

The Light From the Window

**Warsaw Community
Development Corporation**
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2010 BUSINESS WRAP-UP

Winter 2010/2011

Most downtown Warsaw businesses are hanging tough despite the economic recession.

Reader's World, Ferrin's Fruit Winery and Simple Settings closed their doors in 2010, but several new businesses opened.

Downtown Warsaw welcomed two restaurants and one catering business. Greek's Pizzeria and 8WW Cuisines have been great additions to the downtown restaurant scene. Viand Chef Catering Services opened in the Key Bank Building.

The former Bishop's Books location became home to the St. Regis Club. Dave Gustafson made several changes to the building to transition it into an upscale facility. It now

boasts a comfortable reception area, meeting room, workout center, sauna and much more.

Lisa Robinson purchased the Bishop's Books inventory and she operates a new/used bookstore, "The Next Chapter," at 116 S. Buffalo Street, Suite B.

Cindy Dobbins created a downtown variety store, Buffalo Street Emporium, at the former Ruby location, 116 S. Buffalo Street. The shop features office & scrapbook supplies, cards, party goods and candies.

Dr. Kevin Day opened Day Chiropractic at 118 W. Market St. Dr. Kevin's practice has been a great addition to downtown Warsaw.

CenturyLink reestablished a

retail/service presence in downtown Warsaw in the former United Credit Union location at 122 E. Center Street. Consumers love the convenience.

Downtown relocations in 2010 included:

- ◆ PNC Bank (corner of Center and Buffalo St. to the corner of Market and Washington)
- ◆ Attorney Chris Kehler (109 E. Market St. to 301 N. Lake Street)
- ◆ WCDC (117 W. Center St, Suite A to Suite C)

As 2010 draws to a close we can be thankful that we continue to have steady activity in downtown Warsaw.

SPECIAL NOTES

Matching Façade Grant Funds: *Matching Grant Funds are still available. Applications for the third grant period will be due January 15th, and projects must be completed by March 31st in order to qualify for 2010 funds.*

Downtown Buildings: *The WCDC maintains a current monthly listing of properties that are available for lease or purchase in downtown Warsaw. Please refer interested parties to the WCDC website: www.warsawcdc.org.*

2011 FIRST FRIDAY EVENTS

The final First Friday event for 2010 was well attended despite the cold weather. Santa visited with almost 300 children and many people took advantage of the free sleigh and wagon rides.

The next First Friday event is scheduled for February, 4th. It will be a "Fire and Ice" festival featuring ice carvers from the Michiana Ice Carver's Association.

Sponsors are needed for this event as the



blocks of ice are quite expensive. The cost to sponsor a 300 pound block of ice is \$135, and the cost for a 600 pound block of ice is \$195. Sponsors will be acknowledged in the flyers and other publicity for the event.

Volunteers are needed if Warsaw's downtown retail merchants are to continue hosting First Friday events throughout 2011. A great deal of effort goes into the planning, set-up and clean-up for each event. Since most of the downtown businesses are not heavily staffed, it is a challenge for merchants to take care of activities within their shops as well as on the streets.

The Downtown Retail Merchants are appealing to community groups/organizations to assist with First Friday events. People are needed to man an information booth and to assist with set-up and clean-up activities. The First Friday Committee would like to have different groups commit to helping each month so that it does not create an undue hardship on anyone.

Interested individuals and organizations please contact Keith Reinholt at 267-5940 or Cindy Dobbins at 267-6419, or e-mail wcdc@kconline.com.

HOMELESS SHELTER UPDATE

The WCDC Board recently met with Eric Lane and Fellowship Missions board members. The WCDC learned that the group had looked at the Trinamic property on S. Buffalo Street as well as the Brennan building in downtown Warsaw. While the Trinamic property was deemed better suited to the group's long-term needs, the purchase price was not within their budget.

WCDC board members encouraged Fel-

lowship Missions to put together a business plan and come back to the WCDC Board. The WCDC expressed interest/support in helping Fellowship Missions secure the best location for present and future needs.

The City of Warsaw has agreed to provide Fellowship Missions with a temporary facility on N. Buffalo Street to house women and children, and men's accommodations are also in place on S. Buffalo Street.

Contrary to the negative letters/news reports, Warsaw's downtown merchants were never against the homeless or a homeless shelter. Downtown merchants regularly worked with Eric Lane and Fellowship Missions during 2010 First Friday events. In addition to hosting fundraisers the group also helped with several activities.

Homelessness is a community problem that everyone must work together to solve.

SIDEWALK DUTIES

Warsaw has not experienced much in the way of any major snowstorms this winter, however, it is doubtful that winter will pass without treating us to more of the white stuff.

WCDC is requesting that merchants/building owners be prepared to clean the sidewalks in front of their premises in order to keep the downtown sidewalks safe for customers/visitors.

City ordinances require occupants to remove snow by 9:00 a.m. each day, and to continue to keep sidewalks clean throughout the day.

Persons that are unable to shovel their walks should contact WCDC for information about businesses/individuals that can provide this service. Please call 267-6419 for information.

"DECK THE DISTRICT" WINNERS

There were so many great window displays and wreaths in downtown Warsaw that it was really difficult to pick a winner.

In the "People's Choice" category for best wreath and/or window display the prize goes to the Shuttle Shop. Owner Kathy Carvey created a wreath decked out with handmade mittens. Honorable mentions included Merle Norman/Studio 116,

Vision It Now and Dennie House.

The "People's Choice" award for best interior ambience went to Dennie House. Rex's Rendezvous received an honorable mention.

Vision It Now was the "Judge's Choice"



for the best wreath and/or window display. Concepts in Stone and Blue Moon Shoes tied for honorable mention. Winners will receive certificates and advertising dollars.

Please note that in 2011 the WCDC will be working with the First Friday Committee to develop a Victorian Christmas theme for "decking the district" and celebrating the December First Friday.

2011 GOALS

With the approach of each new year Warsaw Community Development Corporation makes it a point to set new goals for the upcoming year.

The first priority each and every year is to try to recruit occupants for empty downtown buildings. Needless to say with the downturn in the economy this is quite a challenge. I have already been actively speaking with potential occupants for a few of the vacant downtown buildings. If the leads come to fruition I believe that the businesses will be great additions to down-

town Warsaw.

A second goal in 2011 will be to find a way to continue with the First Friday activities that began in June of 2010. The events are a lot of work, but have been well received by the community. Funding and volunteers are two of the challenges that will need to be met in 2011.

The third project for 2011 is an update of the WCDC website. It has been several years since any improvements have been made to the site, and it is definitely in need

of some TLC. Visitors to the site more than tripled during several months of 2010 (from approximately 200 hits to 700 hits/mo.) so it is important for the WCDC to maintain this method of communication. A more user-friendly design is already in the works, but it is contingent on funding.

Suggestions and ideas are always welcome. Please feel free to call me at 267-6419 or e-mail wcdc@kconline.com

Cindy Dobbins

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