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**Joseph Albert, DO, MRO,
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Medical Director**

Dr. Albert has over 20 years of comprehensive Occupational Healthcare experience. His experience in emergency department medicine is an asset to our team. Dr. Albert is a certified Medical Review Officer and a DOT Certified Medical Examiner.



**James Stephenson, MD, MRO,
DOT Certified Medical Examiner**

A skilled Board-Certified Occupational Health medical provider and surgeon, Dr. Stephenson has over 30 years of clinical health care experience. Dr. Stephenson is a certified Medical Review Officer and a DOT Certified Medical Examiner. An avid traveler, Dr. Stephenson also oversees the Travel Medicine Clinic at our occupational health clinic.



**Monica Kwan-Consigli, PA-C,
DOT Certified Medical Examiner**

Monica has been employed at Pottstown Hospital for over 20 years. During this time, she has been a dedicated medical provider for our Occupational Health Team and Pottstown Hospital's Employee Health Department. Monica's health care expertise in both departments is well respected.



**Theresa Cedzo PA-C,
MSA Health Care Administration,
DOT Certified Medical Examiner**

Theresa's 30 years of comprehensive Occupational Health Medical Provider and Occupational Health Clinic Management expertise is an asset to our team. Theresa also leads our ancillary clinic team.

For More Information: Kathleen Kelly O'Hara,
Client Service Coordinator 610-326-2300 ext. 5555

Occupational Health

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pottstown.towerhealth.org/occupationalhealth

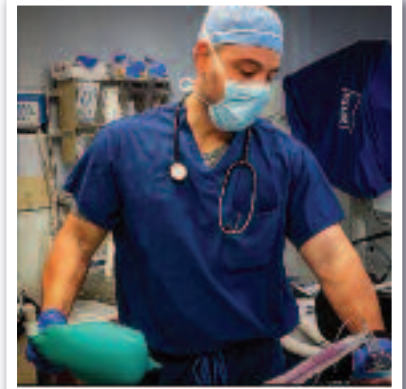
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Phone: 610.988.6060

Website: www.pacanesthesia.com





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Cover Story: *Security Service Company of Berks County personalizes the latest fire alarm, security and surveillance systems for their clients' homes and businesses, emphasizing customer service as well as protecting what's precious — since 1973.*



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To contact the Route 422 Business Advisor:

phone: 610.323.6253; fax: 610.970.6194; email: bill@422business.com

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RICHARD LONG – PRESIDENT

SECURITY SERVICE COMPANY

For 50 Years, Service Has Been SSC's Middle Name

By Kathy Hunt

Whether heading out on a weekend trip or a week-long summer vacation, people want to believe that, in their absence, nothing will go wrong at their home or place of business. Before leaving, they lock the windows and doors, make sure the range, coffee maker, and other appliances have been turned off, and confirm that everything seems secure. Unfortunately, fires can unexpectedly break out and burglaries do occur. However, with the protection afforded by Security Service Company (SSC), home and business owners have assurance that, no matter what event takes place, they and their possessions will be safeguarded.



JIM LONG – V.P. OPERATIONS



BENJAMIN LONG – CIO

PHOTOS BY STYLISH IMAGES



Based in Fleetwood, Berks County, the family-owned SSC installs and supports commercial, residential, and personal security systems across southeastern Pennsylvania and western New Jersey.

This fall marks the 50th anniversary of Security Service Company's founding. Along with his late business partner, Gary Hager, Richard Long started SSC in Allentown in 1973. Long, who had previously worked as a sales manager at a national security firm, handled sales and system design, while Hager, who had many years of experience, cared for installation and service. Over time, the business moved its headquarters and expanded to its current staff of 30, including sons Jim Long, SSC's vice-president of operations, and Ben Long, chief information officer. Although both the company and technology have grown considerably since the 1970s, the goal remains the same — to protect people and businesses including their safety and well-being.

