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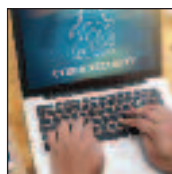


PHOTO BY STYLISH IMAGES

Cover Story: *Patriot Pest Solutions is a veteran-owned, pet-friendly, community-driven local business with a Certified Entomologist on staff offering commercial and residential customers environmentally-friendly pest control services with a 100% satisfaction guarantee.*



21
Browse the Marketplace to grow your business, network, and keep your money local.



29
Are you taking the most basic precautions to protect against a cyber attack?

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Contents

- 8 | Focus On Pottstown**
Unlocking Pottstown's Potential
- 16 | Social Media Tips**
Facebook Reviews — It's All About The Ask
- 24 | Ask SCORE**
Retirement Planning For Small Business Owners
- 30 | Business Spotlight**
Sottosanti Lawn Care
- 32 | Regional Chamber Of Commerce Round-Up**
Greater Reading / Perkiomen Valley / Phoenixville / Spring-Ford / TriCounty Area
- 38 | The SBRA Community**
Team Sports And Business — One In The Same?
- 40 | Advertised Services Directory**
What You Are Looking For — At Your Fingertips
- 41 | Mindset And Leadership**
The ART Of The WIN WIN
- 42 | Dining Guide**
A Sampling of Wonderful Restaurant Options
- 43 | Legal Perspectives**
Vaccines And The Current Legal Landscape
- 57 | Downtown Marketing & Development**
OPINION: Space Assessment In America

... AND MORE!

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VETERAN-OWNED PATRIOT PEST SOLUTIONS



JAMES AND DENICE HARRISON

ELIMINATING PESTS IS OUR PATRIOTIC DUTY!



PHOTOS BY STYLISH IMAGES

By Kathy Hunt

Spring brings such wondrous things. Longer days and warmer nights. Delicate flowers and budding trees. It also marks the return of less welcome creatures, including ants, mosquitoes and spotted lanternflies. Whether they take over your kitchen counters or feed on you or your trees, these pests can wreak havoc on your household and put a damper on the season. Yet, insects aren't the only headaches. In the springtime groundhogs re-emerge to munch on outdoor plants and gardens and raccoons resume their rummaging in garbage cans. When wildlife runs amuck and causes damage to your home or business, you can turn to the licensed and insured professionals of Patriot Pest Solutions LLC. Locally owned and headquartered at 414 West Main Street in Trappe, Patriot Pest possesses the experience and expertise needed to resolve any type of pest control nightmare.



Veteran-owned. Locally based. Nationally licensed.

James and Denice Harrison started Patriot Pest Solutions ten years ago from their home in Royersford. They chose the name "Patriot" as an homage to the Harrison family's military service. Both James and his brother served in the United States Army while James' father was a member of the U.S. Navy.

“The name isn't just a marketing tool. It's a belief system. We make eliminating pests our patriotic duty.”

— Denice Harrison

The veteran-owned business quickly grew to support residential and commercial customers in Montgomery, Berks, Chester, Delaware and Philadelphia counties. It now has 11 employees working out of its Trappe location. They consist of co-owners James, who is an associate certified entomologist (ACE), and Denice as well as five licensed service technicians, three customer service representatives, and a business developer.

In pest control, as in the military, understanding one's enemy is key. To prepare for his civilian role as an associate certified entomologist and the battle against pests, James had to gain a minimum of seven years of experience in the field, hold a current U.S. pesticide applicator's license, pass a 150-question exam and sign the ACE code of ethics. He annually maintains the minimum required continuing education credits.



Patriot Pest proudly serves the Berks, Chester, Montgomery, Bucks, Delaware, and Philadelphia Counties.



James is an associate certified entomologist and a member of the National Pest Management Association.

In addition to James' role as an ACE, Patriot Pest is a member of the National Pest Management Association (NPMA). This nonprofit organization supports the industry's commitment to the protection of public health, food and property, provides continuing education, and addresses the technical, governmental, educational, business, and networking needs of its members.

Undoubtedly, Patriot Pest values pest management education and believes that training benefits both its employees and clients. "Incorrectly identifying a pest can cost a customer thousands of dollars and a company its reputation. That's why it's so important to have trained and licensed technicians," Denice said.

To stay on top of the latest pest management require-

ments and up-to-date with certifications, technicians participate in weekly, in-house training sessions. They attend conventions, conferences, and meetings of the Pennsylvania Pest Management Association. Through the National Wildlife Control Operators Association (NWCOA), they maintain the techniques and practices of safe and humane wildlife management. They are licensed through the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

The company itself is listed as a NWCOA certified wildlife professional and is part of the Pennsylvania Trapper's Association, which promotes the humane trapping of wildlife. When you contact Patriot Pest Solutions for assistance, you can be assured that you will work with experts in the field of pest control.

Continued on page 6)



Patriot Pest Solutions' technicians are state-licensed and specially trained in humane squirrel trapping, removal and exclusion services.

COVER STORY

(Continued from page 5)

Pests of all sizes and seasons

As you might expect from wildlife certified professionals, Patriot Pest humanely removes an assortment of wildlife. Find a family of bats nestled in your attic or birds nesting in a vent? Hear squirrels rolling nuts across your crawl space? The company will send a licensed technician to assess the problem, suggest remediation efforts, and outline steps to prevent future wildlife invasions. Along with squirrels, bats, raccoons and ground-hogs, Patriot Pest technicians will take care of issues with birds, foxes, opossums, skunks, moles, voles, rats, and snakes.

What about house and field mice? "Mice are considered 'normal' pest control," Denice said. "Every pest control company takes care of them. What most don't do are wildlife, like snakes, ground-hogs and skunks. A lot of pest control companies will refer their wildlife calls to us. We work hand-in-hand very nicely with locally owned companies and take care of their wildlife. That's something that makes us unique in the pest control," she said.

She noted that many pest problems are seasonal. "With ants, its usually spring showers that helps push them up out of the ground along with warmer ambient ground temperatures. With spotted lanternflies, we come out in the spring and do a systemic treatment that is harmless to the trees but not to the spotted lantern flies. In the fall we make

applications to the bark of the bark. Our goal is to save the trees and we have a method to do this, to stop the spotted lantern flies from killing trees. Everyone's gripe the past few years has been lantern-flies. Before that, it was stink bugs, which have now dissipated. Everything has ebbs and flows," she said.

As for the billions of cicadas destined to hatch after 17 years underground, she advised readers not to worry. The two-inch-long, red-eyed, orange-veined and translucent winged insects may appear frightening, but they are quite harmless. "They don't kill anything, they're good for the environment, they're not destroying anything, and they're outside. They're not something that we'd consider a target insect and want to get rid of," she said.

Patriot Pest's technicians do resolve a wide range of insect issues, including fleas, termites, ticks, cockroaches and the aforementioned ants, lanternflies and stink bugs. They also tackle the toughest of all infestations, that of bed bugs.



The Harrison family.

Customers can choose between conventional chemical or heat treatment to eliminate these invasive and prolific blood suckers. Denice observed that bed bug calls have dipped a bit over the past year and credited this decline to the drastic reduction in travel caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

While the pandemic may have thwarted travel, it didn't stop the efforts of Patriot Pest. "We're essential workers and, as a result, we never shut down," she said. "Nursing homes and restaurants can't have rodents and roaches in their kitchens. We can't have homes and businesses unsafe and uninhabitable because of pests."

Patriot Pest recognizes that not everyone feels comfortable having a stranger indoors during this time. For both safety and peace of mind, customers are asked whether they want technicians to treat their homes or businesses from the inside or outside.

"Over the past year, fear has been the biggest thing that we've seen," Denice explains. "Knowing that people are scared, we have additional protocols for our technicians. They are trained, tested and certified in the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). They have to wear masks and gloves and get their temperatures checked at the sites. We have to be sure that they're safe to go into buildings, and into nursing homes especially, and we have to be sure that people feel comfortable with them there," she said.

Keeping everyone safe

Patriot Pest's dedication to customer safety extends beyond its two-legged clients. The company also looks out for those four-legged household members.

"Our family is really big into rescuing dogs. I have a rotation of rescue dogs, mostly mutts, and right now have three. We design our services to be as safe as possible for humans and pets. I am too much of an animal lover to ever let that happen," she said.

Even in the case of rodent bait, Denice pointed out that the amount of bait used for rodents is minuscule. Plus, the bait is placed in tamper-proof containers far from the reach of pets.

To ensure that customers, and pets, keep troublesome wildlife and insects at bay, Patriot Pest offers maintenance plans. These reduce the likelihood that whatever has infiltrated the premises will do so again. It also offers customized approaches that suit each customer's unique needs.

**For additional information,
to schedule service or to
receive a free quote, contact
Patriot Pest Solutions
at 610.489.5136 or
info@patriotpestsolutions.net.**

PATRIOT PEST SOLUTIONS' SERVICE FOCUS

Patriot Pest Solutions' service focus has evolved over the years. It has always been their goal to keep up to date with the industry's most recent innovations and new pest invaders. Below are some recent shifts they have seen in the industry. Please visit www.PatriotPestSolutions.net for a comprehensive list.

SPOTTED LANTERN FLY

Back in 2011 no one heard of the Spotted Lantern Fly and pest control companies were not treating trees. However, these destructive pests began killing trees in Berks county and have made their way across the state. Addressing this problem requires two treatments per year, in the Spring and in the Fall. The Spring treatment involves a systemic application treatment lasting three months. The treatment absorbs into plant, will not wash off, and is highly effective against Lanternflies on first application. Fall is a repellent treatment.



MOSQUITO

The demand for Mosquito treatments has grown over the years as concerns over West Nile Virus, Zika Virus and Dengue Fever continue to grow. Patriot Pest Solutions urges Pennsylvania residents to take precautions to prevent mosquito bites. Mosquitoes only need about half an inch of water to breed. Eliminating standing water around your property will remove mosquito harborage. Patriot Pest Solutions also recommends making sure all screens on windows and doors are in good condition to block mosquito access.

Effective mosquito treatment starts with targeting populations where they originate. Patriot Pest Solutions' mosquito treatments are focused to shady areas in shrubbery and under decks where mosquitoes live and breed. All of the materials they use are registered by the EPA and are completely safe when applied according to the label by a licensed pest professional.

Patriot Pest Solutions offers a six-month 100 percent organic mosquito control plan that ensures the safety of you, your pets and your children. Organic mosquito control service plans begin in May and keeps your yard mosquito-free through October. Mosquito services will eliminate the number of mosquitoes that swarm your yard in those warm summer months. Patriot Pest Solutions treats foliage, vegetation, shrubbery areas, patios, eaves, covered porches, and other resting areas.

TICKS

Ticks are second only to mosquitoes as vectors of disease. Ticks can transmit Lyme disease, Meningoencephalitis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, tularemia, babesiosis, Colorado tick fever, Q fever, tick paralysis, and several forms of ehrlichiosis. Tick-borne diseases correspond to a specific tick-host combination and are limited in their geographical extent. Nearly 95 percent of all Lyme disease cases have been reported in the Northeastern part of the United States.

It is just as important to treat your lawn to



Chris Gentile – Bed Bug and Spotted Lantern Fly Specialist

prevent ticks as it is to mow and maintain a green and healthy lawn. Pets can easily bring ticks into your home. After feeding, ticks will drop off and lay eggs in protected cracks and crevices. Getting rid of an indoor tick infestation takes time because eggs can hatch months later, long after you think you have the situation under control.

Service begins with a licensed technician providing a full inspection of your property. During the inspection, your tick control technician will identify potential problem areas around your home or office. After the source of your problem areas have been identified, your technician will create a customized tick treatment plan for year-round protection, using the most effective and environmentally conscious tick control solutions.

BED BUGS

Bed bugs have made a comeback over the last ten years. Bed bugs have developed resistance to traditional pesticide applications. This resistance has made establishing control more difficult.

Bed bugs are apple seed-sized, reddish-brown bugs that feed on human blood at night. Bed bugs are frequently brought home from airports, clothing stores, hotels, movie theaters and used furniture. Once inside, bed bugs are typically found close to where you sleep. These blood-sucking pests can hide in cracks the thickness of a credit card. PPS technicians frequently find bed

bugs in baseboards, bed frames, box springs, cabinets, furniture, headboards, mattresses, nightstands, picture frames — even behind electrical plate covers! Bed bugs do not spread diseases, but they do cause discomfort and many sleepless nights.

Bed bug heat remediation treatments are an efficient and cost-effective way to eradicate bed bug infestations without the use of pesticides. Heat treatments take only one day and leave no odor or toxic residues behind, making heat the ideal choice for the extermination of bed bugs in both residential and commercial settings. Bed bug heat treatments penetrate walls and permeate every square inch of an infested room, ensuring that it is clean and clear of bed bugs.

The newest bed bug treatment is a bio-pesticide. Bed bugs build up a resistance to chemicals, and certain chemicals won't work. A couple of years ago scientists from Penn State developed a bio-pesticide that bed bugs have no resistance to. "We are seeing excellent results with it," James Harrison explains.

All of Patriot Pest Solutions' Quality Pro certified state-licensed technicians have been trained by James, an Associate Certified Entomologist, in bed bug detection. Don't wonder if you have bed bugs, find out for sure by contacting Patriot Pest Solutions for a FREE inspection and estimate on proven solutions to exterminate your bed bug infestation.

FOCUS ON POTTSTOWN

Unlocking Pottstown's Potential

DIVERSITY-FOCUSED INVESTORS CONFERENCE A VIRTUAL SUCCESS

The upbeat, online Pottstown Investors Conference held April 16 showcased not only the resilience within the Western Montgomery County borough's shared business community, but also the tangible, rich opportunity that exists if entrepreneurs, investors, and residents embrace diversity as a driver for sustainable economic and nonprofit success.

About 150 registrants participated in the free, virtual event, hosted by Hobart's Run; Pottstown Area Industrial Development, Inc.; the Borough of Pottstown; and The Hill School. This was the fourth Pottstown Investors Conference. The 2020 event was cancelled due to the then-growing Covid pandemic. This year, organizers were eager to bring potential and existing investors back to the table to share very encouraging news and address the timely issue of social equity and its impact on Pottstown's business environment.

If you missed the conference but would like to view a video, contact Stephanie Trauner at stephanie@hobart-srunpottstown.org.

Don Chen

The keynote speaker, Don Chen, president and CEO of the New York City-based Surdna Foundation, emphasized that ensuring an equitable post-pandemic recovery is important not only because it is the just thing to do.

After the initial focus on surviving the pandemic, "older cities like Pottstown should reinvent themselves and the diversity of their economic drivers," Chen said, adding that towns which enrich their "social fabric" will differentiate themselves from other business environments.

Diversification requires strong, committed leadership from civic, business, and



educational stakeholders; people-centered support such as training; creative use and re-use of available physical spaces; and the smart use of public money and investor capital.

"Communities need to create welcoming spaces" for people of color, immigrants (who, statistics show, create *more* jobs), and

women entrepreneurs, Chen said. Growth sectors ripe for investment include businesses that allow employees to work remotely, the tech and science industries, and small scale "makerspaces" such as craftsmen working with textiles, wood, and other materials.

The Surdna Foundation's investments



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SULAIMAN RAHMAN

promote diversity and foster a more inclusive society that closes the wealth gap, as it believes such commitments “will lead to better returns and impact,” Chen said.

The social networks existing in towns like Pottstown, he observed, are strong. “People check in with other,” he said. “They realize ‘we all are in this together’ – and the community is worth saving and building upon.”

The key to attracting more businesses owned by black and brown people can be summed up in one word: Trust. Pottstown as a whole must build relationships with existing and potential businesspeople and “ascertain the needs of the community,” Chen said. Loans must be accessible to all potential investors. And larger, established businesses must support smaller businesses.

