



# Downtown Mt. Vernon Development Corporation Newsletter

A Main Street Community

January, February, March 2009

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## The Rex Receives Lt. Governor's Award for Excellence in Downtown Revitalization at IMS State Conference



Left to right: Jay and Chanda Koch (The Rex), Simone McNeil, Brian Edmison, Cyndy Mitchell and Rex Cusumano

On November 13, 2008, local business 'The Rex' received the Lt. Governor's Award for Excellence in Downtown Revitalization in the category of

Adaptive Reuse of an Existing Building at the Illinois Main Street Conference in Decatur, Illinois. Owners Jay and Chanda Koch attended the banquet along with DMDC representatives: president Rex Cusumano, Mary Ellen Cusumano, past president Brian Edmison and executive director Cyndy Mitchell.

This is the second year that Downtown Mt. Vernon Development Corporation has been honored by IMS and the Lt. Governor's Office. In 2007, DMDC received the award in the category of promotion 'The District After 5 Residential Tour – A Place to Hang Your Hat.'

Illinois Main Street is a part of Lt. Governor Pat Quinn's office, which promotes architectural and streetscape enhancements, economic development and growth and historic and cultural preservation in downtown communities throughout the state. Mt. Vernon is one of 70 Illinois Main Street communities.

## Mark Your Calendars

March 1-4  
National Main Street Conference

April 23  
Downtown After 5 Tour

May 19  
Annual Dinner Meeting

## Streetscape Groundbreaking Ceremony



L-R: DMDC President Rex Cusumano, State Representative Kurt Granberg, Mt. Vernon Mayor Mary Jane Chesley, State Senator John O. Jones, City Councilman David Wood, DMDC Executive Director Cyndy Mitchell, DMDC Design Chairman Brian Edmison.

On November 7, Downtown Mt. Vernon Development Corporation and city and state officials were on hand to kick off a groundbreaking of the Downtown Mt. Vernon Streetscape Project that was held at the First United Methodist Church. Construction was scheduled to begin the first of the year.

### Executive Committee

Rex Cusumano, President  
Cindy Bevis, Vice President  
Barb Hengle, Vice President  
Robin Hensley, Vice President  
Doug Hoffman, Vice President  
Susan Hughey, Vice President  
Dennis McEnaney, At Large  
Jo Ann Joy, Treasurer  
Brenda Breeze, Secretary  
Brian Edmison, Past President

### Board of Directors

Susan Bacon  
Ed Breeze  
Chris Campo  
Jo David Cummins  
Rae Cummins  
Bob Dennis  
David Eadie  
Molly Federici  
Mark Hassakis  
Troy Heitmeyer  
Bonnie Jerdon  
Jay Koch  
Greg Lundius  
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Lindy Lysell  
Karen Pelker  
Denise Ross  
Pam Robertson  
Laura Thacker  
Brenda Torrez  
Luther Torrez  
Tammy Wheeler

### Staff

Cyndy Mitchell, Executive Director  
Mary Denham, Administrative Assistant  
Mark Ilbery, Maintenance

### Downtown Mt. Vernon Development Corporation

809 Main Street  
Phone: (618) 242-6866  
Fax: (618) 242-6868  
Hours: M-F  
9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.  
Email: dmdc@mvn.net

Design: Mt. Vernon Tourism

## Streetscape Groundbreaking Ceremony....

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According to DMDC president Rex Cusumano, in 2006 the city was awarded a \$500,000 Illinois Transportation Enhancement Grant to implement the streetscape project. Additionally, the city provided a \$125,000 matching grant. Both of these grants are important to **DMDC's mission to revitalize and maintain downtown as a commercial and cultural center of the local and regional community.** Streetscape enhancements are essential elements to preserving the downtown district and encouraging economic growth.

The grants are also instrumental in achieving some of the goals of the Master Plan for the Downtown District – to make it pedestrian friendly through new sidewalks, streetlights, benches and landscaping with railings modeling the ones after the Appellate Courthouse. The scope of the project includes Main Street from Johnson Alley to 12<sup>th</sup> Street.

