

# Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER: MAY 2013



Mansfield Downtown Partnership  
Helping to Build Mansfield's Future

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## The Puppets Are Coming! The Puppets Are Coming!

The Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry, part of the University of Connecticut's world-renowned puppet programs in the School of Fine Arts, will become part of Storrs Center in the fall.

The museum will relocate from its current location at UConn's Depot campus to a more accessible exhibition and performance space that is part of the new branch of the UConn Co-op at Storrs Center.

"Our move to Storrs Center is a great opportunity for the Ballard Institute to thrive in the middle of a busy community environment," says John Bell, Director of the museum and a theater historian. "We are looking forward to expanding our hours of operation, presenting



*Ballard Director John Bell discusses a current exhibit of puppets at the museum's Depot Campus location. The museum will relocate to 1 Royce Circle this fall.*

*Photo by Peter Morenus/UConn*

more puppet performances, forums, film showings, and symposia, and collaborating with other parts of the UConn and Mansfield community."

In its new home, the Ballard Institute will occupy 4,332 square-feet of museum, performance, and support space on the first floor of

*Continued on page 3*

## DEEP Commissioner Visits Storrs Center

Story by Colin Poitras, *UConn Today*

Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Commissioner Daniel C.

Esty toured the new Storrs Center Tuesday, taking time out to praise the Mansfield Downtown Partnership for its commitment to building an environmentally sound

and energy efficient community that should be a model for other towns to follow.

"It is a pleasure to compete with the sounds of construction equipment that is building this complex into what I see will be a model of what the

smart growth development of the future will look like – a mixed-use residential, commercial, walkable, bikeable, electric car-driveable community – and it is a special joy to be here today to celebrate that,"

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## Save the Date!

### 10<sup>TH</sup> Annual Festival on the Green

Sunday,  
September 22

## Webster Bank Coming to Storrs Center



Webster Bank, a leading regional bank serving businesses and consumers from Westchester County, New York to Boston, Massachusetts, announced recently that it will open a banking office in Storrs Center.

“An authentic downtown needs a bank and we’re pleased to have a bank of the caliber of Webster

Bank coming to Storrs Center,” says Storrs Center developer Howard Kaufman, managing member of LeylandAlliance LLC of Tuxedo, New York. Mr. Kaufman confirmed that Webster Bank has signed a lease for 1,600 square feet at One Royce Circle in Storrs Center. The full-service banking center, Webster’s 169<sup>th</sup>, is expected to open in August.

“Webster’s new banking center in Storrs builds upon our partnership with the University of

Connecticut Alumni Association and UConn Athletics,” said Jerry Plush, President and COO of Webster Bank. “We look forward to meeting the personal and business banking needs of the Storrs community with exceptional customer service.”

For more information about Webster, including past press releases and the latest annual report, visit the Webster website at [www.websterbank.com](http://www.websterbank.com) or follow the bank on Twitter ([@WebsterBank](https://twitter.com/WebsterBank)). ♦

## Geno’s Grille: Now Open!

Geno’s Grille is now open at 9 Dog Lane in Storrs Center. The restaurant seats more than 100 people, offers both indoor and outdoor seating, and provides a relaxed, yet fun, dining experience. It will be a great place to enjoy a special celebration or to kick back on the weekend with friends. The varied menu is comprised of dining selections that will appeal to a broad spectrum of patrons.

“With Mr. Auriemma’s national reputation in the collegiate sports world, and the success of his restaurant at Mohegan Sun, Geno’s Grille will be a



signature restaurant and is sure to be a major draw,” said Howard Kaufman, Managing Member of LeylandAlliance, on behalf of Storrs Center.

The phone number for the restaurant is

860.487.9032.

For more information, like them on facebook ([www.facebook.com/GenosGrille](http://www.facebook.com/GenosGrille)) or follow them on Twitter ([@GenosGrille](https://twitter.com/GenosGrille)). ♦

### FYI: Mansfield Residents

The Annual Town Meeting will be Tuesday, May 14 at 7:00 PM at the Mansfield Middle School. All Mansfield residents who are registered to vote are encouraged to attend. Please contact the Town Clerk’s office (860.429.3302) for information about the budget process and voter eligibility.



## The Puppets Are Coming! (continued from page 1)



*The Ballard marched with Mansfield residents in the 2012 Celebrate Mansfield Parade with puppets made during the Community Puppet-Building Workshop, one of many great community collaborations!*

*Photo by Kim Bova Photography*

the building, providing for an expanded space for one large exhibition or two smaller simultaneous exhibitions.

