

# National Conference Coming to Iowa!

## DES MOINES SELECTED AS 2011 HOST SITE

It was announced in a previous edition of the Main Street Messenger that the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Center had selected Des Moines, Iowa as the host city for the 2011 National Main Streets Conference, May 22-25, 2011. Plans are coming together for a great conference and we would like to share some details with you.

**Attention, Iowa communities!** Don't miss this chance to participate in a great national conference right in your own backyard. Our goal is to have 500 Iowans in attendance. The first annual National Main Streets Conference was held in Winston-Salem, North Carolina in 1987. It's never been held in Iowa — until this year!

Leaders from ANY community in the United States interested in learning more about successful downtown development through a focus on historic preservation are welcome to attend, whether or not they are part of an officially designated Main Street district. In addition to phenomenal plenary sessions, there will be approximately 50 educational sessions to choose from, including numerous tours and "mobile workshops", an outdoor street fair in West Des Moines' Historic Valley Junction, and special conference opening reception held at the Iowa State Fairgrounds. More information about the street fair and opening reception can be found on Pages 2 and 3.

The conference will focus on strategies to help recruit, retain, strengthen, and sup-

port local businesses; showcase how being green and open to all can advance these efforts; and to teach the Main Street Four Point Approach® – from the basics to the new, cutting-edge ideas that are being put into practice in historic commercial districts of all sizes across the nation.

Scholarships are available from several sources to help cover registration fees. Be sure to check out each one for the best fit for your organization and to make sure you don't miss an important application deadline:

- **Main Street Iowa** (eligible applicants include Main Street board members, committee volunteers, business owners and property owners from Main Street Iowa communities). This opportunity is for volunteers only - program directors and staff are NOT eligible for this scholarship. Paid staff have the option of volunteering at the conference in exchange for registration. Please note – the scholarships are for registration only. The attendee is responsible for the costs of their transportation, room and board as well as any additional ticketed tours and/or social events. Two types of scholarships are available: 1) 100 percent of the "early" online FULL Conference registration fee (\$355); or 2) 100 percent of the "early" online One Day registration fee (\$180) to attend Monday or Tuesday only. For more information contact Debi Flanders at [debi.flanders@iowa.gov](mailto:debi.flanders@iowa.gov) or 515.725.3055.



- **Certified Local Government.** The Iowa State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is offering conference scholarships to Certified Local Government (CLG) historic preservation commission members and CLG staff. Approximately 20 scholarships will be given on a first come, first serve basis to CLGs in good standing. Contact Paula Mohr at the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, at [Paula.Mohr@iowa.gov](mailto:Paula.Mohr@iowa.gov) or 515.281.6826 for application details.
- **Iowa Tourism Regions** will also have scholarships available. Each region will provide up to 10 scholarships for those who plan to attend both the National Main Streets Conference in May and the Iowa Tourism Conference in October. This scholarship is set up on a first come, first serve basis and will fund the first 10 eligible applicants per region in the amount of \$355 per applicant. Applications will be accepted until noon on March 15 or until the first 10 eligible applicants are awarded.

*Continued on page 2*

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Continued from page 1

For more information, contact the appropriate person from your area:

- ◆ **Western Iowa**, Michele Walker, witr@traveliowa.org, 888.623.4232
- ◆ **Central Iowa**, Anne Vogelbacher, ann@iowatourism.com, 800.285.5842
- ◆ **Eastern Iowa**, Carrie Koelker, carrie@easterniowatourism.org, 800.891.3482
- ◆ **State Tourism Office**, Lonie Mezera, lonie.mezera@iowa.gov, 515.725.3087

Conference registration will open soon. Details are continuously being added at [www.preservationnation.org/main-street/training/conference/](http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/training/conference/) so check this site often for the latest news.

