



## *Milford DO – IT*

### ~ 2011 TOWN REPORT ~

During 2011, Milford's Downtown Ongoing-Improvement Team (DO-IT) continued its focus on improving the Downtown and providing opportunities for economic development by marketing and raising the profile of Milford to the region.

DO-IT held several events this year. In early June, DO-IT partnered with a long standing organization, the Keyes Art Group, for the Milford Keyes Art Festival. Thanks to sponsor, the Milford Masonic Association, the Festival featured a stage & musical entertainment on the Oval as well as artist demonstrations, children's activities, and of course the art show. The Milford Masons provided food and coordinated the presentation of their Bikes for Books award on the stage. The result was a very well attended event over the weekend that focused on local art but had a broader community appeal.

The Taste of Milford took place on the eve of the Art Festival and showcased Milford's restaurants to the region. 2011 marked the second year for this highly successful event which featured 20 local eateries and downtown shops. The feedback from both regional media and participants noted Milford as being an up and coming destination for shopping and dining.

Throughout July, DO-IT held its 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Lunchtime Concert Series, bringing music and sometimes impromptu dancing to the Oval every Thursday. Approximately 750 people attended the concerts, listening to a variety of great music.

The Milford Great Pumpkin Festival celebrated its 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary on October 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> and was hugely successful. Approximately 30,000 to 35,000 people attended the Festival over the three day period. Forty nonprofit and community based groups participated with fundraising or awareness activities that will benefit Milford and surrounding communities in innumerable ways – including scouting troops, 4-H Clubs, Milford High School clubs, the Souhegan Valley Boys & Girls Club, Milford Middle School Enrichment, the Milford Community Athletic Association, the Rotary Club, and local churches. Altogether, these groups raised approximately \$60,000 for their programs and services that will be reinvested back into the community.

DO-IT sponsored the Milford Indoor Farmer's Market for its second season of November 2011 – May 2012 in the Town Hall Auditorium.

On December 1, the Oval glowed with holiday cheer during the Jingle Downtown Holiday Stroll and tree lighting. This year's Christmas tree was donated again by the Bonczar Family of Jennison Road.

DO-IT again coordinated seasonal plantings and decorations on the Oval, partnering with the Milford Garden Club to plant the Stone Bridge planters and the Bandstand. Local nurseries Butternut Farm, Souhegan Gardens and Trombly Farm

donated plants for the planters and Northland Design donated their expertise to plantings on the Oval.

The Milford Downtown welcomed 6 new businesses in 2011: Tasty Tobacco, B&D Bagel Shop, Layla's Consignment, Patriot Firearms, I DO Again Bridal Consignment and Kelley Photography.

DO-IT is actively seeking projects for our Revolving Loan Fund. The loan is funded by a HUD Economic Development Initiative grant received by DO-IT and will be loaned out to Milford businesses meeting the loan criteria for building renovations.

DO-IT's Executive Director served on the Town's Economic Development Advisory Council, and on the Hotel Feasibility Committee, the chair of the Town Website Redesign Committee and chair of the Town Branding Initiative Committee, as well as the Oval Area Improvement Committee.

DO-IT regretfully accepted the resignation of board member Richard Mori, a Milford resident.

At the December Board Member retreat, the DO-IT Board of Directors voted unanimously to change the mission of DO-IT from focusing on the Downtown to taking a town-wide approach and focus of promoting the town and supporting economic development activities in Milford. Also, the Board voted that the organization would change their name to reflect the new mission – therefore, DO-IT will now be known as the Milford Improvement Team. The new Milford Improvement Team plans to focus on increasing the promotion of Milford to the State and region as a great place to live, work and do business and looks forward to a successful 2012.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Woolfson, President Board of Directors

Tracy Hutchins, Executive Director

2011 Board Members: Kathy Bauer, Kent Chappell, Mark Constable, Melissa Deschenes, Ryan Hansen, Rick Ganis, Karen Keating, Ed Killam, Robert Krey, Heather Leach, Richard Mori, Janet Spalding, David Sturm, Alan Woolfson, and Chuck Worcester.

<i>Total Private/Public Reinvestment Initiated by DO-IT 1992-2008:</i>	<b>\$6.6 million</b>
<i>Number of Attendees of 2011 Milford Pumpkin Festival:</i>	<b>30-35,000</b>
<i>Total Economic Impact of Milford Pumpkin Festival on Town Economy:</i>	<b>\$2.6 million</b>
<i>Number of events coordinated by DO-IT in 2011:</i>	<b>8</b>
<i>Total value of DO-IT's 2011 activities to Milford economy:</i>	<b>\$2.69 million</b>