

# CLOCK TOWER TIMES

The Newsletter of the the Berne Community Development Corporation



The Bern, Switzerland clock tower dates from the 15th century and is an international tourist attraction. The Berne, Indiana clock tower will bear a strong resemblance to the historic tower, but will include characteristics that are unique to this area.

One of the purposes of the Berne CDC is to assist in the ongoing development and beautification of downtown and US 27 businesses and public properties—making Berne a Community of Distinction and Charm.



## Berne's tower and Baker's thermometer: Marketing an economic miracle

Baker, California lies between Los Angeles and Las Vegas. It's a little speck just off Interstate 15 that was suffering from an identity crisis—tussling for travelers with empty gas tanks and full bladders on their journey to Vegas. According to an article in *The Journal Gazette*, in 1991, a local businessman built a reason for drivers to brake—a towering 134-foot thermometer at a cost of \$700,000. Today, the town is billed as “Baker, California—Home of the World's Tallest Thermometer!”

Why 134 feet? Because that's the record-breaking temperature reading for Baker—134 degrees.

The thermometer boosted the income of the entire town and shored up its sense of self. Community leaders credited the thermometer with spurring development and creating lots of curiosity. The general manager of the town said, “If the thermometer were dismantled, it would be like not having a name at all. We'd be back to ‘that little town east of Barstow.’”

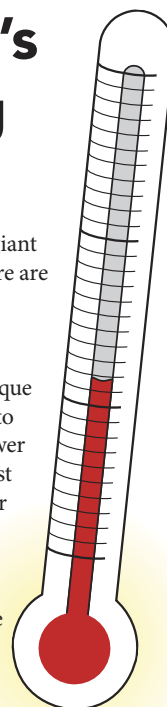
One marketing consultant said, “It's a ‘clutter buster’—if you see nine gas stations

and the tenth one has a giant Paul Bunyan statue, where are you going to stop?”

Berne has something even bigger than Baker's thermometer. It has a unique Swiss flavor and a vision to build a 175-foot clock tower that will be a bigger tourist attraction than Baker ever dreamed of.

The thermometer on the right shows the financial progress of the Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower campaign. To-date, \$1,217,000 has been pledged toward the total goal of \$3,246,000.

Cash contributions to the project are fully deductible to the extent allowed by federal law. Gifts are designed to be paid over a three-year pledge period, with some even choosing to spread gift-giving over a five-year-period.



Fifty steering committee members and special guests met on June 25 for a leadership social hosted by Jim and Melissa Beitler and Roger and Naomi Muselman. From the left are: the Beitlers, Keith and Rose-Lee Reinhard and the Muselmans.

## WPTA-TV visits Berne

Eric Olson, feature reporter for WPTA-TV in Fort Wayne, met with members of the Berne Community Development Corporation on Wednesday, June 1. He and his film crew traveled to Berne to discuss the Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower.

The feature aired on WPTA on Friday, June 3 during the 6 p.m. news, and is now available for viewing at the Web site at <http://www.berneclocktower.org>, or it can be viewed at the 21 Country site at <http://www.wpta.com/21country>.

## TOWERING THOUGHTS!

“From a little spark may burst a mighty flame.”

Dante

## A bold perspective on the need to build

When the CDC was formed, the Berne City Council asked the group to plan and build a plaza at the corner of Main Street and US 27 that forms a link between the two business sectors of the city. Preliminary plans for the plaza grew to include a replica of the famous Bern, Switzerland clock tower, called the Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower.

CDC president David Baumgartner is a member of the clock tower steering committee. He said, "We believe the clock tower and plaza will attract many people to Berne. When that happens, new stores and restaurants will sprout up, and entrepreneurs will be inspired to bring new businesses to the area."

With today's global economy and the changes in the job market, cities everywhere are feeling the economic crunch. Berne has also been affected, and it must find a way to survive the changes and maintain a stable economic base.

The plaza will provide an attractive gathering place for weddings, reunions and receptions, as well as for concerts and Swiss Days events. "Every person in Berne will be benefited by this project," said Wes Rediger, campaign consultant. "This will bring increased business, increased employee base, increased income, increased quality of life and increased community pride."

"We consider this to be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to forever improve the quality of life in Berne," said Baumgartner. "It will create a visual impact at the 'crossroads' of the community that will become nationally, indeed, internationally known."



