From Main Street to your street, the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota is working hard to empower communities to connect with, and protect their historic places.

Please help us to continue to do this important work for communities across Minnesota by making a donation today!

Visit MNPRESERVATION.ORG for easy secure processing, or use the enclosed envelope to send in your contribution.

The Preservation Alliance of Minnesota is a nonprofit organization, and we rely on donations in any amount to fulfill our mission. We appreciate your contribution, and your donation is 100% tax deductible.
Our staff voted, did yours? Head to pg. 24 to view the results of the first ever PAM MN Legislative Candidate Survey.

Our 2018 Benefit Gala and Minnesota Preservation Awards took place on October 11th. Turn to pg. 6 to read about the outstanding projects recognized at the event.

Three Above: Hello, Winona! See all the Upper Mississippi Main Street Conference highlights on pg. 18.

Above and Left: The Artists on Main Street Program has a big announcement on pg. 20!

Above and Right: Our Education Services had a great year - check out our 2018 recap on pg. 5.

Right: Thank you to all of our Board Members! (Not all pictured)

Right and Above: See what our Main Street Communities have been up to on pg. 16.

This year, the PAM Education Services TRIPLED the number of people we reached two years ago. Our program is expanding and diversifying, thanks to your support!

Where We’ve Been
We traveled to Duluth, Little Falls, St. Cloud, Virginia, Mankato, Northfield, and Rochester. And in the Twin Cities, dozens of homeowners and partner organizations hosted classes and tours.

What We’ve Done
We hosted talks on identifying wood types, energy efficiency in older homes, midcentury architecture, and engagement strategies for community advocates. We repaired windows in a turn-of-the-century home in St. Cloud’s Southside Neighborhood Historic District, and patched plaster cracks in a 1915 bungalow in St. Paul’s Midway neighborhood.

New Partnerships
We forged new partnerships with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Linden Hill Historical Event Center, Northfield Arts Guild, and Clarence H. Johnston Society.

Our most memorable venues include the Lyric Center for the Arts in Virginia, Waldmann Brewery & Wurstery, Linden Hill in Little Falls, and the Skyway system of Minneapolis. We repaired windows in a turn-of-the-century home in St. Cloud’s Southside Neighborhood Historic District and patched plaster cracks in a 1915 bungalow in St. Paul’s Midway neighborhood. One of the biggest hits was Beyond the Pint, a tour of the brewing industry along West Seventh in St. Paul. We got a behind-the-scenes tour at the Schmidt Brewery complex, including the historic Rathskeller, soon to be an event space!

Looking ahead to 2019
We’ll be on the road a bunch, offering homeowner education to all corners of the state. We’re bringing new expert instructors into the fold and developing fresh classes on basic home maintenance and heating & cooling systems! Keep an eye on our emails, website, and social media for schedule updates. See you in class!

- Rehab Lab: Repairing Old Windows
  South Minneapolis

- What’s That House?
  Architectural Styles of Minnesota — 2 CE credits
  Keller Williams Premier Realty, Wayzata

- Home Sweet Home: Maintenance & Rehab 101
  St. Paul

- Rotted Wood Repair
  Fridley

Education

YEAR in REVIEW

By the Numbers

40 classes
talks
tours

800 students

31 counties

mnpreservation.org 5
The Minnesota Preservation Awards were presented at the 2018 Benefit Gala on October 11 at The Saint Paul Athletic Club. Help us continue the celebration of all the well deserved winners.
This year’s Presidents Award recognizes a person who is one of the leading voices in favor of preservation at the State Capitol. David Senjem is a Republican who represents Rochester and portions of Olmsted and Dodge counties. He has had a long career in public service, having been a member of the Olmsted County Environmental Commission, a Park Board member, and an 11-year member of the Rochester City Council before he was elected to the Minnesota Senate in 2002. As a long-standing member and current chairman of the Senate Capitol Investment Committee, Senator Senjem has crafted bills that have directed billions of dollars towards the preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings, sites, and structures all across the state.

From university buildings to landmark bridges to the hallways, chambers, and marble exterior of the State Capitol building itself, Senator Senjem’s skillful hand as a negotiator and advocate is evident in these renovated historic places. Senator Senjem also helps ensure the thoughtful and respectful management of the restored Capitol building as a member of the Minnesota State Capitol Preservation Commission and the Minnesota Capitol Art Subcommittee.

Senator Senjem has been a strong proponent of the Minnesota Historic Structure Rehabilitation Tax Credit since its initial passage in 2010. He has authored bills to extend the credit’s sunset date, and is justifiably proud of the economic impact that the rehabilitation tax credit has generated over the past eight years. During this time, the state historic tax credit has helped save over one hundred and underutilized buildings, and has created almost 13,000 jobs, for a total of over $745 million in labor income. All told, the economic impact of private rehabilitation projects completed using the state historic tax credit tops $2.2 billion dollars.

