

## GOOD NEWS BUSINESS SALUTE

# Chamber spotlights Harris

The Amesbury Chamber of Commerce honored Annie C. Harris at its May Good News Business Salute May 18 at the Amesbury Sports Park. Harris is executive director of the Essex National Heritage Commission

"This is an honor to be recognized on behalf of Essex National Heritage Commission," Harris said. "I, along with our President Emeritus Tom Leonard, have spent the better part of our lives promoting regionalism and cultivating partnerships throughout Essex County. We are proud of the commitment to the Merrimack Valley and look forward to working with the Amesbury Chamber to continue to promote the history and culture of this region."

Harris has been active for many years in civic and community organizations around the Merrimack Valley. She was a leader in starting a collaborative effort between the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and the commission to bring the Heritage Land-

scape Inventory program to communities in Essex County.

As a result of this collaborative effort, the Amesbury Reconnaissance Report was produced as a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in town and in beginning to promote discussions about preservation strategies.

In addition, like many communities along the Merrimack River, Amesbury is seeing a revitalization of its historic downtown. At the center of this revival is the newly opened Amesbury Cultural Center, which received an Essex National Heritage Commission Partnership Grant for planning and design work.

The town received another Partnership Grant for the center to help fund an interactive kiosk linking visitors with other historic sites.

For the annual Trails & Sails program, Harris collaborated with the town and its Chamber of Commerce, ArtsFest Merrimack Valley and the Newburyport Chamber of Commerce

to showcase a cluster of events in a unique array of historic, cultural and natural sites within the Lower Merrimack section of the Essex National Heritage Area. Trails & Sails includes hundreds of free events throughout the region involving non-profit and community organizations, as well as recreation-based businesses, to promote tourism and regionalism throughout Essex County.

The Essex National Heritage Commission (Essex Heritage) is the non-profit management entity for Essex National Heritage Area, one of 49 heritage partnership parks of the National Park Service. Working in collaboration with the National Park Service, Essex Heritage promotes public/private partnerships, and develops and implements programs that enhance, preserve and encourage regional awareness of the unique historic, cultural and natural resources found within the Heritage Area.

For information, visit [essexheritage.org](http://essexheritage.org) or call 978-740-0444.





**Gathered for the Good News Business Salute are, from left: Amesbury Mayor Thatcher Kezer; Annie Harris, Essex National Heritage Commission; Alan K. Porter, Kramer Scientific/Merrimac Tool Co., Inc.; Anne Bonaventura, vice president of The Provident Bank in Amesbury and chairman of the Amesbury Chamber of Commerce & Industrial Foundation; Lucia Vaughn, Good Gracious; and Bill Piercey, executive director of the Amesbury Chamber of Commerce & Industrial Foundation. Porter and Vaughn represented businesses that also received honors at the event. COURTESY PHOTO**