



# Muscatine Downtown Action Alliance

# IN THE LOOP

October-December 2008

## Table of Contents:

Upcoming Events.....p2

Downtown Dollars.....p2

Fall Showcase.....p3

Holiday Open House and Stroll Info.....p4

We want you- Volunteers Needed....p5

Downtown Action Alliance Update.....p6

DAA Board.....p6

Coming to a Downtown near you...

## GIRL'S NIGHT OUT

Every 3rd Thursday- Starting Oct. 16th

Different activities each month...fashion shows, chocolate parties, scrapbooking, progressive dinners, and more...find out how your business can be involved.

?s Call Dawnese Openshaw at 262-5532

## Fall Showcase

A "Coming Home" in the heart of Muscatine ...Downtown!

Beginning October 2nd (MHS Heroic Homecoming weekend)

- Window Decorating Contest
- Children's Coloring Contest
- Oktoberfest at participating shops & restaurants
- Downtown Story Collection
- Business Crawl
- Trolley Tour (Date TBD)



## National Customer Appreciation Week (October 6th-10th)

We encourage businesses to join together on the weekend before (3-5th) and the weekend after (10-12th) to offer customer specials, have a sidewalk sale with your block, or do special giveaways. Whatever works for you...it's just a great opportunity to say thanks to those who support your business and in turn the downtown.



## Farmer's Market Season Comes to an End

Take advantage of the great FALL offerings at the Farmer's Market from now until the end of this month.

Saturday's (7:30-11:30AM) in the corner lot of Sycamore and Mississippi Dr. and Tuesday's at Wilson's True Value Hardware on Park Ave (3:00-6:00PM). The Market will start back up in May, 2009.

**Have an Event or Entertainment Group you'd like us to help advertise?**

**Contact us at:  
downtown@muscatine.com  
or Dawnese at 262-5532**



**National Customer Appreciation Week**  
**(October 6th-10th)**

## Downtown Dollars

**Q:** What are they?

**A:** These are essentially gift certificates that can be purchased from the Chamber of Commerce (GMCCD) and used in any store in the downtown. They are checks from a local bank so you accept them and process them as you would a check. Great time of year to promote these!

Find a special way to say Thank You to your loyal customers!

For customer service tips:

[iowalifechanging.com/business](http://iowalifechanging.com/business)

[businessknowhow.com/marketing/cstips.htm](http://businessknowhow.com/marketing/cstips.htm)



Check us out at:

**[www.muscatedowntown.com](http://www.muscatedowntown.com)**

Events, News, Business Directory, Alliance info, and more!

## Upcoming Events in the Downtown:

### October:

#### **1st:**

Notify Dawnese or your block captain that you'd like to participate in the Business Crawl & Holiday Open House

#### **3-5th & 10-12th:**

Customer Appreciation Days

#### **16th:** Girl's Night Out

Details TBA on [www.muscatedowntown.com](http://www.muscatedowntown.com)

**18th:** Votes due for window contest

**20th:** Window Contest Winners Announced

**31st:** All Coloring Contest Entries Due



### November:

#### **Sunday the 9th:**

Holiday Open House 12-4PM

**14th:** Deadline for special/coupon you want to run Stroll weekend (see pg 4)

**20th:** Girl's Night Out

**28th and 29th:** In store specials weekend...make this BIG retail weekend work for you!

### December:

#### **Friday the 5th**

Annual Holiday Stroll Begins at 5:30 PM

**5th-7th:** In store specials weekend

### Winter/Spring Events:

January: Eagles and Ivories

February: Valentine's Specials & Cabin Fever Days

March: Spring Fling

April: Women's Getaway Weekend

Watch for details of these events on the website and in the next In the Loop Newsletter

Meet  
*Muscatine*  
Downtown

October 2nd –31st

## Fall Showcase



### Window Decorating Contest:

Decorate your storefront or entrance with a Fall theme...scarecrows would be great..maybe a “Scarilyn Monroe” or to go with MHS Homecoming theme a Superhero crow. (No live vegetation may be used in your displays per the Fire Department, unless it has been sprayed by a flame retardant treatment). Have it done if possible by October 2nd! Voting will run from the 2nd thru the 18th and winners announced on the 20th.