DMDC plans to keep the downtown businesses and community aware of how the project is coming along and what to expect. For update about the project, call DMDC at 242-6866.

## Congratulations

Hughey Funeral Home  
Celebrated 40th Anniversary

Hughey Funeral Home celebrated **it's fortieth anniversary on January 1, 2009.** Charles and Susan Hughey founded the funeral home at 1314 Main Street in 1969, living and raising their family on the top floor of the business for several years. The business has grown dramatically since then, becoming a well-known downtown landmark and business in the region.



Wheeler Receives Top Score at  
Photography Convention



Nick Wheeler, photographer for Once Upon A Lifetime Studio, 922 Main **Street, received the top score in boys' portraits** at the Senior Portrait Artist Convention in Las Vegas. He was also a featured shooter, one of several nationwide who set up to shoot at the resort during the convention.

Nick has competed in many photography competitions and has won several top awards for his work.

## All Things Considered—Volunteers Column

*The List* by Bonnie Jerdon

I'm a big fan of the list. I have lists everywhere, and they really work to get me focused on the task at hand. My favorite type of list is the Top Ten List, especially as perfected by Letterman. As a fan and supporter of Mt. Vernon's downtown, I decided to make a list of my top ten favorite things about our downtown. I could have kept going, but ten it is.

My number one favorite thing about our downtown is the people who work to make it a better place. Sometimes I humorously say that the motto in my line of work is **"No Good Deed Goes Unpunished"**. It's what we say we when we work really hard on a really good idea and it is met by a complaint from the naysayers. What I like about the good folks involved in downtown development is that we are the opposite of CAVE people (citizens against virtually everything). We are FOR most everything. Challenges abound, funding is limited, things move slowly sometimes, but the work continues, progress is made, and things keep getting better. We move forward despite obstacles.

I have had the privilege of working with several of the DMDC committees and downtown groups over the past year and feel very proud of the accomplishments – **new events, renovations, awards, movies, a 9' Lincoln** - and look forward to the new look on Broadway with new benches, trees, and sidewalks that will be changing the streetscape in the near future.

So, here goes, my top ten things I love about downtown Mt. Vernon:

### Bonnie's Top Ten List

10. The beautiful façade of the CMAC building on north 9<sup>th</sup> Street.
9. The ever-changing window displays at The Insurance Store on north 9<sup>th</sup> Street
8. The veterans memorials at the Courthouse
7. Movies and events (and the marquee) at the Granada
6. Everything at The Dish
5. The handsome fire trucks at the City Hall Fire Station
4. Gyros from Jimmie James Blue Goose – yum
3. Fresh flowers from our florists
2. The Lincoln statue
1. The people who make a difference

## New DMDC Partners

We want to welcome the following partners to the organization and express our appreciation for their support of **DMDC's mission to preserve our historic and cultural heritage and promote economic growth downtown.**

Corporate Partner  
First United Methodist Church  
Good Samaritan Regional Health Center

Sustaining Partner  
Old National Bank

Sponsoring Partner  
Jefferson County Title Company  
Krehbiel & Associates, LLC

Partner  
Bevis Real Estate  
Cactus Jack Burrito Shack  
Annelies Heijnen  
Mt. Vernon Township High School  
Fay B. Rue  
Trinity Episcopal Church  
White & Borgognoni Architects



Mike McKelvy, left, president of Jefferson County Title Company presents DMDC president Rex Cusumano a check for a Partnership

## Thank You



DMDC wishes to thank the Boyd Sawmill for the 300-pound wood stump base on which the Lincoln maquette sits. The statue of the Illinois rail-splitter, lawyer and 16th President of the United States is located in the entry of the DMDC office at 809 Main Street.

The stump is a perfect complement to this bronze icon of Mt. Vernon, the State of Illinois and the nation.

### Volunteers welcome:

If you would like to help with a DMDC event or activity, please contact our office at (618) 242-6866 or at [dmdc@mvn.net](mailto:dmdc@mvn.net).

