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By Yvonne Invergo April 14 at 8:24 a.m.



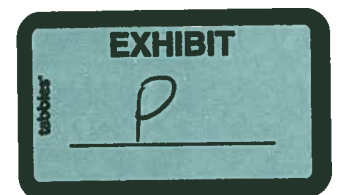
LOMBARD, Illinois – The Lombard Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Village of Lombard, with the support of Lombard Town Centre, will sponsor the 16th Annual Lilac Time Art & Craft Fair on Sunday, May 1, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. in downtown Lombard.

The fair is a rain/shine event which raises funds for Lombard area charitable organizations and is a family-oriented happening with crafters, food vendors, and a free Kid Zone! This is also a great opportunity to experience the downtown area and shops!

There will be entertainment on the main stage throughout the day with the group "A Capella Underground" singing at 11:00 AM, several local dance groups performing, a martial arts demonstration by Sky Centers, and the band "The Viaducts" at 2:30. There is also an opportunity to meet the newly crowned Lilac Queen and her court.

Be sure to attend the first Lombard outdoor festival of the season, as there will be something for everyone!

If you have any questions, please call the Chamber office at 630/627-5040.



Daily Herald

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Article updated: 5/9/2011 12:06 PM | published: 5/9/2011 12:01 AM

Lombard continues attracting restaurants, retail

By

Yorktown Center may put Lombard on the suburban shopping map, but there's more to business in the Lilac Village than national chains and department stores.

Small shops downtown, local retailers along commercial corridors, industrial uses, offices in business parks, and restaurants, restaurants, restaurants also contribute to Lombard's business landscape.

While each type of business has its challenges, property managers, business owners and village staff are beginning to see some positives.

Sixteen new businesses have received zoning certificates in 2011, according to Lombard's community development department.

Some strip centers along Roosevelt Road are improving their facades and filling vacancies, said Bill Heniff, director of community development. Existing retail stores are investing in "invisible" improvements, spending on interior elements such as heating and ventilation systems.

"Last year, even though we didn't see a lot of visible changes in the business community, we had a lot of changes happening," Village President Bill Mueller said.

These trends and changes combine to position Lombard as a community where businesses can prosper as the economy begins to recover.

"We're at least holding our own or, if not, seeing somewhat of an improvement," said Keith Giagnorio, a village trustee and owner of Gianorio's Pizza, 434 S. Main St. "We're even seeing a little bit of an uptick with my pizza business."

Lombard officials are working to fill vacancies, make downtown a destination, improve commercial corridors and continue supporting the successful restaurants and shopping customers have come to expect.

A combined 1.5 million square feet of office, retail and industrial space was vacant in Lombard in December, according to the community development department.

Not too many of those vacancies reside at Yorktown Center, where shopping space is 92 percent occupied — a pretty high percentage given the economic situation, said Lindsey Burke, marketing manager.

The mall, built in 1968, got a facelift in 2006 with the addition of a line of outdoor stores called the Shops on Butterfield and free-standing restaurants Claim Jumper, The Capital Grille and Rock Bottom Restaurant and Brewery, she said.

As of January, downtown Lombard had 19 vacant spaces. In an effort to fill and enliven the area, the village board in March approved a downtown plan for economic development, redevelopment of certain sites and improvements to

streetscapes, facades, signs and transportation.

"Economic development is much more than throwing money at a project," Heniff said.

It also involves forming partnerships with business owners, something Lombard Towne Centre, a mainly volunteer downtown promotion organization, strives to do.

Amy Madsen, owner of Night and Day Salon on St. Charles Road downtown, said these efforts have worked during her shop's first year, helping her make connections with other business owners and potential clients.

"I love being in a community where people are willing to work together," she said.

While efforts to improve downtown are often seen as Lombard's economic development focus, Heniff said upgrading the appearance of commercial corridors such as Roosevelt Road also is an important goal.

The challenge with Roosevelt Road, Heniff said, is public perception that it's nothing but rows of strip malls. Property owners are overcoming that perception by rebuilding facades and interiors to entice tenants, he said.

