

THE GREAT AMERICAN DOWNTOWN DISPATCH

A NEWSLETTER ABOUT DOWNTOWN NASHUA

Special points of interest:

- From the Director
- Downtown Forum Meetings being Held
- Block Captain program begins
- Joy Barrett named Volunteer of the Year
- New Businesses Open

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Getting to Know Your Neighbors

The first in a continuing series of stories about downtown businesses and organizations

Did you know that downtown Nashua has its very own U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) office located within the Chamber of Commerce office?

The SBA is a federal agency with a mission to maintain and strengthen the country's economy by counseling, assisting, and protecting the interests of small businesses and by helping families and businesses recover from natural disasters.

The SBA has been assisting businesses since 1953, and provides a variety of assistance including loan programs, technical and contracting assistance, and advocating



for small businesses.

The SBA has teamed up with resource partners including SCORE, the NH Small Business Development Center, and the Women's Business Center in order to fully assist small business owners.

Lillian Evans is the SBA's Business Information Center (BIC)

manager in Nashua. She has been working for the SBA for 16 years, and is well versed in many aspects of small business assistance, especially financial assistance.

Evans describes the SBA's BIC as a "one-stop shop" for small business owners to access information and receive counseling

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Gift Certificate Idea Proposed for Downtown Businesses

Imagine being able to buy a handbag at the Handbag Boutique, shoes at Alec's, and dinner at Villa Banca, all using the same gift certificate. Well, if the proposed idea of a down-

town gift certificate program goes through, you will be.

At the January Downtown Forum meeting, there was "great interest," according to Great American Down-

town Director John Mitterholzer, in pursuing a downtown-wide gift certificate program.

The goal of the program is to have all businesses in the down-

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Special points of interest:

- Our newsletter has a new look! Read about it in A Few Words from the Director.
- Learn all about block captains in our article and get involved in downtown.
- Downtown Forum Meetings are being held at Flegal Law Offices. If you want to get involved read more
- Board President Scott Flegal wins 2004 Eminence Award for Business Person of the Year

A Few Words From the Director

Our New Look

By now you have noticed that our newsletter has a brand new look.

It is our hope here at Great American Downtown that we can continue to better our communication with businesses located downtown, between businesses and other businesses and between Great American Downtown and the community.

Throughout 2004 we will continue to

provide opportunities for everyone to communicate their ideas, goals and needs for downtown.

I encourage business owners to attend the new monthly Downtown Forum. These meetings provide an opportunity to meet your fellow business owners and to work together to solve downtown issues.

In addition I encourage business owners to assist us with the new "Block Captain" program. This program will help all of us keep in better contact and work to ensure that no one is left in the dark about downtown projects, events or



issues.

These programs will not be successful without each of your cooperation. I hope to see everyone at the next Downtown Forum Meeting or at our next "Block Captain" meeting.

- John Mitterholzer

Gift Certificates From pg 1

(Continued from page 1) town area participate, including retailers, lawyers, accountants, restaurants, etc. And you thought you could get a lot with a mall gift card.

While there are no specifics yet, there is currently a committee looking into creating the program.

The final plans for the program, including a list of all the businesses participating, will be released in the spring.

If you are interested in being on the planning committee, or if you want to get involved in any way, contact the Great American Downtown office at (603) 883-5700

Block Captains Introduced to Downtown

Great American Downtown is creating a system in the downtown area called "Block Captains."

Each block captain is in charge of informing all business owners on their block about downtown meetings, events, and issues. Each block will have at least one block captain.

The purpose of the block captains program is "to have better communication downtown," states Great American Downtown Director John Mitterholzer. The block captains are a result of an "effort to get more people involved in activities," adds Mitterholzer.



Downtown business owners will be hearing from the captains within the next few weeks.

Several block captains are still unassigned, so if you are interested please contact Great American Downtown at 883-5700.

Barrett Wins Volunteer of the Year

Great American Downtown's own Joy Barrett won the First Annual Volunteer of the Year Award at the Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce's Eminence Awards on February 19. Joy was nominated by Great American Downtown for her numerous hours of volunteer work with Great American Downtown's Winter Holiday Stroll.

