



Historic Downtown La Crosse Update

September 07

www.historicdowntownlacrosse.com



“Downtown La Crosse is experiencing a renaissance that’s a model for other cities.”

--Governor James Doyle

Greetings from Bud...

I hope your summer business has been successful and rewarding, despite the hot and humid conditions that we have had for quite some time. The current weather conditions can impact many outdoor activities, such as dining outside, walking and shopping, etc. But remember those wonderful words from a past Nat King Cole song: “Those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer...those days of soda and pretzels and ice cream.” (Sorry, Nat, had to insert ‘ice cream’.) And remember that January and February come upon us in just a few months.

You will be receiving a personal invitation (or consider this notice as your invitation) to join DMI, the Chamber of Commerce, LADCO, and the LACVB for the joint “Business Gala at UW-La Crosse Veterans Memorial Field.”

Date: Wednesday, August 29th

Time: 5-7 pm

Location: UW-L Veterans Memorial Field

Free food & refreshments provided

I hope you and your guests can take time to attend this important community event where there will be information on the new UW-L Sports Complex. The complex will have a tremendous economic impact on the entire city and region.

Lee Rasch, president of the DMI board, is forming an ad-hoc committee of board members and other DMI volunteers. The initial focus will be to look into options for placing banners and baskets downtown, although other recommendations may be made. The charge of the ad hoc committee would be to look into the practices of other model downtowns, determine options for financing and maintenance, and make a recommendation to the DMI Board. If you would like to participate, please call the DMI office.

Interesting comments were made in the La Crosse Tribune on **Sunday, January 17, 1988**: “(Answer/s to a reader’s comments on parking problems and other issues downtown):

- All parking meters have been removed in response to strong opinions from shoppers that meters were a nuisance.
- Two parking ramps have been built in six years for *employees* to park off-street and as a place where a shopper can always find parking. (In comparison, on busy days one must meander endlessly through the mall looking for a spot and then wind up walking a great distance to a business).
- Police cadets are stepping up the surveillance of those who exceed the time limits on parking. All too often the offenders are downtown employees.
- Benches have been added to sit at Third and Main and Second and Main streets.
- The city has promised a stepped-up effort at snow removal on sidewalks because many people have trouble in the winter.
- Downtown employers have been asked repeatedly to instruct employees to park in the upper levels of the ramps or outside the downtown area as a courtesy to visitors.
- One retailer states: “I would not trade the parking situation today with that of five years ago.”

What goes around, comes around! Hopefully, we can find positive ways to correct the issues that have existed for 20 years. How do we fill the empty parking spots that amount to an estimated 400-500+ in our new and restored parking ramps on a daily basis? There is much more parking available in downtown La Crosse than there was back in 1988!

Hope you have a very successful August in your businesses...Bud

Since our July 2007 newsletter, the following businesses have shown their support, and DMI gratefully acknowledges:

Renewing Associate Sponsor:
City Brewing Company, LLC

Historic Day plans taking shape

The planning committee for Historic Downtown La Crosse Day on October 13 has been working diligently to put plans in place for this year's event. If you are planning something for your business, or would like to contribute, call the DMI office, 784-0440, by August 17 to be sure you are included in the flyer.

Here are some of the highlights so far:

Costumed historic enactors and time travelers, courtesy of the La Crosse County Historical Society and Viterbo University Theatre Department, will circulate throughout the downtown. As you stroll the downtown, a particular historic character might tip his hat or engage you in conversation. Or you might encounter a poor, anonymous 19th century laborer, lost in an unfamiliar 21st century, looking in vain for that employer whose business has been replaced by a parking ramp. Be prepared to meet anyone.

The Bluff Country Talespinners will offer up their particular brand of fun. They'll be telling stories for both young and young at heart.

Listen to the sounds of the street musicians, take in an art show at City Square, or get your caricature done at Community Credit Union.

FREE rides on the trolley, carriage, depot hack, or old fire truck, mainstays of this event, will again be offered. Or take a La Crosse Queen cruise. Two sightseeing cruises are half off the regular price with a copy of the Historic Day brochure. The evening dinner cruise is \$10 off the regular price with the brochure.

If historic buildings are your thing, then learn from an expert about downtown architecture on a walking tour. You've never toured the St. Rose Convent Chapel on the Viterbo campus? The trolley will make a stop there so don't miss it.

You can learn about historic stitchery at Crosse Stitchery, take a beginner's knitting lesson at Fitting Knit, or enter an apple pie contest at the People's Food Co-op.

And there's still more! There is truly something for everyone. And there are several ways to get details, times and places. Check out the box on the right. **Please also take a moment to thank the sponsors listed on the right for making this event possible.**

Noteworthy Dates:

August 10-12, Irish Fest, Oktoberfest grounds.
Thursday, August 16, Promotions Committee, 8:00 a.m., Chamber of Commerce conference room, 712 Main St.

Friday, September 7, First Friday.

Participating stores are open late.

Thursday, September 13, After-5:00 Social, sponsored by the DMI Promotions Committee, at the **Courtyard by Marriott**, starting at 5:15 p.m. All DMI members and employees are welcome. Relax on the terrace with a river view or enjoy the camaraderie indoors in case of rain.

Save the date – Holiday Open House sooner than you think

Downtown La Crosse begins the holiday season each year with a bang. Put it on your calendar-- **Friday, November 9**. That's the date of the annual Holiday Open House.

Get your direct mail list together, and start planning now for decorations, door prizes, refreshments, or any other arrangements that will create an especially festive evening.

Be sure to watch this newsletter and/or the *DMI Member News Link* for further information so you can respond promptly.

For details on Historic Day*:

- Go to the Downtown Mainstreet, Inc., website, www.historicdowntownlacrosse.com, and click on the link.
- Pick up a schedule flyer at downtown shops, or call 784-0440 to have one sent to you.
- Watch the La Crosse Tribune for a clip-out schedule.
- Email downtownmainstreet@centurytel.net to request a pdf version of the brochure to be emailed to you.
- Watch for an attachment to the *DMI Member News Link*.

*Information should be available by mid-September.

PLEASE JOIN US IN THANKING OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS:

Viterbo University; Community Credit Union; North Central Trust Company; Associated Bank; Governmental Employees Credit Union; Feminine Fancies; Washburn on the Park; La Crosse Loggers; Leithold Music; Dolly's Crafts, Gifts & Memories; Fayze's; Satori Arts; Ambiance; Bob's Moen Photo; Howes Jewelers.