



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...

Congratulations to Deb Limberg, owner of the Wedding Tree for receiving the WTC 2007 Distinguished Alumni Award. The Western Technical College Alumni Association at the 2007 WTC commencement ceremony gave Deb this award. Deb has done an outstanding job in developing her business into one of the most successful wedding and tuxedo businesses in the entire region. I have known Deb for many years and was always impressed with her business knowledge, dedication, commitment, and enthusiasm for her work. She is an outstanding credit to the business community of downtown La Crosse and we are fortunate that she has The Wedding Tree located here, drawing thousands of people into downtown on an annual basis...congratulations Deb, very proud of you!

Our new 2007 DMI Lender Commitment Program is off and running. The program has received a tremendous boost from the 12 lending institutions that created a \$5 million loan pool to be used for various downtown projects, including funds for business start-up, restoration of buildings, creation of upper floor housing, signage, painting projects, purchase of buildings, etc. Along with the \$5 million loan pool, they have added a fantastic incentive, for those who are approved, by giving 2% below the current prime rate, fixed at a level of 5%!!!!

This is one of the largest private loan programs of its kind in the state and country supporting the economic redevelopment and revitalization of a downtown. A huge thank you goes out to the lending institutions that joined together to make this program happen for 2007. The enthusiasm and commitment of these financial institutions for the continued development of our downtown and city is outstanding. These competing institutions know and understand the value to the entire region by having a central business district that is economically strong and vibrant.

The following financial institutions have come together to offer this program to our downtown

business community: **Wells Fargo, State Bank Financial, Coulee Bank, US Bank, M&I Bank (Marshall & Ilsley), Associated Bank, Community Credit Union, Altra Federal Credit Union, Fortress Bank, Merchants Bank, River Bank, and Citizens State Bank.** Please patronize these financial institutions and thank them for their support in creating a strong downtown economy.

Congratulations & thanks to Logistics Health, Inc. and the Don Weber family on the beginning of the second LHI office building. Ground was broken on Monday, May 18th by the removal of the parking lot surface. A huge thank you to all of those involved in getting this project off the ground—Mayor Johnsrud, City Council, City Planning Commission, Redevelopment Authority, John Wettstein, Lee Rasch, DMI Board of Directors, UW-L, Western Technical College, Viterbo University—all coming forth to help make the growth of our downtown successful. All downtown businesses benefit by the location of large, successful corporations in our downtown. Our future looks brighter than ever!

Best Wishes, Bud

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

NEW & Renewing Corporate Sponsors:

County of La Crosse
Festival Foods (NEW)
Vendi Advertising (NEW)

Renewing Associate Sponsors:

Harry Viner, Inc.
Johns, Flaherty & Collins, SC
Trim Design of La Crosse, Inc.

Renewing General Members:

Benson Management
Designing Jewelers
Premier Fitness
River City Gold & Silver Exchange
Satori Arts

Download the NEW 2007/2008 edition of the downtown brochure

DMI is now making the *Experience Historic Downtown La Crosse* brochure even more accessible by offering it as a pdf download on our web site. Requests for print copies already come in from across the country via a link that will remain on the web site. But now anyone can get a copy at any time by going to www.historicdowntownlacrosse.com. The brochures are also distributed statewide through the Wisconsin Welcome Centers and throughout the region at visitor information sites, member businesses, campuses, and area conventions and conferences.

We recently sent 100 copies to the Kohler Company in Kohler, Wis., for their employee recreation department. We'd be happy to provide any business with brochures for an employee lounge or visitor waiting room. Please call the DMI office at 784-0440 to request a delivery.

In addition to business listings, there are maps to direct visitors to parking and ATM machines, an alphabetical directory that's a ready reference to phone numbers and addresses, a list of downtown festival dates, public art descriptions, an architectural tour guide, and more.

The brochure is *the most comprehensive listing of downtown La Crosse businesses anywhere*. It is updated annually. DMI members receive a discount on their business listing—*yet another benefit of membership*.

Western gifting grads with DMI downtown discounts

The alumni office at Western Technical College will give their 2007 graduates an extra reason to celebrate by providing each with a one-time use downtown discount card. These cards will state that it is a DMI-Western program. We thank our members that offer a discount and hope you see many happy returns on all our *member only* programs.



Noteworthy Dates:

Wednesday, **May 23, Business Over Breakfast**, 7:30-8:45 a.m., 712 Main. This month's topic is *Co-marketing Strategies*. Pre-registration is required. Call 784-4807 to reserve. Cost is \$5. See the attached flyer for more information.

Friday, **June 1, First Friday**. Participating downtown stores open until 8:00 the first Friday of each month.

Thursday, **July 19, Crazy Daze**. Start making plans now.

Show your appreciation with special visitor window signs

There are groups that return to events each year in downtown La Crosse, and new visitors who attend conferences that are hosted by local businesses or organizations. The DMI Promotions Committee is fostering a project to let these special visitors know their presence in downtown is noted and valued.

DMI will send out a template via email that each business can print on 8.5 X 11 inch paper. Look for colorful and unique papers at Express Printing, Office-n-Etc., and Stamp 'n Hand. If you do not have access to a printer, a limited number of signs will be available to pick up at the DMI office, 712 Main, or at Chic Boutique, 318 Main.

The **WIAA State Track Meet** will be the first group to receive a special welcome from May 30 to June 4. Each year, Wisconsin student-athletes and their families travel to UW-La Crosse, many of them staying in the downtown and enjoying shopping and dining while they're here.

The **Consumer Cooperative Management Association** will hold its national conference in La Crosse on June 14-16. It is hosted this year by the People's Food Co-op. The Association is bringing approximately 400-500 people to the downtown for meetings at the La Crosse Center and other downtown locations.

Jazz Fest celebrants will be in town August 2-5. This festival draws jazz aficionados from across the country, many of them returning every year. The Jazz Fest parade will coincide with First Friday on August 3. Jazz Fest organizers are seeking other ways to draw fans into the downtown.

If you know of another group that should be recognized, please call the DMI office at 784-0440.