



Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.

Our mission is to enhance the social, cultural and environmental well being of historic downtown business districts located in Missouri's diverse cities and towns, through education using the Main Street Four Point Approach® to Revitalization, as developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

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Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Blue Springs Downtown Alive! Wins Outstanding Affiliate Community Award

Blue Springs accepted the Award for Outstanding Affiliate Community from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

One of 15 communities in Missouri participating in the Affiliate Matching Grant, Blue Springs has received revitalization training and mentoring from MMSC since July, 2011.

Having just completed its second year in the grant program, the Blue Springs group started by preparing an action plan around the teamwork concept, said Cindy Miller, president of the group. Teamwork has proved key to its success, with the four standing committees embracing the Four-Point Approach® and focusing their work on providing benefits to the entire community.

The Organization Team's successful approach to the City, requesting a commitment of \$5,000 in each of its first two years of operation to support the new organization, resulted in a sound financial base, matched by gifts of \$9,165 from private donors during the past two years. The team also has developed a strong volunteer group and produces a monthly newsletter. Work on its website is nearly complete and will debut soon.

The Design Team obtained matching Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds up to \$100,000 for a facade renovation program on one of the largest buildings downtown. Partnering with various civic and educational organizations in Blue Springs, the team developed four free libraries in downtown, created a student art display, brought a temporary art exhibit to downtown, resolved a parking shortage downtown, and started a beautification program.

The Economic Restructuring Team provided input to the City on the tax abatement policy, resulting in lowered thresholds for improvement investment, as an incentive for renovations. The team also obtained a seat on the City Downtown Review Board, which oversees enforcement of the Downtown Development Code and Downtown Zoning Map.

The Promotions Team has produced downtown events that generate awareness, bring people downtown, and develop funding for the operation of the organization. These include the Chili Lunch, Spring Fling, Corks & Canvas Art Walk, and Holiday Open House, plus events in partnership with the City's Parks and Recreation Department, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Blue Springs Business Association.

For more details about the award, contact Blue Springs Downtown Alive! 816-228-2300, or e-mail: Cmiller@amcommbank.com

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Missouri House District 18

July 26, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Warrensburg retailer wins Business Excellence Award

The Old Drum Gallery & Trading Company of Warrensburg accepted the Business Excellence Award from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

Jo Henning, owner of Old Drum, is an artist and entrepreneur, but is much more, according to Julie Turnipseed, Executive Director of Warrensburg Main Street. "Over the years her love for art, the entire Downtown Warrensburg Revitalization effort, the Main Street mission and purpose and all small business ventures have caused her to reach beyond the gallery front door. Jo is a civic leader, activist and downtown champion," Julie said.

Old Drum is a leader among downtown business, showing enthusiasm in:

- organizing the "First Lady Art Walk," an event that has inspired other downtown business to stay open late on Friday nights and feature local artists' work in their stores
- serving as a "hub" for people coming downtown where they come to the gallery and engage in community dialogue
- scheduling live music on a regular basis with performances on the front porch
- being a spokesperson for the Pine Street Downtown Revitalization Effort and recruit volunteers for the Grand Opening celebration
- participating in the development and ongoing efforts of many downtown festivals
- bringing many local and regional artists to downtown Warrensburg along with their products to sell and demonstrate their art
- offering art classes in the gallery
- assembling a group of volunteers to pack welcome bags for the Mystery Train visitors to downtown Warrensburg, and organizing the event
- keeping Old Drum open late when other businesses are closed to provide an example for increasing business activity

For more details, contact Julie Turnipseed, Warrensburg Main Street, 660-429-3988,
e-mail: wmainst@embarqmail.com

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July 25, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.

417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Downtown Washington Inc. wins Heritage Travel Award

Downtown Washington Inc. accepted the Heritage Travel Award from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

The Travel Award is for Slava Bowman's blog "Re-Discover Washington." Using entertaining and informative blogs, Ms. Bowman has rekindled interest in forgotten parts of the downtown district and endorsed new and upcoming businesses. Through her introspective essays and sentimental photographs, she has renewed and redefined what Washington means to many residents. The blog material she has generated in the last year has reinvigorated the public's connection to the downtown district.

Slava's ability to easily connect and communicate with community members and business owners has allowed her to capture unique images and record genuine portraits of the heart of Washington. Her posts cover several subject areas, including the inner workings of downtown businesses and light-hearted coverage of the many pets residing in them, plus reviews of local festivals and events. No matter what the focus of her posts, the content always includes photographs that encapsulate the warm feeling of local businesses and detailed descriptions that encourage readers to search for similar experiences hidden in their own downtown.

The "Re-Discover Washington" blogs have a unique perspective that many in Washington find appealing. Coming from a European background, Slava's blog is based on a new perspective that often lends insight to citizens who have taken for granted several treasurable aspects of the community.

Through her hard work, Slava has become a pillar in the downtown community and many rely on her blog to discover something more about what is happening locally. She challenges her readers to imagine these happenings in a larger community context. Many websites promote the events and businesses of a downtown, but few infuse these promotions with consideration of their cultural and social significance. In doing this, Slava has won the respect of the community and has cemented herself as a young guide who has envisioned the possibilities that downtown Washington can achieve.

For more details about this award, contact Downtown Washington Inc. 636-239-1743 or e-mail:

bepple@downtownwashmo.org

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July 26, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Rhonda Gelbach wins Volunteer of the Year Award

Rhonda Gelbach accepted the Volunteer of the Year Award from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 18 categories.

