



Downtown Digest

A publication of Bristol Downtown Community Partnership

Volume Four, Number One

Bristol, Vermont

August 2011

Five New Businesses Come to Main Street

During the past year, downtown Bristol experienced a series of business closings and re-locations that created an unusual sight - many vacant stores on Main Street. The BDCP board viewed this as an opportunity to improve the retail mix of businesses and sought input from the public about what kinds of businesses they would support in the downtown. Always confident that the vacancies were a temporary issue, board members and the executive director worked behind the scenes to recruit suggested businesses, support entrepreneurs, work with the landlords, direct potential new business owners to resources to help them flesh out business plans and acquire adequate financing and, of course, always promoting Bristol as a supportive community to open a business. We are happy to welcome the new stores to Main Street and encourage all area residents to stop in, say hello and buy something!



Recycled Reading, opened June 15 at 25 Main Street, owned by Melissa Hernandez. A passion for books and the desire to nurture the love of reading in children motivated Melissa to open

her own bookstore. After eight years in retail book store management, she decided it was "now or never" to take the leap and open her own shop. Her goal is to create a space that is inviting for people to spend time, browse, have coffee or tea, enjoy the books, read to their child and find reasonably priced, quality used books.

Services she provides include searching for hard to find or out of print books, selling books of value online for customers and informing customers when certain types of books arrive in her store. She fills her shelves with books that customers bring in to donate or for store credit and from carefully culling through library, estate and yard sales. She also accepts and sells used CDs, DVDs and audio books.

Verde Mountain, opened in August at 19 Main Street, owned by Reed Prescott III. A showcase of local home improvement professionals, Verde Mountain seeks to be a one-stop shopping resource for those looking for services in the realm of home building, décor and renovations. Reed's goal is to have 18 to 20 professionals showcasing their specialty at the Main Street location. Those signed up so far include Stilwell Designs, Stark Mountain Woodworking, Thomas Building & Design, Woodware, DP Decorative Painting, Otter Creek Picture Framing, Nikken, McLaughlin Wood Floors and Prescott Galleries.

The advantage for area residents is having services downtown that would not be here if the professional had to pay for their own Main Street storefront. The co-operative approach allows the home professionals to feature their skills and broaden their customer base for a modest share of the rent. A creative, win-win situation for all involved. - Continued on pg. 5



Did you know....?

...**Raycroft/Meyer Landscape Architects** recently won the Grand Honor Award at the Green Works 2010 Industry Awards sponsored by the Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association. Their winning project was for the Chicago Botanic Gardens and involved designing an integrated setting for their world-class collection of bonsai trees. Husband and wife team, Katie Raycroft-Meyer and Peter Meyer own the design firm.

...**Carolyn Ashby**, manager of Art on Main, recently received a certificate in Non-Profit Management from Champlain College. The intensive 13 week course covered all aspects of successfully running a non-profit.

....At the statewide Downtown Conference this past spring, the **Town of Bristol** won a Green Mountain Award for the best historical renovation for the recent upgrade to Holley Hall.

...A group of Bristol residents have been meeting and planning a good quality consignment shop for Main Street. If you want to help bring this idea to Bristol, call Carol at 453-7378.

...**Better Planet** is open seven days a week through December (Sundays 11-4) and has lots of new greeting cards and more on the way, many are laugh-out-loud funny. Coming this fall are author visits from Steve Delaney, former VPR commentator and author of *Kevin, Vermont Seasonings*, and *Cooney*, and Rusty "The Logger" Dewees, with his new book *Scrawlings, Too*.

...**Leila Joseph, Ed.D**, is looking for someone to share her office within a suite in the Old High School building. Ideal for someone in the healing arts. Contact her at 453-7088 for more info.

...Bristol's **Harvest Festival and Downtown Sidewalk Sale** will be Saturday, September 24.

