



Making Barnesville A Better Place For All

By Michael Stein

The primary objective of Barnesville's Main Street program is to make the town a better place for its residents and businesses. Under the direction of Bailey Thompson, Main Street is a member-driven organization that has a presence in several community activities and improvement efforts.

The numbers are impressive: As of December 31, 2017, Main Street had 65 members and 51 "Friends of Main Street" organizations. It hosted 18 annual events and sponsored an additional 16 community programs. There were 34 committee members on five committees. About 1,100 volunteer hours were chalked up during the year—which is equivalent to \$26,602 based on the national value of each volunteer hour.

Communities similar in size to Barnesville may have one or two annual city-wide events, and that's it. Under the direction of the Main Street Program, Thompson points

out several events that remain successful year after year.

"For one we'll have our 25th community picnic this year," Thompson said. "We did our 25th Showcase event in 2017 and, of course, we'll do it again this year. Other events include the golf tournament, Miss Barnesville crowning at the community picnic, yard of the week, community rummage sales in May and September, and we'll have another Show 'n' Shine car cruise this summer."

For the holidays, there will be another turkey giveaway promotion and Miracle on Front Street with Santa. "This year we are looking at doing the first hour of the Santa event exclusively for children with special needs," Thompson said.

"We're always looking for ideas for new events," she added. "The first year I was here we had Toast of the Town, so we might consider bringing that back. We do look at

events that other communities have had success with. But that works both ways. Perham and Fergus Falls have started events like our Showcase, so it's cool to see other communities following us."

Main Street is stepping up its efforts to work with local businesses in 2018.

"We're always encouraging businesses to utilize Main Street's benefits and resources," Thompson said. "We're here to make Barnesville a better city in whatever way we can. And whether it's for local business or the community as a whole, we are there to help."

A healthy community engages residents and provides opportunities for involvement in community activities. "And there are many ways people can get involved and help with our local events."

On that note, a great way to become involved is through a new membership category called "Friends of Main Street."

We've had individual and couple's memberships," Thompson said. "The new Friends of Main Street level is along that same

line— somewhat different than the business and organization levels but equally important. We're asking people to consider donating \$20 to

our program. That comes with a pair of VIP tickets to the Community Picnic in July. Below are 10 reasons to become a Friend of Main Street:



The annual Barnesville Community Picnic is one of the many events under the direction of the Main Street program.



The semi-annual neighborhood rummage sales are planned for May and September.

10 Reasons For Becoming A Friend Of Main Street

10. Help drive the organization's mission of building relationships between residents and businesses
9. Support promotional events like the Miss Barnesville Pageant, Community Picnic, Toast of the Town, Show 'n Shine Car Shows, Rummage Sales, Golf Tournament, Miracle on Front Street activities
8. Your contribution helps fund enhancements to beautify our town, as well as to welcome visitors and new residents
7. Name recognition at several events and in publications throughout the year
6. Evidence that you support Barnesville's business community
5. A chance to say "I care about our community!"
4. Opportunities to network with other community members making new friends, and possible business connections for yourself
3. Improve and increase community spirit



2. Opportunities to volunteer for programs, services and events
1. Personal investment, satisfaction and pride that you help Barnesville grow and thrive



Show 'n' Shine will again be on Front Street this summer.

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