## DMDC Receives US Bank Grant



DMDC President Rex Cusumano accepts \$1000 US Bank Grant for the enhancement of the downtown district from US Bank Vice President Jo Ann Joy.

## Did You Notice....

....this sign in the window of a downtown business? (Hint: 10th & Main)

Keeping downtown clean is an everyday project. First impressions do make a difference. So **let's keep our downtown beautiful** by each of us maintaining our own space.



## Welcome New Businesses

Wood Forensic/Valuation Services  
824 Main Street, Suite A  
(618) 242-3743

Hawkins School of Tae Kwon Do  
208 South 9th Street  
(618) 204-8027

## DMDC Holiday Decorating Contest

Downtown windows glowed and twinkled with lights, tinsel and greenery welcoming in the Holiday Season thanks to the businesses that participated in the third annual DMDC Holiday Decorating Contest.

**This year's theme was "Sleigh Bells Ring." On December 6, DMDC announced the award winners, which is always held on the same day as the Downtown Christmas Parade – the first Saturday in December, from the Granada Theater lobby. Winners were First Place: State Beauty Supply, Second Place: The Insurance Store and Third Place: The Blossom Shop.**

Judges Debbie Wilson and Delisa Hale of Independent Artist Studio presented the awards to the recipients. Other entries that made downtown beautiful with their displays were Affordable Tax Service, Bank of America, Dish on the Square, Northeast Water Company and Jefferson County Courthouse. We also appreciate those whose displays were not in the contest but contributed to the overall festivity of the district with their Christmas decorations.



L-R: Debbie Wilson, Judge; Dee Younkin, State Beauty Supply, First Place; and Delisa Hale, Judge



L-R: Debbie Wilson; Mike Beard, The Insurance Store, Second Place, and Delisa Hale

## Downtown Christmas Parade Float

In spite of a bone chilling night, The Downtown Christmas Parade, held on Saturday, December 6, was a great success with many outstanding floats competing for the prize trophies. **The theme 'A Musical Christmas' fit right in with DMDC's Holiday Decorating theme 'Sleigh Bells Ring.'** And the DMDC parade entry was a perfect reflection of both themes. Board member Susan Hughey generously donated her antique sleigh to use for this year's float. **Another board member Barb Hengle** was in charge of decorating the float and with her creative skills and lots of lights and tinsel, she brought it to life – in more ways than one. Children bundled in layers of warm clothing and donning felt antlers volunteered to be reindeers for the sleigh while Christmas music from the CD player filled the air. Kelley Hengle, dressed in beautiful gown and cape befitting the turn of the century, sat aloft on the sleigh.



A special thank you goes to all the volunteers who decorated the float and/or participated in the parade. The volunteers were Barb Hengle, Susan Hughey, Kylie and Krystal Akes, Hayden Locke, Lane Tyler Deichman, Tristan Houser, Ryker Davis, and Kelley Hengle.

The Christmas Parade was sponsored by the Christmas Parade Organization, which was chaired by Debbie Chiappelli.

