

Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership News Bulletin

February 2018

You can download a PDF of the most recent News Bulletin at <http://downtownfdl.com/publications.html#newsletter>
In an attempt to keep newsletters as brief as possible, details about on-going support and activities for downtown business and property owners can be found on our site: <http://downtownfdl.com/business-support.html>

Important Dates and Deadlines

If your business will be closing or an event will be cancelled due to weather, please take a moment to email cancellations@wfdl.com, cancellations@mdogmedia.com, news@fdlreporter.com, and cancellations@kfiz.com. They do not accept secondhand notices, so we cannot forward your information to them.

February 19, 9-10 a.m. – Restaurant & Hospitality Business Best Practices at Fox Valley Savings Bank.

February 21, 8:30-9:30 a.m. – Downtown Morning Marketing Meetup at new Downtown FDL Partnership Office (131 S. Main, Suite 101)

March 1 – Deadline to sign up as a site for Fest-of-Ale

March 13 – Fest-of-Ale Tickets on sale

March 13, 8:30-11:30 a.m. – Cell Phone Photography and Merchandising for Social Media at THELMA. Please RSVP by March 9.

March 14, 8-9:30 a.m. – DFP Board Meeting at Hometown Bank. Public welcome.

March – St. Patrick's Day Parade

March 19 – Building Improvement Grant Application Review

March 20 – Farmer Market Vendor Open House

March 21, 8-9 a.m. – Downtown Morning Marketing Meetup; Location TBD

April 1 – Deadline to sign up for Wine Walk

April 5, 5:30-7:30 p.m. – “Meet Me Downtown” quarterly social. Please RSVP by April 3.

April 11, 8-9:30 a.m. – DFP Board Meeting at Hometown Bank. Public welcome.

April 13 – Fest-of-Ale

April 13 – Wine Walk Tickets on sale

The activities listed here are administered by the Partnership and are open to all downtown businesses for participation or marketing, additional downtown events and activities can be found on our [website](#) or our [Facebook page](#).

Businesses & Property Notes

Vacancy Rate: November 2013 - 10.2% >>> February 2018 – 6.0%

Details about on-going economic vitality support (i.e. Market Analysis, Business Start-up Assistance, Business Recruitment, Property Listings, Vision Planning for the Arts & Entertainment District, the Riverwalk District and The Gateway District) are available here: <http://downtownfdl.com/economic-vitality.html>

Building Improvement Grants (BIG)

- The Building Improvement Grant (BIG) is designed to incentivize property owners to undertake exterior property improvements, which will lead to increased property value and a better utilization of properties within downtown Fond du Lac. Grants are awarded based on the following criteria including, but not limited to: projected increase in property value, blight elimination, street front visibility, business track record, impact on surrounding neighborhood, a signed lease from a viable tenant, job creation, readiness to proceed, local economic impact, and new use of a high-profile property.
- \$143,750 is available to be awarded to property owners in 2018. Grant reviews will be held on the third Monday of every month until funding has been exhausted.
- If you are considering any improvements to your building façade, please contact Amy Hansen at 920.322.2007 to begin the process of applying for a Building Improvement Grant.
- The DFP would like to thank the City of Fond du Lac for their continued funding of the Building Improvement Grants.
- Information on all local grant & loan programs: www.downtownfdl.com/dfp/financial_incentives.html

New, Relocated, or Closed

- ModTruss held a community open house for their new location at 33 Sheboygan Street.
- Downtown FDL Partnership moved from 30 S. Portland St. to 131 S. Main St.
- Parks Law Office relocated from 17 Forest Ave. to 39 S. Main St.
- S&B Alterations will open on March 1 at 35 N. Main St.
- Legendary Hotels has purchased the properties at 7 & 9 N. Main St.

Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership News Bulletin

February 2018

- Staff is currently working with two entrepreneurs regarding new/expansion projects.

Organization Notes

Details about on-going organizational support (i.e. Meet Me Downtown, Monthly Newsletters, Networking & Educational Sessions for Business Owners, Volunteer Coordination) are available here: <http://downtownfdl.com/organization.html>

Downtown Morning Marketing Meetup: Focus on Sturgeon Spectacular – Wednesday, February 21

PLEASE NOTE THE NEW TIME: 8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m.

- This month's location: Downtown FDL Partnership office at 131 S. Main Street, Suite 101
- We'll be spending our meetup as a marketing roundtable. Bring your questions and ideas for discussion.
- In the interest of using the meetups as partnering opportunities, we rotate locations on a monthly basis. If you would like to have the group meet in your building, please let us know. The host simply needs to provide enough seating for 10-15 people at 8 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month.

