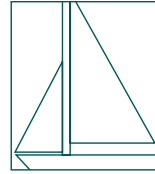


NEW LONDON MAIN STREET



A Connecticut Main Street Community

www.newlondonmainstreet.org

Volume 7, No. 2 ■ Spring 2005

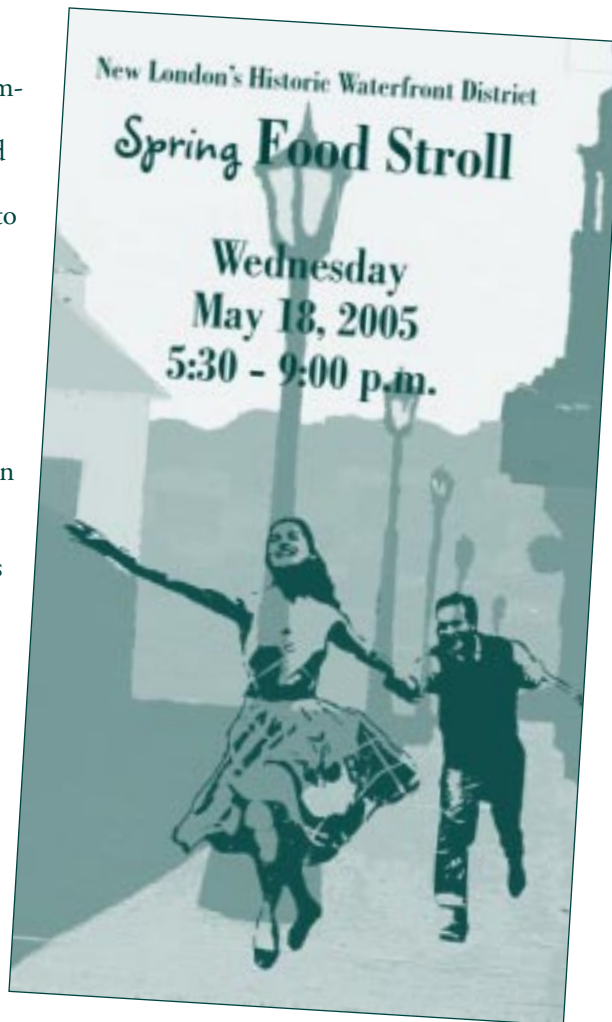
Back by Popular Demand!

By Kathleen Neal

The temperature is warming, the sun is setting later each evening, and flowers are popping up everywhere! Now is the ideal time to wander through the Historic Waterfront District and enjoy the finest food it has to offer. On Wednesday, May 18th, from 5:30 to 9:00 pm, 22 of our district's restaurants, two food shops, and a party cruise boat *SeaPony* will participate in the Spring Food Stroll. They will offer a variety of hors d'oeuvres, entrées and desserts for strollers to sample. The district has had five new restaurants open this spring, and all will be part of the Food Stroll.

The sounds of big band, swing and jazz will keep participants' toes tapping, as live music fills the air along Bank and State streets. The New London Firefighters' Pipe & Drum will waft from Hanafin's Irish Pub on upper State Street. Enjoy the flowers cascading from the lampposts and the newly installed downtown banners while meandering between restaurants. Make sure to peek into our various shop windows, as they will be showing off their spring finery.

For \$25, strollers will receive a bright green and yellow button and a drink coupon that can be redeemed at any of the Food Stroll venues. Buttons can be purchased after May 1st at the New London Main Street office or at Chocolates & More at 140 State Street.



Buttons can also be picked up outside the New London Main Street office the night of the Stroll, but reservations are required in advance.

The Spring Food Stroll is back by popular demand after the overwhelming response New London Main Street received from the restaurants and the more than 400 strollers who participated in the October Food Stroll. If you haven't "strolled", now is the time, and if you have, welcome back!

NEW CROCKER HOUSE LOBBY *Showcased at* EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING

By Karen Anderson

Join us in the newly renovated Sol LeWitt Lobby of the historic Crocker House for New London Main Street's Eighth Annual Meeting & Awards Ceremony, to be held on Thursday, May 26 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Come see the "wrap-around" mural by internationally acclaimed artist, Sol LeWitt, whose work can be found in museums all over the world.

The event will be hosted by Crocker House partner, Michael Joplin. The Crocker House, built in 1872, is a fitting location for this year's Annual Meeting, since it was once a favorite location for social and political events.

