



CENTER *Piece*

PENNSYLVANIA DOWNTOWN CENTER'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER / *Winter 2017/18*



BEDFORD'S

*Dynamic Duo:
The Team of Tonya & Tabitha*

P6

**P2
THE
CHANGING
FACE OF RETAIL**

*Is your 5-Year-Strategy
ready?*

**P17
HOLIDAY
TRADITIONS**

*We're more alike than we
think...*

Small Business Saturday Success How PA Communities Celebrated P11

The Changing Face of Retail

by Bill Fontana

So, 2017-18 is about adapting to change. Few issues impact revitalization efforts more dramatically than the changes taking place in the retail sector of the economy. If you are a program manager or a board member in a community where the retail environment is a critical issue (and where isn't that the case?) you certainly see the fast moving changes taking place in that sector. According to the PA Department of Labor and Industry between 2006 and 2016 retail establishments declined by nine percent (9%) in the Commonwealth's rural communities and by three percent (3%) in urban areas. Employment in the retail sector declined by 4% and 3%, respectively.

Some of the reasons for these changes are obvious. First and foremost is the increase in on-line retailing, which everyone immediately points to as the reason for the decline in brick and mortar retailing. Interestingly, however, most Americans would still prefer to make an in-store purchase versus an on-line purchase for several reasons, including the ability to actually see and touch the merchandise and the availability of direct, in-store customer service. Additional reasons given for the decline are:

- Millennials would rather pay for experiences than goods.
- Seventy-one percent of shoppers think that they will get a better deal online than in a store.
- Shopping habits and shopping hours are constantly changing.
- Only 17% of small businesses have experimented with creating an on-line store.

If your five year strategy has retail considerations high up on its list of program priorities, your organization needs to invest in retail skill-building and knowledge development – both for the manager and committee(s) responsible for the economic vitality function. This issue may be equally important for Elm

Street programs, as the retail environment may be a critical factor in defining the desirability of your neighborhood. Tracking the latest in-store and on-line trends and conveying those to your retailers is critical if your organization and your manager are to be looked at as the go-to resource for your retail community. In addition, holding regular educational seminars for your retailers should be an important component of your economic vitality strategy. Two seminars per year should be the minimum; quarterly is probably better.

There are, however, a host of issues that go beyond shopping trends and on-line capabilities. The Labor and Industry report indicated that there is a direct connection between declines in population, housing units, employment and median household income and the associated retail declines. The old adage that "Retail Follows Residential" still holds true. In addition, the question of business ownership and succession is a looming giant that will affect many more local retailers as the baby-boom retirement tsunami picks up steam over the next decade. Working to impact these issues should be another element of your strategy.

If you and your organization are serious about changing the retail environment in your town, there will be several great sessions you should attend at the 2018 PDC conference in West Chester. You should also make sure you are connecting with your local Small Business Development Center to provide both "retail group" and individual business assistance as needed. Learn how to teach your retailers to create experiences. Consider subscribing to on-line retail trend sites and make sure you are keeping your trade area data current. In addition, PDC will be posting a list of retail assistance web sites on our website in the near future.

On behalf of the Board and staff of PDC, I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous 2018. – Bill

2018 EVENTS

Calendar

For more information or to register for an event or training, please visit our online events calendar.



2017-2018 Reporting Due TUESDAY, JANUARY 16TH BY 11:59 P.M.

EVENT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
NAP Workshop	Monday, February 12	TBD	Harrisburg, PA
Statewide Managers Meeting	Tuesday, February 13	9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Harrisburg, PA
Regional Leadership Forum			
New Manager Training	Monday, February 26 & Tuesday, February 27	8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Harrisburg, PA PDC Offices
Community Revitalization Academy: Asset Enhancement	Wednesday, February 28 & Thursday, March 1	8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Harrisburg, PA PDC Offices
National Main Street Conference	March 26 - March 28	Ongoing Events	Kansas City, MO
New Manager Training	Monday, April 16 & Tuesday, April 17	8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Harrisburg, PA PDC Offices
Community Revitalization Academy: Safe, Clean, & Green	Wednesday, April 18 - Thursday, April 19	8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Harrisburg, PA PDC Offices
PDC Annual Conference	June 3 - June 6	Ongoing Events	West Chester, PA

THE NEWEST FACES on Main Street & Elm Street



Oxford Main Street, Inc.