Annual Award Winners Announced

- The Design of the Year Award was presented to Doug & Judie Duitman for the exterior renovation of 40 Fourth Street, a property that now houses Studio 40 Salon, Street Pedalers LLC, and a heated storage unit. The modern industrial renovation complements the interior renovation completed in 2016 and has had a substantial visual impact on the surrounding area.
- The Interior Design of the Year Award was presented to Peter Katris for the Coliseum Sports Bar & Grill. The extensive interior remodeling project removed dated décor and restored a sense of the building's 1880's history while renewing the appearance and improving the room's natural lighting.
- Sara Cujak was the recipient of the 2017 Friend of Downtown Award, an annual award given to a person or organization that has had major impact on the partnership. Cujak, owner of Cujak's Wine & Coffee Bar, has shown consistent commitment to downtown Fond du Lac through regular volunteering, advocacy, financial support, and administrative support for events such as the Downtown Fond du Lac Wine Walk.
- The 2017 Volunteer of the Year award, presented to an individual who made significant contribution over the previous year, was awarded to Donna King. King headed up volunteer efforts for the Fond du Lac Fresh 5 Food Donation program during the Farmers Market. Because of her support, the program was able to donate 1,645 pounds of food to local food pantry Broken Bread.
- Atlas Gaming received the Best New Business Award for 2017. Atlas Gaming specializes in tabletop gaming including manga, anime, and card games such as Yu-Gi-Oh! and Pokémon, and has become a second home to many in the local gaming community. The atmosphere they have created has filled a need in the downtown for late night family-friendly retail and activity space; a "third place" for those are looking for a welcoming, playful business where they can connect, shop, and stay a while.
- The Downtown Legacy Award, awarded to a business that has been in downtown for at least 50 years, was given to US Bank whose ties to community go back 163 years. Opening in 1855, US Bank has expanded three times within downtown Fond du Lac and showcases its contributions and love of the community in the historic photos displayed throughout their lobby.

Upcoming Wisconsin Main Street Programs

- *'Restaurant & Hospitality Business Best Practices'* (1-hour presentation) Ryan Doerr of The Spire Group will provide guidance for restaurants and hospitality businesses to allow them to evaluate their menu, pricing, layout and marketing in order to maximize revenues and attract additional customer traffic. The workshop will be held on **Monday, February 19, 9 a.m. at Fox Valley Savings Bank**, 51 E. First Street. Please RSVP to amy@downtownfdl.com.
- *'Cell Phone Photography and Merchandising for Social Media'* (3-hour workshop) Danielle Brufloodt of Thyme is Honey will lead you through a workshop designed to teach you the basics of smart phone photography, along with advanced editing techniques, home studio set-up and online marketing and social media strategies that can help your small business succeed. We'll discuss social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter and how each platform can help increase your visibility and reach. The workshop will be held on **Tuesday, March 13, 8:30-11:30 a.m. at THELMA**, 51 Sheboygan Street. Please RSVP to amy@downtownfdl.com by March 9.

Promotion & Event Notes

Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership News Bulletin

February 2018

Details about on-going marketing support (i.e. Marketing Assistance, Wednesday and Saturday Downtown Fond du Lac Farmers Market, Fondue Fest, Chili Crawl, Monster March, Shop Small Holiday Campaign, Downtown Gift Certificate) are available here: <http://downtownfdl.com/promotion.html>

Sturgeon Spectacular Weekend – February 9-11

- Chili Crawl sold out a week in advance. Out of 100 tickets sold, 99 attendees arrived. 24 different zip codes were represented. Ziggy's Pub won the prize for downtown's best chili. Knight Barry Title won the "Home-Cooked" category. Businesses each saw an average of 42 new faces. The average attendee visited 6 businesses they had never been to before. A full economic impact report is forthcoming.
- 30 sturgeon were hung windows in various downtown businesses as part of the city-wide Sturgeon Hunt.
- Downtown Sturgeon Spectacular events organized by the Fond du Lac Area Convention and Visitors Bureau drew larger than anticipated crowds and increased social media engagement for all of the downtown.

Downtown Fond du Lac Website Redesigned

- The redesigned website was launched on Thursday, Feb. 8.
- Business owner login has been simplified. By logging in you can update your business information, open hours, photos, categories, events, and location features such as free wi-fi or availability for private rental. If you are uncertain of which email address is used for your business account, please email info@downtownfdl.com. To reset your password, simply use the "forgot password" link on the site.

