

FYI | By Fred Albert

SHOP TALK

It takes a special kind of person to open a new business during a pandemic. Hats off to these hearty souls who've pursued their dreams and expanded our shopping horizons.



Zürner Oceanic

John and Jennifer Zuerner were selling their nautical goods as a sideline when both lost their jobs due to the pandemic. So the pair decided to turn their pastime into a full-time profession, launching a retail store called **Zürner Oceanic** (utilizing a traditional spelling of the family name). The shop, at 40 Franklin St. in Newport, offers bags, belts and backpacks (*above*) incorporating reclaimed sailcloth and yacht rope, to appeal to the mariner in all of us.

zurneroceanic.com

Charter Books

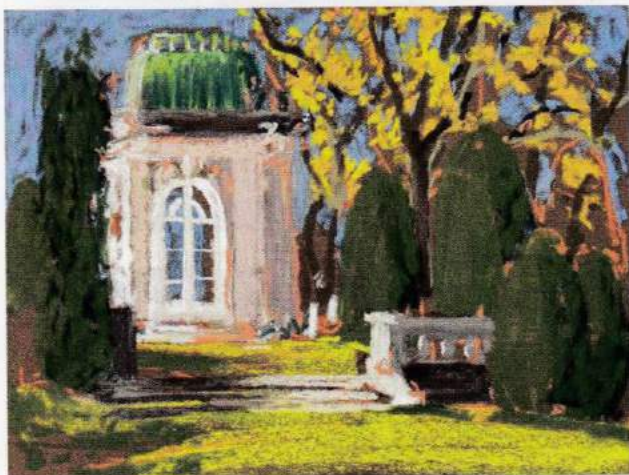
Located just a stone's throw from the Old Colony House and named after the 1663 document that established Rhode Island, **Charter Books** at 8 Broadway aims to do more than just peddle the latest John Grisham thriller. Veteran bookseller Steve Iwanski wants to cultivate a sense of community, facilitate an exchange of ideas, and promote the power of the written word — just as our forefathers did when composing the Rhode Island Royal Charter more than 350 years ago.

charterbookstore.com

Times Are Tough Gallery

Billed as “the smallest gallery in the smallest state,” **Times Are Tough Gallery** is located in the breezeway of a Middletown home, and offers jewelry, cards, framed prints, and even sculptures crafted from molted horseshoe crab shells. Visits are by appointment only, and are limited to two people at a time. “We sell so much that people literally run out [of work] and I have to find more artists!” says co-founder Pia Hogue. Visit their Facebook page to preview work and arrange a visit.

facebook.com/timesaretoughgallery



Room Service, Send Up a Landscape

When Hammetts Hotel opened on the waterfront last spring, Newport gained not only a hotel, but an art gallery. The Sarah Langley Gallery, named after one of the wharf's early owners, is located by the building's entrance and features curated exhibitions of work inspired by the region. On display through the end of January is a showing of pastels depicting Newport (*left*) by New York artist Nicole Wittenberg.

Top: Zürner Oceanic; Bottom: Joe Sortwell