If communities do not work to include and embrace people of color, immigrant, and women-owned businesses, they are “missing out on unlocking the potential” for the entire community, Chen said.

Sulaiman Rahman

Sulaiman Rahman, the CEO of Philadelphia-based DiverseForce, a “human capital solutions firm,” addressed the challenges of preparing the next generation of black and brown leaders for their role in the business and nonprofit world. Rahman

was introduced by Mike Harris, chairman of the Hobart’s Run Board of Directors.

Research shows a troubling 86 to 95 percent of all nonprofit leaders are white, he noted, a statistic reflecting the real need to bring broader cultural perspectives and collaboration to leadership entities.

When leaders work in silos and fail to think of the collective impact embodied by diversity, they miss the chance to “build robust pipelines of diverse talent and to build aspirational capital,” Rahman said, noting DiverseForce led a training program that filled 120 board seats with such diverse talent over the past four years.

Like Chen, Rahman suggested Pottstown leaders look for ways to make the community as desirable as possible for *all* people to live and invest in. Tulsa, Oklahoma, for example, has provided significant financial incentives to people so they will stay in their city and find ways to work remotely. Another worthwhile incentive might be for leaders to offset moving costs for talent to move here and make the town the place where they want to live, work, and play.

Entrepreneurs need to have ample access to technical support and training, as well as financial support. Crowdsourcing can be one way to raise money for investment in Pottstown by people of color, Rahman said.

(Continued on page 10)

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FOCUS ON POTTSTOWN

(Continued from page 9)

Case Studies of Pottstown Resilience

The Conference featured two stories of pandemic resilience shared by Pottstown business owners Kristen Sirbak of Beverly's Pastry Shop and Zahmere Trott of Uptown Flavors Kitchen. In introducing Sirbak and Trott, Lee-Clark praised their innovation, grit, and commitment to our community. While they had not previously offered curbside pickup, both owners adapted and offered this service to keep their businesses afloat.

Trott was in constant communication with PAID about changing regulations and he built his network by reaching out to the Pottstown NAACP and other local political and business support groups.

He refused to raise his prices, he said, as he wanted to be sure his soul food would remain affordable. In fact, he sent hundreds of free lunches to children in the community as a way of helping Pottstown – and was pleasantly surprised to find that his customer base tripled following his act of kindness.

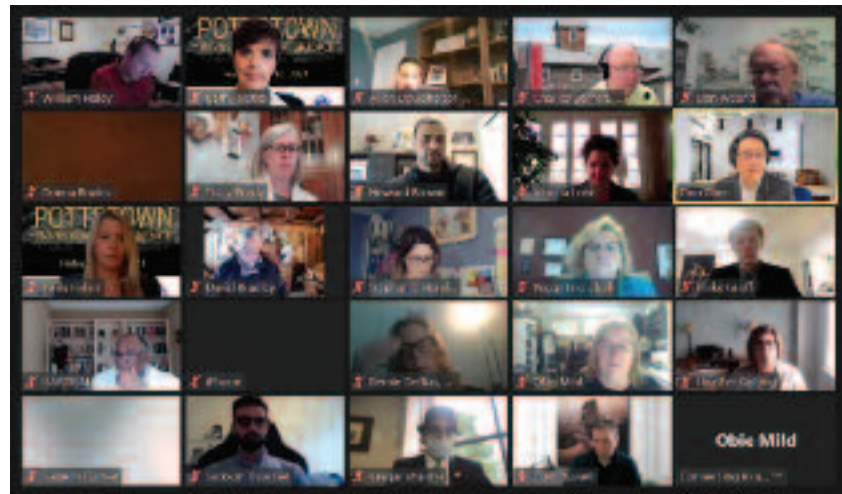
Despite her temporary shutdown, Sirbak kept her friendly face in front of customers by creating “how to” videos from her home kitchen and she consciously looked at “problems” as “solutions” in disguise. She was especially focused on surviving so she could bring her staff – “my girls,” she said with affection – back to work.

“I never got so close to my customers as I did throughout this [pandemic] experience,” she said. “Our community is strong. We love our community, and they love us back. The community is the reason I come in here every day.”

Hobart's Run

Twila Fisher, executive director of the Hobart's Run initiative, and Cathy Skitko, director of Hobart's Run communications and community relations, shared an update about recent developments.

Highlights included hosting a successful Borough-wide clean-up and providing tools for small neighborhood litter pick-ups; placement of 42 “Adopt-a-Trashcan” bins throughout the Borough and securing eight corporate bin sponsors; funding security cameras at the Ricketts Center; proceeding with Pa. DCED-funded safety enhancements on Beech Street; facilitating



Edgewood Cemetery cleanups and fundraisers; promoting Hobart's Run's Homeownership Incentive Program (HIP) and Façade Improvement Grants (FIG); ongoing Block Captain engagement; thriving monthly Community Leaders Breakfast networking sessions; and distribution of \$17,000 in Covid-relief grants to 10 businesses and 14 nonprofits since last March.

Twila announced the launch of \$1,500 Business Incentive Grants (BIG) for busi-

nesses that open in the 600 – 900 blocks of High Street as well as Hobart's Run's move into a new, more accessible office space at 856-A East High Street.

PAID, INC.

Peggy Lee-Clark, provided updates about several exciting projects, including a new Life Sciences Incubator, Y3, LLC, located on the third floor of 159 E. High Street; a bio-diesel, “green” fuel production facility, Pottstown Sustainability

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Energy Plant, to be located on Keystone Boulevard; and the restoration and renovation of the former Pottstown *Mercury* office building on Hanover Street into a boutique hotel and restaurant.

"Long-term investors are telling us that – even with Covid – they have never before seen such interest in Pottstown development," Lee-Clark emphasized. She cited a recent Philadelphia *Inquirer* article stating the average Pottstown home now sells within six days and featuring Pottstown apartments as offering "far more bang for the buck" than residences in other regional locations.

Investors know Pottstown offers a "really beautiful and walkable community," she said, adding, "We are hitting the [post-pandemic] reset button, and looking forward to a strong future."

The Borough of Pottstown

Justin Keller, Borough manager, began his update by declaring "the complexity of our town is changing for the better."

Contributing to Pottstown's strong investment climate are the hot Pottstown real estate market; substantiated movement toward re-establishment of rail transportation to and from Philadelphia;

ongoing Borough infrastructure upgrades and work to bring federal infrastructure improvement funding to our town; and the presence of four, full-time fire and emergency services companies as well as 47 highly trained police officers.

All these aspects "show we are a highly desirable place to be," Keller said.

Breakouts

Conference participants had the chance to engage in small virtual group discussions. In one "room," local investor Christa Costello said she has felt these conferences "have made a real difference in Pottstown investment," adding, "I really feel Pottstown is coming back."

Eileen Dautrich, president of the Tri-County Area Chamber of Commerce, said she immediately reached out to Rahman with hopes this Conference connection will help the Chamber's efforts to increase the number of minority-owned businesses.

While Pottstown struggled with a negative self-image for many years, the conferences led to much of that negativity disappearing, said Bill Haley, editor and publisher of *Route 422 Business Advisor*. "Events like these help get out the word about Pottstown, and this conference will help encourage diversity," he said.

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Local Dance Students Work with True Professionals This Summer

The Pottstown Dance Theatre Repertory Ensemble will be performing with four professional dancers from Melange Contemporary Dance in the director's original full-length work, "Jazzerella." The performance was scheduled last spring at the Hill School Center for the Arts but was canceled due to the pandemic. The dancers continued to train, remotely as needed, and re-mounted the entire show for this June. The performance, being professionally recorded (and possibly streamed with professional sound engineering) will take place at the Green Lane Park Amphitheater. Shows will be rain or shine on June 26 at 3 pm, as well as June 27 at 3 pm. The amphitheater utilizes all lawn seating (making social distancing a breeze) and lawn chairs or blankets are welcome. Viewers can easily sit with their own families to maintain safety and enjoy the fresh air.

One of the pieces, "Dance Toccata," is set to originally composed music by pianist Jeff Nations. Jeff has toured the



world as a pianist; and this is the world premiere of this work. The piece was cited for excellence by State Senator Bob Mensch. Pottstown Dance Theatre students Lacey Krause and Nina Shenk will split the role of Jazzerella, and Owen Bernhardt will perform the male lead, Prinz. Instructor Diane Alex-Brody will portray the Evil Ballet-Step Mistress. The entire show has been choreographed by director Michelle Jones Wurtz.

Tickets need to be purchased in advance and are available at Pottstown Dance Theatre, by calling 610.323.2569, or online through a link (to Dance Box Office) on the studio website at www.pottstowndance.com. Student/senior tickets are \$8 and adult tickets are \$12. This project was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.



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Jeanette M. Hassis, CPA has enjoyed serving closely-held businesses, their owners and high net-worth families for over 25 years. She has extensive Federal, state and local tax experience with corporations, partnerships, individuals, non-profits, private foundations, estate and trusts, including multi-state and tiered structures. Throughout her career, Jeanette has been instrumental in assisting clients at every stage of their business and personal life with timely tax, succession and estate planning and compliance. Her client industries of focus include real estate construction and development, manufacturing, wholesalers, and professional services such as attorneys, doctors, insurance agents and financial advisors.

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Insurance lines include: Commercial; Homeowners; Personal Auto; and Niche Industries, including condo associations, property management, artisan contractors, and automotive repair shops.

Company president and founder John A. Bigham III has lived in the Pottstown, PA area his entire life. He attended Owen J. Roberts High School and received his MIS degree from Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, PA. Upon graduation from college, John worked for a large accounting and finance firm as a consultant for large insurance companies. He became a producing insurance agent/broker in 2005. Since then John has become successful by utilizing his insurance knowledge and strong work ethic to provide his clients with the necessary insurance coverage at a competitive price combined with superior customer service.

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Beginning locally in 1989 as a traffic engineering firm, TPD is currently ranked the #1 Best Large Engineering Firm to Work for in the United States. We attribute our growth and success to our strong focus on work/life balance and our dedication to creating a unique and family-oriented

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This hiring boom includes the recent welcoming of several new senior-level managers to the TPD team – leaders who have demonstrated records of technical

excellence and client satisfaction within the Pennsylvania transportation marketplace. Combined with TPD's established services and operations, these managers will work with agencies, counties, municipalities and others to help deliver quality engineering and construction projects across the Commonwealth and beyond. For more information on TPD's news, capabilities and experience, please visit www.trafficpd.com.

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The attorneys at O'Donnell, Weiss & Mattei, P.C. (OWM Law) have been serving clients in Pottstown and Phoenixville, and throughout Montgomery, Chester, and Berks Counties, for over 60 years! In addition, OWM Law has been a member of the Chamber for over 35 years.

OWM Law attorneys serve as Solicitors to both the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce and Pottstown Area Industrial Development, Inc., and we are pleased help advance their vision of growth and revitalization for Pottstown. In fact, it is not unusual to find the lawyers from OWM involved, both on the front lines and behind the scenes, in much of what is happening in both Pottstown and Phoenixville, as OWM attorneys are good citizens and proud volunteers, strongly committed to supporting the communities in which they do business. The fingerprints of OWM Law attorneys

are all over the revitalization of Pottstown and Phoenixville, including various and assorted business and real estate projects (i.e. motels, retail establishments, redevelopment of formerly abandoned industrial sites, restaurants, etc.).

The attorneys at OWM Law represent businesses, municipalities, banks, individuals, families, and charitable organizations. Each lawyer practices in specific areas of the law, and to better serve clients we also frequently utilize client service teams consisting of multiple attorneys and paralegals. Through the development of these teams, we are able to handle complex transactions and provide the guidance and solutions our clients need. In addition, several OWM Law attorneys are licensed title agents, and OWM Law routinely conducts residential and commercial real estate settlements in both of our office locations.

OWM Law has fully-staffed offices in Pottstown at 41 E. High Street, and in Phoenixville at 347 Bridge Street, Suite 200. Supporting the 13 lawyers is a dedicated staff of paralegals, legal assistants and other staff members who, along with the attorneys, are committed to providing top quality service and legal representation to clients in a professional, pleasant and cost-effective manner. We constantly strive to stay up-to-date with the latest available technology, while endeavoring to develop and maintain personal relationships with our clients and provide individualized service.

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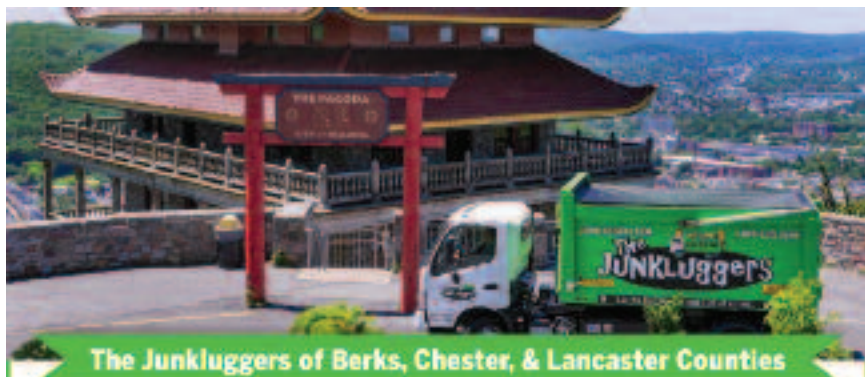
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FACEBOOK REVIEWS — IT'S ALL ABOUT THE ASK



SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

By Theresa Mintzer

People buy from businesses that they know, like, and trust. One way to increase your trust factor is through Facebook Reviews. Customers can recommend your business to others and leave comments about it.

If you don't have a review tab on your page, go to Settings then Templates and Tabs. You want to turn on reviews so that they will show up. Now that you have confirmed that your review tab is visible, it's time to ask for more reviews.

Don't be afraid to be direct about asking for reviews. When you send a follow-up email to a customer, include a link to your Facebook review page and ask for a recommendation. I would also suggest

that you include a link to your Google My Business as well. The easier you make it, the better it is for people. How many times have you been in a business where they have handed you a receipt with the survey?

When customers tell you how much they loved your product or service, you can respond by asking them to recommend you on Facebook. Not everyone will, and that's OK. However, there is a good chance that they had not thought about it.

Reviews can really benefit your business. It would be amazing if every satisfied customer sent you a glowing review after they interacted with your business. That is not always

going to happen, so don't forget to ask.

For further information, please contact Theresa Mintzer at 484.686.2995; email: theresa@MintzerSolutions.com; and visit: MintzerSolutions.com.




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The COVID-19 pandemic has irrevocably changed our lives. Not only have we all shifted to wearing masks and keeping our distance. We have all lost someone. Every day we miss our loved ones and honor them by continuing to mitigate the spread of this virus. Wearing masks, not gathering in groups, and choosing to wave to Grandma from the street are measures that save lives. Though perhaps it is becoming tiresome, they are important. Let's continue to save lives for our whole community.

For our veterinary practice, we have completely adjusted our day-to-day appointment protocol. Since March 2020, we have not allowed clients into the building for everyone's safety. Our appointments are done over the phone or over video chat, while the patient is in the exam room with us. This has drastically changed how we interact with our clients and even with the patients themselves! We must say: we miss you all! However, we know this sacrifice is worth it to keep us all safe.

Did you know that your pet can get COVID-19? Though it is rare, if your dog or cat comes in close contact with someone sick with SARS-CoV-2, they could catch it and become ill. The good news is that there is little evidence showing that humans can catch this virus from pets. If you think your pet has caught COVID from you or someone ill, you should call us right away.