Barrett has been involved with the Winter Holiday Stroll for four years. She has been the chairperson of the event for the past three years. Every year this proves to be a difficult task, for the chairperson has to plan the event, find volunteers, and raise \$26,000 in order to keep the event free to the public.

"What makes Joy Barrett such a unique volunteer is not only her dedication but also her modesty," says



2002 Winter Holiday Stroll

Great American Downtown Director John Mitterholzer.

"Joy never takes credit for her accomplishments and never complains about the long hours or hard work she must put in to make the event successful."

In 2003 alone, Barrett volunteered over 500 hours of her time to the Great American Downtown Winter Holiday Stroll.

She even closed her computer training company for most of the month of November so she could focus on the Stroll.

Most of the citizens of Nashua have no idea how much time and energy Barrett gives to the Stroll every year. The Eminence Award is a way for the community to show their appreciation for such a "rare volunteer," as Mitterholzer describes her.

"Without Joy Barrett, Great American Downtown and the Winter Holiday Stroll would be nowhere near as successful as they are today," says Mitterholzer. "[She] is a remarkable person. She is a dedicated volunteer who has committed thousands of hours to making her community a better place for everyone."

Downtown Sweeps Eminence Awards (Almost)

The Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce's first annual Eminence Awards honored several downtown businesses on February 19, 2004.

The awards are given out annually by the Chamber to honor businesses, business owners, and volunteers in the Greater Nashua Region.

Great American Downtown Board Chair, Scott Flegal took home Business Person of the Year honors, Oracle Corporation,



Great American Downtown Board President Scott Flegal receives the Business Person of the Year Award at the 2004 Eminence Awards

a sponsor of Great American Downtown's Winter Holiday Stroll was selected as Business of the Year, Michael Timothy's won the Small Business of the Year award and Great American Downtown's Vice President Joy Barrett won Volunteer of the Year.

Congratulations to all of this year's winners and finalists.

Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce's Eminence Award Finalists and Winners

Business of the Year

Oracle Corporation (Winner)

BAE Systems

Bank of New Hampshire

Business Person of the Year

Scott Flegal of Flegal Law Office (Winner)

Paul Laflamme of At Home Realty

Raymond Noel of Northeast Planning Associates, Inc.

Jack Law of Law Warehouses

Small Business of the Year

Michael Timothy's (Winner)

Splash by Masi

Fortin-Gage LTD

Volunteer of the Year

Joy Barrett (Winner)

Ted Gorski

Susan McHugh

Names in Italics are downtown businesses or business owners

Downtown Forum Meetings to be Held

Volunteer Needs

The following committees are in need of volunteers

Taste of Downtown June 2, 2004

Join the committee that plans our first event of the Summer

Music Event, date to be determined

Join the committee that will be reorganizing downtown's music event.

Winter Holiday Stroll, November 27, 2004

Help us plan Nashua's signature holiday event

Historic Preservation/ Design (4-6 hrs per month)

Come help us preserve our heritage and improve the way downtown looks and feels.

Marketing (5-7 hrs per month)

Volunteers are needed for our Marketing Committee. If you have experience in marketing and are willing to volunteer 5-7 hours a month please join us.

Additional Needs

Website Manager (1-2 hrs per week)

Experienced website designer/manager needed to update our website weekly

Please call 883-5700 for more information

Great American Downtown will be holding Downtown Forum Meetings the third Tuesday of every month at Flegal Law Office from 8:00 am to 9:30 am.

The purpose of the meetings is to join with other downtown business owners and downtown organizations to discuss current issues that are affecting the downtown area. The meetings are an "opportunity for business owners to meet each other and to work to

make downtown better" says Great American Downtown's director John Mitterholzer.

The meetings hope to help with any "issues that are affecting downtown business owners and customers," says Mitterholzer. They are open to any member of a business or organization in the downtown area.