## Main Streets Conference Overview

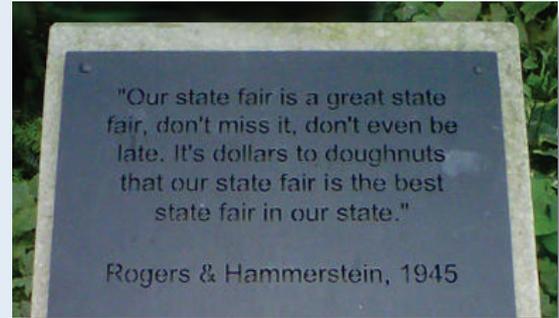
- Four days of educational and networking opportunities
- Day-long Main Street Four Point Approach® training
- Mobile workshops focused on revitalization successes in Des Moines and surrounding communities
- Expo Hall filled with products and service providers that specialize in commercial district revitalization
- Opportunities to network with colleagues who are experiencing similar successes and challenges in their communities



## A TASTE OF THE IOWA STATE FAIR!

SUNDAY, MAY 22, 2011, 6:00 TO 9:00 P.M.

All's Fair in Iowa at Sunday night's Opening Reception for conference attendees, so put on your comfy clothes and come on out. Classic cars, corn dogs and contests await you at this 400-acre playground, home to America's favorite fair—the Iowa State Fair.



There'll be Iowa beer and wine, pork and beef, funnel cakes and homemade pies so plan to 'PIG OUT' on Fair food! Toss some cow chips, milk a cow, play roulette, win great prizes...it's Fair games! Experience the flavors, the fun and the friendship that Iowans love to celebrate.

### Just a few highlights of what you'll experience:

- Entertainment by Bob Dorr & the Blue Band, a member of the Iowa Rock 'n Roll Music Association's Hall of Fame. This band has entertained the crowds attending the Iowa State Fair for more than 20 years. A good time is promised for all as attendees listen and dance to songs ranging from "Mojo and the Say So" to the famous "Madness on Main Street"
- An "up in the air" view of the state fairgrounds from the Skyglider
- Displays of animals, antique cars and tractors
- The chance to play carnival games and win great Iowa prizes

### Iowa State Fair trivia:

- The first Iowa State Fair was held October 25-27, 1854 in Fairfield, twenty years before America's great westward movement began.
- In 1987 the Iowa State Fairgrounds was named to the National Register of Historic Places
- The Iowa State Fair was the inspiration for the original novel "State Fair" by Iowan Phil Stong, three motion pictures and Rodgers and Hammerstein's classic Broadway musical.
- National media frequently rank the Iowa State Fair as one of the top events in the country.
- In 2004, USA Weekend named the event the #2 choice for summer fun in America, topping New York City's Times Square, Cedar Point Amusement Park Resort in Ohio and Disneyland in California.
- Midwest Living magazine named the Fair one of the "Top 30 Things Every Midwesterner Should Experience."
- The Fair is also included in the New York Times best-selling travel book "1000 Places to See Before You Die" and the subsequent travel book, "1,000 Places to See in the U.S.A. and Canada Before You Die."

Be there! Be FAIR!! Don't be a square!

# Main Street Bash: FUNction in the Junction

## Tuesday, May 24, 2011, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.



Get ready to party at the Main Street Bash! The FUNction will be an outdoor street fair showcasing the best of Iowa's culture and diversity in Historic Valley Junction, just a few minutes from downtown Des Moines. Come early to explore more than 150 specialty stores, art galleries, fashion boutiques, restaurants and antique shops in this 24-year Main Street community. Then stay for the food and fun!

On the Main Stage will be live music by the Tony Valdez Large Band. Entertainment ranging from belly dancers to musicians playing the pan flute will be featured at six additional locations.

Vendors will provide a variety of cuisine, from Asian and Greek specialties to barbeque and pizza to tickle your taste buds. No one will leave hungry or thirsty!

Thanks to a generous sponsorship from the City of West Des Moines and the Historic Valley Junction Foundation, you will enjoy a FREE evening, as the ticket price for this event is only \$25, which entitles you to motor coach transportation, plus \$25 in "fun money" to spend on food, beverage, or shopping throughout the district that evening.

