lane;
- * 5-ft. bicycle lane;
- * 16-ft. parking; and
- * 15-ft. sidewalk.

It is proposed to have differing surfacing colors/textures to

clearly delineate the various zones. This should provide a very functional downtown street.

Storm water management concepts discussed and planned for use within the street include a permeable paver system and bioretention cells. We have just completed soil borings throughout the project area. Following laboratory analysis of the encountered soils, we will be able to tailor a storm water management plan that works best with the soils on the project site.

Baseline hydrologic data is being collected this spring, summer, and fall within the project area, as well as along Otter

Creek above, through, and below the city of West Union. This will amount to detailed rainfall data, current storm runoff characteristics, flow within Otter Creek, and chemical analysis. This same data collection will take place following the streetscape project to determine what effects the improvements made on the downstream storm water flow characteristics.

Design will be developing quickly over the next few months. We have several public meetings scheduled in this time frame. Please take the opportunity to attend these meetings to learn about what is being proposed and to offer your input.

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

Greg Ptacek, President
Ron Saboe, Vice President
Troy Johansen, Secretary
Dick Woodard, Treasurer
Robin Bostrom, Executive Director
Mike Baldwin
Neal Bentley
Jon Biederman
Gail Hackman
Erin Heins
Mike Lauer
Mark Moser
Sue North
Jim Updegraff
Joe Winter



Mystery Building

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

The answer is hidden somewhere in this issue!