



Building Membership: Defining and Delivering Value

Led by Kathy La Plante, National Trust for Historic Preservation

March 1, 2011

Kathy La Plante joined the National Trust Main Street Center (NTMSC) staff as a Program Officer in May of 2007. She has worked in the Main Street field since 1989. Ms. La Plante works with organizations throughout the U.S. and has primary contract responsibilities to the New Mexico, Oakland County, Michigan, Arkansas, Delaware, Virginia, Maryland, Wisconsin, and Oregon Main Street Programs. Prior to joining the NTMSC she served as the Director of the New Hampshire Main Street Center, from 1996 to 2007. She was responsible for initiating the New Hampshire statewide, nonprofit Main Street Program, and providing comprehensive downtown revitalization technical assistance to twenty-three designated communities. From 1989 to 1996, Ms. La Plante was the Executive Director of the Chippewa Falls (WI) Main Street Program. In 1996, under her direction, Chippewa Falls was a recipient of the Great American Main Street Award, recognizing it as one of the top five Downtown revitalization programs in the country. As an independent consultant, Ms. La Plante has worked with communities in Arkansas, Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, Vermont, Rhode Island, Wisconsin, and Maine. Prior to working in downtown revitalization, Ms. La Plante spent 12 years in retail management at Oakwood Pharmacy & Gifts in Eau Claire, Wisconsin and, for ten years, as manager of Spurgeon's Department Stores in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa.

Making Your Case: Building Membership

Kathy La Plante
Senior Program Officer
National Trust Main Street Center

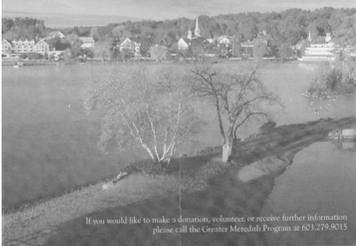
Before we can gain supporters Public Relations

- *How do you tell the community, district, or neighborhood who you are and what you do?*
- *How would you rate your current public relations?*



OUR MISSION...

The Greater Meredith Program is a community development organization seeking to enhance economic vitality, historical and cultural heritage, and town-wide beautification. It strives to achieve these goals through direct advocacy and action, plus it seeks to capture and extend the vision, energy, and inter-organizational cooperation that have molded Meredith into the jewel that it has become. GMP is also a member of the New Hampshire Main Street Program, which provides technical assistance, training, and advice. Our Board of Directors is comprised of community leaders and town officials who volunteer their time and expertise to advance the mission of our organization.



If you would like to make a donation, volunteer, or receive further information, please call the Greater Meredith Program at 603-774-9015.

Promoting Revitalization & Fostering Involvement through Printed Materials

- Newsletters
- Annual Reports
- Fliers & brochures that tell talk about what you want to accomplish

Can I make a difference in the revitalization of downtown Waterville?

Yes! By becoming a DOWNTOWN PARTNER

See the difference. Meet the difference. Make the difference.

Waterville Main Street
177 Main Street
Waterville, Maine 04901
Tel: 603-852-2266
Fax: 603-852-2266
info@mainstreetwaterville.org

Be a part of something great!
(207)582-3188

Promoting the organization's efforts

Newsletters & Brochures

THINK you can't make a difference? You can! Only volunteers who want to have FUN are invited to attend at Green Fair in August!

Call the 501 office to get your name on the forwarding list 105-362-7276.

The Four Point Approach of Main Street or work for our Downtown Group

Organization

Economic Revitalizing

Preservation

How are other Commercial Districts Coping in a Down Economy?

Why Should I Join? Choose Your Level:

100% of all membership dues are used to support the revitalization and economic development of downtown Waterville.

Yes, I want to join the Downtown Waterville Development Corporation 2007 Membership Program!

Level: _____
Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____
E-mail: _____

100% of membership dues are used to support the revitalization and economic development of downtown Waterville.