According to the CDC, symptoms in pets are very similar to symptoms in humans: fever, coughing, lethargy, and difficulty breathing. The best thing you can do to keep your pet safe from COVID is get all their vaccinations. You may be thinking, "What? How are they related?" Here's how: if your pet is fully vaccinated against all of the diseases we can prevent, it means that they'll be healthier longer. That way if your pets ever come into contact with someone infected by SARS-CoV-2, we know for a fact that they don't have any other diseases and as a result would have the maximum capacity to overcome any symptoms of COVID-19.

(Continued on page 18)



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(Continued from page 17)

Here's a list of preventative measures you can take for your pet!

Flea and tick prevention! Even if your pet doesn't go outside, it's possible that fleas and ticks can come into the house. The best thing to do is to ensure that even if those bugs bite your pet that they immediately fall off and die. Now that the weather is nice, these biters are out! Keep them out of your house and off your pet with a preventative medication.

Vaccines, vaccines, vaccines! Keeping your pets healthy isn't just about diet or yearly exams. Preventing illness through the use of vaccines is key, especially because certain illnesses such as leptospirosis can be passed onto humans and cause us harm too. There are lots of prevalent diseases that can be prevented from even happening and this way your pet stays happy and healthy!

Brushing their teeth! Investing time and care into your pet's teeth can help save you time and money later — and save your pet's teeth from being extracted. Use a pet toothpaste and pet toothbrush and rub the outside of their teeth at least every other day to keep them clean. At the very least, you can use a hygienic solution

spray bottle to spray the pet's teeth by aiming at the gum line to prevent plaque buildup that further prevents infection and keeps your pet free of any tooth pain.

Exercise and activity! It's important that your pet get the right amount of exercise in a given day. Playtime with your pet is a great way to bond with them and build trust. Show them your love by taking good care of their health with at least one walk a day for our canine friends, and playtime sessions indoors with our feline friends.

Annual Visits! Even when you know your pet is healthy, it's paramount to bring them in to us once a year. This allows us to check on their health and ensure that they receive the vaccines that they need. We might notice something that you haven't yet seen.

We hope that you never have to worry about your own health or your pet's health. However, it's best to be prepared and have the right information at your fingertips. Remember to mask up to save a life and to get vaccinated as soon as you can. Preventative care is our best bet at beating this pandemic.

For additional information, please call 610.326.6346, and visit sanatogavet.com.

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At Home Service

A Short Story of a Lifelong Journey



By Chris Knox, Owner,
At Home Service, LLC

Life is a journey. Yes, it is a cliché, but true. And the thing about life's journey is it always moves forward along a

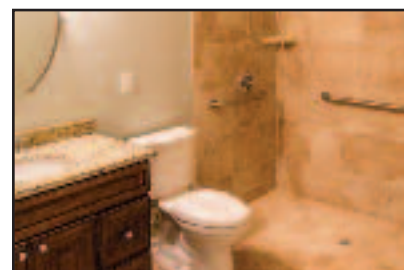
completely unpredictable path. Yet with all the unpredictable highs and lows, we always have the ability to choose a new path. Still an unpredictable path, but a new and exciting one none the less.

My own journey led me right to here, when in Oct. of 2020 I chose to start a residential service company. A company where I'm able to take all the experience I've gathered from Drexel University, the US Navy, working for Architectural Firms, and a decade long career as a Service Executive, and apply them in ways that set a new standard for Customer Experience and helping others enjoy life to the fullest.

At Home Service LLC is a residential service company focused on providing home safety and residential services to Senior Citizens who wish to live a safer, healthier, and more comfortable life in their own home.

The most critical element of long-term Senior Citizen independence is to minimize the risk of injury. All the planning, saving, and dreaming of new experiences are in jeopardy with a single fall or incident. That is why our service process begins with a comprehensive At Home Safety Assessment focused on fall prevention, accessibility, and home safety. Our team of certified Safety Specialists are trained to understand a client's needs and expectations for aging at home, and identify improvements that help to protect their health, safety, and comfort.

At Home Service is happy to work independently or with a client's family members and Care Providers to be part of a comprehensive home support team.



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Ask SCORE

RETIREMENT PLANNING FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

Planning for retirement needs to be a priority for every small business owner. Here are three types of small business retirement plans that you can take advantage of to save for retirement that also provide tax advantages for your business.

It's easy and far too common for small business owners to focus so much of their time and energy on running their business that they fail to plan for their personal financial future. But, when you own a small business, there's no 401(k) employer match or other company-sponsored retirement programs to join. Your retirement fund rests solely on your shoulders and failing to prioritize retirement over the other areas of your business will harm you down the road.

Ensuring that your financial well-being in the future is a part of ensuring the financial stability of your business.

Think of your retirement plan as a part of your overall business strategy. Some retirement plans have more small business tax advantages than others. Start here by looking at plans that include one or more of these major tax advantages.

- Tax-deferred plans that grow your investment without taxes applied
- Employer contributions that can be deducted as business expenses
- Tax credits for expenses as you start and maintain the plan

There are three types of retirement plans that small business owners should consider that offer strong tax advantages and other benefits.

(Continued on page 26)



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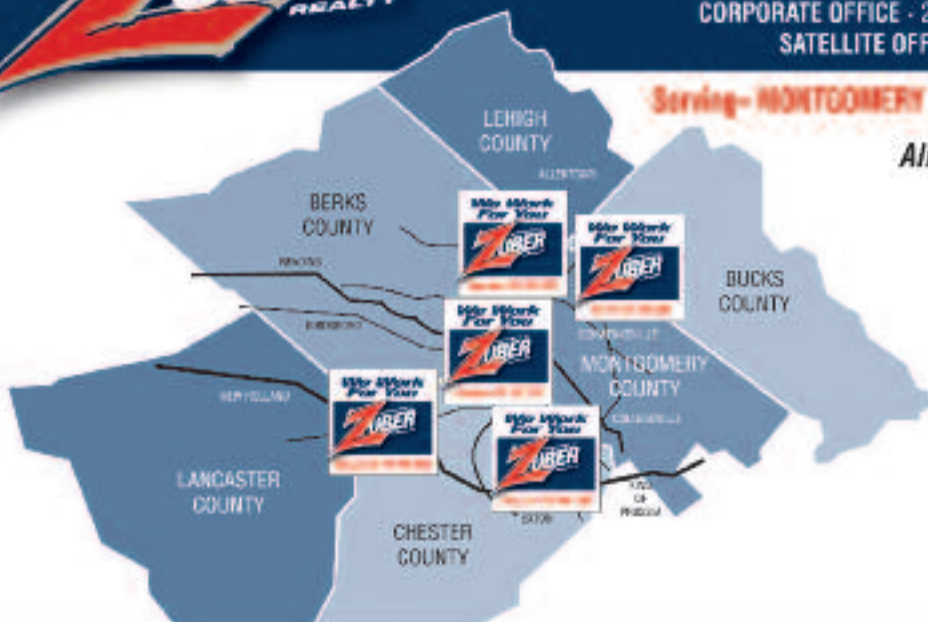
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Ask SCORE

(Continued from page 24)

Simplified Employee Pension (SEP)

IRA: A SEP IRA is a basic retirement plan that allows self-employed people and small business owners to contribute directly to their own account. These accounts have a limit as to how much you can contribute each year – in 2020 owners can save up to \$57,000 toward retirement with a SEP IRA. This type of IRA offers tax advantages to business owners who put money away for retirement and contributions are tax-deductible.

SIMPLE IRA: The "SIMPLE" in SIMPLE IRA stands for a Savings Incentive Match Plan for Employees. This IRA is an employer-sponsored retirement plan for businesses with 100 employees or less and is funded by tax-deductible contributions and pretax employee contributions similar to the way a 401(k) works. Employees can contribute a portion of their paycheck pretax with taxes on the funds deferred until the money is withdrawn. SIMPLE IRAs are less expensive and easier to manage than other plans – a big benefit for busy small businesses.

Self-Employed 401(k): A self-employed 401(k) is a plan for a self-employed business owner with no employees. It is a

tax-deferred retirement plan that works about the same way as a traditional 401(k). However, if you are interested in putting a significant amount of retirement savings away each year, then a self-employed 401(k) has a big advantage. This plan looks at the participant as both the employer and the employee, allowing you to contribute more money each year than an individual could under most other traditional retirement accounts.

Each of these plans has its advantages. Picking the right one for you and your business often comes down to the tax advantages your business can benefit from now and how much you're looking to save for the future.

**Once you have selected
your retirement account,
come up with a contribution
plan and stick with it.**

Plan to contribute to your retirement account regularly and factor that into your overall budget each year. You can decide to make ongoing contributions or make one larger contribution at the end of the tax year. However often you decide to contribute to your account, make sure the amount you contribute is directly tied to

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the amount of money you plan to need throughout your retirement years.

According to SCORE mentor Frank DeSantis, "With any retirement plan, you need to estimate how much money you will need to live on after you stop working in your business. For a small business owner, there may be new costs to consider as expenses—such as automobile payments, fuel, insurance, and some entertainment costs—transition from business tax deductions to personal expenses in retirement. Knowing what your needs are will help you plan to save enough to meet your goals."

Saving for retirement as a small business owner is easier with guidance from a professional.

As a small business owner, saving for retirement can feel like an overwhelming task on an already long list of to-dos. The best way to make saving for retirement a priority and make intelligent planning decisions is with the help of professionals who understand your needs. If you have not already started working with a professional financial planner, this is a great time to start. In addition, if you are looking for guidance in finding the right financial planner, choosing the best

retirement savings plan and planning for the future of your business, connect with a SCORE mentor. A SCORE mentor can help you develop and execute a smart retirement plan and get retirement savings checked off your to-do list.

ABOUT SCORE: Since 1964, SCORE "Mentors to America's Small Business" has helped more than 10 million aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners through mentoring and business workshops. More than 11,000 volunteer business mentors in over 320 chapters serve their communities through entrepreneur education dedicated to the formation, growth and success of small businesses. For more information about starting or operating a small business, contact SCORE TriCounty, <https://tricity.score.org/content/find-mentor-183>.

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Five Reasons You Should Hire a Professional Graphic Designer

By Suzy Lysczek, President/Creative Director, Suzy Rae Design

It happens often. Suzy Rae Design is asked to create a billboard or design a t-shirt and the client provides us with a file of their logo that is not professionally designed. The file was created in Word or PowerPoint or even Photoshop. Now, we must recreate their logo which takes time and money. This can be frustrating for the client. Yes, they saved some money in the beginning, but it costs them later!

Graphic design requires a creative expert. There is a major difference from a \$50 logo you purchased from an online site and one that has been customized for you and your business. When working with a local designer you will build a relationship with someone who takes time to learn about your business, services, and target audience. Whether the concept is yours, or you let the designer create an image, they are working with you every step of the way with an open line of communication. You don't always receive that with online services, and being local they truly understand your community. In the end, a professional designer will make sure your logo is first class and looks good on business cards, billboards, website, social media, apparel, promotional items etc. you name it!

Here are five reasons why you should hire a graphic designer for your business:

1. Saves Time: You have enough to do! Let the graphic designer come up with a design or format a marketing document. It's what they do! A professional design will excel the image of your business. How do you want that perspective client to perceive you?

2. Save Money: A graphic designer will know the most cost-effective ways to design your materials to keep your printing costs to a minimum. They can also suggest options to make your materials stand out from your competition.

3. Helps You Create a Brand: OK now you have a logo, but what about the rest of your marketing? A designer can create a visual brand for your business.

4. Keeps Your Look Consistent: Keeping your brand consistent is key. A designer will know which fonts to use where, they will keep fonts and colors consistent and ensure the overall look and feel of all your materials will consistently capture your brand.

5. Help You Get the Results You Want: So, you have an idea of what you want your business materials to look like but have no way to convey them. A designer will listen to your needs and goals and create an effective piece that is visually appealing to capture your audience.

Investing in a professionally designed logo or marketing materials is a solid investment that will last a long time. It is crucial to making the right first impression or improving your image to stand out from your competition! Always remember, the more established, professional your company looks, the more trust your customer will have in doing business with you.

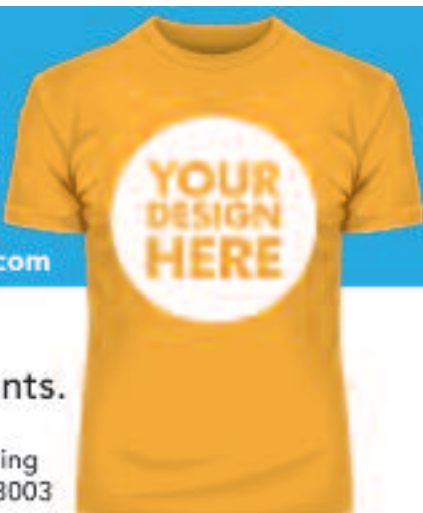
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Provided by Kelli Gerth, CIC, CISR, The Loomis Company

If one thing is for certain, it is that cyber incidents are happening to businesses of all types sizes and it is costing them dearly. Businesses are getting stung by cyber-related losses like fraudulent wire transfers and ransomware attacks more than ever. This has meant that while the need for cyber insurance has never been greater, cyber insurers are having to look even more carefully at each potential client to make sure they are taking the most basic precautions to protect themselves.

But what are those precautions?

1. Unused RDP (Remote Desktop Protocol) ports are closed (and open ones are protected) — RDP allows users to access their office desktop and computing resources remotely.

2. MFA (Multi-Factor Authentication) is turned on access across key business software — MFA is an extra layer of security used to verify the identity of the person trying to gain access to an account.

3. There is a data management strategy in place — carriers like to be able to quickly understand the types and amounts of data held by any company.

4. Systems are running endpoint detection and response — Firewalls and antivirus software are not enough to ward off today's more sophisticated cybercriminals.

5. Regular backups are taken using best practice — Backup practices can vary widely — How often are they taken? Where are they stored?

6. A good attitude toward risk management is demonstrated — A willingness to implement fixes for security vulnerabilities.

The Loomis Company works with their clients in partnership with our carriers to identify where holes in the security posture might be, and then provide support in remediating any vulnerabilities and strengthening the overall security. If you would like to learn more, please contact: Kelli L. Gerth, CIC, CISR at 484.334.9089; email: kgerth@loomisco.com. I'M DEDICATED TO SERVICE BEYOND WHAT MY CLIENTS EXPECT.

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As every small business owner knows, long-term success requires overcoming and learning from a variety of challenges faced along the way.

When the news about the deadly COVID-19 virus first hit in the Spring of 2020, Sebastian Sottosanti was understandably concerned about the negative impact the ensuing public health restrictions could have on his business. Over the years, Sottosanti Lawn Care had built a stellar reputation for providing exceptional residential and commercial lawn care, hardscaping and landscaping services to residential and commercial clients in Berks, Western Montgomery and Northern Chester Counties. The home-grown business was started in 1978 by Sebastian's hard-working father who would cut lawns

and do yard work from 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM as a side job before heading to his full-time factory job each day in season. Since those humble beginnings, the business has steadily grown to currently include a fleet of seven trucks and 11 employees. Now, with a global health crisis looming, the future of Sottosanti's business, and all businesses, was uncertain.

"When the pandemic first hit and things were starting to go a bit crazy, we thought we would be shut down for the year," Sebastian explains. After spending his youth helping his dad every summer since the age of ten, he had returned to the family business after graduating from college, and he eventually took over and expanded the company when his father passed in 2002. As it turned out, this particular challenge had a silver lining.

"We were able to procure the necessary paperwork that deemed us essential, and we were able to continue working," Sebastian said. "With so many people working from home this past year, they had the opportunity to think about their lawns and their properties a lot more, and many more people decided to do a 'staycation' and put some money into their own properties, and that led to what at first looked to be a disaster into the best year of my career."