Brian Wenzka, Executive Director

Brian Wenzka is the new Executive Director for Oxford Mainstreet, Inc. (OMI), for the Borough of Oxford, Chester County. He comes to OMI with an extensive career in community development and non profit leadership, previously holding positions as the Executive Director of the Octorara Community Recreation Commission, and Executive Director for the YMCA. Brian also

has a background in Landscape Architecture and Horticulture.

Brian grew up in western New York State, attended Temple University, and has been a resident in southeastern PA for the past 25 years. He currently lives in Atglen Borough where he has also served as Mayor since 2014.



Chestnut Hill Business District

Philip Dawson, Executive Director

The Chestnut Hill Business District is pleased to welcome Philip Dawson as its new Executive Director. Mr. Dawson is a city planner with a track record of successful community and economic development work who is committed to building on Chestnut Hill's value as a historic, thriving, and choice Philadelphia neighborhood. Prior to coming to Chestnut Hill, Mr. Dawson served as Executive Director of Esperanza Housing and Economic Development, also in Philadelphia. He has a special passion for small business development and downtown management. Mr. Dawson is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, where he

obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Urban Studies and Spanish. He went on to earn a Masters in City Planning from Penn's School of Design, with a concentration in Community and Economic Development. Mr. Dawson is active in civic affairs, and has served as three-term Chair of SEPTA's Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) as well as Chair of his community organization's Zoning Committee. In 2013, he was one of six citizens selected to serve as a face of the city's UnLitter Us campaign for his work to encourage recycling in Philadelphia. Mr. Dawson resides in Philadelphia's West Mt. Airy neighborhood with his wife and son.



PDC Board Report

The Pennsylvania Downtown Center Board of Directors met in State College on November 28 & 29, 2017, combining their regular fall board meeting with their strategic planning retreat. The Board meeting and retreat were led by PDC Board Chair Larry Newman.

BOARD MEETING

2016-17 Audit Report

The first and most important item on the board meeting agenda was the 2016-2017 audit report submitted by the independent certified public accounting firm of Smith Elliott Kearns & Company, LLC (SEK). The annual fiscal year audit is a consolidated statement combining the financial statements of both PDC and its subsidiary, Keystone CORE Services(KCS). The report, presented by Mr. Greg Hall of SEK, stated that SEK was issuing an "unqualified" opinion, indicating a clean audit. The report showed that combined revenue for the 2016-17 fiscal year was \$1,044,764. Expenses were stated as \$1,077,390, or a loss for the year of \$32,625. This loss was anticipated at the beginning of the fiscal year as the PDC board agreed to incur additional expenses to bump up PDC activities in anticipation of the National Main Street Conference that was held in Pittsburgh in May of 2017. Financial analysis showed that 93% of PDC/KCS were program related and 7% of expenses were directed to general administration and fundraising for PDC/KCS. At the end of the 2016-17 fiscal year the PDC/KCS corporate structure had total net assets of \$500,732.

National Main Street Center Coordinator's Package

The board reviewed and approved both the Trademark License Agreement and Coordinating Program Membership Agreement between PDC and the National Main Street Center for 2018. PDC serves as the Pennsylvania state coordinating program to the National Main Street Center as part of PDC's service contract with the Department of Community and Economic Development. The agreements cost PDC \$4,550 for 2018.

Blueprint Communities Mini-Grants

The PDC board reviewed the recommendations of PDC's Blueprint Communities Advisory Committee and gave a preliminary approval to two grants, each worth \$10,000. Five of the six current PA Blueprint Communities had submitted applications for the two mini-grants. The awards will be officially announced pending final contract acceptance by the two communities selected.

