



Free NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2008

Art Downtown

An essential ingredient in the revitalization of traditional downtown areas is the presence of unique activities that attract people and stimulate their interaction.



Pictured above: Angelucci Fine Woodworking & Stained Glass Studios and Artist Gallery. Pictured below: Mispillion Art League Gallery.



For this reason, art galleries have played a key role in the success of many downtown redevelopment efforts. In addition, arts-related businesses are great downtown tenants. They bring customers to the commercial district in the day, evening, and weekend, and are superb complements for restaurants and retail.

Downtown Milford is thus fortunate to now have two art galleries—Angelucci Fine

President's Message

by Mitch Crane, Esq.

Now that the holidays are over and winter has set in, we have the opportunity to reflect on what we have accomplished and to look forward to and plan for Spring. DMI has much in the way of recent accomplishment to reflect upon. It also has not only spring events, but 2008 plans to be excited about.

The evening of December 7th was a great night for DMI and for all of downtown Milford. The second annual Holiday Stroll reminded life-long Milfordians of their downtown of old. It also demonstrated to all who attended that our downtown businesses



Mitch Crane

have much to offer and that the unique atmosphere of our downtown exceeds any comparison to shopping centers and malls. Of course, Mr. & Mrs. Claus

brought delight to the children and Dave Wilson's horse-drawn carriages brought joy to all. I hope the throngs who visited downtown came back to

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Art Downtown (continued from Page One)

Woodworking & Stained Glass Studios and Artist Gallery and the Mispillion Art League Gallery. The former is located in a rehabilitated building on the Mispillion Riverwalk across from the Milford Public Library. The latter has just moved into a first floor space in the recently rehabilitated Governor Tharp Building on the corner of N.W. Front and North Church Streets. Both galleries have ample off-street parking immediately adjacent to their facilities.

Scott and Gail Angelucci officially opened their gallery during the Bug & Bud Festival last April. Their two-story building contains working studios for Scott (woodworking), Gail (stained glass), and Marc Clery (photography) and ample gallery space for displaying art and crafts from local and national artists. In addition, Gail and Marc hold classes in their respective fields in the building. A new line of work that Scott and Gail have been developing is working together on interior installations that combine their woodworking and stained glass. The gallery is open to the public Monday/ Tuesday/ Thursday 10-5, Friday 10-7, Saturday 10-4 and by appointment (302-422-4533).

The Mispillion Art League Gallery first opened its doors to the public during the Downtown Holiday Stroll on December 7. The four rooms they now occupy will be used

as a permanent gallery for displaying their members' work and as a space for holding occasional art classes. The gallery will be staffed on a volunteer basis by members of the League, so all proceeds from art sales will go directly to the artists. The gallery's winter hours for January and February are Saturday and Sunday from noon until 3. (The gallery will have more extended hours beginning in March.) The gallery can also be open by appointment—call Sara Gallagher at 302-424-0376 or leave a voice mail at 302-430-7646. Information about classes and other activities can be found on the League's website, www.mispillionarts.org.

It may seem remarkable that two such fine galleries have opened in downtown Milford, but this simply reflects the fact that the number of artists and art patrons in our community has been growing steadily for some time. Artists are finding Milford to be a hospitable and affordable location in which to work. The many new residents moving to Milford from metropolitan areas with thriving art communities are a natural support base for artists in our community.

Please remember—if you want local art, you need to support your local artists. So visit our downtown galleries, get to know the artists and buy their work!

Pres. Message

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shop and will continue to do so. I also hope they will come downtown throughout 2008 to see what is great about our existing businesses and those that will soon join them.

2008 will be a year of great growth downtown, more so if Downtown Milford, Inc. becomes part of Delaware Main Street! I am proud to announce that DMI handed in its application to join Main Street on November 30th. Approval is expected early in 2008 and will bring the professional help we will need if we are to attract new and unique businesses and provide member businesses with the tools they will need to not only survive but also to thrive in our community. I invite those few businesses who are not current members of DMI to invest the \$75.00 needed to join. What you will receive in return will be greater than any similar investment you could ever make.

April will bring the return of our Farmers Market on the day of DMI's most popular event—the "Bug & Bud Festival". Mark April 26th on your calendar! The Spring will also showcase the hard work done this fall by the Street Beautification Committee when their planting results will bloom for all to see.

On behalf of Downtown Milford, Incorporated, I want to thank all our members and volunteers for all they do. I want to thank our partners, especially the City of Milford, for the continuing contributions and support for our efforts.

Downtown for the Holidays

Two of DMI's most anticipated programs celebrated the holiday season with great success. The jingling of Santa's sleigh bells departed downtown for the last time on Sunday, December 23rd after 14 days of operation during November and December. The Santa House located

just off Walnut Street near the Mispillion Riverwalk welcomed over 1,000 children and an equal number of adults in 2007. The Santa House committee led by Beverly French is able to operate due to the financial

and product sponsorships from the local community. A wide range of civic groups and individuals donate their time and resources to furthering the cause. Each child who visited the little red house received a free picture with Santa as well as a hand-made stocking filled with candy.

In addition to spending time in his downtown house, Santa was able to get out with crowds of hundreds at the Second Annual Holiday Stroll. The event which was held Friday, December 7th provided downtown with merriment and good cheer. The merchant promotions committee of DMI met for several months leading up to the event to plan and execute the many activities held that night. In

addition to greater business participation, this year's Stroll also provided a larger number of live entertainment choices. Milford's Christmas Carol Band, First Presbyterian Church, Second Street Players, Avenue United Methodist Church Hand Bell Ringers, Phil Henry's Christmas Jazz, Delmarva Miniature Horse Club, and Zwaanendael Dance Academy were several groups who added to the festive atmosphere with their talents.

Finally, we congratulate the Milford Beacon for winning the 2007 Downtown Decorating Contest. Milford Beacon was awarded the traveling prize wreath to display at their business throughout the holiday season.



*Photos courtesy of
Gwen Guerke/
Milford Chronicle*



Above left: Sophia Layfield and her violin teacher, Michelle Peters, from the Delaware Music School provided music on Holiday Stroll. Above right: Madison Nally tells Santa her wish list at Santa's House. Bottom: Horse-drawn wagon rides, sponsored by Dave Wilson, drew a crowd throughout Holiday Stroll.

Redevelopment Grants Awarded

Four downtown properties received news this fall that they would be receiving Community Redevelopment Grant funds from a State of Delaware program operated by DMI. A DMI committee made recommendations to the DMI Board based on the fund's mission "to promote the historic restoration, preservation, and protection of Milford's traditional and historic downtown area."

Projects approved for funding include the repair and replacement of original tiles in front of the former Schine Theatre at 106 S. Walnut Street; structural repair at 7 N. Walnut Street; foundation repair and exterior improve-

ments at 19 N.W. Front Street; and sub floor replacement and roof work at 7 Park Avenue.

To date over \$1,250,000 has been spent on this project; including nearly every renovated structure on Walnut Street, Causey Avenue, and N.W. Front Street. Representatives from DMI continue to work with state officials to obtain future funding for the purpose of restoring and preserving downtown buildings.



Above: Facade improvements are underway at 19 N.W. Front Street.



7 South Washington Street
Milford, DE 19963

www.DowntownMilford.org
dmi@downtownmilford.org
(302) 839-1180