...**Mountain Greens Market** is open until 8 pm for

...When **Sally Burrell** is not giving Healing Touch and massage sessions, her hands are in the soil or in the kitchen. She is offering fresh pestos, sauces and salads at the Farmers' Market.

...Congratulations are in order for **Darcy's Salon!** This November will mark their 19th anniversary! It has been a great summer and **Lisa Peryea**, manager of Darcy's, wants to thank all her loyal customers for their patronage.



....Founded in 1762, next year will be the 250th birthday of **Bristol!** If you are interested in helping to plan the celebration, call Carol at 453-7378.

...**bOne Hair Studio**, on Prince Lane between Shaw's and Bristol Beverage, offers manicures, pedicures and facials.

...One of the best gifts in town is **Bristol Bucks**, the Bristol gift certificate redeemable at over 35 local businesses. Purchase in denominations of \$5 or \$20 at the Bristol branch of the National Bank of Middlebury. It is always the right size!

...**VBT**, Vermont Bicycling and Walking Vacations, of Bristol is celebrating their 40th anniversary this year. They also won two awards from Travel & Leisure magazine and National Geographic as one of the Best Adventure Travel Companies on Earth. Congratulations!

...Downtown businesses are exploring staying open late one night a week to better accommodate those working outside of Bristol.

Downtown Digest

is published periodically by
BDCP

(Bristol Downtown Community Partnership)
PO Box 413, Bristol, Vermont 05443
802-453-7378 bdcpt@yahoo.com

BDCP Chair - Bonita Bedard
Editor - Carol Wells

Five New Businesses in Bristol — *continued from page 1*

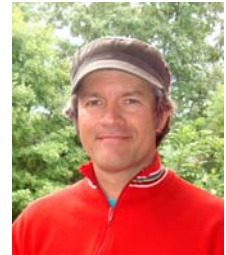
Scentsations, 10 Main Street, opening in September, owned by Erin Heffernan and Dani Bluteau.



Planning for an opening in early September, Erin and Dani are working hard to revamp the former Cheers space. Their new business will be a full service floral shop with fresh cut flowers, floral designs for weddings and arrangements for all occasions. They will also offer silk and dried flowers and a variety of gifts and crafts like fabric wall hangings, beaded jewelry and chocolate. Many of the crafts will be created by Dani and Erin. The goal for their business is captured in the store's name, Scentsations. They want the customer to walk in and have a feast for their senses, from wonderful fragrances, to beautiful colors and textures and abundant flowers, plants and gifts to look at and explore. Both women had been looking for a business they could own together in downtown Bristol. Dani has floral design training and experience, so the pieces just fell into place. They will be open Monday through Saturday, from 9 to 5, but the hours may expand depending on customer feedback. Follow their progress on Facebook.

Bristol Outdoor Sports opens in October, owned by Todd Warnock.

The idea of an outdoor sports store has echoed around Bristol for years. Well, folks, we will finally have one on Main Street! Todd Warnock, a Lincoln native and avid cyclist, is hard at work preparing to open his store this fall. It will feature outdoor gear and apparel, a full service workshop for bikes and ski tuning, equipment for Nordic, cross country and alpine skiing, snow shoeing, kayaking, canoeing, hiking, fishing, cycling, yoga, and skateboarding. Todd has been working and active in the outdoor industry since 1992. He chose Bristol because he saw a unique opportunity of untapped natural resources yet no facilities, infrastructure or provider of equipment and services. He plans to get involved in helping create bike and hiking trails around Bristol that take advantage of the area's natural assets. Robert Fuller, area restaurateur and the original owner of the Bobcat, is acting as Todd's mentor and encouraged him to utilize the community investment concept that worked so well for the Bobcat. If you would like to know more about investing in this business, contact Todd at 377-7871 or bristoloutdoorgear@gmail.com. Todd's business goal is "to be a destination and provider of everything outdoors for local people and visitors."



ND Tavern, 31 Main Street, opened in June, owned by Nina Badger and David Bannister.