As a 10-year-old who sometimes butted heads with his father about having to help mow lawns during the summer months while other children played, Sebastian had no idea he was actually building the foundation for his future. "Instead of getting in trouble or wasting time, it developed my career path" he said, adding, "It also instilled some values in me, and a hard work ethic. You always say you're going to be different, and you turn out exactly like your parents."

Ironically, Sebastian's father would have preferred that his son had gone into the business world, wearing a suit and tie to work instead of engaging in the struggle of hard labor that he had himself endured his entire life. Sebastian saw it differently.





Upon graduating from LaSalle University in 1994 with a degree in Business Management, he decided to combine his knowledge of business with his innate love for the landscape work he grew up doing, and he decided to join forces and partner with his father in the family business.

"The way I saw it, and it's even worse now, many kids come out of college and they don't pursue the career path they majored in," Sebastian explains. "I'm really a proponent now for Trade School or Vocational Tech. I saw that a lot of my friends were inundated with student loans and they weren't necessarily doing the work that they thought they'd be doing anyway."



Although it turned out to be the right decision for Sebastian, there were, of course, challenges along the way, particularly with the passing of his father in 2002. "The business was thrust upon me by necessity," he said. "I would say there was a good five or six years of struggle. Working with my

dad, we were splitting profits basically. He was quite the efficient worker and when hiring workers as employees who were not as involved or invested in the business, the profits were not what they once were," he explains. As a result, Sebastian was determined to develop and expand his business skills. "You definitely sharpen your pencil on that. I've learned more professionalism, to under promise and over deliver, and generally do what you say you're going to do," he said.

Through Sebastian's persistent dedication to excellence, integrity and dependability, his business has steadily grown over the years. Today, Sottosanti Lawn Care provides a wide range of lawn care, hardscaping and landscaping services (see accompanying sidebar for a complete listing of services). In addition to a growing list of residential and commercial clients, Sottosanti Lawn Care has also expanded to include the Home-Owners Association market and the municipal market — providing services for townships and municipalities. The company is fully insured and provides FREE estimates and a one-year warranty on all hardscape and landscape materials installed, and a FREE consultation on all services except landscape design.

Sebastian Sottosanti clearly loves what he does for a living. "I love the business and I love making a difference in people's properties," he said. "We're all about property value enhancement. I take great pride especially in 'before' and 'after' photos. It's a great feeling of pride when you come into a property that's been neglected for a while and you turn that property around and get it to where it once was or should have been," he explains, adding, "I'm a strong proponent of supervised work. When we take on a job, we strive to service it as if it was our own property. . .

LIST OF SERVICES

EFFICIENT LAWN MOWING

- Full-Scale Lawn Mowing Services
- Commercial lawn mowing
- Residential lawn mowing
- Lawn maintenance
- Weekly contracts tailored to your project
- Maintenance contracts available

PRECISION LANDSCAPE DESIGN

- Professional Landscape Design Services
- Landscape installation
- Property face-lift
- Renovation services
- Rearrange or design a new layout for your landscape

HARDSCAPE DESIGN

- Hardscape installations
- Patio pavers
- Walkway pavers
- Retaining walls

PREMIUM SHRUB TRIMMING

- High-Quality Shrub Trimming Services.
- Scheduling options available to ensure that no shrub or hedge becomes overgrown.

PROFESSIONAL FERTILIZATION

- Preemergent crabgrass control
- Weed and feed
- Lawn aeration
- Seeding and lime application

MULCHING

- Mulch installation
- Refresh flower beds with defined edges
- Brown mulch installation
- Black mulch installation
- Red mulch installation
- Premium double-shredded hardwood

PROMPT SPRING & FALL CLEANUP

- Removal of all winter depress
- Prepare bed for planting
- Turning over existing mulch and garden
- Weekly schedule available

We provide a FREE consultation on all our services except landscape design. For a complete list of services. Please visit: www.sottosantilawnncare.net.



If you do a good job for people, it's going to make a difference, and you make it a point to keep an open line of communication with clients as well. You don't want any mis-communication or misunderstandings getting in the way of a good client relationship."

For additional information, please call: 610.670.7639 or 610.370.1507, or email: Sebastiansottosanti0771@gmail.com, and visit: www.sottosantilawnncare.net.



REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

GREATER READING CHAMBER ALLIANCE



- 606 Court Street, Reading, PA 19601
- 610.376.6766 • fax 610.376.4135
- info@greaterreading.org
- www.greaterreading.org

Mission: To be Berks County's leading resource for building a healthy, competitive business community

Vision: Assist companies to retain, expand, and grow their operations and employment and attract new business to Berks County.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 4 - Women2Women: Starting a D&I Council in Your Workplace

Desha Dickson – AVP, Community Wellness at Reading Hospital

Virtual Event – Link will be sent week of Event
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

\$15/person – Chamber Member

\$25/person – Not Yet Chamber Member

Advanced Registration Required

May 6 – COVID-19 Employment Policies and Vaccine Plans

Kozloff Stoudt Attorneys

Virtual Event – Link will be sent week of Event
1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

FREE to GRCA Members

Advanced Registration Required

May 11 – Essentials of Effective Management: Driving Organizational Results

Center for Business Excellence -
Or virtually on Zoom

49 Commerce Drive

Wyomissing, Pa 19610

8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

5 weeks on Tuesdays: May 13, 20, 27, Jun 3, 10

\$695/person - Chamber Members

\$895/ person - Not-Yet Chamber Members

Advanced Registration Required

May 12 – Driving Disciplined Execution

Virtual Event – Link will be sent week of event
1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

FREE

Advanced Registration Required

May 13 – De Mujer a Mujer: Engaging Men to Advance Women Panel

Virtual Event – Link will be sent week of Event
10:00 – 11:30 p.m.

\$5/person

Advanced Registration Required

May 13 – The Heart and The Head of The New Business World

Virtual Event – Link will be sent week of event
1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

FREE

Advanced Registration Required

May 20 – Berks Alliance Community Forum

Focusing Forward: The Positive Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Pre-K to 12 Education

Virtual Event - link will be sent prior to the event

11:30 – 1:00 p.m.

FREE

Advanced Registration Required

Downtown Reading Business + Investment Property Tour

Thursday, June 17
9 a.m. - Noon

Downtown Reading is ready for new opportunities, growth, and investment. We invite you to be part of the momentum! The team at the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance in partnership with the Reading Berks Association of Realtors is here to help you find your dream property and connect you to the resources to turn that dream into a reality. Participate in a **FREE**, curated tour of available spaces for lease and for sale in Downtown Reading – in-person or virtually!

Please note: COVID-19 precautions will be followed – tour groups will be no larger than five people walking from space to space and inside at any given time. A virtual tour opportunity of all participating properties will be available.



Learn more at greaterreading.org



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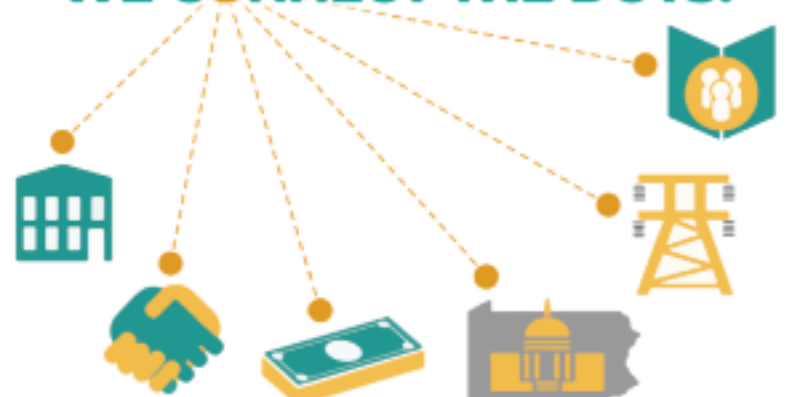
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Visit www.selectgreaterreading.com to learn how GRCA can assist you with all of your needs for expanding your business in the Greater Reading area.

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REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

PHOENIXVILLE REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

• 171 East Bridge Street, Phoenixville, PA 19460 • 610.933.3070 • fax 610.917.0503
• info@phoenixvillechamber.org • www.phoenixvillechamber.org

Celebrating 90 years in the PXV Business Community



PHOENIXVILLE
REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Phoenixville Regional Chamber of Commerce is an independent organization serving the business interests of Northern Chester, Western Montgomery and parts of Delaware Counties. The Chamber's mission is to "advance the principles of free enterprise by providing the leadership which will enhance the economic climate of the region, address the priority needs of its members, and interact with other individuals and organizations for the overall benefit of the business community."

Keep PXV's Economy Going!

Small businesses are the backbone of our regional economy, for every dollar spent at a small business, 67 cents stays in the community.

Many businesses provide convenient alternatives like online ordering and delivery services. Show support is ordering take-out, purchasing gift cards, or ordering online for delivery. You can make a big impact by shopping small all year round.



Take the Challenge - Go Local in 2021
Shop, Eat, Promote, Visit, and Donate Locally

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Awards Ceremony – Virtual May 12

See Phoenixville Chamber Community Calendar for time and link.

Congratulations to our Incredibly-Deserving 2019-2020 Winners

2020 Legacy Award - **Donald Coppedge**
2020 Outstanding Citizen of the Year - **Julian McCracken**
2019 Business Development Award - **Reads & Co.**
2019 Business Development Award - **Sedona Taphouse**
2019 Business Development Award - **Unde B's BBQ & Root Down Brewing Collab**
2019 Community Betterment Award - **All-Abilities Playground Project**
2019 Merit Award - **Megan Inmon**
2019 Merit Award - **Voxipop**

Chamber Round Up 2nd and 4th Thursdays

see Phoenixville Chamber Community Calendar for times.

Check in with the Chamber and fellow members! Please check time, each Round Up may be a different hour.

Open-Air Set Ups Will Return!

Weekly open-air business set ups will resume on Bridge Street starting April 16th!

Road Closure Info:

Bridge Street will be closed from Starr St. to Main St. and from Main St. to Gay St. from Fridays at 2pm to Mondays at 7am

New Hours of Operation:

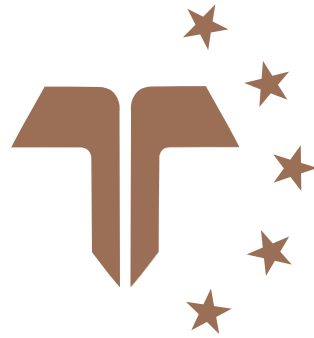
Friday - 4pm to 10pm

Saturday - 7am to 10pm

Sunday - 7am to 10pm



For information please visit the Borough website at: www.phoenixville.org/openairsetup



TRICOUNTY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Building Communities, Creating Connections, Supporting Commerce

152 E. High St., Suite 200, Pottstown, PA 19464 | 610.326.2900 | www.tricountyareachamber.com

Our Mission: Leveraging the power of membership to provide valued membership services and proactive leadership for the tri-county region.

Our Vision: The tri-county area has a strong sense of place – quality of life, economic opportunity, and generations of leaders – to support the region's businesses and communities.

Follow us on:



#WhyTCACC #tcaccbettertogether

Visit the NEW TriCountyAreaChamber.com

Featuring an even better design and easier navigation for you to access important information and resources for you and your business.

MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES Happy Anniversary to the following Members!

20 Years
McCormick Chiropractic

15 Years
David McSurdy D.M.D. Orthodontist

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Congratulations to the businesses listed below. Their applications were approved by the Board of Directors in April.

When purchasing goods or services, please keep these businesses as well as other TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce Members in mind while you **Always Buy Chamber!**

American Cancer Society
cancer.org
info@cancer.org
800.227.2345
Nonprofit Organizations

American Red Cross - Delaware Valley Chapter
www.redcross.org/philly
215.687.8794
Nonprofit Organizations

Be Resilient,
Healing Through The Arts
www.berezilient.org
484.561.2306
Nonprofit Organizations

Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott
Pottstown Limerick
www.marriott.com/abefo
610.326.5000
Hotels / Motels / Bed and Breakfasts

Superior Savings & Solutions LLC
484.624.1873
Consultants

IMPACTFUL NETWORKING

By Eileen Dautrich, TCACC President



"Networking" - the reason we hear most often of why people join the Chamber. We like to instead identify what Members would consider networking events as opportunities to build relationships.

Shepa Learning Company, "88 Positive Networking Tips" identifies Tip #1 as "A Better Way to Network" - "The seminal secret of Positive Networking is discovering what you can do for someone else, with no expectation of anything in return. It's about opening a relationship, not closing a sale. When you network this way, it takes all the pressure off - guaranteed."

Because the networking/relationship building component is so important to our Members and is part of our identity, the Chamber's 2nd Cornerstone is "Creating Connections" - membership is designed for business professionals looking for connections which lead to business growth. The Chamber is a great place to start to grow your contact list; we connect Members to fellow Members and connect Members to programs and resources to help their business grow.

We entered in 2021 with the goal of establishing more impactful networking focused on relationship building leading to expanding our supportive networks. Over the last year we have put in place our REACH Coffee Chat program, a CEO Roundtable, we have continued and re-engaged our Young Professionals, and

we are working on launching additional roundtables based on our Members wants and needs.

Our events are still currently virtual however we are planning in-person events. SAVE THE DATES - we may have one even before, but on June 29th - our REACH Half-Day Women's Conference is being planned as an in-person event! On July 29 - Boyertown Area Progress Dinner! On August 11 - Leadercast 2021 - "Shift"! And our marquee event - the 2021 Annual Dinner - is scheduled for September 23!

Until in-person events return I encourage you to remember Tip #17 - Use Your Time Wisely - "at events avoid the temptation to hang out with people you came with or talk only to people you know. This habit may make your networking more comfortable, but the downside is it limits opportunities to meet new connections. You have invested your precious time to attend the event, make it a worthwhile investment." **So, in the meantime - attend a virtual event where you will get to meet everyone else on the screen!** You can then meet up with them again at an in-person event and continue to strengthen that connection.

REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars - we have lots of great events happening this month!

For more details and to register for any of these events, please visit our events calendar at www.tricountyareachamber.com/events or call 610.326.2900.

**REACH Coffee Chat with Dr. Myra Forrest:
Rise from the Ashes – Tuesday, May 11**
10 - 11AM | Free to all

Member Meet-Up and Check-In – Thursday, May 13
10 - 11AM | Free to TCACC Members Only

SkillUp: The Password to Networking – Wednesday, May 19
9 - 10:30AM | Free to TCACC Members; \$25 per Non-Member

REACH Coffee Chat – Tuesday, May 25
10 - 11AM | Free to all

**Membership Breakfast:
U.S. Chamber Policy Briefing – Thursday, May 27**
8:30 - 10AM | \$15 per TCACC Member; \$30 per Non-Member

**In-Person Event! Member Networking Luncheon –
Wednesday, June 16**
11:30AM - 1PM | Brookside Country Club

REACH Half-Day Conference – Tuesday, June 29
11:30AM - 5:30PM | \$99 per person before May 17

SAVE THE DATE: Annual Dinner – Thursday, September 23
5 - 9PM | \$95 per TCACC Member; \$150 per Non-Member

THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 MISSION & VISION PARTNERS (MVPS)



Precision Polymer Products, Inc.



HALF-DAY CONFERENCE

TUESDAY, JUNE 29 | 11:30 AM TO 5:30 PM

SUNNYBROOK BALLROOM

SALE: \$99 PER PERSON BEFORE MAY 17; \$150 AFTER MAY 17

Featuring professional women who lead and inspire others, have persevered to reach success, and are paving the way for other women.