Warrensburg Main Street has benefitted from Rhonda's services as a consistent volunteer. She is also a board member, committee member and merchant in downtown Warrensburg. Rhonda and her husband opened Gelbach Manor, a bed and breakfast in the downtown district in 2006. After taking a break from Main Street activities, Rhonda became involved again in 2012. She has taken many leadership roles and brought fresh and exciting ideas like Day of Caring, Piccadilly and 'Takin' It To the Streets."

Rhonda's exceptional organizational skills and 'get it done' attitude have helped propel her to organize and be a part of various successful downtown fundraisers and community involvement events.

She is also involved with University of Central Missouri campus activities, spearheading UMC parent weekend. She is also part of the local Republican Women and a supporter of many other local civic organizations. Rhonda recently attended the National Main Street meeting in New Orleans, and she attends the Missouri Main Street trainings each quarter.

Her leadership skills are a huge asset to every downtown event she is involved in," said Julie Turnipseed, Executive Director of Warrensburg Main Street. "She is not only a pleasure to work with, she has the ability to make volunteering fun. She always works hard and will do anything for a cause. She is a people person who enlists others and has great ideas at all hours of the day. She is a team player who is willing to work early mornings and late nights. We are lucky to have Rhonda as a member of this community and cannot thank her enough for all of her time she has given to our downtown. She does it all out of the goodness of her heart and passion for the betterment of our community."

For more details about the award and the Missouri Main Street Conference, contact Julie Turnipseed, 660-429-3988 or e-mail: wmainst@embarqmail.com

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PRESS RELEASE July 26, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Warrensburg wins Award for “Day of Caring”: Outstanding Special Project

Warrensburg accepted the Award for Outstanding Special Project from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

The “Day of Caring” project in 2012 was dedicated to revitalizing a specific commercial district in downtown Warrensburg, identified by the Warrensburg Main Street board and the City of Warrensburg. The project focused on Mopac Alley. Along the railroad tracks that intersect the downtown, over 75 volunteers participated - painting buildings in a historic color pallet, installing fences, sidewalks and awnings, covering old in-filled windows, and installing over 175 live plants in the depot area – all completed in one day. The volunteer team included professional painters and carpenters, college students and the maintenance staff from University of Central Missouri, the city manager, mayor and city council members. They logged over 650 hours of labor that day.

Warrensburg Main Street arranged for the funding to cover the costs of the project, securing more than 30 partners who donated over \$30,000, both monetary and in-kind.

The “Day of Caring” received mention during the National Main Street Conference in New Orleans, by Stephanie Meeks, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, in her opening remarks.

This project is a fine example of how community pride plus enthusiastic volunteers can make a positive impact on a distressed area to create an inviting public space. MOpac Alley is now an inspiration to citizens and visitors as well as those train travelers who are “just passing by.”

“Missouri Main Street Connection is pleased to present this award to Warrensburg Main Street for the Day of Caring project,” said Executive Director Gayla Roten. “It is richly deserved.”

For more details about the “Day of Caring” project, contact Julie Turnipseed, Warrensburg Main Street, Inc. 660-429-3988, e-mail: wmainst@embarqmail.com

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July 25, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Warrensburg VIPS Gather to Celebrate Success of Downtown Warrensburg Main Street

Ten special guests gathered to celebrate at a VIP table, sponsored by Warrensburg Main Street, Inc. (WMS) during the Evening of Excellence dinner and awards ceremony at the Missouri Main Street Revitalization Conference in Kansas City, July 25 at the Phillips Hotel.

The event capped off three days of over 40 educational workshops and in-the-field educational sessions, sponsored by Missouri Main Street Connection. Awards recognizing achievements in downtown revitalization were presented in 18 categories. Competition for the awards came from all across the state of Missouri.

"Missouri Main Street Connection congratulates Warrensburg for embracing the opportunity for training and mentoring from Missouri Main Street, and is now enjoying the success of their revitalization plan," said Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection State Director. MMSC has worked with WMS to help the program expand its goals and qualify for accreditation from the National Trust Main Street Center. "The dedicated leaders and many volunteers who are contributing to the success of the Warrensburg revitalization effort can be proud of their efforts which have resulted in measureable achievements in all Four Points of the Main Street Approach® to revitalization," Roten added.

WMS is dedicated to the revitalization and historic preservation of Downtown Warrensburg, and is Accredited as a Main Street® program through the National Trust Main Street Center and the Missouri Main Street Connection. WMS works tirelessly in a variety of ways to bring commerce, people and entertainment back to the heart of the community. Events include a Piccadilly Auction & Gala in early Spring, Summer Concert Series, a Fall Festival "The Burg Fest," Tailgating with the City for UMC's Homecoming, and Dickens Christmas Living Windows. Warrensburg Main Street's "Day of Caring 2012" has been recognized nationally as a special way for volunteers to give back to a community while cooperatively accomplishing a specific goal.

Dr. Charles Ambrose, President of University of Central Missouri, said, "Main Street is the front door to a community, and this front door welcomes people into Warrensburg where learning and education identifies our past, present, and future." Utilizing the Four-Point Approach, WMS has developed a volunteer-based organization that serves the community and achieves economic development within the context of historic preservation.

For more details about the Awards ceremony and the Main Street Revitalization Conference, contact Julie Turnipseed at 660-429-3988 or e-mail wmainst@embarqmail.com

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July 25, 2013

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City of Pleasant Hills wins Best Façade Rehabilitation Project

The City of Pleasant Hill accepted the Award for Best Façade (over \$10,000) Rehabilitation Project from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

Innovative strategies, including a public-private partnership produced a new façade for the historic Peoples Theater. Since 1909 this movie theatre was an important part of the built environment in historic downtown Pleasant Hill. Time and weather has deteriorated the marquee and the iconic sign "Peoples Theater." By 2012, both were becoming a hazard to passersby, and a concern to the owner of the theater. Many people in the community were beginning to feel that restoration of the façade was essential to the success of revitalization efforts in downtown Pleasant Hill.