“We are very excited about the move,” says Cynthia van Zelm, Executive Director of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc. “We feel it will be a destination for visitors with a key location inside the UConn Co-op and near restaurants and other businesses in the downtown.”

The museum’s permanent collection includes 2,500 puppets consisting of a wide variety of marionettes, hand puppets, shadow fingers, rod puppets, toy theaters, and other figures, as well as hundreds of traditional

puppets from Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas. It also includes hundreds of books and more than 1,000 videos and other audio-visual resources.

William Simpson, President and Chief Operating Officer of the UConn Co-op, says working with the Museum in its new Storrs Center location will create an innovative experience for the UConn Co-op and its patrons.

“This will offer the bookstore customer/museum patron a unique environment that they will want to experience again and again. We can’t wait,” says Simpson.

Current exhibitions at the Museum at the Depot campus include

“Exceptional and Uncommon: The Puppetry of Dick Myers,” the first-ever exhibition devoted to the unique puppetry of Dick Myers, whose one-man shows excited audiences around the world in the mid-20th century; and “Strings, Rods, and Robots: Recent Acquisitions,” which showcases the exhilarating diversity of puppets from around the world recently acquired by the Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry.

UConn is one of only two universities in the country offering a bachelor’s of fine arts in puppet arts and the only one offering master’s degrees in puppet arts. Graduates of the program perform and design for many theatres around the world. Shortly before her death earlier this month, Jane Henson, a puppeteer and original collaborator with Muppets creator Jim Henson, donated \$100,000 to establish a scholarship fund for students majoring in puppet arts.

For more information about the Ballard, please visit their website: [bimp/uconn.edu](http://bimp/uconn.edu) or like them on [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/bimp.uconn). ♦

### STORRS CENTER by the NUMBERS

In the 12 years since it was formed, the Partnership has secured **\$25 million in state & federal funding** and over **\$70 million in private funding** for Storrs Center — not a bad return-on-investment for the Town & UConn who each contributed approximately \$1 million to the Partnership’s operating budget over that same time period.

The Town’s preliminary Grand List **increased by 3.55%** and LeylandAlliance & EdR are now the Town’s **largest taxpayers**.

Current real estate taxes from Storrs Center total **\$204,406** - there was no abatement given to Storrs Center Alliance & EdR for these initial taxes.

Net tax revenue from Storrs Center for the next fiscal year, after the partial tax abatement, is estimated to be **\$420,400** - more than enough to cover any Storrs Center operating expenses by the Town.

Only taxes and fees coming in from Storrs Center are paying for additional Storrs Center expenses; no general funds are being used.



## DEEP Commissioner (continued from page 1)



*Dan Esty, Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, described Storrs Center as a model of smart growth development.*

*Photo by Peter Morenus/UConn*

***This “will be a model of what the smart growth development of the future will look like - a mixed-use residential, commercial, walkable, bikeable, electric car-driveable community” — DEEP Commission Daniel Esty***

Esty said following an early morning tour of the complex along Dog Lane. Esty arrived in Storrs in his Chevrolet Volt, parking it neatly in one of four public charging stations in the Storrs Center parking garage. While a small crowd of town officials and others looked on, Esty used his parking ticket to activate the charger and plugged in a thick black power cable that dropped quietly from the ceiling.

Dan Shanahan of Control Module Industries of Enfield said the dual parking ticket-charger activation technology was especially consumer friendly and “the first of its kind system in the world.” Mitch Gross, a spokesman for Connecticut Light & Power which

donated charging stations to the town of Mansfield and other communities across the state as part of a research project, said the Level 2 chargers supply 240 volts and can fully charge a vehicle in about four hours.

One of the Chevrolet Volts charging in the garage Tuesday belonged to Hertz, which offers the electric vehicle as part of its small fleet of cars available to UConn students and visitors through the company’s [Hertz On Demand](#) car share program.

Mansfield Mayor Betsy Paterson said the town’s five public charging stations – four in the Storrs Center garage and one

near the local community center – support the community’s vision and commitment to environmental sustainability. Paterson noted that an 83-kilowatt solar array on top of the Mansfield Community Center currently supplies about a third of the center’s electrical needs, and the new parking garage is constructed to allow for the installation of a photovoltaic energy system on the upper level.

“We anticipate the day when a solar carport on top of the garage will support the electrical needs of the building and its four charging stations,” Paterson said.

UConn Provost Mun Choi praised Esty, Paterson, and others for their environmental stewardship and pledged the University’s full commitment toward developing a more sustainable community. UConn is a member of the independent, non-profit Mansfield Downtown Partnership, along with the town of Mansfield, local business owners, and members of the community.