...to Participate in Celebrations
...to Receive an Award
...to Receive a Certificate
...to Receive a Gift
...to Receive a Membership Card
...to Receive a Nameplate
...to Receive a Parking & Holiday Celebration

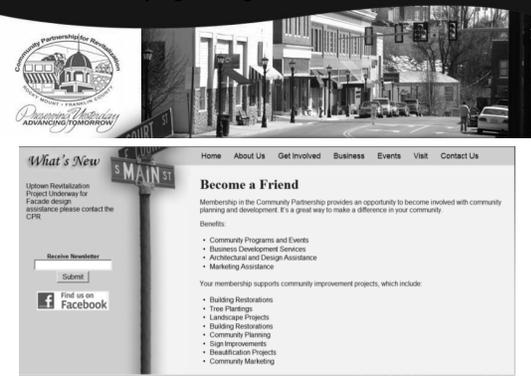
Success story:
Greenfield, IA
reported that 85% of their supporters gave more!

Mainly Manitowoc Membership

Prominent on their website



Friends Campaigns Target Residents



Carthage, MS

PATRONS:

- Businesses who would give \$1,000 the first year and \$500 per year for the 4 following years OR INDIVIDUALS: \$500 the first year and \$250.00 for the 4 following years.

Membership structure

- () Business Patron - Initial \$1,000
- () Business Patron (year 2-5) \$500
- () Individual Patron - Initial \$500
- () Individual Patron (year 2-5) \$250

Business:

- () 26 + employees \$250
- () 11-25 employees \$175
- () 6-10 Employees \$125
- () 1-5 Employees \$100
- () Non-Resident \$60 * (churches, organizations, clubs)
- () County Resident \$40
- () Student \$10

Membership Levels



Date: _____ Amount paid: _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES are calculated on a yearly basis (calendar year), prorated quarterly.

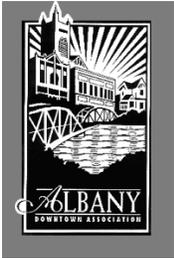
<input type="checkbox"/> Downtown Member located in Historic District (see map) <small>Dues are based on full time employees or full time equivalent</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate Member \$100 <small>Businesses outside the Historic District who want to support the mission of the ADA</small>
1-2 Employees \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> Non Profit Member \$100
3-5 Employees \$160	<input type="checkbox"/> Friend of the MDA \$35 - Individual
6-8 Employees \$220	\$55 - Couple
9+ Employees \$275	<small>Community members who want to support the mission of the ADA</small>

PO Box 691, McMinnville, OR 97128 • Phone: (503)472-3605 • e-mail: krls@downtownmcmnville.com



- \$150.00 Small Business (1-5 employees)
- \$200.00 Medium Business (6-10 employees)
- \$250.00 Large Business (11-15 employees)
- \$300.00 Major Business (over 15 employees)
- \$75.00 Non-District Business Related
- \$25.00 Friends of Downtown
- \$25.00 Not-for Profit Organization

Benefits of ADA membership include



- Monthly informational newsletter
- "Evening Out" get togethers for members
- Downtown Networking opportunities
- Free newsletter insert
- Invitation to special ADA activities
- Free set of mailing address labels from our mailing list
- Invitation to ADA's annual membership meeting
- Voting privilege in ADA board elections
- Reduced fees for ADA workshops & guest speakers
- Participation in fraud prevention network
- Making a positive difference in the health, vitality, and livability of historic downtown Albany.

MEMBER: \$60 - \$99

Denton, Texas

- Quarterly Membership Newsletter
- Quarterly Membership Meetings with one vote
- MSA Mixers (invitations mailed to business)
- MSA Discount Card (ability to participate as a discounting business, as well as personally using the discounts offered by other MSA businesses)
- NAME listed on MSA website (Name only)

BRONZE MEMBER: \$100 - \$249

All of the above, and:

- Name and contact information on MSA website (address and business phone)
- Free link to your business website from the MSA website
- Listing in Denton Live ad (2 issues per year)
- Cooperative ads at discounted rates
- Listing on downtown kiosks (if business is located downtown)

SILVER MEMBER: \$250 - \$999

All of the above, and:

- Business LOGO and link on MSA website to your business website

GOLD MEMBER: \$1000 +

All of the above, and:

- Business of the month profile on MSA website one time per year (profile information provided by business)
- Complimentary 10x10 booth space at event of choice at Dog Days of Summer or Arts Antiques & Autos Extravaganza (Business must notify Denton Main Street at least one month prior to event to reserve the space)

ORANGE DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE

Posted: Jul 01, 2010
Teachy Ribs and Blues Festival
Posted: May 27, 2010
Dash 4 Trash
Posted: Apr 20, 2010

Membership Levels

Please consider joining us the highest level you are able. We promise that every dollar you donate will be used to its full potential. As a 501(c)(3) organization, your contributions may be tax deductible.