BOARD RETREAT

After adjourning the regular board meeting, PDC's directors and staff met for the rest of the day and most of the next day, discussing the strategic plan for PDC for 2018-2023. The retreat started the strategic planning that is expected to be completed in May of 2018. The plan under consideration will be for July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2023 time frame. The plan is also being developed along-side a similar strategic planning being conducted by the National Main Street Center. Items of strategic importance discussed by the board included ongoing PDC executive transition, the consolidation and enhancement of initiatives begun during the last five years including Nature Based Placemaking, Blueprint Communities, and Keystone CORE Service initiatives. Also discussed were PDC's location needs moving forward, potential partnerships with other statewide non-profits, strategic plan metrics and possible (but limited) new program initiatives. Reinstating funds for managerial support is a high programmatic priority as is amending the Neighborhood Improvement District Act.

Bedford's New Dynamic Duo

The Team of Tonya & Tabitha



by Stefan Klosowski

Prior to any knowledge of what a Main Street program was, Tonya Grimes had started her career as a teacher of kindergarten students. Later, after becoming a stay at home mother with four children, she launched Creative Memories, a home-based business.

This involved teaching people how to organize their family photos and document their stories. The business bug bit Tonya and after six years growing Creative Memories she was sought out by companies to teach others how to grow their businesses.

Years later while enjoying her morning coffee and reading the local newspaper Tonya saw the ad for Bedford Main Street Manager. With her love of Bedford, varied skill set and that she was pretty successful in parenting four teenagers Tonya felt confident she could tackle just about anything!

Though before interviewing for the position she was not aware of Downtown Bedford's Main Street, it's now four years later and Tonya continues to welcome the rewards and the challenges of a job that she is crazy in love with.

Tonya has a B.A. in Education from Juniata College and graduated with early childhood and elementary teaching certificates. She is also certified in Middle School English, Middle School History, and Family & Consumer Science. Her passion is many things of equal value to her: organizing and engaging volunteers; contributing to the quality of life for people who live, work and play in Bedford; event planning and fundraising with an emphasis on adding creative value to businesses and people who support the organization. She is proud of her children who, like her, are extending themselves into the community, teaching and caring fields. One is a physician's assistant and one a teacher while the other two are in college studying to become a physician's assistant and a Registered Nurse. Tonya's hobby is working on fixer-upper houses.

Some of Tonya and Downtown Bedford's achievements include:

- The Snowflake Social at the Omni Bedford Springs Resort is their largest fundraiser
- Since DBI's inception in 2002, \$410,000 has been invested in façade grant money
- Doubled the budget within two years and increased it over \$100,000
- Tripled the amount of events by putting feet on the street and traffic into the stores
- Exponentially grew the volunteer force through clear objectives and leadership
- Volunteer installation of 32 flower brackets which hold flower buckets
- Projects in alleyways creating art and to increase pedestrian safety
- Young George Washington Mural Project on the back of HeBrews coffee shop
- 100' long x 21' high mural on the underpass of Route 30 (Lincoln Highway) depicting the 100 year history of our Bedford County Fair.

A few of the awards received are:

With her love of Bedford, varied skill set and that she was pretty successful in parenting four teenagers Tonya felt confident she could tackle just about anything!

- Top Ten Main Street in the USA two consecutive years through the National Main Street Center's Great America Main Street Awards
- Bedford County Chamber of Commerce's Historic Preservation Award in 2011
- PA Downtown Center's 2012 Public Space Improvement Award

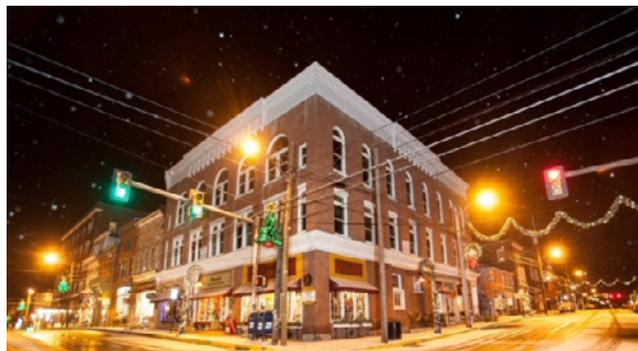
One of Tonya's greatest accomplishments is assembling an army of volunteers who are committed to DBI's mission, the town and focused on keeping Bedford a very special place. Of particular interest is helping to add value to students so they can get involved and know the importance of community participation.

