

The Light From the Window

**Warsaw Community
Development Corporation
(574) 267-6419**

Summer 2009

Shop Local Promotion

One downtown retailer recently made the WCDC aware of a national "shop local" campaign called "the 3/50 project." With a tag line "Save your local economy three stores at a time," the project's goal is to promote shopping in locally owned businesses while thanking customers for the positive impact that decision has on the local economy.

The concept was developed by Cinda Baxter, an independent stationery store owner. Cinda is widely recognized as an expert in the gift and stationery industry, and is considered a pioneer of social networking in the retail industry.

In essence Cinda's strategy boils down to "Pick 3, spend

50, save the economy." She encourages consumers to think about three local stores they would really miss if they disappeared and she urges them to spend \$50 per month in locally owned businesses.

There are several facts and statistics that help support the theory of the 3/50 project. Visit www.the350project.net for more information.

The WCDC would like to work with businesses to develop a local 3/50 campaign. Most materials are available free of charge, but there would be a cost for radio and newspaper ads. If several businesses work together on this project, it should help to make it affordable.

Another promotion underway encourages patrons to spend \$20 at a local business on June 20th. Participating businesses must offer a \$20 special on the 20th, and their coupon/special would be featured in a Times Union ad on June 18th. Each business gets a 2 x 3 ad for \$20. Contact the Times Union Advertising Dept. at 267-3111 by June 15th to participate.

Please contact the WCDC office if you are interested in being a part of the 3/50 project. WCDC can also provide additional information about either the 350 project or 20/\$20 promotion. You do not have to be a downtown business to participate. Phone 267-6419 or e-mail wcdc@kconline.com.

Need Coupons/Flyers/Brochures/Menus for Northern Indiana Lakes Festival

The WCDC is in charge of preparing 500 goodie bags for attendees at the Northern Indiana Lakes Festival on Saturday, June 27th.

This is a great opportunity for downtown businesses to provide brochures, flyers, menus or coupons that can be stuffed into the bags. It is not necessary to provide 500 items because each bag does not have to

be the same. If you can spare 500 items that is great, but if you can provide 50 to 100 items that will at least get the word out about your business to a significant number of people.

Items need to be turned into the WCDC office by Tuesday, June 16th in order to allow plenty of time to prepare the bags. I'll be glad to come pick things up. Items may also be dropped off

at the WCDC office after hours. There is a mail slot next to the front door.

Please call (267-6419) or e-mail wcdc@kconline.com if you have questions or would like more information. I'll also be glad to come by your business to talk with you.

Thanks!

Cindy

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- The WCDC office can provide info on window washing services .
- The next round of Matching Façade Grant apps is due by August 31, 2009
- Thinking of a major renovation to your downtown building? Info about a low interest revolving loan program is available thru WCDC.

Lincoln Highway Celebration/Downtown Days

Plans are underway for the 2009 Lincoln Highway/Downtown Days Celebrations. Lincoln Highway sales will be held on Friday, August 7th. Pending approval by the Commissioners booth space will be available on the courthouse lawn.

The Warsaw Parks and Recreation Department will host a "Family Carnival" at Central Park on the evening of August 7th from 6—9 pm. This event will feature fun and games for the whole family.

Activities planned for Saturday, August 8th, include a 5K "Race Thru Town," the Penguin Point/Warsaw Optimist Club Big

Wheel Race, the "Downtown Criterium" cycling event, and entertainment throughout the day under the big tent.

Downtown Days will feature several kiddie rides including a ferris wheel, airplanes, swings and a moonwalk. Nat City Bank will host its annual "Watermelon Feast."

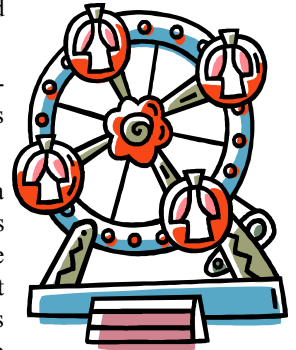
The Bowen Center will sponsor a car show on Saturday evening, and plans are being made for a band and beverage tent.