Fest-of-Ale – Friday, April 13, 2018, 4-8 p.m.

- Deadline to sign up as a site – March 1
- Modeled after the success of the Wine Walk, the Fest-of-Ale will feature beers and hard ciders. A minimum of 12 businesses are needed to participate. 350 tickets will be made available to the public. At this time, two businesses have confirmed participation.
- In 2016, the average cost to businesses was less \$100 in product, plus any additional staffing costs for staying open during hours when they would normally have been closed. 203 tickets were sold in 2016 with each participant visiting an average of 4.6 new businesses and each business seeing an average of 100 new faces.
- The 2018 cost will vary based on number of tickets sold and number of participants who attend each location.
- The event is open to restaurants, retailers, and service businesses. If your service business would like to use the event for awareness raising but cannot host in your site, consider partnering with a retail location to share costs and partner in staffing at their site.
- If you are interested in being part of the event planning committee or would like to sponsor the cost of logoed glasses for the event (approx. \$1200), please contact Dusty at dusty@downtownfdl.com as soon as possible.

2018 DFP Special Events Calendar

April 13 – Fest-of-Ale

May 12, 8-Noon – Farmers Market Opens for the Season (continues weekly until the end of October)

June 6, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. – Wednesday Farmers Market Opens for the Season (continues weekly until the end of September)

June 15, 4-8 p.m. – Downtown Wine Walk

September 8 – Fondue Fest

October 27, 10-Noon – Monster March, Main Street from Rees to Western

November 24 – Small Business Saturday

Design Notes

Details on how the DFP enhances the attractiveness of the business district. (i.e. grant programs for building and façade improvements, Adopt-A-Planter program, investment in signage, trash receptacles, holiday decorations) are available here: <http://downtownfdl.com/design.html>

North Main Road Construction

- In 2019, the city will be embarking on the reconstruction of N. Main Street between Merrill and Johnson. You are invited to attend a public meeting to gather feedback in the streetscape design, and to create a plan that will lead to the least amount of disruption to downtown businesses. The public meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 21 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at City Hall. The meeting will be an 'open house' sort of style. City staff will be available to discuss the project and provide an overall project presentation at 6:00 p.m..

Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership News Bulletin

February 2018

Call for Artists – Utility Box Project

- Utility Art Box Call for Artists was issued and distributed widely. The winning designs will be chosen in the next week. Installation is planned for early spring. This project is made possible through the generous support of the Fond du Lac Area Foundation.

Notes from Downtown Businesses

If you would like to include information in the "Notes from Businesses" section, please email before the second Wednesday of the month.

- What's green and a mile long? The Fond du Lac St. Patty's Day Parade hosted by **95 and 96-1 The Rock !** Come see Fond du Lac's Miracle Mile wrapped up in the spirit of the Irish. Show off your business or organization in the biggest parade in Fond du Lac! Parade will start on the corner of Rees and Main St and travel south to Veterans Park. Parade entries are free! To enter your business, non-profit group, or organization in this year's parade use this link: <https://goo.gl/forms/t6LHwah4QRS2reZh1>
- A wellness intern at the **Fond du Lac YMCA** is researching the types of wellness benefits corporations offer to their employees. She is primarily interested in learning if companies offer gym memberships and how that benefit is structured, such as requirements to go to the gym a certain amount of days per month or a set dollar amount that can be used each year as a reimbursement. If you have information to share with her, please reach out to her directly. Ariana Schmidt; Email: arischmidt@charter.net; Phone: 9205395047

Stay Connected

- **Facebook Group** – This closed group welcomes downtown business and property owners to discuss with one another or with DFP regarding questions, promotions, events, and services in the downtown area. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DFPeeps/>
- **Facebook Page** – Our public page showcases great things happening downtown! <https://www.facebook.com/DowntownFDL/>

Contact Us

General Inquiries or responses to items from this news bulletin can be sent to info@downtownfdl.com or reach us via phone at 920.322.2006.

Our staff includes:

Amy Hansen, Executive Director

Tracy Reinhart, Farmers Market Manager

Dusty Krikau, Director of Communication and Special Events

Crystal Patt, Bookkeeper and Research Assistant

Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership, Inc.

131 S. Main Street, Suite 101

Fond du Lac, WI 54935

920.322.2006

www.downtownfdl.com