Christmas is a big deal in Bedford and it requires the most cooperation of volunteers to get the job done. Businesses and individuals donate so much of their time and resources. This goes along with their theme that "Downtown Bedford is the living room of the community." The Christmas tree is called the town's tree so they encourage families to make it a tradition of putting an ornament on it each year. The tree is always

donated by a local family.

The Inaugural Farm to Table experience in 2017 produced a strong connection between their downtown and local producers. The idea was presented to their Penn State intern who championed the effort as they steered her project into an overwhelming success that will continue to grow annually.

LEFT TO RIGHT: FARM TO TABLE EVENT; FESTIVE STOREFRONTS FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON; YOUTH FROM "BEST AND BRIGHTEST" PROGRAM



What does it take to work as a team?

While Tonya has been at DBI for four years, Tabitha has been there for only four months.

The new assistant manager Tabitha Barbarito brings a whole different skill set that will help elevate the organization even more. It was imperative to hire someone whose strengths were different from Tonya's. It's the key to this organization's success. Working as a team takes selflessness...no one caring who gets credit but caring about the greater good of getting the job done and moving projects forward and celebrating everyone who made it happen. Working as

a team takes time. When Tabitha was hired, it was Tonya's goal to give her the freedom to bring new ideas to the table, a fresh perspective and a voice to help take things to a higher level using her strengths and talents.

For three months Tonya was able to observe and focus in on the things that totally light Tabitha up about her job. For example, Tabitha lights up when she is asked to write something...press releases or information for this article. She loved asking questions and pulling together the facts and pictures, telling the story of this

organization's success in a way that would be interesting for PDC to read. The two of them constantly bounce ideas off of each other or take an idea and drill down or peel the layers back to uncover how they can solve problems, help merchants, enhance the town and add value to their members. Tabitha loves the Farmer's Market. She was excited to learn she would be carrying on as the manager of it and immediately instituted a winter market because she has a passion for the producers and makers and making connections throughout the community.

Tabitha Barbarito, DBI's new Assistant Manager, is also the Market Manager for Downtown Bedford's Farmer's Market. While working in economic development in a neighboring city she realized and came to value the importance of preservation based revitalization.

TABITHA AND SHARON BEAUPRE, ONE OF DBI'S MOST DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS AT ONE OF THIS YEAR'S DOWNTOWN CHRISTMAS DECORATING DAYS

Tabitha is fortunate to have found her career and true calling through her volunteer and her work experiences.

Tabitha attended Marshall University studying Political PR and Journalism. She then switched to education and later returned to a satellite campus of West Virginia University completing her degree in Liberal Studies.

Having grown up in Appalachia, Tabitha feels strongly that our rural small towns and cities are valuable assets and they deserve the attention of our nation's best and brightest. Her favorite projects and initiatives have the recurring theme of retaining or attracting innovative professionals and creative artists to the region.

Tabitha's favorite project at DBI has been the opportunity to start a winter farmer's market. It is an exciting initiative for producers. The winter market not only sustains the producers through an additional season, but serves as a community effort and helps to showcase commercial property. Recently they had over 20 seniors join on site for a farm to table luncheon. The space which holds the market is a large property with some vacant commercial rental suites and tons of potential. Drawing consumers into the space helps to showcase the property.



When asked *what does it take to make such a team work*, Tabitha replied, "I would say the most important components of team work are: common goals and passions; equal energy and mutual respect."

Tabitha's wonderful husband Sebastian is supportive of her career and also community minded. Having moved to the area from greater DC in 2015 they both value the intimate community spirit and kayaking and biking in nature. They look forward to getting on the trails and rivers with Oona, their recently adopted Australian Cattle shelter dog. Tabitha enjoys reading and is an alternate on an epic bowling team.

