

iBuyMoCo Campaign is Being Extended

Thanks to you and the nearly 1,200 individuals and 200 businesses who have joined the iBuyMoCo campaign, the program is being extended. Launched in 2009 by the Monroe County Economic Development, Commerce and Tourism Committee, the iBuyMoCo program was scheduled to end in December 2011.

The primary goal of the program is to educate consumers about the impact their buying decisions have on local businesses and communities. A 2007 UW-Extension study showed that Monroe County residents made \$41 million worth of retail purchases at out-of-county businesses that year. The iBuyMoCo campaign asks individuals to

shift 10 percent of what they were spending at retail stores outside of Monroe County back to local businesses.

By shifting just 10 percent – or \$4.1 million – the study showed we could add 100 jobs in Monroe County, increase personal incomes by \$3.5 million and increase municipal tax revenues by more than \$700,000.

Has iBuyMoCo had an impact? While we can't directly measure whether or not local retailers are seeing an increase in sales due to iBuyMoCo, we do know that the sales tax revenues in the county for 2009 were \$65,890 higher than in 2008. And the 2010 sales tax revenues in the county were \$57,158 higher than in 2009.

iBuyMoCo Launches Facebook Page

As the iBuyMoCo campaign moves into Phase 2, we have launched a Facebook page thanks to Kenny and Michelle Clipner of YouTurnTheKey.com. The Oakdale couple offered to create and maintain the Facebook page at no cost to the county. The page – at www.fb.com/iBuyMoCo – will feature three businesses or organizations per day along with their Hot Buy, if they have one.

The Facebook page will replace the iBuyMoCo newsletters for keeping participants up-to-date on what's happening with the program. News and Hot Buy specials will also continue to be posted on the www.iBuyMoCo.com website.

Individuals who supplied an e-mail address when taking the iBuyMoCo pledge will receive the iBuyMoCo EXTRA e-newsletter in November and December.

If you have not been receiving the monthly e-newsletter, you can still sign up by sending your name and e-mail address to info@ibuymoco.com.

Starting Jan. 1, Monroe County UW-Extension Community, Natural Resources & Economic Development Agent Will Cronin will take over coordinating the iBuyMoCo program from current program coordinator Lorry Erickson.

At that time, the monthly and quarterly newsletters will be replaced by periodic news columns written by Cronin on the impact buying locally has on area businesses, our communities and local governments.

Participation in the iBuyMoCo campaign is open to all Monroe County businesses and organizations. To register, visit the Business Directory section of the iBuyMoCo website or write to iBuyMoCo, P.O. Box 704, Tomah, WI 54666 to request an application form.



iBuyMoCo Reaches the 200 Mark

The Mommy Bunch, a non-profit group based in Norwalk, is the 200th business or organization to join iBuyMoCo. The group was founded by Norwalk mother Jessica Helgren as a way to bring local moms and children together. The group's activities to date have included offering face painting at the Norwalk Tractor Pull (pictured above). Read more about The Mommy Bunch at www.ibuymoco.com/newsletter.php.

Other businesses joining the iBuyMoCo campaign since the Summer Quarterly Newsletter was distributed include: YouTurnTheKey.com, Sunset Ridge Estate and Hardware Hank, all of Tomah; Dean's Home Security and Tastefully Simple Independent Consultant Stacy Van Wormer, both of Sparta; and Thirty-One Independent Consultant Diane Pitel, Warrens.