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OCTOBER 2021

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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

The Tables are Set, Rack 'em Up at



In September of 2020, owner Vance Jaffe opened up Downtown Pottstown's very own pool hall. Located at 232 E. High Street, High Street Billiards was the brain child of the former owner of Jaffe's Halfway House, who envisioned a great addition to the downtown social scene with a place where players of all ages and skill levels could enjoy the game.

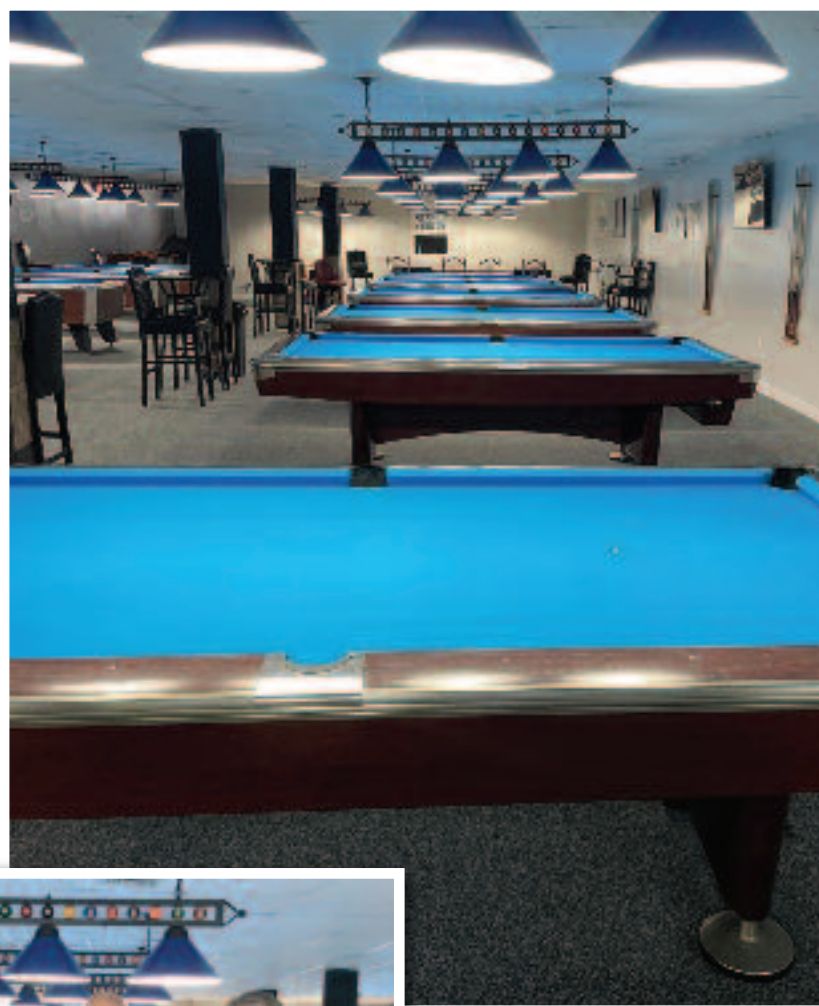
Furnished with 13 tournament blue 9' Gold Crown and 7' Valley Bar Box tables, there's always a table available for playing. Whether you are a skilled player, or a novice that's looking for something fun and affordable to do downtown with your family and friends, this is the place for you. The new Saturday Night 9-Ball Fever Tournament and the Wednesday Night 8-Ball Tournaments are especially popular, with \$20 buy-ins and cash prizes. And the Wednesday tournament is handicapped, so no matter your skill level, everyone has a chance! If you're feeling lucky, there's a 10-Ball Break & Run during every tournament. Thursday night is Ladies Night, with \$10 unlimited play from 6pm-close. Get your girlfriends together for a fun night out shooting pool!

If you are a serious player, or want to brush up on your skills, High Street Bil-

liards is now offering monthly Memberships for \$100 a month, with Unlimited Play all day every day! You can also enjoy Unlimited Play every day from 12noon - 5pm for just \$10. House cues are available to use, along with cool HSB swag and billiards equipment available for purchase.

Looking for a fun place to hold your next event? How about a "Pool Party?" High Street Billiards has an all-purpose community/meeting room that is available for groups of 3-100 for private parties, birthdays, meetings, or team building, with shuffleboard, foosball and dart boards for even more fun!

High Street Billiards is a BYOB (beer and wine), and has snacks and non-alcoholic beverages available for purchase. You can also opt to grab some beverages from one of our neighboring beer gardens or take-out food from the great restaurants nearby. Open 7 days a week, hours Monday through Saturday are 12noon - 12 midnight, and Sunday 12noon - 9pm.



*Well played,
High Street Billiards,
Well played.*



Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for tournament updates and special events.

High Street Billiards
232 E. High Street, Pottstown PA
484-300-4345

email: highstreetbilliards@gmail.com
web: highstreetbilliardspottstown.com



PHOTO BY STYLISH IMAGES

Cover Story: *REACH — Empowering and Connecting Women* is a TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce program designed to bring professional women in the tri-county region together for networking, building relationships, and to provide access to professional development and educational opportunities designed to empower and inspire women.



27
Browse the Marketplace to grow your business, network, and keep your money local.



30
Business Spotlight: Rothenberger Insurance Services in West Reading.

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Contents

- 10** | **Route 422 Holiday Gift Guide**
Local Options To Help Make Their Holiday Special
- 15** | **Tech Tips**
It's In The Cloud. It's Safe? Right?
- 18** | **Social Media Tips**
Setting Smart Goals For Your Social Media
- 21** | **Ask SCORE**
Making Your Small Business Website Mobile Friendly
- 23** | **Ask SCORE**
Seven Legal And Financial Steps To Closing Your Business
- 32** | **Advertised Services Directory**
What You Are Looking For — At Your Fingertips
- 33** | **Regional Chamber Of Commerce Round-Up**
Greater Reading / Perkiomen Valley / Phoenixville / Spring-Ford / TriCounty Area
- 38** | **The SBRA Community**
Should You Know What You Don't Know?
- 40** | **Legal Perspectives**
College Bound! Two Legal Documents Your Child Needs
- 44** | **Downtown Marketing & Development**
Institutional Poverty
- 48** | **Celebrating Healthy Skin Month**
Local Experts And Their Approach To Great Looking Skin

... AND MORE!

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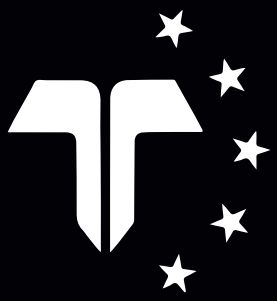
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TRICOUNTY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Empowering and Connecting Women Through "REACH"

With nearly half the seats on its board of directors filled by women, the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce (TCACC) has traditionally been and continues to be a strong advocate for women in the business community. Throughout nearly a century of serving and supporting its member businesses in Western Montgomery, Northern Chester, and Eastern Berks counties, the Chamber has worked diligently for all of its business members, male and female, but women in particular have been historically under-represented in the business arena, and through special programs like Women of the Workforce (WOW), TCACC has pro-actively served as a valuable resource and created numerous networking opportunities for female entrepreneurs, managers and executives.

The WOW program was rebranded in 2019 and is now called REACH. "The idea was to expand the program that we were offering through WOW," explains TCACC president **Eileen Dautrich**. "The philosophy behind calling the program REACH is to REACH out and take the hand of someone who needs us to help to pull them up. We REACH out and share our time, talents, and gifts with others, and we REACH for our goals – our next success," she said. "We want to REACH that point where we are proud of accomplishing our objectives, and we want our program to support our participants at all stages of their careers and wherever they are in their professional or personal journey."

When the COVID-19 epidemic emerged in March 2020, TCACC's operations, like those of many of its member businesses, were adversely impacted and challenged. "Several times over this organization has worked to reinvent itself for various reasons at various times, and this time was no different," Dautrich said.

***Eileen
Dautrich,
TCACC
President***

PHOTO BY STYLISH IMAGES



TCACC women board members, (L to R): Eileen Dautrich, TCACC President; Elaine Schaeffer; April Barkasi; Peggy Lee Clark; Therol Dix; Wendy Moyer-Drabick; and Lisa Lightcap

The TCACC board of directors embraced the challenge, turning adversity into opportunity. Through the leadership of Dautrich and the support of the board of directors, the Chamber revamped and re-energized its focus as well as many of its platforms and outreach efforts. "The (COVID-19 crisis) has been an opportunity for us to take a hard look at who we are, what we are offering, who we are offering it to, what our key base of members truly need from us," Dautrich said, "and we'll continue to do that as often as we need to and adapt to meet those needs."

"Obviously the 'look' of networking changed drastically as 'zoom' became the most popular word in our vocabulary." "At the start of the pandemic, as part of the REACH program, the Chamber began hosting a bi-weekly 'Coffee Chat' series via zoom where women members can check in, network, and connect with other professional women in the tri-county region. 'Coffee Chat' was created in response to a suggestion from Chamber member Carina Hatfield of Weigner Insurance. 'Carina was offering to coordinate a 'happy hour' get together for the REACH Committee Members but instead I reached out to her and asked if she would help me facilitate a call with women who were interested in getting together and being a sounding board for each other,' Dautrich said. 'We had women members trying to work from home and help their kids with online schooling, as well as dealing with the multiple other issues that were resulting from the pandemic, so we set up Coffee Chat.'



We meet every other Tuesday at 10:00 AM, and it's just an opportunity for women to support each other. Sometimes it's somebody having an issue and most of the hour is spent helping them through it," she explains. "Sometimes it's educational, and there's something that we want to talk about in greater detail and invite in a guest speaker. We've done some sessions on goal setting, and then, it's open conversation of tips and tricks from the rest of the group. Sometimes it's re-introducing businesses just so everybody remembers who is on the call and what their area of expertise is, because everything Chamber is relationship based. We want this group to form relationships." The Coffee Chat group began meeting in April of 2020 and continues to meet every other Tuesday.

"REACH is an amazing redevelopment and refresh of what were some previous women's groups, with the new aspect and the new focus being on mentorship, which is incredibly rewarding and refreshing for everyone who is involved," said TCACC board member **April M. Barkasi**, President, Cedarville Engineering Group, LLC.

The REACH committee, comprised of women on the TCACC board of directors and women from other Chamber Member businesses, has also continued quarterly luncheons that were a regular part of the WOW program, and have organized a half-day conference featuring a slate of inspirational professional speakers, to be held Thursday, November 4, 2021.

Continued on page 8)



TCACC Chairman Elect April Barkasi, REACH Co-Chair, and President, Cedarville Engineering Group

REACH — Empowering and connecting women!



(Continued from page 7)

Beyond events, the REACH committee will also work on developing an informal mentoring program to assist and support women who are relatively new to the challenges of starting, owning and/or managing a business.

"The REACH program is about empowering and connecting women, as the tagline says, and that is what it's about," explains TCACC board and executive committee member **Lisa Lightcap**, Vice President, Tompkins VIST Bank. "Taking women either from their infancy of just getting out into the business world, to mature women, and even pairing them up (with a mentor). It gives women in business another opportunity to see what's working for other women and gives them that network and support group that is really needed."

"I was thinking about REACH and the impact that REACH intends to have and does have on young women and wish that I'd had such an organization to be mentors for me when I was making decisions as a very young person out of college trying to figure out what I wanted my career to be," adds board member **Therol Dix**, VP, Montgomery County Community College Pottstown Campus. "It's a real pleasure to be a part of an organization that has such a key focus on building relationships and improving the core possibilities for young women."

TCACC Board member **Peggy Lee Clark**, Executive Director of PAID, Inc., concurs. "My thoughts on REACH are how important it is for experienced women to help younger women, and to share all of the lessons we've learned, and also how we can support women not only in the workforce, but in society in general."

Fellow board member **Wendy Moyer-Drabick**, Moyer-Drabick & Associates, Accounting Systems & Consulting, adds, "I recently joined as a board member, but I've been involved with REACH since the very beginning, and I like the networking. I like how it empowers women, and I hope we can do some mentoring for women-owned businesses that are trying to get established," she said. "I would like to see us do some kind of program that is led by women, specifically in our industry, like maybe a marketing person, an accounting person, or a lawyer, to do a series of workshops in a day, for women who are thinking about getting into business," she said.

"We have a number of women (in the Chamber), especially on the committee, who are business owners advanced in their careers, and have accomplished certain things in their own right," explains Eileen Dautrich. "We want people to be able to learn from those individuals, not only their successes and how they achieved them, but obstacles that they were able to overcome," she said, adding, "Everything kind of took a pause at the beginning of 2020. Our hope is, as we move forward with 2021 and 2022 programming, to develop mentoring opportunities, even if it's just starting out with a first coffee, and scheduling time to get together. We will start with our committee members, and they will meet with women who are not necessarily on the committee, just for something they may need help or want help with. It is not a formal mentoring program as of yet. We hope to grow the program into that opportunity. It's about helping women reach their own goals and the support we can offer to help them get there."

Of course, the TriCounty Area Chamber is focused on supporting all of its members, male and female, and the



**TCACC Treasurer Lisa Lightcap,
REACH Co-Chair, and Vice President,
Tompkins VIST Bank**

TRICOUNTY REACH

EMPOWERING AND CONNECTING WOMEN



1 OF 4 FEATURED KEYNOTES
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- Chamber Member Expo
- Swag Bag with a copy of Sylvie di Giusto's book
- Opportunity to make new connections
- Lunch
- Closing Reception

Contact Alice at the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce for more information, alice@tricountyareachamber.com or 610-326-2900.

philosophy behind the expansion and development of the REACH program is reflective of the Chamber's overall intensified efforts to increase opportunities for its membership from the spring of 2020 to present.