## Keith Reinhard, honorary chairman, visits Berne

Keith Reinhard, recognized leader in the national and international advertising community, visited Berne on Saturday, June 25, 2005 to attend a leadership social hosted by Roger and Naomi Muselman and Jim and Melissa Beitler.

Reinhard is chairman of New York based DDB Worldwide, which ranks among the largest global advertising agency networks in the world. His familiar slogan, "You deserve a break today," was named



Keith Reinhard

the No. 1 jingle of all time by Advertising Age's, *The Century of Advertising*.

A former resident of Berne, Reinhard is the honorary chairman of the Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower project. He said, "The vision to create the clock tower and plaza

was inspired by the recognition that what you learn in Berne is not only worth celebrating, it's worth preserving in a way that uniquely reflects our Swiss heritage."

## Building a towering symbol of timeless values: The Verdin Company

Thirteen members of the Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower steering committee traveled to Cincinnati, Ohio on June 6, 2005 to research construction of Berne's clock tower. The group visited the Verdin Company, which is the world's largest supplier of clocks, clock towers, electronic carillons and bells.

Verdin installed its first tower clock in Cincinnati in 1842, and since then has pioneered several breakthroughs in the bell and clock industry. Its most notable bell creation was the world's largest swing-

ing bell, the 66,000 pound World Peace Bell. The bell commemorated the millennium and is now on display at the Millennium Monument in Newport, Ky.

Verdin designs and installs clocks in airports, amusement parks, churches, hotels, restaurants, free-standing towers and shopping centers. Clock towers are built in the factory and then transported to the site for installation.

Representatives from the Verdin Company visited Berne on June 21 to discuss construction of the clock tower and to view the site.

"This project is sig-

nificant," said James Verdin. "People from all around the country will hear about it, and they'll come to Berne to see it."

Pictured from the left are: Roger Muselman, co-chairman of the steering committee; Larry Flores, chief designer for the Verdin Co.; Jim Beitler, steering committee co-chairman; James Cooper, sales representative for Verdin; James Verdin, co-owner of Verdin; and David Baumgartner, president of the Berne CDC.



Representatives from the Verdin Company visit Berne to discuss construction of the Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower.

# Looking back at plans to move forward

The Swiss heritage of Berne is unique and inviting. However, like most small communities, Berne faces the growing need for economic development. Development is necessary for progress, but progress also means change.

Berne has undergone a number of changes over the years, but has managed to maintain its traditional look and feel. One area where change has led to progress has

been in the relocation of homes.

Homes have been moved in Berne to accommodate businesses, invite tourism, expand church facilities, allow for convenient banking, and even for the installation of the Berne Post Office. In every case, the move has meant economic advancement and community improvement.

## TOWERING THOUGHTS!

“Moves have meant economic advancement and community improvement.”



Moved from Harrison St. to 706 Van Buren St.

The relocation of homes means growth for Berne businesses and public places.



Bank of Geneva, Berne branch



Moved from Harrison St. to 415 Van Buren St.



Berne US Post Office



First Mennonite educational wing



Cross United Church of Christ educational wing

## Erv Inniger lends support to the Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower

Erv Inniger, Senior Associate Athletic Director for Development at North Dakota State University and former resident of Berne, is lending his support to the city's Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower project.

Inniger's basketball career began in the local school gymnasium, and

advanced to the college campus and on to the American Basketball Association. He served as NDSU's head basketball coach from 1978 until 1992, and before that was head basketball coach at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minn., and Golden Valley Lutheran College in Minneapolis.

During his successful 23-year coaching career, he compiled a 409-224 record.

With all of his successes, he still maintains close, personal ties with his hometown. During a three-week trip to Europe earlier this year, he and his wife, Linda, visited Bern, Switzerland to talk with the city's mayor and former mayor about plans to build a clock tower in Berne that will be a replica of the historic Bern clock tower.

Inniger said, "Berne's efforts to stay connected to its history take a lot of effort, but it's worth it." He went on to say, "Most people will never have the opportunity to travel to Switzerland like I did, but building a replica clock tower will give them a chance to connect with their Swiss heritage too."