Visionary	\$1,000 +
Advocate	\$500 to \$999
Sustainer	\$250 to \$499
Benefactor	\$100 to \$249
Corner Stone	up to \$99

[Membership Form](#)
(Filers require Acrobat Reader, 191Kb)

[Membership Form](#)
(Not Filable requires Acrobat Reader, 190Kb)

Membership forms on-line

Why should I become a member of your district?

- Gather in small groups by district or mix with others.
- Take 10 minutes to discuss one of these categories and how would will convince them to join? What's in it for them?
 - Businesses:** if they've been reluctant to join
 - Residents:** if this is a member base you haven't tried to get
 - Businesses Outside your District:** if you haven't been successful here

Case Study Libertyville, IL



Source: Donna Harris,
Main Street Now
Sept/Oct 2010 Issue

- Northern middle-class suburb of Chicago
- 21,843 population
- Five block commercial district along the spine of Milwaukee Avenue (a state highway)
- Main Street established in 1989
- Over 18 years = \$30M in private investment; 2% vacancy rate; 55 days of events drawing 70,000 attendees, 240 volunteers
- 2007 Budget was \$205,000 with a \$100,000 reserve fund
- Residential support stood at 439

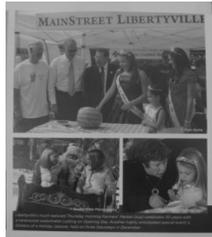
Case Study Continued Steadily Decreasing Funding

Starting in 2005, support from the village started to decline

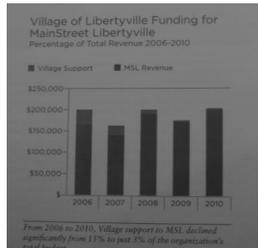
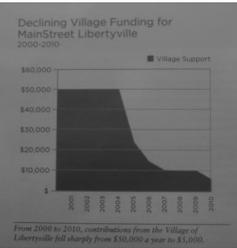
- Started with \$50,000
- 2005 cut in half
- 2006 dropped to \$15,000
- 2007 cut to \$10,000

Despite the downward trend the MSL board was unable to plug the wide hole in their budget

2007, their annual Street Dance, which typically brought in \$60,000, made only \$2,000. Other events made little money



Case Study Continues Funding Picture Changes



Case Study Continued
A Refocus on Membership

Realized the only way to stave off imminent financial collapse was to ask residents for their financial support

Decided to "go public" with the organizations' dire state

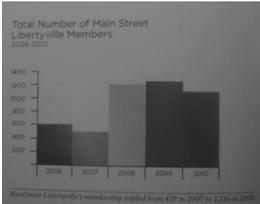
Made clear their organization was not part of the city government and that their tax did not support revitalization efforts

Touted their successes and events held that many loved

Within 2 weeks – 42 new members with \$40-\$100 pledges



Case Study Continued
PR Strategy



- School backpack stuffers
- Bag stuffers at all merchants
- Event schedule reprinted with "How to Join" section
- Appearances on local talk radio
- Speeches to civic groups
- A special newsletter stressing the urgency
- The Green Envelopes

2009 MainStreet Libertyville Revenue
MSL 2009 revenue totaled \$179,229.



- Membership/sponsorship (65%)
- Event net (23%)
- Village support (3%)
- Gift certificates, other income (9%)

Why Focus on Expanding Membership beyond Businesses?



- Giving dropped by 3.6% in 2009 (\$303.75 Billion)
- Still, the largest sector of donations was from individuals who donated more than 74% of all gifts.
- Renew/upgrade your pitch to individuals

Giving USA Foundation

Starting the Annual Membership Drive

- Assign a Membership Chair
- Set a Goal
- Identify potential members, supporters, investors (stakeholders)
- If you have a dollar goal split the figure among your membership categories
- Establish the timeline for your annual drive – ideally 4-6 weeks (*although new members can and will join throughout the year*)
- Prepare solicitation materials
- Publicize the drive
- Mail or deliver request info/letter
- Follow up
- Thanks and Celebrate
- Maintain a good database (renewals)



Members Doing Business in the District



- Ask businesses in the district to make a list of businesses they use and community organizations
- Have those businesses hand letters to those vendors, or mail with invoice payment....or go higher up.
- Follow up with a reminder

Opportunities to Become Members

Give them options, highlight in newsletter



...the things to buy, see and do, creation of more things on parade events; updated website; green spaces and focus on community.

