



**Sterling
Main
Street**

Executive Director
Karen Ogden

Executive Committee

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Edson Cox

VICE PRESIDENT
Brian Grummert

TREASURER
Sheila Martinez

Board of Directors

- Edson Cox, ReMax
- Brian Grummert,
- Grummerts Hardware
- Sheila Martinez, US Bank
- Phil Mattox, Phil Mattox Insurance
- Rod Johnson, SBM
- Jim McPherson, Edward Jones
- Marilyn Anderson, Sterling Library
- Shelley Gottel,
- Trissel, Graham & Toole
- Linnea Koch, LK Design Source
- Heather Lanell,
- Heather Lanell Photography
- Tim McNinch, Airplay Sports

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Street Smart

The Official Newsletter of Sterling Main Street
318 1st Ave, P.O. Box 261 * Sterling, Illinois 61081 * 815-626-8610

Volume 1, Issue 2

Second Quarter

Letter from the Executive Director



Photo by Phil Mattox

The Changing Face of Downtown Sterling

The face of Sterling's downtown has been undergoing some major changes this spring with exciting results. Revitalization is a term that we can now be proud to use in describing Sterling's downtown. With three major façade preservation improvement projects almost completed, we continue to see an upward trend of community support for our locally owned and operated downtown district businesses.

Sterling is delighted to welcome Mead's Bike Shop and Martin's Steaks and Spirits to our Sterling Main Street district. Many months of sweat and tears have gone into both renovations, revealing two businesses that any town would be proud to have in their downtown. In addition, Educators of Beauty will soon have a fresh, new look that will help to brighten our streets, clearly reflecting their flourishing business. All three businesses display their strong belief in and dedication to our community through their deep commitment to the heart of this

community, Sterling's downtown district.

With an already diverse selection of successful and vibrant businesses, the added support from our new neighbors will help to strengthen our downtown. With the additional customers on our sidewalks, new networking opportunities, and more for people to do, new businesses help move us towards a revitalized downtown. This provides a win/win situation for all Sterling Main Street businesses.

Our downtowns are more than an area for business. It is our heritage and a symbol of who we are. So remember, whether your neighbor is a competitor or a business that complements yours, the more we work together to support each other, the better we can help our clients, our neighboring businesses, our community and most of all, ourselves.

Wishing you a happy and prosperous summer!

Sincerely,
Karen Ogden



Photo by Phil Mattox



Photo by Karen Ogden

Volunteering for Sterling Main Street

Volunteer Night was a huge success and we are always looking for more volunteers. We welcome your assistance and talents and hope you will consider lending us a helping hand in 2011!

To get started, call Karen @ 815-626-8610

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest board members:

Tim McNinch from Airplay Sports

Heather Lanell of Heather Lanell Photography

We look forward to working with you!

Our “Spring has Sprung” winner was awarded to **Apron Strings**, owned and operated by Laura Fitzgerald, located at 318 1st Ave. Laura has recently moved to this location, delighting our downtown customers with her eclectic collection of antiques, gifts and collectables. She’s excited to be one of the many wonderful downtown businesses and is thrilled about the networking opportunities available with her downtown associates.

We are proud to present Laura with a Media Package as the grand prize. We are also extremely proud of the sponsors that have generously contributed such valuable gifts. Although the sponsors vary each quarter, collectively they are:

WLLT Oldies — two gift certificates a year each at a value of \$250 in advertising services.

WRCV River County — three gift certificates a year each at a value of \$250 in advertising services

New Millenium Directories — two gift certificates a year each at a value of \$300 in advertising services.

Sauk Valley Newspaper — 4 gift certificates a year each valued at \$100 in advertising services.

Heather Lanell Photography — 2 gift certificates a year each valued at \$250 in photography services.

New Millenium Directories — two gift certificates a year each at a value of \$300 in advertising services.

Sauk Valley Newspaper — 4 gift certificates a year each valued at \$100 in advertising services.

Heather Lanell Photography — 2 gift certificates a year each valued at \$250 in photography services.

Donald Czyzyk Enterprises — 4 gift certificates a year varying in value of \$50 to \$100 in printing services.

Dezine Marketing - design services for signage for our contest.

We are so lucky to have the support of our sponsors. This summer, watch for an explosion of Red, White and Blue as our downtown windows prepare for our “Small Town USA” contest. If you are interested in getting involved in our decorating contest by becoming a sponsor, entering as a contestant or just being a part of the fun, please contact Karen Ogden at 815-626-8610 e-mail to kgoden@sterlingmainstreet.org.

Reflections on the National Main Street Conference – Des Moines, Iowa May 22-25

by Phil Mattox, Phil Mattox Insurance Agency

On a quest to learn the secrets to building a successful Main Street program in Sterling, I attended the National Main Street Conference in Des Moines, Iowa from May 22nd through 25th. I was joined by my wife, Julia and Sterling Main Street executive director, Karen Ogden. Because ours is considered a “young” Main Street, the majority of the cities represented were decades ahead of us in the number and size of the projects completed.