RAPID RESPONSE TO FIRE AND MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

When it comes to protecting clients, SSC emphasizes "total security." This entails designing a system that meets each customer's individual needs, installing that system, servicing, and monitoring and responding to any alarm signal. The company provides rapid, 24/7 responses to such scenarios as an intruder, smoke, fire, and carbon monoxide detection, as well as medical emergencies.

Ben Long said. "Most people don't think about fire, however, a fire involves life safety, and you never know what's going to happen. Wiring may start smoking within your walls, and with smoke and fire detection, the alarm is set off. With a fire detection system, you save your house, you save your pets, you save your lives."

Although some home construction codes require a smoke detector to be installed on each level of a house and in all bedrooms, these sensors rely upon someone being present and alert to hear and act upon them. With a fire alarm system, the home is connected to SSC's central monitoring station, which supervises notifications and contacts the fire department in the event of a fire. The system may also include sprinklers that are likewise monitored remotely.

"There's definitely an advantage to having monitored fire as opposed to the smoke detectors that you buy at the hardware store," Jim Long said. "Monitored fire means that there is a dispatch involved and it saves lives and property. If a smoke detector goes off in

your house and you're not there, your house burns down, and your pets die."

Even if people are at home when a fire starts, they may not realize that something inside their home is burning. "There may be a fire in the attic that they don't even know about, but the fire alarm knows and has notified us. Over the years, we have had that happen," Jim said.

Fire alarm systems may be hardwired or wireless. A hardwired alarm ties into a building's existing electrical system and includes battery backup in case of power outages. A wireless system operates on batteries for an extensive period of time. When the batteries are running low the customer is notified either by a phone call, or if they choose, text message.

When SSC installs a commercial fire

alarm system, the business owner can rest assured that the system will meet local, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 72, which is the national fire alarm and signaling code standard, and UL code requirements.

"Commercial fire alarms are very code driven, and we lay out fire alarms per code," Jim Long said. "After that we submit drawings to the AHJ (Authority Having Jurisdiction), such as the fire marshal. We do not have to submit them for residential settings. Commercial fire is a different animal," he explained, pointing out that, in Pennsylvania, fire alarm codes depend upon municipality, but, in New Jersey, the same code applies throughout the state.

(Continued on page 8)



MATHEW D. HINES – CFO

(Continued from page 7)



To ensure that customers receive prompt assistance, not only for fires but also medical emergencies, SSC offers a medical alert service. It can be incorporated into an existing fire or security system or installed separately. Known as a PERS or Personal Emergency Response System, the unit is worn around the neck and allows people to request emergency assistance, to communicate with other parties and also provide them with your location with the push of a button. Capable of tracking routine activities, it may independently send an alert when the wearer deviates from normal behavior. Should someone become unexpectedly ill, fall, or suffer other medical emergencies, a personal emergency response system assures that help arrives quickly at any hour of the day.

SAFEGUARDING BUSINESSES' AND HOMEOWNERS' PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS

While fires may occur less frequently than break-ins, incidents such as trespassing, vandalism, and fire do happen often. To combat this, SSC offers commercial and residential security systems that communicate using a mesh network. Instead of relying upon radio towers, a mesh network works with a group of connected devices that act as a single network and provide faster service and extended coverage.

“Mesh networks provide extended coverage and fewer dead zones than single router access points.”

“We do not trust phone lines for alarm systems and haven’t used them for at least a decade,” Ben Long said. “Everything has gone wireless — cellular or, even better, mesh networks. Some less critical alerts, like access control systems where you’re sending door openings, go over the internet.”

SSC offers free, in-person consultations for anyone interested in a security system, fire alarm system, closed circuit TV, or access control. “We go out to the customer and meet them face-to-face,” Ben said. “We want to see the property, understand their needs and concerns, and lay out the system in person. We build custom security from the ground up for the user and their needs.”

For those interested in business or home surveillance, SSC will install camera systems with video verification as well as low-light and long-term recording. Curious about who pulled into your driveway or parked outside of your business in the middle of the night? Along with notifying customers when someone arrives at or trespasses on their property, SSC’s camera systems enable them to view images of people, vehicles and license plates from their phones, computers, or television screens. Depending on the system selected, notifications arrive through a phone app, text message, email, and other means.

