

Downtown crowd gathers to sway and strut on the street

By Whitney Helm whelm@beloitdailynews.com | Posted: Saturday, August 8, 2015 10:00 am

If you're not a fan of dancing in the street, the Friday evening kickoff of the Downtown Beloit Association's annual Street Dance was not the place for you.

The 22nd year of the street dance featured vendor favorites, old and new residents and a few slick moves by some of Rock County's finest public safety personnel to the Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars' hit song "Uptown Funk."

The annual event is the biggest fundraiser for the Downtown Beloit Association, which helps fund various events through the year. It brings as many as 3,500 people to the streets of downtown Beloit each year, including Beloit resident Sharon Klein, who sat in a lawn chair as she listened to swing music.

A few sprinkles Friday didn't dampen any spirits downtown. Klein said she was devastated when rain canceled the dance last year, and she was happy that didn't happen this year.

"We come every year," Klein said. "We come to see the people, I bring my grandkids."

Other residents like Jodie Miller said the music was the big draw to come to the event.

"We came down for the music," Miller said. "My best friend was in town so I brought her down too."

Downtown Beloit Association Program Coordinator Crystal Buhmeyer said the night was a success, despite an earlier threat of rain.

"It's going really well," Buhmeyer said on Friday evening.

Buhmeyer said there were more than 60 volunteers helped put on the event, which will continue on Saturday.

The music and dancing began as the Extra Crispy Brass Band took the stage.

During intermission, public safety personnel entertained the crowds by dancing to the song "Uptown



Street Dance fun

Face painting was a big hit at Downtown Beloit Association's 22nd annual Street Dance on Friday. From left: Ava Carrillo, 7, Maliah Miller, 6, and Zoey Olson, 9 enjoyed music and hanging out on Friday.

Funk.” The original crew of firefighters, Beloit police sergeants and Rock County Sheriff’s office employees filmed a lipsync video on May 30. Beloit Police Director of Support Services Jillian Peterson, a FitPro Services fitness and Zumba instructor, choreographed the dance for the video. The video is posted on the Rock County Communications Center’s YouTube channel and is on the Center’s website (www.rockcounty911.com). It can also be found by going to this link: <https://youtu.be/5ywAz5ba9Qs>.

After firefighters and police officers showed their dance moves, Cold Sweat and the Brew City Horns provided music for the rest of the evening.

Saturday, the downtown celebration continues with sidewalk sales and the Farmer’s Market from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. The Rock, Paper, Kubb Tournament also will be held at Riverside Park, with registration starting at 9 a.m.