TONYA GRIMES
Main Street Manager

TABITHA BARBARITO
Assistant Main Street Manager

Downtown Bedford, Inc.
124 South Juliana Street
Bedford, PA 15522
814-623-0048
www.downtownbedford.com

Bedford's Main Street Program: How It All Began



THE FOLLOWING IS AN INTERESTING STORY ABOUT ELAINE HOUSEL FROM EARLY MAIN STREET BEGINNINGS IN BEDFORD

Previously Elaine's Wearable Art and now Juli's Wearable Art – painting, signage, awnings, windows. Cornerstone building and business located at 100 East Pitt Street (photo insert)

In 2001 Elaine Housel contacted PDC and spoke with Bill Fontana on how to form an official Main Street program. The letter sent to Bill Fontana was handwritten. In an interview with Elaine she said, "I started my business in 1985 in the town of Bedford. In the year 2000 the economy was horrible. The famous Bedford Springs Hotel had closed in 1990 and we didn't have the many tourists that we previously had from the hotel.

We had five or six empty store fronts (18% vacancy rate), which was a lot for our small town. The business owners were getting older and the next generation seemed to have no interest in taking over family businesses or becoming entrepreneurs. We only had three restaurants and a few bars that drew in a 'not so nice crowd'. Kids were growing up and had no desire to stick around. We were getting scared our town was going to die," she said. "I wrote a letter to PDC that said HELP US!"

In order to demonstrate community support for a Main Street program, town meetings were held. They had school children draw a picture of what their main street looked like. Elaine said, "I'll never forget the picture we got of the Wal-Mart." This caused the group to become even more determined

to educate people on what Main Street was and what it meant for the local economy and the community. "We hauled Bedford Councilmen to surrounding towns so they could see ideas. It was simple things like signs that hung from the buildings so you could look down the street and see what was available. The Borough had an ordinance against signs like this. We had to work hard to get council to change ordinances that would be more business friendly," said Elaine. Part of being business friendly included removing parking meters allowing free parking throughout the town.

Small Business Saturday in PA

by Katie Tyson &
Imogen Wirth-Granlund



The second floor of a historic bank building in Harrisburg erupted in excitement when the Pennsylvania Downtown Center staff read the Washington Post headlines declaring Black Friday had lost its bang and Small Business Saturday was a success in America’s small towns. With the National Main Street Center and American Express garnering nationwide attention for their promotion of the “shop small, shop local” movement, we are shining a spotlight on communities across the Commonwealth and sharing the bright ideas that make these downtowns destinations for holiday shopping and cheer.

WINNING WINDOW DISPLAYS

Each year, **Downtown Bedford, Inc.** and local merchants select a theme for their annual window decorations—this year it was “The Twelve Days of Christmas.” DBI documents the preparations and finished displays via Facebook photos and shared posts. Shoppers vote for their favorite displays by dropping change in boxes at each store—the winners are determined by the amount of money collected. The funds raised go towards the cost of the street decorations in the business district. After Small Business Saturday, DBI holds a second contest for the “People’s Choice Award,” selected by

its Facebook audience of approximately 10,000 people. The window display that generates the most likes on DBI’s page wins, but all of the business participants benefit from this continued promotion that runs through December 21st.

DBI’s initiative is one of many examples of proving nonprofits do not need to wait until Giving Tuesday to raise awareness and funds. Manager Tonya Grimes highlighted both DBI and Bedford’s business district by coordinating an advertising and social media campaign, which included radio ads and boosted Facebook posts. Resulting newspaper and television coverage



further spread Tonya’s message, “Stop and think. Where is my money going to be invested? If it is invested into a small town...that money goes back into the community.”

POP-UP PUBLICITY

Building a Better Boyertown served as its Neighborhood Champion, creating a window display and distributing signs and swag, including 200 canvas bags branded with American Express’s “Shop Small” logo. Spreading holiday cheer, chiropractor David Carr and the Samana Holistic Center invited local entrepreneurs and vendors to share their downtown spaces for the day. Emily Jones, Assistant Main Street Manager in Boyertown, commented, “[Small Business Saturday] is a growing, wonderful thing here. It brought 12

additional vendors to the 20+ merchants who were already celebrating.”

