



Get Ready for Spring!

"May Days and Nights on Atlantic": May 7, 8, & 9

If the analysts are correct, the arrival of warmer weather means an upswing in retail activity. We've survived our holiday credit card blues and are starting to emerge from our winter cocoons, ready to spring for fresh new gear and meet the arrival of the season. After all what would Spring be without a special sale to match our blooming consumer moods? No doubt, May is an ideal time to give consumers an incentive to shop Atlantic Avenue this Spring and the AALDC is working on some great ideas to make that happen.

We are currently ramping up for "May Days and Nights on Atlantic," a special event being planned for May 7-9. Activities include a Master Plan Community Update; Implementation of plan to light Atlantic Avenue after dark; a "Building the Boulevard" fundraiser and a host of sales and in-store activities.

Goals of "May Days and Nights" are as follows:

- Boost Retail Sales for Spring 2004
- Raise Funds for Implementation of the Master Plan 2004-2005
- Implement a pilot project for lighting Avenue storefronts through 2004

Boost Retail Sales

Save May 7-9 on your promotional calendar! A primary objective with May Days and Nights is to drive in-store traffic with a variety of activities not the least of which are special sales and happenings at your establishments. The AALDC plans to heavily promote May Days and Nights with a postcard mail campaign, posters, press releases, and the LDC website.

For inclusion in our marketing communications, contact Frances Carroll by phone at 802-9500 or at silkroadantiques@hotmail.com by March 15 with the details of your in-store event(s).

Raise Funds for Implementation of the Master Plan

"May Days & Nights" will kick-off on Friday May 7 with a "Building The Boulevard" fundraiser cocktail party. Proceeds will go to the implementation of the Master Plan. The Plan is currently entering the implementation phase where such short-term objectives as a pilot lighting project can be realized.

Along with volunteers, Karen Auster of Auster Events and Liana Hawes of The Hawes Group are programming and promoting these events.

Master Plan: Lighting

The Atlantic Avenue LDC is launching a unique building lighting project on the Avenue. We have retained internationally known Leni Schwendinger Light Projects Ltd. to work with us. We plan to work with owners and retail tenants to light residential and commercial doorways up and down the Avenue. The result will be a lighting system that enhances the feeling of safety and welcome, significantly reduces electric usage (therefore tenant and owner operating costs), and creates an "only on Atlantic Avenue" family of lighting fixtures, which will provide promotional opportunities for all of us who care about the Avenue.

The lighting project is the first visible outcome of the Atlantic Avenue Master Plan, which was sponsored by the LDC and 50 other community groups and businesses. (The Master Plan was released to the public at last year's Antic.) The Master Plan advocates a streetscape program with multiple elements. The LDC has determined that the lighting project is the means by which it will contribute to the recommended streetscape program.

The LDC has secured funding for the "pilot phase" of the lighting project that includes:

- Design of the fixture and selection of the bulb
- Outreach to owners and tenants
- Installation of the system on a pilot block at no cost to owners or tenants

Working with members of the Atlantic Avenue Master Plan coalition of groups and businesses, the LDC has selected the south side of Atlantic Avenue between Hoyt and Bond as the pilot block.

Although both a major national fixture designer and an international light bulb manufacturer have agreed to participate in the project at essentially no cost to owners, tenants, or the LDC, additional funds will be needed for installation of the lights on other blocks. We are in the process of fundraising for this second phase of the project.

What we need now is: expressions of owner and merchant interest in the project, including a willingness to work with the designer to select a fixture and a bulb that "works" for area businesses and complements our historic architecture. Please call us at 875-8993 or e-mail us at AtlanticAve@AtlanticAve.org if you would like to participate.

The Antic is Coming

Mark your calendar for Sunday, September 26 – the date for this year's Atlantic Antic. Please contact the LDC by **March 15** if you have any special concerns about the vendors near your location. Email: AtlanticAve@AtlanticAve.org. Phone: (718) 875-8993.

Holiday Window Winners

The Atlantic Avenue Local Development Corporation (AALDC) is pleased to announce the winners of the Atlantic Avenue 2003 Holiday Window Design Competition: **Care Partners Thrift Shop** at 475 Atlantic Avenue captured the 1st prize. 2nd Prize went to **In Days of Old** at 355 Atlantic. 3rd Prize went to **Scarlet Ginger** at 376 Atlantic.

The Atlantic Avenue Window Design Competition is based on artistic merchandising and creative window display. The award is given to merchants for their aesthetic contribution to the neighborhoods.

Shoplifters Beware!

Protecting our Businesses

As shopkeepers on Atlantic Avenue, many of us enjoy the daily contact we have with our customers. Our customers have become our friends through the years, and knowing them is one of the great pleasures of our profession. The one thing, however, we don't enjoy is the shoplifter!

Shoplifters have certain types of behavior that vary from those of the normal customer. Look for:

- Two or more people working together. One person may keep you occupied with questions while the other(s) shoplift.
- Shopping bags which look easy to put things into.
- Nervous behavior.
- Uncertainty as to what they are looking for.

In addition, shopkeepers may encounter people presenting stolen credit cards. In some cases, shopkeepers can be held liable for the charged merchandise. Therefore, shopkeepers should carefully check ID's of customers they do not know, especially when large purchases are made. Often these people will make large purchases, and may purchase items quickly without much thought.

Counterfeit bills especially in \$50 and \$100 denominations are in circulation. Check crisp new bills. Use the marking pens sold in stationary stores to identify such bills.

Look for information on AABA's buddy system in our next issue. If you have any suggestions to reduce

the incidences of shoplifting and theft, please forward your suggestions to AtlanticAve@AtlanticAve.org and we will publish in our next newsletter. Awareness, communication and working together are the keys that create a safer and more pleasant experience for us all!

What's the buzz?

Coming Soon

Providence Day Spa @ 329: This March the Providence Day Spa will be moving to 329 Atlantic Ave between Smith and Hoyt streets.

Artez'n @ 444: On Wednesday, February 25th, Artez'n at 444 Atlantic Avenue will opened its doors. Primarily a retail store, Artez'n will be selling gallery caliber art and craftwork such as T-shirts, jewelry, greeting cards and much more, made by well-known local artists. Artez'n will also be hosting craft classes and workshops for adults.

Silk Road Antiques @ 313 is celebrating its third anniversary 2/28 and 2/29/2004. We're leaping into our 3rd year with some very unique kinds of Chinese.

Can we talk?

Come network with your fellow merchants at **Kili** on 81 Hoyt Street, **March 3rd** from 7 to 9 pm. Share a cocktail and nibble on some mighty morsels. First 5 merchants are free. For latecomers, \$10 cover at the door gets you beverages, nibbles and networking.

Atlantic Avenue Calendar

If you would like a listing here, please email a description of the event plus the date, time and location to AtlanticAve@AtlanticAve.org.

March

Wednesday, 3 rd	Merchant	Kili @ 81
	Networking Event	Hoyt
15 th	Deadline for publicity for May Days and Nights	

May

Friday, 7 th	BTB: Cocktail Party & Fund Raiser	Rico @ 384
6 pm		
Saturday, 8 th & Sunday, 9 th	May Days on Atlantic: Shopping Extravaganza	
Saturday, 8 th	Dance Party!	TBD

September

Sunday, 26 th	Atlantic Antic	
--------------------------	----------------	--