Aside from a few underutilized storefronts, we are in much better shape than most downtowns, as we are blessed with very low vacancy rates. Some cities have 20% vacancy. Some programs concentrate on developing upper level habitation, whether apartments or condos.

We learned in order to make our program grow, we need to increase the number of members of

each committee, as well as recruit a great number of volunteers to work on events. Events are the fun times that come with Main Street.

Sterling’s Downtown did not deteriorate all at once but one building at a time and that is the way we have to build it back, one building at a time. We learned that the key to successfully working on large dollar projects is establishing very good relationships with all levels of government. We need to reach all the way from local and state officials, to the Governor, and to the Federal officials that control the purse strings for rehab projects. We don’t currently have these strong ties to government and with the current state of the finances in Illinois, we should not expect them to come knocking at our door with bags of money in the decade to come.

We learned that we need to maximize our efforts with assets that we have and go forward. If Sterling is better tomorrow than today, we will be successful. Main Street communities are successful because of the commitment of board members, and the volunteers giving 110% effort.

Sterling is blessed with both a strong Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Merchants Association. The three organizations can accomplish more by working together rather than alone.

I discovered that we may have different problems than other cities, but we’re all working toward the same goal; to make our Main Streets a fun destination our citizens want to visit time and again.

Promoting Partnerships

by Jami Cannell, PMIA, Inc.

A healthy sense of competition is good (and necessary) for all successful businesses. However, it can be very beneficial to network and form positive working relationships with your competitors as well. Here a few reasons why:

You improve your business – Building each other’s businesses up, instead of criticizing, will result in better service, higher customer satisfaction, and more success. By working together, we can make each other better.

It makes you look good – No matter what kind of business you’re in, you share customers with other businesses. There is nothing more unprofessional than “battling it out” publicly. By creating civil, positive relationships with your competitors, you look like the moral, upstanding, and professional business owner that you are.

Your business can grow – There may be a time when your colleague can’t help someone and you could be on the receiving end of a new client or customer, just by being a positive acquaintance. This helps keep customers in your local shopping district, promoting downtown businesses.

You might learn something new – You can keep up on market trends and learn about new products. No matter how much experience you have or how successful you are, never pass up an opportunity to learn.

You could form an alliance – There is nothing better than having an ally in the business that understands the industry and can collaborate with you in a way that benefits both parties...for example, shared costs, more buying power from a mutual vendor, etc.

The best way to begin networking with other business owners is to be open and friendly, meet on neutral ground, share experiences, and explore strengths and opportunities. Meeting at a tradeshow, a Chamber or a Sterling Main Street event would probably be a more comfortable way to initiate contact, instead of a random phone call inviting him or her to stop by your office. Rather than giving away any facts or figures relating to your business, share your experiences as a business owner. Your competitor probably has a different set of strengths than you do. By exploring each other’s strong points, you can jointly create collaborative opportunities that give you both an advantage over the rest of the field.

Clearly there are many reasons to partner with others in your industry. Whether it’s a formal strategic alliance, a referral network, or just sharing your problems over coffee, getting to know your competitors can be a winning solution for all.



TWIN CITY MARKET
106 AVENUE A
STERLING IL 61081

Spring is here! Take the opportunity to visit the Twin City Market for locally grown produce, locally raised meat, and locally produced arts and crafts items. Open year-round, Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to Noon. Bring the whole family and enjoy something healthy, homemade, and delicious from our Scarecrow Café, serving every Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to Noon. Menus available online each week at www.tcmarket.net. Indoor eating area or To Go.



2011 Twin City Market Scheduled Events

- July 15th—Breakfast Before Business
- August 13th—Back to School Day of Fun
- August 27th—Corn Festival and Boil
- September 24th—Fall Harvest Festival
- October 29th—Trick or Treating for the kids
- November 19th—Thanksgiving Dinner
- December 19th—Christmas at the Market

Sterling Main Street's Upcoming Events

Sterling Main Street is hard at work putting together exciting events for our downtown and community, providing something for everyone with new and fun reasons to return time and time again to our downtown. Working with our volunteers, we have several fun dates set for 2011!

Five dates you will want to "save the date" for are:

- July 15th—Sterling Main Street Blues Fest / Starlights Theater
- July 16th—Sterling Main Street Outdoor Blues Fest
- August 5th—Downtown Businesses Hot Dog Days
- August 6th—Dog Days at Grandon Civic Park
- December 2—Seasonal Sights and Sounds Parade

SMS has many more events that are in the planning stage so watch for the upcoming announcements and make sure to keep your eyes and ears open so you won't miss any of the fun!

BLUES FEST 3rd Annual
FRI. JULY 15
SAT. JULY 16

FRIDAY, JULY 15, 2011 at the Starlight Theatre & Lounge
314 1st Ave., Sterling, IL 61081
Doors Open at 5pm.

