



HERITAGE OHIO

Vital Places. Vibrant Communities.

846 1/2 East Main Street
Columbus, OH 43205

Office 614.258.6200

heritageohio.org

2011 AWARD WINNER

MOST CREATIVE FUNDRAISING

GALA OF TREES MARION, OHIO

In an attempt to honor the people, places, and projects that exemplify growth through preservation and revitalization, Heritage Ohio granted the 2011 Annual Award of Most Creative Fundraiser to the Downtown Marion, Inc. for its event, the Gala of Trees.

RECOGNIZING OPPORTUNITY

As an Emerging Main Street Organization, Downtown Marion, Inc. sought to increase its visibility, make more connections within the community, and, of course, raise money. Their creative event, the Gala of Trees, made significant strides toward each of these goals. After locating a facility with plenty of windows visible from the street, area businesspeople donated money for the trees and decorations, while a local merchant sold Downtown Marion, Inc. eighteen trees at a discounted price. Volunteers from local businesses and professional design studios in Marion decorated the trees, each with a different theme. The trees were then free for the public to view.

SUCCESS

Over 150 people purchased tickets to bid on the trees at the live auction. A local auctioneer volunteered his services while a local television station filmed the event, later featuring the broadcast throughout the holiday season. An area restaurant served hors d'oeuvres and beverages. The entire event created \$9,000 in net income. The broad spectrum of volunteers and positive feedback from the community further contributed to the success of the Gala of Trees. This event helped Downtown Marion, Inc. to realize its potential as a self-sustaining organization and to gain valuable community recognition.