"That is who we are," Dautrich said. "That overarching idea (of expanding opportunities for members) has just led us on different paths. REACH is one example. I remember many years ago when we first started WOW. The idea was, why should women be treated any differently? But if you look at the demographics of a typical room back in the late 1990, early 2000s, women were not the key demographic."

"We have worked hard to get the women that are on our board to be able to sit in those seats, and to really change the look of our board," she said. "That opportunity spurred us to find a different way to reach a population. We do the same through Leadership TriCounty. That is a program of our Foundation which is an educational arm of the Chamber. The Leadership TriCounty program provides members with an opportunity to connect with individuals, give them some assistance in a particular area that they need, very similar to REACH," she said. "It's more limited participation with a particular focus on professional development, but again it's just an opportunity for us to help people make connections," she continued. "Those classes stay in contact with each other when they graduate. We're helping to support their leadership development and professional growth. They are helping to support each other. And the same thing with the Young Professionals program that we started a couple of years ago. It's just creating an opportunity for people to network in differ-



ent groups, to feel supported or more comfortable in different environments, and again, trying to provide whatever we can to our members. We want to create those additional environments where they feel comfortable and can be successful on their terms," she said.

"I think the true philosophy of REACH goes back to who we are as an organization. Whether you are a business that was suffering through COVID, we were trying to be there to support you and "REACH" out our hand to help you up. Whether you were able to stay open and you were successful, we were trying to learn success from those organizations in terms of what they may have been doing for social distancing, new employee policies, masking, PPE, etc., having their REACH be lifting up and supporting fellow Chamber Members. We were

also trying to give all businesses access to resources, even though they may not have been as in need as some of our other members, and we worked to celebrate successes, we continued to offer members the opportunity to post press releases, be on Chamber Chat live on Facebook Live and help tell the stories of our members. So, it is not necessarily a word we use in our everyday marketing of our organization but it, the word REACH, touches on the same principles and cornerstones of who we are and will always be at the core of our organization," she said.

Dautrich's fellow board members concur. "The TCACC is an incredibly important community asset in that it provides support to all of our businesses and non-profits and especially in this post-pandemic era," said Elaine Schaeffer, Executive Director, Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area. "This type of networking and support is just so important."

The TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce has been tremendously helpful for myself and the businesses that I am involved in for the business-to-business support," adds April Barkasi. "The community overall, which includes those who are directly affected in investment, those who have businesses within the region, also non-profits and the community resources that are members of the organization, just make it a holistic group to support the overall economy in this area."

For additional information about the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce and its REACH program, please call 610.326.2900 and visit www.tricountyareachamber.com.

ROUTE 422 HOLIDAY GIFTS AND SERVICES GUIDE

Taste of Fall basket



Business Gifts – Sparking Connections that Count

By Suzanne D. Wisnik,
Gifts With a Twist 4U

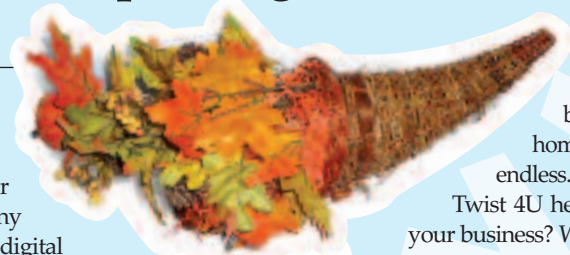
As our world has become increasingly electronic, business marketing has as well.

I began my working career in 1980 and have seen the many wonderful changes that the digital world has brought us. At the same time, and now more than ever, we all still crave, need and value personal connection and interactions.

Businesses rely on electronic forms of marketing. **However, for business to thrive and grow, personal interaction must play a role and is key to any successful marketing plan.** Calls, mail and business gifts are vital to building relationships — and to standing apart from the crowd.

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Holiday decorations and lighting are proven to make employees and customers happier. A study published by the *Journal of Environmental Psychology* has found that holiday lights cause dopamine spikes, a feel-good hormone. It creates a neurological



shift that produces happiness. A festive work environment improves employee morale and aids to a productive workforce. Customers are likely to stay longer and spend more money if the environment makes them happy.

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Maribeth Gardella, Meg's Quilted Memories

The seed for Meg's Quilted Memories was planted while Maribeth was raising her family. "My kids were so small and looked so cute in their little jeans and tees. As they grew and their clothes size grew with them, I kept those little tees and pajamas tucked away because I knew I wanted to make a quilt to give to them when they were older. My heart remembers when."



and using them on pillows and quilts."

"We really take what you have and work closely with you to create a quilt," Maribeth said. "Our tag line is 'Stitching Together Your Life Story.' That's what our clothes represent. They evoke memories

of childhood, vacations you went on, concerts you attended, Broadway shows you may have seen. We hold onto the shirts because they remind us of good times," she explains.

We all have shirts stuffed into closets and drawers or sitting in totes and boxes in our basements. Now's the time to pull them out and upcycle them. Since 2012, Meg's Quilted Memories has been bringing new life to your shirts. With thousands of quilts created, we know we can make something unique and special for you.

You can reach Maribeth at Meg's Quilted Memories via email: meg@megsquiltedmemories.com or 810.250.1825, and please visit: www.megsquiltedmemories.com.

Meg's Quilted Memories creates beautiful and customized quilts from your or your loved one's clothing. Just about anything can be used on a quilt — t-shirts, jeans, sweatshirts, flannels, button-down shirts, pajamas, robes, etc. Recently, Meg's Quilted Memories has been doing quilts and pillows with men's ties. Maribeth explains, "Covid-19 has really changed the landscape of men's fashion. With more Zoom meetings and less face-to-face meetings, suits and ties are less important. Many executives have these beautiful ties and they're not being used. But they love their ties and they're not ready to give them up. So, we've been re-thinking the tie

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ROUTE 422 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Reppert's Candy

Reppert's Candy, operating out of a 12,000 square foot facility in Oley Township, now offers more than 65 varieties of candy and approximately 200 different style chocolate molds. Holding true to the "family business," model, owner Keith Schell truly views his employees as an extension of their family. With more than 22 employees averaging 15 years with the company, "employees come first" is a philosophy Reppert's Candy has stood by for many years. This mentality is one of the reasons Reppert's Candy has built a long-standing tradition of being one of the finest chocolate manufacturers around.

Have one those "hard to please" people on your gift list? A box of assorted chocolates is a perfect gift that is sure to please anyone! Valentine's Day and Reppert's Candy are a perfect match! As you walk through the doors of their retail store, you will be pleasantly overwhelmed by the sweet aroma of chocolate. As you walk further into the store, the enormous variety of chocolate candies, Valentine's treats, not to mention the beautifully detailed packaging, will certainly overwhelm all of your senses.

Reppert's Candy retail store transition from Autumn to Christmas began at Thanksgiving and lasts through the new year. Chocolate tree ornaments and custom packaged party favors are just a few examples of the hundreds of seasonal treats you will find at Reppert's retail store.

Reppert's also offers custom chocolates for your wedding favors and gifts for the wedding party, bride or even the groom. Reppert's can offer custom molds, custom packaging and plenty of options. Call them so they can learn how to make your special day even sweeter. You can reach them at 610.689.9200 or email: info@reppertscandy.com.

Reppert's Candy is located at 2708 W. Philadelphia Ave., Oley, PA 19547. For additional information, please visit: www.reppertscandy.com.

Other Retailers with Reppert's Candy include: Coventry Parlor at Laurel Locks, Inc.; Pottstown Memorial Medical Center; Professional Pharmacy Pottstown; S.Clyde Weaver; Dutch Valley Food Distributors; and Patsy's Potpourri of Gifts, 30 E. Philadelphia Ave, Boyertown.

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Holiday Success Starts with a Plan



SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

By Theresa Mintzer

I know that most of you aren't ready to think about the holidays. Guess what? Now is the perfect time to start making a plan. We have no idea what this holiday season will look like, but it is a safe bet that people will be making many online purchases.

Here are the things you should be doing now to set up for your success later.

1 Confirm that all your information is up to date and consistent across social media.

2 Try to build brand awareness through your social media. Use different social media sites like Instagram, Reels Stories, and ads.

3 Take advantage of back-to-school and Fall to grow your audience.

4 Post regularly. If you can, start posting videos. You can retarget your viewers with ads at the holidays. If a video is doing well consider boosting it. You can retarget that audience later.

5 If you have a Facebook Pixel on your website confirm that it is working. If you don't have one, now is the time to install one. You want to be able to target website visitors with ads later.

6 Did you have a mobile holiday shopping process last year? What worked? What didn't? Is the experience user friendly?

Now is the time to advertise your business. Ads will become more expensive as we get closer to the holidays.

If you need extra help, I offer Social Media and Facebook Ad Coaching to help businesses create a plan that works. Head on over to my website at www.Mintzer-Solutions.com for more information and to schedule an appointment.

PAYROLL INTEGRATION IS NOT NECESSARILY AUTOMATION



**By Brad Palmer,
President,
The Conestoga
Group, Inc.**

Payroll and other service providers frequently market systems "integration" as a means to automate and increase the speed and accuracy of administrative procedures, such as benefits administration. Partnering with a service provider that allows integration, such as payroll, can be a major investment in time and resources. Marketing materials may suggest that once implemented, the system is fully automated. However, full automation may not be the case and make detract from the expected value.

1. Many of the procedures, especially those that involve insurance companies, 401k platforms, and other service providers, require approval by the client before the integrated transaction takes place.

2. Implementations may be simplified and not take full advantage of the capabilities of the system.

3. Future adjustments to the system after implementation may be the full responsibility of the employer, unless an additional consulting fee is paid.

4. Integrations may be restricted and not available to new service providers an employer may wish to use in the future.

5. New integrations may be subject to setup and/or recurring fees.

The Conestoga Group provides without charge a benefits administration system to all clients that can be integrated with any service provider willing to do so. We handle the full implementation with little involvement from the client. More importantly, as service providers, products, employer objectives, and legislation changes over the years, we modify the setup to comply without charge.

Brad Palmer is President of The Conestoga Group, Inc., founded in 1986, based in Malvern, and specializing in benefit programs for companies with 2 to 250 employees. bpalmer@cgiadvisors.com or 610.854.1420.




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IT'S IN THE CLOUD. IT'S SAFE? RIGHT?



TECH TIPS

By Joe Awe, President, TechBldrs, Inc.

Whether you know it or not, you are living in the cloud. Don't believe me? If you watch any streaming service, like Netflix or Hulu, you are putting your trust into the cloud to protect your personal data. If you send an email on Gmail, you are putting your trust into the cloud. If you buy something on Amazon, you are putting your trust into the cloud.

What is the cloud? Essentially, it's software or services that live on the internet instead of your personal devices. So, as you might have noticed, increasingly everything. The migration from your personal device storage to the cloud has been underway for a great while, and is only accelerating due to constraints on data storage space and ease of access and shareability.

Is the Cloud Safe?

With such a great amount of our data now living in the cloud, how safe is the cloud? The reality is that the cloud is subject to data breaches. And with the rapid increase in remote work during the pandemic, the amount of your data in the cloud has likewise increased. This has led to an increase in data breaches.

In particular, Microsoft 365 has proven to be susceptible to frequent and severe data breaches. Microsoft 365 provides cloud services, device management, and, supposedly, advanced security. Yet according to a report by digital security company Egress, 85 percent of organizations using Microsoft 365 have suffered email data breaches in the last twelve months.

Along with the many benefits of remote work, we can't ignore the increased risk of data breaches. As we make this transition to more cloud usage, organizations and individuals must be proactive in protect-

ing their data. This applies generally, but as these statistics show, it applies doubly to organizations using Microsoft 365, which has been hit both more frequently and more severely by email data breaches.

What can I do to Protect my Data?

The most secure form of data on the cloud is no data. But, at the moment, this is impractical. So, what other steps can you take as an organization or individual to protect yourself?

First, you can pay attention to articles like this: <https://www.helpnetsecurity.com/2021/05/13/microsoft-365-breaches/> — so that you are up to date with any emerging security statistics regarding the different cloud services. Do these stats mean you should stay away from Microsoft 365 cloud services? Well, they at least tell you that if you use Microsoft 365, you need to be proactive against the likely — 85 percent! — chance you will experience a data breach.

Being proactive with the security of your cloud data can take many forms. You might acquire credit monitoring services, or identity theft insurance. One of the simplest yet most important steps you can take is committing to changing your passwords frequently and ensuring that your passwords are strong. Everyone should at least take this step!

(Continued on page 16)



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TECH TIPS

(Continued from page 15)

If you've taken all these measures and still worry about your data in the cloud, as we laid out in a previous article, the emerging market of Personal Cyber Insurance might be right for you. Check with your current home insurance company to see if they've added an option to purchase Personal Cyber Insurance.

What will be the Future Trends?

The onus is squarely on cloud services like Microsoft 365 to increase their cloud security. There's no reason that your credit card information on Netflix should lead to your credit being compromised! As consumers become more aware of these cloud breaches, expect a competitive race between cloud services to take the next leap in cloud security.

The rise of the Personal Cyber Insurance field is in direct relationship to these breaches in the cloud. Considering these jarring statistics on cloud data breaches, it's fair to expect the rapid growth of the Personal Cyber Insurance field. It will be interesting to see what effect the adoption

of Personal Cyber Insurance has on the overall number of cloud data breaches. It very likely will increase them, as the Insurance payments create an easy way for Cyber criminals to get paid.

Like it or not, you're in the cloud. And you are at risk. If you haven't already, it's time to take the next steps to fortify the security of your cloud data.

Joe Awe can be reached at 610.937.0859; email: jawe@techbldrs.com, and visit: www.techbldrs.com.