In response to public demand efforts are being made to get a group to sponsor a fish tent, as well as an elephant ear or funnel cake vendor. Due to the manpower

needed, as well as the expense, a parade is doubtful unless someone steps forward to help fund and organize it.

Ideas and volunteers are always welcome.

Fundraising is a challenge this year, but the WCDC Event Committee is working hard to obtain funding for the summer events.



Indiana Main Street Regional Workshop

The WCDC will host a Main Street Regional Workshop at the Warsaw Community Public Library on Wednesday, June 17th.

Registration begins at 9:00 a.m., and the program will start at 9:30. Several speakers and topics will be featured throughout the day. An agenda is included with this newsletter.

The fee is \$20.00 per person (includes

lunch) for each individual that attends from a business that is not a member of the WCDC.

WCDC member businesses and WCDC board members may attend any of the workshop sessions free of charge. Lunch may be purchased for \$8.00.

Attendees must pre-register in order that we can insure adequate seating, handouts and refreshments. Reservations need to be

made no later than noon on Friday, June 12th. Please contact the WCDC office at 267-6419 or e-mail wcdc@kconline.



Bicycle Racks



Bicycle racks are coming to downtown Warsaw! Several people expressed interest in riding their bicycles to downtown Warsaw, but also noted concerns that there wasn't any place to secure bicycles.

Sometime in the next few weeks a serpentine bicycle rack will be installed somewhere in the vicinity of Giverny Fitness or the City Parking Lot on South Buffalo Street.

After there has been an opportunity to evaluate how well the first rack is working out, it is quite possible that additional

bicycle racks may be installed. Please direct questions, concerns and requests to the WCDC office.

Many thanks to City Councilman Kyle Babcock and Mayor Wiggins for working to make sure that the bicycle rack became a reality. Thanks also to Jon Garber and Warsaw Parks and Recreation for their assistance with the project.

It should be noted that there is currently a bicycle rack positioned on the lawn near the east entrance of the Kosciusko County Courthouse.

DeGraff Memorials, A Fresh Concept in Design

Please welcome Kevin DeGraff and DeGraff Memorials to downtown Warsaw.

Kevin has spent twenty-five years learning every aspect of the monument industry, and has the unique ability to offer custom tributes with a personal touch.

Kevin stresses that a memorial needs to achieve three goals. It needs to be a tribute and reflection of your loved one, a record of the individual's life, and a beautiful work of art for everyone to admire.

DeGraff describes himself as a counselor, a historian, and an artist. He sets himself

apart from similar businesses by spending time with the family to learn what made their loved one unique and special. Choosing a monument at DeGraff Memorials is definitely not a "cookie cutter" process.



Kevin indicates that this caring concept doesn't have to cost more. If budget is a factor, less expensive granite colors and shapes can be used to create an elegant custom memorial.

Vases, lights, florals and other items to compliment cemetery lots are also available.

DeGraff Memorials is located at 103 E. Center Street (next to Kelainey's), and Kevin offers a no-obligation consultation. Business hours are M/W/F from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., as well as by appointment.



Flowers, Trees & General Downtown Maintenance

The downtown trees and flower beds are really starting to look beautiful. While it is easy to take them for granted, it is important to note the commitment that the City of Warsaw has made to maintain them.

The cost of the flowers and trees is just the tip of the iceberg. Under the direction of Larry Plummer, Maria and her crew from Warsaw Parks and Recreation maintain 80 flower beds on a daily basis. Not only do the beds require an astounding amount of water (in an average day the large 325 gallon water container gets filled 4-6 times), everything gets fertilized every 14 days.

Due to the magnitude of maintaining the City's flower beds, the Park Department is not able to assist individual merchants and building owners in watering their personal window boxes, planters, etc.

In addition to the actual physical work, there is also a great deal of paperwork involved in maintaining the downtown streetscape. Daily records are kept on watering activities, new plantings and general maintenance.

There are lots of things that residents and merchants can do to help. It's important to keep pets out of the flower beds because

the ammonia in their urine destroys trees and plants. Chemicals such as Round-Up and other weed killing materials should not be used near the flower beds. On a windy day those chemicals can infiltrate the beds and destroy the plants.