There will be prizes awarded to:

“Most Original” “Best Theme”  
“Greatest Superhero” & “ People’s Choice”

### Votes for People’s Choice accepted at the following locations:

Sweet Temptations, GMCCI office,  
Party HQ, Muscatine History and  
Industry Center (Museum), the Flower  
Gallery & Carriage House Carpet One

Votes accepted until October 18th  
**Winner’s Announced October  
20th on our website**  
**[www.muscatedowntown.com](http://www.muscatedowntown.com)**

### FUN FALL HOLIDAYS...

Take a look at [www.brownielocks.com](http://www.brownielocks.com) and see  
what fun Holidays you can use for marketing.

Example: Nat’l Mental Health Day on Oct. 10th

### Children’s Coloring Contest:

We’re sponsoring this contest in conjunction with the Musser Public Library and would love to have your participation. If you’d like to have coloring sheets in your business please email Dawnese at [dawnese@machlink.com](mailto:dawnese@machlink.com). We are also seeking prizes for this contest if you’d like to make a donation.

### Business Crawl:

Customers will be encourage to shop Downtown and between October 16th and 31st when they go to 20+ restaurants and shops they will be entered to win prizes. To participate in this event you must be willing to donate a prize for the drawing.

### Story Collections:

We’re collecting people’s favorite stories of the Muscatine DOWNTOWN. Stories can be submitted to [Downtown@muscatine.com](mailto:Downtown@muscatine.com) or turned in at the GMCCI (Chamber) Office. This will be an ongoing collection and will have more buzz around it as it progresses.



## Q & A

# Upcoming Events

### Holiday Open House Sunday November 9th 12-4:00PM

- Q: Isn't this a little early?
- A: It's traditionally been two Sunday's before Thanksgiving and the "second Sunday" of the month. For the last six years those were one and the same. Thanksgiving this year is later than the past six years. So, because the Visitor's Guide and CVB info state it's the 2nd Sunday in November we're going with that. (Merchants hope this will give them an extra week for Holiday Sales).
- Q: Will I be able to advertise with the DAA for the upcoming events?
- A: The Downtown organization provides FREE advertising to any Downtown events for their due paying members.
- Q: What if I'm not a member of DAA and would still like to advertise?
- A: You may pay \$25 for covering costs for printed materials promoting these events. Make checks payable to the Downtown Action Alliance and get them to your block captain or Melanie Alexander (Museum). Further info will be distributed as the events draw closer.
- Q: What benefits do I have to be in the ads for these upcoming events?
- A: To name a few: Increased visibility, Your business may be a drop off or register site for prize drawings/contests and therefore increased foot traffic.
- Q: Do I have to be open special Holiday hours after the Open House?
- A: It's recommended that you set your Holiday hours so they are posted at the time of the Open House. Sunday's and additional evening or Saturday hours are encouraged. However we recognize not everyone will have the same hours, but we will help those participating in this event to advertise their hours of operation.

Timely commitments to participate are crucial to our success of this event. Thank you in advance!

### Annual Holiday Stroll December 5th

**Begins at Tree Lighting 5:30PM at Episcopal Church lot across from HNI**

*Christmas Through the Years...take a stroll down memory lane!*

Decades Represented by blocks:

1800's — the Button Boom

1930's; 1950's; 1960's 1970's; 1980's; 1990's Present

- Window Decorating Contest (extra points for motion) have windows decorated by the Stroll. Winners will be selected that weekend.

Live Entertainment in your place of business highly recommended (in store windows IDEAL).

Q. How will we make the Stroll work effectively?

A. Encourage more entertainment on 2nd St. in windows, as in the past, window decorations of some kind in most if not all windows, partner with other organizations for this event, and encourage activities for youth that will allow them to participate in a positive way.

Q. The Stroll is a community event...how do I make it work for increasing revenue for my business?

A: We will be creating a coupon packet for interested Downtown businesses, these packets full of specials for the stroll weekend will be included in the November 26th payrolls of participating corporations and businesses. This is free to members or \$25 for non-members. (A Downtown coupon packet will be printed each season and used for the CVB, re-location packets, & the above).

#### IMPORTANT:

Please notify us by October 1st if you would like to participate in the Holiday Open House and be included in our advertising. Counter Cards for participating businesses and Posters for advertising the event will be available early October.



