

BUSINESS

quarterly

Friday, March 7, 2014

'Twas a Crystal Winter Gala to remember

Greater New Milford Chamber of Commerce hosts its annual dinner-dance at Candlewood Inn

More than 200 area business folks and their guests enjoyed a festive evening of dinner and dancing Jan. 25 at the Greater New Milford Chamber of Commerce's 16th annual Crystal Winter Gala.

The black-tie optional event took place at the Candlewood Inn in

Brookfield.

The evening commenced with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, followed by dinner and dancing, with music provided by the band Higher & Higher.

Among the evening's highlights were the presentation of the chamber's distinguished indi-

vidual award to Sergio Liguori and the business award to Marie McCarthy of Nordica Toys.

For more information, call the Chamber office at 860-354-6080 or email nmcc@newmilford-chamber.com.

For more photos, visit www.newmilfordspectrum.com.



Top, Robert O'Keefe and his wife, Katherine Webster-O'Keefe, of the Law Office of Katherine Webster-O'Keefe, win a gift certificate to the Bull's Bridge Inn.

Right, sharing a light moment are, from left, chamber board members attorney Katherine Webster-O'Keefe, Lou Abella, of Edward Jones, and Union Savings Bank's Bonnie Blackman.



Above, chamber honoree Sergio Liguori and his wife, Kristin, enjoy a dance to the music of Higher and Higher during the Greater New Milford Chamber of Commerce's Crystal Winter Gala in January at the Candlewood Inn in Brookfield.



Left, chamber President Michael Gold offers a toast to "a great 2014" at the winter gala.

Photography by Deborah Rose

Nordica Toys earns Chamber award

By Deborah Rose

To many in Greater New Milford, Nordica Toys is a destination.

It's the place to go to look for the latest popular toys — and some oldies but goodies.

Whether someone is looking for a puzzle, Legos, Thomas & Friends trains, dolls, Playmobil, Melissa & Doug toys or books or blocks, the Main Street store is a hot spot.

In addition, the business sells Girl Scout uniforms and books and allows Scouts to sell cookies in front of the store.

The Greater New Milford Chamber of Commerce recognized the store in January with its 2013 Distinguished Chamber Member of the Year Award for Business at the Chamber's Crystal Winter Gala.

"The store is unique in the way it's a small store," said owner Marie McCarthy, who purchased the store from its longtime owners in 2003, "and we have better prices and



TRISH HALDIN/SPECTRUM

Marie McCarthy, of Nordica Toys, accepts the Greater New Milford Chamber of Commerce's Distinguished Chamber Member of the Year Business award during the chamber's Crystal Winter Gala in January at the Candlewood Inn in Brookfield. Presenting the plaque is chamber President Michael Gold.

better service and more knowledge about the needs of our customers."

Owning the business brings McCarthy, a self-described "big kid," much enjoyment.

"I do like to see kids evolving — when they come back with their childhood shopping here," McCarthy related.

Since assuming ownership, McCarthy has fo-

cused on the community.

To that end, she is open seven days a week, including two evenings until 9 p.m. and extended hours when special events are held on the Village Green.

Her business was an active member of the now-defunct Downtown Business Alliance, later renamed the Village Center Organization.

Today, it is part of the

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Chamber honors Liguori for his community efforts

By Deborah Rose

Sergio Liguori is a hardworking man invested in the community in which he lives.

That is one of the reasons the Greater New Milford Chamber of Commerce honored him in January with the organization's 2013 Distinguished Chamber Member of the Year Award for an Individual during the Chamber's Crystal Winter Gala.

Liguori has lived in the community since he came to the U.S. from San Paulo, Brazil, in April of 1986 — except for a few years when he lived in Indiana. During his years in town, he has been active in various organizations.

Liguori first became involved in the Northville Volunteer Fire Department in the early 1990s and later rejoined in 2011. Over the years, he has answered calls and served on several committees.

Last year, he took his volunteerism a step further and became certified through the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection as a wildland firefighter, doing everything "a smoke jumper does but not jumping out of a plane," he said.

One of his first assignments was in Montana, he



TRISH HALDIN/SPECTRUM

Sergio Liguori shares his moment in the spotlight with Greater New Milford Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Denise Del Mastro as he receives the organization's Distinguished Chamber Member Of The Year award during the Chamber's Crystal Winter Gala in January at the Candlewood Inn in Brookfield.

said.

He is also dedicated to working with youth. He has helped New Milford Cub Scout packs 58 and 66, and Boy Scout troops 158 and 21, in particular, with fundraising activities.

"It's an accomplishment when you see a kid who all of the sudden gets it," said Liguori, explaining what it's like to watch boys learn how to do things, even just tying

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