Senator Senjem considers his efforts on behalf of preservation to be all in a day’s work. But it is his dedication to serving the interests of the people he represents – and his belief that historic places have value to ALL Minnesotans – that makes him so effective. As Senator Senjem has said, “These are irreplaceable structures and they tell us so much about ourselves. What really matters is that we try to work in a reasonable and thoughtful way towards preserving our past.” Senator Senjem is a true preservation champion, which is why we are pleased to honor him with this year’s Presidents Award.
Whenever we think of Anders Christensen, we think of his optimism, passion, his craftmanship, entrepreneurship; his inquisitiveness, and generally, just his joy of life. Anders gets to go to work every day at his Minneapolis-based company, TigerOx Painting, specializing in painting, plaster repair, paper hanging, and other finishing trades.

Anders knows how crucial it is to pass on his knowledge of the trades to future generations. In the last few years, Anders has shared his decades of experience and knowledge with participants in PAM's hands-on classes. And as if that weren't enough, Anders is a regular donor to our organization and has always given back his instructor fee as a donation to PAM. We never asked for this. He doesn't have to do it. He does it because he believes in what he does, and what we do.

Honestly, Anders is our go-to instructor for our Rehab Labs. At these hands-on classes, Anders equips homeowners with the skills and confidence to tackle repair projects on their own. Beyond plaster techniques and painting tips, Anders empowers students to take pride in their homes, to appreciate their beauty, and to recognize their unique character.

He is committed to the notion that every home contains a wealth of stories and is worthy of quality craftsmanship. He has led Rehab Labs all over the metro and the reviews of his classes are always glowing. One review that stands out, a student mentioned they would take any class we hosted, as long as Anders taught it. We can't ask for more than that! Anders is also the founder of the Healy Project, a nonprofit dedicated to sharing the architectural legacy of Minneapolis master builder T. P. Healy. He has dedicated countless hours to research and education about Healy and it has resulted in growing community pride. Anders sees more than the architectural gems in the neighborhood, he sees the people and the places and the possibilities. We are lucky to count Anders among our treasured supporters and PAM family.

Executive Director’s Award
Anders Christensen

“Our old buildings, our historic buildings, are our inheritance. And if we received an inheritance of money from an ancestor, who would throw it away? Buildings are no different.”
Impact Awards

The Impact Awards are all about community vitality. Each Impact Award made a distinct difference in the pride and prosperity of our community. These award winners are proactive and say ‘yes’ to challenging projects that have an extraordinary impact on our communities and state.

Maytag Building
Minneapolis, MN

The commitment and confidence to see the possibilities in this early 20th century building took a tremendous amount of creativity. This 13 million-dollar restoration effort was filled with questions to be answered and attention to detail. No detail was spared, whether it was the double hung windows that were either restored or meticulously replicated, or to the fact they spent a year looking for just ten specific bricks. Their hard work paid off; the street facing space on the first floor now houses a popular restaurant, Nolo’s, and the upper floors are all occupied by offices. Using a commitment to detail and with the help of the state historic tax credit, the Maytag Building is a success for all involved.

Stakeholders include: AWH Architects; Saturday Properties; Frana; MBJ; Scott Petersen Construction; American Masonry; Midwest Window; Rebel Electric; Kone; Bridgewater Bank; Forterra Capital; Winthrop & Weinstine

Reuse of Building 222 at Historic Fort Snelling
Saint Paul, MN

The restoration of Building 222 at Historic Fort Snelling, undertaken by the US Department of Veterans Affairs, is a model in adaptive re-use. They faced a significant challenge; how to bring the building up to code and keep the community happy, while at the same time not disturbing that community or sacrificing the historical character? In the end, using careful consultation, they succeeded. Now a cutting-edge medical center that helps patients all over the country, the re-use of Building 222 is a demonstration of how the past can exist side-by-side with present day needs.

Stakeholders include: Minneapolis VA Health Care System; Anderson Engineering; 106 Group
Millworks Lofts
Minneapolis, MN

The Millworks Lofts is the last building left from Minneapolis’ thriving millwork industry of the early to mid-20th century. While it no longer processes lumber, it now serves people as affordable housing. Working to preserve the building (which is on the National Register of Historic Places) the project team preserved the historic character of not just the building, but the neighborhood, while at the same time adding modern amenities such as renewable geothermal energy. The result is 78 units of affordable housing, all occupied shortly after development was completed. With a commitment to history and the environment, Millworks Lofts is proof of how reuse isn’t a niche interest, but instead proof that it can serve not just the public need, but the public good as well.

Stakeholders include: Dominiun; Weis Builders; BKV Group; MacRostie Historic Advisors; City of Minneapolis; Loucks; Braun Intertec; Associated Mechanical Contractors; RT Moore Mechanical; Medina Electric, Inc; Schindler Elevator; Central Roofing Company; Advanced Masonry Restoration; Wiss Janney Elstner; Pella Midwest Window & Door; Crawford Door Sales Company; Braxton & Sons, Inc.; Central Sheet Metal; Cedar Ridge Landscaping; D&M Industries; Design Sign Systems, Inc.; North Country Concrete, Inc.; Winthrop & Weinstine

NorShore Theatre
Duluth, MN

Beginning life as an Opheum in 1910, the NorShor Theatre had been attacked by time for a decades-long span, falling into dereliction until the city of Duluth acquired the property. Working with Sherman Associates, they began a focused, dedicated, and challenging effort to restoring the building, from repointing the bricks to reopening the balcony. It was a Herculean effort, taking 31 million dollars, two mayoral administrations, the state historic tax credits, and almost 20 years from the genesis of the project until opening. It did not disappoint. Now, with its modern amenities, new features including a wine bar and classrooms, the NorShor Theatre, a Duluth community treasure, has attracted national attention, and has been restored not just to its former glory, but made even better than before.

