

Tri Town Foods Named Portland 2008 Business of the Year

Tri Town Foods, located at 316 Marlborough Street has been named Portland Business of the Year by the EDC. **Tri Town Foods** opened its' Portland store in 1988. Rick Sharr, President of **Tri Town Foods** and partners Kevin Brouillard and Jack Fitzpatrick, also own stores in the towns of East Lyme and Ledyard. The three stores are dedicated to providing a quality product, exceptional customer service, a commitment to the environment and becoming an integral part of the community.

Tri Town Foods not only provides monetary and in-kind support to local community groups, but is always ready to open its doors, or parking lot, to a group in need of a fund raising location. Among the nearly thirty community groups benefiting from the **Tri Town** philosophy of community involvement include: PHS Project Graduation, the Brownstone Arch Project, Portland Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, the Glastonbury Art Guild, Portland Little League, Panther Football, Portland, Mercy and Xavier High Schools, DARE, Exchange Club, Lions Club, Rotary, Portland Fair Association, Portland Fireworks, Portland Republicans and numerous food drive and charitable campaigns.

Tri Town Foods has continued to dedicate itself to a planned energy reduction and environmental program. Beginning in 2003, a new gas fired HVAC system was installed to replace a more than 40 year old oil system. During 2008, **Tri Town Foods** began working with CL&P, to install upgrades to lighting and infrastructure costing nearly \$300,000. One of the most visible changes is the replacement of the frozen food display cases with more energy efficient models. The renovations will continue with an upgrade in lighting and electric fan motors and the replacement of rooftop refrigeration compressors and condensers, to further reduce electric consumption.

Like many larger chains, **Tri Town Foods** has begun to promote the use of recycled plastic reusable bags by customers. Future bags made from hemp or similar organic materials are planned. Plastic bags provided at the checkout are made in the USA from natural gas sources instead of oil, and are biodegradable. As a way to offer more organic and locally grown produce and to support local farms, **Tri Town Foods** is beginning the permitting process for the **Tri Town Foods Farmers Market**. The market will be held one day per week at their current 316 Marlborough Street location beginning with the 2009 growing season.

Eggs Up Grill Receives Statewide Recognition

Congratulations to **Eggs up Grill!** The restaurant, located at 1462 Portland-Cobalt Road was profiled in the November 2008 issue of **Connecticut Magazine** and was positively reviewed by **The Hartford Courant**. The article appearing in **Connecticut Magazine**, written by Beth Hillson, entitled, "*The Connecticut Table: Allergy-Tested*", provided a guide for those customers suffering from food allergies and sensitivities. **Eggs Up Grill**, was one of only six restaurants statewide to meet the criteria set by **Connecticut Magazine**. **The Hartford Courant** article showers glowing praise upon **Eggs Up Grill** and its ability to do "comfort food" right. It terms its' coffee simply as, "fabulous".

Eggs Up Grill, owned by Kim Greenlaw, offers an array of choices for customers with food allergies. The restaurants menu includes dairy free and gluten free offerings. We are lucky to have such a well recognized restaurant here in Portland. Open for breakfast and lunch, stop by to try gluten free pancakes, muffins, French toast, breads, soups, salads and sandwiches. Bring cash, as credit cards are not accepted.



EDC BOOTH AT 2008 PORTLAND FAIR

For the first time, the EDC sponsored a booth at the Portland Fair for local businesses to market their products and services. The booth was located with the Village Marketplace, an indoor area dedicated to promoting community organizations. In exchange for an hour of time staffing the booth, Portland businesses were allowed to display signs, pamphlets, business cards, price lists, product samples, and other marketing materials at no cost. Too often, small businesses cannot afford the time away from their businesses to staff a booth for the entire three day event.

Local businesses participating included: **Coins and Gold Exchange, Signs & Designs, Kimberkleen Housekeeping Service, Claysocks Studio, Paychex, Frank Magnotta P.E., Tri Town Foods, Sand Art Birthday Parties, Cavaliere's Bakery and Deli, Tropical Sun, Dog Tales Pet Grooming, Portland Pizza House, Ameriprise Financial, and Tastefully Simple.**

Rick Kelsey, Director of Public Works, and Mary Flood, Senior Center Director provided materials to make the display a success. On Saturday afternoon, Ken Vaughn a representative of **Paychex**, a Rocky Hill based payroll services company serving several Portland businesses, sponsored an Amber Alert Child Safe ID Card giveaway. The program, provided in conjunction with the Middletown Rotary, brought a steady stream of young families to the EDC Booth. The laminated photo ID cards were offered free of charge to parents, with their children's information linked directly to Connecticut State Police and National Amber Alert data bases.

The EDC sponsored a free drawing for gift certificates to food establishments within the Main Street Village District. Seven lucky winners chosen from the more than 780 entries received during the weekend. \$20.00 Gift Certificates were awarded from **Portland Restaurant, Portland Country Market, Portland Pizza House, Great Wall Chinese Restaurant, Cavaliere's Bakery and Deli, Dunkin Donuts, and Main Street Diner.** Additionally, **Kimberkleen Housekeeping, Tastefully Simple and Tri Town Foods** offered free drawings for goods and services from their businesses.

Retirement and Insurance Planning at Next EDC Breakfast

The next EDC Breakfast Meeting is scheduled for December 15, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. at the Portland Library. Jim McCabe owner of **Ameriprise Financial Services**, will present a program designed to help small business owners and the self employed with retirement and insurance planning issues. Susan Bransfield, First Selectwoman, will provide an update regarding the recent bonding approvals for infrastructure improvements and mixed use developments. Refreshments will be served. Look for an announcement of the Breakfast Meeting in the Rivereast News Bulletin.