See you there!

## NATIONAL RECOGNITION

# Preservation Honor Award Presented to Main Street Iowa

Last October, Thom Guzman, Director of the Iowa Downtown Resource Center, and Jane Seaton, State Coordinator of the Main Street Iowa program, traveled to Austin, Texas to accept a National Preservation Honor Award on behalf of the state's Main Street program. Established in 1986, Iowa's program is the first state coordinating program in the nation to receive this prestigious award.

"Main Street Iowa has put its stamp all over the state, showing citizens how to revitalize their downtowns and re-energize their communities," said Stephanie Meeks, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "A preservation powerhouse and a model for other organizations, Main Street Iowa is making a real difference in the economic health

and livability of America's heartland."

Each year the National Trust for Historic Preservation celebrates the best of preservation by presenting awards to individuals and organizations whose contributions demonstrate excellence in historic preservation. The Honor Awards recognize the efforts of individuals, nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and corporations whose skill and determination have given new meaning to their communities through preservation. These efforts include citizen attempts to save and maintain important landmarks, as well as architects, craftspeople, and developers whose exemplary

work restores the richness of the past.

More details about the award and a video highlighting Iowa's Main Street communities are online: [www.preservationnation.org/take-action/awards/2010-national-preservation-awards/main-street-iowa.html](http://www.preservationnation.org/take-action/awards/2010-national-preservation-awards/main-street-iowa.html).



# National Main Streets Conference at a Glance

## ***SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!***

More than 40 workshops and daily plenary sessions will be offered during the conference, which will focus on three important themes: Design/Economic Restructuring; Promotion/Organization; and Grow Your Main Street. In addition, numerous tours and “mobile workshops” have been arranged. Read on for an overview of all the exciting activities being planned...

### **SUNDAY, MAY 22**

- 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. — Welcome area at the Des Moines Airport, hosted by the Des Moines Convention and Visitors Bureau
- 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. — Bus tour to Hamilton County — “Planting the Seeds to Grow our Main Streets”
- 8:00 a.m. – 6:15 p.m. — Bus tour to Mason City — “Music...Memories...Wright...In Mason City!”
- 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. — State Coordinators’ meetings
- 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. — State Architects’ roundtable meetings
- 12:00 – 6:00 p.m. — Bus tour to Marshalltown — “Preserving the Future by Preserving the Past”
- 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. — Walking tour in Des Moines — “Downtown Des Moines Architectural Overview” (this tour will be repeated on Monday, May 23)
- 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. — Walking tour of Downtown Des Moines — “Resurgence of Downtown Living in Des Moines”
- 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. — Opening Reception at the Iowa State Fairgrounds

### **MONDAY, MAY 23**

- 6:00 – 8:00 a.m. — Optional Morning Wake-Up Bike/Walk
- 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. — Opening Plenary
- 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. — Main Street Expo
- 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. — Walking tour in Des Moines — “Downtown Des Moines Architectural Overview” (this tour is a repeat of Sunday’s tour)



- 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. — Walking tour of the Historic East Village in Des Moines
- 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. — Bus tour of the historic Lincoln Highway, featuring visits to Colo and State Center — “Main Streets on the Main Street”
- 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. — Bus tour in Des Moines — “Mansions of Des Moines”
- 1:00 – 6:00 p.m. — Bus tour to Ames — “Experience 100 Years of Ames’ Main Street: Unique Space, Creative Places”
- 2:00 – 3:15 p.m. — Breakout Sessions
- 3:45 – 5:00 p.m. — Breakout Sessions
- 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. — Exhibitor Reception
- 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. — VIP Reception
- 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. — State Dinners/Dining
- 8:00 – 11:00 p.m. — Social/Networking Opportunity

### **TUESDAY, MAY 24**

- 6:00 – 8:00 a.m. — Optional Morning Wake-Up Bike/Walk
- 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. — General Session
- 10:30 – 11:45 a.m. — Breakout Sessions