6pm - Filisko & Noden
8pm - Barstool Bob Band
10pm - Starlight Band

SATURDAY, JULY 16, 2011 at 3rd & Locust Street
Doors Open at 1pm.

2pm - Aaron Williams & the Hoodoo
4pm - Glenn Davis & Matt Goodwin
6pm - Starlight Band
8pm - The Cash Box Kings
10pm - Mississippi Heat

<http://sterlingblues.blogspot.com>
Call (815)626-8610 for details!
Bring your own chairs. No coolers or outside food and beverages allowed. No pets.

2011 Summer Concert Schedule



JUNE

- 8th
- 15th
- 22nd
- 25th (Saturday)
- 29th

JULY

- July 6th—Patriotic Concert
- July 9th (Saturday)
- July 13th
- July 20th
- July 23rd (Saturday) - Big Band Dance Night
- July 27th

AUGUST

- 3rd
- 6th (Saturday)
- 10th

Sterling Main Street
 318 1st Avenue
 P. O. Box 261
 Sterling, IL 61071
 Phone: 815-626-8610
 Fax: 815-626-8612
 kogden@sterlingmainstreet.org



**Main Street's
 Mission:**

"Sterling Main Street is a partnership of businesses, citizens, property owners, civic leaders, and city officials devoted to achieving a balance between historic preservation and economic development in the downtown district"



Photos by Phil Mattox



**Sterling
 Main
 Street**

Sterling Main Streets Partnerships— We thank you for your support and encouragement!

Gold Partners—\$500

CGH Medical Center
 Verifacts, Inc.

Silver Partners—\$250

Educators of Beauty
 US Bank

Partnership Level—\$100

Air Play Sports
 Body N Sol Tanning
 Central Heating and Cooling
 DeJonge Tax & Accounting
 Dennis Electric of Tampico, Inc.
 Donald Czyzyk Enterprise
 Edward Jones, 1st Ave.
 Edward Jones, Locust Street
 Greater Sterling Development Corp.
 Martin's Steaks & Spirits
 Mary Kay Cosmetics
 McCormick's Nursery
 Mead's Bike Shop

Midland States Bank
 Miller, Lancaster, Walker & Burall
 Napa Auto Parts
 New Millenium Directories
 Phil Mattox Insurance Agency
 Photographys by Heather Lanell
 Pinney Printing
 Plainwell Brass, Inc.
 River Ridge Animal Hospital
 Sam S. Card, CPA P.C.
 Sauk Valley Bank
 Sauk Valley Area Chamber
 Sauk Valley Newspaper
 SBM
 Service Master
 Showplace Antiques & Treasures
 Skoog Landscaping & Design
 Sterling Chevrolet
 Sterling, City of
 Sterling Commercial Roofing

Sterling Federal Bank
 Sterling Today
 Trissel Graham and Toole
 Tuff Dog Bakery
 Wipfli LLP

Sterling Main Street 2011 Partnership Benefits

- Committee: Partners may join a Main Street Committee... Have your voice be heard.
- Decorating Contest: Partners have no entry fee. 1st Place prize is a media package worth \$750 plus a spot in our quarterly newsletter and a sandwich board sign designating you as the "Downtown Decorating King/Queen of the Quarter. Non-Partners may enter for a fee of \$10.00
- Façade Grant Program: Partners who are within the Downtown District Area may apply for our 50/50 matching Façade Grant Program once per year.
- E-Blast your Ad: Partners may take advantage of our E-Blast database of over 200 people to promote your upcoming events once per month. Non-Partners must pay a fee of \$10.00.
- Mailing Labels: Partners may request a set of mailing labels from all 50-plus Sterling Main Street Partners once a year at no cost.
- Partnership Directory: All current Partners will be included in the Partnership Directory on our website, as well as being listed in our quarterly newsletter.
- Quarterly Newsletter: Partners will receive our quarterly newsletter listing out upcoming events and other exciting happenings in our downtown.
- Sponsorship of Events: Partners will have several opportunities to sponsor events provided for our community, your customers, by Sterling Main Street throughout the year.
- Website: Soon our Partners will be provided with monthly promotional and advertising opportunities on our website. These opportunities are being developed now and will be offered in the near future.

Sterling Main Street continues to provide different events that attract a variety of people with a variety of interests to our downtown. Your partnership will help to bring back a fully revitalized downtown to our community. Your partnership will help bring back opportunity for small local business growth in our community. So much good can come from your kind gift of a partnership, so please request your application TODAY and say yes for Sterling!!

Call Karen at 815-626-8610 for your Partnership Application!

City of Sterling's Clean and Green Day

Despite the rain, on May 13th, the City of Sterling and many volunteers spent the day beautifying Sterling with clean up crews, drop off dumpsters, paint and lots of flowers. Thanks to all who worked or volunteered to ensure that May 13th was a great success. Also, a special thank you goes out to Rod Johnson of SBM and Brian Grummert of Grummert's Hardware for the delicious lunch they so kindly provided for all the volunteers. All your efforts help us to enjoy a brighter, more beautiful city.