

# The View

from...

Located in  
the Historic  
Theatre Plaza



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## “From The Director’s Seat”

By *Maria Kovachev*

The start of 2009 is filled with energy and a strong sense of community spirit. Downtown Vero’s visitors, residents, property owners and merchants are all enjoying the welcomed addition of a **weekly Friday Farmers Market (9AM-2PM)** with Music, Flowers, Fruits, Vegetables, and the smell of Baked Goods filling the air.....yet there is so much more that Downtown Vero has to offer. Many of the local merchants have unique and specialized products that once discovered **create a loyal customer base.** But the key to “discovery” is a willingness to try new things and there is nothing like the start of a New Year to bring out that spirit of adventure.

Main Street has set some **terrific goals for 2009** which includes creating a **Downtown Vero Walking Map** to invite residents and visitor alike to explore and discover the Downtown area, installing **banners** (created by local artists) in the Historic Downtown section to begin to set the tone to welcome more pedestrian activity on 14th Avenue, keeping the **Downtown Friday events** filled with activities for the entire family, the tradition of a **Hibiscus Festival** filled with two-days of shows, music, food, pageant, races and ceremonies, and **creating some new venues... for art lovers** with all the galleries, design and deco-

rating shops, **for treasure hunters** with the unexpected “find” in an antique, consignment, or thrift shop, or the **wonderful restaurants, cafes and food shops** that compliment your busy schedule or cater to a relaxing evening meal.



Whoever I speak to seems to want Downtown Vero to return to its original level of activity, character and community pride. After all, Historic Downtown Vero is where economic commerce and community spirit began in Vero Beach and as such, deserves our respect, admiration, and commitment to re-store it as a true Florida gem.

I welcome and encourage each of you to join Main Street and its mission to re-establish Downtown Vero (through historic preservation and commercial revitalization) to become a center of community pride and activity. Main Street is extending its reduced membership rates throughout 2009 to encourage your support and participation. It takes team work to make a difference and we need your help to make it happen.

**Let’s do it together!**

*Maria*

## What does Main Street Vero Beach do for Downtown Vero?

By *Daniel Fourmont, President, Main Street Board of Directors*

The most frequently asked question I receive as a Main Street Vero Beach (MSVB) board member is, **“What does MSVB do for Downtown Vero Beach?”** The best answer to this is our Mission Statement as chartered in the Main Street By-Laws which states that **“MSVB is dedicated to the promotion of civic pride and community involvement in the Historic Downtown area.....This program will work to make Downtown Vero Beach an attractive, safe place to live, shop, work and play.”**

MSVB is, in fact, comprised of interested residents, property owners, business merchants and professionals who lobby the cause of Downtown Vero Beach. These accomplishments are many and can be found listed on our website at [www.mainstreetverobeach.org](http://www.mainstreetverobeach.org). I invite you to visit our site to find out more about MSVB and its history. One very important factor not yet listed is a **positive directional trend towards slow but sure rehabilitation in Downtown thanks to various property owners,**

**individuals and organizations who believe in Downtown Vero Beach.**

More specifically this refers to the many downtown building improvements over the last ten to fifteen years that have made a Visible Difference in Downtown Vero and deserve our thanks and appreciation. For example:

- **The Seminole Building** at 2066 14th Avenue. It was built in two phases, in 1984 and 1994, as a replica of the historic and original two story professional building that housed the City of Vero Beach original chambers. Owners and developers Bob Brackett and Sandy Brackett also remodeled the historic Theater Plaza and Pueblo arcades next to the Seminole Building during that period.
- **The Courthouse Executive Center.** Built in 1936, it functioned as the Indian River County Courthouse until the new Courthouse was built. The Brackett Family Limited Partnership bought the property in 1997 and restored it to a functional and attractive office complex in 1998.
- **The Seminole Courtyard**, in the 14th Avenue block and Old Dixie, was restored by Mr. and Mrs. Brackett in the late 1990s.
- **The Pocahontas Building** at 1414 21st Street. It was purchased by the Haggerty Family Limited Partnership in 2001. Owners Glenn and Karen Haggerty have spent the last seven years bringing this beautiful two story building back to its original splendors inside and out for the retail stores on the first floor and the apartments on the second floor.
- **The Heritage Center**, 2140 14th Avenue, was saved from demolition and brought back to life in 1991 thanks to dedicated community supporters under the leadership of Millie Bunnell. Built in early 1935 and initially called the Community Building, the building has kept its original wood floor, most of its 56 wood frame windows and the rest of its woodwork.

Thanks to a public partnership between the City of Vero Beach and Vero Heritage, Inc., this historic site has been preserved and continues to be used for many events. An addition built in 1943 houses the Citrus Museum.