## Berne family visits Swiss ambassador

The Matt Lehman family visited the home of Christian and Suzanne Blickenstorfer during a visit to Washington DC. Mr. Blickenstorfer is the Ambassador to the United States from Switzerland. In 2002 he came to Berne during the city's sesquicentennial, and since then has remained interested in the community. The Lehmans talked with the Blickenstorfers about Berne's Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower, generating genuine interest. Pictured above are: in the front row, Kelli Lehman; from left to right, Joye Lehman, Kristen Lehman, Kara Lehman and Mrs. Blickenstorfer; and in back from the left, Matt and Ambassador Blickenstorfer.



From left: Alexander Tschappat, mayor of Bern, Switzerland; Erv Inniger; Erika Munger, Bern Tourism; and Linda Inniger.



PO Box 27  
Berne, IN 46711  
(260) 589-3139

## TOWERING THOUGHTS!

"We need to make Berne a thriving hub of small businesses."

*Roger Muselman  
Steering Committee  
Co-chairman*

If you're interested in making a commemorative gift, visit the web site or call 260-589-3139.



## Clock tower budget

Total cost estimate, \$3,246,000

- **Component one, \$1,968,000**  
Acquisition, Site preparation, Tower and glockenspiel, Settlers statue, Component one endowment.
- **Component two, \$855,000**  
Acquisition, Site preparation, Promenade, Fountain with bear statue, Component two endowment.
- **Component three, \$423,000**  
Utilities, Earthwork, Brickwork, Masonry, Seating, Lighting, Landscaping.

### Commemorative opportunities and gift values: Feature and amount

- Clock tower \$1,000,000
- Endowment \$500,000
- Glockenspiel \$400,000
- Event lawn (2) \$200,000
- Clock face (2) \$100,000
- Promenade \$100,000
- Fountain/bear statue \$100,000
- Tower column (4) \$50,000
- Settlers statue \$50,000
- Carved value stone (8) \$25,000
- Historical marker (Multiple) \$15,000
- Arch (4) \$15,000
- Low wall, pedestal (Multiple) \$6,000
- Icon (Multiple), \$6,000
- Lamp post, Bench, Tree (Multiple) \$3,000
- Flower garden (Multiple) \$3,000

## Concept marketing: a key to success

Concept marketing is the key to small town success. With industries moving elsewhere, communities like Berne are scrambling to find a new economic identity. Concept marketing looks for areas of interest that have the most potential for success, and then markets those concepts.

When asked what Berne's concept marketing strategy might be, Jim Beitler, co-chairman of the Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower steering committee, said, "It's simple. Berne already has a popular niche—it's

pronounced 'Swiss.'" He went on to say, "In order to concept market, we need to 'super size that Swiss concept,' and that's what the Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower will do."

The clock tower will improve the local economy by opening the door to increased trade and tourism, generating increased economic opportunity for all of the city's businesses. The plaza will provide an attractive gathering place for weddings, reunions and receptions, and can be used for concerts and Swiss Days events.

### Mission Statement

The Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower create a time-honoring tribute at the crossroads of our community by fostering an abiding legacy of the faith of our ancestors, refreshing the common spirit of the community, and inspiring a vision of hope for future generations.

## Berne alumni get on board

The Berne CDC Steering Committee consists of nine divisions. They include: lead gifts, professional, financial, retail, industrial, agricultural, individual, senior, international, and perhaps most important of all, alumni divisions. Floyd Liechty is chairman of the alumni division.

There are over 1,200 alumni who were born and raised in Berne but who have moved away. The alumni division has been contacting these former residents, and interest in the clock tower from this group has been nothing short of amazing. Former Bernites with varying connections to the town are responding, and they want to participate.

Floyd Liechty said, "Although we are in the early stages, it has been a

very rewarding experience working and conversing with Berne alumni."

Berne provides a respite—a place that still stands for the timeless values of faith, hope and love that form the foundation of the fundraising campaign theme. It is that concept and those values that help to explain, in part, why a person who has had little contact with Berne for over 50 years, would, after seeing our brochure, pick up the telephone and say, "I'm interested in a commemorative gift at the \$50,000.00 level."

The clock tower will help add to the sense of "place" that current and former residents feel for Berne. It will be this town's visual image from now on.

## www.berneclocktower.org

The Muensterberg Plaza and Clock Tower now has a Web site, and the CDC would like to thank John Robinson, CEO of Dynamic Resource Group, for funding and overseeing its creation. For information about the clock tower or to read ongoing news about the project, visit the Web site at <http://www.berneclocktower.org>.