## Available Real Estate in the Downtown District

STATUS	POINT OF REFERENCE	ADDRESS	AVAILABLE SQ. FT.	CONTACT	PHONE
Rent	Jefferson State Bank - Upper Space	1002 Main	12' x 16'	Brian Edmison	244-0780
Rent	Front Office Space	328 S. 10th	800 sq. ft.	Chuck Baldrige	241-9009
Rent	Stumpp Building	1011 Broadway	1,050	Dennis Schweigert	241-7466
Rent	Old WinAir Building	318 S. 10th	20,000	Dennis Schweigert	241-7466
Rent	US Bank - Office Space	123 S. 10th	Varies	Frank Bastida	394-4520
Rent	Designer Kids Building	236 S. 9th	2,000 Upper Floor	Gino Federici	244-3168
Rent	Round Table Design-Upper Level	1020 Main	1,500	Kevin Phillips	244-7819
Rent	Round Table Design-Upper Level	1020 Main	1,500	Kevin Phillips	244-7819
Rent	Boston/Universal Bldg, upper floor	206,208,210 S. 9th	12,000	Mark Hassakis	244-5335
Rent	Office Space (Brehm Bldg)	320 S. 11th	1,600	Robin Hensley	237-9241
Rent	Vacant building	809 Broadway	3,000	Robin Hensley	237-9241
Rent	Vacant building	805 Broadway	3,000	Robin Hensley	237-9241
Rent	Suites for rent	815 Broadway	varies	Cindy Bevis	244-9500
Rent/Sale	9th St. Apartments	203 N. 9th		Mary Burgan	214-0660
Rent/Sale	Empty Building	223 S. 9th	1,600	Charles Cooper	242-7907
Rent/Sale	McCoy & Howard Bldg Move-in ready second floor condo/business office	212 S. 9th	3000 on each floor	Robin Hensley	237-9241
Sale	Building Site 10th and Casey	315-321 S. 10th		Robin Hensley	237-9241
Sale	Vacant Lot	907 Jordan	50' x 100'	Butch Burwell	244-4548
Sale	Airex Heating & Air	114 N. Johnson	3,336	Bennie Fryer	242-7900
Sale	Former State Beauty Supply Bldg	801 Broadway	40'x100' -one floor	Sandra Graddy	242-3268



Small Office next to  
Community First Bank



Old Manion Building



Stumpp Building



## Center for the Performing Arts

### Granada Kid's Classic Matinee Season

2009

Saturday February 14, 2009  
Cinderella (1950)  
Sponsored by: Integra Bank  
Drawing for a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond

Saturday March 14, 2009  
**Darby O' Gill and the Little People (1959)**  
Sponsored by: Mid Country Bank  
Drawing for a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond

Saturday April 11, 2009  
A Goofy Movie (1994)  
Sponsored by: Crossroads Community Hospital  
Drawing for a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond

Saturday May 16, 2009  
Loony, Loony, Loony Bugs Bunny Movie (1981)  
Sponsored by: Banterra Bank  
Drawing for a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond

Doors open at 1 p.m. with drawings/contests.  
Movie starts at 2 p.m.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Concessions available in the lobby:  
Soda 12oz—\$1  
Candy—\$1  
Popcorn—\$1

Movies and times can change without notice.

### Granada Classic Movie Series

2009

Thursday February 12, 2009  
Some Like It Hot (1959)  
2nd Annual Valentine Classic

Wednesday February 13, 2009  
**WDML presents The Who's "Tommy"**  
Concert after the movie

Thursday March 12, 2009  
My Left Foot (1989)

Thursday April 9, 2009  
Diary of Anne Frank (1959)  
(Second showing for school students)

Thursday May 14, 2009  
My Little Chickadee (1940)  
Sponsored by: Toni Federici, Inc.

Doors open at 6 p.m.  
Movie starts at 7 p.m.

Concessions on sale in the lobby:  
Soda 12 oz—\$1  
Candy—\$1  
Popcorn—\$1

Movies and times can change without notice.

Downtown Mt. Vernon Development Corporation  
"A Main Street Community"  
809 Main Street  
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

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## Four Points to Success

Downtown Mt. Vernon and the Illinois Main Street program employ the Four-Point Approach to successful downtown revitalization.

### Design

This committee enhances the physical appearance of Downtown by assisting with the renovation of historic buildings and streetscape enhancements, encouraging supportive new construction and long term planning.

### Economic Restructuring

This committee works to strengthen **Downtown's economic base by focusing** on retaining and recruiting a cross-section of businesses that can create a viable economic downtown.

### Organization

This committee coordinates the overall volunteer effort and builds unity among the many volunteers and the community who have a role in the downtown revitalization process.

### Promotion

This committee promotes the assets of Downtown to attract new customers, investors, businesses and visitors. They plan special events and assist with publicity and communication.

Each committee is always looking to welcome new volunteers. If you would like to get involved, call the DMDC office at (618) 242-6866 or email to [dmdc@mvn.net](mailto:dmdc@mvn.net).