



THE WORD ON THE STREET

OFFICE OF LT. GOVERNOR PAT QUINN

February & March 2007 UPDATE

RECORD BREAKING MAIN STREET DAY AT THE CAPITOL!



The largest number of “Main Streeters” in Illinois history joined Lt. Governor Pat Quinn for the annual **Main Street Day at the Capitol** on Feb. 22. Local program displays filled the halls, giving Main Street representatives a chance to show their civic pride to legislators.

Quinn led a rally in the Rotunda, calling on Illinois lawmakers to pass two pieces of legislation that will help revitalize downtown areas.

HB 1355, sponsored by Rep. Rich Brauer, requires the state to give preference to historic properties located in central business districts when locating its facilities. The Illinois Arts Districts Act, SB 660, would allow Illinois communities to create arts districts and offer tax breaks to local artists and gallery owners, promoting vibrant art

communities. The bill is sponsored by Sen. Terry Link, who joined the rally.

At the rally, Quinn noted that preparations for the Lincoln Bicentennial are already under way.

“In February 2009, Illinois communities will have a one-of-a-kind opportunity to roll out the red carpet for the world,” Quinn said. “As we celebrate the 200th birthday of President Abraham Lincoln, the Land of Lincoln must be ready to showcase its unique ties to his life and legacy.”

Many Main Street communities showcase their connections to Lincoln history, making them important partners in the Bicentennial planning.

Main Street Day at the Capitol ended with a luncheon and program update. Thanks to all who joined us for the best Main Street Day ever!

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TRAINING

New Executive Director Training was held Jan. 30 and 31 in Springfield.

Eight new Directors attended, along with several Board Presidents. From left to right (front): Rita Pacyga, Blue Island; Penny Lawyer, Macomb; Sara McGibany, Alton; Kathleen Hanrahan, Forest Park; Elizabeth Gelman, Lombard; Randy Nelson, Libertyville;

(back row): Greg Koos and Peggy Flynn, Bloomington; Spring Ramsey, Mascoutah; Marsha Walker, Rock Island; Daylyn Wells and Glenna Ashley, Decatur; Michelle Skryd and Sean Gallagher, Berwyn.



The two-day training focused on Main Street history and the Four-Point Approach™. The Ten Criteria for Recognition, Letter of Agreement, monthly reports, design services and the Illinois Main Street website were discussed. Special emphasis was given to volunteer management, the roles of board and staff, and work plans.

The sessions were presented by Illinois Main Street staff Wendy Bell, Anna Margaræt Borntreger, Darius Bryjka, Navonna Bunn, Les Cavada and Anthony Rubano.

Leadership is not so much about technique and methods as it is about opening the heart.

Leadership is about inspiration—of oneself and of others. Great leadership is about human experiences, not processes. Leadership is not a formula or a program, it is a human activity that comes from the heart and considers the hearts of others. It is an attitude, not a routine.

- Lance Secretan, Industry Week

ILLINOIS MAIN STREET VIDEO TRAINING

Illinois Main Street has developed a new way to provide board and committee training to Main Street Communities.

Navonna Bunn coordinated the project – one of only two in the nation offering Main Street program training via videoconference.



The video training option allows new volunteers to learn more about their roles and responsibilities without having to travel to an out-of-town training session. It also allows the speaker to train volunteers in multiple Main Street communities simultaneously.

Volunteers can download the PowerPoint presentations and other handouts and materials from the Illinois Main Street website's Member's Section ahead of time and take them to the training session.

At the videoconference sessions, participants can see and hear the speaker's PowerPoint presentation and ask questions or make comments. Each session lasts about two hours.

So far, 272 people have participated. As with every new project, there have been some technological glitches, but those are being addressed. A survey of participants found overwhelmingly positive response to the new training option. Another set of videoconference training sessions is planned for later this year.

CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM

Make Downtown
Your
Destination
in 2007.



Visit an
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Cultural tourism is booming throughout the United States. According to a 2003 survey by the Travel Industry Association of America, 81% of American adult travelers – more than 118 million tourists – said they included a visit to a cultural attraction or event on at least one out-of-town trip in the previous year.

The study also found that cultural tourists stay longer – 5.2 nights vs. 3.4 for all travelers – and that they also spend more money at their destination, averaging \$623 per visit (not including transportation costs), \$166 above the average.

Given those statistics, it's clearly worthwhile for Main Street communities to keep those cultural tourists in mind in preparing event calendars for the summer travel season. It also shows just how important a major coordinated statewide event, such as the Lincoln Bicentennial, can be for communities around Illinois.