FEATURING



Sylvie di Giusto

Featured Keynote
Professional speaker, consultant
and author



Leslie Richards

Lunch Keynote
General Manager of Southeastern
Pennsylvania Transportation
Authority (SEPTA)



Carolina DiGiorgio

President and CEO of Congreso
de Latinos Unidos, Inc.



Therol J. Dix, Esq.

Vice President of West Campus of
Montgomery County Community
College and former Assistant District
Attorney of Montgomery County

VISIT WWW.TRICOUNTYAREACHAMBER.COM TO REGISTER

REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

SPRING-FORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Building a Better Community Through Business

• P.O. Box 127, Royersford PA 19468 • 610.489.7200



The Spring-Ford Chamber of Commerce is a community-focused business advocate. We strive to help our member businesses grow while improving the community in which we all live and work.

The Chamber consists of local businesses whose main objective is to run a successful business. We are a great resource for members, not only because we offer the opportunity to network and brainstorm with fellow members, but also to have exposure to

the local community, your customer, through our continued involvement in community events and charitable endeavors. Visit www.springfordchamber.com for Chamber Events, Press Releases, Online Newsletters and more!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

**All Zoom links can be found at www.springfordchamber.com

Wednesday, May 12th - 10:00am - 11:30am Celebrating Women- Virtual Event

In a celebration of Mother's Day - This virtual forum will focus on stress, healthy eating and exercise - this event will host a number of speakers each giving hosting 10 minute discussions on keeping women in the workplace healthy!

Meeting ID: 898 0716 3894 Passcode: 111111

Thursday, May 13th - 11:30am - 1:30pm Shark Think Tank (Bring Your Own Lunch Event)

The business only owners roundtable will be going back to in-person events starting on Thursday, May 13th. Their plan will include: Bring your own lunch to the Limerick Township Building pavilion for May and June. Then will proceed back to the Copperfield in for the remaining months of the year. If you are a business owner member of the Spring-Ford Chamber. Be sure to join us for a lively lunch discussion.

Thursday, May 20th - 10:00am - 10:30am A Workshop on Diversity - Courageous Conversations

Join Michelle Govan and Laurie Cusic as they share about Courageous Conversations. What is Courageous Conversations? Engaging in conversations with sincere and genuine interest and curiosity about the other person. Listening with your whole heart to better understand others. Individuals are encouraged to express their views openly and truthfully, rather than defensively or with the purpose of laying blame. Out of dialogue emerges a new and shared understanding

Saturday, June 5th - 10:00am - 1:00pm Dog Days of Summer- Outdoor Pet Expo event

Family fun event featuring our favorite furry family members. vendors, activities and more in collaboration with the Upper Providence Parks and Recreation.

Saturday, Aug. 14th - Noon - 3:00pm

Limerick Community Day

Your favorite Community Day is back for 2021. Vendors, food, music and more in collaboration with the Limerick Township Parks and Recreation.

Spring "Forward" September

Welcome Back Luncheon - 11:30am - 1:00pm

Thursday, September 9th; Location TBD

Spring-Ford Chamber's 1st IN-PERSON Luncheon. Join us for three mini speakers and a great lunch.

Tune into the Spring-Ford Chamber facebook and website as we will be hosting pop-up networking events through out the summer starting in June.

Thank you to our Spring-Ford Chamber Ambassador's

Tune into the our Thursday "In Chamber News" e-blasts and meet each of our 2021 Ambassadors include:

Jessica Snook, Lindt Chocolate
Tom Donofrio, Donofrio Handyman Service
Pam Mann, Help at Home with Pam
Tom McCoy, Staples, Royersford



SPRING-FORD CHAMBER IS EXCITED ABOUT THE SUMMER!

Spring-Ford Chamber is excited to be moving forward with planning in-person summer events. The kick off will include the Dog Days of Summer event to be held in collaboration with the Upper Providence Township Parks and Recreation on Saturday, June 5th. This socially distant event will encourage everyone to bring their furriest family members to the park for a day of fun filled activities including: a vendor area, fun activities and food trucks for humans and our dogs to take lunch with them when they head out.

The return of everyone's summer activity - our Limerick Community Day at Limerick Park will happen on Saturday,

August 17th. This event will return in a modified format but will include your old favorites such as our food truck festival, local business vendors and fun entertainment. Registration is now open.

Lastly, the Chamber is excited to announce our "SPRING FORWARD!" In-person chamber luncheon on Thursday, September 9th. More details to follow but until then you can always tune into our monthly webinars, check out our 5 questions networking zoom's or take part in our Shark Think Tank discussions. All links and information can be found on our Spring-Ford Chamber's website at www.springfordchamber.com

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REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

PERKIOMEN VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



521 Main Street, Trappe, PA 19436 • 610.489.6660

• info@PVchamber.net • www.PVchamber.net

Welcome to the Perkiomen Valley Chamber of Commerce!

For over 60 years the Chamber has been the recognized voice & advocate for the business community. Creating opportunities for members to connect with business professionals, mentors, and potential customers, the Chamber helps members improve business and create a thriving community for themselves and their employees. We can help grow YOUR customer base in Collegeville, Trappe, Schwenksville, Upper

Providence, Lower Frederick, Lower Providence, Perkiomen, Skippack, and Oaks. For more information contact Executive Director, Renee Blomstrom, 610-489-6660, renee@PVchamber.net.

Don't miss Virtual Chamber events, member news, special offers and more... Like us on Facebook @PerkValleyChamber and email info@PVchamber.net to receive weekly e-news! Visit www.PVchamber.net to view membership directory

Free PPE Support Kit

Free COVID-19 prevention kits available for small businesses (fewer than 100 employees). To reserve your free kit, contact PV Chamber at 610-489-6660 or email renee@pvchamber.net

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, May 13 @ 4PM – Kona Ice Networking Hour

Join business leaders for a chilled networking event at PVCC Office

May 20, 2021 @ 10AM – Cyber Security Workshop sponsored by Plus One Technology

Each attendee will be entitled to a dark web scan for their firm. Hybrid Event - Attend via Zoom or in-person (limited seating)

May 26, 2021 – Grand Opening/ Mixer at Boston Scott Golf

Join us in celebration for an evening of networking, shopping, prizes and more.

May 27, 2021 @ Noon – Business Roundtable

Join us for an interactive discussion and sharing of best practices among other business owners and key decision makers, right from the comforts of your home or office.

May 27 2021 @ 4:30PM – PV Men Virtual Happy Hour

Kick off the Memorial Day Weekend by joining the fellas on Zoom or in-person for a networking happy hour.

June 11, 2021 @ Noon – 2021 PV Chamber Business Book Club

Attendees at bi-monthly PVCC Business Book Club participate in book discussions and "all things business" reviews. All are welcome to attend. Join us for Part 2 discussion "How to Win Friends and Influence People" by Dale Carnegie.

Save the Date...

August 9, 2021 – PV Chamber Annual Golf Outing

Spring Ford County Club

Visit www.PVChamber.net for details on all of our upcoming events!

COVID-19 Resources:

perkiomenvalleychamber.org/covid-19-updates-and-resources/

Please visit the PV Chamber website for COVID-19 health updates and business resources, webinars and event schedules. Be safe and healthy!

e-News

We've increased communications, sending time-sensitive announcements/resource links through email and social media.

To sign-up for E-news, send request to info@PVchamber.net. Follow the PV Chamber Facebook Page @PerkValleyChamber.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Boston Scott Golf, LLC – Michelle Hallman
(610) 960-8521 www.bostonscottgolf.com

Boston Scott Golf, LLC is a Men's and junior's golf apparel business located in Collegeville, PA.

Mane Fitness – Jumane Buchanan
(610) 761-5968 www.Mane-fitness.com

A small one on one fitness training studio. I design and safely guide my client thru workout routines.

Help at Home With Pam – Pamela Mann
(610) 505-4777 www.helpathomewithpam.com

Cleaning and organizing business serving residents and businesses in Chester, Montgomery and Berks Counties.

POST EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

PVCC Annual Meeting – Wednesday, March 31st

The program was recorded and can be viewed using the link below. Thanks to the event sponsors and congratulations to 2021-2022 Chairman of the Board, Bob Clark, Interface Financial Group and the 2021-2022 Board of Directors.

Visit PVChamber.net and select "2021 Annual Meeting" from the Chamber Events dropdown menu to listen to recorded meeting including Keynote Address presented by David Zellers: "MontcoStrong – From Resiliency to a Prosperous Future".



David Zellers

Much appreciation to past-chairman, Kip Bilo, Universal Atlantic Systems, for leading our organization in through the pandemic!

WELCOME THE 2021-2022 BOARD DIRECTORS:

Barbara Russel – PVSD

Tim Uehling – USB

David Maris – Marco Motors

Lori Colasanti – The Job Exchange

Maureen Cumpstone – Ursinus College

Lou Rinaldi – Eagle Eye Home Inspection Pro

Sodiah Thomas – S&B Event Concepts and Catering

Katie Kelly – Kelly Insurance

David Akers – Too Cool Apparel / LMS Solutions

Susan Graham – Phoenixville Hospital Tower Health

Lynn Fleisher, Legal Counsel, – Keenan Cicitto & Associates

2021-22 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman – Bob Clark, Interface Financial Group

Secretary – Phil White, Signarama Limerick

Vice Chair – Brian Dubas, Pine Run Construction

Chair Elect – Joe Bergquist, Harleysville Bank

Past Chair – Kip Bilo, Universal Atlantic Systems

Treasurer – Matt Baker, Maillie

Exec Director – Renee Blomstrom, PVCC



Bob Clark
2021-2022 Chairman

PV CHAMBER SHREDDING DAY EVENT



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www.sbrassociation.com

 **Small Business
Resource Association**



THE SBRA COMMUNITY

Team Sports and Business—One in the Same?



**By Gary Seibert, CEO,
Small Business Resource Association**

A couple of weeks ago I was meeting with a client and he asked me “Since you were an athlete in high school and college and then a Physical Education Teacher and Coach, do you see any correlation between Team Sports and running a Business”? I have always referenced the teamwork aspect of running a business as something I learned while participating in sports but I never took a deep dive into other similarities. This was a fun exercise for me and I hope you enjoy it also.

Specialized characteristics—Every sport is different as some hit a ball, some throw or run with a ball, some play in water while other play on snow or ice, some use animals and some use cars, boats or planes. There is even a sport betting on sports. Regardless of the sport each one has its own set of rules and different ways to “win the game”. Business is no different as some businesses make products as other businesses design, provide raw materials for making and packaging the product. Some businesses transport the product to the distributor who in turn delivers to the dealer who then sells to the end user. There are businesses for everything you could ever need or want. There are even businesses that make money, lend money, collect money and trade money. Not too much different than sports, businesses also want to “win the game”. Their goal is to stay in the game and make more money they spend.

Specialized Team—We all know that a successful sports team has many moving parts and they all have to be focused

on a common goal, how to beat the other team. Many sports teams have specialized teams that only perform a particular role at a particular time but without them the team would have a very difficult time winning. Successful, profitable businesses are no different as they have people within the organization or in many cases, outside consultants or subcontractors that they depend on to help them navigate through their day-to-day challenges. In today’s complex world no one person can know everything that it takes to run a successful business. That’s why smart owners are constantly looking for resources to help them backfill not what they know but rather what they don’t know.

Competition—Successful sports teams spend a lot of time and money scouting out their competition.

Why do they do that? If they don’t know what they are competing against, how can they prepare an offense to score points and a defense to keep the competition from scoring more points than they do? Every business has the exact same problem. If you do not know what you are up against how can you price, market, sell and service your product so that customers buy from you and not from other businesses selling the same thing. Remember, your competition wants your customers just as bad as you do.

Know who they are, what they do and how they do it, and then, do it better. That’s how a sports team does it.

Training—It is a given fact that most athlete knows that their success depends on how much they put into their sport such as their fitness, endurance, technique, mental concentration, diet and continual improvement. This is what the individual athlete has to do. A team is made up of a

variety of individuals that need to combine their knowledge, talent and skill for a common goal, to win the game. A business is no different. Like a sports team, a business is made up of a variety of individuals that bring a variety of skill sets to the organization. However, a business that does not have a “fitness/training” program that encourages and supports their employees to not only maintain their skill sets but more importantly, improve upon their knowledge, talent and skill, will eventually see their competition taking some of their business. Best practices and continual improvement is the business form of sports training. To stay at the top of your game, you must invest time and money into being the best. Remember “good” is “not good enough” if you want to be the best.

Fans—Show me a sports team that does not have fans you will also see that they do not have a winning team, sponsors, competitive salaries and they most likely have an unusually high turnover rate. Fans rally behind winners and winners are encouraged by the fans. If you run your business like a successful sport’s team you will have loyal client’s “fans” that keep coming back and supporting your business and they will also be your cheerleaders by telling others about you.

There are many other similarities but I think you get the picture I’m trying to paint. I learned so much from my years of being an athlete and then coaching successful teams. I have instinctually applied almost everything I learned through athletics to my business career and I believe doing so played a major role in the success of our business. The biggest lesson I learned was the word TEAM, Together Everyone Achieves More. A CEO guides his team and just as in sports, the well-directed team wins the game. Be a great coach - hire, train and support a great team and I believe you will win many more games.



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HOW COMMUNITY BANKS & THEIR CLIENTS ADAPTED DURING THE PANDEMIC AND WHY THESE CHANGES WILL LIKELY LAST



**By Carolann Westendorp,
Proud SBRA Member**

Community banks such as Jonestown Bank & Trust Co. (JBT), like many other segments of business and industry, found the need to adapt while working within the restrictions that came about as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Identified as essential businesses, community banks were able to serve clients, even during the brief time when branch lobbies at most banks were closed. In addition, as a community bank that believes in truly being part of the communities we serve, many of the volunteer efforts of JBT employees and bank-wide initiatives that support our communities were, out of necessity, either postponed or cancelled. The good news is with vaccinations on the rise and restrictions being eased the thought of getting back to "normal" seems more and more possible.

However, while the pandemic had negative impacts in so many ways, many community bank clients found time-saving benefits in doing banking differently than they had before.

For example, inside branch visits were by appointment only and many business and personal banking clients discovered the benefits of scheduling an appointment, including the community banker having all necessary paperwork organized and ready. At JBT, we made sure if there was a need for commercial banking expertise, mortgage expertise, etc., that those experts were in the branch for the meeting as well. As a result, clients found their in-branch appointments were extremely efficient and productive.

Another big benefit many clients took advantage of was online and mobile banking. In fact, during the pandemic our clients' mobile banking enrollment and usage ex-

ploded by nearly 200%, with appointments being made to help clients set up and feel comfortable with electronic banking options. From bill pay to transferring money and managing their accounts, many business and personal banking clients entered the mobile banking world with enthusiasm, enjoying the convenience and security it provides.

Since going to the branches meant the possibility of longer than usual drive-thru lines and time out of their busy day, more and more businesses migrated to remote deposit, either by way of a scanner or a smartphone or tablet to capture check images and deposit those checks into their account securely without leaving work.

One of the biggest impacts community banks had during the pandemic was their role in the SBA's Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), helping hundreds of companies keep paychecks flowing for thousands of employees.

Despite only controlling 15% of the nation's banking assets, community banks issued 60% of all PPP loans. Community banks were also more effective in controlling borrower fraud because of the ability of community banks to work with and know local businesses.

The pandemic changed the way many businesses and individuals did their banking and with the convenience, security and time-saving benefits it seems likely the changes made by both clients and community banks are here to stay. What won't change, however, is the focus community banks have on building relationships with our clients so we know how to better meet their financial needs, as well as continuing to be actively involved in the communities we serve.

