

PC Main Street is Raising the Bar in a Lowered Economy

Ponca City Main Street offers our community much in the way of “quality economic development”. In tough economic times, the advent of the Main Street program in a community can improve the quality of life there through its activities, projects and programs offered to both the members and to the community’s citizens. The projects coordinated and completed through with the help of a Main Street program enhance the look and feel of a historic downtown, improve its image and the quality of its infrastructure.

Each year the PCMS program makes available a \$15,000 to \$20,000 facade grant fund for its business members that have property in the downtown district. This fund has financed over \$160,000 dollars of building renovations in the past five years. Twenty two facade grants have been awarded by the PCMS Design Committee and Board.

During a drive down Grand Ave. one will discover two historic murals recently painted which were made possible by the Main Street program. Over \$20,000 was raised locally to fund these artistic murals and also pay for donor plaques which are being created now and will be installed this spring.

During the month of October the program offered a Community Halloween Carnival for public children ages 2-12 for \$2 per person. Included in this \$2 ticket price children upon entering received a bag of candy and the opportunity to play safe holiday games for two hours at no additional charge. Each and every game for each and every child followed with more candy and prizes for the guests. The PCMS Halloween Carnival is a good value for the cost and gave local families an opportunity for their children to wear their Halloween costumes in public, have fun with simple old-fashioned games, have their picture taken in their costumes, bounce in the bounce house, eat and drink additional concessions and in general enjoy the City Hall lawn on a beautiful fall evening with their friends. In an age where a movie ticket costs at least \$5.00, renting video about \$4.00, a meal at a fast food restaurant for a child about \$3.50, a coke out is \$1.50, and a OK lottery ticket is \$2.00...the \$2 fee for the carnival event is exceptional!

Free architectural assistance and business planning assistance is also offered to PCMS business members through a simple phone call to the PCMS office, 580-763-8082. At that time an appointment with an OK state Main Street staff professional in the area of expertise can be made and a trip by that professional to Ponca City to meet with the PCMS member scheduled. This assistance in the areas of building facade design, architectural renderings drawn, remodeling advice given, business planning direction and consultation can be invaluable to the merchant.

Various other business improvement workshops and sessions throughout the year are also offered free of charge by the program for those members who wish to take advantage of the opportunity. Members are notified through the program publications, mail and news of dates and times.

Free business web pages attached to the poncacitymainstreet.com web site are also available to business members by simply applying. A form can be obtained through the office. This form should be filled out and turned in along with a photo of the business, interior and exterior. At that time the page will be created for the business and placed on the web.

A reprinting of the 2006 Downtown Business Directory and Tourist Map lists downtown business members in the retail or professional categories there in. This brochure is placed at all tourism sites and the chamber of commerce for visitors to our city at no additional charge to the PCMS member.

“Destination Downtown” cable commercials hosting the downtown businesses which are shown on a monthly basis give free advertising to those businesses that may have low budgets themselves for advertising purposes. With Main Street group commercials a business can receive free airtime that can bring recognition to their location and increase traffic through their doors.

As you can see, the value of a Main Street membership or even of just living in a community where a Main Street program exists can be well worth it. Main Street offers much to raise the bar for the citizens of Ponca City in this time of a lowered economy. For more information about the program call the office at 580-763-8082 or visit the web site at poncacitymainstreet.com.