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BUSINESS PROFILE

The Loomis Company

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Right now, during the COVID-19 pandemic, cyber security is extremely important. Let The Loomis Company assist in reviewing your current insurance program. Contact Kelli Gerth, CIC, CISR for more information by phone 484.334.9089 or by email kgerth@loomisco.com.




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SETTING **SMART** GOALS FOR YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA



SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

By Theresa Mintzer

Setting SMART goals is an excellent way to focus your social media efforts. Creating goals for the month or quarter helps to dial down your message and measure if it is making an impact. Set aside some time to brainstorm your social media goals. Next look at the goals to see if they meet the criteria below.

- **Specific** — I want more Facebook followers is not a specific goal. However, I want to increase my Facebook followers by 500 or I want to increase the signups for my newsletter coming from Facebook by 50 percent are specific goals.

- **Measurable** — You can use your Facebook analytics to see new followers. So, make sure you have the data from when you started working on your goals. Do regular check-ins along the way to make sure you are on the right

track. This allows you to make changes as you go.

- **Achievable** — Set obtainable goals. You cannot set an unrealistic goal such as I will have 1M new followers in the next month.

- **Relevant** — How can social media help your business goal? 500 random followers will not help you spread the message about your business. You need to target potential customers with your messaging.

- **Time-bound** — When you set your goals, make sure to include a date. For instance, I will have 500 new followers by December 31st.

The extra effort of setting goals will come in handy when you go to create content. You now have a focus for your content. If you need extra help, I offer Social Media and Facebook Ad Coaching to help businesses create a plan that works. Head on over to my website at www.MintzerSolutions.com for more information and to schedule an appointment.



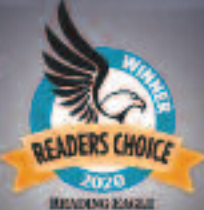
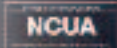
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*Company President Michael Longwill,
and Chairman Richard Longwill.*

*The Carpet & Tile Mart
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Q: When is it time to replace our floors?

A: There is no exact answer as it really depends on the type of floor and the amount of daily foot traffic. Take a quick look at your floors. Do they look worn down, or not as vibrant as when they were first put in? Have they definitely seen better days? It's time to consider updating your floors. Stop in to Carpet & Tile Mart today and let our professionally trained Flooring Consultants help assess your needs and get you the new floors your home deserves.



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BUSINESS PROFILE

Synergy Environmental Inc.

Synergy Environmental, Inc. takes pride in the quality of its professional staff of engineers, technicians, and scientists. Our staff is professional, friendly, and very good at communicating with clients. Synergy is a full-service environmental consulting firm founded in 1998. Synergy's offices are located in: Royersford, PA; Cherry Hill, NJ; and Reading PA. Synergy's personnel have extensive experience working within the regulatory requirements various state and federal programs including USEPA, PADEP, NJDEP and NYSDEC programs.

When it comes to environmental engineering services Synergy is a local company with a very large footprint. Current project locations range amongst the following states: Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. For these projects Synergy maintains a staff of Environmental Scientists, Licensed Professional Geologists; Licensed Professional Engineers; Licensed Site Remedial Professionals; field technicians and field scientists.

Synergy has built its company from repeat and referral business. This is the result of our: 1) **Emphasis on problem solving and client advocacy**; 2) **Cost competitiveness**; 3) **Ability to respond to the specific needs of our clients**, where solutions must be developed which are compatible with ongoing operations and priorities; and 4) **Knowledgeable professionals** able to conduct regulatory negotiations with a strong understanding of the applicability and interpretation of those regulations.

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- **Regulatory permitting and compliance.**
- **Environmental construction management and landfill closures.**
- **Real estate transaction assessments.**
- **Litigation support (civil and criminal).**
- **Brownfields investigations and remediation planning.**
- **Public supply well locating, testing, and permitting.**
- **Underground storage tank (UST) inspections, closures, and investigations.**
- **Environmental project portfolio management.**

Synergy's corporate headquarters and main warehouse are located in Royersford, Pennsylvania. Our warehouse contains a vast array of groundwater and soil sampling equipment, as well as, environmental remediation system components. All remediation systems designed by Synergy are constructed at our Royersford location.

Synergy Environmental, Inc. is located at 155 Railroad Plaza, 1st Floor, Royersford, PA 19468. If you need support for your next project please contact Brian Loughnane at 484.369.2005, by email bloughna@synergyenvinc.com, or visit our webpage www.synergyenvinc.com.



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Today, having a mobile-friendly website for your business is non-negotiable. That's because back in 2015, Google changed the game and started prioritizing mobile-friendly websites in its organic search results page rankings. Since then, the need for a mobile-friendly site has only continued to climb.

It's Google's world and we have to play in it.

An astounding 87-percent of all web searches take place on Google's platform. With this level of market share, it's no surprise that Google is setting the standards and rules for how the world does business online.

Today, years after Google's shift to prioritize mobile-friendly sites in search results, nearly 60-percent of all web searches take place on a mobile device. So, what does this all mean?

It means that if your business website is not mobile-friendly, then you're losing business.

Making the change to a mobile-friendly website needs to be high up on your priority list, especially if you sell online. If you're building a new site for your small business, you'll want to choose a site built with what's known as 'responsive design.'

Responsive design creates a website experience that's fluid from mobile to desktop to tablet.

Google's emphasis on mobile design is its way of rewarding businesses that provide users with a high-quality user experience. When someone visits your website, their experience on your site should be the same regardless of whether they're viewing it on their phone or computer.

Responsive design is a design solution that accounts for how the site will respond to your content and graphics at various pixel widths and heights. The width of a mobile device is far less than a desktop, and your website needs to account for both.

A website designer will create a site using responsive design and assess the way the site responds to text and images of different sizes throughout the design process.

(Continued on page 22)



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Ask SCORE

(Continued from page 21)

The result is a high-quality website that meets Google's mobile requirements and provides a positive user experience on any device.

If your website is not yet mobile-friendly, the best option is to start fresh.

Years ago, businesses were adding plug-ins to make their websites mobile-friendly. Plug-ins are notorious for creating more challenges than solutions when not used properly. If you've been holding out and are still operating a site that's not mobile-friendly, your best option is to invest in a new, responsive website that will greatly improve the user experience for your customers and prospects.

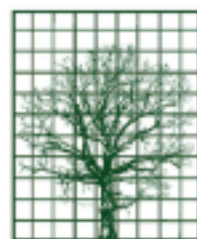
Launching a new mobile-friendly website – regardless of whether it's a brand new site or a website refresh – is a big step for any small business. Having the support of other small business owners and mentors who have gone through a website launch before, like a SCORE mentor, is one of the best ways to make sure you're taking the right steps to launch a website that performs well and creates a positive user experience.

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Today at SCORE, we are on the frontline fighting to keep Main Street America in business. If you believe that you can help a small business with your experience, advice and mentoring please think about joining us. Email us at tricity@scorevolunteer.org, call us at 610.327.2673, or to learn more. To submit an application to be a SCORE TriCounty volunteer, visit our website at <https://tricity.score.org/become-volunteer-2>.

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SEVEN LEGAL AND FINANCIAL STEPS TO CLOSING YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

For a variety of reasons, some small businesses permanently close their doors. Closing a company may be a difficult decision to make, and it can become even more challenging when a business owner does not take the proper steps.

Exiting a business involves more than just ceasing to advertise and ending sales of products and services. It also requires filing paperwork to officially dissolve your business with the state and taking care of other formalities. Failing to take care of those details could mean being on the hook for fees (and possibly fines) even when a business is not serving its customers anymore.

Here are the Seven Steps to Closing a Business

Step #1 — Dissolve Your Business Entity

Companies operating as an LLC or corporation must legally dissolve that business structure so that the state knows it is no longer in operation. This involves filing Articles of Dissolution with the Secretary of State office. Businesses with multiple owners will need to first hold a meeting with their business partners or Board of Directors to get a consensus vote on closing the business. Note that the procedures for each state and municipality may vary slightly, so it is important to research what you need to do in each state and municipality where your business is registered.

Step #2 — Collect Money Owed to You and Sell Your Assets

As you pay suppliers and vendors what you owe them before you close your business, you will want to reach out to customers who owe you money. If you are having difficulty collecting, one option to ensure you get some of what is owed is to sell your accounts receivable to a factor. A factor will compensate you for a portion of the money that is owed you, and then they assume ownership (and the task of collecting the money) of the receivables.

Selling your business assets and inventory can also generate cash for you before you close your company. Some ways to handle this are using sites like Craigslist or eBay, holding an auction, and personally reaching out to other business owners who might need what you're selling.

Step #3 — Pay Your Outstanding Debts

Take care of outstanding bills from vendors and service providers to close out your accounts payable. If you are unable to pay what you owe, discuss your options with an attorney.

Step #4 — File Final Payroll Taxes and Pay State Sales Tax

If you have employees, after you have paid them their final wages and salaries, submit your payroll forms as usual and pay your final payroll taxes. What if you are unable to pay what you owe in payroll taxes to the IRS? Filing an "Offer in Compromise" (<https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-656>) might enable you to reduce the amount that you owe. Another option to consider is agreeing to pay your tax due in installments.

Also, submit your final state sales tax forms with the tax you have collected from your customers. Then, find out what your state and municipal tax agencies require you to do to officially close out your tax account. (See additional information at the end of this article.)

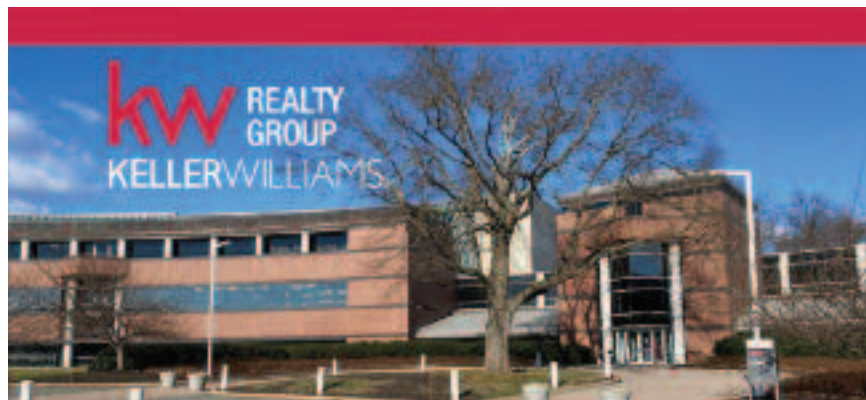
Step #5 — Submit Your Final Income Tax Return

LLCs and corporations must check the "final return" box when filing their income tax forms. Corporations also need to report shareholder allocations (and losses) on Schedule K-1 (<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f1120ssk.pdf>).

Heed the deadlines for submitting final tax documents:

- LLCs — By April 15 of the year after the business dissolved or as published during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Corporations — Within two months and 15 days from when the business dissolved.
- Businesses that close must also close their Employer Identification Number account with the IRS (<https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/canceling-an-ein-closing-your-account>).

(Continued on page 24)



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(Continued from page 23)

Step #6 — Cancel

Business Licenses and Permits

If you have needed business licenses and permits from the federal, state, county, or local governments, notify them that your company has closed. That way, you will not be charged renewal fees or be on the hook for taxes after you are no longer doing business.

Step #7 — Distribute Assets

to Partners or Shareholders

Businesses that have multiple owners and money or assets left over after paying all debts should distribute them among partners or shareholders. LLCs will divide assets according to each partner's share of the business. Corporations will allocate assets according to the shares owned by each shareholder.

Additional Information

More information about what is required by the IRS is available at <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/closing-a-business-checklist>.

More information about what is required by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Department of revenues is available in <https://www.revenue.pa.gov/>

Forms and Publications/other forms/ Documents/rev-252.pdf

Do Not Miss a Thing — GET HELP!

As you can see, closing a business comes with many responsibilities. To make sure you cover all the bases as you work through the process, SCORE recommends reaching out to legal and accounting professionals who can provide expert guidance. Also, you might find that an online business document filing service will make submitting your dissolution paperwork and canceling licenses and permits less daunting. And, last but not least, your SCORE mentor will also be a helpful resource for insight, feedback, and encouragement.