The meeting begins informally at 8:00 a.m. with a chance to grab a cup of coffee and meet your fellow business owners. Formal discus-

sion begins at 8:30 am and lasts until 9:30 am.

If you have any questions regarding the meetings, contact The Great American Downtown office at 883-5700.



Small Business Cont'd

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services.

At the Nashua BIC the SBA offers a variety of resources, including four Internet accessible computers, business planning computer programs, an extensive hard copy library, counselors, brochures, and access to a list

of numerous seminars and workshops in the area. All the resources that the SBA provides are completely free of charge.

Additionally, the SBA works closely with the IRS, so any small business owner can ac-

cess IRS information at the office.

If you would like more information on the SBA you can access the SBA website at www.sba.gov, or contact Lillian Evans at: (603) 881-8333.

Volunteers: The Key to Successful Revitalization

Without volunteers Downtown Nashua's revitalization efforts will not be successful.

If you have ever wondered how downtown businesses are recruited, who decides where benches are

placed who designs our website or asked yourself who plans these events, the answer is volunteers.

Great American Downtown encourages you to get involved downtown. Sign up for a committee, help plan an event or volunteer

in our office.

Your volunteer hours will help make downtown Nashua the place you want it to be.

Call the Great American Downtown office at (603) 883-5700 for a complete list of volunteer opportunities.

March 2004

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Historic Preservation/Design Committee Meeting	4	5	6
7	8	9 Block Captains Meeting Events Committee Meeting	10	11	12	13
14 Meet the literati of Nashua! Nashua Public Library	15	16 Downtown Forum Meeting	17 Historic Preservation and Design Meeting	18	19	20
21 Schanachie Nashua Public Library	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 Small Business Expo 3:00 -7:00 p.m. Nashua Sheraton	31 Historic Preservation/Design Meeting			

- March 3rd: Historic Preservation/Design Meeting at GAD Office 6:00 p.m.
- March 9th: Block Captains Meeting at GAD Office, 8:30 am; Events Committee Meeting GAD Office, 6:00 pm
- March 14: Authors Marilyn Solomon, Cay Gregg, Steve Daly, and Sheila Darragh will be on hand to read from and sign their books about Nashua. Nashua Public Library 2pm
- March 16th: Downtown Forum Meeting at Flegal Law Office, 8:00 am—9:30 a.m.
- March 17th: Historic Preservation and Design Meeting at GAD Office, 6:00 pm
- March 21: Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with Songs, Stories and Shenanigans, featuring the Irish singing duo of Pat Heffernan and Patrick Keane and other guest performers. Dancers from the McGonagle School of Irish Dance will also be featured. Nashua Public Library 2 pm
- March 30: Greater Nashua Chamber Small Business Expo. Nashua Sheraton 3:00-7:00 p.m. Come and view products and services offered from 100 small businesses located throughout the greater Nashua region. For more info call: (603) 881-8333
- March 31: Historic Preservation/Design Meeting at GAD Office 6:00 p.m.

Unless otherwise noted, all GAD committee meetings are held at our office located at 151 Main St.

* If you have a date you would like added to next months calendar, please contact us by March 15th*

Great American Downtown

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www.greatamericandowntown.org



Great American Downtown is Nashua's downtown revitalization organization. We work to "To provide coordination collaboration and partnerships that unify the entire Nashua community around a common vision for an attractive downtown that is vibrant, viable and truly reflects the character of our city." We are a non-profit organization who receives funding from the City of Nashua, downtown business owners, community residents and businesses outside of the downtown area.

What's New Downtown?

New Businesses

The Great American Downtown welcomes the following businesses to the downtown area:

- Benjamin's Dry Cleaning
- Blackbird Bookstore and Café
- Liberty Tax Service

Milestones

Congratulations to Tout Le Monde Interiors who has launched a new website featuring e-commerce. You can visit the site at:

www.toutlemondeinteriors.com

If your business is expecting a milestone within the next month (i.e. anniversaries, expansions, moving, etc.), please contact the Great American Downtown office.