Join the Team! Please be part of our future!

Yes, I believe in Downtown Rhinelander and want to help!

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution. Amount: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____

Check is enclosed payable to Downtown Rhinelander, Inc. PO Box 1638, Rhinelander, WI 54501.

Please send an invoice.

I would like my contribution to go toward a special project or activity. Specify: _____

Call me: I would like to discuss contributing toward Hodags On Parade, flower baskets, benches or historic preservation.

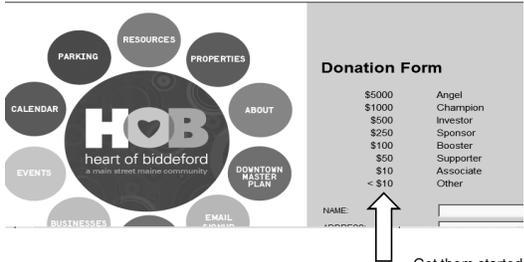
Please do not publish my name as a donor.

Thank you for your trust in Downtown Rhinelander and its future. It is bright!

For more information about our programs or to volunteer, contact Downtown Rhinelander, Inc. 715.362.7374 phone 715.362.7340 fax downtownrhinelander.com msdri@frontiernet.net

On line pledging (Donations)

the same can be done with memberships



Get them started

Happy Thanksgiving from Heart of Biddeford

Give today to the Heart of Biddeford

Individuals can be asked to give more than once a year

Dear Kathy, We here at HoB are hoping that you and your family have a lovely Thanksgiving!

We're also hoping that you are thankful for how much progress we have made downtown over the past 4 years! We are starting our annual fund raising drive and are hoping that you will support the Heart of Biddeford through the next year so that we can help bring:

- MORE new businesses to Main Street
- do MORE events downtown
- do MORE projects to beautify the downtown area
- do MORE to put Biddeford on the map
- and, do MORE to make Biddeford an even better place to live, work, and shop!

Please help us get off to a good start by donating online. [CLICK HERE!](#)

*A donation of ANY size is greatly appreciated!

Training Your Board and Volunteers for Membership Solicitation

Help your Board Members feel comfortable making the ask



- Join themselves first
- Talk about the districts' successes and why they should be eager to tell your story and ask others to become members
- If mailed letters, personalize them
- Provide material
- Assist in writing thank you notes and being in touch with members throughout the year

Why People Respond to Fundraising Requests

- To accomplish this seemingly unlikely objective, your appeal needs to be built on the psychology of giving. Forget your organization's needs. Instead, focus on the needs, the desires, and the concerns of the people you're writing or talking to. Your job is to motivate them.



Why People Will Send Money

Hal Warwick

- People send money because you ask
- Because they have money available
- In the habit of sending money by mail
- Because they support organizations like yours
- Because their money will make a difference
- Something will be accomplished right now
- Because they will be recognized for their support
- You help them preserve their worldview by validating cherished values and beliefs
- Because they get something tangible in return
- Enable people to do something about a critical problem
- Gives people the opportunity to "belong" as a member, friend, or supporter
- You enable them to offer their opinions
- Access to inside information
- You help them learn about a complex or interesting issue
- Allow a person connection to others
- Because they feel it is their duty
- Because there is a tax advantage (businesses)

Giving On-line

MasterCard, Via, Discover, American Express and PayPal

The screenshot shows the 'Believe in Bristol' website. At the top, it says 'BELIEVE IN BRISTOL' with a logo for 'BRISTOL TENNESSEE & VIRGINIA'. Below the logo, there's a 'FEATURED EVENT' section for 'Bristol Book - Because It's Great on State' on June 25, 2010. To the right, there's a 'FEATURED SUPPORTER' section for 'Richard Clark'. The main content area is titled 'Support Believe in Bristol' and contains the text: 'By donating to Believe in Bristol, you can become an active part of the success story. Thanks to the participation of people like you, Downtown Bristol has been and will continue to be a source of pride for the people of both Tennessee and Virginia -- because we believe in Bristol.' Below this text is a 'Donate' button with logos for Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express.