Should customers wish to engage with the people captured on camera, they can speak directly to them through an intercom system. Whether they are in another room or another state, customers have the ability to know what’s transpiring at their home or place of work in their absence and also do something about it.

“Knowing that your dog is safe when you’re not at home, knowing that your kid got home safely, these are all benefits of these systems,” Ben said.

He added that, with some alarm systems, known as “latch key systems,” parents receive a photo of their child when the child arrives home and deactivates the alarm system. It provides the parents with “security beyond peace of mind.”

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Richard Long said. "For the last 50 years, SSC has operated its own central monitoring service where in-house staff respond to alarm notices. However, monitoring alarms and customer assistance requires different skills. Utilizing today's technology, monitoring of alarms is computer based. SSC programs data, specific to each customer, into the computer system. When an alarm is initiated, the computer tells the operator how to handle it. The operator then follows the procedural-based instructions. We came to appreciate that our staff members' skills could be better used elsewhere within the company. As a result, SSC recently separated these two departments and developed a **"Customer Assistance Department"** to better service our customers."

"This allows us to better utilize these valuable SSC staff members, who have between 10 to 25 years of experience. We have migrated towards a partnership with a professional monitoring service to take care of the procedural-based signal monitoring," Richard Long said.

"Doing this allows our experienced staff to be of additional help to our customers. The frequent increase in technology also makes this additional help from our staff a great benefit to our customers."

"Previously, if they were on the phone with a customer, handling a service issue -like helping the customer with codes or if they need service on their system - and, suddenly, they'd get an alarm on their computer screen, they'd have to say, 'Hold on! Hold on! I must take care of this alarm,' then put the customer on hold and take care of the alarm signal. Then return to the customer and say, 'where were we?' No one likes hold! Ben said. "An alarm obviously takes priority over a service call. They would then have to bypass that service call, not taking care of the customer as a service department should, because of the requirements of dispatching an alarm."

He added, "Handing that process off to a professional monitoring service means that our people, who know and understand our customers so well and have been dealing with them for years, can handle service calls much, much better. They don't have to worry about responding to an alarm. Responding to an alarm is a very important thing.

"Providing excellent service while protecting what's precious since 1973."

However, it's also disruptive to handling service calls. They had to completely switch gears from being personable and handling a customer's problem to the procedural-based role of a dispatcher dispatching an alarm. So, instead of dealing with the things that are procedural-based, they now work on personally handling a customer's issue."

Because SSC's staff already offered customer support, the central monitoring staff did not require additional training to transition to a customer service-focused role. SSC employees have a tremendous knowledge base, one that benefits from many years of working with security and fire alarm systems.

Customer service has long been a priority for the company. "When we first started in '73, we always said that we'd named our company 'Security Service Company,' because service is our middle name, Richard Long said. "Service has been a motivation during the entire time we've been in business."

FIFTY YEARS OF HELPING OTHERS

"We have really good people here," Ben said in conclusion. "Our employee turnover is so low. Someone just retired who had 47 years with us."

What encourages employee retention and makes each day so rewarding, Jim said, is the satisfaction you get when you report an alarm that was dispatched to an emergency situation, and you know that you're helping law enforcement and possibly saving people's lives. It feels good."

For additional information about the residential and commercial services offered by Security Service Company (SSC), contact the company at 1.800.232.2500 or email: info@SSCsince73.com, and for more information, please visit www.SSCsince73.com. On-site consultations are free and coordinated to meet the customer's schedule and needs.

For additional information call 1.800.232.2500, email: info@SSCsince73.com, or visit www.SSCsince73.com

FOCUS ON SUCCESSFUL BERKS COUNTY BUSINESS

GRCA's Annual Dinner Honors Top Businesses, Features Candace Nelson Dinner Winners

The Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA) recently celebrated the excellence of the Berks County business community at its Annual Dinner held at the Santander Arena. More than 800 people attended the colorful cupcake and sprinkle-themed event, which was punctuated by a discussion with Candace Nelson, TV personality and producer with Netflix, Hulu and Food Network Entrepreneur as well as a NYT & WSJ bestselling author. Freddy Vasquez, Owner of FXV Digital Design, Inc. and Host of the Fred Talk Podcast, served as the moderator.