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ATTORNEYS O'DONNELL, WEISS & MATTEI, P.C.47 THE FLEISCHMANN LAW FIRM, P.C.44 WOLF BALDWIN & ASSOC. PC40	INSURANCE SERVICES ROTHENBERGER INSURANCE54 THE CONESTOGA GROUP13 THE LOOMIS COMPANY57
AUDIOLOGIST PRECISION HEARING17	JUNK REMOVAL / HAULING THE JUNKLUGGERS OF BERKS, CHESTER & LANCASTER COUNTIES14
AUTOMOTIVE / AUTO BODY SERVICE MERCER'S TRUCRAFT COLLISION45	LANDSCAPE / HARDSCAPE DESIGN DAVIES HARDSCAPING, LLC52
AUTOMOTIVE / SERVICE AAMCO TRANSMISSION45 EMBODY'S SUNOCO52 RED KIEFFER'S AUTO REPAIR45	LANDSCAPE DESIGN & INSTALLATION WOLFRUN LANDSCAPES55
AUTOMOTIVE / TIRE SALES & SERVICE CJ'S TIRE & AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE45 H & F TIRE SERVICE45	LANDSCAPING / PROPERTY MAINTENANCE SOTTOSANTI LAWN CARE28 & 44 TONY & JOE'S LANDSCAPE DESIGN47
AUTOMOTIVE FINANCING HIGH STREET AUTO CONNECTION44	LODGING / BED & BREAKFAST TWIN TURRETS INN28
AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM BOYERTOWN MUSEUM OF HISTORIC VEHICLES24	MAINTENANCE/JANITORIAL SERVICES 24K CLEANING SERVICES46 CLEAN FLOORS & MORE, LLC59 DEMEDIO'S BUILDING MAINTENANCE15 L & J CLEANING SERVICE29
BANKING / FINANCES MEMBERS 1ST FEDERAL CREDIT UNION13 RIVERFRONT FEDERAL CREDIT UNION18 TOMPKINS VIST BANK26 THE VICTORY BANK24 VISIONS FEDERAL CREDIT UNION5	MARKETING / DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA BELL MEDIA GROUP57
BUSINESS BROKERS: MARATHON CAPITAL ADVISORS / MARATHON FINANCING ADVISORS55	MARKETING & SOCIAL MEDIA SERVICES INTERLACE COMMUNICATIONS29
BUSINESS COACHING JOHN WHITEHALL / SANDLER TRAINING32	MASSAGE THERAPY & PERSONAL TRAINING CHARLES PEEPLES MASSAGE12
CANDIES RETAIL / WHOLESALE REPPERT'S CANDY12	MEDICAL SPA YOUNG MEDICAL SPA48
CIGAR LOUNGE & CAFÉ GOOSE'S MONTECRISTO CIGAR LOUNGE & CAFÉ16	MERCHANT SERVICES NET COST PROCESSING29
CONSTRUCTION SERVICES BLATT GROUP26 ONDRA-HUYETT ASSOCIATES, INC.17	ORGANIZATION HOBART'S RUN51 POTTSTOWN ROTARY CLUB42 SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE ASSOCIATION36
COURIER SERVICE: BUSINESS EXPRESS COURIERS51	ORGANIZATION / CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GREATER READING CHAMBER ALLIANCE33 TRICOUNTY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE9
CUSTOMIZED T-SHIRT QUILTS MEG'S QUILTED MEMORIES11	ORGANIZATION / NON-PROFIT SOCIAL SERVICES ORION COMMUNITIES56
DANCE SCHOOL / PERFORMANCE POTTSTOWN DANCE THEATRE10	ORGANIZATION / TOURISM & CONVENTIONS VALLEY FORGE TOURISM & CONVENTION BOARD50
DIGITAL PRINTING / MARKETING / ADVERTISING BERKS DIGITAL, INC.27 & 51	ORGANIZATION / VENUE SCHUYLKILL RIVER HERITAGE CENTER47
DRUG, ALCOHOL & DNA TESTING ARCPPOINT LABS OF READING54	PAINTING CONTRACTOR / RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL: AGOSTINELLI BROS. PAINTING15
EDUCATION ALVERNIA UNIVERSITY43 MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE18	PAYROLL SERVICES / BOOKKEEPING SERVICES EXPRESS DATA SYSTEMS, INC.21
EDUCATION / TECHNICAL SCHOOL NORTH MONTCO TECHNICAL CAREER CENTER52	PAYROLL SERVICES / HR SUPPORT PREMIER PAYROLL SERVICES25
ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS HARD HAT SERVICES21	PHOTOGRAPHY PROFESSIONAL FOTOVANTAGE29 STUDIO 413 PHOTO & DESIGN20 STYLISH IMAGES PHOTOGRAPHY46
ENERGY BOYERTOWN OIL & PROPANE / RHOADS ENERGY17	PLUMBING CONTRACTOR A. JACKSON ECKER, INC.28
ENGINEERING SERVICES ALL COUNTY & ASSOCIATES47 CARROLL ENGINEERING CORPORATION40 EARTH ENGINEERING54 GREAT VALLEY CONSULTANTS53 LUDGATE ENGINEERING22 MC CARTHY ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES, INC.52 SYNERGY ENVIRONMENTAL, INC.20	PRINTING SERVICES EVERYTHING PRINTING28 & 58
FLOORING CARPET & TILE MART FLOORING SUPERCENTERS19 CHESMONT CARPET ONE23 FRANKLIN FLOORING59	REAL ESTATE / COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL DESTINATION REALTY, LLC56 ZUBER COMMERCIAL REALTORS60
GARAGE DOORS: B & C GARAGE DOORS, LLC27 & 42	REAL ESTATE / RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY GROUP COLLEGEVILLE23
GARDEN CENTER / NURSERY PUIGHTOWN AGWAY27	RECREATION / BILLIARDS HIGH STREET BILLIARDS22
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HOLIDAY LIGHTING SOLUTIONS DYNAMIC CELEBRATION LIGHTING11	SCREEN PRINTING AMITY SHIRT FACTORY50 MISSION SCREEN PRINTING, LLC54
HOME HEALTH SERVICES TRI-COUNTY HOME HEALTH & HOSPICE21	SENIOR CARE / LIVING ASSISTANCE SERVICES SENIOR HELPERS29
HOTEL LODGING FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES BY MARRIOTT POTTSTOWN-LIMERICK58	SENIOR SERVICES AT HOME SERVICE, LLC55
	STRUCTURED CABLING SYSTEMS PROVIDER LINKTECH, INC.22
	TECHNOLOGY / IT INTERMEDIA GROUP, INC.53 TECHBLDRS, INC.16
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GREATER READING CHAMBER ALLIANCE



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

Our mission is to be Berks County's leading unified resource for building a healthy, competitive business community. Our vision is to assist companies to retain, expand and grow their operations and employment and attract new businesses to Berks County.

GRCA's Annual Dinner Honors Top Businesses, Features Sarah Thomas

The Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA) last month celebrated the Berks County business community at its Annual Dinner held at the Truck N Brew at Willow Glen Park. Nearly 600 people attended the outdoor, upscale-tailgate-themed evening, which was punctuated by a keynote address from Sarah Thomas, the NFL's first female referee.

"Our dinner was a terrific hit with our members, which was topped off with an inspirational speech by Sarah Thomas. Sarah's down-to-earth story of a star college athlete to her groundbreaking entry into the NFL demonstrates again that hard work, tenacity and perseverance are the keys to success regardless of one's gender or background. And with the new NFL season starting, the crowd loved her story and her passion for the high-profile job she took up again opening week at the Buffalo-Pittsburgh game," said Jim Gerlach, President & CEO of GRCA.

Thomas' address featured some light-hearted moments as well. She asked the crowd to raise their hands if they were football fans, which resulted in a flurry of hands flying up. Thomas then asked the crowd to repeat after her as she said, "I promise, I will no longer boo the officials."

The ceremony kicked off with the DoubleTree by Hilton Reading being recognized with the 2021 Albert Boscov Economic Development Award. Jim Boscov, Chairman & CEO of Boscov's Department Store, was on hand to present Craig Poole, General Manager of the DoubleTree by Hilton Reading, with the award.



Sarah Thomas

The area's Top Growth Businesses were also honored. Good Life Companies, Service 360 Group and Heeby's Surplus rounded out the top 3. The honored businesses are for-profit companies who had revenues of at least \$1 million in each of that most recent fiscal years.

Smaller businesses were recognized in the category of Entrepreneurial Excellence. Burns Logistics, Berks Surveying & Engineering and Financial Planning Advisors made up the top three. The honored companies are for-profit businesses who had revenues of at least \$250,000 in each of the most recent fiscal years.

"GRCA always looks forward to the Top Business Awards every year," said Michele Richards, Director of Treasury Sales of Fulton Bank and GRCA's board chairwoman. "We are excited to recognize a business community that continues to flourish despite a challenging 12 months. It's so gratifying to see everyone come together and celebrate business growth, development, and in many cases, continued commitment to Greater Reading. Congratulations to all our honorees!"

About The Greater Reading Chamber Alliance: Our mission is with excellent and committed leadership and coordination, we: attract new businesses to our community, support the businesses which are already here, nurture local start-ups, develop the workforce for today and the future, and advocate on behalf of the business community.



UPCOMING EVENTS

For further information contact: Leah Fassnacht, Director of Communications & Marketing
lfassnacht@greaterreading.org, 610.898.7780

October 13 – Building Berks Awards & Trade Expo

Doubletree by Hilton Reading
701 Penn Ave, Reading, PA 19602
5:00 – 8:00 p.m.
\$100/person
Advanced Registration Required

October 21 – Berks Alliance Community Forum Where will we get local news?

Virtual link will be sent the week of the event
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
FREE to Attend
Advanced Registration Required

October 26 – Essentials of Effective Leadership

Center for Business Excellence
49 Commerce Drive
Wyomissing, PA 19610
5 weeks on Tuesdays: Oct. 26, Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23
8:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
\$695/person for Chamber Members
\$895/person for Not-Yet Chamber Members

October 27 – 2021 MFG Summit

RACC Schmidt Training & Technology Center
10 S. 2nd Street, Reading, PA 19602
8:00 – 12:00 p.m.
\$20/person
Advanced Registration Required



October 30 – Chamber Trip 2021 Greece – Land of Gods and Heroes

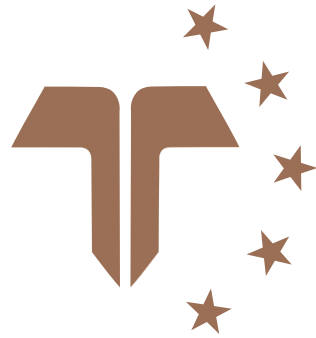
10/30 – 11/7
<https://www.aventuraworld.com/booking/login/>

FROM GREAT TO Greater

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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.

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MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Anniversary to the following Members!

43+ Years

Universal Machine Co.

31 Years

James M. Capinski and Associates

21 Years

SCORE TriCounty

6 Years

Good Contracting LLC

FlagZone LLC

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!



20th Class Starts Their Journey



By Eileen Dautrich,
TCACC President

Last month, the focus of my article was one of our core values – Leadership. I mentioned in that article the Leadership TriCounty Program.

The Class of 2022 started their journey in September, and I wanted to recognize this unique and respected program in our community. I also want to introduce the 18 members of the Class of 2022. You can find their names and companies on the next page.

Some statistics about Leadership TriCounty:

- Class of 2022 will be our 20th class!
- The very first class graduated in 1993
- There are over 250 alumni of this program
- Out of the 16 companies with a participant in the program, 11 have had previous participants



COVID-19 had an impact on Leadership TriCounty, and we chose not to run the program for the 2020-2021 class year. So, we are elated to be able to provide this great resource to our Chamber Member employees so they can grow and succeed in their roles.

I am a graduate of the class of 2000 (shout out to my classmates still connected to the Chamber!). I went on to be the director of the program from 2001 - 2010 and I find so much value in it that we require all full-time employees to participate.

This program unites a group of strangers, helps them define their goals, provides support as they work toward those goals, and build relationships with their classmates as well as the community leaders they meet and learn from throughout the next 10 months.

To guide the class of 2022, the Chamber has contracted with Jenna Armato, Growth

and Success Coach, to serve as Director of Leadership TriCounty. In addition to the program's existing curriculum, Jenna is sharing her expertise and offering the class access to the following: cohort coaching, group engagement, DISC Behavioral assessment, individual DISC debriefs and group workshop, the Leadership Game, "Another Seat at the Table" Diversity and Inclusion Training with a completion certificate, and a one-hour team session with Jenna for the participants' individual companies.

We will share stories from the Class of 2022's experiences over the next 10 months.

If you would like more information on the program or would like to add a name to our candidate list for the class of 2023, please contact me. Leadership TriCounty is something I believe in, and I am passionate about, so I love to talk about it!

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Dear Chamber Members,

After careful consideration, the TriCounty Chamber is postponing two upcoming events: the Annual Dinner and the Pottstown Progress Luncheon.

We will be in touch with Chamber Members regarding these events in the coming months.

The health and safety of our members and their guests is the most important thing for us to keep in mind. Due to the rise in COVID cases in our area, we are more comfortable waiting until a later date to hold these events.

We look forward to hosting these events as soon as we can and providing our Members with events worth waiting for.



THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 ROUND 2
MISSION & VISION PARTNERS (MVPS)



Welcome to the Class of
2022! Best of luck to you
over the next 10 months!

Class of 2022

Kyle Carr, *The Victory Bank*
Kellee Casey, *Schultz Technology*
John Cavaliere, *Cornestone Advisors Asset Management*
Laura Comish, *Borough of Pottstown*
Sue DeSanto, *Pottstown Hospital Tower Health*
Stephanie Frederick, *The Victory Bank*
Alice Funk, *TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce*
Carina Hatfield, *Weigner Insurance & Financial Services*
Brett Krumanocker, *Sealstrip Corporation*
Justin Kull, *Citadel Federal Credit Union*
Micca Patterson, *Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area*
John Robertson, *Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation*
Megan Samar, *Exelon Nuclear*
Todd Savidge, *Citadel Federal Credit Union*
Tiffany Smith, *Montgomery County Intermediate Unit*
Heather Stehman, *Boyertown Oil & Propane*
Jon Vesar, *Pottsgrove School District*
Jessica Zeigler-Cihlar, *Village Architecture & Preservation*



Mondays and
Wednesdays at 1PM
on Facebook Live

October's Guests

Denise Williams, <i>Be ReZilient</i>	10/04/2021
Nicholas Franz, <i>Frag Out Clothing Co.</i>	10/06/2021
Matthew Green, <i>Glicker Realty and Insurance</i>	10/13/2021
Gregory Herb, <i>Herb Real Estate, Inc.</i>	10/18/2021
John Whitehall, <i>Sandler Training</i>	10/20/2021
Navid Moosa, <i>Exp Realty, LLC - Pottstown</i>	10/25/2021
Daniel Price, <i>Mosaic Community Land Trust</i>	10/27/2021



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PERKIOMEN VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

521 Main Street, Trappe, PA 19436 • 610.489.6660 • info@PVchamber.net • www.PVchamber.net



**Perkiomen
Valley
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**
2000 Institute for Community

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out our website for details and registration links for these and other events! www.pvchamber.net

October 6, 2021 @ 4pm – Mixer at Health Insurance Solutions, Inc.