Stakeholders include: Sherman Associates; Duluth Playhouse; City of Duluth; DLR Group; TKDA – Duluth; Johnson Wilson Constructors; Hess, Rosie and Company; BMO Harris; Chase Bank; LISC; Winthrop & Weinstine
Honor Awards

The Honor Awards exemplify the first part of our mission, “to lead and inspire people to connect with historic places.” The honor awardees activated spaces in entrepreneurial and creative ways.

Gambles Restoration
Wabasha, MN

“We’re gonna fix her.” That was the goal and mantra of the father-son team of James and Gary Schmitt regarding Gambles, the hardware store that has been in their family for 65 years, and of Jim and Jeff Roemer, their contractors. And fix her they have. They replaced the original storefront, completed extensive stone repair and window replacement, rebuilt the roof, and potentially the most ambitious element, replacing the steel plate that held their front brick in place. Without it, it would create a potentially catastrophic safety issue. Over two generations, Gambles has stood, and will continue to stand.

Stakeholders include: Gary J. Schmitt, Jeff Roemer, City of Wabasha, HPC, Wabasha Main Street

Carnegie Arts Center
Mankato, MN

A location in a prominent children’s book series, and on the National Register of Historic Places, the Carnegie Art Center’s restoration was a community project made possible thanks to matching grants of a quarter of a million dollars by two Mankato families, one of whom had been a volunteer whose work was exhibited at the art center. The restoration work has revealed the Art Center’s vision as its builders originally intended, with damaging vines removed, a new mortar set, and a new metal capstone. With this restoration, the building now literally glows in the sunlight like it did in 1902. It reflects the words Andrew Carnegie insisted be on the recently uncovered cornerstone - let there be light.

Stakeholders include: Mankato Area Arts Coalition; Brunton Architects & Engineers; Brennan Construction
Waldmann Brewery & Wurstery
Saint Paul, MN

The restoration and reestablishment of Waldmann Brewery & Wurstery is a story of determination, attention to detail, and community engagement. After years of planning and dreaming, proprietor Tom Schroeder and his team of historians, archaeologists, architects, carpenters, and contractors began restoring the pre-Civil War limestone building in 2012. The property was designated as a Heritage Preservation Site by the City of Saint Paul in 2015. The team went through 13 total public hearings to make this project happen. At every step, neighbors, fellow business owners, and friends were present to demonstrate their support. Now open for just over a year, Waldmann regularly hosts tours, lectures, music, and private events, including several programs in partnership with PAM. Waldmann invites you to get a taste of the city’s German immigrant roots, learn about the area’s commercial and cultural history, and see how one person’s passion project became a neighborhood hub.

Stakeholders include: Yust Architectural Services; Pelco Construction, LLC; Tom Dengler, Two World Woodworking, LLC; Fred Livesay; Building Restoration Corporation; Rippe & Associates; Align Structural; Vogel Mechanical; Lakeridge Electric; Neeck Construction; Greg Bemis Masonry, Bob Frame, and Midke Madsen, Meade & Hunt, Jim Szecich, Richard Miller, David Christofferson, Christine Bouleware, Paul Schmidt, Greg Donofrio, Anthony Rodriguez, Myron Hanson, Tom Latane, Julie Scherer, Robert & Evangeline Schroeder, The entire Yust Family, and many, many good friends and West 7th neighbors.

EMERGE Career & Technology Center
Minneapolis, MN

This is a story of perseverance. EMERGE Community Development spent 7 years renovating the long-closed North Branch Library building on Emerson Avenue North, into the EMERGE Career & Technology Center (ECTC), creating an essential and vibrant community space in North Minneapolis. The Center opened to the public in 2015, and serves as the agency’s headquarters. Each year EMERGE serves nearly 2,000 youth and adults offering job coaching, career training, financial education, adult education, digital literacy, hosting hiring fairs, providing foundational employment skill trainings, and one-on-one job coaching. The EMERGE Career & Technology Center has two dedicated training classrooms and a computer lab that is open to the public five days per week, hosting countless events, partnership gatherings, and community prosperity.

Stakeholders include: Emerge Community Development; Paul Gates Architect, MacDonald & Mack Architects, Ltd; Watson-Forsberg Co.; Lisa Kugler; Mattson McDonald Young; Ericksen Ellison & Associates; Lightspaces; Target Commercial Interiors; Faegre Baker Daniels; Twin Cities LISC
From 1993 to 2003, homeowners in Minnesota could receive a tax break for rehabbing their old houses. Technically called a “property tax valuation exclusion,” the “This Old House” program allowed for certain improvements to older homestead property to be fully or partially excluded from the value assessed for property taxes. Enacted in 1993 and tweaked once through amending legislation in 1999, the policy was designed to provide owners of older homes with an incentive to renovate them, thereby preserving and revitalizing older neighborhoods.