The City and the theater owner, the Crowell-Dittemore family, created a public/private partnership for bringing the theater back to life. A grant program operated by the city provided \$10,310 for the purchase of a new sign, based on the original design and approved by the city's Historic Preservation Commission. A more elaborate process was needed to fund the nearly \$14,245 replacement of the marquee.

The solution created a "façade easement" to the city by the owner. Granting the easement made it possible to develop a new Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) to fund the improvement. By using the NID process, the city was assured of getting its money back, as NID obligations are collected annually as part of the property tax bill. In addition, NID obligations are tied to the property, and transfer with any subsequent change in ownership. The marquee design was based on the historic original and also was approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.

The restored façade quickly became an iconic image of the downtown, and is a tangible symbol of progress while preserving the historic structure. A provision in the program requires the theater owners to light up the "Peoples" sign each evening for at least two hours. The vibrant neon sign and marquee have attracted additional visitors to downtown, something that has greatly pleased the downtown business owners and other advocates of downtown. Theater owners have also been pleased to note an increased attendance at the weekly live-performance of Big Creek, a country music show which has performed there for 30 years. The theater has also shown potential for bringing back movies, since a project last Christmas by the Parks & Recreation Board brought in the movie "Elf", to a sold-out crowd seeing the first film at the theater since 1982.

For more details about the award, contact Mark Randall at the City of Pleasant Hill, 816-540-3135, or e-mail: admin@pleasanthill.com

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417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Lee's Summit wins Top Special Event Award

Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street, with the Cellular Cenes, accepted the Award for Top Special Event from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

The Top Special Event award category recognizes projects and special events or promotions that attracted new visitors to downtown and that involved families, with emphasis on downtown as the centerpiece of the community.

Cellular Cenes, written specifically for Downtown Lee's Summit (DLSMS) by former theatre teacher Ben Martin, is a truly unique theatre experience, acted out on the streets and inside businesses in downtown Lee's Summit. It is a short romance told in five scenes, but much more than that. During the one-hour play, the audience literally follows the story of two young people and their quirky budding relationship. Each scene is set in a different downtown location. The audience keeps their cell phones on, and at the end of each scene they will receive a text message telling them where to go next to see the next episode.

Ben worked with the downtown merchants whose businesses would serve as the settings for the play. After casting two actors and serving as the director, Ben and Cellular Cenes hit the streets on the Fourth Friday in August 2012.

The street performances are part of a cultural arts initiative launched by the new Main Street Cultural Arts Committee, an arm of DLSMS. The goal is to promote the arts and culture in downtown Lee's Summit and engage residents and visitors the cultural arts experience and to create arts-related activities within each downtown event to draw new visitors and residents in the downtown area.

When the first performance opened, it was sold out, and because there was a great deal of positive word of mouth buzz about the play after those August performances, DLSMS brought back the performances in April 2013. At \$10 per ticket, the success of the project has benefitted Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street. More performances and new scripts are being planned. An eager crowd awaits, and businesses in downtown are welcoming new customers who get a chance to shop between some of the scenes. "Break a leg!"

For more details about the award, contact Trisha Drape, 816-246-6598,
e-mail: trisha@downtownls.org

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July 25, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Lee's Summit VIPS Gather to Celebrate Success of Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street

Ten special guests gathered to celebrate at a VIP table, sponsored by Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street, Inc. (DLSMS) during the Evening of Excellence dinner and awards ceremony at the Missouri Main Street Revitalization Conference in Kansas City, July 25 at the Phillips Hotel.

The event capped off three days of over 40 educational workshops and in-the-field educational sessions, sponsored by Missouri Main Street Connection. Awards recognizing achievements in downtown revitalization were presented in 18 categories. Competition for the awards came from all across the state of Missouri.

"Missouri Main Street Connection congratulates Lee's Summit, which nearly 10 years ago embraced the opportunity for training and mentoring from Missouri Main Street, and is now enjoying the success of their revitalization plan," said Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection State Director. MMSC has worked with DLSMS to help the program expand its goals and qualify for accreditation from the National Trust Main Street Center. "The dedicated leaders and many volunteers who are contributing to the success of the Lee's Summit revitalization effort can be proud of their efforts which have resulted in measureable achievements in all Four Points of the Main Street Approach® to revitalization," Roten added.

DLSMS is dedicated to the revitalization and historic preservation of Downtown Lee's Summit, and is Accredited as a Main Street® program through the National Trust Main Street Center and the Missouri Main Street Connection. DLSMS won the Great American Main Street Award in 2010, an achievement that only five communities each year are awarded. The dedicated staff, Trisha Drape, Sarah Shore and Stacy Needles said they attribute much of the organization's success to the many engaged volunteers and several collaborations with city and business leaders.

The new streetscape represents a long-term commitment from the mayor, city council members and citizens through a community-wide bond issue. The DSLMS Design Committee, in close cooperation the local Historic Preservation Commission, has established the downtown as a National Register Historic District. Many historic buildings downtown have been restored or rehabbed during the past 20 years, including seven buildings owned by Culbertson Properties. Some have utilized the Historic Preservation Tax Credits, and others have benefitted from the city's Façade and Corridor Enhancement (FACE) program which offers low-interest loans to property owners.

