

# **VOLUNTEERS - THE HEART OF** **THE FRIENDS OF FORT TRUMBULL**



*They quietly go about their jobs, expecting no attention or even recognition. However, the contributions of volunteers to our group are incalculable. In 2005, Joyce DeLaura became the Gift Store Coordinator. She was drawn to this position because of her abiding love of history and because the experience was so different from the medical office atmosphere in which she had worked. For 23 years, Joyce had been employed by the Waterford Public Health Nurse Service. Upon her retirement, she couldn't think of a more beautiful site at which to volunteer or a more worthy organization to support.*

*For the past 8 years, Joyce has spent significant time directing the activities of the store. Innumerable hours of researching and ordering merchandise from catalogs were involved. She would then supervise a group of approximately 30 volunteers who would organize the purchases and place them in the shop. She would also schedule the volunteers who would each donate approximately 4 hours a month working in the store during the season from May to October. In November, she would present to the membership meticulous tallies of sales, inventory, and receipts.*

***Stocking the store with Friends of Fort Trumbull logo items such as hats, shirts, and sweatshirts, she also sought out American historical toys made in Connecticut and other historical items. Books on State and local history added to the mission of the store. Often, paintings and photographs of local artists would be exhibited for sale. Adding to the charm of the store, Joyce would prepare informative and eye-catching posters for the merchandise displays. Her goal was always to enhance the Fort Trumbull visitors' experience and to raise money that the Friends could direct into supporting the State Park and the New London Community.***

***After eight years as its Coordinator, Joyce has decided to transfer this project to a very capable member, Pam Benson. However, Joyce will continue to schedule the volunteers and to organize our Refreshment Committees at our meetings.***

***Before her retirement, Pam spent most of her career teaching the gifted and talented program at the middle school level. She also taught theatre as an enrichment program. Drawn to the gift shop because of its creative element and marketing challenge, she also saw it as an enjoyable way to meet people while providing vital income for the Friends of Fort Trumbull.***

***When our season opens in May, 2013, be sure to visit this hidden gem of a store on the grounds of Fort Trumbull, New London.***