

News from Genoa Main Street



Genoa Main Street, Inc.
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Helland Wins Spark Plug Award:

Genoa Main Street Lays Out 2011 Plans, Elects Directors, Officers at Annual Meeting

A crowd of more than 70 Genoa Main Street, Inc. partners and volunteers filled Prairie State Winery in downtown Genoa recently for the organization's annual recognition night and annual meeting.

Pattie Marx, president, told those gathered that "While raising sufficient funds became the first order of business for 2010, carrying out our mission did not fall by the wayside.

"Thanks to the terrific efforts of our board of directors and the community spirit of several major corporations serving the Genoa area, we can now report that Genoa Main Street, Inc. is financially secure for the immediate future," she said.

Among examples of "carrying out our mission," she cited :

- Main Street's carried out a full calendar of events downtown and ice rink provided area residents with free family-friendly recreation while attracting new customers to downtown businesses.
- Downtown's economy continued to grow as businesses saw sales increase. Plus, several new businesses located downtown reducing the vacancy rate on Main Street to near zero.

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- Downtown looks better than ever with many building owners investing in their buildings, with Main Street Park creating a colorful accent and the “Good Roads” mural adding a new point of interest to downtown.
- Genoa Springboard, the small-business incubator, attracted attention throughout the area for its innovative approach to economic development.

Volunteers Responsible for Successes

“The accomplishments of the past year are the result of the hard work of you, our volunteers,” she said acknowledging the audience. “We continue to carry out our work with one part-time paid staff person and scores of dedicated volunteers.”

The organization’s annual “Spark Plug” award was presented to volunteer and co-chair of Design, Diane Helland of Genoa, by Mim Evans, executive director. The award recognizes a non-director volunteer for their efforts which help keep the organization’s “engine: running smoothly and propelling it to new levels of achievement.” Helland was selected from the more than 100 volunteers, who during the past year donated more than 3,000 hours to make the year a success.

Events, Projects Fill Action Plan

During 2011, the organization will pursue its Action Plan through four avenues:

- Membership & Development will concentrate on fundraising, communications, exploring new alternatives for board and volunteer training, developing a planned giving program, expanding the corporate partnership program and expanding volunteer recruitment and recognition.
- Economic Restructuring will develop and implement a plan for the marketing of off-Main Street properties and work to restore long-vacant Main Street properties to active business locations and strengthen and grow existing businesses by providing technical expertise and mentoring and continue the Genoa Springboard program with a focus on assistance to both new and existing businesses.

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- Promotion will market downtown Genoa as a destination for groups host will hosting 15 events to attract people downtown and increase relationships with downtown businesses and merchants. Among the events will be the Quilt Walk, Chocolate Walk, Beach Party, Red Hat Day, two Movies on Main Street, Summer Farm Fest & Back Roads Tractor Run, Candlelight Open House, and the Food Pantry Raffle, and six Open Air Markets. In addition, merchants and businesses working with Main Street will offer the Main Street High School scholarship for the fifth year.
- Design will continue to work with the City on streetscape planning and improvements while working to install landscape buffers at remaining Main Street vacant lots and developing a plan for a pedestrian plaza at South Emmett and Main Streets.

Spier Elected to Board

During the business portion of the meeting, members elected Sandy Spier, owner of downtown Genoa's Poppy Seed Primitives, to the Genoa Main Street, Inc. board for a three-year term, and re-elected David Glaum and Leslie Sander to similar terms. Continuing directors with terms expiring in 2011 are Maria Bennett; Arlene Erickson; Michael Haines; Gordon Jones and Pattie Marx; and Gene Bradford and Jim Wilson whose terms expire in 2012.

Elected officers for the coming year by the membership were Pattie Marx, president; Michael Haines, vice president; Leslie Sanderson, secretary, and Gordon Jones, treasurer.

A printable copy of the Genoa Main Street, Inc. 2010 Annual Report and 2011 Action Plan is available on the organization's Web site at <http://www.genoamainstreet.com> (just click on the link on the home page). A printed copy also is available by mail by calling 815-784-6961.

Genoa Main Street, Inc. is a volunteer organization dedicated to preserving Genoa's historic heritage and small town wholesomeness while promoting economic development and downtown improvements. Genoa has been an Illinois Main Street designated community since 1996.

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Pattie Marx (left), President of Genoa Main Street, Inc., presented volunteer Diane Helland with the organization's Spark Plug award for her outstanding leadership and accomplishments during for 2010.



Sandy Spier (above), owner of Poppy Seed Primitives, was elected to the Genoa Main Street, Inc. board of directors for a three-year term. Active as a Main Street chair and volunteer, she describes her five-year-old downtown store as a “small gathering of primitive décor for your home and unique gift ideas.”