For more details about the Awards ceremony and the Main Street Revitalization Conference, contact Trisha Drape, 816-246-6598 or e-mail: trisha@downtownls.org

Missouri Main Street Connection

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July 25, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Mayor Randy Rhoades, Lee's Summit, wins Outstanding Public Official Award

Lee's Summit Mayor Randy Rhoades was named the Outstanding Public Official by Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

Mayor Rhoades has many accomplishments he could brag about – if he were the sort of person to brag. He has been termed “a positive, leveling influence in a dynamic, diverse community with sometimes complex politics,” according to Smart Growth America. He also has an affable, low-key manner and isn't inclined to tout himself. Instead, he brags about the City of Lee's Summit and often mentions his pride in Downtown Lee's Summit and the revitalization efforts of Main Street.

He can be seen attending events in downtown summer and winter, whether he's helping flip the switch during the Mayor's Tree Lighting ceremony, passing out candy bars at the Chocolate Crawl, riding in the Emerald Isle Parade, talking with children at the Downtown Bunny Hop or supporting Fourth Fridays and the cultural arts.

Last year Mayor Rhoades volunteered to be part of a Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street Fundraising Advisory Board, to help brainstorm ideas for the organization's sustainability. His contributions were valued and many are being implemented as part of a three-month task force plan.

He has encouraged partnerships and cooperative efforts among various civic organizations such as the Chamber, Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street, and the Economic Development Council to strengthen business retention and recruitment efforts in downtown. He has taken an active role during presentations and meetings with the Missouri Main Street Resource Team during its two-day visit to downtown Lee's Summit. He is always engaged and always at the table when he is asked to help with Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street efforts.

Downtown Lee's Summit is proud to brag about him – even if he neglects to do so - while he works alongside volunteers, city council members, the Downtown Lee's Summit board of directors and its committees to ensure the success of the downtown revitalization program.

For more details on the award, contact Trisha Drape, Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street, 816-246-6598, e-mail, trisha@downtownls.org

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July 25, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Great Southern Bank Sponsors Event for Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street

Ten special guests gathered to celebrate at a VIP table, sponsored by Great Southern Bank of Lee's Summit, during the Evening of Excellence dinner and awards ceremony at the Missouri Main Street Revitalization Conference in Kansas City, July 25 at the Phillips Hotel.

Placing emphasis on assistance to small business, Great Southern is all about building relationships with its clients to create a strong community.

Great Southern has enthusiastically supported the revitalization efforts of Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street (DLSMS) since the organization adopted the Main Street Four-Point Approach® to revitalization. DLSMS has demonstrated that - with help from its local partners such as Great Southern - it can achieve great results with its plan for developing a healthy economy, always aiming toward sustainable growth through job creation and preservation of its historic downtown buildings.

The Evening of Excellence capped off a tour of Downtown Lee's Summit and a reception at the Stanley Event Center hosted by Great Southern for all the attendees of the 5th Annual Missouri Main Street conference. The conference spanned three days, with over 40 educational workshops and in-the-field educational sessions sponsored by Missouri Main Street Connection. Awards recognizing achievements in downtown revitalization were presented in 18 categories. Competition for the awards came from all across the state of Missouri.

"Missouri Main Street Connection congratulates Lee's Summit, which nearly 10 years ago embraced the opportunity for training and mentoring from Missouri Main Street, and is now enjoying the success of their revitalization plan," said Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection State Director. MMSC has worked with DLSMS to help the program expand its goals and qualify for accreditation from the National Trust Main Street Center. "The dedicated leaders and many volunteers who are contributing to the success of the Lee's Summit revitalization effort can be proud of their efforts which have resulted in measureable achievements in all Four Points of the Main Street Approach® to revitalization," Roten added.

For more details about these events, contact Trisha Drape, Executive Director, Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street, Inc. 816-246-6598, trisha@downtownls.org

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July 26, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Ventana Gourmet Grill in Excelsior Springs wins award from Missouri Main Street

Downtown Excelsior Partnership, with Jill Rickart and Wendy Baldwin, accepted the Stick-Your-Neck-Out Award from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC). Awards were presented in 16 categories during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference on July 25 in Kansas City.

Downtown Excelsior Springs was just starting to think about revitalization in February 2002 with a few daring businesses opening their doors that year. During a terrible ice storm, sisters Jill and Wendy opened their restaurant, Ventana Grill. Of those businesses that opened their doors that year, Ventana is the only one still in operation today, 11 years later. That ice storm was one of their first obstacles to overcome, with the next being a streetscape project that started in 2004. Then development on the west side of town brought in a chain and three fast food restaurants. Through it all, the sisters have kept their noses to the grindstone and focused on their customers and their business. Remarkably, they have also maintained their determination to be involved in the community.

Giving back to the community has always been part of their business plan, whether it is serving on a board or giving to a cause or charity, Jill and Wendy have given their time and resources. Jill currently sits on the board of the Downtown Excelsior Partnership, and the restaurant has been a member since 2006. Events that are held in the restaurant - with a portion of the proceeds going to the organization - include the Christmas Committee's Pancake Breakfast, feeding the KC Chiefs that attend the annual Waterfest and hosting events by the Community Theater. Other donations include the Mineral Water Bowl, Good Samaritan Golf Tournament, the veterans, Shriners, school district and the cheerleaders. All of these organizations hold events downtown or support the efforts of downtown.

