

Giving

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Edmonson said the Adopt-a-Family program will help about 40 families who have previously been residents at the Hearth. "Ninety-nine percent of those families that leave the hearth continue to be single moms," explained Edmonson.

Families currently residing at the Hearth would also benefit from community donations. However, Edmonson chose not to identify specific items sought by the Hearth. "We have 18 mothers and nine children at the Hearth who would be grateful for any contribution that anyone in the community would be willing to make toward a happy Christmas for them."

Churches, too, are offering their help to those in need. Jamestown's Central Baptist Church is currently accepting items that will be donated to the South Providence Neighborhood Ministries. Chairwoman of Community Care Tammy Fasano said the church is collecting hats, mittens, and toys until about Dec. 20.

Father O'Neill of St. Mark Church said his parish is in need of grocery store gift certificates/cards. The church is preparing food baskets for 60 to 70 people on the island who are either shut-ins or church members who have been bereaved over the last year. In addition, the church is always in need of non-perishable food items, or better yet, grocery store gift cards/certificates for its food pantry, which is distributed privately to people on the island. "We have a need here," explained O'Neill. "People don't realize it."

The Jamestown Chapel, an offshoot of the Exeter Chapel in Exeter, has been giving back to the community for a number of years. However, the small church group has no strict schedule for giving. "Our belief is that giving should be an ongoing thing," said Donna Cote, whose husband Mark is the church elder (pastor), "not something you do once or twice a year."

Cote was modest and said she preferred not to give specific details related to past donations. "We feel like it's between us and God and the person," explained Cote.

One program the Jamestown Chapel has participated in is the Angel Tree project — a project that gives gifts to the children of prisoners. Though the program is national, it pairs donors with local children who have been left behind. Donors learn the age and type of gift the child is hoping to receive, purchase the gift and in the process, and make a child's wish come true.

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Rector Kevin Lloyd said his congregation is participating in a holiday giving tree, in connection with Lucy's Hearth in Middletown. A Christmas tree decorated with paper mittens, which list a child's name and the child's specific holiday wish or need, is located in the parish hall. Those interested in helping simply select a mitten and purchase the requested item, which is then brought to Lucy's Hearth.

"We also take an ongoing collection of food for the Johnnycake Center," explained Lloyd. Though food donations are up due to the holidays, Lloyd said they are appreciated year round.



Jody Ziegler and Dale Rocha

Pas de Chat open for the holiday season

By Michaela Kennedy

A new shop, Pas de Chat, has pawed its way onto the retail scene at 16 Narragansett Avenue. Last week, Owners Dale Rocha and Jody Ziegler officially opened the doors to their store, which features, among other amenities, a mini spa offering "nice things for busy women" on site at the Cathryn Jamieson Salon.

Nurturing books, art cards, music CDs, and a mélange of other specialties line the shelves at Pas de Chat, French for the "cat's paw." Rich textures of organic cottons and silks fill the front showcase. Flashy reading glasses peek out at patrons from under the counter. Celtic music floats through the rustic front room, and Rocha and Ziegler show how "very committed" they are to Jamestown. "We offer things to renew, inspire, help make lives warmer, more fun — especially for women who live here," says Ziegler. These ladies are not pussyfooting around with their wares.

Busy women themselves, the owners emphasize the aspect of creating not just a storefront, but a relaxing place to browse and share a story or two. Explaining the lighthearted approach to the business and how they thought up the name, Ziegler, a former dancer, notes, "We kept hitting on cats. They land on their feet."

Ziegler, who has lived here for over three years, says that Jamestown needs more retail shops "for the people who live here," not just the seasonal tourists. She talks about adding to the flavor of the village, not competing with it. As an example, she points

across the street. "We are not in competition with Jamestown Designs. We are complementary to it," says Ziegler, adding that they are grateful for the welcoming support they have received from owner Debbie Swistak.

Ziegler gives credit for the operation to Rocha, whom she calls "the face" of the store. "I am just a silent partner," admits Ziegler, who is a full-time professor of visual arts at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester.