BROWNSTONE INDUSTRIAL PARK SIGNAGE COMPLETED

It's been nearly five years since the EDC began plans to provide directional signage for the streets and businesses within the **Brownstone Industrial Park**. That plan finally became a reality with the completion of the signage project in October 2008. The final proposal was submitted by **Signs & Designs**, of 123 Marlborough Street. Tom Humpreys, owner of **Signs & Designs**, proposed a combination of street signs, individual business placards, and a color coding system that makes following directions in the often confusing industrial area easier.

The signage, paid for through EDC budgeted funds for the 2008-2009 fiscal year, incorporates a color coded header for each street. Placards for each business located along that street are affixed below the header. The color coding, Wilcox Avenue is labeled in the color green for example, allows local businesses to provide directions not only using the street name, but the street color, which is easier to find when traveling in an unfamiliar area.

Community Partners Program to Recognize the Contributions of Portland Businesses

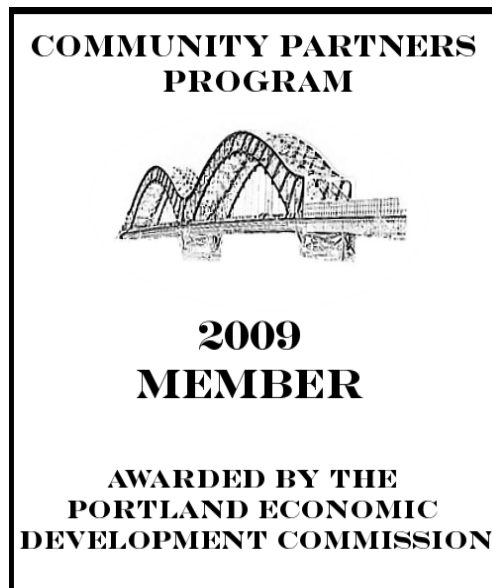
Local businesses support a wide variety of activities, including educational programs, recreational programs, religious organizations, organized sports programs, community outreach programs and nonprofit groups. The Portland Economic Development (EDC) Commission will recognize these contributions and convey the importance of this involvement in the success of many community programs and projects through the Community Partners Program (CPP).

The CPP will provide recognition for the time and money spent by local businesses in supporting activities important to the community through the issuance of a window decal. The decal is intended to recognize the contributions made by the business and serve as a reminder to customers of the importance of local businesses contributions in the success of community, educational and charitable programs.

CPP Members donating up to 200 hours of community service or up to \$5000. in products or financial assistance will receive a General Membership decal. CPP Members contributing more than 200 hours of community service or more than \$5000. in products or financial assistance will receive Gold Membership decal.

Businesses located within the Town of Portland may complete an application

documenting the financial assistance and in-kind goods and services provided to the community during the previous calendar year. Businesses may complete the application process anytime during the calendar year and receive a decal for the previous year's contributions recognizing them as a Community Partner. Applications are available in the Planning Office at the Portland Town Hall, on line at www.portland.org, or by calling Mary Dickerson, Economic Development Consultant at 342-7302. Completed applications should be sent to Mary Dickerson c/o Portland Town Hall, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480.



The Community Partners Program 2009 Decal

The EDC will host a Recognition Breakfast, to be held on Monday, March 16, 2009 at the Portland Library. Applications received by the EDC by January 31, will be recognized by the EDC and receive their decals as the Breakfast.

Portland Paint and Hardware Selected October Business of the Month

Congratulations to **Portland Paint and Hardware**, selected as Business of the Month for October 2008 by the Portland EDC. All businesses receiving the Business of the Month designation receive a sign to be displayed throughout the month in front of the business.

Owner Vern Adamski's dedication to providing quality products and attentive customer service made **Portland Paint & Hardware** an obvious choice for this award. A commitment to the town of Portland, the local business community, and Portland residents is evidenced by his newly renovated store at 724 Portland-Cobalt Road. Be sure to stop in and congratulate Vern and his staff.



A MESSAGE FROM THE EDC CHAIRMAN

The EDC is a volunteer commission composed of five Portland residents appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The EDC meets the second Thursday of each month at the Portland Library. Residents and members of the business community are invited to attend. The EDC has retained a part-time business consultant, Mary D. Dickerson, a Portland resident, to work directly with our business community.

The mission of the EDC is to work to promote and retain our existing businesses and to attract new businesses appropriate to our community. Members of the EDC have provided testimony in support of business owners before town policy and regulatory boards and can assist local business owners in their efforts to make changes at the local and state level. We welcome any suggestions you may have regarding improving Portland's business climate.

Sincerely,

Fred Knous, EDC Chairman

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PARKING NEAR POST OFFICE LIMITED TO FIFTEEN MINUTES

The installation of "15 Minute Parking" signs along Middlesex Avenue, adjacent to the US Post Office, has been completed. The EDC spearheaded the effort due to the lack of available short term parking spaces for the US Post Office patrons. The number of parking spaces along Main Street has been inadequate for the heavily used US Post Office. The signs are an attempt to prevent long term parking along Middlesex Avenue by area employees. Parking spaces along Main Street are unaffected by this change.

PORTLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION PORTLAND BUSINESS JOURNAL WINTER 2008

The **Portland Business Journal** is a quarterly publication of the **Portland Economic Development Commission**. Issues are published in March, June, September and December. If you have ideas for future articles, or notices for meetings or events that you would like to be included in the **Portland Business Journal**, please contact Mary D. Dickerson, EDC Consultant at 342-7302 or by e-mail at marydickerson@yahoo.com.