Please join us for an evening of celebration and networking at Health Insurance Solutions, Inc. Meet the team and enjoy refreshments and networking. FREE for PV Chamber member; \$10 non-members.

October 12, 2021 @ 8:30am – New Member Orientation

Learn how to make the most of chamber membership, network with board representatives, new members and prospective members. Following the presentation, attendees are invited to participate in "tips for networking" workshop. Meeting is held in the conference room at PV Chamber.

October 22, 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. Book: The Challenger Sale by Matthew Dizon and Brent Adamson

October 23, 2021 @ 9am – 12pm – Business & Commu- nity Secure Shredding Event

Open to all residents (no appointment needed). Due to space limitations, businesses must pre-register for a time slot by calling the PV Chamber office at 610-489-6660.

LIMITED SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE. Look for details on www.pvchamber.net

October 28, 2021 @ Noon – Business Roundtable Luncheon

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.

Annual Holiday Mixer

December 7, 2021

5pm -7pm

Copperfield Inn @ Lakeside

Food, Holiday Martini's, Music, Silent Auction, Raffles, Wines and More!

Sponsorship and attendee registration www.pvchamber.net

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

**Coldwell Banker Preferred –
Carolyn Prante
610-476-1713;
www.carolynprante.com**

**Realty One Group Restore –
Richelle Deane
(610) 322-8432;
www.RichelleDeane.com**

**Loan Depot – Bruce Pilarczyk
(610) 955-4474;
www.loandepot.com/bpilarczyk**

**Evansburg Vineyards –
Yuval Blat
610-348-8760;
www.evansburgvineyards.com**

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.

POST EVENT SPOTLIGHT

Mixer at 1st Colonial Community Bank

Thanks to 1st Colonial Community Bank for hosting a Chamber Mixer at the new full-service bank branch at 440 Linfield Trappe Road, Limerick. Stop by to learn more about this service oriented community bank supported by a concierge banking model, servicing personal and business accounts!



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

Spring "Forward"

September: Welcome Back Luncheon - 11:30am - 1:00pm
- Thursday, October 14th
 11:30am – Sunnybrook Ballroom

Spring-Ford Chamber's 1st IN-PERSON Luncheon. Join Dr. Lorraine, Montgomery County Department of Health to discuss what is the next step for businesses in our county. Moving from a Pandemic to and End-emic! As well as other mini speakers and new Chamber plaques.

Upper Providence

Community Day – Saturday, Oct. 16th - 10:00am - 2:00pm

Community Business Expo, food, music and more in collaboration with the Upper Providence Township Parks and Recreation

Visit the chamber website www.springfordchamber.com to register to participate

Black Rock Park (behind the Upper Providence Township Building)

This event was rescheduled due to the emergency relief efforts going on in our community and the event will be combined with the UPT's Spooktacular event.

Shark Think Tank

Thursday, Oct. 21st – 11:30am – 1:00pm

Join us for our business owners only roundtable

OTHER SAVE THE DATES INCLUDE:

• **Thursday, Nov. 4th – Mix and Mingle**
 – Copperfield Inn at Lakeside 6pm – 8pm

• **Thursday, Nov. 11th - Chamber Luncheon - Yearly Education Update from the Spring-Ford School District,** Western Montgomery Career and Technology Center and the Pope John Paul II High School.
 11:30am – 1:00pm

• **Thursday, Nov. 18th - Shark Think Tank** Copperfield Inn at Lakeside – 11:30am – 1:00pm

Tune into the Spring-Ford Chamber facebook and website for updates on events

Bouncing back with a Spring FORWARD Luncheon

Join the Spring-Ford Chamber as we kick off our in-person luncheon's with a wonderful return event. Spring FORWARD on Thursday, October 14th from 11:30am – 1:00pm outside under the tent at the Creekside Bar and Grill featuring Dr. Richard Lorraine, Montgomery County Medical Director speaking about what businesses need to know in our new normal.

Laurie Cusic and Michelle Govan, Govan Coaching and Consulting speaking about Diversity, Inclusion and Equity

Registrations can be found at www.springfordchamber.com

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



The Phoenixville Regional Chamber of Commerce is an independent organization serving the business interests of Northern Chester, Western Montgomery and parts of Delaware Counties.

NEW MEMBER:
Kate's Casa, Inc.

NEW LOCATIONS:
Bridge Street Chocolates,
 175 Bridge Street, Phoenixville
Cameron Peters Floral Design,
 34 S Main St, Phoenixville

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."

EVENTS



PHOENIXVILLE HARVEST FEST!

Saturday, October 30 – Harvest Charcuterie Challenge

Fall Festival – Free Event

A family-friendly event. 2- 4 PM, Reeves Park

Sunday, October 31 – Pints & Pups

12 – 4 PM, Main & Bridge Street Parking Lot, Downtown, Phoenixville

For more information visit www.phoenixvilleharvestfestival.com

Thursday, October 28 – NIGHT MARKET

6:00pm -9:00pm, Main & Bridge Street Parking Lot, Downtown, Phoenixville

Friday, October 29 – ET at the Colonial Theatre

Downtown, Phoenixville



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Resource Association**

THE SBRA COMMUNITY

Should you KNOW what you don't KNOW?



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

That might sound like a trick question but, quite honestly, it comes from the statement "it's not what you know that get's you into trouble, it's what you don't know". I have discovered in my 50+ years of being in business that lack of knowledge, as well as the lack of applying knowledge is the primary cause of business stress and in many cases failure.

With over 15 years of doing business in the Far East, I learned from their culture that very few young people had top executive jobs, and, almost every CEO was well into their 60's if not older. This was the result of their belief that a person needed to develop WISDOM before they would possess sufficient KNOWLEDGE to be responsible enough to run a business. Knowledge is an accumulation of facts, information and skill acquired by a person through experience and education. In other words, these executives not only spent years learning everything about their business, but equally important, they knew how to recognize areas of the business they were unfamiliar with. They could spot a problem and get help before the situation got out of control. Conversely, our culture and the way of doing business in America allows someone to start a business at almost any age, regardless of their experience. These young entrepreneurs may have a saleable skill but in most cases they lack the experience and knowledge to establish and run a business.

Therefore, I would like to focus the subject of this article on reasons why many people may not know what they need to know and why they don't apply new found knowledge once they've learned it.

Let's start with "what you don't know". In all my years I have never met anyone who knows everything, however,

I have met many people who profess to know everything. They have several business degrees, they've read numerous books, attended workshops and seminars but they have never owned a business or worked in a managerial position that allowed them to deal with the everyday challenges of running a business. They are book smart but not street smart. As a first-year high school teacher, I had a college education with a degree in teaching, but I learned more in the first couple of months of actually teaching than the entire four years in the college classroom. Had it not been for several great seasoned teachers that took me under their wing and mentored me, I may not have survived the first year. I was book smart but not street smart. Situations popped up that I never anticipated and I had no "facts, experience or skill" to help me make decisions. (Thank you, Mr. Mentzer for bailing me out many times). I knew how to teach but I did not have the knowledge or experience to adequately deal with the different personalities and behaviors of my High School students. Lesson #1-surround yourself with people equal to or better than yourself and don't be afraid to ask them for advice and help. Learn from their mistakes, not your own, and their successes. You will become much more successful, quicker and with a lot less pain, stress and financial loss.

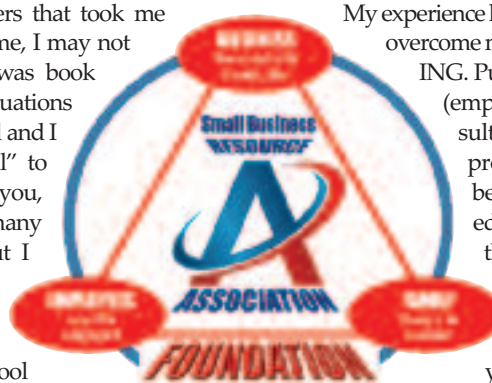
Now let's look at "why people don't apply the knowledge they've learned"? You may recall a quote of mine from a previous article, "knowledge without application is wasted". Some people are actually paralyzed by knowledge. They have so much of it that they can't choose which answer is the best one to apply to a situation and therefore they do nothing. Other people suffer from the "fear of failure" and

therefore put off making decisions. Others just don't know what to do and hope and pray that the situation will, "just go away". A problem usually doesn't "just go away", in fact, it usually grows and gets worse. This "procrastination" is a real problem in today's business culture. People expect immediate gratification whether it be answers to questions, deliveries, products, services, project completions – they want it "NOW". Procrastination is not acceptable and will destroy employee morale, customer confidence and business success. So how do you deal with these situations?

My experience has taught me to let go of my PRIDE, overcome my FEAR and stop PROCASTINATING. Put together a team of trusted people (employees, friends and/or outside consultants) that can provide solutions to problems you're faced with that may be beyond your experience, knowledge or skill set. Allow them to share their perspective on how to find the answer that will result in what is BEST for your employees, your customers and the success of your business. In other words, pull

other people into your decision-making process and together you will make quicker and better decisions. Their experiences will also help you address situations that you never anticipated and most certainly had no answers for.

So, should you know what you don't know? It's not a matter of should you, it's a MUST. Because it is most likely what you don't know that will get you into trouble. Be a Smokey the Bear and not a Firefighter. Ask questions, surround yourself with a great team of mentors, be in-tune with your employees and your customers and learn what you don't know. Your stress level will go down and you will have a more successful and profitable business.



SBRA Business Spotlight



Small Business Resource Association's South Central PA Chapter at the Hive

The Hive E-Town: Unique small business headquarters in Central PA.

Phone: 702-467-7005

Websites: hubonmarket.com

sbrassociation.com/chapters/pa/elizabethtown



NEW OFFICE OPTIONS FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS PROVIDE RESOURCES FOR GROWTH



By Stacey Derck, Hub on Market, Executive Director, South Central PA SBRA Chapter

A long time ago, somewhere around 1889, a beautiful building was constructed at 206 S. Market

Street Elizabethtown, PA and Roth's Furniture was launched. Decade after decade, the store grew in size and height, eventually reaching 2 levels with a large basement, ending around 30,000 sf. After multiple owners, managers and a few various business ventures, Market Street Venture Group, LLC purchased the building in August 2015 and soon after the renovation of what was now a greatly under-utilized building began.

After two years of demolition, design and re-construction, this newly renovated space re-opened with beautiful retail spaces, as well as a delightful coffee house, and finally in March 2019 a unique flex office / co-working space with an industrial and modern barn-feel ambiance known as "The Hive E-Town".

Boasting 20 private and unique Office Spaces, a large Dedicated Desk area, a spectacular Member Lounge / Hot Desk area and multiple conference rooms along with beautiful event rental space, The Hive E-Town has become Central PA's Creative Workplace.

Why is flexible office such a hot commodity in these pandemic filled times? With many businesses downsizing their commercial space, Flex Office Space is a beneficial arrangement where companies and their employees can have their own office while sharing other office amenities such as meeting rooms, high-speed internet, in-house printing services, reception desk, mailing services and package acceptance, as well as cleaning services or snow removal. When choosing office space for your business, there

are other things to consider that just the size of the space. Considering an office environment where additional resources are included in the lease agreement makes a lot of sense. It's also smart to join a community of tenants that provide products or services that compliment your business.

Our original vision for the Hive E-Town was to create a connected community of businesses that could grow their businesses together... through business-focused events, business growth opportunities and similar activities... so imagine our delight when we were asked to become the Small Business Resource Association's South Central PA Chapter!

By partnering with the SBRA, we have now brought in an organization that's total focus is specifically on your company and your employees! It will help grow your business and help you achieve your financial goals.

The SBRA provides amazing networking opportunities, business planning and strategy assistance, business marketing and promotional assistance and events, and other significant discounts to its members, along with keeping you on the forefront of business trends and other opportunities for your company. As a member, you have the opportunity to take advantage of all the resources that the SBRA provides and become an active member within the business community in central Pennsylvania.

This newly-formed Chapter covers twelve counties in Central Pennsylvania. We hope you'll take a look at all of the great benefits the SBRA provides on our website at <https://www.sbrassociation.com/> as well as read Member Testimonials to see for yourself the impact this amazing organization has on over 440 current companies.

We invite you to stop by The Hive E-Town or join us for one of our 120 Mingles so you can truly experience what the buzz is all about.

SBRA Monthly Member Shout Out

Members Helping Each Other Grow



NEW SBRA MEMBERS

- Excellence-In...
- Sensory Concepts Orthopedic & Medical Massage
- Social Enterprise Institute USA
- Solve IT Solutions
- American Insuring Group

See the full member directory at <https://www.sbrassociation.com>

SBRA EVENTS - BE BETTER. GROW FASTER.

TUNE-UP Tuesdays
information. sharing. motivating.



free to the public, registration at <https://www.sbrassociation.com/#EVENTS>

• Tuesday, October 12th – 9:30-10:30 a.m. – SBRA Workshop

"Upcoming Social Media Trends Small Businesses Can Leverage" virtually on Zoom, presented by Bell Media Group.

120 MINGLE NETWORKING

Check [sbrassociation.com/events](https://www.sbrassociation.com/events) for locations and times.



Learn How the SBRA Can Help Your Business Grow – Membership Benefits Update

Wednesday October 27th, 9:00-9:30 a.m. via Zoom register at: <https://www.sbrassociation.com/#EVENTS>



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LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

By Michelle M. Forsell, Esquire, Wolf Baldwin & Associates, P.C.

Summer is gone, and many parents are tearfully sending their children off to college. For many students, this is the first time that they have spent an extended amount of time away from home and on their own. The last few weeks have probably been spent visiting friends, back-to-school shopping, and packing. While back-to-school shopping looks different for college, whether your child will be on campus or in an apartment, one item that is often overlooked is making sure that your child has the necessary legal documents should something happen to him or her while away from home.