On-line Pledging (Memberships)

The screenshot shows the 'Downtown Harrisonburg VA' website. The main heading is 'Be A Member'. Below this, there's a 'Membership Levels' section with a list of options:

- Renaissance Benefactor \$5,000+
- Renaissance Patron \$1,000-\$4,999
- Renaissance Sponsor \$500-\$999
- Renaissance Partner \$100-\$499
- Downtown Supporter \$50-\$99
- Downtown Friend \$25-\$49
- Associate Member \$15-\$24

 Below the list is a 'Donate' button with a note: 'Note: the tax now account credit card payments through PayPal. Please consider on Visa \$3 donation fee (includes credit card fee)'. At the bottom, there's a counter that says 'HDI Members 11/11/2009 11/20/2009'. An arrow points to the counter with the text 'Contribute an extra \$3 to offset PayPal costs'.

Thank you Premiums

The collage consists of three images. On the left is a photo of a man wearing a dark t-shirt with a 'PIGTOWN' logo. On the right are two photos of merchandise: the top one shows two mugs, one white and one dark, both with 'PIGTOWN' branding; the bottom one shows a dark tote bag with 'PIGTOWN' branding and several small items like buttons and stickers.

Final Tips

1. Chart your membership closely each year and compare to last year.
2. Review your membership levels and increase or change some categories each year, offering a diamond, platinum or gold level of support.
3. Ask members to support other project once or twice a year in addition to their membership.
4. Tell people about your good work through public relations activities.
5. Even mature organizations must explain their value to constituents.
6. Consider diversification of your revenue sources (businesses that make money in your district but that are not located there)
7. Invite your neighbors/residents to get involved and support with \$\$.

Benefits of a Healthy Commercial District for Property Owners

- Increased occupancy rates
- Rent stabilization or increase
- Increased property values
- Increased stability
- Reduced vandalism/crime deterrent
- Assistance with tax credits, grants, loan programs, design, and maintenance
- Communication medium with other property owners
- Better image
- New uses on upper floors

Local Residents & Consumers

- Enhanced marketplace (better shopping & the benefits of shopping locally)
- Sense of pride in Downtown
- Social/cultural activities
- Opportunities to keep kids in town
- Sense of hometown community
- Opportunity to participate/volunteer
- Better communication
- Political advocate
- Home values increase

Retail Business Owners

- Increased sales
- Improved image
- Increased value of business
- Coordinated efforts between local businesses & franchises
- Quality of life
- Educational opportunities (seminars & workshops)
- Increased traffic
- District marketing strategies (promotion & advertising)
- Better business mix
- New market groups Downtown
- Community pride
- Have needs/issues addressed



Service Business Owners

- Image building/improvement
- New/renewed/repeated exposure
- Increased variety of services
- Healthier economy generates new/more businesses
- Increased competition means more aggressive business styles
- Tapping leakage
- Increased population, new customers
- Improved image, creates new market

Financial Institutions

- Community Reinvestment Act compliance
- Potential growth for loans, deposits, and other services (bank cards, financial services)
- Improved image and good will
- Survival of community, critical to bank success and economic stability
- Central location more cost effective

Utilities

- Additional businesses
- Longer business hours
- More employees
- Healthy businesses feel freer to increase utility use
- Healthy economy causes community to grow
- Ensure quality in Main Street public improvements

Preservation and Sustainability Advocates

- Coordinated efforts at reviatlzaiton. reinforces the common goals of preservation and sustainable issues.
- Increases coalition
- Increased awareness and credibility
- Education of public and group
- Improved public image
- Improved economic feasibility of preservation

Municipal Government

The biggest benefactor of Coordinated Commercial District Revitalization

- Increased tax base
- More tourism
- Increased property values
- Increased number of jobs
- Better goals and vision
- Healthy economy
- Better services available
- Positive perception of Downtown and community
- Better relations between local government and private sector
- 20 Minute Neighborhoods
- Better relations between local government and private sector
- Increased volunteer base for city
- Takes political heat, develops consensus for political requests
- Industrial recruitment
- Impetus for public improvements
- Grant solicitation
- Information resource for city leaders about the local district

KEYS to help Main Street Programs succeed:



TRUST

- Communication

VALUE

- Programming

Questions?



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Book Giveaway!