The sisters also lead by example as a veteran business in town. They mentor newly opened businesses, help support and encourage existing businesses while recruiting potential new businesses. Jill and Wendy have each volunteered to champion various events of the Downtown Excelsior Springs Partnership like Downtown Diva Night or Mug Shot, a progressive beer tasting event. Jill is currently helping coordinate a new event, a microbrew and craft brew festival this fall.

When they aren't coordinating, they're participating and volunteering time and energy. Both sisters have stepped up with cooking demonstrations during the Downtown Excelsior Partnership's Wine Festival and Chocolate Tour. Through their leadership, they have not only created a very popular restaurant downtown but have also fostered the development of downtown.

For more details about the award contact Keith Winge, Downtown Excelsior Partnership, 816-522-4362, e-mail kwinge@visitesprings.com

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Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Downtown Excelsior Partnership wins Award for Outstanding Public Partner

Excelsior Springs accepted the Award for Outstanding Public Partner/the Villas Downtown, from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

Gardner Capital, partnering with the Downtown Excelsior Partnership, the City of Excelsior Springs, and the Missouri Housing Development Corporation (MHDC), redeveloped a blighted residential area with a two-fold project that encompasses new construction and the preservation/rehabilitation of four historic properties.

Work began when the City's Master Plan and the downtown DREAM Initiative outlined a strategy to improve this neighborhood. Financing was secured through approval from the MHDC to acquire housing tax credits and financing. Then the City undertook the task of relocating of a drug rehabilitation center located there, and found a larger space that would better serve the center's needs. With that accomplished, the city – partnering with Gardner Capital – began identifying the project site boundaries and examining ownership and acquiring property. The city owned several lots which they contributed to the project. The Downtown Excelsior Partnership was brought in as a non-managing agent.

The new homes were designed to sit on zero lot lines, with an appearance much like homes built in this neighborhood during the early 1900s. They have traditional front porches and sidewalks to encourage residents to socialize and meet their neighbors. A small community center was built to supplement the project for use by residents and the downtown community. Its design was modeled after a downtown commercial store front to match the others along Broadway – the primary downtown street.

The project captured the historic character and history of the neighborhood, and included construction of 30 single-family homes and the restoration of four historic properties, now called The Villas Downtown.

For more details on the award, contact the Downtown Excelsior Partnership, 816-522-4362 or e-mail: kwinge@visitesprings.com

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July 25, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.

417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Downtown Excelsior Partnership wins Award for Best Large-Scale Project: Elms Hotel Resort & Spa

Downtown Excelsior Partnership accepted the Award for Best Large-Scale Project for the Elms Hotel and Spa restoration. The Award was presented by the Missouri Main Street Connection (MMSC) during the Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

New owners recently took over the century-old Elms Hotel and Spa in June, 2011 and soon began an \$18 million renovation project that has brought back the glory of the Gilded Age, while providing all the comforts 21st century guests expect from a luxury hotel and spa. The architect, Susan Richards Johnson, and interior designer Sherri Cline were charged with ensuring all interior and exterior rehabilitation work was in keeping with the original design and complied with federal guidelines for buildings on the National Register of Historic Places.

The architectural style is similar to English Tudor, mediated by late 19th century Victorian tastes and the America's Gilded Age. The challenge was not only in removing aluminum-framed windows from a previous restoration and installing new windows in the original muntin style, having the same size as the original and also allow for insulated panes. The exterior renovations included a new paint scheme. Previously a monotone yellow, the hotel is now a more neutral golden tone on the stucco and background material, with dark brown on the batten details.

Inside, a new color palette was based on the three main colors in the original mosaic floor in the lobby – red, rust, green and gold with some ivory. Restoration in the large, curved banquet hall was launched after some old postcards were discovered – at one time there were large window that curved around diners in the banquet space. These were covered during an earlier renovation, but are back in place now, transforming the feel of the room with natural light.

The spa also saw an extensive transformation. New features of the Grotto are a modern take on the traditional Roman bath, with a collection of soothing chambers for relaxing in richly appointed surrounding. The Elms is vital to the success and future of downtown Excelsior Springs as an economic engine that brings in over 40,000 guests to the community each year.

For more details on the award, contact the Downtown Excelsior Partnership, 816-522-4362 or e-mail: kwinge@visitesprings.com

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July 26, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.

417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Peculiar Charitable Foundation wins award from Missouri Main Street Connection

Downtown Peculiar Arts & Culture District, with the Peculiar Charitable Foundation, accepted the Stick-Your-Neck-Out Award from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSMC). Awards were presented in 16 categories during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference on July 25 in Kansas City.

In an effort to save a beautiful 1908 stone church and parsonage in downtown Peculiar, the Downtown Peculiar Arts and Culture District (DPACD) and the Peculiar Charitable Foundation have partnered to acquire the vacant building and put it back into use for arts, crafts and small business classes. The parsonage, built in the 1940s, will become a visitors' center.

The church was built by volunteers from the Methodist congregation, with help from professional stone masons and some of the most complex carpentry. Hundreds of wagonloads of stone for the structure was hauled in from the Hainlain farm and nearby quarry. The origin of the beautiful stained glass windows is thought to be Germany, as they are in keeping with windows of that time. The pinks, reds and orang shades are hand-hammered glass made with real gold. Many of the types of glass used and pieces called "jewels" are no long made and could not be replaced. The windows were actually used for ventilation before air-conditioning. The traditional images seen on the glass were hand painted by artists. In the afternoon the light coming through the windows produces a wonderful atmosphere in the sanctuary. The brass bell in the north tower appears to have been moved from the earlier Methodist church in Yankee Hill. It originated in the 1880s.

