

# POCONO RECORD

## S-burg spruces up for big weekend

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STROUDSBURG — A big weekend of downtown activity meant some springtime sprucing up this week for Stroudsburg shop owners.

The Jacob Stroud Corp., the Stroudsburg revitalization organization, called for Wednesday and Thursday to be "Clean Up Main Street Days," in preparation for not only the upcoming tourist season, but also for this weekend's activities.

On Saturday in the borough, the PoconoArts Council will hold PoconoArts Squared, a day of visual and performing arts, and on Sunday the Pocono Mountains Run for the Red Marathon passes straight down Main Street.

"It's the real beginning of our foot-traffic season," Sherman Theater Executive Director Richard Berkowitz said. "People don't want to see a dirty downtown. They want to see an open, inviting one."

Berkowitz had staff power washing the sidewalks and walls of the theater's entrance at 524 Main St. in preparation for the weekend.

He said he's also got big shows this month, including "American Idol" runner-up Bo Bice visiting the theater Wednesday, May 24. There is also a comedy show Friday, May 12, featuring the Rev. Bob Levy of "The Howard Stern Show."

Berkowitz said those shows will be bringing people into the downtown — people who will be looking for somewhere to eat, shop or stay.

"We should want to look our best," he said.

At Brownie's in the Burg, that meant the annual planting of flowers. Pat Brown, an owner of the restaurant and the Best Western hotel at Main and Seventh streets, spent Thursday morning planting brand new flowers in boxes along the wall of the hotel.

Admittedly, she knows they may not make it through the summer because of vandalism. But that doesn't stop her from making her place as visually appetizing as she can.

"I get a lot of compliments from our guests about how nice the downtown is," she said. "We take pride in that. They always have good comments about the downtown."

The PoconoArts Council expects a good crowd for Saturday's program, which begins at 1 p.m. and runs to about 9. On Sunday, while no one knows exactly how many spectators will be drawn downtown for the marathon, there will certainly be a bustle.

"We're going to be introducing a lot of people to the downtown," Berkowitz said.