Carolann Westendorp is a business solutions officer with JBT. With 31 years of locally based financial experience, she works with existing JBT business clients and also develops new business relationships in Berks, Lancaster and Lebanon counties. Carolann is treasurer of Entrepreneurs Connection, serves on the board of YMCA in Sinking Spring and volunteers for numerous organizations, including Grey Muzzle Manor, Reading Rising Park, and Berks Nature. Founded in 1873, JBT has 14 branch locations, serving clients in and around Lebanon, Lancaster and Berks counties.

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BRESLOW'S BOOKKEEPING	21
HERBEIN + COMPANY, INC.	12
KARLENE'S CONSULTING	21

ATTORNEYS

OWM LAW / O'DONNELL, WEISS & MATTEI, P.C.	14
WOLF BALDWIN & ASSOC. PC	43

AUTOMOTIVE / AUTO BODY SERVICE

MERCER'S TRUCRAFT COLLISION	47
-----------------------------	----

AUTOMOTIVE / CAR WASH & DETAIL CENTER

POTTSTOWN AUTO WASH & DETAIL CENTER	10
-------------------------------------	----

AUTOMOTIVE / SERVICE

AAMCO TRANSMISSION	47
EMBODY'S SUNOCO	15
RED KIEFFER'S AUTO REPAIR	47

AUTOMOTIVE / TIRE SALES & SERVICE

CJ'S TIRE & AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE	47
H & F TIRE SERVICE	47

AUTOMOTIVE FINANCING

HIGH STREET AUTO CONNECTION	46
-----------------------------	----

AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM

BOYERTOWN MUSEUM OF HISTORIC VEHICLES	50
---------------------------------------	----

BANKING / FINANCES

AMERICAN HERITAGE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION	29
FLEETWOOD BANK	17
RIVERFRONT FEDERAL CREDIT UNION	24
THE VICTORY BANK	19
TOMPKINS VIST BANK	27

BUSINESS BROKERS

MARATHON CAPITAL ADVISORS / MARATHON FINANCING ADVISORS	58
---	----

BUSINESS COACHING

DENAB COACHING	41
JOHN WHITEHALL / SANDLER TRAINING	40

BUSINESS COUNSELING

SCORE	21
-------	----

CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

BLATT GROUP	18
ONDRA-HUYETT ASSOCIATES, INC.	16

COURIER SERVICE

BUSINESS EXPRESS COURIERS	44
---------------------------	----

CUSTOMIZED T-SHIRT QUILTS

MEG'S QUILTED MEMORIES	41
------------------------	----

DANCE INSTRUCTION & PERFORMANCE

POTTSTOWN DANCE THEATRE	9
-------------------------	---

DIGITAL PRINTING / MARKETING / ADVERTISING

BERKS DIGITAL, INC.	21 & 28
---------------------	---------

DRONE VIDEOGRAPHY / PHOTOGRAPHY

ROBOTIC IMAGING GROUP	58
-----------------------	----

EDUCATION / EARLY LEARNING

MAGIC MEMORIES EARLY LEARNING SCHOOLS	17
---------------------------------------	----

EDUCATION / TECHNICAL SCHOOL

NORTH MONTCO TECHNICAL CAREER CENTER	48
--------------------------------------	----

ENGINEERING SERVICES

ALL COUNTY & ASSOCIATES	45
EARTH ENGINEERING	48
LUDGATE ENGINEERING	46
TRAFFIC PLANNING AND DESIGN, INC.	14

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

PATRIOT ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT, LLC	8
---------------------------------------	---

FLOORING

CHESMONT CARPET ONE	46
FRANKLIN FLOORING	9

GARAGE DOORS

B & C GARAGE DOORS, LLC	19 & 21
-------------------------	---------

GARDEN CENTER / NURSERY

PUGHOWN AGWAY	21
---------------	----

GRAPHIC & WEB DESIGN

SUZY RAE DESIGN	22
-----------------	----

GRAPHIC DESIGN SERVICES

DOWNTOWN DEZIGN	22
-----------------	----

GRAPHIC DESIGN, SIGNS & PRINTING SERVICES

COMPLETE GRAPHICS, INC.	22
FASTSIGNS	21
GRABER LETTERIN' INC. SIGN COMPANY	22
LUCKY SQUIRREL PRINTWORKS	22 & 27

GUTTER GUARDS /GUTTER CLEANING & REPAIR

BLOUGH'S GUTTER GUARDS	26
------------------------	----

HEALTH / HEALTHCARE

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH / POTTSTOWN HOSPITAL – TOWER HEALTH	2
---	---

HEALTH CARE / CHIROPRACTIC

KEYSTONE SPECIFIC CHIROPRACTIC CENTER	26
---------------------------------------	----

HEALTH INSURANCE

HEALTH INSURANCE SOLUTIONS, INC.	20
----------------------------------	----

HOME HEALTH SERVICES

TRI-COUNTY HOME HEALTH & HOSPICE	29
----------------------------------	----

INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY

CLARK INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY, INC.	9
-------------------------------	---

INSURANCE SERVICES

JAB INSURANCE BROKERS	13
THE LOOMIS COMPANY	29

JUNK REMOVAL / HAULING

THE JUNKLUGGERS OF BERKS, CHESTER & LANCASTER COUNTIES	16
--	----

LANDSCAPE / HARDSCAPE DESIGN

DAVIES HARDSCAPING, LLC	43
-------------------------	----

LANDSCAPE DESIGN & INSTALLATION

WOLFRUN LANDSCAPES	46
--------------------	----

LANDSCAPING / PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

SOTTOSANTI LAWN CARE	22 & 54
TONY & JOE'S LANDSCAPE DESIGN	16

LODGING / BED & BREAKFAST

TWIN TURRETS INN	23
------------------	----

MACHINE & TRUCK EQUIPMENT

LEVAN MACHINE & TRUCK EQUIPMENT	45
---------------------------------	----

MAINTENANCE/JANITORIAL SERVICES

24K CLEANING SERVICES	54
DEMEDIO'S BUILDING MAINTENANCE	18
L & J CLEANING SERVICE	23

MARKETING / DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA

BELL MEDIA GROUP	57
------------------	----

MARKETING & SOCIAL MEDIA SERVICES

INTERLACE COMMUNICATIONS	23
--------------------------	----

MESSAGE THERAPY & PERSONAL TRAINING

CHARLES PEEPLES MASSAGE	57
-------------------------	----

MEDICAL SPA

YOUNG MEDICAL SPA	52
-------------------	----

MERCHANT SERVICES

NET COST PROCESSING	23
---------------------	----

ORGANIZATION

GREATER READING CHAMBER ALLIANCE	32
POTTSTOWN ROTARY CLUB	50
POTTSTOWN ROTARY CLUB B2B MIXER	10
SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE ASSOCIATION	57

ORGANIZATION / TOURISM & CONVENTIONS

VALLEY FORGE TOURISM & CONVENTION BOARD	28
---	----

OUTDOOR SHEDS/GAZEBOS/GARAGES & MORE

PINE CREEK STRUCTURES	20
-----------------------	----

PAINTING CONTRACTOR - RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL

AGOSTINELLI BROS. PAINTING	17
----------------------------	----

PAYROLL SERVICES / BOOKKEEPING SERVICES

EXPRESS DATA SYSTEMS, INC.	11
----------------------------	----

PAYROLL SERVICES / HR SUPPORT

PREMIER PAYROLL SERVICES	59
--------------------------	----

PEST CONTROL SERVICES

PATRIOT PEST SOLUTIONS, LLC	60
-----------------------------	----

PHOTOGRAPHY PROFESSIONAL

STUDIO 413 PHOTO & DESIGN	23 & 54
STYLISH IMAGES PHOTOGRAPHY	44

PLUMBING CONTRACTOR

A. JACKSON ECKER, INC.	22
------------------------	----

PRINTING SERVICES

EVERYTHING PRINTING	16 7 22
---------------------	---------

REAL ESTATE / COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL

J.M. BASILE & ASSOCIATES, INC.	58
ZUBER COMMERCIAL REALTORS	25

REAL ESTATE / COMMERCIAL SPACE FOR LEASE

KEENAN CICCITTO & ASSOCIATES	18
------------------------------	----

REAL ESTATE / RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY GROUP COLLEGEVILLE	40
RE/MAX ACHIEVERS, INC.	11

RECREATION / BILLIARDS

HIGH STREET BILLIARDS	14
-----------------------	----

RECREATION / GOLF COURSE

ARROWHEAD PUBLIC GOLF COURSE	48
------------------------------	----

RESTAURANTS

SPECK'S DRIVE-IN	42
UNCLE B'S BBQ	42
YE OLD COVENTRY PUB	42

RETAIL / JEWELER

VAN SCOY JEWELERS	52
-------------------	----

RETAIL / TOBACCO & RELATED PRODUCTS

COLE'S TOBACCO	23
----------------	----

RETAIL / WHOLESALE COFFEE PRODUCTS

READING COFFEE COMPANY	21
------------------------	----

SAFETY PRODUCTS

COPPERHEAD SAFETY PRODUCTS	56
----------------------------	----

SALON / SPA / NAIL BAR

TRE NAIL BAR / TRE SPA	23
------------------------	----

SCREEN PRINTING

MISSION SCREEN PRINTING, LLC	28
------------------------------	----

SENIOR CARE / LIVING ASSISTANCE SERVICES

SENIOR HELPERS	23
----------------	----

SENIOR SERVICES

AT HOME SERVICE, LLC	20
----------------------	----

SEPTIC SERVICE

A HONEY DIPPER / J. BREHM, INC.	56
---------------------------------	----

STRUCTURED CABLING SYSTEMS PROVIDER

LINKTECH, INC.	26
----------------	----

TECHNOLOGY / IT

INTERMEDIA GROUP, INC.	43
PLUS ONE TECHNOLOGY	13
TECHBLDRS, INC.	24

VETERINARY SERVICE

SANATOGA ANIMAL HOSPITAL	18
--------------------------	----

VIDEO PRODUCTION/TELEVISION

PCTV NETWORK	15
--------------	----

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THE ART OF THE WIN WIN



By Dena Breslin, CTACC, MSPAS, High Performance Coach

As small and medium sized business owners, how do we set ourselves apart in an ever-changing and super-competitive marketplace? We master the Art of the WIN WIN.

WIN WIN is not just a concept for our current or future customers, but ALSO for our employees.

Three tips to Mastering the WIN WIN overall:

1) EMPATHY: a word that is not often used in business, and not often used by men in business. (this isn't a criticism as much as it's been taught over generations and is a fact). Standing in the other's shoes, understanding what PAIN someone may be feeling, and then communicating your ability to "get them," "hear them," "understand" or "follow"... all these words are useful when connecting. This does NOT mean that you have experienced the exact same thing that a customer or an employee has... it means that you have experienced a very similar EMOTION that they are FEELING.

Tip: LISTEN when a customer or employee is speaking. Listen to HEAR the emotion that they may not be specifying. NOT to immediately SOLVE or RESPOND. A simple: "I hear you," or "That must be so frustrating," or "I know that feeling" bridges the gap between YOU and THEM. They will remember that. This sets you apart from others in big ways!

2) PAINT the PICTURE for the customer of how YOU are different and how you GET THEM. Meaning, don't just assume things. ACTUALLY SPEAK it out clearly on how you and your team take pride in doing things DIFFERENTLY. When you have a new customer on a phone call or in person, interject your Principles, and Company Mission that you intend to STAND BY. Things like integrity, efficiency, professionalism, skill, etc. DO NOT leave this only up to the copy on your social media, or website. People want to HEAR that reassurance from YOU.

Tip: Do you have a mission and vision statement for your business? Could your team recite this back to you? If not, create a fun yet important challenge for them to be able to do that with you, SO THAT, they are able to do that with clients; SO THAT they have it so engrained in their mindset, those words become AUTOMATIC in how they SHOW up to work. That is a WIN WIN for them AND YOU.

3) Relationship MAINTENANCE: especially now, in a time where there can be uncertainty with clients, and employees, people want to know THEY MEAN SOMETHING to the business owner. Greater than HALF of business today is coming from referral sources. And while the majority of businesses BELIEVE they deliver superior customer service and maintenance, less than 10percent ACTUALLY DO, when customers were asked. Additionally, more than 50 percent of employees today are unengaged, 20 percent are literally UN-happy where they are, and 30 percent are actually satisfied with their work. How can this be??

Tip: Once you've established an agreement or contract, or even completed a job, design a unique way to go above and beyond to THANK the customer, STAY connected and TOP of MIND, SO THAT.... referrals come naturally. With employees, the way we used to hold meetings, doesn't work the same today as it once did. A WIN WIN, is actually identifying the employee WINS daily or at minimum weekly. Are you currently doing this?? Set up 15-minute calls to learn of their WINS only.... celebrate them. Give little incentives, or rewards for jobs well done, UNEXPECTED SURPRISES. Keep that SPARK of JOY going with customers and employees and you will not only set yourself and your business apart, you will no doubt double or triple your revenue!!

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Ye Old Coventry Pub

Good Food, Good Friends and Good Times has been the motto of the Coventry Pub for many years. Conveniently located South of Pottstown and North of Bucktown on Route 100, the Coventry Pub was originally a farmhouse, and started as a pub in 1960. Ye Old Coventry Pub is famous for its hand carved roast beef — cooked and carved from a standing beef roast, and homemade snapper soup. In addition, the Pub features a full lunch and dinner menu, and a variety of sandwiches and salads, as well as a comfortable bar. The friendly Pub is a perfect place to watch sports and chat. The Pub also has a separate dining room, and we have patio dining — weather permitting — dogs are welcome to sit out at the patio.

Daily specials: Every Monday— special "2-for-dinners" with five choices — chef special dinners; Tuesday — Taco Tuesday; Wednesday — Burger Day specials; Thursday — Clam special & Trivia, 8-10 P.M. featuring fun and prizes. Weekend dinner specials include Prime Rib; Saturday afternoon — Soup and Sandwich special; Sunday — Family Day- Wert's Birch Beer on tap from 1960s, a local favorite from Topton; Shepherd's pie and children's menu.

The Coventry Pub features 11 drafts with three rotating seasonal taps. There is always a draft and cocktail special. Check out our Facebook page for daily specials and events. For more information, please call 610.323.5790.

Speck's Drive-In

Speck's Drive-In, located at 3969 Ridge Pike in Collegeville, is a family owned restaurant that has served the community for over 50 years, employing many local youths, and teaching them through example the importance to serve and support their community and charities.

Speck's won the Broaster Company "Golden Chicken Award" a few years ago. This award is presented annually by the company to a select operator that consistently produce a top-quality product and show exemplary merchandising skills.

In 1953, Stanley B. Landis, aka Speck, started the original Speck's Drive-In on Ridge Pike in Limerick, based on the idea of "Pipin' Hot Sandwiches" and good, affordable fast food. The home-grown business was a big success in the small community, long before the fast-food franchise bonanza that defines the American landscape today.

Several years later, The Big Pixie, located at Ridge and Germantown Pikes, suffered a fire. Speck acquired the property and began operating at dual locations. The Limerick

location changed hands many times over the years, with the last change in 1997 which included the name. This was a welcome change to the rest of the Speck's legacy, as the two locations had diverged in both style and menu.

The Collegeville location has remained in the family and many of Speck's children and their spouses are involved in various aspects of the operations. The restaurant is still renowned for its sandwiches, but the Broasted® Chicken and homemade coleslaw are the primary draw. We pride ourselves on serving a delicious, fast, affordable meal and being a fun place to work too. Many generations of local teens have started their working experiences here, and many of them become regular customers with their children following on as employees.