Parents often receive a shock when their child returns home for a school break and their regular doctor's office tells them, "I'm sorry but your child is now 18 years old, and they need to call for this appointment." After you pick yourself up off the floor and before you argue with the receptionist, take a step back and think about it. You successfully raised your children to become young adults.

Congratulations and Job Well-Done! But that also means that the law now views them as having some adult responsibilities, including making their own medical decisions. The *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996* (HIPAA) has also made it increasingly difficult for parents to access their adult child's medical history and speak to medical professionals even in an emergency unless that child has author-

ized the parent on a HIPAA-compliant release form. An emergency situation is exactly that — an emergency with little if any time to worry about a HIPAA-compliant form.

Instead, a healthcare power of attorney can help alleviate a lot of unnecessary stress and anxiety for both parent and child. Your young adult can now sign a legal document that names you, the parent, as his or her primary medical agent to discuss and assist in medical decisions. But don't forget to name a trusted alternate in the event that you and your child are in an accident while driving to and from college.

It is always best to be prepared for anything life throws at you and this particular back-to-school time seems to be filled with much more anxiety than in years past.

(Continued on page 42)



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"It (cover story) was a great experience and we have gotten a lot of phone calls from the exposure. From a marketing perspective the story was great for two reasons. It got us some terrific exposure which led to phone calls and quote requests. That's the short-term goal you would hope for and expect from this kind of exposure. The second and hopefully longer lasting benefit is the validation it can bring. It's easy for us to tell you we are experts at what we do and that we can help grow your business online, it's an entirely different thing when someone else does the research and writes a story telling the world the same exact thing." – Brian Welch, Partner, Amity Digital

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LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

(Continued from page 40)

Part of that anxiety is due to the existence of COVID-19 and the fact that last year a lot of schools offered remote learning. I have seen more clients coming in recently with their college-bound children to sign a healthcare power of attorney than I have in previous summers.

The second document that your college-bound child should consider is a general durable power of attorney, which covers a variety of non-medical situations. Specifically, this document allows you the parent, if you are named as the primary agent, to manage bank accounts, pay bills, file income tax returns, and step in to address concerns with the student's apartment lease, among other things. All of these tasks can be particularly helpful in the event that your child decides to study abroad, in addition to assisting with visa applications and communicating directly with the United States Embassy. As with the medical power of attorney, it is always a good idea to name an alternate agent.

Although it may be a bit morbid to discuss these documents with your college-bound child, the peace of mind that

they provide is priceless. Transitioning to adulthood can be a scary time, but with the proper legal planning, that stress can be diminished.

Michelle M. Forsell, Esq. is an elder law attorney at Wolf, Baldwin and Associates P.C. She is a member of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and accredited by the Department of Veterans Affairs to assist claimants in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims for VA benefits. She practices primarily out of the firm's newest office in Pennsburg, and can be reached at 215.679.5912 or by e-mail at mforsell@wolfbaldwin.com.

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Alvernia Complements Adult Learner Programs with New Non-Credit Certificates

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"We've revolutionized higher education's

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to deliver flexible, relevant courses to enhance professional and personal goals," states Dana Baker, Executive Director of Alvernia's community-

-based campuses. "We have an established network of professionals who help to guide and support our adult students on their *pathway* to the next step in their career and life."

To expand offerings to the adult market, Alvernia is launching new non-credit certificate programs, which provide industry-specific credentials that allow adult learners to upskill or reskill for new employment opportunities. "In a post-COVID world, many individuals are exploring educational pathways that will allow themselves to reskill, upskill, and advance in their current field or in transitioning to a new field," reports Baker. "We've partnered with Coursera and industry leaders, like Google, IBM, CertNexus, SAS, Facebook and many

others to design and deliver content to help adult learners earn industry micro-credentials and badges in areas outside of our academic programming for enhanced career opportunities."

Individuals can earn the IT Support Professional Certificate, IBM Digital Badges, Certified Artificial Intelligence Practitioner, Facebook Social Media Marketing Associate Certificate and many others.

The Gateway certificates require no background to start and provide training for entry-level positions in the subject area studied. Depending on the subject area, they can be completed anywhere from 5 weeks (one course) to three- six months (full certificates).

The Professional certificates are designed for those already in specific careers who want to upskill for a promotion or advanced responsibilities.

"Using both academic credit and non-credit pathways, Alvernia is helping to meet the needs of adult learners in various stages of their education and careers," states Baker.

For additional information on Alvernia's new certificate offerings visit: certificates.alvernia.edu or contact our Graduate and Adult Learning team at gradandadult@alvernia.edu or 610.796.5187.



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DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

By Barry Cassidy

While at the recent statewide downtown conference in Reading, I spent a couple of days checking out the city. One of the mobile workshops was held at a public housing complex close to the hotel.

We were there to talk to the tenants about the outdoor space around their complex. We were standing there outside as people converged to our area. Most people there did not speak English, and they had a nice interpreter there doing her best to convey the people's thoughts. I thought she did a good job. So, when things started to go south a little bit, I did not hear exactly what was said.

There is not enough parking at the building. Some of the men brought that up as a constraint to their pursuit of happiness. I, along with the others, was not surprised, as downtown people hear parking complaints all the time. There is never enough parking downtown. But the Resident Coordinator seemed to take umbrage with the comments. Finally, he interceded in the process and told us that the people were wrong.

He persisted in enunciating, and he continued his denial. Then the group got up and left and went to the other side of the open space. It occurred to be without regard for the merits of the discussion and the complaints. We were told not to listen to the people we arranged to meet. There were men and women there who had one common thread: they lived in a public housing project, and they were poor.

Unless you have lived it, there is no way to garner your thoughts around the restrictive atmosphere that prevailed that day. There is a price that you pay for getting government assistance — you

must follow the rules. There is a comprehensive set of rules for people that, in truth, are somewhat daunting.

The threat of losing housing is the result of not following the rules. You give up your individualism to be part of a "group think" of a certain point of view. The regimen is described in the bowels of a *Federal Register* regulation that could be interpreted any way the local jurisdiction reads it, within limits.

When you look at the history of public housing, back in the beginning, black developments and white developments depended upon where the project was located. As a result, white areas remained protected, and black projects were crammed into the city's industrial and less desirable areas to hyper-segregate an area.

So, minorities are pushed together with only the color of their skin, ethnic derivation, and their low-income status. In some cases, if you lose your unit, you cannot move to another and need to get on the waiting list. So, in a way, many are tethered to the unit.

In the meantime, money to make your life better is being eaten up in the administrative process. The residents are being administered to by people who seek to implement a complex set of rules. As funding changes in many cases, the rules change, but the one constant is some rules dictate how you live your life.

(Continued on page 46)

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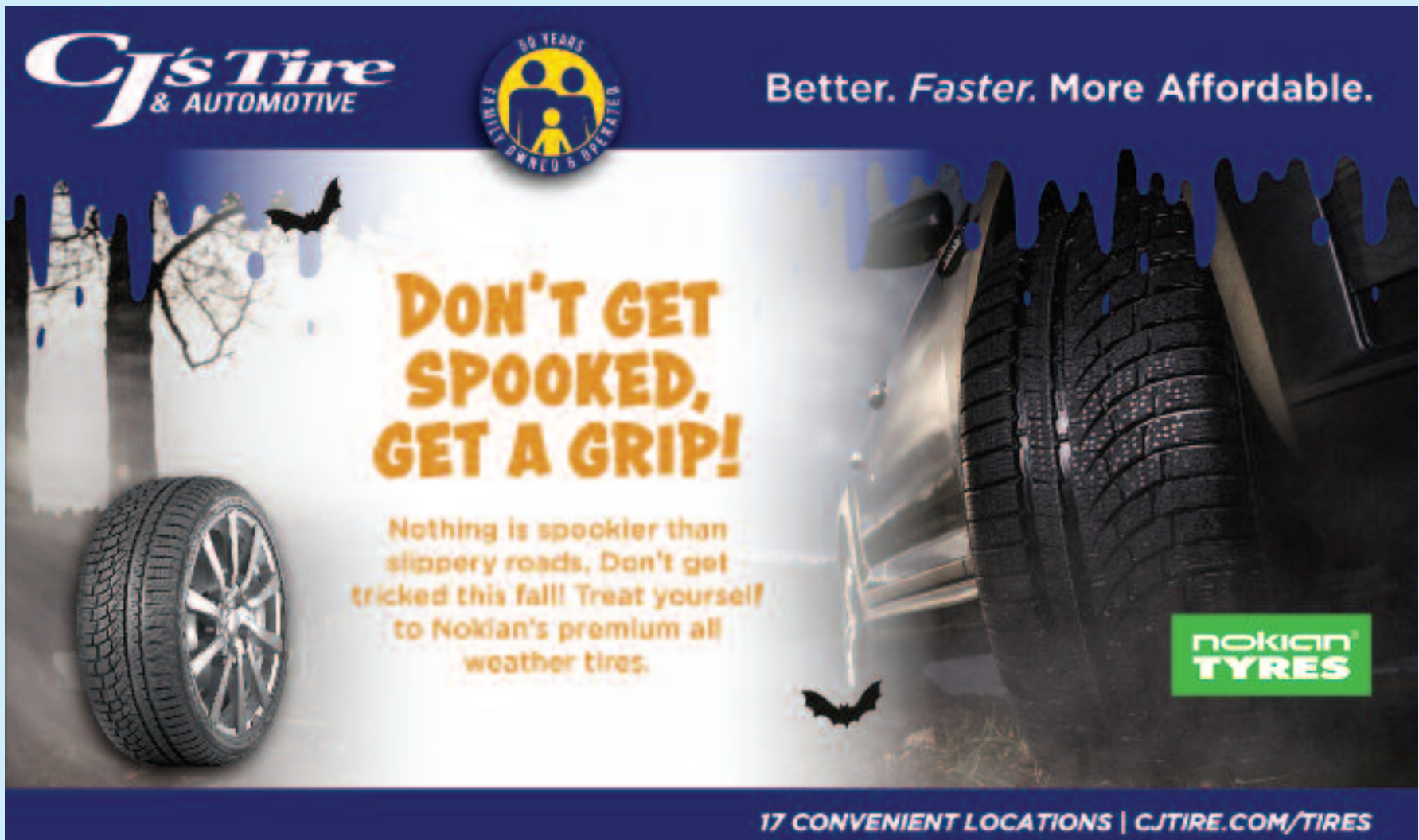
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DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

(Continued from page 44)

Recently the \$4.925 billion in HOME-ARP (American Rescue Plan) was announced to help the homeless. There is an average of 553,742 homeless persons in the U.S. on any given night. If you divided the allocation by the number of people, it would be just shy of \$8,850 per person. If you split the money and say that ten percent of the homeless throw the money in the air, ten percent buy drugs or alcohol, ten percent get swindled immediately, ten percent are victims of a crime, and let's say ten percent have some miscellaneous reason to have the money misused somehow. Out of the total homeless cohort group, 276,871 people could get out of the shelters and start anew.

That would seriously reduce the load on the shelters, but what it would also do is not pay their salaries, not pay to build more shelters but better yet, not pay for a high price connected consultants to tell the organizations what they already know. They will be a direct benefit to the people, not the system. We cannot keep feeding the system and have connected elites skim the money off the top in the name of their expertise being needed.

People are homeless for many reasons, but the number one reason is they have no money. The money probably will never reach the people and will be used

for "services," also known as program delivery. Many consultants and many political elites know the program delivery well as it is a way to get around the administrative limit for a Community Development Block Grant.

I was at an equity workshop the other day, and it was reported that of the \$11.9 million to advise racial equity given through philanthropy, only \$1.15 million reached the intended recipients. About ten percent made way for the intended purpose.

It is all like that. I do this for a living; I see it all the time. I am always asking myself, "who is funding this?" when I see some glossy presentation without a merit effort.

The minority population of African Americans never had a chance after slavery. Then they were segregated, sometimes arrested, and made to work in jobs like US Steel mines and, in general, precluded from building generational wealth.

The only way everyone could gain freedom is by giving them the one thing they lack ... money. So instead, we pay for services because if they escaped the system, they would lessen the demand for institutional poverty.

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

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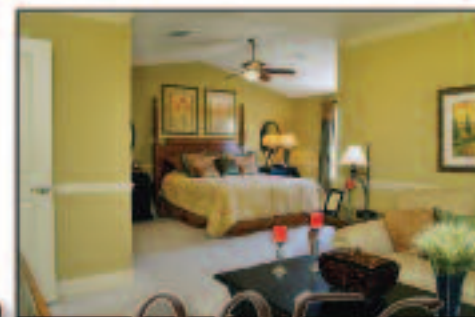


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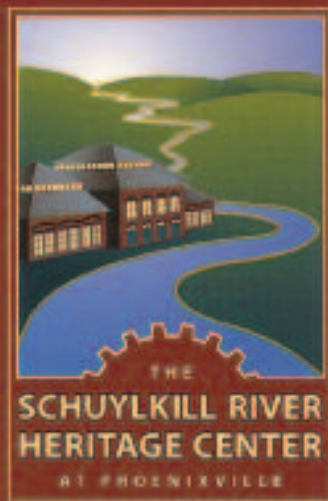


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The law firm of O'Donnell, Weiss & Mattei, P.C. (OWM), 41 E. High Street, Pottstown, PA, is growing again, announcing that Scott J. Werner, Jr., Esquire has joined the firm effective July 26th.

Mr. Werner received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Penn State in 2008 and his Juris Doctor from Widener Delaware in 2013. Scott began his legal career as an Accredited Voluntary Attorney with the Widener Veterans Law Clinic.