- **The Indian River County Historical Society** is housed in Vero Beach's former Railroad Station built in 1903. The station was preserved and moved by the Society from its original location 1/8 mile north to its current location at 2336 14th Avenue in the mid-80s.
- **The Scott's Sporting Goods Building** at 1401 20th Street. After buying the building in 1998, Scott and Brenda Chisolm restored the building in 2002 to its original 1920s appearance.
- **Vero Furniture** at 2004 14th Avenue has been brought back to its original attractive look by Mr. and Mrs. Max Lawing. It was the Farmers Bank & Trust in the 1920's and 1930's.
- **Ironside Press** at 1323 21st Street is the original site of the Vero Beach Press Journal. It continues as a printing facility under owner Bo Forbes.
- **The new Chamber of Commerce Building** (under construction) at 1216 21st Street is scheduled for completion in March 2009. This handsome, new building blends perfectly with neighboring historical buildings to its west on 21st Street and 14th Avenue.
- **The Rotary Clubs Centennial Fountain** on the corner of 14th Avenue and 21st Street. The Rotary Fountain was the resurrection of an original Rotary drinking fountain built in 1931 by the Rotary Club of Vero Beach and demolished in 1962. In 2005, the five Rotary Clubs in Indian River County joined forces to raise funds to build the Centennial Fountain commemorating 100 years for the Rotary.



*Daniel Fourmont*

Main Street is thankful for the efforts of so many dedicated Vero residents committed to saving and restoring historical building in Vero's original Downtown area. Private owners, like the Bracketts and the Haggertys, have spent several million dollars in the restorations of their buildings. Non-profit organizations like the Chamber of Commerce have committed \$1.5 million to stay in Downtown Vero with a newly-constructed building that has an Old Florida presence. Community volunteers like Minnie Bunnell, as well as other non-profit organizations like the Heritage Center, the Historical Society and the Vero Beach Rotarians have all made note-worthy contributions to keeping Downtown Vero Beach an attractive place to live, shop, work and play.

MSVB and its Board of Directors have the same ongoing commitment to Downtown Vero. Your ongoing support through Main Street involvement, volunteering, donations and attending Main Street sponsored events like the weekly Friday Farmers Market, Downtown Fridays, and the upcoming Hibiscus Festival on April 17th-18th is greatly appreciated and continues to makes a visible difference in Downtown Vero!

# The Merchant's Corner

by Maria Sparsis, Downtown Merchants Association

On the corner of 14th Avenue and Route 60 is **Scott's Sporting Goods**, one of downtown's long standing merchants. The quietly unassuming, renovated exterior belies the hustle and bustle inside. As I walk in, a large, impressive machine is busily embroidering shirts for a baseball team in Melbourne somewhere. "Twenty-two hundred stitches in this logo," the girl that runs the machines proudly tells me.

The store is bright and spacious; the floor has racks of colorful uniforms, shirts, jackets, shoes and hats. The walls are covered with every manner of sporting accessory for lacrosse, football, baseball and basketball. Then I notice a large section of dance outfits and shoes. I didn't know we had dance supplier in this town. "Oh yes", **Scott Chisholm** informs me with what seems to be a permanent, infectious smile. "We are the second largest Capezio dance supplier in the state of Florida."

**Scott and his wife Brenda have been in the sporting goods business for 33 years** and at their current downtown location for the last twelve. They are both property owners and merchants who have gained the respect of the community through their sound business practices and multiple charitable contributions. Several years ago they performed extensive renovations to their 1920's historical building which originally included both the Downtown Vero Beach drugstore and hardware store. "The embroidery machines sit exactly where the soda fountain once was." Scott tells me.

Scott's building now houses a music store, a bicycle shop, and a hair salon. All three businesses were hand picked by Scott to be wholesome, family or teenager friendly and to also complement his business and the downtown.

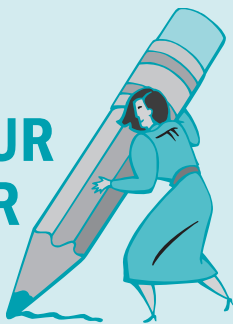
"How is business?" I ask Scott as I walk out the store, expecting the usual response of tough times, slowed down economy, etc.. His smile gets bigger as he tells me, "Business is great!" He outfits 25 different baseball teams in four different counties and multiple dance studios in many different cities. He has local school contracts as well as business with outfits in Okeechobee, Melbourne, Stuart, and West Palm. "Sometimes you have to go out and get the business" he tells me. It's obvious to me from the busy store and the happy, helpful staff that Scott knows how to do just that!

**Scott's Sporting Goods** is located at 1407 20th Street and is open Monday-Friday 9AM-6PM and Saturdays from 10AM-4PM. Phone (772) 778-0661.



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### Upcoming Main Street Events



### Downtown Vero Farmers Market - Every Friday 9AM-2PM

Start your weekend off RIGHT with fresh produce and other goodies!

### Downtown Friday Friday, March 27th

Enjoy this popular street festival with great music, dancing, food and drinks...  
A fun-filled family night out!

### 2009 Hibiscus Festival April 17-18

Two days loaded with something for everyone...5K Run, Pancake Breakfast, Kids Activities, Salute to Youth, Great Music, Evening Event, Pageant, Antiques, Historic Exhibit, Farmers Market, Food and many other vendors you won't want to miss!



2036 14th Avenue #103  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

(772) 480-8353

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