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'Something for everyone' – Sophia's Gallery in Cos Cob celebrates nearly five decades thanks to support from The First Bank of Greenwich

By Susan Shultz

(Ad) During the COVID pandemic, many local businesses were facing hard times. And Sophia Scarpelli, owner of Greenwich's Sophia's Gallery, a dynamic gift, vintage antique, clothing, and high-end costume shop, was no exception.

In addition to the pandemic challenges, Scarpelli was also going through personal struggles, having to relocate her store at the last minute after four decades.

"Banks were helping everyone, and my bank wasn't helping me. I got a message to Frank (Gaudio, President and CEO of The First Bank of Greenwich)," Scarpelli said.

"Even though I wasn't a customer of the bank, he offered to help me and gave me a loan. If it wasn't for Frank, I probably wouldn't have made it – I wouldn't have survived," Scarpelli said. She noted that the loan helped her secure her newer location in Cos Cob.

"If it wasn't for Frank Gaudio, I wouldn't still be in business going on my 47th year," she said.

About Sophia's Gallery

Sophia Scarpelli opened her doors in 1981 with her own rare collection of fine, vintage and estate jewelry. Scarpelli has remained a staple in Greenwich for over 43 years, contributing to local charity events, participating in outreach and always greeting her customers with a smile.

The Cos Cob boutique offers a unique collection of vintage clothing, costume rentals, theatrical wardrobes, historical costumes, antique accessories, jewelry, décor, gifts, and one-of-a-kind collectible pieces.

It offers distinctive vintage fashion and rents costumes for theater productions, Halloween, masquerade parties, photo shoots, school productions, private events, and special occasions.

"My costumes are renowned. People come here from New Jersey and New York – my clothes are immaculate," Scarpelli said.

Whether it's a costume ball, a high-end Halloween party, or a themed party, Scarpelli's costumes are organized by era and by theme. She has also sourced some priceless items, including a costume from Gypsy Rose's sister, and a Joan of Arc costume from Broadway actress Kay Ballard.

Scarpelli also houses unique and vintage items she sources from all over the world.

"Every visit feels like a new discovery," said bank Human Resources Manager Paulette Bannon. "The collection is constantly evolving, so there's always something unexpected to catch your eye. From timeless designer pieces to beautifully curated displays, the store has a unique charm that makes each experience memorable."

For the discerning shopper

The store is located in a building that dates back to 1880.

"I've got original, ten-foot tin ceilings, ten-foot windows, and when you walk in the store, you don't know where to look because I have a million items," Scarpelli said.



Credit: The First Bank of Greenwich

Sophia's inventory is vast. She said if it wasn't for the support of The First Bank of Greenwich and its President and CEO, Frank Gaudio, "I wouldn't still be in business going on my 47th year."

Scarpelli also consigns jewelry, so she has eight cases of fantastic vintage jewelry – some costume, some real.

Scarpelli said her store is not for the person who "wants to look like everyone else."

"It is for interesting people that have a little bit of artistry to them – a person that can pick out something beautiful," she said.

And Scarpelli is truly grateful for the community support; she prioritizes giving back by volunteering regularly with Meals on Wheels.

Bannon said supporting a long-time locally owned business like Scarpelli's is one of the many community efforts The First Bank of Greenwich is about.

"You have to have a real appreciation for how well curated these items are. She's had this wonderful shop in downtown Cos Cob," Bannon said.

Sophia's Gallery is located at 428 E Putnam Ave, Cos Cob. For more information, or to order online, visit https://sophiasgallery.com/.

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The First Bank of Greenwich is deeply committed to the communities it serves, building lasting relationships with local businesses, nonprofit organizations and community partners. Through active engagement, meaningful partnerships, and continued support of local initiatives, the Bank is proud to help strengthen the people, organizations, and communities that make the region thrive.

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