

# Main Street USA

## Women feted and pampered at networking day

*Founders of Northport Arts Coalition and Friends of the Farm among the honorees*

BY ARLENE GROSS

The Town of Huntington hosted its fifth annual Women's Networking Day last Thursday in celebration of women and the many local services available to them. About 400 women turned out for a luncheon, awards ceremony and networking booths at the Thatched Cottage of Centerport.

"Ladies, this is our day," Rhonda Shephardson, director of Women's Services said as she kicked off the awards presentation. Town Supervisor Frank Petrone presented the first of five town proclamations honoring local women whose efforts and achievements have enhanced the lives of its citizens. Pat Reiss, public servant of Huntington for over 30 years, was honored for her work as Citizen Advocate for the Suffolk County Department of Consumer Affairs.

Town council members presented the four remaining proclamations to Isabella Eredita Johnson, Marguerite Brandt, Pamela Veitch, and Fran Greenspan.

Eredita Johnson, a native of Northport, was honored for her creation of and extensive work with the Northport Arts Coalition. "It was a great thrill to be part of such a distinguished group of women honorees. I am delighted with my proclamation, which further inspires me in my efforts to enrich the Northport art community," Johnson said.

Councilwoman Glenda Jackson presented the honor to Brandt, who is organizer of the Huntington Chapter of the National Council of Negro Women, a foster grandparent and a volunteer at the Huntington Freedom Center. Brandt said, "I thought it was amazing that they should honor me in the first place. I fell in love with Huntington back when I got here, when the forsythia was in bloom. What I do in the community is because I love Huntington. That's all."

Jackson said, "These women deserve the recognition of their community. Their lives serve as examples for women to continue to strive for excellence."

Veitch, founder of Friends of the Farm in East Northport, which helps care for the animals of the Lewis Oliver Dairy, said, "I was honored that Stuart Besen chose me to receive the award."

The fourth honoree, Greenspan, founded the For-



Photos by Arlene Gross

Northport Opera Company co-founder Tara Kavanagh, Northport Arts Coalition Chairwoman Lauren Paige and merchant Madona Cole-Lacy trying on Cole-Lacy's designs. Pictured below, Northport resident and arts coalition founder Isabella Eredita Johnson receiving a proclamation from Town Councilman Mark Cuthbertson.

est Park Program that offers a safe environment before school for children with working parents and is president of the Half Hollow Hills Board of Education.

The Division of Women's Services hosts this annual event to give the many non-profit organizations and businesses dedicated to women the chance to get the word about their services out to the women in the community. Among the 34 organizations represented there were Long Island Cares, which delivers food to the island's needy throughout the year, along with the Long Island Ovarian Cancer Education Advocacy Networking Support, League of Women Voters, Huntington Arts Council, Northport Arts Coalition, Town of Huntington Senior Center, and Helen Keller Services for the Blind.

In keeping with this year's theme, "Pure Indulgence - A Day of Pampering," an array of businesses, from A through Y (Avon through YMCA) participated. Madona Cole Originals sold exotic head wear and accessories. "They're for women who've lost hair to cancer. Or for women who just want to enhance their wardrobe. It's a solution for a bad hair day. We cover everything," said designer and owner Madona Cole-Lacy.

At Northport's Healing Cottage booth, massage therapist and healer Sandy Edwards said, "Massage focuses on the physical body. The healing deals with the aura or energy. It's almost like spatial psychotherapy."

Nancy Forrest, acupuncturist and Chinese herbologist agreed. "I can't tell you how many people I treat," she said, "not for pain, but for stress."

Other stress managers were well represented. Inner Spirit Yoga of East Northport invited people to their Bellydance Extravaganza, a Middle Eastern party/celebration, on November 4 for \$45 per adult; BARE Salon of Greenlawn offered skin care product samples and \$20-off coupons for special "Manuka Honey Facials" and Reiki master Jim Lavery held many heads in his healing hands. "The theory of Reiki is that we need the life-force energy to flow through us to live," he said. "If we have blocks to the energy flow, problems could develop. A Reiki practitioner is a channel for the energy, it helps to relieve stress and helps the body to heal itself."

Jeanne Sellick, owner of Gempport of Northport, offered her take on stress reduction. "This year's theme is indulgence. So we're saying 'here's some diamonds.'"



Besides browsing the booths, attendees were treated to a buffet luncheon. As dessert was served, belly dancer and teacher Roni Yaari of Inner Spirit Yoga performed and raffle prizes, donated by for-profit businesses, were distributed. "I bought stuff that benefited the Cancer Society," Donna Pitrelli of Huntington said, studying her raffle ticket. "It's very nice. You get food, a gift."

Marceline Findlay of Huntington said that she came to see one of the honorees and didn't get over to the networking booths. "I mostly sat around. I have a bad leg. But," she said, "I had a really good time."

Shephardson summed up the day, "When you see a turnout like today, you see there is certainly a need to bring women together to celebrate and exchange information. I cannot thank everyone enough for another successful day."

## Eco-Summit focuses on energy, environment

A presentation on energy alternatives given by Lee Koppelman, director of the Center for Regional Policy Studies at Stony Brook University, is among the highlights of Long Island Eco-Summit III to be held from 8:30 am to 5 pm November 14 at Dowling College in Oakdale.

The event also features workshops and panel discussions on Long Island environmental issues such as wetland loss, sea level rise, water quality, wildlife conservation and land use. Leading researchers will discuss their work in those and other areas, and various preservation initiatives will be reviewed.

A tour of Dowling's coral reef and horseshoe crab conservation laboratories will be given by John Tancredi, chairman of the Earth and Marine Sciences Department. Featured speakers include wetlands specialist Nicole Maher, conservationist and author Rusty Johnson and research scientist Susan Elbin of the Wildlife Trust.

Among the workshops offered will be *Energy: No Free Lunch!*; *Coastal Issues: We are an Island You Know?*; *Aquariums, Zoos: How does Long Island Connect Recreation to Conservation?*; and *Our Parks and Wildlife Refuges: Exotic Species Concerns*. A continental breakfast and buffet-style lunch are also planned. The event is free, but seating is first come-first served.

For reservations, call 244-3394.