To qualify, houses had to be at least 45 years old and assessed at no more than $400,000. The eligible work had to increase the value of the property by at least $5,000, as determined by the county tax assessor. The maximum value of the exclusion was $50,000 for houses older than 75 years and $25,000 for houses between 45 and 69 years old. Qualifying work included remodeling or upgrading existing buildings, adding a deck or porch, construction of a one- or two-car garage, and additions, as long as they weren’t larger than the original house itself. At least 50% of the original structure had to remain intact for the project to qualify. In the case of an owner-occupied duplex or triplex, the improvement was eligible regardless of which portion of the property was improved. Houses moved or relocated to a new site were eligible beyond the basic expenses of relocation. The property tax that would have been assessed for the resulting increase in value was held off for 10 years, and then phased back in to its full assessed amount over 2-5 years, depending on the value of the improvement. The dollar amount of this tax credit varied widely from property to property and from county to county, based as it was on individual circumstances. But regardless, This Old House seems to have been a popular program. At the time that it expired, about 57,000 homeowners had used the program, and qualifying projects could be found in all but one of Minnesota’s 87 counties. In the final year of the program, the statewide total of all excluded value due to old home improvements was about $700 million.

This Old House has been reintroduced several times since the original legislation sunsets in 2003 but has failed to pass the Minnesota Legislature. Recent versions of the bill have added a provision for smaller commercial buildings called This Old Shop. In 2017, PAM testified in favor of the This Old House/This Old Shop bill introduced by Rep. Cheryl Youakim (DFL, Hopkins). The League of Minnesota Cities has also supported this policy proposal.

From our perspective, there’s no question that old houses – and old-house owners – deserve a break.

Contact us to share your ideas and experiences as we work towards solutions.
stock – stability, beauty, affordability, smaller carbon footprint, jobs creation – are worth investing in as statewide policy. But is This Old House really the best way to incentivize home rehab activity and to achieve these goals? Program reports indicate that, while This Old House was used statewide and the majority of projects were relatively modest in scale and value, Hennepin County residents benefited the most from the program. There were 15,438 qualifying projects in Hennepin County, compared with 5,160 projects in Ramsey County and just over 4,000 projects in St Louis County. But the program truly was statewide, with 57% of the projects taking place outside of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Dakota, Otter Tail, Stearns, Mower, and Blue Earth counties all had high rates of participation.

Recently, PAM submitted a policy proposal to the Homes for All coalition suggesting reinstatement of This Old House. The proposal was met with some skepticism by this diverse group of affordable housing advocates, though. Frankly, we share some of their concerns. Given the statistics of use and value, it appears that the end result of This Old House was to concentrate wealth in areas where home rehab and improvements were likely to happen anyway, resulting in a state subsidy for property owners in neighborhoods with stable (or rapidly escalating) property values. As the actual value of a This Old House property tax break was a fraction of the actual dollar amount invested, it may have primarily benefitted homeowners who already had access to the capital – or home equity – required to undertake their projects. Rather than stabilize and retain affordable housing options in aging, distressed neighborhoods, This Old House might have simply served as a bonus for already well-off homeowners. So, is there another way? Could we develop a policy that is responsive to the rehabilitation needs of Minnesota’s communities – in our core, aging cities as well as throughout Greater Minnesota? As a society, we can’t afford to replace all of the housing units that are now provided by aging and deteriorating buildings. Other states allow municipalities to determine their own incentives for historic home rehab. The city of San Antonio, Texas has a robust program to aid property owners in the city’s designated historic districts, including city tax breaks for qualifying projects and property tax freezes for stable residents of newly created historic districts (without qualifying rehabilitation work). Recognizing the risk of gentrification and displacement that often accompanies rehabilitation work, San Antonio also offers long-term tax breaks to landlords who retain affordable housing units in their rehabilitated properties. Qualifying improvements must extend the life of the building, such as roof, foundation, structural, and siding work. Interior improvements must demonstrate that they also address needed repairs or upgrades in electrical, plumbing, and HVAC systems. As Minnesota continues to grapple with the growing need for affordable housing, as well as the aging housing stock in communities statewide, it is imperative that we put our heads together to come up with incentives to maintain older homes.
Keynote speakers Paul Jordan, CEO of the Portage Partnership in Winnipeg, Canada, and Jim Peters, Founder of the Responsible Hospitality Institute, shared their insights on creating thriving economies, respectively.

Jordan began by sharing his memories of visiting Winona in the 1970s during a Mississippi River rafting excursion before discussing how he’s helped transform the Forks, a former railyard, into a major community asset through placemaking and reframing water. Peters closed the conference by talking about ways small communities can help reignite their nighttime economies by creating active spaces where people want to be.

This past October, the Preservation Alliance and Winona Main Street hosted the Upper Mississippi Main Street Conference, a semi-annual event bringing together leaders in downtown and historic commercial district revitalization from across the upper Midwest. The conference highlighted strategies for year-round, 24/7 downtown activation. UMMSC was hosted in partnership with Wisconsin Main Street and Iowa Main Street in Winona.