To join with us in  
the effort to

**REVITALIZE**

**Downtown  
Muscatine**

## How can you be involved in the DAA's revitalization efforts?

- Attend Alliance board meetings and be informed
- Serve on a committee (or two)
- Offer constructive input
- Recognize that YOUR GREAT idea is needed and though it's not always implemented, it takes many ideas to make things work better
- Share your Promotional ideas
- Partner with other businesses
- Look for things that are going right and solutions for those that aren't
- Volunteer your time to help with an event
- Clean up your window displays—make it look inviting to customers
- A fresh coat of paint; clean awnings/windows/etc.
- Adopt an empty storefront ... just to name a few

We have great things to offer here in the Downtown. Let's FOCUS on what we have, how we can make it even better, and how in turn we can bring NEW business downtown that will also attract more customers for all. Do we have areas of concern? Yes, but we can tackle these together and work thru it.

So, rather than waiting to see what the Downtown Action Alliance will do, criticize what they don't do, or wonder why they even exist, come FIND OUT for yourself and BECOME an active part of it.

*Don't ask what the DAA can do for you, but ask what you can do for the Downtown!*

Muscatine's Downtown belongs to you..to all who shop and dine here, to those who work here, live here, and visit here. It's not just the business owners who benefit from a great Downtown...it's all of us! It's the heart and soul of our community, so why not make it the best it can be?

## We're all in this together!



Remember, the DAA is a volunteer organization and as such only functions as well as its' volunteers. Those currently volunteering give of their own time, talents, and energy to HELP YOU. But they need your help... Please LEND A HAND and volunteer so that EVERYONE WINS!!! It's about a community effort—the Muscatine community COMING together, WORKING together, and making things HAPPEN together-right here in the heart of it all!

### Design Committee:

Working in correlation with other committees to “clean up” empty storefronts. Coordinating efforts with the Cultural Alliance to place art work, and other attractive pieces in these windows.

Working on the Façade improvement program and other projects to improve the aesthetics of the Downtown.

### Business Improvement Committee:

This group is reviewing the Downtown Conceptual plan and Marketing analysis (both completed a few years ago) to determine the most effective next steps in a helping current businesses grow and to recruit new businesses to the downtown.

Working on a plan to encourage coordinated efforts by the DAA, the City of Muscatine, and the GMCCI in the development of Downtown

## **DAA Committee Updates:**

### Promotions Committee:

Meetings held each 2nd & 4th Thursday at Sweet Temptations (208 W. 2nd St.) 8:35AM. Welcome ALL!

- Assisted in the creation and maintaining the Website: **[www.muscatedowntown.com](http://www.muscatedowntown.com)**
- Encouraging DAA membership (annual to date you sign). Membership forms may be downloaded on the website under Alliance and then “Brochure.”
- Maintaining business database
- Provide Marketing support for DAA members & events
- Prepared and placed ads in The Showcase, River Cities Reader, and various summer sporting event brochures.
- Prepared and distributed packets to over 400 coaches and recruiters for the College Search Kick-off. Distributed over 2000 flyers promoting DAA members and other paid participating downtown businesses.
- Planning for October events/contests, the Holiday Open House and Holiday Stroll—we’d love your help!

## **Downtown Action Alliance Board**

### **Executive Board:**

#### **Chairman/President:**

Jim Nepple  
(Nepple Law)

#### **Vice President:**

Chris Foss  
(Round the Bend Music)

#### **Secretary/Treasurer:**

Melanie Alexander  
(History & Industry Center)

Board Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month at 8:00AM. These meetings are held at the History and Industry Center. All are invited and encouraged to attend.

### **Board Members:**

#### **Business Improvement Chair:**

Greg Jenkins (GMCCI)  
[gjenkins@muscatine.com](mailto:gjenkins@muscatine.com)

#### **Design Committee Chair:**

Tom Bankhead (Bankhead Associates)  
[tommyb@machlink.com](mailto:tommyb@machlink.com)

#### **Promotions Committee Chair:**

Dawnese Openshaw (Sweet Temptations)  
[dawnese@machlink.com](mailto:dawnese@machlink.com)

Elsa de la Paz (Mami’s)

Karen Dierks (Flower Gallery)

Kerry Keller (Party HQ/K&D Formal Wear)

Rich Klimes (Muscatine Parks and Rec)

Steve Kundel (Hintermeister and Kundel)

Ann Meeker (Downtown Developer)

Devin Petit (Historic Preservation)

\*A special thanks to those who give of their time and talents to help further the efforts of the DAA. Please lend them a hand in helping in the revitalizing of our great Downtown.