Standing with a bouquet of lavender in her hand, Rocha waves a hand of welcome to the back room and spa room. "We offer pedicures and other treatments here," she notes. Rocha has been offering her talents at the Cathryn Jamieson salon for the past three years, and the new storefront is an extension of her work and creative ideas.

Rocha runs upstairs to show the "tearoom," an intimate room available for workshops, meditations, or other small gatherings. She shares her hope to create a space for women to "come, relax, laugh, and be rejuvenated."

Appointments for the spa or inquiries regarding the tearoom can be made at the shop with Rocha. The new store is barely open, but the owners see plans in the future that include a Web site and an expanded variety of gifts to sell. Ziegler, who does art consultation and brokering, is looking forward to featuring and selling original artwork done by local artists.

Most of all, the owners express their excitement in providing a fun spot that adds a new thread of strength to the island community.

Holiday plan

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or poinsettia after all this preparation, McQuade's, the Secret Garden, or Tricia's Tropicrille will gladly help you out.

Gift-giving is heart-giving

The decorations are up, the spa dates are made, and the official holiday season is in full swing. Neighbors and family members this week have been echoing the chant, "I'm headed downtown to get gift ideas." Baked goods are selling, hot chocolate wafting in the air, and shoppers are browsing.

Rules of present exchange make many of us nervous, but worrying is a waste of good holiday party energy. A heart-felt gift, on the giving or receiving end, is an exquisite pleasure of the season.

A variety of people enrich our lives on a daily basis — co-workers, teachers, care givers, and neighbors, to name a few. A card can express your appreciation simply without stretching the wallet seams. Jamestown Designs, Baker's Pharmacy, and Pas de Chat all carry cards, books, and cute knick-knacks that will send the right message for you.

Gifts for the man of the house often end up last on the list, because his answer to the what-do-you-want-this-year question is typically, "Anything is fine." Years of frustration with this answer melt away by simply believing it's true — anything really is fine with him. A new power tool or meat smoker from Jamestown Hardware is icing to all the holiday food that's really on his mind. Big sellers, says Steve Sherman, are gas grills and battery-free flashlights, with or without a radio.

Across the street at the Conanicut Marine Services' ship store, foul weather jackets, boots and other boating gear abound for the sailor who is dreaming of the day in spring when his hull hits the water again. Jamestown Designs offers warm dreams as well with board games such as Shut the Box and Dread Pirate, traditionally loved by men at sea.

Gifts for the lady of the house become a bit more complicated. Just

because she says she needs a blender or a Crock Pot doesn't mean she wants to ogle it under the tree. Bewary of the man who protests, "But she loves the toaster oven I got for her!" She may have given up hope that the man in her life understands at all the mystery of the heart. No matter how much Scott Sherman at the hardware store would love to sell all the household appliances in stock, he still tags a warning to his advice. "Dust busters are big sellers, but I was smart enough not to get my wife one," he says.

Useful household items with beauty attached is a perfect compromise. Michael Houston on the waterfront carries a wide array of glassware with florals hand-painted by shop owner Fran Hanners. A hurricane lamp with dancing palm trees or a pastry cover bursting with cherry blossoms will enhance the romance.

All women, young or old, love jewelry that has been personally picked by a loved one. One-of-a-kind pieces, like a mother-of-pearl shell pendant with Conanicut Island stamped out of the center from the Purple Door, will be treasured years from now. The Purple Door is also well-stocked up on supplies from beads to semi-precious stones for creating some handmade gifts. Price ranges fit any purse, Goyette adds.

Gift certificates do not sound personal. Nevertheless, what could be more personal than a gift certificate for spa beauty treatments at Ocean Essence Spa or Cathryn Jamieson Salon. Friends always love an elegant meal on the town to a charming restaurant of choice, like the Bay Voyage, Trattoria Simpatico, or Tricia's Tropicrille.

For the kids, Wiffle balls and volleyball nets are ready for wrapping at the hardware store. Books and games are aplenty at Jamestown Designs and Baker's Pharmacy. Keep the young ones busy with gift certificates to Video Showcase.

If gift ideas are still eluding you, head downtown with the rest of the neighbors and mooch some inspiration from the merchants.

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