The Promotion Committee will unveil the most recent addition to its annual series of posters. The local artist, Cindy Walker, will be on hand to sign them. A brief business meeting will be held to elect new board members and to approve the annual budget. Main Street Partners, Major Funders and volunteers who have made outstanding contributions during the past year will also be recognized. Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

The annual meeting is a chance to hear about Main Street's recent achievements and learn about upcoming projects. If you have not joined or renewed your membership, take advantage of a membership discount available only at the annual meeting. The public is welcome. Please RSVP to the office at 444-2489.

It takes a whole town to make our downtown work!

NEW LONDON MAIN STREET

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NEWSLETTER

Designer/Publisher
Angell House Design
Editor
Joanne Gibson

President's Perspective

Our downtown businesses vibrate with excitement of the spring as we prepare for the Food Stroll, which will include several newly established eateries in the district. The spring brings cheer and hope after



a somber yet spiritual uplift from the passing of Pope John Paul, remembered in all the spectacular churches in our downtown with the assemblage of many generations of New Londoners. We also remember Faye Vathauer, a longtime friend of New London Main Street, who recently passed away after distinguishing herself as a long-standing entrepreneur with strong convictions in the promise of our downtown.

We have reaffirmed our mission through a strategic plan

which will concentrate our efforts toward integration of the Historic Waterfront District with the waterfront itself. We have found an extremely supportive group in the city council members, who continue to encourage the NLMS volunteers and staff for their dedicated service to the city. We will continue to collaborate with City Center District, Maritime Society, New London landmarks, The Garde Arts Center, Hygienic Arts and the Downtown New London Association, and to support the efforts of all the downtown merchants, developers and residents, while working to attract new merchants, visitors, residents and entertainment to our downtown.

We welcome Joanne Gibson as our new volunteer coordinator. Our esteemed volunteers will find her skills extremely valuable to optimize their many efforts toward our objectives of the four commit-

tees. I applaud the efforts of the committee chairs Liz Suson (Design), Jean Brown (Promotion), Kerin Woods (Organization), and Jerry Sinnamon (Economic Enhancement) for their leadership in organizing and motivating us in many exciting projects.

We specifically recognize financial and moral support by the major sponsors including Suisman Shapiro and The Kitchings family. NLMS has become the flagship program of our State with 30,264 cumulative volunteer hours (as of December 2004), which reflects the pride in our downtown. We are convinced that the Historic Waterfront District is on its way to becoming a destination for all those who value history, art, culture and entertainment, bringing families and friends together.

Executive Director's Update

As a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, does New London Main Street devote sufficient resources to preserving and promoting the district's historic assets? This is a good question to ask in May, which is National Historic Preservation Month. Here's my report. Decide for yourself!



- The *Promotion Committee* this year added an historic walk to its shopping guide and is going into full production after piloting a successful living history play, which linked three of the district's historic sites by horse-drawn

carriage for the Lights & Song festival.

- The *Design Committee* is completing the text for bronze plaques that will mark 30 historic buildings in the district to create a heritage trail (see page 6).
- The *Economic Enhancement Committee* held the second in 2005 of its "Don't Miss the Boat" workshops on May 4, featuring a slide lecture by Harvard University visiting professor, Paul Groth, on the evolution of storefront design and window displays and how strategies for attracting shoppers have changed with architecture and building materials.
- The *Organization Committee* is holding its Annual Meeting in a location to celebrate the restoration of an historic

lobby (see page 1).

But we're not always successful at weaving history into our events: The Food Stroll committee, in trying to incorporate history into the spring stroll, started out with an image of elephants parading along State Street on Circus Day in the early 1900s as the graphic for the event. Did not the image suggest that we would all look like elephants after eating so much on the stroll? The idea was scrapped. Nevertheless, our historic assets make the district the beautiful, interesting place that it is. Remember, no matter how hard our competition tries, it can't build an historic mall. We've got it, and we will flaunt it!

SPOTLIGHT ON SUPPORTERS

Bodenwein and Community Foundations
Strengthen Our Organization

By Penny Parsekian

The Bodenwein Public Benevolent Foundation awarded New London Main Street a \$13,200 grant in February to double the hours of our part time employee in order to add volunteer coordinating to her responsibilities. It was the largest Bodenwein grant awarded. In March, the Community Foundation awarded Main Street a \$6,300 to redesign our Web site and maintain it for a year.

These two grants are particularly critical for our organization at this juncture. After seven years of operation, we have many complex projects in the pipeline. Reinforcements for our loyal corps of volunteers are needed as never before. The two grants will work together to expand our outreach to new volunteers, especially those who are internet savvy, and will help provide the support and rewards to sustain our mostly volunteer organization.