The city once owed the parsonage, and the Foundation owned the church. Both wanted to put these properties in the hands of a group that would preserve and make use of the buildings, so they approached DPACD with their proposal. DPACD is a relatively young organization with very little money, but with a team of amazing volunteers and appreciation for this wonderful piece of the town's history. DPACD expressed concern about the cost to repair and maintain the building, so the more financially flush Foundation stuck their necks out – "giraffesque" if you will – and pledged to dedicate \$80,000 to help with those expenses. DPACD now owns the church and parsonage and is leading the renovation efforts.

Renovation and attention to deferred maintenance have been going on and will continue for years. The Peculiar Charitable Foundation also monetarily supports downtown events and the overall revitalization plan. The judges' comments explain more about it: "They clearly took a risk for the community – a pretty amazing story, and a hard act to top."

For more details about the award and the ongoing work on the property, contact Brenda Conway, DPACD, 816-806-3698, e-mail: Brenda@downtownpeculiar.com

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Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
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Clinton Main Street wins Award for Preservation Project

Clinton Main Street accepted the Award for Outstanding Adaptive Re-Use/Preservation from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

The building at 114 W. Jefferson in downtown Clinton and the adjoined property at 116 W. Jefferson were once destined for demolition, but were saved through a preservation project of Clinton Main Street.

The law firm that previously owned the buildings reported when they listed the property for sale that it had many problems, the greatest need being a new roof. There had been so much water damage that the front half of the building was uninhabitable and the tenants had been asked to vacate. There was a buyer or two interested, but in the end they decided against purchasing because there was so much work to be done. One of the owners visited with Clinton Main Street and indicated they might be willing to donate the property to a 501c3 organization; otherwise, they were looking into demolition. They had decided that the property would be more valuable if it was leveled.

The Main Street Board of Directors discussed the situation and determined that they could not let anymore buildings on the town square be taken down. After suffering the loss of six buildings on the square in 2006, more losses were not what anyone wanted. The Board decided to accept ownership. A vacant lot next door was also available, and Clinton Main Street arranged for that to be donated also.

Financial support for renovation included use of some Neighborhood Assistance Program funds to cover the repairs. Designs to adapt the former law offices included a community meeting room that could double as a board meeting place, ADA restrooms, kitchenette, rental space for a community non-profit, and storage space for Clinton Main Street. The vacant lot would become green space with a side entrance to the community meeting room.

The first order of work was a new roof. Work began by tearing off all the old walls and the first floor ceiling. The back half of the building was cleaned. The front half was completely stripped and rebuilt with new drywall, new wiring and plumbing, heating and air-conditioning, dropped ceiling, lighting and subfloor. Two new bathrooms were installed. The front of the building is now ideal for a business to open, having an incentive plan in place to entice a retail occupant.

For more details about the award, contact Diane Hannah, Clinton Main Street, 660-885-8168, or e-mail: diane@clintonmo.com

Missouri Main Street Connection

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Missouri House District 18

July 25, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Chillicothe wins Best Façade Rehabilitation Project

Chillicothe Main Street, with the Healthy Living Store, accepted the Award for Best Façade (under \$10,000) Rehabilitation Project from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSMC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSMC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

A crowd –pleasing event launched this project, and many weeks of planning. One Sunday afternoon, residents of Chillicothe and some downtown business owners gathered in front of the Healthy Living Store to watch the metal slipcover come off the façade.

The store had been part of the downtown since the mid 2000s. This newer addition to the community has grown and adapted to the ever-changing economy and needs of residents. With these changes came an exterior face-lift of epic proportions.

Once the metal was removed, a beautiful brick façade was revealed. Although it needed some minimal cleaning, the brick itself was pristine condition except for a few spots where the brick had been chipped away from securing the faux metal façade.

Most downtowns have at least one section of buildings covered with the ever-so-popular trend of metal coverings during the 1960s and 70s. Over time, people began to think that the metal served a useful purpose of hiding an ugly façade or protecting damaged brick, when truly that was not the case, more often than not. Whatever the condition of the original façade, the process of uncovering the surface is daunting, especially when the building owners don't know what may be underneath.

The building owner worked with Main Street Chillicothe's Design Committee to choose a fitting historic color scheme for the exterior that matched their store design, along with new second-story windows to replace the old ones. The cost was minimal, but the result was one that had the town talking.

The Health Living Store owners see their façade renovation as the finishing touch since opening their doors. They are proud to be located in downtown Chillicothe and happy to have worked with Main Street Chillicothe through the façade renovation grant program.

For more details about the award, contact Crystal Narr, Main Street Chillicothe, 660-646-4071, e-mail: mschilli@greenhills.net

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Missouri House District 18

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Main Street Chillicothe wins Heritage Travel Award

Main Street Chillicothe, Inc. accepted the Heritage Travel Award from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

Chillicothe's outdoor murals, mounted on buildings throughout the commercial district, tell a story around every corner of this historic downtown. Each one transports the viewer into a by-gone era and celebrates an important part of the town's rich history and heritage.

Over 20 larger-than-life, breath-taking murals include tell the visual story of trains, automobiles, a brick factory, a business college, a retailer, a bank, a fire brigade and many streetscapes.

The Murals Tour can be conducted by professional tour guides or self-guided. Tours take place almost daily throughout the year, sometimes on foot, sometimes in cars or motor coaches.

The murals are a vital part of Chillicothe's tourism mix, and one of the city's top attractions. Chillicothe Main Street Inc. promotes the Mural Tour through printed pieces and the website to attract visitors and media attention.

