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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER: MAY 2015

The Downtown is gearing up for warmer weather. We are grateful for the growing interest and investment being made in the commercial core, and are looking forward to the many events being planned for the summer. Read on for details!

Above: View of the sunset from the 11th floor of the Hayden Tower at the Markle Building.

Image Perception Survey

We are conducting a short electronic survey about how people feel about Downtown Hazleton. The purpose of this survey is to collect baseline information about common community perceptions that will help guide our future downtown revitalization strategies, and its results will serve as part of our application to become designated as a PA "Main Street" community.

The questions are based upon a matrix for what constitutes a "sense of place" that was developed by the Project for Public Spaces, a nonprofit organization based in New York dedicated to creating and sustaining public places that build communities.

The survey is administered by the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, and should only take a few minutes of your time. The survey is available on our website: www.downtownhazleton.org, or you may [CLICK HERE for the direct link>>>](#)

Mark your calendars for June 5th

Kick off summer in downtown Hazleton on the First Friday of June (June 5th). In addition to merchant promotions, there are many events to enjoy, including a historical walking tour highlighting downtown architecture led by Charles McElwee (on behalf of the Hazleton Historical Society & Museum); a

"Meet the Artists" event and an "Essential Oils" yoga class at the Dragonfly Café; an Art League Exhibit and Reception featuring the work of Grayce Swet; professional wrestling at The Sanctuary; and much more, including several business promotions. Kids can also enjoy a craft program at the library, Family Nerf Wars at the YMCA/ YWCA, and pageantry classes at Facettes of Dance. [CLICK HERE>>>](#) to view the full schedule, and a map showing locations of all participating businesses and organizations.

pedestrians are welcome, and reserved bike parking will be available along the north side of Broad St., between Laurel and Wyoming.

May First Friday Highlights

Mother's Day was the theme for May's First Friday events. In addition to merchant promotions, there were many events that brought a nice crowd to the downtown, including: a "Tea Tasting" at the Shop 2; a Wine & Dessert pairing demonstration and tastings at Carmen's Bakery & Deli (with wine



Featured Event: Bikes, Blues & BBQ

During the June 5th First Friday from 6:00-9:00 PM, the Downtown Hazleton Alliance for Progress will be hosting a "Bikes, Blues, & BBQ" event, which will take place in the vacant lot adjacent to the historic Security Savings Bank Building (25 W. Broad St.). Live music will be performed by "Friar's Point Band," a three-time semifinalist at the International Blues Challenge held annually in Memphis, Tennessee. The outdoor BBQ will be provided by Damon's Grill. Custom built bikes will also be on display. Bikers and



Top: Several hundred people enjoyed the panoramic views of downtown Hazleton, as well as over 140 individual entries exhibited by regional artists at "Art @ the Markle," which was hosted by Hazleton POWER! Above: Carmen's Bakery hosted a free Wine and Fruit Dessert "Pairing Demonstration & Tasting" event in cooperation with Benigna's Creek Vineyard and Winery.

provided by Benigna's Creek Vineyard and Winery; an Artist's Regional Networking Event hosted by Hazleton Power on the 11th Floor of the Markle Building; a Mother-Daughter "Boot Camp" at Core Fitness Hazleton; an Essential Oils demonstration at the Dragonfly Cafe (hosted by Mother's Nature Market); costumed interpretation of "Mother Jones" at the Greater Hazleton Historical Society and Museum, and also opening night for "Lost in Yonkers" at the Pennsylvania Theatre of Performing Arts.

Featured New Business

AFLAC Insurance (Hazleton field office)
Jack Martin, District Sales Coordinator
 101 W. Broad St., Suites 403 and 404



In January 2015, Jack Martin (pictured above) opened a field office in Downtown Hazleton for AFLAC Insurance. As District Manager, Jack's job is to grow AFLAC's customer base throughout the region, which stretches as far as Pottsville, Tunkhannock, Bloomsburg, and East Stroudsburg. He feels that there is enormous opportunity for growth for his company, which provides supplemental insurance to individuals and groups to help pay benefits that major medical insurance doesn't cover.

Jack is looking to hire full time account representatives that have the desire to help him grow the business. For more information about these career opportunities, call Jack at 814-594-8187 or email him at jackmartin32@gmail.com.

City Council Adopts Strategic Plan for Downtown

On May 5th, the Hazleton City Council unanimously approved and adopted the Downtown Strategic Plan and associated five-year strategy on behalf of the City of Hazleton, and also voted to authorize the Downtown Hazleton Alliance for Progress to represent the municipality in the DCED Main Street Program application. We appreciate council's support of our efforts.

Park Update

On May 5th the city opened bids for Phase One construction of the new City Park, which will be located on the corner of Broad and Laurel Streets. The low bid was awarded to Barletta Materials. Groundbreaking for the Phase One project (new curbing, sidewalk, lighting, electrical work, etc.) is expected to be held in June.

Fundraising Update

The Alliance would like to recognize those who recently awarded grants to help fund our organization and special projects:

- PPL recently awarded a \$5,000 grant to help fund our downtown revitalization initiatives
- PNC Foundation recently awarded \$5,000 to help fund improvements of the Security Savings Bank Building for its future use as a City Arts Center.
- Susquehanna Bank recently awarded \$1,500 to help fund improvements of the Security Savings Bank Building for its future use as a City Arts Center.
- The Hazleton Rotary Club recently awarded a \$1,000 grant to help fund our downtown revitalization initiatives.
- First National Community Bank recently awarded \$2,000 to help fund our downtown revitalization initiatives.