Expanding our staff thus became our priority this winter. Our database manager KB Bryant decided she needed to attend to her growing consulting business, Operation Organization, so we advertised to fill the new Volunteer Coordinator position. From 16 applicants we selected the top six, and, after interviews with each, we found the person we were looking for: Joanne Gibson. Joanne lives in East Lyme with her three children, aged 7, 13 and 14, and her husband, Don, who works at Pfizer. She has a degree in psychology and education and many years of experience as an executive in the fields of healthcare and finance.

In addition to editing the newsletter and annual report, Joanne will be working with a committee to redesign the Web site as a vehicle for volunteer recruiting, among the site's many other roles. She will be



Volunteer Coordinator,
Joanne Gibson

in the office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

New London Main Street is blessed to have two granting agencies that are focused on the region and know its needs and players. Without their support we would not be able to sustain the momentum we have achieved.



New London Main Street gratefully acknowledges its supporters

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CT Main Street Center Awards
New London Main Street Top Honors

The Awards for Excellence in Downtown Revitalization have been announced by the CT Main Street Center, putting our program in the spotlight. The Best Special Event went to

our Living History play for the Celebration of Lights & Song by the Sea, thanks to a winning application by Kathy Diaz-Saavedra. In the category of Best Fundraiser, Kathleen Neal's application for the His-

toric Waterfront District Food Stroll won the top billing. Congratulations to our very own whiz kids. Thanks go to the CT Main Street Center for raising the bar with such awards programs.

Thanks
to our supporters

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Pick a project from the committee reports below and call the Main Street office at 444-2489 to learn how to get involved

Promotion

Jean Brown, Chair

The Promotion Committee, along with project chair Gretchen Higgins, is proud to be unveiling the 2005 NLMs poster at the Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony on the 26th of May.

There is plenty to do in downtown this spring and summer so be sure to pick up one of the bright green Event Calendar cards. Designed by committee member Deirdre Cavanagh, this card is available at local retailers and restaurants throughout the district.

We will be updating the downtown Historic Waterfront District's Dining & Shopping Map & Guide for the summer season. This guide to downtown's best in shopping and dining is a must-have for area residents and visitors.

Calling all artists! Applications will be accepted beginning in May for participation in this fall's Wet Paint Week competition. Artists will once again hit the streets to capture scenes of New London's Historic Waterfront District, which will then be displayed during the Boats, Books & Brushes Festival. Cash prizes will be awarded!

The planning committees for both September's Wet Paint Week (held in conjunction with Boats, Books & Brushes) and December's Lights & Song by the Sea celebration are now meeting monthly. Anyone interested in joining one of these committees should contact the Main Street office at 444-2489, or email our new volunteer coordinator, Joanne Gibson, at volunteer@newlondonmainstreet.org.

Please consider joining us on the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30pm at the Main Street Office to see where you might fit into one of these wonderful projects!

Design

Liz Suson, Interim Chair

The Public Works Department might be installing the new banners by the time this newsletter arrives in your mailbox! The Banners Committee was able to sell 48 of the 50 banners ordered, with a few queries still out. Bob Stuller did the heavy lifting, preparing all the logos to be printed on the slices. To control the problem of too much fluttering, the slices now have a solid oak rod in the bottom hem and a



grommet in the side where a tie attaches the slice to the light pole.

The Heritage Trail project is making good progress (see pg. 6) and the Façade Design Assistance project, headed by Frank McLaughlin, is also going forward. Suisman Shapiro has agreed to have three colorful banners installed on the front of One Union Plaza to help identify the building as the home of New London Main Street. Tom Zanarini is working with the Building Department to get the proper approvals, and the same company that manufactured the light pole banners, Downtown Decorations, will be fabricating the brackets and overseeing the installation.

Gail Bartelli and her City Lights Committee started phase II of lighting the crowns of buildings on State and Bank streets, but due to weather and untried materials some of the lights will have to be reinstalled this spring. The committee is nevertheless ready to expand the program for next winter, and vows to get an earlier start!

We would like to use the funds raised through the Commemorative Bench Program, headed by Paul Foley, towards a project consistent with Main Street's strategic goal of improving the connection between commercial district and the waterfront. But in order to tackle new projects, we need to bolster our committee. Please consider attending one of our monthly meetings on the fourth Wednesday at 5:45 p.m. at the Main Street office and help us improve the appearance of the district.