Lansdowne Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) takes over the historic Twentieth Century Club building downtown with A Bit of the Arts. Geared towards holiday shoppers, the event features local arts and crafts vendors and musicians, who bring the energy of LEDC’s annual summertime Arts on the Avenue street festival indoors for a day. The community gathering, which also serves as a successful fundraiser for LEDC, creates a festive atmosphere downtown in conjunction with the Lansdowne Business & Professional Association’s Tree Lighting and Santa’s Arrival.

TRANSFORMING TRADITIONS

For Easton residents, the holiday season begins with the lighting of a 106-foot tall Peace Candle in Centre Square. Historically, this took place on Black Friday, but three years ago the Easton Main Street Initiative (ESMI) made the controversial decision to move the annual ceremony to Small Business Saturday. This calendar change has led to a dramatic rise in attendees from approximately 4,000 to 7,500. Volunteer availability also increased from an average of 70 hours for the Friday ceremony to 190 hours for the Saturday festival. Switching to Saturday freed up an entire day for events, starting with two Breakfasts with Santa, including a Cinderella’s carriage ride, strolling street performers, and ice carvers, and closing with the evening



LEFT PAGE, CLOCKWISE: BELLEFONTE, ERIE & LANSDOWNE
RIGHT PAGE: BEDFORD, EASTON & ERIE

Peace Candle Lighting. Wayfinding signage directs shoppers through the hilly, winding blocks of Easton’s downtown to participating storefronts, identifiable with balloon bouquets and “Shop Small” decorations. ESMI also hosts an info booth, which offers “Shop Small” bags and swag and accepts donations to supplement revenues from advance ticket sales for the breakfasts and carriage rides. Fundraiser items include ornaments, as well as battery-operated candles to use during the festivities past twilight.

SAVVY SOCIAL MEDIA

The Borough of Bellefonte in Centre County partnered with local business owners and the BelleKey organization to deploy an online communication strategy via Facebook, Instagram, and Bellefonte.com. A homespun advertorial, accompanied by a Facebook Event page, likened independently-owned shops and markets to endangered species. At the end, it listed local businesses’ discounts, and urged readers to, “Skip the malls and the chains for a day. Come shop in Bellefonte.” Shannon Wright, Bellefonte’s Keystone Community Development Coordinator, remarked that the 394 views with an average of 2.5 minutes spent on the page meant that “people actually read it, which is fantastic!” Bellefonte.com’s Facebook and Instagram posts combined reached nearly 10,000 people with 60 shares and nearly 250 reactions.

DBI’s initiative is one of many examples of proving nonprofits do not need to wait until Giving Tuesday to raise awareness and funds.

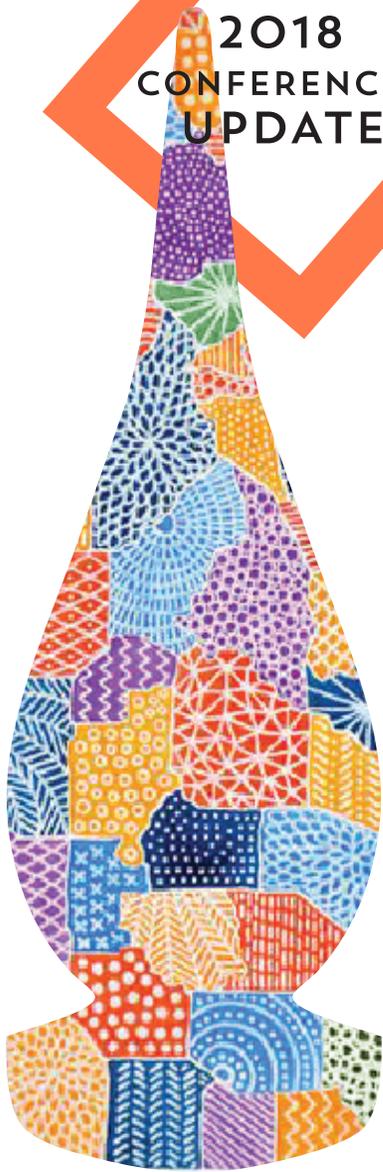
In Easton, ESMI started using social media for Small Business Saturday in 2014 and has analyzed and diversified its effort since. Their first Facebook posts included small business statistics and photos of merchants holding “Shop Small” hearts in their stores. By 2015, the number of business participants doubled and ESMI expanded its strategy to include Instagram.