Rotary Club recognizes donation to the Alliance. Left to Right: Tim Genetti, Hazleton Rotary Club President; Krista Schneider, Executive Director and Neal DeAngelo III, Board President, Downtown Hazleton Alliance for Progress; and Ron Avellino, Hazleton Rotary Club President-Elect.



Dave McCarthy, Senior Vice President of Susquehanna Bank (center) presents check to Downtown Hazleton Alliance for Progress. Krista Schneider (left) and Neal DeAngelo III (right).

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Mark Your Calendars

First Fridays

June 5, 2015: Say Hello to Summer
 July 3, 2015: Fourth of July holiday
(no First Friday promotions)
 August 7, 2015: Crusin' Downtown
 September 4, 2015: Tastes of Home
 October 2, 2015: Latin Arts Expo
 November 6, 2015: Veteran's Day
 December 4, 2015: Christmas

Movie at the Markle

June 12, 2015

Peace, Love & Chalk

August 8, 2015

Farmer's Market (10AM – 2PM)

July 17, opening day; July 24, July 31,
 August 7, August 14, August 21,
 August 28, and September 4

Funfest

September 12 and 13, 2015

PTPA Shows

June 12-24: The Who's Tommy
 July 3-12, 2015: Mister Roberts
 August 7-16, 2015: Mary Poppins
 September 11-20: A Little Night Music
 December 3-13, 2015: Scrooge the Musical

Hazleton Town & Trail Race Series

October 17, 2015 (8:30am)

P. Deisroth's Sons Department Store

Est. 1871

Former Owner: Peter Deisroth

Location: 100 West Broad Street, Hazleton

Featured Legacy Business

Downtown Hazleton has been home to many multi-generational and family-owned small businesses. This section is dedicated to recognizing and celebrating those that have had a meaningful and long-lasting impact on the community. Each has evolved in different ways to meet the challenges of a changing economy.

The seeds for P. Deisroth's Sons Department Store were planted in 1861 when Peter Deisroth first entered the dry goods business as a clerk in the general store of John Waechter in Conyngham. Eventually he pursued opportunities in the bigger city of Hazleton, and by 1868 Peter was working as a clerk for a store owned by Lauderburn & Smith, which was located on the southwest corner of Broad and Laurel Streets (the site of the future Deisroth Department Store).



The former P. Deisroth Building at the southwest corner of Broad and Laurel Streets, looking south in the early 1900s. The building is now gone, and the street widened. Source: Greater Hazleton Pictorial Heritage (2003 edition), pg. 12.

Eventually he became a partner in the business and for 18 year the store thrived. By 1888 Peter had saved enough money to go into business on his own, so he purchased property at the southeast corner of Broad and Laurel streets, to which he made many revisions. At the time of Peter's death in 1900, it was regarded as the finest retail department store in the City of Hazleton.

After Peter died, his sons took over the business. In 1905, William A. Deisroth bought the business from his father's estate and formed what came to be known as P.

Deisroth's Sons. He formed a partnership with his brother Alvan in 1914 to take control of the family business.

A few years later William and Alvan acquired the property of the old Smith building, which housed the former Lauderburn, Smith and Deisroth store, and operated the business there. In 1935 this building was demolished and a new one (currently standing) was constructed in its place.



Architectural rendering showing the new building, which looks much the same today (courtesy of the Hazleton Historical Society & Museum).

For most of the 20th century, P. Deisroth's Sons Department Store served as a primary retail shopping destination for the Greater Hazleton Area. Its four floors carried jewelry, makeup, and other accessories, men's and women's clothing, as well as a variety of other retail goods.

However, when the Laurel Mall opened in 1973, the family owned department store—like other downtown retail shops throughout the country—could not compete with the national trend towards suburban shopping. The Deisroth family decided to close their store in December of 1989 after 118 years of operation.



Photo of interior, first floor (courtesy of the Hazleton Historical Society & Museum).

According to Peter B. Deisroth, it was a difficult decision, but the family felt they had no choice. The Alliance to Revitalize Center City Hazleton (ARCH), a non-profit organization formed in 1985 by the City and the Chamber of Commerce, hired John Quigley as its Executive Director with the

objective of improving the central business district. During this time, a group of community-minded individuals established the Hazleton Community Development Corporation. The organization was initially capitalized with \$100,000 investments from Hazleton National Bank, Peoples First National Bank, Northeastern Bank and First Federal Savings and Loan Association totaling \$400,000. The CDC, using its capital as seed funding, was successful in its application to the Economic Development Administration in securing additional funding to purchase, renovate and repurpose the Deisroth Department Store and adjoining McCrory's Five and Dime buildings in 1994. The combined buildings are now the multi-tenant Broad Street Business Exchange.



The former Deisroth's Department Store is now home to the Broad Street Business Exchange.

These buildings are now home to 16 businesses, including the Hazleton Center of the Luzerne County Community College, Barry Isett & Associates, El Mensajero newspaper, Precision Design, the dental office of Dr. Santana, the law offices of Dougherty Leventhal & Price LLP, and several others.

Credits: Thanks to DHAP volunteer Kelly Kostanesky who collected this information, and Peter B. Deisroth for the interview. Sources also included archived articles of the Times Leader (July 15, 1995) and the Hazleton Plain Speaker, (August 9, 1938).