Economic Enhancement

Jerry Sinnamon, Chair

The Economic Enhancement Committee is again hosting a series of meetings to assist New London businesses in capitalizing on events in the Historic Waterfront District this spring, summer and fall. The first meeting in the 2005 series, entitled "Don't Miss the Boat", was held on Thursday, April 21, at 8:00 a.m. at the New London Antiques Center. Thank you to Suzanne Berkman for making her

space available to us and for being such a gracious host! The well-attended meeting was a huge success. A second special meeting was held on Wednesday, May 4, and featured a slide presentation on changing trends in storefront design, hosted by Kream, and sponsored by Mark Christiansen, Chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Again, there was an excellent turnout.

These meetings will provide information about scheduled events on the Waterfront during the months of May through November, afford downtown businesses a forum to discuss ideas for taking full advantage of these events, and encourage event sponsors to meet with restaurants, merchants, and other downtown interests prior to finalizing their plans. In 2004, the meetings were an integral ingredient in New London's success in hosting two important visits by Holland America Cruise ship *MSS Maasdam*.

We are using a new on-line announcement to increase the awareness of these meetings, so that all who are interested will have the opportunity to learn about the sessions and to participate. While individual flyers will continue to be distributed, we are confident that the additional communication vehicle will reach more Historic Waterfront District businesses and encourage them to turn the many warm weather events into business opportunities.

A priority for the committee in 2005 is increasing the membership, especially by representatives of the committee's primary constituency—business owners, merchants, and restaurants in the Historic Waterfront District. *Individuals with an interest in becoming members are encouraged to attend the committee's meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm. at the Main Street Office.*



W H A T ' S N E W

Kream Rises to the Top

By *Tambria Moore*

Its magic alchemy starts as soon as you open the glass door. A stone fairy washes away your cares from her window garden niche. The serene sounds of her cascading water sooth you forward past picket fence and patio to the charming dining area. Behind the coffee bar, owners Tom Catalina and Dennis Adley pour piping hot rejuvenation. The discriminating traveler in this urban oasis may sip the finest coffees and organic teas. But don't overlook the Euro-infusion of salads and sandwiches artistically created from the finest delicatessen meats and greens. It is the wise traveler who orders the full experience from rich and exotic espresso, to the eye and palate pleasing antipasto, right on to the tiramisu. Then, you'll want to lounge on an Italian leather sofa and chat with others, or sit silently and surf the net through the wireless Internet access provided.

Your experience at Kream is as important a creation as the quality of the prosciutto on Tom's Catalina Sandwich. Dennis and Tom met over 12 years ago. Both have a strong career history in high pressure sales. Eventually they agreed that taking time to "smell the coffee" was worth more than racing on life's fast track.

Tom Catalina is a family man. His fiancé and son are the sun and the moon of his world. Without remorse he will tell you that baseball and beach time are far more important than working long hours. He grew up in a large, traditional Italian family so, of course, the food, the salad dressing, the meats, and everything down to the Kalamata olive has to be just right—the way mom would have it.

Dennis Adley may have been born an American, but he has spent much of his life in other countries. His first six years he lived in Germany. As an adult, he went off to see even more of the world. He conquered the European experience and saw much of the Orient and Hawaii while serving in the U. S. Navy. Because of his exposure to the unique and exotic, Dennis insists that Kream bring the world to the port city residents of New London. Based on the skill and experience he

developed in some of the finest restaurants in the region, he is determined and confident that Kream will succeed.

The New London location was selected for its eclectic mix of people including artisans, theatre patrons, and college students. With the help of François Curiel, they have renovated 318 State Street and designed its engaging interior. Using their entertainment license, they plan to open Kream's doors to artists, poets, actors, musicians and more.

On May 1st, Theatrical Script Reading will be hosted beginning at 6 p.m.

Kream Coffee Bar and Lounge

(860) 701-0370

318 State St., New London, CT 06320

Sunday - Saturday, 9 a.m. - midnight



Nico's: Most Likely to Succeed

By *Tambria Moore*

Anita Beck, NLHS class of '91, was voted most likely to succeed by Reid Burdick, New London businessman and civil servant. According to Reid, "As people know, I love to eat. Nico's is a great addition to downtown for anybody looking for fabulous soups and great homestyle cooking at very reasonable prices. And as a bonus, the place is spotless."

