

## MANCHESTER

# 'Pop-Up' Store Announced

### Grand Opening Part Of Series Of First Thursday Events Downtown

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MANCHESTER — Downtown's first "pop-up" store — Wicked Chic — is to open Thursday at 974 Main St.

"A community of creatively inspired, artistically driven entrepreneurs have come together to collectively open the doors to an alternative shopping experience," Imagine Main Street Chairman Steve Gates said Monday.

The store will sell vintage clothing and accessories, furnishings and unique art. Gates described the shop as "outlandish and funky fashion with a cup of coffee or a spot of tea along with a book."

Wicked Chic is the first business to open as a result of a pop-up store initiative developed through a partnership of Imagine Main Street, the Downtown Manchester Special Services District and the town, Gates said. He described the store as "a co-op partnership."

"Each one of the partners is paying a fee

for space, which will go toward expenses, utilities, etc.," Gates said.

Through Imagine Main Street, Gates said, he has developed relationships with Main Street building owners with vacant properties. Part of the pop-up proposal, he said, was for the business to launch without rent for 90 days.

"The concept proposal was reviewed with several building owners," he said. "Now we're functioning as 'matchmakers' between potential businesses and the building owners. I hope to have a second business up and running within a couple of weeks."

Mark Pellegrini and Tana Parselitti — leaders in the town planning office and the downtown district — "have been great partners throughout this process," Gates said.

The grand opening is part of a series of First Thursday events slated for 6-9 p.m., organized by Imagine Main Street. The Wicked Chic opening is to include a moonshine tasting by local distiller Onyx Moonshine.

Other events Thursday include a student art exhibit at 699 and 713 Main St. Students from Manchester High School, East Catholic High School, Great Path Academy and Howell Cheney Technical School will display and sell their artwork, organizers said. Food and beverages by bin228 and baked goods from the Manchester Community College Culinary School will be available at a reception area at 705 Main St. The exhibit is the result of a partnership between the schools, Manchester Art Association and Imagine Main Street, according to a news release.

There will also be, at 695 Main St., cookies and hot beverages by La Via del Gusto at Katherine's Hair Design; music by "Auborn Mode" at Beller's Music; a Mitten Tree at First Niagara Bank, 923 Main St.; a wine tasting from 6-8 p.m. at the Forest Package Store, 1065 Main St.; and music by Kevin Pearl at E.M. Dougan Gallery and Carriage House Designs, 1071 Main St.

First Thursday also will include carolers at several locations throughout downtown.

make it easier for people who want to get involved with the service to get certified.

Getting enough people to staff the ambulance service has been a challenge. The class is open to anyone, including people who live in other communities, but Canton fire and EMS officials are hoping that by offering a class they can encourage local people to get involved in the service. Bunnell said the service has 51 members, 40 of whom are certified as emergency medical technicians or higher.

"If we could get to 75 or 100 members I would be ecstatic," Bunnell said.

The ambulance service is part of the volunteer fire department and many its members are also firefighters. Bunnell said he is hoping that firefighters who are not in the ambulance service will take the EMT class so they can also perform emergency medical services at a fire scene.

Efforts to get more people involved in the ambulance service come at a time when town officials are considering how to address other issues it is facing, including response times and the increasing demands posted by administrative tasks.

A study committee made several recommendations earlier this year and Chief Administrative Officer Robert Skinner along with two members of the board of selectmen are also studying the issue. In an