Mr. Werner is a Chester County native, currently residing in Phoenixville with his wife and daughter. For the last three years Scott was an Assistant District Attorney in Chester County, and prior to that, he was a prosecutor in Lycoming and Tioga Counties.

At OWM, Mr. Werner will focus his practice on matters of criminal law, including DUI, civil and commercial litigation. He will also be handling guardianships and working in the OWM Business Law Group.

Mr. Werner is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association. He is also a mem-



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ber of the Chester County Bar Association, the Montgomery County Bar Association, and the Pennsylvania Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (PACDL).

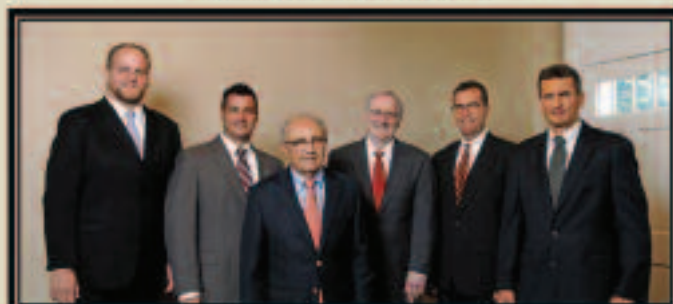
O'Donnell, Weiss & Mattei, P.C. is a full-service law firm that has been serving the Montgomery, Chester, and Berks County areas for over 65 years. In addition to the Pottstown office, the firm established its Phoenixville office, located at 347 Bridge Street, Phoenixville, in 2006. Mr. Werner will be based out of the 41 E. High Street office in Pottstown, however, as with all OWM attorneys, he will be available to assist clients in both our Pottstown and Phoenixville offices. For more information, please contact Scott at 610.323.2800.



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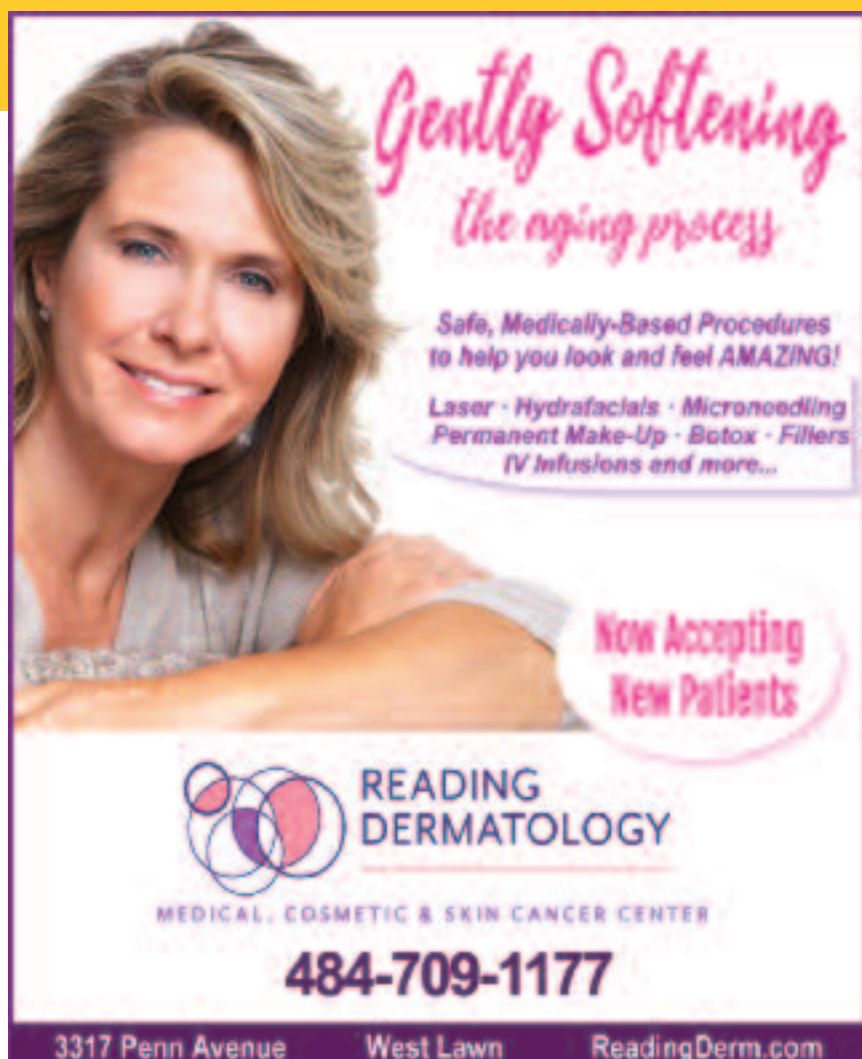
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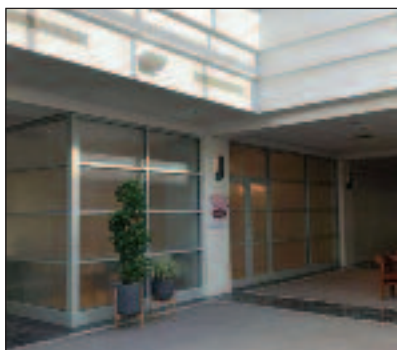
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But what is the Vspot? Founded by Real Housewives of New York star Cindy Barshop, the Vspot brings to the community a variety of services tailored for women's sexual health to improve satisfaction, tightening, and hormones. Together these two brands provide a one stop shop for feminine wellness in Bala Cynwyd.

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YOUR IDEA ... YOUR DESIGN ... YOUR SHOP ... **AMITY SHIRT FACTORY**

Looking at their operation, it is hard to believe that so much work is done in such a small place. Coming up on 8 years, located in the Olde Swede Office Complex in Douglassville, there is a hidden gem of a business known as Amity Shirt Factory. "We do everything here ... nothing is shipped out ... Screen Printing, Embroidery, Vinyl Press on Jackets, Sweat-shirts, Pants, of course Tee-Shirts ... you name it ... all completely finished in-house". But owner Charlie Wedemeyer is quick to say Amity Shirt Factory is NOT "his company". "No, it's not mine, It's the community's ... I work for them, this is their place ... and they can get almost anything and everything they need right here." Amity Shirt Factory ... Your Idea ... Your Design ... Your Company.

When I met up with Charlie at the Amity Shirt Factory shop on Olde Swede Road, in Douglassville, I could hear him working in the back. When he came out to greet me, his hands were stained with ink, his hair a bit desheveled and there was his famous huge welcoming smile on his face.

Q: Driving around, there seems to be a lot of competition, how do you feel about that?

CW: I have never been worried about competition ... there is plenty of work to go around. Besides, when I was on the other side needing to purchase uniforms for my daughters softball team, I learned very quickly that "Brand X" is very difficult with which to work. I took what I had learned, and keep learning, and decided to do the opposite [laughing] Editor's Note: "Brand X" is a composite of several screen printing companies in the area.

Q: It seems to be working you have a lot of boxes, is your product better than most?

CW: I'm building a fort! [laughing]. Yes, it is working! No, my product isn't any better or worse. Side by side it would appear to be exactly the same.

Q: So then why does Amity Shirt Factory have so many customers, couldn't they just go anywhere? Editor's Note : At that moment a student from Pottstown High School came in to pick up the soccer warm-ups for her team. Charlie not only knew her name, but asked about the game she was playing today and if her knee felt better. He also knew details of the earlier game where this player was injured.

Q: Nevermind, I think I am beginning to understand. Do you know all of your customers by name?

CW: I try to. Hey, [the customers] work hard for their money and they have chosen to come to Amity Shirt Factory. Like you said, they could go anywhere but they choose to come here. The least I can do is make them feel welcome, learn their name and find out what they do. It's fun for both of us! Isn't that the way it's suppose to be?

Q: I think it is but most of the time it isn't. What does this tee cost to print? Editor's Note: I am holding a black tee with 2 colors on the front and 2 colors on the back.

CW: For just one, about \$20.00 the price goes down based on quantity.

Q: Wait, you can get just ONE tee shirt made at Amity Shirt Factory?

CW: [Laughing] Yep! Amity Shirt Factory does NOT have minimum order requirements. Guess what else, we DONT charge design fees, we DONT charge screen fees, NOR do we have any set up charges. Let "Brand X" charge that stuff, you'll never see that here.

(Continued on page 52)

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“BIG” news! Sole-Full Grant Recipient Sets Up Shop

You might say this is a business story made in heaven – or at least in Hobart’s Run.

Entrepreneur Tamika Malachi and her husband, Phillip, were looking to open a small family-owned clothing shop in Pottstown when she attended the April 2021 virtual Pottstown Investors Conference, co-sponsored by Hobart’s Run with Pottstown Area Industrial Development, Inc. and the Borough of Pottstown.

Malachi already was involved in the community through her 16-year-old nonprofit, Joule 4 Jesus Ministries, Inc. This organization hosts empowering events for women who are non-violent former criminal offenders and distributes donations ranging from diapers and clothing to food to help these individuals and their families turn their lives around. (“Joule” is a physics term that means “a unit of energy or work.” Tamika said her extended family’s motto is “We are blessed to be a blessing.”)

During the Investors Conference, she learned about Hobart’s Run’s new Business Incentive Grant (BIG) designed to give a \$1,500 incentive toward rent or closing costs to new business owners who set up shop along the 500 to 900 blocks of High Street. Some time later, she realized the property at 866 E. High Street, a former barber shop, was available.

“As soon as I walked in this bright, newly renovated building, I knew this was it,” Tamika said enthusiastically. “I said ‘It’s perfect. Where do I sign?’”

She soon became Hobart’s Run’s first BIG recipient.

Tamika expressed not only her gratitude for Hobart’s Run’s assistance but also her enthusiasm for living in Pottstown, where she and her family have resided since 2007, after moving here from Philadelphia. “Pottstown is a family town,” she said, praising her neighbors in the 700 block of Lincoln Avenue, as well as the Borough’s community spirit.

The shop, **Soles Shoes LLC**, sells shoes ranging from women’s fashion shoes and accessories to men’s athletics footwear as well as other athletics garb. They opened officially on July 31 and are busy expanding their inventory. Their website soon will be up and running, and they will sell on-line as well.

Open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Soles Shoes includes participation not only from Phillip, a sous chef at Ursinus College, but several of the Malachis’ seven children, including son Tyshyre; daughter and co-owner Tiane; and daughter Tamyre, who will help manage the shop. Suggestions are welcomed at solesshoesllc@gmail.com.

To learn more about the BIG program or apply, go to www.hobartsrunpottstown.org/business. Hobart’s Run, an initiative created through The Hill School, strives to foster a clean and safe neighborhood; inclusivity; home ownership and property pride; and quality commercial / retail development, all while supporting Pottstown-wide revitalization.



Hobart's Run is Open for Your Business

Hobart's Run, a neighborhood improvement initiative and 501(c)3 created with support of The Hill School, now offers a Business Incentive Grant!

Qualified new businesses must open in the 500 to 900 blocks of East High Street. Our BIG of up to \$1,500 will help entrepreneurs with their first month's mortgage payment or rent. More information can be found at hobartsrunpottstown.org/business.

To learn more about Hobart's Run and how we welcome local business development, email [Twila Fisher](mailto:twila@hobartsrunpottstown.org), Director of Community and Economic Development, at twila@hobartsrunpottstown.org or call 610-780-6324.

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AMITY SHIRT FACTORY

(Continued from page 50)

Q: So is this why your pricing may be a bit higher than "Brand X"

CW: Per shirt maybe yes, in most cases Amity Shirt Factory's pricing is the same. However, when you factor in the fees "Brand X" may have, my product is considerably less. With the example of this shirt, it would take 4 screens to complete ... a minimum charge is \$25.00! Per Screen! That's \$100.00 right there that Amity Shirt Factory has saved our customers. Editor's Note: After some investigating, it was discovered that some screen fees cost upwards to \$45.00 per screen needed for a project.

Q: Is it true you have turn work down?

CW: Yes I have ... but allow me to explain. We have start up businesses come in all the time and they want to get two, maybe three hundred shirts at a time. I don't care who you are ... that is a lot of money! What I do is explain our business model and offer them a manageable project ... getting only 30 or so garments to start ... I would love to take the \$2,400.00 and run but I was there. I know they don't have that kind of money ... some day they will ... but if I can help them out now, hopefully they will come

back ... and you know what? They do.

Q: I bet you get a lot of work for pink tees around this time of year? Editor's Note: The interview was conducted in September 2021

CW: I do, for Breast Cancer Awareness and for Relay for Life as-well. Amity Shirt Factory never makes any money off of these tees, we try to do them for cost. We also help customers sell the tees on our on-line store and guide them to a good price point. Amity Shirt Factory has donated thousands of dollars thru the sales of our shirts as-well-as cash donations. I get thank you cards all the time ... I like to hang them up.

Q: Tell me about TSA.

CW: Technology Student Association or TSA has Marketing Competition that includes screen printing. Students have to do everything from the design, to burning the screen, to the actual screen printing ... Twenty-five test prints and three final tees. The print also must have 3 colors. The winner's design goes on to be the tee for next years competition. Amity Shirt Factory donates the shop and everything necessary to complete this project. I am allowed to teach but I cannot do the project.

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One of the girls actually came in first one year. She was great ... better than me she is tiny and developed a technique that really worked for her. I actually use that technique when I apply ink to the screens.

Q: The million dollar question ... Why do you do this?

CW: Amity Shirt Factory's victory is seeing how their work affects people's lives. Some people see this [pointing at his shirt] as only a tee shirt. Amity Shirt Factory knows it is much more than that. It is something that can help buy food, medicine or treatments ... it can make you feel like you belong ... it can promote a

cause or a business. This [again pointing to his shirt] is a lot of different things to a lot of different people. This idea is not lost on Amity Shirt Factory, we have the best customers in the world, the amount of love they have for the community is truly amazing. We feel very lucky and honored that they come to Amity Shirt Factory for help.