A life-long dream and the perfect opportunity came together at the right time and a new business was born. Nina and David want to create a fun place where everyone feels comfortable and welcome. Before opening, the interior underwent major upgrades to the rest room facilities and the kitchen, bringing everything up to code. The current menu features hot and cold selections, including appetizers, salads, sandwiches and specialty burgers. They take pride in their hand-cut fries, in-house made pesto, guacamole, salsa and wing sauce. They feature live music on Saturdays from 8 to 10. Events to look for in the near future include pool and dart tournaments, trivia, karaoke and other theme nights as the year progresses. The tavern is open Monday through Thursday 4 to 11, Friday and Saturday from 4 to midnight and closed Sundays. ND's is available for private parties and events on Sundays. Events are welcome other nights, but, for the time being, the tavern will need to be shared with the public during regular business hours.

Bristol Farmers Market Provides Fresh Produce, Food, Services and Fun on Summer Saturdays



Every Saturday from 11 to 2 until October 1, the town green is a bee hive of activity. Vendors, music, and craft activities under the kids' tent provide a family-friendly atmosphere. This year, the market also features a variety of craft and cooking demonstrations. Bike repair, car vacuuming and clothes mending are services offered weekly at the market, as well as trial spots for local businesses and entrepreneurs. The Farmers Market accepts EBT and Debit cards and currently has a \$3.00 coupon available on their website until September 15. Visit their website at www.bristolfarmersmarket.org for the coupon and a list of upcoming musical performances, kids activities and special events. Sign up on line for their weekly summer emails to inform you of the market highlights.

Third Annual Pocock Rocks Music Festival and Street Fair



On June 18 in beautiful downtown Bristol, folks enjoyed local foods, outdoor dining, vendors, kids' activities and music that ranged

from gospel to country rock with all sorts of toe-tapping tunes in between. The wine tasting tent was a popular new feature this year as was the Farmers' Market on Main St. The weather cooperated to provide a beautiful day for a fun, community event.

Art on Main Celebrates 10 Years



October will feature a variety of special exhibits and activities at Art on Main as they kick off their next decade of business. Opening just weeks after the tragedy of September 11, 2001 and the ensuing economic malaise that blanketed this country, Art on Main has weathered many rocky national and local economic challenges and plans to celebrate their survival with the community. Look for Saturday demonstrations during Foliage Open Studio weekend October 1 - 2, craft demonstrations from October 7-16, reception and exhibit of work by Judith Bryant, pottery, and Krista Cheney, photography, on October 7. Visit



Bristol
Downtown
Community
Partnership

PO Box 413
Bristol, VT 05443

Inside...

- ...Five New Businesses ...pg. 1
- ...Did You Know?...pg. 2
- ...Shopping Locally...pg. 3

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
MIDDLEBURY, VT
PERMIT NO. 11

Shopping Locally Does Make a Difference

Where can you find a gift for your child's birthday, hiking boots, a nice bottle of wine, men's undies and new windshield wipers? On Main Street in Bristol, that's where! How many residents of the five town area are well-versed in the diversity of goods and services available in the Bristol area?

"Shop Local" has become a mantra repeated frequently in the media. Sometimes when we hear something repeatedly, it loses its effect. However, if we truly understand why something is important, then long term changes in habit may occur.

The economic, social and aesthetic vitality of our community is greatly enhanced by a strong independent business sector. Because local business people eat, sleep, play, shop, pay taxes and send their kids to local schools, they have a strong interest in keeping their towns vibrant. The common benefits of a strong independent business sector are a healthier economy, a more engaged citizenry and more choices for consumers. A strong, healthy downtown benefits all area residents.

Money Spent Locally, Stays Locally - Money spent at local businesses has far-reaching effects. Study after study show that money spent locally stays in the local economy strengthening the economic base of the community. One such study found that local businesses circulate about \$.60 of every dollar back into the local economy via wages, donations, taxes, purchases of supplies, and the hiring of local services, professionals and repairmen. A national chain store circulates only \$.14 back into the local economy, mostly by way of wages. Buying something online from a national company circulates \$.0, zip, zero, nothing back into the local economy.