The Mural Tour brochure is available at several tourist information centers as well as hotels and retailers throughout the downtown. Tourists can then walk or drive around the downtown, taking in each piece of art at their leisure. The mural brochure and website both have full-color photos of each mural, the address, a map, and a little history about the story depicted in each mural. Also in the brochure is information about the mural artist, Kelly Poling, a resident of Chillicothe and business owner. He has painted all the murals in downtown Chillicothe, and has created murals for other communities and produces other works of art also.

Poling and some of the staff for Main Street Chillicothe serve as guides for group tours. Their goal is to educate the public about local history and the history of the murals themselves – the process behind what it takes to paint a mural and some of the stories behind the murals.

The achievement of the mural project is obvious when yet another downtown property owner catches on to the excitement and clamors to have a mural grace the side of his building.

For more details on the Mural Tours, contact Main Street Chillicothe Inc. 660-646-4071, or e-mail: mschilli@greenhills.net

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Missouri House District 18

July 26, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.

417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Chillicothe Main Street wins Award for “Black & Red Friday” Event

Chillicothe Main Street accepted the award for Best Economic Restructuring Project from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

The Award was for Chillicothe's special event, “Black and Red Friday” in the category that recognizes outstanding achievement in planning and implementation by an Economic Restructuring Committee, in cooperation with a local development organization.

The concept began when Chillicothe's Economic Restructuring Committee considered the impact of Black Friday advertising campaigns by the Big Box stores upon small retailers who have a hard time competing for sales during what many say is the largest shopping day of the holiday season.

To beat the big box retailers to the punch, Main Street Chillicothe and Chillicothe Area Chamber of Commerce teamed up to offer an alternative to shoppers. They called it “Black and Red Friday” in honor of the local high school's spirit colors. It is part of a wider plan to promote spending locally throughout the year, called “Local First: Think Local, Buy Local, Be Local.”

The strategy was to encourage Chillicothe and area residents to explore what their local stores have to offer before hitting the highway or cyber sales to find holiday bargains. The local participating businesses offer special sales on hot ticket items, one-time discounts or other unique promotions. The goal for “Black and Red Friday” was to keep more shopping dollars spent with local retailers and service providers who do so much to support the community throughout the year.

In the weeks before the event Main Street Chillicothe and the Chamber worked with the participating businesses to create a list of the various stores specials, discounts, extended hours, and promotions. These also were highlighted and featured at a Chamber luncheon, where participating business could share information about a special “Hot Holiday Item Showcase” program, showing new hot items or demonstrating toys. Shopping Guides were given out to all luncheon attendees and also made available on Facebook. Throughout the event social media was used to spread the word and enthusiasm.

To further illustrate the success and economic impact of “Black and Red Friday” the local bakery reported she had to remove large sliding glass doors on her display case to serve throngs of waiting customers more quickly. A jeweler had a line of customers waiting outside the door for an extra early 6:00 a.m. special discount, and remained busy the rest of the day. The “Black and Red Friday” project was deemed so successful that it is now celebrating its third year in operation.

For details about the award, contact Crystal Narr, 660-646-4071; e-mail: mschilli@greenhills.net

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July 25, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
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Old Town Cape wins Top Special Event Award

Old Town Cape, with Riverfront Market accepted the Award for Top Special Event from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSA), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSA presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

This category recognizes successful events that have attracted new visitors to downtown and involves families, with emphasis on downtown as the centerpiece of the community.

Many people contributed their skills and time to produce the first farmers market in downtown Cape Girardeau. Emily Scifers, a local farmer who produced organic foods, approached Old Town Cape with the idea of starting a farmers market. Emily and her husband, Ross, had participated in many farmers markets across the county, so they possessed the knowledge that was needed from the farming perspective. A short time later, Levi Olson approached the organization also wanting to start a farmers market. Emily and Levi connected and were encouraged to start doing research to see if support for a farmers market was present in the community. They received an overwhelmingly positive response, and took the next step of contacting Charlie Hopper, a marketing specialist with the Missouri Department of Agriculture. His advice added encouragement and helped the project along a path to success.

After several months of planning, the event became a reality in the spring of 2012, opening to the public each Saturday from May through October. All products must be grown or produced within 100 miles, and vendors must submit an application to the market manager for consideration to sell at the market. To enhance the visitor and vendor experience, demonstrations during the event include cooking, roller derby demonstrations, jewelry making, ice sculpting and more.

Riverfront Market has been called a "powerhouse" event because it has accomplished several of Old Town Cape's goals: 66% of nearby businesses reported an increase in foot traffic and many businesses are opening earlier to accommodate the early shoppers at the market.

A fringe benefit of the project is that it has also enticed many more volunteers who are eager to participate in downtown activities. As a result many community partnerships and committed volunteers, all working together, have produced a high-quality event that brings hundreds of people to downtown every Saturday.

For more details about the award, contact Marla Mills, Old Town Cape, 573-334-8085,
e-mail: info@oldtowncape.org

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Missouri House District 18

July 26, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Old Town Cape wins Greatest Achievement Award

Old Town Cape accepted the award for Greatest Achievement: Best Downtown Revitalization Organization from Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC), during the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on July 25. MMSC presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

The award recognizes an exceptional downtown management organization that provides financial stability to the revitalization effort, exhibits leadership skills that generate design improvements, promotions and events that highlight the area's culture and history, shares historic preservation resources, generates economic growth for the downtown, and works with the city and other public partners to accomplish downtown goals.

Formed in 1999, Old Town Cape was declared an official Main Street Community in 2000 and has been accredited each year since 2005. The Main Street district covers 131 blocks, including almost 400 retail, business, service or organizational offices and 4,500 residents. Strong leadership throughout the years has guided its development, consistently maintaining a strong Board and committees with representation from the downtown and community. Old Town Cape has significantly advanced its impact, is respected in the community and valued by community partners.