"A lot of retailers now are demanding lower rents and a lot of tenant improvements," said Tony Youshaei, owner of CP Management, which manages shopping centers across the suburbs, including locations on and near Roosevelt Road in Lombard.

To lure Sherwin-Williams into a vacant storefront, CP Management renovated the facade of the building at 743 E. Roosevelt Road, Youshaei said. That improvement started a trend, he said, as other tenants — Rosati's Pizza and Lover's Lane — also have renovations in the works.

And while interior renovations may not be as noticeable as new construction, they promote creative reuses of existing spaces and signal strong investment by retailers and restaurants, Heniff said.

"I think, for the most part, the businesses are doing well," said Yvonne Invergo, executive director of the Lombard Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "Particularly the Lombard restaurants are doing well, even though there's a lot of competition."

Mueller said he expects prosperity, build outs and new business recruitment to continue.

"Coming into this year, I'm just very positive about everything," Mueller said. "Business is good for Lombard; Lombard is good for business."

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May 15, 2011 @ 04:42 PM

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Bill Ackerman

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A waving hand and an umbrella protrude from a bus with members of the Lombard Town Centre. Rain dampens participation and viewing of the 2011 Lombard Lilac Parade, but those who came were prepared for the cold wet weather on Sunday, May 15, 2011. snapshots.mysuburbanlife.com/1248070

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New businesses boom in downtown Lombard

By Eleni Demertzis, edemertzis@mysuburbanlife.com

Lombard Spectator

Posted May 19, 2011 @ 02:11 PM

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Lombard, IL — In a recent change of pace, four new Lombard businesses have opened their doors in the downtown area.

"Each business that has located within the downtown area has a unique history and story to tell," village Community Development Director Bill Heniff said.

The following businesses have now filled some of the empty storefronts in downtown Lombard:

- Shannon's Corner Butcher Shoppe, 15 S. Park Ave.
- Dance It Again, 11 N. Main St.
- Blend Beauty and Redwall Photo, 6 S. Park Ave. (shared studio space)
- Cabinet Depot, 14 S. St. Charles Road

Karen Stonehouse, executive director of the Lombard Town Centre, is excited about the new openings in town.

"That's a big part of the reason of why I'm here," she said.

Stonehouse began working at the center nearly a year ago to promote prospective businesses wanting to make Lombard their home.

"People are seeing opportunities in the downtown now," she added.

There are still about eight to 10 vacancies throughout town, but Stonehouse has three to four prospective tenants for those openings.

Some are trying to decide which space might be easier to fit their needs, she said.

And in turn, the new businesses opening their doors are fulfilling a certain need in town.

"When they came into town and thought about opening a business, they all looked at what sort of business or store the village and the residents needed," Stonehouse said.

Heniff said a variety of factors have sparked these new openings, including favorable market conditions, entrepreneurship, village programs and ready spaces.

Residents can benefit from the creation of more local shopping opportunities, increased sales tax revenue to the village to pay for essential government services, new employment, reduced overall vacancy rates and adaptive re-use of existing historic buildings, Heniff added.

Shannon's Butcher Shoppe has re-opened in the former Clancy's location at 15 S. Park Ave. by owner Jennifer Shannon, who was involved in the initial Clancy's development.

"She is excited about re-establishing the business that was successful at that location and they hope to continue building on the favorable response received to date," Heniff said. "She is also planning to expand the business by adding a delicatessen, which may occupy a vacant tenant space immediately north of their storefront."

Heniff said he hopes these new businesses will bring other openings to town.

"Through resources provided by the village, as warranted, and with the assistance of the Lombard Town Centre, we are hopeful that other businesses that are also looking at downtown Lombard will move forward in the coming months," he said.

More online

For more information about the new businesses in town, check out the [Lombard Town Centre](#) website.

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Article updated 5/23/2011 12:41 PM

Lombard's Lilac Parade shines in rain

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ABOUT THIS ARTICLE

Despite cold temperatures and a light rain, Lombard's Lilac Parade still marched on with bands and floats.