“As a university, we are committed partners to the Town of Mansfield,”

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## Storrs Road Construction Nearing Completion

With the arrival of warmer spring weather, the Town resumed work on its streetscape improvements on Storrs Road (Route 195) and Dog Lane.

In April, the Town’s contractor, Milton C. Beebe & Sons Construction of Mansfield, installed new crosswalks on Dog Lane.

Beebe is currently adding planted medians in Storrs

Road. In addition to beautifying the street, the medians will serve as a traffic-calming measure on this busy section of road.

Once the final physical changes to Storrs Road are complete, Beebe will repave the road from the intersection with Dog Lane to the intersection with South Eagleville Road (Route 275). As part of the repaving of Storrs Road,

Beebe will mark the new on-street areas, which will be free parking for 2 hours.

Another traffic calming measure, which will also serve to beautify the area, will be new street trees along Storrs Road. These will be planted in the coming months. There will be trees every fifty feet along the road, in between the street lights. ♦

### Did you know?

You can follow the construction of Storrs Center online at: <http://goo.gl/5QwK7>



## DEEP Commissioner (continued from page 2)

said Choi. “During the past several years, we’ve instituted programs like a fuel cell microgrid that powers UConn’s Depot Campus. We recently started a water reclamation plant that recycles a half million gallons of water a day. We also have a new major in environmental studies so our students can become leaders in the field.

“These programs, we believe, are critical not only for putting into practice our belief in environmental stewardship but for making a difference for future generations,” he added.

Cynthia van Zelm, Executive Director of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, said sustainability was a key

part of the Storrs Center project from the very beginning. Eventually, the new Storrs Center will include an “intermodal transportation center” that will provide stops for UConn, local, and regional buses, and a prominent bike storage and locker program. The transportation center will “add to the tradition in Mansfield to provide accessible alternative modes of transportation,” she said.

“We are looking forward to the next stage of the Storrs Center that will continue to promote an economic and environmentally sustainable downtown for residents and visitors to enjoy,” van Zelm added. Esty stressed that the

Storrs Center project and others like it are not strictly about electric vehicles, natural gas vehicles, or other new technologies that protect the environment.

“It’s about choice,” he said. “It’s about flexibility. It’s about what we call mobility. And that’s the ability for some people to

walk here, some people to drive here, some people to take a shuttle bus. It’s really ensuring that in the future we don’t have the kind of dependency on a car that we had in the 20th century.” ♦

*Reprinted with permission from [UConn Today](#)*



*DEEP Commissioner Dan Esty plugs in his car in the Storrs Center parking garage.*

*Photo by Peter Morenus/UConn*



## UPCOMING DOWNTOWN EVENTS

April 6 - May 12

[Elisions: The 2013 Masters of Arts Exhibition](#), Various hours, [Benton Museum](#)

April 25 - May 5

[Hairspray](#), Various times, [Connecticut Repertory Theatre \(CRT\)](#), Studio Theatre

Wednesday, May 1

[Campus Art Walk](#), 12.15 PM (weather permitting), [Benton Museum](#)

Thursday, May 2

MDP Monthly Open House, 6 PM - 7 PM, Partnership office, Room 30 of Town Hall

Thursday, May 2

[Town Budget Info Session](#), 7 PM, Town Hall - Council Chambers

Thursday, May 2

[Lila Downs](#), 7.30 PM, [Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts](#)

Friday, May 3

[Friday Art Forum: Beyond the Picture](#), 5 - 7 PM, Members: Free; Non-Members: \$10, [Benton Museum](#)

Saturday, May 4

[Rid Litter Day](#), Town of Mansfield, Contact Recycling Coordinator (860.429.3333) for details

Saturday, May 4

[Free Mansfield Day](#), 10 AM - 1 PM, [Mansfield Community Center](#)

Saturday, May 4

[Storrs Farmers Market](#), 3 - 6 PM, Mansfield Town Hall, Every Saturday through Thanksgiving, Rain or shine

Saturday, May 11

[Family Fun Night](#), 4.30 pm - 7.30 PM, [Mansfield Community Center](#)

Tuesday, May 14

[Annual Town Meeting](#), 7 PM, [Mansfield Middle School](#)

Friday, May 24

[Family Fun Night](#), 6 pm - 9 PM, [Mansfield Community Center](#)

Save the date: Saturday, June 22

[John E. Jackman Tour de Mansfield: Village to Village Bike Tour](#) (2013 info coming soon)

Mark your calendars: [Nutmeg Summer Series](#) returns in June! Stay tuned for details!