Today, Speck's is a Collegeville landmark and often the first stop for people returning to the area. We invite you to stop by and try some today! "Chicken at its finest!" For additional information, please call 610.489.2110 and visit www.speckschicken.com.

Uncle B's BBQ

"B" is Brian — The smoker, the creator, the chef, the uncle...the man!

Born and bred in the true south, B came up in the homestyle kitchens of Florence, Alabama — on the banks of the Tennessee River — where he was educated in the fine art of meat smoking from a very young age. The northwestern region of Alabama is famous for their BBQ and, specifically, their Alabama White Sauce and a Southern Style Vinegar Sauce.

B left Alabama in his early twenties. Manufacturing, his first career brought him to various areas of the country. Through the years, B collected experience and recipes cooking in kitchens throughout the South, (from Texas to Florida, the Carolinas and Virginia) continually perfecting his signature style. Eventually, B found himself changing careers and working in the restaurant world. Which brought him up north, where he met Beth. The two fell in love with Phoenixville while B's family was living in the area. They moved to Phoenixville in 2011.

In 2013, B went out on a limb, put his delicious knowledge to practice and bought and old oil tank smoker. Starting out roadside, B soon became a local favorite. The community supported and embraced the B spirit. And B loved it right back. B had a few stops before landing at 425 Bridge Street near his home. Soon after starting up roadside, B moved to sharing a kitchen in Eland Downe (the Old Epicurean — then Fenice Creolo). Other stops included setting up at Stable 12, finding his first home next to Rita's on Schuylkill Road. From Sunday Football to the annual Egg Hunt and of course Dogwood and Firebird Festivals, B has become a local staple! Being here in downtown Phoenixville is fitting. B has now settled in at home.

UNCLE B's Real Deal Southern-Style Bar-B-Q — now located at 425 Bridge Street in Phoenixville — is a place you'll feel at home, like part of the family. And the food is so good, you will Just Say Uncle.

VACCINES AND THE CURRENT LEGAL LANDSCAPE



LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

By Levi S. Wolf, Esquire, Wolf, Baldwin & Associates, P.C.

As I write this article in April 2021, the United States is still ramping up COVID-19 vaccine injections, and many more shots in arms will have to be completed before our country will feel like the virus is under control. But this leaves both employers and employees with many questions about the work environment of today and of the future. This article will answer none of those questions, only raise some which you might not have considered.

The reason why the article will not attempt to answer questions is that each person's situation and each company's situation is different and must be analyzed on its individual facts. Between case law and statutes which have been around for years like FMLA and the ADA, and the new and changing guidance from OSHA, the CDC, and the EEOC, these circumstances are fluid and filled with dangers. Let's explore just some of the questions.

- Can a company force its workers to get a vaccine?
- Can a company encourage its workers to get a vaccine?
- Can an employee refuse to get a vaccine?
- Does it matter if the employee's refusal to get a vaccine is based on good faith religious or medical objections?
- Can an employer ask employees whether they have been vaccinated?
- Can an employer tell its employees who is vaccinated and who is not?

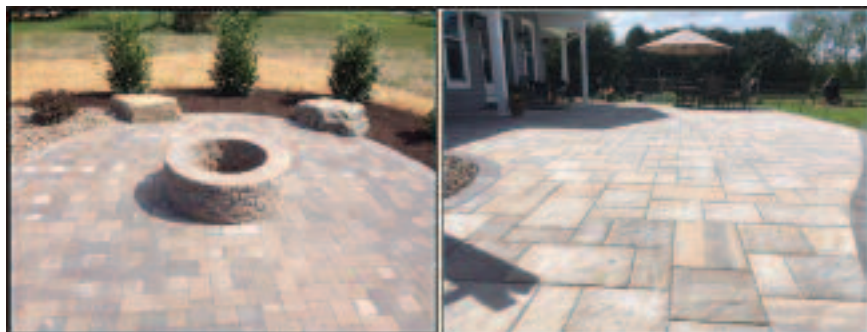
• Must employers allow work from home or other accommodations and in what circumstances?

• May an employee request the ability to work from home or other accommodations and in what circumstances?

• Can an employer who has allowed or encouraged working from home in the past now require an employee to work in the office?

These are just some of the many, many issues with which employers, employees, and lawyers are grappling as we settle into our "new normal." Don't go it alone – seek legal advice before you get entangled in one of these many legal traps.

Levi S. Wolf, Esquire is a shareholder in the law firm of Wolf, Baldwin & Associates, P.C. with offices in Pottstown, Reading, Pennsburg, and West Chester. He is certified as a specialist in the practice of workers' compensation law by the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Section on Workers' Compensation Law as authorized by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Mr. Wolf can be reached at 610.323.7436 or by e-mail to Lwolf@wolfbaldwin.com.



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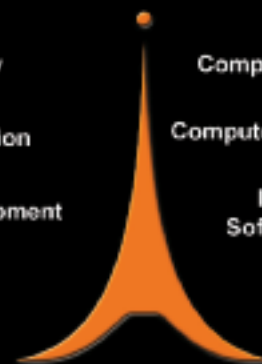
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Richard A. Zuber Realty Celebrates Mothers with Flower Giveaway

Rich Zuber, owner of Richard A. Zuber Realty, made a request of the organization's Community Outreach Committee during a recent planning meeting: "I want to do a flower giveaway to celebrate Mother's Day."

And so, on Friday, May 7, 2021, between 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and Saturday, May 8, 2021, between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., at Zuber Realty's Boyertown and Royersford offices and Zuber Insurance office, Boyertown, flowers will be available for pick up as the organization's gift to the area's mothers.

Zuber serves as president and long-time coach with the Pine Forge Athletic Association and noted that honoring motherhood has always been important to him: "I never held practice on Mother's Day," he recalled, "and I always insisted that the boys do something special for their mothers. Zuber Realty's mission statement 'We Work for You!' is evidenced every day in all the things that mothers do and all the love they provide their families.

Mother's Day is a day to demonstrate our gratitude, and we'll do it with flowers!"

Zuber Realty is located at 201 E Philadelphia Ave, Boyertown, and 384 N Lewis Road, Royersford; Zuber Insurance is located at 215 E Philadelphia Ave, Boyertown. Flowers are provided by Levensgood's Flowers, 7652 Boyertown Pike, Douglassville, PA.

Zuber Realty's agents are dedicated to community service. The agency features a management style that offers training, professional development and support for all agents, freedom from a fee-based arrangement, flexibility offered through a trained and experienced office support staff, and opportunities to utilize assorted creative marketing services.

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Left to Right. Jody Dolansky, agent and Chairwoman of Zuber Realty's Community Outreach Committee, and JoCarol Zuber, Insurance Manager of Richard A. Zuber Insurance Agency, will present a gift of flowers from Levengood's Flowers to celebrate Mother's Day on May 7 and May 8, 2021, at offices in Boyertown and Royersford.

With a team of full-time real estate agents and a support staff dedicated to the real estate industry, Richard A. Zuber Realty is unsurpassed in service by any organization in the Tri-County Area. The firm's motto "We work for you!" underscores the company's dedication to full service from dedicated, experienced professionals.

For additional information, please contact Rich Zuber, rzuber@zuberrealty.com, 610.639.0787.



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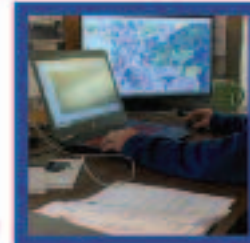
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Reading Coffee does not do plastic. That is the company's current focus, making sure plastics and pollutants don't end up adding to the massive waste created by the single-serve cup industry. "We've decided that, upon getting into the single-serve, 'K-Cup' market, that we'd be responsible stewards of the planet and find an alternative to millions more plastic cups," says Frank Orman, Reading Coffee Company's co-owner and President. "We're using a fully compostable and biodegradable cup made from Bio-Materials that will compost quickly in a controlled composting facility or create your own garden compost in 60-90 days."

Offices and office supply and service companies are searching for a good eco-friendly product to replace the aging and original plastic K-cups people use every day. "This is the one people are going with," Frank Orman said. "It isn't just a responsible and earth-friendlier product, but you get freshly roasted, small-batch and high-quality coffee in these pods. Some of the stuff in regular K-cups can be on shelves and in circulation for years. That coffee was probably roasted two or three years ago, and ours was roasted last week! It's a totally different experience in your cup."

The Reading Coffee Company, roasting in Berks county since 1989, is under its second generation of ownership, with a renewed focus on ethically sourced coffees, increased and unsurpassed cup quality and eco-friendly packaging solutions. "It's the responsible thing to do - yes, it's slightly more expensive for now, but those looking for eco-friendly options don't mind paying the extra few cents," according to co-owner Kevin Orman, Frank's business partner and cousin. "We're all in on this process and product."

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FROM CONSTRUCTION STUDENT TO TEACHER

North Montco Technical Career Center's Carpentry program has gained considerable interest among many students wanting to prepare for a great career path after high school. Malcolm Roach, North Montco's Carpentry teacher, has garnered an impressive reputation as a teacher and mentor with his students.

Roach's interest in carpentry grew in high school. Under the tutelage of his well-respected teacher, Robert Miller, at Bucks County Technical High School, he took Building Trades and Maintenance. There he took advantage of participating in the co-op program, which is still a popular career pathway. His participation in the co-op program landed him a position at Nelson Brothers in Langhorne, where he learned how to install windows, doors, roofing, and awnings. Gaining even more experience, he worked for his father's company on weekends, installing resilient floor covering.

Roach's technical training gave him a foundation to build his career and further his learning. He began his career working in commercial construction while simultaneously building his own handyman business. Home repairs gave way to living room remodels. As his references grew, he added bathrooms and kitchens to his offerings.

Despite his impressive skill set and entrepreneurial spirit, his greatest asset might be his ability to connect with his 42 students. Roach explains to his students the importance of a positive mental attitude (PMA). "I stress production, pride, and positivity as keys to learning and success. The outcome is always better.



Roach's instructional skills have not gone unnoticed by the administration. Stephen Monstrata says, "Mr. Roach has been able to turn the program into a robust CTE program incorporating academics throughout the curriculum. Students also earn a plethora of industry-recognized certifications. He uses literacy and numeracy instructional strategies, including videos and interactive assessments, to support the students' learning and encourages them to grow into highly skilled workers."

As part of building a solid foundation in this business, Roach spends considerable time teaching math skills. He says, "Students should learn to estimate like a boss." Roach created a couple of YouTube videos, "BluePrint Madness" and "Estimate like a Boss," to help demonstrate relevance.

(Continued on page 50)

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Freestyle Real Estate Boutique has been female-owned and operated since 2008. Suzanne Kunda saw huge opportunities in separating from a traditional brokerage she worked for and creating something new and fresh. She decided it was time for a change. It was then she decided to open Freestyle.

The name "Freestyle" was fitting. It conveys some of our biggest values such as adapting to the ever-changing demands of the market and the needs of our clients. We are always coming up with creative solutions for both!

Suzanne comes from a long line of entrepreneurs. From a very young age, she's always known she wanted to be a small business owner. But she didn't just want to own a business. She wanted to make a difference, putting ethics and professionalism first. Some companies may compromise on their morals to turn a profit. Freestyle's foundation is centered around the client's success and doing things the right way. To us this is never just a transaction or a number on the board.



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FROM CONSTRUCTION STUDENT TO TEACHER

(Continued from page 48)

Roach enjoys teaching the basics of carpentry; however, it is also apparent how much he values soft skills. He says, "Students need to grow socially and emotionally."

And as part of his preparing students for their careers, he frequently reminds them that "no one holds your hand out in the field, and there isn't always a lot of praise for what you've accomplished."

Whether through virtual instruction or in the classroom, Roach likes to create an area where there is room to engage freely and a real-world balance. This year several students are working in residential construction with local employers, gaining some good experience. Roach states, "There are so many career pathways to explore with carpentry skills. For example, I have a couple now building furniture. Once students complete this program, they are ready to begin an apprenticeship that does residential or commercial construction work. Other students continue to college to pursue construction management or other areas of study."

Regardless of the pathway his students choose, Roach says that teaching has been a rewarding part of his career. Although he knows he's in a great place, especially

with the growing student interest and enrollment in carpentry, Roach likes to think of ways he could take more students in the future. "I envision a grassed in area outside where students can learn to work in an outside environment, similar to the building trades." While he continues to expand learning opportunities and set new classroom goals, Roach's students make meaningful strides towards a fulfilling and valuable career.

For additional information, please contact: North Montco Technical Career Center at 215.855.3931 and visit: www.nmtcc.org.

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The Blanski family has been in the mechanical contracting business since 1962. The company was started by Milton Blanski and Stanley Phillips as Blanski & Phillips Mechanical, Inc.

Over the years, the company has specialized in many areas, including plumbing, industrial piping, heating, air conditioning, ductwork fabrication, HVAC service, and portable boiler rentals. The key to the family's business success has always been their commitment to providing quality service and products.

In 1986, Blanski Energy Management, Inc. was formed to provide quality service for HVAC equipment and systems the company has installed. As time passed, Milton Blanski retired and passed the company to James (Jim) Blanski, the second generation. At that point in time, the company became more of a sheet metal fabrication and installation firm and continued to service many types of HVAC systems.

Blanski Energy Management has completed numerous sheet metal projects in, and around Philadelphia since becoming more of a sheet metal company. They were involved with the Please Touch Museum; Samuel Fels High School; Jewish National History Museum; Swarthmore College Dormitory (2); Girard Music Academy; Temple Baptist Renovation; Temple-McGonigle Renovation, and many more. Outside of Philadelphia they have completed projects at Graterford Prison Boiler Plant and School, Northampton Prison Renovation; Yuengling Plant #2; Coatesville 9-10 Center; Lincoln University Science and Cultural Center; (3) Connective Power Plant Projects;

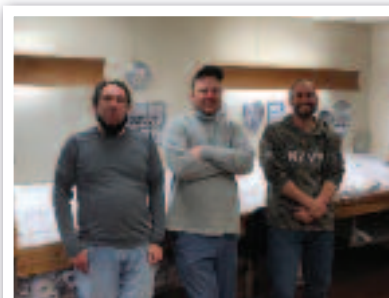
and reproductive Science Institute Laboratory and Operating Rooms.

Recently, Jim Blanski, CFO, has semi-retired and Nathan (Nate) Blanski, the third generation, has assumed control of operations as president, and is continuing the company's dedication to providing quality services and products. Blanski Energy Management is currently working on projects at West Chester Science Building; Philaport Vehicle Staging Center; Belmont Behavioral Hospital; Bimbo Bakeries; Solomon Solis Cohen Elementary; and Valley Forge Visitor Center, among many others.

Through all generations the company continues looking out for their customers' best interests by providing education and training with their partner, the Sheet Metal Workers Local Union No. 19, and by financially supporting their pension, and health and welfare funds. In addition, they support local and national charities, including: the Olivet Boys and Girls Club; the Reading Police; PA Professional Firefighters; Mary's Shelter; Wounded Warrior Project, and many others. Blanski Energy Management gives back to the communities in which they operate and hope for a better future for all.



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At Monastra & Grater, LLC, we pride ourselves on being the attorney you need at the time you need it. We understand that if you are seeking an attorney, you have likely just experienced a life-changing event or anticipate one in the near future. Whether you are dealing with property issues, buying a house or dealing with the death of a loved one, we are here for you. Our experienced lawyers will help you through your experience.

Andrew is well known as an innovative, hands on, "can do" professional, who prides himself on aggressively representing his client's interests at all times. Andrew's extensive knowledge of real estate law is known amongst his peers, who respect him both as an adversary and as a colleague who will gladly share his knowledge with other members of the Bar whenever asked.