Illinois Main Street's upcoming Director's Workshop, to be held May 2 and 3 in Vandalia, focus on how to attract cultural tourists by identifying and marketing cultural heritage assets in your community. Speakers will include Leslie Townsen from Historic Southern Indiana, Nicky Stratton from Looking for Lincoln, and Kay Smith from the Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. Main Street Directors Linda Miller, of Monticello, Rachel Baker, of Pittsfield, and Lori Fairfield, of Pontiac, will hold a panel discussion.

The May/June issue of Midwest Living will include an ad encouraging summer travelers to visit our Illinois Main Street website. The site is featuring two major promotions: "Lazy, Hazy,

Crazy Days on Main Street," highlighting events between June 1 and July 4th, and "Main Street Salutes 'The Music Man,'" celebrating the classic Broadway musical's 50th anniversary, featuring events from July 4th through Labor Day. Both promotions are targeted to bring cultural heritage tourists – and their travel dollars – to your Main Street community this summer.

A 'Volunteer Career'

For 13 years, Illinois Main Street Program Coordinator Wendy Bell has been volunteering her time and talents as director of the Illinois Fair Queen Pageant. Wendy is only the second director in the program's 48-year history.



The state pageant is held each January during the Illinois Association of Agricultural Fairs convention. About 70 local fair queens compete for the state title.

The event includes two days of interviews and rehearsals, two preliminaries – before audiences of 1,000 – featuring contestant speeches, dazzling displays of gowns and yes, (one-piece) swimsuits.



This year's winner is Ashley Willner of Lake County, shown at left. .

The state queen becomes a summer employee for the Illinois Department of Agriculture and acts as spokesperson for state and local fairs. She travels more than 12,000 miles in less than three months, and

lives on the Fairgrounds during the Illinois State Fair's 10-day run

The mother of two sons, Wendy says she enjoys getting a new "daughter each year, especially since she doesn't have to pay for the clothes!

Preservation Project Creates Ultimate Antique on Taylorville Square

TAYLORVILLE - The lingering smell of leather -- a souvenir from a century of shoe sales -- is gone from the storefront at 105 South Washington. So are the long wooden shelves that once held hundreds of shoeboxes.

However, the building in which C.C. Esslinger opened a shoe store back in 1905 retains its historic air, thanks to the patient and thoughtful restoration efforts of Rich Payne, its fourth owner. Payne now is



seeking a tenant who shares his enthusiasm for both the restored building and its downtown location.

Payne and his wife, Marilyn, bought the building in March 2005. "My wife and I are very passionate about this downtown," he said. Over the past two years, they have poured their time, energy and resources into the building's restoration, with the help of several local contractors and other professionals.

The Paynes began the project by pulling out the wall shelves, using some of the vintage wood to fabricate replacement interior trim.

To enhance the feeling of old-world charm, they left some brick exposed on the interior walls.

"In cleaning up things here, we found two posters from the early 1900s, advertising Bixby's polish for shoes," Payne said. "The girls in each poster have actual cloth for their skirts."

Payne was careful to respect the building's vintage style as he added new decorative elements. The stained-glass window over the entrance originally came from the old Trinity Motors building, and the bronze light fixture hanging on the north wall was an antique store find.

To add to the building's value, Payne created a 950-square-foot apartment, complete with hardwood floors, on the second floor.

"This is a perfect example of a restored storefront that falls within the goals of **Main Street** for the downtown square," said Michelle Merker, Executive Director of Taylorville Main Street. "All the good things we like to see done to return a building to its original appearance, and enhance the heritage of our historic square, are found in Rich's work."

Payne, a member of the Design Committee for Main Street, hopes to find a retail tenant for the downstairs space.

"It's been retail for so long," he explained. "To me it's still just perfect for retail."

- Amanda Reavy



Mark Your Calendar!



April

16th – Board Videotraining

18th – Application Workshop – Mt. Vernon

20th – Application Workshop – Springfield

24th – Application Workshop – Berwyn

27th – **Registration Deadline for Director's Workshop**

April 30th – Proposals due for 2007 Conference

May

May 2nd & 3rd – Director's Workshop in Vandalia

June

2nd – Illinois Main Street Day!

July

10th – 12th – Core Training in Springfield

September

25th – 27th – Tri-State Conference in Platteville, Wisconsin

November

14th & 15th – Illinois Main Street Conference and Awards Ceremony

Monthly Reports are due on the 15th of each month!

Illinois Main Street

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