To see the full album from the UMMSC, head to mnpreservation.org/services/mainstreet.
The Preservation Alliance would like to sincerely thank Winona Main Street, the City of Winona, and the Winona County Historical Society, and the Minnesota Marine Art Museum for hosting this year’s Upper Mississippi Main Street Conference, and Iowa and Wisconsin Main Streets for providing key additional support.

In between keynote speakers, conference attendees participated in a range of sessions, tours, and roundtable discussions. Sessions ranged from a tour of Winona’s newly renovated Levee Park, a hands-on creative placemaking activity, and a deep-dive into marketing and sponsorship for Main Street programs.
The 2018 Partners in Preservation: Main Streets campaign invited the public to #VoteYourMainStreet to decide which historic sites along 20 of America’s favorite Main Streets should receive $2 million in preservation funding from American Express. The campaign ran from September 24th to October 26th.

Our Minnesota Main Street Communities didn’t make it to the final vote, but we decided to join in on the fun and celebrate each community throughout the duration of the contest on social media.

Make sure to follow us on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to stay up to date on all things PAM, and follow our Main Street communities below!

@Faribault, one of our Artists on Main Street communities, launched their new project, The Virtues Trail, this summer. The trail has 10 posts with 20 different virtues, engraved on stainless steel material, in 3 different languages, English, Somali, and Spanish. The response to taking calculated steps in bridging the cultural divide, in what was once a nearly all-white Southern Minnesota city, is overwhelmingly positive and celebrated. It seems like now, more than ever, these projects are vital in strengthening our communities and our spirits as a whole.

@visitmankatoom is not only a designated Main Street, they are also part of our Artists on Main Street initiative with @springboardarts and The Bush Foundation! One of their projects that took place over the summer, All for One, was the inspiration for re-imagining PAM’s Benefit Gala to be available to anyone, anywhere.

Known as the “City of Festivals,” @newulm is rich with German history - and German brews. Although most of their Oktoberfest activities have passed, their holiday line-up isn’t one you’ll want to miss! Head to their website to check out more info.

@visit_northfield had a ton of exciting fall events, including a cemetery tour of famous Northfielders for Halloween. Head to their website to see what they have planned for the holidays!

Who made it out to the Steele County Free Fair this year in @visitowatonna?! The Fair is the largest county fair in Minnesota, and hosts thousands of people every year. We can’t wait for next year’s theme - Summer Days, Carnival Lights, August 13-18, 2019!
Ah, beautiful Red Wing. Head to their website to read more about their impact on the state and learn about their Main Street approach. Their holiday season is also one you won’t want to miss.

@visitshakopee is home to some of Minnesota’s favorite events and entertainment destinations like the Renaissance Festival and @canterbury park.

Wabasha is one of our Main Street’s that is steeped in Native American history. They were in the running for Minnesota Monthly’s Best Town of 2018!

Join us in wishing a belated Happy 3rd Anniversary to the FoxHole Brew-house! The @foxholebrewhouse is located in our 9th Main Street - @cityofwillmar!

Thank you to @winonamn-mainstreet for hosting the Upper Mississippi Main Street Conference! It was filled with wonderful sessions and discussions about the Main Street Program across the country.

To learn how to become a Designated or Network Community, head to mnpreservation.org/mainstreet.

MAIN STREET NETWORKS

★ Designated Minnesota Main Street Communities
Faribault • Mankato • New Ulm • Northfield
• Owatonna • Red Wing
Shakopee • Wabasha • Willmar • Winona

Network Communities
Granite Falls • Kasson • Hastings • Litchfield • Luverne • Olivia
Montgomery • Sauk Centre • Sleepy Eye • Crookston • Fergus Falls
The Preservation Alliance of Minnesota (PAM) in partnership with Springboard for the Arts, and with support from the Bush Foundation, launched a new program earlier this year, Artists on Main Street, to explore how the arts help address the challenges affecting Main Street communities today. The pilot year’s success in Faribault, Mankato, and Winona has resulted in continued investment in the program by the Bush Foundation to include eleven communities over a three-year period. Four communities were selected to join the program in 2019.

“The Bush Foundation is very excited to be able to support Artists on Main Street through PAM’s Main Street Program. We see this as a great opportunity to support artists as leaders in their communities and to show how art and culture can be an important part of efforts led by local Main Street programs, Cities, Economic Development Authorities, and Chambers of Commerce throughout the region.” - Erik Takeshita, Portfolio Director for Community Creativity at the Foundation.
Jovy Rockey has been in Winona for about 10 years now, and she’s long had a vision of finding space downtown for her jewelry business. A few months ago, she made her vision a reality, opening up a gallery and studio in the heart of the downtown. For the past few years, she’s been working in a basement studio in her home, going to art fairs, and building connections with other local artists. Other galleries have come and gone in Winona, but she’s always felt she could bring something unique to the table and fill a niche.

It’s clear that Jovy sees that art and creativity are deeply important for a thriving community, but a vibrant arts scene isn’t something that happens by accident. She recognizes how important it is to build momentum, so she opened her gallery intending to make it more than a gallery. She designed it with a collaborative approach in mind, hoping to provide the spark of momentum and deepen her impact on Winona’s art scene.