- 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. — Bike tour in Des Moines — “Tour d’Ingersoll: Building a Bikeable Des Moines”
- 10:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. — Bus to walking tour in Des Moines — “Sherman Hill – A Neighborhood of Planning Activists”
- 10:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. — Bus tour to Greenfield — “Preserving Our Heritage – Opening Doors for the Future”
- 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. — Walking tour in Des Moines — “An Altar Crawl in Downtown Des Moines”
- 1:00 – 6:00 p.m. — Bus tour to Oskaloosa — “Progress and Tradition”
- 2:00 – 3:15 p.m. — Breakout Sessions
- 3:45 – 5:00 p.m. — Breakout Sessions
- 6:30 – 10:00 p.m. — Main Street Bash in Historic Valley Junction

### **WEDNESDAY, MAY 25**

- 6:00 – 8:00 a.m. — Optional Morning Wake-Up Bike/Walk
- 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. — General Session
- 10:30 – 11:45 a.m. — Breakout Sessions
- 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. — Walking tour — “Downtown Des Moines and the City Beautiful Movement”
- 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. — Walking tour — “Western Gateway of Downtown Des Moines”
- 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. — Mini Bus to Walking Tour — “Iowa’s State Capitol Building”
- 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. — Closing Plenary

## MAIN STREET IOWA'S ANNIVERSARY

# *Celebrating a Quarter Century of Change*

### MAGAZINE FEATURE

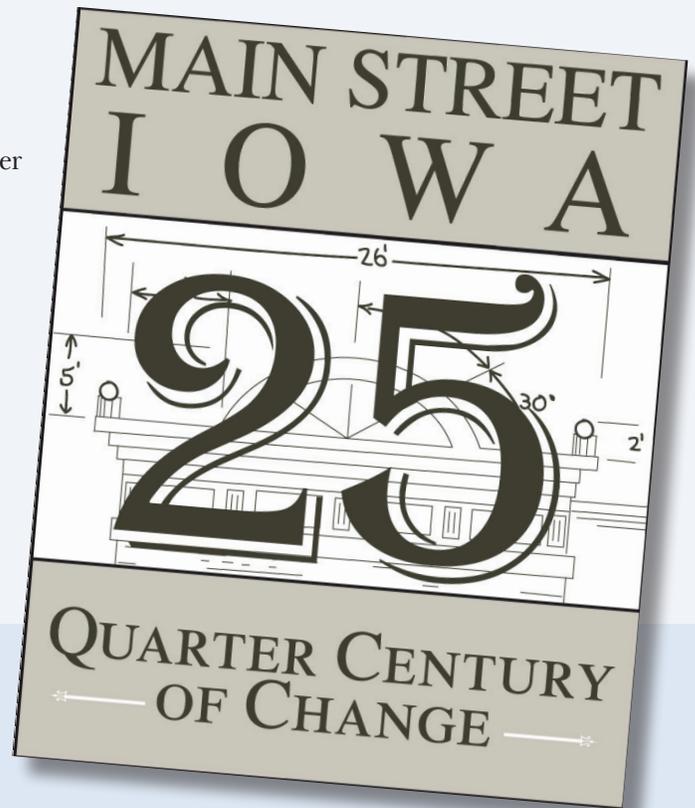
Since the Iowa Legislature created Main Street Iowa, within the Iowa Department of Economic Development in 1986, private sector investment in Main Street districts has surpassed \$980 million as of November 30, 2010. The program expects to reach \$1 billion (yes, that's billion with a B!) in private investment sometime this fiscal year.

To help recognize this milestone, The Iowan magazine dedicated nearly its entire Jan/Feb 2011 issue to highlighting Iowa's great Main Street program and communities. Cooperative advertising pages, interesting stories and beautiful photographs are featured throughout the 86 pages of this issue (the largest in the publication's 59+ year history!). You can get a peek at the contents at [www.iowan.com/inside-janfeb2011.cfm](http://www.iowan.com/inside-janfeb2011.cfm). Local Main Street programs can request a hard copy of the publication by contacting Susan Matthews at [susan.matthews@iowa.gov](mailto:susan.matthews@iowa.gov) or 515.725.3059.