Some impressive numbers from Old Town Cape, April 2012 to March 2013:

- Old Town Cape managed over 4,000 volunteer hours.
- Nearly 5 million dollars in public improvements
- Nearly 2 million in private improvements
- 10 new businesses, producing 22 net new jobs

A few of the recent successes, events and project Old Town Cape has developed or been part of :
The Broadway Corridor Project - A nine-block, \$4.5 million streetscape project that replaced sidewalks and roadway.

Wayfinding - Nine new kiosks have been located in the district

Building Rehabilitations - Old town Cape was part of the team that saved the Julius Vasterling Building.

Old Town Cape has launched many other projects that support its revitalization program, including a new blog and other web-based promotions, Riverfront Market, Tunes at Twilight, Historic Homes and Garden Tour, Welcome Back for university students, and a partnership with the Douglas C. Greene Center for consultations with businesses during the corridor construction project.

For more details about the award, contact Marla Mills, Old Town Cape, 573-334-8085.

e-mail: info@oldtowncape.org

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Missouri House District 18

July 26, 2013

Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Old Town Cape's Broadway Corridor project wins award

Old Town Cape accepted the top prize for the Broadway Corridor project in the Streetscape and Public Space Improvements category, during the awards ceremony at the Main Street Downtown Revitalization Conference on July 25 in Kansas City. Missouri Main Street Connection presented revitalization awards in 16 categories.

The award category recognizes streetscape and public space improvements which may include landscaping, street furniture, interpretive signage, way-finding signage and lighting.

The project began in April 2012 and was finished six months later, making the Old Town Cape district more pedestrian friendly, creating a sense of place and enhancing the downtown atmosphere for residents and visitors. The \$4.5 million project covered 3,605 feet, nine blocks, used over 5,100 cubic feet of concrete, included infrastructure improvements of 88 new street lights, 129 trees, 5,973 plants and a 15-foot wide pedestrian promenade. Every section of Broadway that was temporarily closed for construction was reopened within 21 days.

Knowing that a major street project can negatively impact business activity, a partnership was formed to take preventive measures. Old Town Cape, The Cape Chamber of Commerce, and the City, along with local media partners built a marketing campaign to raise awareness in the community of the benefits of the project and that businesses would remain open during construction. The hard work and persistence of the construction companies to keep on schedule paid off, as the new Broadway corridor is now a vibrant pedestrian paradise, and many of the businesses are praising the dedication of those involved.

Public enthusiasm and support for the project, even during the construction phase, was evident in the appearance of six new businesses opening in the construction zone, with other businesses opening in adjacent areas. The project was also a catalyst for both minor and major building improvements along the route with more than 10 projects starting or completed during or shortly after the completion of the project.

A new citywide comprehensive way finding system is responsible for the location of nine new pedestrian kiosks in the Old Town Cape district with some of these enhancing the newly constructed Broadway Corridor.

At the heart of the Broadway vision was the wisdom of a quote from The Project for Public Spaces, founded 35 years ago: "If you plan cities for cars and traffic, you get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places." The project is a stellar example of Placemaking and the good that can be accomplished with a vision and dedicated teamwork.

For more details about the award, contact Marla Mills, 573-334-8085,
e-mail: info@oldtowncape.org

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Contact: Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.

417-334-3014; glroten@momainstreet.org

Blue Springs Downtown Alive! Sponsors a VIP Table at Awards Ceremony

Ten special guests gathered to celebrate at a VIP table, sponsored by Blue Springs Downtown Alive! during the Evening of Excellence dinner and awards ceremony at the Missouri Main Street Revitalization Conference in Kansas City, July 25 at the Phillips Hotel. The event capped off three days of over 40 educational workshops and in-the-field educational sessions, sponsored by Missouri Main Street Connection. Awards recognizing achievements in downtown revitalization were presented in 18 categories. Competition for the awards came from all across the state of Missouri.

“Missouri Main Street Connection congratulates Blue Springs, which embraced the opportunity for training and mentoring from Missouri Main Street, and is now seeing great results from all their hard work,” said Gayla Roten, Missouri Main Street Connection State Director.

The Blue Springs revitalization group has just completed its second year of participation in the Missouri Main Street Connection's Affiliate Grant program. Starting their course of training to adopt the Four-Point Main Street Approach to Revitalization, the Blue Springs group prepared a comprehensive action plan for revitalization based on the teamwork concept, said Cindy Miller, president of the group. Teamwork is the key to the group's success, with the four standing committees embracing the Four-Point Approach® and focusing their plan on providing benefits to the entire community.

The Organization Team applied for funding from the City of Blue Springs, which committed \$5,000 in each of its first two years of operation to support the new organization, matched by \$9,165 from private donors. The team also has developed a strong volunteer group.

The Design Team obtained matching Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds up to \$100,000 for a facade renovation program on one of the largest buildings downtown.

The Economic Restructuring Team provided input to the City on the tax abatement policy, resulting in lowered thresholds for improvement investment, as an incentive for renovations. The team also obtained a seat on the City Downtown Review Board, which oversees enforcement of the Downtown Development Code and Downtown Zoning Map.

The Promotions Team has produced downtown events that generate awareness, bring people downtown, and develop funding for the operation of the organization.

For more details about the awards ceremony and the conference, contact Blue Springs Downtown Alive! 816-228-2300, or e-mail: cmiller@amcommbank.com

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