Her space on 3rd Street includes a small studio space and a larger gallery filled with jewelry she’s made and other art from local creatives. She’s started hosting monthly “Maker Meet-Ups”—events for Winona creatives to connect, talk shop, and build the connections essential for a vibrant arts scene. Jovy wants people to feel welcome and comfortable asking for advice; she sees her space as a hub for that. She’ll host pop-up shops with other artists, even if they don’t have art at her gallery, and provide wine and snacks. A new coworking space is opening up next door, and she’s been talking with the owner about how to collaborate and bring more creatives into the offices.

When Jovy heard about Artists on Main Street through Facebook, she hadn’t yet opened up her gallery, but it deepened her conviction about doing so. “The Third Space grant got me really fired up. I’m not going to lie,” she enthusiastically said. All of a sudden, there was a resurgence in excitement about looking at downtown for her gallery, and she felt even more confident that downtown was the place she wanted to be. Though she was too busy with opening her own location to apply for a grant, Artists on Main Street wound up achieving exactly the effect she anticipated—and then some. By pure coincidence, her gallery opened the same day as Shut Down 3rd Street, the block party in downtown Winona funded by Artists on Main Street. She was a sponsor for the event, and had over 200 people walk through her doors that first day.

Jovy is unsurprisingly optimistic about the future of downtown Winona, and her positive outlook is contagious. Artists on Main Street and her gallery have a multiplier effect, building off each other’s energy, and leaving a powerful impression in people’s minds. That can inspire people to get more involved, much like how Artists on Main Street inspired her. “There’s so much potential in Winona. It’s hard for people to jump into the unknown, but hopefully, we’re making that a little easier to do.”

“T’ve pictured something like this in Winona for a long time.”

Top: Exterior of Jovy Rockey Jewelry on 3rd Street in Winona, MN.
Bottom: Interior of Jovy Rockey Jewelry.
Photos by Jovy Rockey
Whenever Dee Bjork visits another community, her hometown of Faribault immediately comes to mind. Her reaction isn’t one of jealousy or envy, but gratitude. “We have an amazing downtown,” she said. “I’m always in awe of Faribault. For what we have, given our size. It’s remarkable.”

Dee and her sisters are a big part of that. They’ve dubbed themselves the Renegade Gardeners because they’ve taken over a couple of derelict spaces in Faribault—dumping grounds for junk and tires—and landscaped them into vibrant ones. They see potential where others don’t and take the initiative to make their vision a reality.

Maintaining these garden takes a lot of work, and they hope to eventually turn over the maintenance responsibilities to business owners. Until then, it’s not unusual to find a neighbor or friend who’s cleaning it up. The Second Street garden is their second project, and when they heard there were financial resources through Artists on Main Street, they were eager to apply and get involved.

Dee is the coordinator and generator of ideas. She provided the vision for the project and worked with her sisters and other community members to enact it. Artists on Main Street provided the final spark, providing the funds to help push the ideal project to completion. Much of the garden itself had already been planted, but they used the money to make the space go further. Dee used the money to create a series of colored panels, collaborating with a local artist in town. Her sister, Beth, used a separate grant to create some metal work using found-objects. Beth fell ill during the project, but was still determined to complete her creations. Although she passed away before she could see it through, her sisters took on the mission of finishing Beth’s work.

In so many ways, the Second Street Garden is a space whose current meaning extends far beyond its original one. Dee and her sisters have taken the vacant space and imprinted deep layers of significance. “When I drive by, I’m overwhelmed—I never imagined what we’d be able to do in this little space.” Dee’s always excited to see people who live in the new nearby apartment building using the garden. She’s always wanted it to be a welcoming space where people can spend time. But to her personally, the garden is a memorial and living testament to her sister, Beth. “We’re proud to see where her hands worked. Her memory will always be there.”
As Artists on Main Street ends its first year, the participating communities are already starting to see the ripple effects from the increased investment in small-scale creative placemaking. Community members have been inspired by the ethos of Artists on Main Street and have decided to implement their own projects, independent of the original grant. Noelle Lawton, Director of the Twin Rivers Council for the Arts, heard about Artists on Main Street through Mankato’s Main Street Director, Megan Flanagan. Twin Rivers didn’t take a lead role, but they helped connect their artists to the funding opportunities provided by the initiative. Lawton was nonetheless taken by the notion that you don’t need to identify as an artist to make art—or an impact. “You could just be a concerned citizen who sees a need and asks, ‘how can I apply a creative solution to this need?’”, she said.

Every day she came to work, she encountered a group of low-income and homeless individuals smoking in the parking lot Twin Rivers shared with a church. Artists on Main Street caused her to consider how she could make them feel more welcome using creative placemaking. She decided a parklet would activate the underutilized space and achieve her goal. When a few members from a local business called asking if Twin Rivers had a project they could volunteer for, she knew she had a few extra hands to help. At first, they were skeptical by her ambition and lack of budget. But Lawton, determined to make the vision a reality, convinced them that they’d manage. She started engaging the people who used the parking lot to figure out what their needs and interests were for this space, ensuring that their input directly informed the idea. Then she put out a call for items and reached out to the church’s board of trustees to let them know about her plans. The board was so enthusiastic about the idea that they paid for the entire thing.