### STATE AWARD

Main Street Iowa was recently selected by Iowa Area Development Group to be profiled in an upcoming issue of IA.biz Best of 2010 under the category "Community Revolution" as a program of excellence. IA.biz is the flagship magazine of the Iowa Association of Business and Industry, and Iowa's only statewide business magazine. This category of excellence incorporates the following: Community Revolution – cities and towns throughout Iowa that have banded together to reclaim the charm and function of main streets and tourist attractions, creating a favorable business climate and revitalization of community spirit.

"What a great and humbling experience to be recognized by Iowa's largest business organizations," said Thom Guzman, Director of the Iowa Downtown Resource Center, which houses the Main Street Iowa program. "This recognition is all thanks to the hard work of our team and especially our communities for making the commitments necessary to revolutionize their historic downtowns and commercial districts."



### PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

We invite you to view another element of this special anniversary year — a Main Street video created and produced by Travis Reinders, a high school freshman and the son of Tim Reinders, a Main Street Iowa staff member. Watch and enjoy at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=0d07fy72lhw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0d07fy72lhw).

# The Main Street Merchant

By Ed Vinson, Keokuk, reprinted with permission

I am your local American Main Street Merchant.

I went into business because I had a dream.

I went to school with you.

I go to church with you.

I now have children of my own that go to school with your children. We sit together on hard bleachers at school programs, piano recitals and award assemblies. We sing in the choir together.

We see each other at our kids' ball games and we read about each other in the family section of our local papers and I rejoice with you when they are recognized and congratulate you on those five generations photos that represent my past, present and future clients.

Because I know you and your family, I celebrate new births with you and I mourn your losses. We've watched you and your children grow up through the years. You've worn our clothes, read our books, ate our food, and honored us with your business as we exchanged everything from "soup-to-nuts" including merchandise and ideas.

Sitting across the counter, we talk about your life and adventures. We laugh at fun things we did and do while trying to bring you into our store.

Our town once bustled with activity and people drove around the block hoping to get "the good" parking place in front of our stores. At one time you thought of our small business first when it came to even your most basic needs. You never fail to find us when it's time to sponsor your local event or fundraiser and we gladly contribute whenever we can because that sick child is a friend of ours too.

Others, like me, lined the streets and town squares competing for your attention, but then we would join hand in hand at our local Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary clubs and other civic organizations working together to strengthen our community.

Few of us, if any, really get rich being a Main Street Merchant, and vacations often consist of a stolen weekend Saturday afternoon to Monday morning. Seasons come and go, each with its own challenges. We hope to be able to sell enough wares to pay our payrolls, winter gas bills and summer air conditioning and have enough left in the checkbook to buy groceries.

I pay for the privilege to hang my shingle on my store to advertise my business. I pay for licenses and permits and am reminded that this is YOUR Main Street, but I shovel and sweep the



sidewalk and pick up trash – not generated by me – so that we all can have a sense of pride in our downtown.

We'd like to hire more employees, but what we can afford to pay doesn't come up to what the government says is acceptable, so we take up the slack ourselves wondering how we would have gained the experience we have if the same rules had applied when we were in High School. If we were to hire the people that we truly need, our prices would have to reflect it and we've already been shown that rock bottom prices trump our smiling faces and hometown service.

I don't throw money around, I don't drive a new car (it's 10 years old, but it fits like an old shoe). I'm not complaining, I'm still following my dream and part of that dream is to have a vibrant, clean, strong and populated downtown neighborhood.