Lilac Parade entries carried the theme "Cause for Celebration," and some of Lombard celebrated Lilac Time even though the weather felt more like March than May.

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Article updated: 7/7/2011 4:57 PM

Downtown Lombard getting new crosswalk

By Marie Wilson

An extra crosswalk is coming to downtown Lombard this construction season.

It won't be at a traffic signal where crosswalks traditionally are located, but many in Lombard say it could help create a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere along St. Charles Road.

Trustees voted 4-2 Thursday at a rescheduled village board meeting to install a designated walking area across St. Charles Road at its intersection with the southern section of Lincoln Avenue. Pedestrians will be able to cross as if Lincoln continued straight across St. Charles instead of jogging over to the west.

"People are going to cross there anyway," Karen Stonehouse, executive director of Lombard Town Centre said Wednesday before the vote. "They can either do it where there's some warning to motorists or not."

Drivers will be warned of the new path by a pedestrian crossing sign to be installed in the crosswalk, Carl Goldsmith, Lombard's public works director, said.

"We will make sure the crossing is as safe as we can at a noncontrolled intersection," Goldsmith said.

The crosswalk installation, estimated to cost \$25,000, also includes extension of curbs on both sides of St. Charles Road to shorten the walking distance, gutter and drainage improvements to control stormwater, brick pavers and asphalt stamping across St. Charles and other pavement markings, Goldsmith said.

Village President Bill Mueller said installing the crosswalk follows the village's downtown plan approved in March by making the area more welcoming to walkers.

"Part of the plan that we approved for downtown is to make it more pedestrian-friendly," Mueller said. "This is just to give pedestrians access to the businesses in downtown on both sides of the street without having to go to an intersection."

The crosswalk is adjacent the splash park water area, several stores and a condominium development. Trustee Greg Gron said it will benefit families who live north of downtown Lombard but want to visit the water area with their kids or do some shopping downtown.

And business advocates agree.

"I think it's important for businesses to have access for crossing the street as well as a safety issue," Dan Whittington, president of Lombard Town Centre, said.

Trustees Keith Giagnorio and Zachary Wilson voted against installing the crosswalk. Wilson said his vote represents the wishes of the committee he leads — the transportation and safety panel — which twice voted down the mid-block crossing.

According to a memo, the committee in June opposed the mid-block crossing in favor of encouraging pedestrians to cross at intersections with traffic signals.

mysuburbanlife.com

BENSENVILLE PRESS

Lombardian immersed in his community

By Sarah Small, ssmall@mysuburbanlife.com

Lombard Spectator

Posted Aug 04, 2011 @ 02:26 PM

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Lombard, IL — Dave Stapleton has lived in **Lombard** for about two years, and although he doesn't consider himself an expert on the town just yet, he's immersed himself in community development by volunteering at the **Lombard Town Centre**.

This organization is part of the **Main Street Program**, which is a nationwide initiative to redevelop and preserve the historic downtown districts in towns. Essentially, the program is to save Main Street, Stapleton said.

"I'm trying to get more involved and understanding the inner-workings of the town," he said. "I need to get involved in the community around me to have a greater sense of self-worth."

Although he grew up in the suburbs, Stapleton spent five years living and working in Virginia, before he and his wife, Margie, decided to return to Chicago. They were attracted to Lombard because of the laid-back atmosphere of the town and the affordable homes, he said.

One profound difference he's noticed between living in Lombard, compared to his last home in Virginia, is the sense of community in the town. Here, he said, he knows nearly all of his neighbors and appreciates the connections people forge with the town.

Motivated in part by this sense of community, Stapleton has invested his time as a volunteer with the Lombard Town Centre, and started educating himself about the factors and issues that influence development in the town. He can rattle off restaurant, bar and shopping recommendations, and knows the names and personalities of the people who work at these places.

"All I have to offer is time," he said "In no way am I a polished product. I'm trying to make the community recognize the good things we have here."