Then came the work of putting the idea together. They arranged some mulch and flowers, set up lighting, and created a table with checkers and chess for people to use. All told, it only took about half a day to complete. Afterwards, Bellissimo, a local paint company, donated paint and mapped out a vision for a mural on the pavement. “Who knew it would be such a story?”, Lawton remarked. Others in the community have certainly noticed. They’ve been written up in the news and are expecting to receive an award from the chamber. But the impact has meant more than just making a place more beautiful and usable. Lawton noted that she and her staff used to have an awkward relationship with the population who used the parking lot—lots of brief acknowledgments and diverting eyes. The process built relationships and created a feeling of belonging that extends well beyond the parklet itself.
During the summer of 2001, my wife Linda and I began looking for property on Rainy Lake in preparation for our planned retirement from teaching jobs in Bemidji and Blackduck. I had hoped to someday move back to the Falls, the place where I was born in November 1948. My father Jim Merrill was attending Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter and my parents were living in veteran's housing on the campus which offered scant comforts and amenities, to say the least. It was also a period during which polio was prevalent. My mother Deloris decided it would be better to travel to the Falls that fall and stay with her parents Martin and Alice Molstre at 917 Riverside Drive to await the birth of their first child. An added bonus was that their home was only a half block from the new Falls Memorial Hospital on 2nd Street. And so it was that my official “place of birth” became “International Falls.” 917 Riverside became the first home for me.

Our family would spend the next 4 1/2 years moving between G.I. housing on the Gustavus campus and summers in the Falls, either on Riverside Drive or my Dad’s parents’ farm at Roger’s Corner (Jim and Edythe Merrill). From 1951-1953 vet’s housing on the U of M campus in St. Paul served as home as my Dad completed a Master’s Degree at the “U.” 1953 saw a move back to the Falls and a job as school social worker and probation officer for my Dad. We rented a home in on Main Avenue in South Falls until we moved to a “new” home at 909 Ninth Street in 1954.

Ninth Street was one of those ideal 1950’s neighborhoods. It had a corner grocery store where you could purchase candy for a penny to a nickel, bottled pop for ten cents and comic books for a dime. My brother Reed Timothy and I had great friends that included Nancy, Susie and Terry Glowack, Chuckie Corrin, Jimmy Scheela, Pat DeMarchi, and Butchie (Angelo) and Artie Gust. There was a crab apple tree to raid on the corner, forts in the backyard, outdoor games and the mill’s noon and five-o’clock whistle to let you know when to come home. Starting Kindergarten in the Alexander Baker School produced more friends and a great start to a lifetime of learning.

As my father’s career progressed we moved again to St. Peter where he taught Sociology and Social Work at Gustavus. We moved there during the 1956-57 and 1958-59 school years coming back to the Falls in between. I remember being proud of being from “International Falls” back then and refusing to let my Mom sew a “St. Peter” patch on my Cub Scout uniform - I’ve kept the “Falls” patch on all these years.

I was devastated at the end of the 1958-59 school year to learn that we were not moving back to the Falls and spent much of the afternoon crying in my bedroom. A new move took us to the Twin Cities and a brand new home in the fast-growing suburb of Cottage Grove. From 1959-1971 we would only visit the Falls during summer vacations and holidays. I always looked forward to returning for visits to my grandparent’s home on Riverside Drive or for summer weeks spent with my aunt and uncle (Pat and Reuben Christiansen) on Rainy Lake. The home on Riverside was sold by my grandmother to Loren and Mavis Sartain in 1965. I remember telling “Gram” as we helped her pack for the move to Minneapolis that, “someday I want to buy this house back.”

Years passed; Linda and I met and became high school sweethearts at St. Paul Park H.S. We married prior to my senior year at Gustavus and moved to Blackduck in 1971 where I taught and was community education director until retirement in 2005.
Linda worked for Bemidji Public Schools as a paraprofessional and we raised two sons Brian and Scott. We realized a lifelong dream by building a log home on a lake and made frequent trips to the Falls to visit relatives, hunt and fish. Almost every time we came to town, I would drive by the home at 917 Riverside Drive and tell my family, “someday I’d like to buy that house.”

By the summer of 2001 Linda and I were thinking of retirement and where we might want to live. Obviously it was International Falls and Rainy Lake for me - Linda not quite so much. But, she had heard me talk of this since high school so it wasn’t a surprise. We talked to a realtor and began looking at property on the lake. Nothing fit our budget or was to our liking and we looked all summer. Every time we were in the Falls - we’d drive down Riverside Drive. “For Sale” signs were posted at “915 Riverside” and at “923.” On Sunday, August 5 we were headed out of town and Linda said, “let’s just drive down Riverside Drive.” As we turned off 9th Avenue I noticed a third “For Sale” sign right in front of “917!”