Other social media techniques employed in Pennsylvania’s core communities included Facebook paid advertisements and “e-blasts.” In addition to its Facebook Event page and photo posts of storefronts and shop owners all day Saturday, Downtown Erie Partnership (DEP) purchased a Facebook ad. The Ardmore Initiative promoted businesses offering discounts and deals to 1,700 people via an email marketing campaign.

THE HOLIDAY FORMERLY KNOWN AS “BLACK FRIDAY”

Pennsylvania’s downtowns have reclaimed the day after Thanksgiving by shifting the focus towards public gatherings and the small business community. The Ardmore Small Business Association distributed “Shop Small” branded bags and stickers at Santa’s Arrival in the Public Square on Friday. During their community Tree Lighting on Friday, the Blueprint Initiative of the Reynoldsville Community Association distributed “Shop Small” swag bags stuffed with coupons for local businesses and information about the two craft shows in town the next day.

2018
CONFERENCE
UPDATES



2018 TOWNIE AWARDS *Nominations Due Feb. 9*

Your community accomplished something amazing this year, and the Townie Awards Committee wants to hear about it.

The Townie Awards Gala, or the Townies, is an annual dinner and awards ceremony wherein communities from across the commonwealth are recognized for noteworthy revitalization projects or events completed over the previous year.



TIPS FOR A STRONG TOWNIE AWARDS APPLICATION

1

SUBMIT
*quality supporting
materials, with
photos at least
1000px or 133 dpi.*

2

CITE
*quantifiable
measurements &
qualitative
examples*

3

SHOW
*how your
project
contributes
to the future of
the community*

SUBMIT
your
nomination
by February 9, 2018

*Oil City
Mural
Project*



2017 Townie Award Winners

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE
ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Erie Downtown Partnership,
CARE About Revitalizing Erie

PROMOTIONS & MARKETING AWARDS
IMAGE & IDENTITY
Lansdowne Economic Development Corp.
LEDC Marketing Strategy

SPECIAL OR NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS
Easton Main Street Initiative, PA Bacon Fest

ASSET ENHANCEMENT AWARD
Fayette County Cultural Trust, Connellsville
Canteen-WWII Museum

ANCHOR BUILDING AWARD
Easton Main Street Initiative, Easton Public Market

BOARD LEADERSHIP
Jennifer Markus, President, Explore Sewickley

PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS &
DESIGN AWARD
PUBLIC SPACES
Oil City Main Street Program, Downtown Murals

PROGRAM-WIDE FAÇADE RESTORATION
Upside Allentown P.I. Committee
Individual Façade Renovation, Indian Café Building

SAFE, CLEAN & GREEN AWARDS
COMMUNITY GREENING
Building A Better Boyertown,
150th Anniversary Garden

PUBLIC SAFETY
Downtown Hazleton Alliance for Progress,
Community Policing Initiative

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT BY A PROGRAM
MANAGER
Naomi Naylor, Quakertown Alive!



CURRENT SPONSORS



FIG INDUSTRIES

creative thinkers & makers with a forever mission of DESIGN FOR GOOD 

LEARN MORE ABOUT PDC'S 2018 CONFERENCE

SAVE *the* DATE

MAIN STREET *Now*

A CONFERENCE OF THE
NATIONAL MAIN STREET CENTER

KANSAS CITY, MO // MARCH 26-28, 2018

Join your fellow commercial district revitalization professionals in Kansas City at the 2018 Main Street Now Conference, March 26-28 for three exciting days of educational sessions, mobile workshops, special events, and plenty of opportunities for exploring all the great things Kansas City and the surrounding area has to offer.