Businesses Support the Community – Local business owners donate 250% more to local non-profits, school and organizations than do national chains or online retailers. Consider who donates items and gift certificates to silent auctions, raffles and events, buys yearbook and program ads, sponsors local events and kids' sports teams. If you don't believe it, try asking Amazon for a donation!



Long-Term Strength of the Economy – Chain businesses are controlled from central headquarters. They make decisions at a national level and some may not be good for folks in Vermont. Sales drop, expenses need to be cut and a branch in Vermont may close at a moment's notice. Nationally, hundreds of chain stores pick up and vacate a community every year, leaving behind empty buildings and unemployed people. What is especially sad is when the chain store has put a local store out of business and then leaves. Both nationally and in Vermont, small local businesses employ the largest number of people and account for the vast majority of job growth.

Diversity of Choice – There are many interesting people in Vermont and some express themselves in the businesses they run. Local, unique businesses reflect our area's culture and character, attracting tourists looking for relief from the cookie cutter chain stores found everywhere. A variety of small businesses with products based on the needs and desires of their local customers instead of an inventory plan from national headquarters, results in a much wider range of choices in goods and services for area residents. National chains have some good points, but do you want to be limited to eating only at chain restaurants and buying only from chain stores?

- continued on page 4

Shopping Locally Does Make a Difference—*continued from page 3*

Lower Environmental Impact – Small businesses, often located in compact downtowns like Bristol, have less impact on local ecosystems than larger



retailers located in strip malls or large stand-alone buildings. Driving or walking to Bristol to do most of your shopping, instead of driving to Burlington, saves gasoline, reduces carbon emissions, and decreases tire and road wear.

We realize that chain stores have a place in our buying habits and folks probably cannot buy everything they need in Bristol. What we are suggesting is that you shop Bristol first to see if what you want is right here in your own backyard. As noted by the Vermont Department of Agriculture's Buy Local campaign, if Vermonters shifted just 10% of their food purchases to locally

would add more than \$100 million to Vermont's economy. Just imagine what would happen if we did that for every kind of purchase! Try increasing your purchases at local businesses by 10 to 20%. The positive benefits will vibrate throughout the community. Let's pledge to patronize the five new businesses, as well as, our current Bristol businesses to keep them in town.

Your buying choices have power. Where you choose to purchase goods and services makes a huge difference. Use that power wisely and think about the ripples that your choice will or will not make in the local economic pond.

Sources for many of the facts and figures come from Local First Vermont and the Institute for Local Self-Reliance.

We Need Your Help!

Bristol Downtown Community Partnership (BDCCP) is a non-profit organization formed six years ago to nurture and expand the economic vitality of downtown Bristol. As required by the Vermont Downtown Program, our focus is the downtown. But a healthy, active downtown Bristol, as the heart of the five-town area, has a positive impact felt throughout the surrounding towns. Our board of directors consists of business and property owners/managers and community members. We work to keep Bristol a vibrant hub of the five-towns by:

- Planning events – Cool Yule, Maple Magic, Pocock Rocks Music Festival and Street Fair, Harvest Sidewalk Sale,
- Promoting Bristol as a destination for tourists in visitors centers and publications around the state,
- Planning and executing beautification projects and writing grants to cover the costs – Prince Lane, the fountain restoration, park improvements,
- Assisting our current businesses via training workshops, providing free or low-cost access to experts in a variety of fields, advocacy, and promotions,
- Recruiting and working with new businesses to fill Main Street vacancies and add to the quality of business mix in Bristol.

We would love to have your support in our efforts to keep Bristol an active, economically healthy downtown. Please become a Bristol Downtown Friend by making a donation in the enclosed envelope.

Thank you very much!