

Frankenmuth

downtown development
economic development

We're Open for Business.

Frankenmuth Economic Development News

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Issue: #2

March/2011

Dear Gary,

Old Man Winter still has his grips on Mid-Michigan! Just as resilient Michiganders we are, when the Old Man gives us SNOW, we make a FESTIVAL. Once again, **Zehnders SnowFest** celebrated in perfect weather, showcasing fine works of snow and ice art and hosting hundreds of thousands of guests in to local shoppes and restaurants. Organizers suspect another record year for attendance.

Let's hope this is a wonderful omen for the year to come.

Frankenmuth Brewery Expanding Beer-Making Capacity

Frankenmuth's Bottled Beer Is A
Owners of the Frankenmuth Brewery plan to add new fermenters to the successful introduction of the Brewery's new bottled beers in the state. On February 22, the City Commission approved the Brewery's plans to add onto their auxiliary (currently housing four fermenters) to accommodate an additional eight fermenters. The expansion will allow the Brewery to brew their year-round varieties, as well as to brew seasonal specialities, for sale on-site and through distributors.



Major Hit!
(425 S. Main) accommodate Frankenmuth outlets across Planning expansion building

The Frankenmuth Brewery sells its beer in both kegs and bottles. Bottles were introduced this past December. With kegs already in dozens of bars and restaurants in the Greater Detroit area, distributors were pleased with the opportunity to sell bottled beer through retail outlets. The first bottles sold out in days. While the Frankenmuth Brewery has capacity to brew plenty of beer, its bottleneck (literally) was the fermenting process, which could take

30 days or more to produce the prize-winning Frankenmuth Brewery beer.

Owners are planning to break ground by Spring.

On-site, the Brewery has also expanded its offerings including locally produced wine and soon-to-be introduced vodka.

For more information about the brewery, check out their website at www.frankenmuthbrewery.com.

Franken Eck (100 S. Main) Sells to New Buyers

Historic Landmark to be Renovated

The sale of Frankenmuth's Franken Eck, located on the southwest corner of Genesee Street and Main (M83), was finalized and closed on February 14, 2011 (Valentine's Day) to a couple with big plans. Gary and Barbara Heidinger visited Frankenmuth more than a year ago to find a storefront for their internet-based Christmas antiques business. Returning this February, the couple successfully purchased the property and married that same week.

Gary and Barbara found Frankenmuth on a recommendation from a Shipshewanna vendor. Working through DDA Director, Sheila Stamiris, the couple discussed options for locations with her. Once they visited the City, they felt the *Spirit of Christmas* (as they say) and selected Frankenmuth as the place for them to settle and begin a new life. Gary will relocate from Washington State and Barbara from Switzerland.

The building at 100 S. Main was once the home of an iconic diner, which hosted informal business meetings, after football game dates and coffee klatches. The couple wants to return the building, abandoned and vacant for five years or more, to its place as a community landmark.

Appreciative of historic buildings, Barbara and Gary will locate a retail outlet for their Christmas antiques business, a Christmas-themed museum and a specialty cake and coffee shop. They are evaluating all options for renovation of the space including renovating the second story living quarters. Exterior improvements including securing the outside staircase will happen as soon as the weather permits.

The Historic District has given approval to demolish the house (135 West Genesee) that had suffered a fire during the early 2000's pending final site plans. The plan for this space includes a garden. The owners are hopeful to relocate to Frankenmuth sometime this summer. Visit their website at www.Christmas.li or www.weihnacht.li (German version).

Fenton Home Furnishings Purchases Oscar Rau Building

New Owners take over August 1, 2011

The Willey Family of Fenton has purchased the Oscar Rau's Furniture Building (360 S. Main Street), located at the corner of Main and Tuscola in Frankenmuth. The new business will take possession on August 1, 2011, anticipating reopening to the public in the early fall.

Billed as "*the most unique store in Michigan*", **Fenton Home Furnishings** has been operating since 1979. Frankenmuth will be its fourth location with stores in Fenton, Waterford and Lapeer. FHF is a full-service furniture

store, whose niche is rustic furnishings. Their website, listing more than 40 vendors, is www.fentonhomefurnishings.com.

Meanwhile, Oscar Rau's of Frankenmuth begins a liquidation sale in coming weeks in preparation for the changeover. Oscar Rau's has been a stable, Frankenmuth business for many years, with a long history of good service, products and personnel. Owner, Ray Rau, says that his Frankenmuth management team had done an excellent job managing the business. The opportunity to sell the building was timely, as Rau had spent less time in Frankenmuth and more time on the road since he started the alternate business a few years ago. After the sale, owner Ray Rau will continue to operate his consulting business which specializes in furniture store liquidations and going out of business sales.

The City welcomes the new owners who have carefully grown their business from one flagship store to three, and who have experience operating multi-site locations, considered a key to business expansions. DDA Director, Sheila Stamiris says that Frankenmuth understands big, family businesses. "The Willey Family will fit right in."

Good news is happening all across Frankenmuth. Let me know if I can be of help to you! Feel Free to contact me at 989.652.3430 ext 120.

Frankenmuth is Open for Business!

Sincerely,



Sheila Stamiris
City of Frankenmuth