Charlie Wedemeyer is an award winning graphic designer. Graduating top of his class at Anthem Institute in 2009, his work can be seen at small businesses as-well-as multimillion dollar companies. Feel free to contact him via text, phone or e-mail at 610-858-9441 and amityshirtfactory@yahoo.com

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DRUG TESTING AFTER A NATIONAL CRISIS

**By Annmarie and Al Dallao, Owners,
ARCpoint Labs of Reading**

Drug Testing Is Extremely Important After a National Crisis! Question: Do you consider employee productivity, workplace safety, and profitability to be important factors in your business? I am sure you answered yes to all three. One thing that all of these have in common is that they all are compromised when one or more employees are engaging in drug use, whether at home or in the workplace.

The recent pandemic has pushed some recreational drug users into more serious and harmful substance use. For some casual users of cannabis or cocaine, the lockdown was most likely a mental health crisis point that lead them to take drugs more frequently. In some cases, users switched to using different and harder drugs, increasing the risk of dependency, overdose, and other harms.

It is imperative for employers to consider doing pre-employment, random, post-accident and suspicion drug testing to:

- Minimize the chance of hiring an employee who may be a drug user

- Reduce workplace accidents and improve safety
- Reduce absenteeism, tardiness, sick leave, and personal time off
- Identify current users and refer them for assistance
- To discourage "recreational" drug use that could lead to addiction
- Reduce employee discipline problems and compensation costs
- Improve employee morale, motivation and increase productivity
- Improve your company's community image

One of six workers has an addiction problem! When you consider the statistics, it's very likely that your company has one or more employees using drugs. It is recommended that employers plan on performing random & suspicion drug testing after a pandemic. Pre-employment testing is also highly recommended.

ARCpoint Labs of Reading is located at 2208 Quarry Drive, Suite 207, Reading, PA 19609. For additional information, please call 484.926.2505; email asdallao@arcpointlabs.com; and visit www.arcpointlabs.com/reading.

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BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND: EDGEWOOD CEMETERY PLANS SECOND ART FAIR AND CLEANUP EVENT

When volunteer friends of the previously abandoned Edgewood Historic Cemetery at 989 E. High Street, Pottstown, planned to combine a grounds cleanup with an Art Fair fundraiser, they were not sure if the creative twist would appeal to vendors or participants.

However, it was so successful the group has planned another event for Saturday, Oct. 23, with the cleanup beginning at 9 a.m., and the Art Fair opening at 10 a.m. and running to 3 p.m. Artisan vendor applications are now open (details below), and the group hopes to line up individuals as well as civic groups to help rake and plant.

The planners' spring goal was not only to attract volunteers to help beautify the grounds and prepare it for the summer mowing season, but also to raise funds for the ever-hungry mowing fund which covers annual fees ranging between \$16,000 to \$20,000 each year, depending on Mother Nature and the weather's effect on the grass.

"We wanted to bring more members of the community to the Cemetery to see

how beautiful it is and consider its potential as a truly park-like setting," says Andrew Monastra, president of the small Edgewood board. "The idea of bringing art to the 'park' was intriguing. It is very difficult to raise money for cemetery upkeep, so we thought we'd try this approach."

According to Art Fair chairperson Bronwyn DeMaso, the 30 very diverse vendors who signed up for last April's event – with items ranging from pottery and jewelry to paintings and fine leather and woodworking – reported the cemetery Art Fair was "one of the most successful events they had experienced in terms of sales and exposure, and they immediately asked if Edgewood would plan a similar event."

To date, as of September 15, 17 vendors quickly signed up for this fall's October 23 fair, with more inquiries coming daily, thanks to social media and word of mouth, DeMaso says. She hopes this year's Art Fair will be bigger than the fall event, especially with the holidays around the corner.

(Continued on page 56)



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EDGEWOOD ART FAIR

(Continued from page 55)

Table spaces will be reserved for \$40 per vendor, or \$30 if the vendor donates an item for the fundraising raffle. Artisans must bring their own table and chairs. To sign up as a vendor, text or call DeMaso at 484-235-7875. At this time, payment is requested by check prior to the event. Checks may be made out to Edgewood Historic Cemetery, c/o 740 E. High St., Pottstown, PA 19464.

Other raffle donations – in addition to those being provided by participating vendors – are welcomed. Email Cathy Skitko at cathy@hobartsrunpottstown.org or 610.705.1017 to arrange your contribution.

Volunteers are encouraged to help with gardening and raking on the previously abandoned 12-acre site from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. – and to take a break to browse and purchase gifts, as well as participate in the raffle and a 50-50 drawing. Rakes, gloves, and other hand tools will be provided, but volunteers are encouraged to bring weed whackers or mowers if they can. A “Port-o-Potty” will be available for participants.

The Cemetery friends sincerely thank Little Italy and The Pourhouse and Jack Cassidy’s Irish Pub, both located in Hobart’s Run in Pottstown, for generously donating lunches for participating volunteers and vendors. Planners would love for other restaurants and businesses to donate gift cards for the raffle, as every item will help raise money to help care for the grounds. Contact Cathy Skitko at cathy@hobartsrunpottstown.org or 610.705.1017.

Organizers also are looking for musicians who would like to perform during the event. They also may contact Skitko.

Why is the event billed as “Edgewood Eddie’s Art Fair and Cemetery Clean-up?” That is in tribute to the handsome hawk who lives at the cemetery and frequently makes his appearance, perching on tombstones or looking over the grounds from one of the trees. DeMaso is credited with

naming “Eddie” and with capturing his image in gorgeous photographs.

“Care for this cemetery – which a few years ago was in terrible disrepair – needs to be sustained by our community,” Monastra notes. “We love to see Boy and Girl Scouts, civic clubs, and other groups come out to lend a hand, and always welcome fundraising ideas and support from interested organizations.”

But Wait, There’s More!

Hobart’s Run has announced it will donate \$2,500 to Edgewood Historic Cemetery, with a promise of an additional \$2,500 when the Cemetery raises \$2,500 or more to match the initial gift.

“Please help us spread the word to vendors as well as people who love quality arts and crafts, raffles, and volunteering, so we can meet Hobart’s Run’s generous challenge and help keep the Cemetery looking beautiful and respectful for all of Pottstown,” says DeMaso.

The rain date for both the cleanup and the Art Fair will be Saturday, Oct. 30.

General donations may be made by sending a check to Edgewood Historic Cemetery c/o 740 E. High St., Pottstown, PA. Volunteers with questions should contact Edgewood’s President, Andrew Monastra, at 484.459.5412.

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FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES BY MARRIOTT

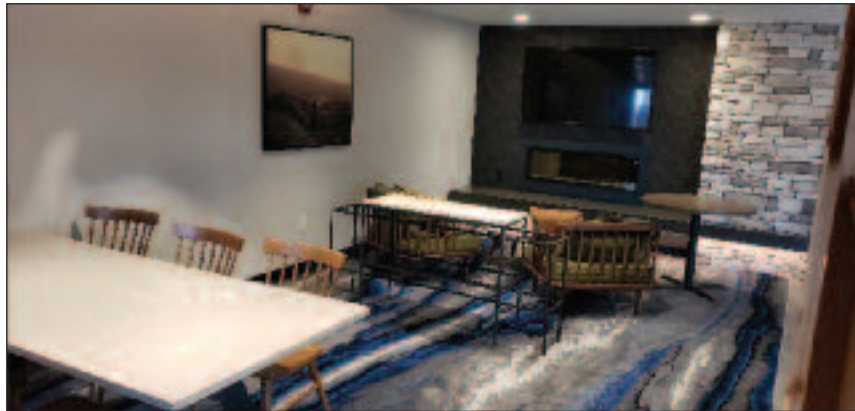
Now Open in Pottstown, PA

Forward-thinking and innovating design with the modern traveler in mind.

The 118-room Fairfield by Marriott Pottstown-Limerick is now open. Located at 99 Robinson Street, Pottstown, PA 19464, the hotel Fairfield by Marriott Pottstown Limerick will operate as a Marriott franchise, owned by Pottstown Lodging Partners LP and managed by Infinity Hotel Group LLC.

Located minutes from downtown Pottstown, the hotel offers a little bit of everything for discerning select service business and leisure travelers, from top notch amenities to convenient access to local businesses, shopping, shopping, like Philadelphia Premium Outlets and King of Prussia Mall, and a short drive to the Limerick Generating Station.

"Delivering both function and comfort, our new design and décor elevate the Fairfield brand, setting a new standard in the moderate tier category," Diane Mayer,



Vice President and Global Brand Leader, Classic Select Brands. "At Fairfield Inn & Suites, we provide an easy, positive, and productive travel experience, as well as the promise of consistent and reliable service at an exceptional value. The Fairfield Inn & Suites Pottstown-Limerick is a truly stunning example of the brand's contemporary look and feel, and we are pleased to introduce the Fairfield Inn & Suites hotel in the Pottstown-Limerick area."

The new décor package is warm,

timeless, forward-thinking, and inviting with simple nods back to the brand's heritage. Specific elements meant to evoke feelings from the Fairfield Farm include a farmhouse table in the lobby for gathering and connecting, photography from the Fairfield Farm serving as artwork in the lobby and guest rooms, natural materials and unique textures featured throughout, and a history wall in every property showcasing the brand's roots.

(Continued on page 58)





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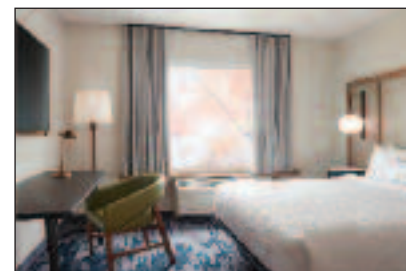
FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES BY MARRIOTT

(Continued from page 57)

The new guestroom design is impactful, unique and addresses the functional needs of the Fairfield guest for a seamless experience. The room was designed with the modern traveler's needs to stay productive on the road in mind without overcomplicating the guestroom. Each room features a modern lounge chair, serving as both functional and comfortable to either work or relax in. The artwork in the room takes center stage with the window treatment acting as a focal point, displaying photography taken at the Fairfield Farm. The material is sheer and allows light to pass through the photography, warming up the room and creating a comfortable environment. Each guestroom also features a work desk, refrigerator, coffeemaker, and microwave.

Additional hotel amenities include an outdoor swimming pool, 24/7 modern fitness center, and an outdoor patio with a firepit. The hotel also has a business center, complimentary Wi-Fi, and a meeting room with 650 sq ft of event space, that can accommodate up to 40 guests.

Fairfield Inn and Suites by Marriott Pottstown-Limerick is located at 99 Robinson Street, Pottstown, PA 19464. Guests may contact the hotel at 610.326.5000 or online at www.marriott.com/abefo.



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When you first contemplated becoming an entrepreneur, you probably spent some time calculating how much your time was worth. Now, you may be wondering how much this business that you've built is worth.

There are many reasons for determining the value of your small business. You may be ready to raise capital by issuing stock or selling a portion of the business to a prospective partner. An appraisal may also be needed in order to spin off a portion of your business, settle a dispute or divorce, liquidate some assets, or sell the business entirely.

Accurately valuing a small business, however, can be complicated. Most entrepreneurs are capable of boosting the value of their businesses by 40 percent simply by paying attention to the things that make a business valuable.

Too often, business owners brush aside valuations, believing them necessary only if they decide to sell. As a result, only about one in 20 small businesses have done a formal valuation, according to the National Association of Certified Valuation Analysts.

You can determine the value of a business in many different ways, from quick and inexpensive software-based calculations you do yourself, to full-scale, certified valuations by professionals. The price range is enormous, from as little as \$15 for the simplest software, to thousands for a detailed analysis

performed by certified pros. Business brokers, hoping to sell your business, may even do them for free.

Try to match the person or method you use for a valuation with the reason you are doing it. If the valuation is for loan purposes, for example, look for someone who's done small business valuations for that purpose.

The National Association of Certified Valuation Analysts (NACVA) offers a free service online to help you find a business valuation expert in your area. Look for the "Value of Your Business?" at Web site, www.nacva.com. You'll also find links to other business valuation data resources and services.

PriceYourBusiness.com offers simple, online small business valuation software that allows business owners to determine their highest business worth quickly, accurately and at their convenience. The company also offers consulting services to help small business owners with a wide range of financial issues.

To learn more about valuing your small business, contact SCORE "Counselors to America's small Business." SCORE is a nonprofit organization of more than 10,500 volunteer business counselors who provide free, confidential business counseling and training workshops to small business owners. Call 610.327.2673 for the Pottstown SCORE office, or find a counselor online at www.pottstownscores.org.

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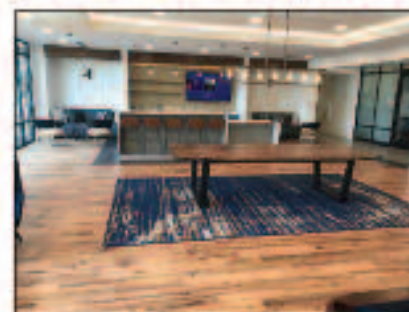
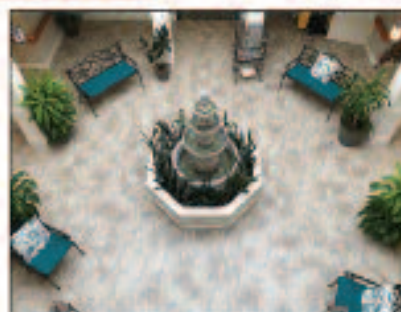
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