



Model boats like this one often find their way into the inventory at Port of Call Consignments – a great conversation piece!



The CSSC's volunteer Ambassador crew has visited Rich (2nd from right) multiple times in recent years, helping increase exposure and potential customers for the business.

Waterford's Real "Port Of Call" Is A Few Blocks Away From The Dock!

by **Pete Bardunias**
President/CEO, the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County

To many boaters, meeting the people who inhabit various ports is part of the enjoyment of the journey, especially on New York's splendid Canal System. Waterford's Rich Bronk is a home-grown upstate entrepreneur who has developed a successful business in an often-challenging environment for small retailers. Port of Call Consignments (57 Broad Street, Waterford, NY 12188, (518) 874-1643) was one of the first area stores to successfully utilize the internet to dramatically boost sales and showcase his business to the traveling public.

Rich placed his store in Waterford partly because it was close to his home, but also because it was in a prime location with high visibility, heavy street traffic, low rent, and an additional client base among the traveling boaters using the canals. "I chose the name Port Of Call as it described a place where you stop for a short time when you are on your journey," says Rich. The store shelves are stocked with a large number of antiques and collectibles plus nautical items such as fishing poles, tackle, marine décor, books, DVDs, and often boating supplies such as fenders, lines, life jackets, etc.

The Waterford location presents a unique opportunity to meet people from far and wide. Rich has met everyone from boat owners, tour boat captains and tugboat crews to those doing "the Loop". "I've been invited on a few occasions to join them on their voyages," he says, "though that was not possible for me with the business. I've even loaned out tools and supplies to some boat crews that were broken down at the Visitors Center."

Rich is eager to see a robust, revitalized Canal Festival for 2018 and is happy to see new energy being pumped into the event: "My hopes for the Festival are to bring an influx of people who don't normally frequent Waterford. I'm happy to see people that are not normally in the store, even if they don't purchase something. They may come back another time, or

at least refer someone else to us." Says Rich, "Word of mouth is priceless!"

Rich is very proud of the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County (CSSC) membership sticker in his window. Rich says, "Prior to Pete taking over the CSSC, I had been open approximately 2 years without any visits from anyone in the chamber so that meant a lot to me." He adds that "It truly felt as though he wanted my business to succeed and grow as much as I did, and the CSSC helps promote my business in ways that I could not do alone."

Rich is right that we do want him to succeed as much as he does. But he is also way too modest – Port of Call Consignments is an amazing store in its own right! One never knows what they might find there, from neon bar signs to ship models to statues and artifacts, used tools, Lionel trains and parts and even vintage stereo equipment. Make Port of Call your destination on your next Waterford trip and tell Rich we sent you – you won't be disappointed!



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Vintage fishing lures and equipment line the walls and fill several racks of the store, alongside other interesting collectibles like matchbox cars, etc.

