

**SPECIAL EVENTS**  
**MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 17, 2011**

**Present:** Elaine Baker, Mike Dougherty, Peggy Schneider, Don Gillette, Amanda Kennedy, Jim Reiley, Phyllis Revell, Heidi Eisert and Nancy Stisser.

**Absent:** Wayne and Jani Eichelkraut.

**Guests:** DeWayne Cronkright, president of the Downtown Merchants Association, and Donna Reynolds, treasurer of ODM.

**Minutes:** Minutes of the October 21 and November 18, 2010, meetings were approved as written.

**Request for Funds:**

- 1) \$500 for Midwest Morel Fest, May 6-7. Allocation designated to purchase insurance for the competition portion of the event.

Sponsored by City of Ottawa, Morel Mania Inc., and Heritage Harbor. Once a popular event in Magnolia, Ill., the mushroom-hunting contest wasn't held in 2009 or 2010. The Ottawa event begins on Friday with a guided hunt and sign-in. The actual 2-hour hunt will be held on Saturday, followed that afternoon by a mushroom auction and a ceremony awarding men and women who've collected the most mushrooms with trophies and cash prizes. The hunt will be limited to 440 hunters, who will be bused to sites outside Ottawa. The remainder of the event will be held in Washington Square. The auctioned mushrooms do not necessarily come from the hunt, but must be fresh-picked. Hunters pay entry fees, and auction sellers pay fees based on their winning bids.

- 2) \$500 for Ottawa 2 Rivers Wine & Jazz Festival, June 4-5. Allocation designated to create a website to promote the event, the first of its kind in town. Though the event occurs after the new fiscal year, the web site will be established in advance.

Sponsored by the city of Ottawa and the Illinois Grapegrowers and Vintners Association, the event will feature a wine-tasting, antique sale and live music and is expected by organizers to draw thousands of visitors. It will run approximately from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. on June 4 and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. June 5.

- 3) \$500 for the Illinois Valley Quilt Guild, toward sponsoring a nationally known speaker from New Hampshire in April.

The author would present a program one evening and a 6-hour workshop on quilting the next day. The event is expected draw quilters from around the region.

The guild had requested funds to help defray the speaker's travel expenses, accommodations or speaker fee, with the balance to be covered through existing funds and admission.

**Financial Report:**

The three funding allocations above were made from about \$2,000 in unallocated funds the committee has counting down to the end of its fiscal year. Expenditures for the year totaled \$33,967 for Cruise Night, July 4 celebration, Festival of Lights Parade, Scarecrow Festival, Music in the Park, Founders Day Picnic, Scouting Anniversary and Ice Odyssey.

**Spring Break Movie:**

Another \$3,900 had been allocated for a Spring Break Movie at the Roxy Cinemas, and the committee discussed whether and when to schedule a movie. Ottawa Elementary and Marquette Academy spring breaks are scheduled 3 weeks apart this year, and don't overlap. Nancy will call the districts to see if there is a shared holiday off outside of spring break, or whether a movie could be scheduled the Monday after Easter or on a Saturday if no mutual weekday can be found. She will report back to the committee.

**Ottawa Downtown Merchants:**

DeWayne Cronkright reported that the group sponsored three main events last year: Scarecrow Festival, Pumpkinpalooza (trick or treat) and Ice Odyssey. Pumpkinpalooza continues to grow in popularity. This year, the group will seek to expand the events and partner with the city on others. DeWayne said the Ottawa Visitors Center featured several ODM events on billboards, on its website calendar, and in regional and state calendars. Donna said the group relies on fund-raisers and corporate sponsorships, in addition to Special Events funding. A fund-raising pie auction raised \$4,500 to cover Ice Odyssey, and ODM hopes to expand the after-auction pie party, which alone raised nearly \$2,000.

**New Business:**

The city is exploring purchasing risers or a portable stage to replace the large stage used during Music in the Park. Pricing estimates are being obtained. Also regarding Music in the Park, Nancy reported she had received inquiries from two area bands that had not been part of the concert series before. The concert schedule and line-up will be determined this spring.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 17, at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Peggy Schneider.