



Let's Paint the Town of Dresden "Downtown!"

Let's paint the town is for many, the clarion call for let's party. In the case of Dresden downtown merchants that's exactly what happened thanks to entrepreneur and long time business woman, Lucy Ogletree. In her own words, the rest of the story is told by Lucy Ogletree.

In November 2012 on the 50th anniversary of my Dad's death, my sister Marian and I visited our dad's gravesite in the Dresden Cemetery.

We then went downtown Dresden for a coffee where I found the buildings to be absolutely amazing, but felt they looked tired and some in need of a facelift. I was in the process of creating a Visual Merchandising Business and thought that Dresden would be a great place to start.

The BIA (Business Improvement Association) accepted the proposed project I called "Let's Paint the Town."

There were 13 businesses that received a face lift. They included: Bella's Café, Lonnie's Hair Salon, Gord McDaimid Chiropractor, Lil Hoarder's, MacTavish Pharmacy, Verna's Sewing Centre, Shelley's Painted Treasures, Coco Beach, Dr. D'Hondt Optometrist, Foxy Cuts Hair Salon, McKellar's Flowers and Gifts, The Frozen Frog Ice Cream Shop and Arim's Discount Store.

On a sunny Saturday, September 14th we had over 70 volunteers between 10 and 70 years old, most from Dresden and some from as far away as London and Windsor. Sporting "Paint the Town" t-shirts and hats, we laughed, talked, worked hard, and in one day painted the town! The energy was amazing.

The sponsors included Lumberjack Home Building Centre (all the paint), Dresden Home Hardware (painting supplies), R Rentals (power washer), Dresden Meat Packers (hamburgers and hotdogs), Burns Restaurant (snacks), Captured Moments (logo printing for hats and t-shirts). Shelley's Painted Treasures (painted all the street flags), Verna's Sewing Centre (sewed all the street flags) Unilever (ice cream), CKXS 99.1 fm (BBQ set up), 3D Balloons. Let's Get Fit helped volunteers stretch and warm up before starting to paint. Musicians roamed the street and entertained in the centre of town. Merchants and sponsors supplied, tables, musical equipment, water, pop and support staff.

Deb Miller from Lumberjack Building Centre, Shawn Smith, owner of Classic Restoration and Design, and Lee Brooker, a professional painter lent their expertise to help create a repair and painting supply list. Mark Labadie, local builder, supplied and worked on scaffolding.

Dresden folks came down to see what was happening; people driving through stopped and walked around town...the buzz around town was terrific!

My personal take on the day was, it felt like we were all in a "feel good" movie only it was real—community spirit and Community pride is alive and well in Dresden. The day was more than just putting paint on a building. It was about community at its best; neighbour helping neighbor—like the old barn-raising days.

When I was very little my Grandpa Ogletree's barn burnt down and shortly

after that my grandpa was in a terrible accident which left him in a coma for several days. His friends, family and neighbors banded together and rebuilt his barn. That is where my vision for the merchants and residents of Dresden came from.

I was humbled and in awe of the folks in Dresden. They really came through for each other. What a caring and kind Community! A photo gallery of "Let's Paint the Town" is on my website.

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Photo Credit: Nathan Vercauteren



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