Nico's Uptown Deli recently opened its doors and its heart to the public. This is a family-first restaurant from the familiar booth seating to the all-American "you've got to try the..." comfort foods. More than a place to enjoy burgers, clam strips, homemade soups and scrumptious desserts, Nico's caters to every taste bud. Anita plans her menu around real people—sugar free items, breakfast basics, and senior specials (delivered 3-5 p.m. to four local senior centers

and housing complexes) are just a few of the ever-developing menu items and services. It is clear that she listens to her customers and responds to their cravings. The food is simple, good and wholesome, and the atmosphere sparkles under the tender attention of its owner—Like the mirrors she hung at different heights, "one for men, one for women", this restaurant reflects the thoughtful philosophies and character of its owner.

Anita grew up in the restaurant environment. Her family has owned and operated several successful restaurants, and she waitressed at many local establishments while working through college. Her partner and father, Gonzalo Marcelo, is a retired chef who cooked in uniform aboard the U. S. Coast Guard on America's tall ship, the *Barque Eagle*. In the near future, he will be a not-so-second mate in Anita's galley.



Nico's is named in honor of her 13-year-old son, who "was such a good boy" during the years she was a single parent. Nico's siblings include a 1 1/2-year old and a 5-year-old. Anita had managed a successful catering and cleaning business on Fishers Island, but the commute was interfering with her time at home. So Nico's Place, or

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VIVA VOLUNTEERS!

History at Your Footsteps

By Kerin M. Woods

Nestled along Bank and State streets, the thoroughfares of downtown New London, are many significant historical buildings, with fascinating but little known

past.

Thanks to volunteers, Heather Grigsby and Sylvia Malizia, this history will soon be available to New London residents

and tourists alike, on bronze plaques set in the sidewalks adjacent to the buildings to create a heritage trail through the district.

The history of the plaques project is itself fascinating. First, it is a collaboration among a number of downtown organizations. Center City District (CCD) originally conceived of the idea of providing information to the public about historic downtown buildings in the mid-1990s. A committee, working with the city's Office of Development and Planning, explored many options before deciding that the best manner to display the information was by the placement of bronze plaques in the sidewalks. When the project lagged, CCD asked New London Main Street to help. Main Street recruited volunteers and wrote two grants for funding from the Frank Loomis Palmer Fund to cover the fabrication and a portion of the installation costs. The balance will be incorporated into a request for funding to City Council for use of federal funds earmarked for the Thames River Maritime Heritage Park.

Heather, a member of the Design Committee, and Sylvia, the archivist for New London Landmarks, set to work last spring. Over the course of the year, they secured bids from several bronze plaque manufacturers and



have meticulously researched the design, construction and past uses of 30 buildings. Thanks, in part, to historians such as Sally Ryan and Dale Plummer, they have come up with some fascinating information. The Mohican building, for example, located at 281 State Street, was designed by New York architect, William Tuthill, who also designed Carnegie Hall in New York City. When built in 1897, the Mohican was intended to house the publishing operations of Frank Munsey, who published the New York Herald, but two years later, it was turned into a hotel, with three floors and a roof garden added to the building. The Custom House, located on Bank Street, was designed by Robert Mills, who also designed the Washington Monument.

Board President Barun Basu, with help from former Main Street administrative assistant Kristin Havrilla Clarke, prepared the bid package for the job of installing the plaques in the sidewalks. Depending on the chosen contractor's schedule and the season's special events, the plaques will be installed either this spring or fall. The next stage in the project is to create a brochure with more details about each of the buildings. The historic plaques project is a good example of what can happen when New London organizations work together, but it is also a case of volunteers making a significant commitment of time. The result will be a long-term benefit to the City of New London and an increased awareness of the stories behind the intriguing architecture found in the district.

Committee Reports

continued from page 4

Organization

Kerin Woods, Chair

The Organization Committee's NLMS Website Redesign Subcommittee has been meeting regularly and is nearing the completion of the Website redesign. The redesign will include new graphics, improved organization of information, increased member exposure, and the ability for members and volunteers to communicate with New London Main Street through the Website. Subcommittee members Joyce Thomas, Joshua Foley and Andrew Bell are to be commended for their efforts and enthusiasm for this project.

The Organization Committee is also completing plans for the Annual Meeting, which is scheduled for May 26, 2005 in the Sol LeWitt Lobby of the Crocker House. Tim Anderson has graciously agreed to chair this event again. Tim received help from several New London Main Street members including: Anne Schmidt, who is in charge of advertising for the Annual Report; Liz Suson, who designed the invitations; Gretchen Higgins, who is overseeing the poster unveiling and award; and Sandy Chalk, who will be in charge of poster sales at the Annual Meeting. Everyone's support in making the Annual Meeting a success is greatly appreciated.