Street Superintendent Lacy Francis also cautions downtown residents about piling mounds of snow in the flower beds during the winter months. The snow gets laden with salt, and consequently that has an adverse effect on the trees and plants.

Residents and merchants should not trim the trees in the downtown planters. The Warsaw Parks and Recreation Department assumes responsibility for the trees, and they will trim them on an "as needed" basis. All of the trees were trimmed in 2008. If there is a tree that is in need of trimming, please contact Larry Plummer at 372-9554.

A few of the trees on Market Street may need to be replaced. Right now they are under observation, and if necessary they will be replaced during an appropriate planting period.

The planters, trees, flowers, etc. are property of the City of Warsaw, and altering the trees or anything in the planter boxes, as

well as allowing pets in the planter boxes, or doing anything that might damage the trees and plants is considered vandalism. There are city ordinances (with fines attached) that deal with such infractions.

City departments have also requested that merchants and residents refrain from moving trash containers and benches. Several of the benches have already been bolted in place to keep them from being moved.

Owners of private parking lots are responsible for weed control in those lots, and they are encouraged to keep lots clean and free of weeds. Building owners and merchants are urged to keep sidewalks weed free in front of their buildings, as well as at rear entrances.

The Street Department sweeps downtown streets every Thursday night. It is helpful if residents park vehicles in parking lots on Thursday evenings so that the trucks can get in close to the curbs to remove debris.

When you see the city crews out working, be sure to thank them for everything they do to keep our downtown beautiful. Many thanks also to the residents, merchants and building owners for doing their part to keep downtown Warsaw vibrant & attractive.



117 West Center Street
 Warsaw, Indiana 46580
 Phone: 574-267-6419
 Fax: 574-269-2351
 E-mail: wcdc@kconline.com



● ...working to have a light
 in every window

Fusion Restaurant Rumors
There have been some rumors floating around town that Fusion Restaurant is closing. Owners Scott Howell and Paul Nowak are adamant about the fact that Fusion Restaurant is not closing. The restaurant is open Monday thru Saturday & catering is available.

Optimism About Downtown's Abilities to Withstand the Recession and Rebound

The past several months have been difficult for most retailers. While dollar stores and some fast food chains seem to be weathering the recession, it has been much more difficult for the average business to eke out a meager profit, and many businesses are struggling just to break even.

Despite the fact that there is still no clear cut end to the nation's economic misfortunes, retail forecasters remain optimistic about the ability of downtowns to rebound.

Most downtowns are diversified, mixed-use places, and that fact in particular may speed the economic recovery of small businesses, or stimulate new growth in downtown areas.

Downtown Warsaw most certainly fits into the category of being a diversified, mixed-use space. It combines housing, govern-

ment services, offices, banks, restaurants, a community library, niche service businesses, unique retail shops, a lake, a park and gardens to create a diverse downtown infrastructure. These attributes, coupled with the beauty of the streetscape and funding opportunities for downtown building renovations, should go a long way toward keeping downtown Warsaw viable.

Throughout the country malls that have catered to many of the national chains are experiencing large numbers of vacancies. Due to the fact that several large chains have folded, those vacancies are not likely to be filled anytime soon. The onslaught of vacancies also seems to have had an adverse effect on mall/strip mall maintenance.

The current national emphasis on "buying local" should help to solidify downtown areas. There is some thought that consum-

ers are now focusing more on value than price. The cost of travel and the service provided by local retailers is really beginning to play into shopping decisions.

Downtowns have also typically supported entrepreneurship. Downtown rents tend to be more affordable than their mall counterparts. Many downtown buildings offer unique, historical features that add to the ambience of the business. Generally speaking there is more flexibility with downtown rental opportunities because many of the properties are locally owned.

Downtowns also offer a "sense of place" that is becoming increasingly important to families. There seems to be a renewed interest in the quality of life as opposed to the sheer act of consumption. It appears that downtowns can, and should serve as a source of enjoyment and community pride.