What's Happening at National Main Street

As many of you know, this past Saturday, November 26, was Small Business Saturday and many of our Indiana Main Street organizations participated. Here is a recap of how Lawrenceburg Main Street celebrated Small Business Saturday.

Each year on Small Business Saturday, Lawrenceburg Main Street coordinates an Annual Cookie Walk with participating downtown merchants. Shoppers who wish to participate in the cookie walk stop in any local business, pick up a cookie bag and begin their walk, visiting the stores listed on a card that is printed locally. All cookies used, are baked locally from cafes, sweet shops and other downtown restaurants.

The cookie walk not only promotes Small Business Saturday, but it also kicks off Lawrenceburg Main Street's annual Winter Wonderland festivities. Additional festivities

Dates to Know

CDBG Round 2 Announced
December 1

Offices Closed
December 23 - 26

5 Community Exchanges Completed

This was the first year of the revamped Main Street Community Exchanges and overall we have to say they were a success!

The Community Exchanges took place in 5 communities throughout the state, Knightstown, Frankfort, Roachdale, Greensburg and Jeffersonville, and they would not have been possible without the help and support of those local Main Street organizations, as well as all of you who attended. They provided excellent opportunities for residents to share best
include: the Mayor’s Reception, the Annual Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony and the grand opening of the downtown ice skating rink.

The cookie walk is a great opportunity for community members and outside shoppers to discover everything Downtown Lawrenceburg has to offer. The cookie walk also helps to create a sense of community among downtown merchants, as they work together on this event and make a point to encourage shoppers to visit other businesses downtown.

**Testimonials from businesses who participated in the Cookie Walk**

"Saturday was the largest credit card day for us in our four years in business! Overall, Saturday was spectacular, and 96% of our credit card sales were new customers, only 4% returning customers!"

- Downtown Lawrenceburg Retailer

"[The Cookie Walk] was a total benefit to our business. It brought new customers in the door and gave us a chance to hand out our to-go menus. I felt I could personally give back to these wonderful people who participated by providing them with cookies on their walk. There was face-to-face time we got to enjoy with each person on the Cookie Walk. I thoroughly enjoyed it. We were very busy that day but each person was patient and those waiting for a seat at the restaurant were curious of the event."

- Recently Opened Pizzeria in Lawrenceburg

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**17 Properties Awarded Historic Renovation Grant Program Funding**

17 properties located throughout 10 communities will receive grant funds ranging from $10,500 to $100,000 to be used on exterior renovations and repairs. Such renovations include roof replacement, masonry restoration, repair and replacement of windows, façade renovation, painting, storefront upgrades and rear entry improvements.

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If you have any additional feedback you wish to provide OCRA, opinions on the Community Exchanges or anything else, feel free to email us anytime. We always love to hear from you firsthand.

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**Do you want your community to be featured as the next Community Spotlight?**

Has your Main Street Community recently finished a project, held an exciting event or you are just proud of your organization in general? Send an email to OCRA to submit stories and photos for the chance to be featured as the community spotlight in next month’s newsletter.

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**Get to Know Your OCRA Community Liaisons**

They are your connection to all things Main Street!

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Community Spotlight: Town of New Carlisle

The holiday season is upon us, and like many Main Street organizations, Discover New Carlisle uses this festive time of year to bring the community together to celebrate. Three years ago, Discover New Carlisle adopted the day-long “Christmas in New Carlisle” event. This event, with over a 20 year history, starts with a craft fair at the fire station. This year, 35 vendors gathered to share their wares. Afterwards, the lighted Christmas parade kicks off in the park, this year 30 lighted entries led to the Lighting Ceremony of the town Christmas tree. Everyone then gathered back at the Fire Station for cookies and hot chocolate. Funds raised from the event are used by Discover New Carlisle to maintain and update the downtown Christmas decorations including lighted trees and wreaths on lamp posts.
Discover New Carlisle’s largest fundraising event is their Beer and Wine Walk. This past August, 13 shops in downtown New Carlisle offered beer and wine samples, encouraging attendees to discover downtown. Discover New Carlisle sells wristbands to this 21 and older event for $25 each and provides a trolley during the duration of the 4-hour evening. There is also a silent auction for additional fundraising. Funds from the Beer and Wine Walk provide most of Discover New Carlisle’s operating funds annually, making it a self-sustaining organization.

“The Beer and Wine Walk has brought to people to downtown who have lived nearby for 20 years, but never came into downtown. It is a great success.”

-Kathy Aurenz, Discover New Carlisle

Discover New Carlisle recently partnered with OCRA to invest in wayfinding signage, trash receptacles, and benches through a Downtown Enhancement Grant.

Francesville and Winamac Join the Indiana Main Street Program

Francesville’s organization, UPTOWN PROJECT, is a community-based organization devoted to enhancing Francesville’s historic business district and identity by providing social, commercial and recreational opportunities that will strengthen their community’s quality of life. The organization will also promote other business areas within city limits and work on enhancing the town park.

“The members of Francesville’s UPTOWN PROJECT are thrilled to be a part of the Indiana Main Street program,” said Darlene Mellon, President of UPTOWN PROJECT. “Not only does our affiliation with this organization help to keep us focused, accountable and motivated, but the resources OCRA has to offer are outstanding.”

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Wander Our Winamac (WOW) is a group of community members dedicated to building a vibrant downtown by providing social, commercial and recreational opportunities through supporting events and programs strengthening their community’s quality of life.

“This Main Street designation means a lot to Wander Our Winamac,” said Town Manager, Brad Zellers. “With this designation, the organization is looking forward to rebuilding our downtown to attract businesses and bring the business owners together. Winamac is ready to move forward and grow as a community.”

Jeffersonville Community Exchange

The Jeffersonville Main Street Community Exchange took place on Wednesday, November 30 at 300 Spring in Jeffersonville. There were over 50 people in attendance representing many communities including: Brownstown, Brazil, Cayuga, Churubusco, Cicero, Corydon, Dillsboro, Evansville, Frankfort, Franklin, Jasper, Jeffersonville, Madison, New Albany, Newburgh, Pike County, Rockport, Salem, Scottsburg, Shelbyville and Winamac.

Jay Ellis, Executive Director of Jeffersonville Main Street, LLC. began the day by welcoming everyone to the city. OCRA Deputy Director, Geoff Schomacker, then gave a brief description of OCRA and how far the agency has come in its 10 years. Andrea Duetsch, OCRA Southeast Community Liaison, gave further information on what OCRA does. OCRA Project Manager, Colette Childress, took some time to explain some of OCRA’s programs in depth, especially ones most beneficial for Indiana Main Street communities. Next, Paul Northam, Director of Parks & Recreation for the City of Jeffersonville, presented on how to draw a crowd downtown for the holidays by explaining everything that Jeffersonville has done, including installing an ice skating rink each holiday season.
After lunch, OCRA Project Managers, Colette Childress and Mary Shaw, conducted a listening session where the communities had a chance to share their best practices with each other and also voice and comments or questions they had for OCRA. Several members of the Downtown Jeffersonville Merchants Association, President Claudia Gatewood and members Warren & Jill Schimpff, shared experiences and answered questions for attendees. The day concluded with a tour of Jeffersonville’s Main Street.