The Lombard Town Centre cooperates with local businesses to strengthen economic conditions and recruit new businesses for the town, it organizes and promotes special retail and marketing events and makes efforts to beautify the downtown.

"It's got to be us, the residents, to improve the town," he said. "Just don't think they're aware, hopefully people are more interested in taking control of their surroundings, not just for them, but for the whole community."

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VILLA PARK ARGUS

A night for the ladies

By Sarah Small, ssmall@mysuburbanlife.com

Suburban Life Publications

Posted Aug 25, 2011 @ 07:00 AM

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Lombard, IL — **Lombard Town Centre** is holding a Ladies Night Out event Thursday night from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at local restaurants and businesses throughout downtown Lombard.

Women can enjoy pampering and shopping specials at several locations throughout town.

Some businesses participating in the event are Bricks Wood Fired Pizza and Cafe, Capones Restaurant and Pizzeria, My Personal Touch Salon, Night and Day Salon, and several other locations.

All participants are invited to meet at Punky's Pub at 8 p.m. for an after-hours pizza party sponsored by Coldwell Banker.

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WOODDALEPRESS

Saucy Tales pub crawl deemed 'great time'

By Sarah Small, ssmall@mysuburbanlife.com

Lombard Spectator

Posted Sep 14, 2011 @ 12:00 PM

Recommend

2 people recommend this.
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Lombard, IL — Karen Stonehouse, executive director of the **Lombard Town Centre**, and Sarah Richardt, senior program director for the **Lombard Historical Society**, both called Friday's Saucy Tales pub crawl through downtown Lombard a good time.

It was a great night to be out in downtown Lombard and the event was a great fundraiser for both the Town Centre and the Historical Society, Stonehouse said.

The event sold 85 tickets, said Richardt, and both organizations received positive feedback from the participants.

"The bars were really happy, there was plenty of food and a lot of people are saying there should be two a year," Richardt said.

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Article updated: 9/14/2011 3:26 PM

Lombard's Prairie Days spotlights flatland ecosystem

By Marie Wilson

When the first settlers came to what's now the Chicago suburbs, every day was a prairie day.

Tall grasses and wildflowers were common coverings for the vast, flat landscape. And living among birds and native plants was a way of life.

The suburban landscape has changed, but Lombard still hearkens back to its prairie heritage each fall with the annual Prairie Days celebration from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 18.

The free event includes sights such as a bird show with hawks, eagles and owls, as well as a reptile show and a nature exhibit from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

"I like the idea of Prairie Days," Lombard resident Don Easterbrook said. "It gives the opportunity for a lot of people to come over and see different things."

And he recommends the reptile show, at 1 p.m., because it lets onlookers see and touch animals, including snakes, from the everyday to the exotic.

The festival's location — Terrace View Park on Greenfield Avenue two blocks west of Main Street — allows visitors to learn about prairie restoration the Lombard Garden Club will conduct on the park's south side, said Barbara Muzzey, a garden club member who organized Prairie Days.

"The focus on the Prairie Days is celebrating the prairie with what we've done, what we've restored," Muzzey said.

Since the 1990s, garden club members have volunteered to remove undesired plants from a marshy prairie area just south of Greenfield Avenue, Muzzey said. They're replacing the invasive plants with native ones like compass plant, yellow coneflower and black-eyed susans with the assistance of the Lombard Park District, said garden club member Lonnie Morris.

"One of our goals is to increase the biodiversity of existing areas," Morris said.

Live music, a dance show by Aspirations Dance Company, food from local restaurants and a bird house contest also will take place at Prairie Days.

Lombard Town Centre representatives will judge bird houses, offering prizes from downtown Lombard businesses.

Bird house builders of any age can make their creations before the festival and are encouraged to "incorporate natural or recycled materials, as judging is based on appearance, originality and sustainability," Muzzey said in a news release.

With its focus on a prairie's natural ecosystem, Prairie Days is an educational event, yet it remains fun and appropriate for children, Muzzey said.