The Organization Committee is gearing up for its 2005 Membership Campaign. Our annual dues for individuals and families will increase in 2005, but will remain very reasonable at \$25.00 for individuals and \$40.00 for families. Remember to renew your membership at the Annual Meeting to get your discount. Our goal is 250 members and we need your help!

Anyone interested in joining one of these committees should contact the Main Street office at 444-2489, or email our new volunteer coordinator, Joanne Gibson, at volunteer@newlondonmainstreet.org.

The committee meets monthly on the fourth Monday of each month at 5:00pm at the Main Street office. Come help us with the newsletter, the Web site and with new projects as we update our plan. All are welcome!

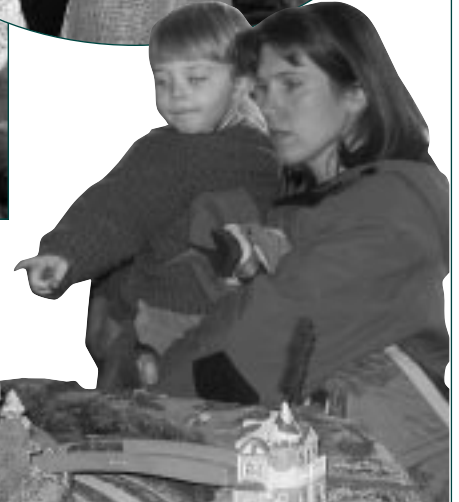


Wow, What a Winter!



DECEMBER

Lights & Song sparkled and glistened and rang with music and laughter, as the largest crowds this festival has ever seen gathered on The Parade and filled the streets. The New London High School Band played, ice artists carved, cookies hung on the Union Station tree decorated by many little hands, Harbor School sang, Santa listened, and children shared their secret wishes. Folks traveled back in time in horse-drawn carriages to witness the first performance of "New London through Time & Place," at three historic sites. Three cheers for Chair Kathy Diaz-Saavedra and her elves!



JANUARY

For Night Kitchen during Hygienic, thirteen restaurants enjoyed great crowds which created heat and light from all the energy to warm a freezing night! Promotion Chair Jean Brown ran with this one.



FEBRUARY

Love conquered all at "Sweet on Downtown," where Romeo wooed Juliet, and the desserts from 19 restaurants proved equally irresistible! Gwen Basilica and Pam Walsh created a veritable bazaar of downtown offerings for the silent auction, complemented by over 40 pieces of art. Midnight was the bewitching hour when volunteers Steve Gould, Bertha Willoughby and Kelly Troland turned into super heroes to help Chair KB Bryant put the ISAAC school back together again!



IT TAKES A WHOLE TOWN TO MAKE OUR DOWNTOWN WORK!

PLEASE NOTE: INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE INCREASING EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2005 AS NOTED BELOW.

Please complete and return form with membership fee to:

New London Main Street Corporation, One Union Plaza, P.O. Box 1428, New London, CT 06320

- Please Check One*
- Individual \$20 (\$25 as of July 1, 2005)
 - Family \$30 (\$40 as of July 1, 2005)
 - Supporter/Small Business \$50-249
 - Patron/Corporation \$250-499
 - Benefactor \$500-1500

Are you interested in serving on a Main Street committee?

If so, please check one or more of the four committees, and a member will contact you:

- Design
- Economic Enhancement
- Promotions
- Organization

Name: _____ Amount Enclosed: _____

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WELCOME TO MEMBERS WHO JOINED OR RENEWED THIS WINTER

Individual

Catherine Foley
Edward Hammond
Elena Pascarella
Ann Connolly
Paul Ferreira
Adam Fritzsche
Christine Keating

Armand Lambert
Todd Lewis
Jeannie Sigel
Leah Spitz
Elizabeth Traggis
Ann Troiano
Lenda Tryon

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Nicos

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rather 312 State Street, was purchased as a turnkey solution. To be with her children and spouse, Anita closes her doors Saturdays and early Sundays.

Even though she lives in East Lyme, Anita remains a fan of New London. "This is my town. People who love New London stick with it, or come back to it." Anita wants to sponsor New London Little League sports and New London Police Explorers. She envisions her son, in his East Lyme uniform, playing against a New London team sporting "Nico's Place" uniforms—that constitutes fun to Anita. In the future she will renovate the façade of the building to allow for a sidewalk café, a wonderful addition to uptown.

Nico's Uptown Deli

312 State St.,
New London, CT 06320
(860) 444-NICO (6426)
Mon.– Fri. 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.
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