

Steppin' Up means \$59,000 for community

Posted: Tuesday, October 18, 2016 12:03 am

How do you raise \$59,000? You find an important cause worth working on, gather extraordinary people who are willing to step up, provide an environment that taps into their skills and let the positive energy flow.

In 2014, Main Street Gettysburg (MSG) created a 10-year economic development plan that extended the revitalization improvements on Steinwehr Avenue down Baltimore Street to connect with Lincoln Square. An MSG board member, Ron Hankey, stepped up to gather support for the project from the Baltimore Street businesses. Ron's approach was to create a sample block on Baltimore Street to gain the commitment of the property and business owners for the project. With the collaboration of Columbia Gas, Gettysburg Foundation, Destination Gettysburg, the ACCF Florence & Tom Metz Foundation, National Trust for Historic Gettysburg, and Rotary Club of Gettysburg, \$21,000 was raised for new light posts, which now shine brightly.

Ron, with the help of others on Baltimore Street, was successful. The Baltimore Street Committee was expanded to 30 people in 2015. MSG facilitated a community-wide focus group that identified safety and lighting as priorities for residents and businesses on the street. A list of additional community wants and needs were created, and a multi-million dollar revitalization project process was developed.

The first step was a Master Plan. MSG negotiated with the borough's engineer and with MSG offering to do some leg work, got the price down from \$50,000 to \$38,000. Grants were written and donors approached. What was most impressive was the work the business owners and neighborhood did to fundraise. The group held an event, Steppin Out in Lincoln's Footsteps in October 2015 to build awareness among the community about the project. Many of the businesses participated, and despite a hurricane, the goal was achieved; the neighborhood now knew about the project.

In May 2016, another Steppin' Out in Lincoln's Footsteps event was held. This time, the Baltimore Street Committee raised \$5,062 and the event enlightened the community about the vision for the street.

After the May Steppin' Out event, a fundraising sub-committee consisting of Lynn Chronister, Jesse Coulter, Tim Woodward, Wendy Allen, Marybeth Sprankle and Annie Letendre put their creativity to work, along with their marketing, sales, planning and cooking skills.

On Sept. 24, more than 160 people attended the first Steppin Out for Polish Pottery Bingo and generously stepped up to support the revitalization project. Borough President Bob Krummerich, Mayor Ted Streeter, Borough Manager Charles Gable, Councilwoman Susan Naugle and Councilman Wes Heyser, showcased their support by calling bingo numbers and running prizes. It was a fun night that reached its fundraising goal of \$2,600.

On Oct. 11, MSG received a call that made all the work worthwhile. The South Mountain Partnership announced tentative approval of a \$5,000 grant, the amount necessary to reach the \$38,000 needed to complete the Baltimore Street Revitalization Master Plan; \$33,000 had been previously raised through grants, events and fundraising.

So how do you raise \$59,000 for community revitalization? It's all about "Steppin' Up for your Community," a lesson that MSG has witnessed time and time again. MSG knows for sure that this community is blessed with generous, committed and courageous people who are willing to step up for this community's future.

Deb Adamik is the president and chief executive officer for Main Street Gettysburg.