"One of our goals is to educate people about native plants, and that's how Prairie Days came about," Morris said. "Most people don't know about native plants and we wanted to get the message out and encourage native plants as much as feasible into residential landscaping."

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Article updated: 10/13/2011 8:02 AM

Spooktacular draws families to downtown Lombard

By Marie Wilson

Downtown Lombard's annual Spooktacular Fall Festival will feature fall favorites like pumpkins, candy and scarecrows, and festival favorites such as cover bands, craft booths and food vendors.

But what will set this year's event apart is swords.

No, not the dangerous metal kind, but safe, padded swords used by students at Sky Centers Martial Arts, 112 W. St. Charles Road, Lombard. Between 150 and 200 Sky Centers students will demonstrate swordplay onstage at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 16.

Other kids who attend the festival will get the chance to don helmets and safety gear to learn sword skills by sparring against instructors, said George "Master Sky" Matejovsky, founder of Sky Centers.

"They're able to swing around, learn some skills, have fun in a safe environment," Matejovsky said. "It's going to be a good time."

The festival runs noon to 6 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 16, at St. Charles Road and Park Avenue in downtown Lombard. It's meant to give families a fun way to spend an afternoon and draw crowds to the downtown area, said Lynne Magnavite, a Lombard resident who volunteers with Lombard Town Centre, the organization that runs Spooktacular.

Sky Centers decided to plan its semiannual open house to coincide with the festival.

"Because we are so involved with Lombard Town Centre and the downtown area, we decided it would be a good time to do an open house," Matejovsky said.

And though the event takes place on a Sunday, several businesses will be open, including Shannon's Corner Butcher Shoppe, 15 S. Park Ave., and Morning Star Books and Gifts, 28 W. St. Charles Road, Magnavite said. Kids can trick-or-treat and play games between noon and 3 p.m. inside the businesses that are open.

"We want to encourage that kind of participation so it's more of a community event to show off the great stuff that we've got going on," Magnavite said.

A scarecrow-building contest, a climbing wall and a spooky science booth from Glenbard East High School are other highlights of the festival. Science enthusiasts also can watch Glenbard East teachers Marisa Abrams and Barbara Zebrowski put on a chemistry magic show at 3 p.m.

"This is the third year that Glenbard East High School has participated in the Lombard Spooktacular, and we host a booth with some make-and-take spooky science experiments," Abrams said.

The booth will be open from noon to 4 p.m., allowing visitors to watch "gooey worms" go from liquid to solid before their eyes, Abrams said.



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Article updated: 10/16/2011 6:41 PM

Halloween comes early to Lombard

By

Halloween came to Lombard a couple of weeks early on Sunday with the annual Spooktacular Fall Festival in the village's downtown area.

Children dressed as superheroes, princesses and cute, furry animals trekked from business to business on Sunday, getting a head start on their trick-or-treating. Others tried to conquer the climbing wall or tame a bucking bull (actually, it was a padded saddle pulled to and fro by volunteers).

It was all part of the daylong festival designed to shine a positive light on downtown Lombard. The event was presented by the Lombard Town Centre community organization.

"I hope the rain this morning doesn't scare people away, because it's good to come out to community events like this," said resident Sondra Callahan as she arrived shortly after noon.

Callahan's 5-year-old son, Gene, walked beside her, looking powerful in his Spider-Man costume.

"And I know my son will love it," she added.

Karen and Miles Kehoe brought their twin 4-year-old daughters, Taylor and Eliza, to the fest. Both wore costumes inspired by some of the more colorful members of the insect world; Taylor was a ladybug and Eliza was a butterfly.

"They've been begging to wear these costumes since we got them a week ago," Karen Kehoe said. "There was no way we could pass this opportunity up."

Karen said she and her husband did establish clear rules about the trick-or-treating, though.

"They'll be getting an insane amount of candy on Halloween weekend, so we said they can only go to a couple places today, as a treat," she said. "We'll see if we're able to stick to that."

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