Real Estate Law at MG Law is a daily occurrence. The attorneys in our firm are NOT general practitioners, but professionals who pride themselves in being leaders in their areas of practice. In Andrew J. Monastra's case, his practice area is real estate. His passion, since being admitted to the Bar in 1991, is providing experienced real estate advice and guidance to clients in Pennsylvania, in areas as close as Pottstown, Boyertown, Wayne and West Chester – or as far as Pittsburgh, Easton and Harrisburg. Andrew has been solving complex real estate issues all across Pennsylvania since 1991.

Jessica R. Grater practices in the areas of Estate Planning, Estate and Trust Administration, Social Security Disability and Litigation. Jessica has assisted hundreds of clients with estate planning, estate and trust administration, guardianships, Social Security Disability and has litigated numerous matters in the Courts of Common Pleas in the Civil and Orphan's Court divisions.

To ensure your wishes are carried out after your death is not only one of the most important things you do, but it can truly be one of the greatest gifts you can provide to your loved ones. At a time when those you

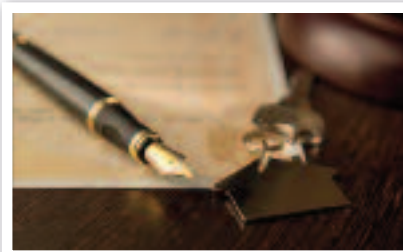


are leaving behind are hurting the most, appropriate estate planning can eliminate additional burdens that they would have to bear. Whether it's planning for the division of your property; creating a trust; tax planning; or planning for your potential incapacity and end of life medical decisions, the attorneys and staff at MG Law have the knowledge and experience not only to provide in-depth and comprehensive advice, but they will do so with compassion and respect.



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EIGHT WAYS TO MANAGE YOUR TIME AND MULTIPLE PROJECTS

As a small business owner, you must have fallen into the trap of having to juggle many tasks in a limited time. While there is no magic formula to hitting the right balance and managing your time seamlessly, you can improve your time-handling skills to accomplish more tasks on your to-do list. Here are some ways to help you keep everything in check when working on multiple projects at the same time.

1. Make a to-do list before you start your day: We get so preoccupied while working on multiple tasks, that we usually tend to undervalue the importance of a to-do list. Although most things in the business world are highly unpredictable in nature, and things can change every second, developing a to-do list can help you clearly define your ideas, visualize your thoughts and work towards your ultimate goal.

Keep in mind that you may have to modify your to-do list as the day progresses. You can also jot down all the important assignments the night before, wake up with a fresh start, and focus on delivering the best results.

2. Determine urgent VS. important: As unusual as it may sound, once the deadlines start approaching, it may be difficult to see the wood from the trees. We get so overwhelmed with everyday tasks that we sometimes fail to see which tasks require immediate attention. By immediate attention, we mean the tasks that will have a detrimental impact on the entire project if not completed and possibly lead to failure.

Prioritize, prioritize, prioritize. Determine the urgent tasks, and handle the burning issues before answering an endless list of emails and returning less timely calls.

Also, don't try to avoid dealing with urgent problems because you want to run from an uncomfortable situation. For example, if one of your clients is complaining about your service because he has an issue with the application, you need to deal with the problem immediately and suggest a possible satisfying solution. You don't want to keep your client waiting as they will easily become upset and maybe even decide to stop using your services.

These kinds of issues aren't going to solve themselves and will often eat at you. Then, you won't be able to concentrate on critical tasks.

3. Schedule time for interruptions:

From endless notifications coming from either social media, your cell or people, there are many interruptions that can break your focus. While it is necessary to prioritize your daily tasks, it's also important to allocate some time for the concerns that interrupt your creative workflow.

Plan some time, an hour or even two, and name it "office hours." During the office hours, leave all the communication channels open, and start handling the information coming from the outside world. This way, you can focus your attention on the real work, and minimize the time wasted doing less relevant things.

(Continued on page 56)



DISCOVERY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

***Delivering authentic member experiences
with innovative digital solutions***

A genuine passion to deliver the best possible member experience while cultivating an internal culture of collaboration, innovation, and a “together we can achieve more” attitude are the pillars of Discovery Federal Credit Union’s digital transformation. “At Discovery, we’re constantly looking for ways to enhance the member experience,” says Ed Williams, CPA, CUDE - President/CEO, Discovery FCU. “We exist to serve our member/owners. We continually seek their feedback, and one of the reasons we made a strategic decision to dramatically improve our digital service offerings was a result of this feedback.” The credit union is dedicated to providing the resources for its members to decide how, when and where they manage their finances, or communicate with the credit union using convenient methods with the least amount of friction, and digital technology plays a major role in this process.

Early last year, Discovery FCU launched a new, interactive website incorporating a modernized online application process to allow individuals to open a new membership account in less than five minutes, and to quickly apply for loans. Moreover, they partnered with a forward-thinking FinTech, Bankjoy, to deliver their members a reimagined, versatile online and mobile banking experience. The innovatively designed online and mobile banking platform, which went live in late 2020, allows members to block and unblock their debit cards, deposit checks with their mobile device, make person-to-person transfers to other credit union members, or to people with bank accounts elsewhere, make external account transfers to or from accounts they own at other credit unions or banks, pay bills, get account alerts, tap to call Discovery and much more – all with the latest fraud controls and security protection.

“We chose to work with Bankjoy because they pride themselves on creating stunning products with advanced features, simple navigation, modern look and feel, and world class user experiences shaped by talking to users,” states Michele Smith, VP/CIO – Discovery FCU. “We are working with Bankjoy on several other projects and plan to introduce Artificial Intelligence (AI) voice banking, and an even quicker online account opening process using biometric identification technology later this year.” They’re also launching video banking soon.

Additionally, Discovery is transforming the way they serve their members in-person. This summer they will undergo expansive branch renovations to enhance the branch experience and include advanced self-serve options using progressive digital technology. “We’re changing the way we serve our members,” says Williams. “We want the branch to be tailored to the member’s preferred experience. We’ll no longer have tellers. We’ll serve our members with a personal consultative approach



Ed Williams



Michele Smith



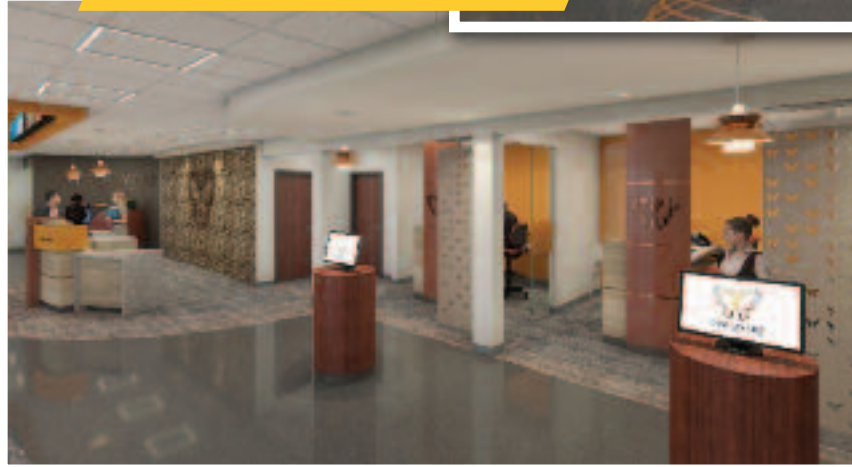
with member experience representatives trained and knowledgeable in all aspects of the credit union.” And, they won’t be behind a teller counter. “We’re equipping our employees with iPads that will allow them to roam freely in our new open branch concept,” says Smith. “Our members will be greeted and served as they enter the branch. They’ll no longer have to wait in line.” For transactions needing more assistance or consultative visits, private service spots will be available. “We will have a state-of-the-art self-serve kiosk in the branch to allow members to quickly deposit and withdraw cash, make check deposits, transfer

money, make loan payments or get a debit card,” says Williams. “Elo’s will also be placed throughout the branch for quick self-serve options. Our main goal with the branch renovations is to allow our member/owners to choose how they want to be served. If they want to come into the branch to quickly handle a transaction themselves, they can do that. If they want to talk to someone, a knowledgeable employee will be readily available.” The branch renovations are slated to be completed later this year.

Discovery FCU is a not-for-profit financial cooperative serving the Berks County community since 1959.



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(Continued from page 54)

4. Create an email-free time of the day: Julie Morgensen, the author of the book "Never check email in the morning," suggests setting aside at least one hour a day when you won't be checking your emails. She also claims that the best time to do it is early in the morning when we are energized and enthusiastic enough to work on the high priority tasks instead of randomly answering our emails.

5. Time-box your tasks: The easiest way to fight the panic that results from looming deadlines is to create fixed time slots, and adhere to them. This is called time-boxing. Time-boxing helps you to get the work done in time and prevent your tasks from dragging on and on. No matter whether your deadline is in a day or in a month, the time you will need to accomplish your task depends on the time you give yourself. Naturally, make sure you set a time that is achievable, and strive towards successfully meeting your deadlines.

6. Upgrade your skillset: If you want to increase your output, consider investing in your and your team's knowledge and skills.

By upgrading your skills, you will be able to manage your tasks more efficiently and effortlessly, boost the overall productivity and get the most of your team. For example, if you wish to produce more pieces of good quality content per day, you should read about new writing techniques, and keep up with trends by reading A-list personal development blogs.

7. Invest in time management tools: With the rise of technology, it's almost unimaginable to handle multiple tasks without using some time management or communication tools, such as Slack or Hubstaff. Also, if you want to minimize

your time organizing files and documents, consider using tools like Dropbox and OneDrive.

You should do an extensive research, review the best project management tools, and choose the one that fits your workflow. If you're working on a weekend project, something like Trello will suffice. However, if your projects last for several months or even longer, then you should look more at tools like Active Collab and Basecamp.

A project management tool can help you and your team save a noticeable amount of time every day by creating a more efficient workflow. It will allow you not only to communicate but also share images and brainstorm ideas in a matter of seconds. It can also help you and your team stay on the same page, focusing on meaningful work.

You shouldn't limit yourself only to PM and communication tools. Identify the repetitive tasks that take a notable amount of your time, and look for apps that can help you work more efficiently.

8. Be realistic: Know your limitations. Taking the ever-increasing demand of the market into account, it's very hard to escape the harsh reality of having to multitask on a daily basis. As much as you would like to be able to complete all your daily tasks, you must be aware that our productivity levels are not always the same. After creating your list of priorities, determine how productive you are and how many tasks you can handle on that particular day. Instead of overextending yourself, focus your efforts on doing your best on the tasks at hand.

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SPACE ASSESSMENT IN AMERICA



DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

By Barry Cassidy

I think that having my basic existence upset at this stage of my life was a surprise. I never thought I would spend a year indoors.

Traveling in Italy looking for a house, I became aware of the virus and just got out in time. Upon arriving back in the U.S., I went to Florida for a while and then again, under emergency action, high-tailed it home with one quick stop at a Holiday Inn in Walterboro, South Carolina as at that stage of the virus, the US was putting the clamp on travel.

My foreign travel days are over at this point, and I thought it would be good to concentrate on the U.S.A. I read a lot during the pandemic and thought about

the places I needed to see before I die. Now that I am vaxed up, I will attempt a cross-country trip. I hope that during the trip I can say goodbye to a few old friends and see the sites that I had put on my list.

I am hoping to get a head start on everybody that will be traveling in the coming year. Being cooped up in my house has me going a little stir crazy. I will try to be respectful of others, wear my mask as an ascot most of the time, and pulled up if I must. I want to take three or four weeks to see how people in different areas dealt with the virus across the country.

It occurred to me that I should spend some time at the Mexican border to see what is happening there. I have been to Tijuana too many times, and this trip is not about fist fights in a drunken stupor, so it is best to avoid crossing the border. I want to look at it from a public administration standpoint. If you know me, you will know I am good at the rules.

So, while I am on my way to Tucson to visit my '60s friend "Cool Breeze," I will skirt the border to see the border crisis.

Also, I thought of a quick run-up to Portland to see the bombed-out downtown. Since I do have a graduate degree in "Cities," I want to add to my understanding of what happens when crowd control fails. I had managed riot control situations in Philadelphia during the Mardi Gras and the Greek Picnic. I can see what the result might have been if I had not worked closely with Philadelphia's Finest super cop John Walker and executed the plan.

While I am on the subject of the Greek Picnic and the rash of sexual assaults, certainly, no one in Philadelphia referred to these fraternities and sororities as the "Devine Nine." Considering the credential of "being in a fraternity or sorority," you had to go to college. People who attend colleges tend to have a higher income level.

(Continued on page 58)

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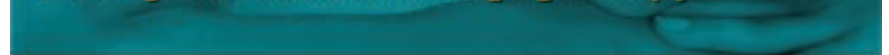
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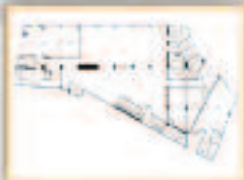
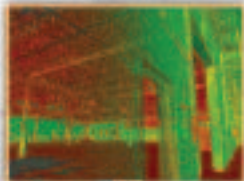
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DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

(Continued from page 57)

When the “Black Doctors” group in Philly dispersed the vaccine to the “divine nine,” I believe it was the force of Black Oligarchical interests to jump the line. Someone should have thought more about the low-income 89-year-old grandmother in North Philly who had not left the house in a year. You could not just show up and say, “I am a Kappa give me the vaccine.”

I will also tour the Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone in Seattle. I love the theory of autonomous districts. As part of what I am proposing to the Train Group, I include “Autonomous Transit Districts” to localize funding. Anything I can pick up concerning an autonomous district will be helpful in my work on the train project. Train projects move slowly, and although I can work from my car, I doubt there will be a lot of movement in the three weeks that I am gone. My knowledge of what it takes to be autonomous will be enhanced, for sure, and perhaps I will be able to replicate a version of it someday.

I have always worked on my revitalization projects by “being the space.” To understand the space, you have to be a vigilant observer of the space and treat the space as a separate independent thing away from all social influences. Space is what matters in the revitalization, and if you always do what is good for space, you cannot lose because space becomes better.

An example of “being the space” is if I am the space, do I want the trash trucks to leak garbage fluid on me? That one is extreme, but an example might lead to social action. Is leaking garbage an amalgamation of what everyone does not want with liquid pour over it? Is the leaking from the bottom of a truck doing so, so the weight is less when dumped? Then you go to the rules, in the rules of the

space, who enforces the rule saying you cannot do that. You have to know and understand the rule.

Once you know the rule about garbage juice on your street, you need to know how to remedy that, and the unit and level of government that handles the issue. And further, when the truck is registered to a vacant lot ... you cannot ignore the problem, and in those cases, I move to the seizure of the truck ... because you can't send them a letter. Space demands justice, and as a conduit for the inanimate object, I act accordingly.

I will spend significant time in both Seattle and Portland to understand the impact on space and how space has changed with the advent of disinvestment and hooliganism. I would suppose that those cities will be there long after the individuals who attacked the space are dead and buried. I want to assess the impact of their actions and how that will relate to the city's positioning in the future.

I am not sure how I will assess the space at the border yet. Should I look at it as the space of America, or should I look at it as the space of Del Rio, Texas? I will have to assess the federalist model and figure out who is who in the space. Space is the space, and I am not sure the space minds who is in the space but more if they are defecating on the sidewalks. I have to give the level of attention to detail in which to assess the space there. Maybe I can do a comparative analysis of the towns I visit along the border and see what kind of space impact commonality I can garner?

At any rate, I need to see what has happened in America ... the land of the free and home of the brave.

Barry Cassidy is a freelance grant and economic development consultant. He can be reached at barrycassidy@comcast.net.

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