Main Street Merchants, like our brick and mortar structures, are fading and disappearing – giving way to parking lots without a purpose. You used to drive past us each day on your way to work and it was easy to get your attention. Now we have by-passes and four lanes that take you straight to the discount stores that offer you more for less than we ever could. Not to feel sorry, many have gone on to work for those big box retailers, tearful as they locked the front door to their dreams for the last time.

I don't enjoy seeing my neighbors here on Main Street giving up and giving in and giving you fewer reasons to come visit the rest of us. It is my store, my building and my business, but it is your town, city and neighborhood.

It is YOUR Main Street.

We hope you'll come back.

# FABULOUS FACES CONTINUE TO ASSIST MAIN STREET IOWA

## The latest is Kindra Wisniewski

Over the past 25 years, MSI has been very fortunate to have had a steady stream of extremely talented interns who work on everything from graphic design, to assisting business owners, to helping create “after” photos for building or streetscape design plans.

Meet Kindra Wisniewski — the current Main Street Iowa intern, who will graduate from Grand View University in Des Moines this May with a degree in graphic design. Currently designing numerous graphic elements that will be used for the National Main Streets Conference, she’ll soon be busy making sure the Main Street Awards celebration materials will

have that special WOW element to make the evening memorable for everyone who attends.

A quote from Kindra’s freelance business website, [www.kindranoel.com](http://www.kindranoel.com), “I was raised in a family who encouraged my creative talents and abilities. Choosing this path with graphic design’s competitive edge came natural because of my family’s support and dedication. I love what I do and believe others can see that through my work.”

In addition to being a coffee and dog lover (specifically, French Bulldogs), Kindra is an avid runner and has participated in several races such as the Living

History Farms Race and the Des Moines Half Marathon. She has been selected as an Emerging Iowa Artist for the Des Moines Art Festival coming up in June.

Main Street Iowa is lucky to have her talent on its team... and the team is certain they will be seeing fantastic things from Kindra well into the future.



## BITS & PIECES

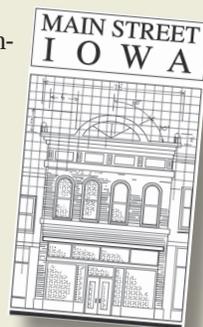
### DON'T FORGET!

The *Main Street Messenger* is only available electronically. Register for the “Iowa Downtown Resource Center/ Main Street Iowa” e-mail list at [www.iowalifechanging.com](http://www.iowalifechanging.com) to make sure you receive this newsletter and other important news from the Iowa Downtown Resource Center. Or download current and past editions at [www.iowalifechanging.com/community/mainstreetiowa/messenger.aspx](http://www.iowalifechanging.com/community/mainstreetiowa/messenger.aspx).



### MAIN STREET AWARDS CELEBRATION

Award winning projects and volunteers will be honored April 1 at the Des Moines Downtown Marriott. Reservations can be made through your local Main Street program (deadline is March 23). If you’re not connected with a local Main Street program or if you have questions, contact Darlene Strachan at [darlene.strachan@iowa.gov](mailto:darlene.strachan@iowa.gov) or 515.725.3057.



### GOVERNOR'S VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Regional recognition ceremonies are being planned for June and July. Nomination forms will be available by mid-March. As details are confirmed, information about where to obtain the proper nomination form as well as ceremony dates and a list of recipients will be posted at [www.volunteeriowa.org/awards](http://www.volunteeriowa.org/awards).



### IOWA STATE FAIR PHOTO CONTEST

June 25 and 26 are the last dates entries can be delivered to the fairgrounds for the Iowa State Fair photo contest, which includes a special category sponsored by Main Street Iowa: Downtown Faces & Places. Use the competition menu button at [www.iowastatefair.org](http://www.iowastatefair.org) and view the How to Enter/Premium Books section to find the photography rules and entry form, which will be available on or before May 1.



# STAFF LISTING



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Main Street Messenger online newsletter found at [www.iowalifechanging.com/community/mainstreetiowa/messenger.aspx](http://www.iowalifechanging.com/community/mainstreetiowa/messenger.aspx)