“My heart was in my throat as we drive by and confirm the “for sale” status.” (Quote from a house “journal” we kept from August 2001 to January 2006). Needless to say, we called the realtor, Ashley Miggins, stayed overnight, viewed the house on Monday and purchased it from Loren and Mavis Sartain who had purchased it from my grandmother in 1965. A few weeks later, Loren and Mavis stopped at our log home near Blackduck and with tears in his eyes, Loren handed me the original blueprints for the home, signed by my grandfather “Martin O. Molstre” in 1937. He was glad the home was going back to the family. Sadly Mavis passed away within a year and Loren passed away in 2004. At his funeral, one of his grandchildren talked about the home being “a place of magic” for them as children. Thinking back, that was an apt description of the many years my younger brother and I enjoyed being at “Grandma and Grandpa’s;” the home had also been “a place of magic” for us.

Linda and I have now lived in the home for 18 years. We’ve enjoyed returning to the community that I always thought of as “home.” Our involvement with the Bass Tournament, Circles of Support, Backus and Zion Lutheran Church has led to many friendships and community connections. Linda is a regular Backus volunteer and I continue to count my position as Backus director as “the best job I’ve ever had.” To return to my hometown and be honored to work with so many great people to help bring Backus and AB back to life is the privilege of a lifetime.

The first day we actually “took possession” of the home, we met Bob Frederickson who said as a kid he delivered the newspaper to my grandfather and purchased his first life insurance policy from him. Another neighbor, Nell Anderson told of working in the “welfare office” with my Dad. Bob and Marie Knudson were still living in their parents’ home at 913 Riverside and later Steve and Carolyn Eirlerton’s children Andy and Mary would welcome us with “Hi Ward, Hi Linda” when we came up the sidewalk. We felt welcome in the neighborhood and welcome in the Falls.

I sometimes think of the title of Thomas Wolfe’s novel, You Can’t Go Home Again when I reflect on our move to the Falls. In a real sense, you cannot return to the memories and the time I’ve mentioned because changes do take place in what we remember as being so static and unchanging. I remember a trip our family took from St. Peter to California and back to the Falls in the summer of 1957. After three weeks scrunched between by Dad and Grandpa Molstre in the front seat of our 1956 Ford station wagon, I recall coming in to the Falls from the west at night. As I looked ahead in the night sky there was the red neon “INSULITE” sign on top of the mill glowing on the horizon and I knew I was “home.”
Candidate Survey a Success

PAM invited candidates for the Minnesota House of Representatives and Governor to complete a survey about preservation and related economic development issues. Our questionnaire was nonpartisan, and was not meant to serve as an endorsement of or for any particular candidate or political party. Fifteen MN House candidates completed the survey. Of those 15, eight were elected. We’re proud to have introduced these members to our issues and concerns through the survey, and gratified by their support. Fully 100% of the survey respondents supported the Minnesota Historic Tax Credit, our Main Street program, and the idea of new incentives to encourage rehabilitation of older commercial buildings in downtowns throughout Minnesota. The candidates also expressed support for historic home rehab, vacant property reuse, and increasing energy efficiency in older buildings. Altogether, there are 38 new members of the Minnesota House of Representatives. We’re looking forward to reaching out to them, as well as to their re-elected colleagues, to help them get to know PAM, Minnesota Main Street, and what we stand for.

Here are some responses from elected officials that completed the survey. To see the entire results of both surveys, head to mnpreservation.org/policy.

Angie Craig
MN-02

Why is historic preservation important to you and your state/district?

“Minnesota has a rich history and is home to a number of important historical sites, including Fort Snelling, the Hill House, and the Mayo Clinic, all of which are near to my district. It is critical that we preserve the treasures of Minnesota’s rich culture and history for the coming generations to enjoy.”

Kristin Bahner
34B

Do you believe in the adage, “the greenest building is the one that’s already built?”

“I am a firm believer in reuse and repurposing wherever possible, we live in unique times in which there are ways to accomplish this goal using new technologies or techniques (i.e. vast improvements in insulation can add energy efficiency and give new life to historic buildings).
This past month has been a great time of learning and sharing as the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota staff attended the Upper Mississippi Main Street Conference in Winona and the National Preservation conference in San Francisco.

It was exciting to hear the new ideas that our counterparts in our region and around the nation are initiating to fulfill their mission of building reuse and community pride. We came back full of ideas around legacy business recognition, the deeper connections around nature and culture, intangible heritage, and education. We also came back with greater resolve around our core belief that the foundation of community pride and prosperity is built by old places, culture, and small businesses.

As the new year unfolds, we are poised to grow our current programs and add new initiatives to reach that vision. We will grow Artists on Main Street to seven communities and fund nearly 70 community led and inspired art projects in those communities.

We are initiating Downtown Assessments, a tool that will engage communities and identify unique places and assets through a grassroots approach. We are finding new tools to work with youth through educational programming and community activation. This year is promising to be a great one where we can more widely deliver our mission of connecting people to historic places.

We continue to be amazed by the entrepreneurship, stories, culture, and deep appreciation for community that abounds in Minnesota and the entire upper Midwest. This year, we hope to share more of those stories that we hear, so everyone can know about all the amazing people and places that shape our communities and inspire more investment to make our towns stronger.

The Last Word

Doug Gasek
PAM Executive Director