

Hopewell Valley News

GUEST OPINION: The Front Porch 'Turf's Up!' donation 'pays it forward'

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By Sheryl Stone



Chris Murphy (left), The Front Porch owner, presents a donation of \$25,000 to Recreation Foundation Trustee Sheryl Stone for "Turf's Up!"

If you talk with Chris Murphy, owner of The Front Porch in Pennington, about her job, you immediately know she has found her bliss. After years in the corporate world, she made a decision 15 years ago to change direction in a way that gave her flexibility with young son "Murf" and traveling husband Jon Butler.

If you are her customer you are witness to a marketing genius. She never misses an opportunity to bring customers in and to give them what they want, or even what they didn't know they wanted until they got there.

Like most local businesses, she supports the local community in countless ways — sponsoring sports teams and donating to local auctions for an endless number of causes in the greater Mercer County area.

She is an active member of the local business community, a board member of both the Pennington Business and Professional Association and a member of the Pennington Economic Development Commission.

She gives generously of her time and energy to ensure the success of all Pennington businesses. She is truly a big-picture person who understands that what is good for the community will also be good for her business.

Chris has been a supporter of the Recreation Foundation for a number of years.

This year with the advent of "Turf's Up!" — the Recreation Foundation's fundraising effort to build a turf field at Hopewell Valley Central High School — she went into high gear. Since the fall, she has held "Turf Tuesday" on the first Tuesday of each month and has given 5 percent of the profits on those days to the Foundation.

Monthly she has invited other businesses to join her, and in June a record 13 businesses were part of her e-blast — prepared and sent to Chris's own business database. Every month, it seems, a new black and gold item appears in her store with a portion of the proceeds going to "Turf's Up!" If you don't have your Bulldog Tie yet, be sure to stop in!

Chris Murphy's excitement about a wonderful new facility in our community is truly an example of someone who is willing to sacrifice to "pay it forward." From the beginning of this project, Chris knew she wanted to make a significant contribution to show her support for the high school, high school programs, and the community.

Foundation trustees understand that in challenging economic times every donation is a true gift at the expense of something else — no matter what the amount.

This week, The Front Porch will contribute \$25,000 to "Turf's Up!" to make sure our students will have a turf field for activities this fall. The gift is the largest donation made by a small business to date. The Front Porch will be recognized on the field with The Front Porch logo sewn into the turf.

Celebrate Chris's 15th anniversary in business by stopping in and congratulating her on her success and also her generous community spirit. If you are a business colleague, contact her about being part of "Turf Tuesday" this summer on July 3 and Aug. 7.

For more information about "Turf's Up!" or to make a donation of your own to "pay it forward," visit the Recreation Foundation website at www.hvrecfoundation.org.

Sheryl Stone is a trustee of the Recreation Foundation of Hopewell Valley, Inc. (www.hvrecfoundation.org).