Recently named one of the “Best Cities to Live in America,” Kansas City thrives as the Midwestern hub of arts, innovation, entrepreneurship, and historically interesting places. From City Market to Power & Light District, boutique shopping to historic city fountains, and world-class museums to a vibrant nightlife, Kansas City is the perfect learning lab for Main Streeters.

Together, we’ll explore how Main Streets can position themselves at the forefront of the new economy, dive into the critical intersection of health and place, discover how commercial districts can be drivers of equity and inclusion, and so much more. We can’t wait to see you there!

The Main Street Now Conference is the largest nationwide gathering of preservation-based economic development and community revitalization professionals, attracting over 1,600 attendees from around the country. Further your community development education and network with colleagues experiencing similar successes and challenges, then celebrate at the Big Bash street festival in GAMSA winner Lee’s Summit,

while enjoying all that the Heartland has to offer!

Whether you hail from an urban business district, small rural downtown, or some place in between, you will find real solutions to common problems at the 2018 Main Street Now Conference in Kansas City. See you in March!

HOTEL INFORMATION

Kansas City Marriott Downtown
200 West 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64105
Hotel block will open November 1, 2017.

REGISTRATION RATES

Early Bird (before Jan 12): \$405 Member | \$555 Non-Member
Regular: \$505 Member | \$655 Non-Member
One Day: \$325
Student: \$175

Registration is open! Early bird rates are available through January 12, 2018. Register today!

Holiday Traditions (We're More Alike Than We Think)

by Julie Fitzpatrick

In my household growing up, we celebrated a fairly Americanized Christmas, but I've often been intrigued by the celebrations of other countries and of other religions. We had a Christmas tree, stockings, special treats, and the reading of the Christmas story on Christmas Eve with my father's family and the opening of presents in the morning and later a Christmas Day dinner with my mother's family. However, each year was slightly different; my mom was always incorporating new traditions into our existing ones. She would add a new ornament or a new food every year, and with that new addition, a traditional story of a far away land – that of Denmark or Sweden, Germany or France. But, all of these stories weren't that different than our story.

As I grew older, I had friends whose families practiced Judaism and Hinduism, and I began to learn about their customs and traditions around this time of year. I learned of Hanukkah and Diwali, and later about Kwanzaa.

All of our stories are stories of hope and faith, of love and family. These stories hold core human values as their foundation. Light, from a candle, a lantern, or a star, is incorporated as an abstract concept or in actual reality in every story. It gives us hope on a dark night, it provides a clear path home, and it may even give us heat on a cold winter's night. That light often symbolizes our faith. Regardless of one's religion, we all have faith. Faith that gets us through difficult times, faith that inspires us to be and do more, faith that promises us that tomorrow will greet us.

In every holiday story and tradition, love is present. The love between a child and their parents, grandparents, or siblings. The love between friends, the love of one's country, and of one's community. This love often surfaces as pride and adoration, and can be seen across the land through holiday decorations and celebrations. Observing those traditions, though varied and specific, are ways to bring us together.

As our local corners become more global, it's important to realize that what may look like differences between us are actually places to grow together, opportunities to be greater than the sum of our parts. This is most evident in neighborhoods that are embracing of our recent wave of immigrants and refugees, whether they are official or unofficial sanctuary cities. Consider adding new traditions into your community's holiday celebrations. Think about your new residents and new business owners and ways to engage them into the holiday festivities. Are there ways that many traditions can be

interwoven into the community's celebrations – new symbols, decorations, music, food and stories? Think of ways to involve children from the neighborhood and invite churches and social clubs to contribute to the planning discussion. Are there ways to teach children of authentic customs and traditions and encourage them to be part of the celebration? As we are each trying to hold onto the past, yet remain relevant to the future, a community's heritage becomes richer when, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts." (Aristotle)

As our local corners become more global, it's important to realize that what may look like differences between us are actually places to grow together, opportunities to be greater than the sum of our parts.





Happy Holidays

from the staff at Pennsylvania Downtown Center