The evening kicked off with Dan Langdon, retired CEO of East Penn Manufacturing Company, being recognized with the 2023 Albert Boscov Economic development Award. This award highlights a person or company that demonstrates a significant investment in job creation and economic growth for Berks County.

The 50 companies that made the Business Excellence Awards in Category 1 were recognized. UGI Energy Services, LLC; Singer



Equipment Company, Inc.; and Omega Systems, LLC, took the top 3 spots. The honored businesses in Category 1 are for-profit companies, with revenues of at least \$1 million in each of the past three fiscal years.

Smaller businesses were recognized in Category 2 with Pennsylvania Anesthesia Coalition, LLC; American Barber and Beauty Academy; and Catering by John Lowe making the top 3. The recognized companies



in Category 2 are for-profit businesses, with revenues of at least \$250,000 in each of the past three fiscal years.

"What a great night to celebrate Berks County businesses and their incredible achievements," said Jim Gerlach, President & CEO of GRCA. "We have some of the greatest businesses in the nation right here in our backyard, and we should celebrate not only their economic successes, but their terrif-

ic contributions to our community as well."

In the moderated discussion, Nelson and Vasquez talked about the highs and lows of entrepreneurship and how confidence plays a large role in an entrepreneur's mindset. They also discussed the importance of personal branding and how it can amplify business. Attendees left with actionable tools that can transform their dreams from passion projects to business ventures.



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"I am delighted to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the businesses in the Greater Reading region at GRCA's Annual Dinner," said Sara Kuzma Stump, Director of Marketing at Suburban Testing Labs and GRCA's board chairwoman. "Their success is a testament to the strength and resilience of our community, and we are committed to supporting their growth and prosperity."



CATEGORY 1 AWARDS

(\$1M+ annual revenue for past three years)

UGI Energy Services, LLC
Singer Equipment Company, Inc.
Omega Systems, LLC
DoubleTree by Hilton Reading
Sealstrip Corporation
Berks Homes
Fromm Electric Supply
Dolan Construction Inc.
Reading Royals
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Stoney Creek Rentals
Grant Manufacturing and Alloying Inc.
Mail Shark
Smith Bukowski, LLC
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Ronnie C. Folk Paving, Inc.
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Wyatt Seating
Champion Personnel, Inc.
Spotts Insurance Group
Fraser Advanced Information Systems
Chester Perfetto Agency, Inc.

Solve IT Solutions, LLC
East Penn Manufacturing Company
Entech Engineering, Inc.
UECU
Levan Machine & Truck Equipment
D&S Elite Construction, Inc.
McCarthy Engineering Associates, Inc.
Muhlenberg Greene Architects, Ltd.
Diamond Credit Union
Irish Creek Enterprises, Inc.
Berkshire Systems Group, Inc.
Unique Pretzel Bakery, Inc.
Kozloff Stoudt Attorneys
Anewalt's Landscape Contracting
Bogia Engineering Inc.
Body Zone Sports and Wellness Complex
Suburban Testing Labs
Weidenhammer
Weaver's Hardware Company
Berks · Fire · Water Restorations, Inc.
Van Scoy Jewelers
Rothenberger Insurance Services, LLC
Cornerstone Law Firm, LLC
Strunk Media Group
Shuman Development Group

CATEGORY 2 AWARDS

(\$250K+ annual revenue for past three years)

Pennsylvania Anesthesia Coalition, LLC
American Barber and Beauty Academy
Catering by John Lowe
Junkluggers of Berks, Chester, Lancaster, PA
D&S Portable Toilets, LLC

SNAPO Toys, LLC
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FOCUS ON SUCCESSFUL BERKS COUNTY BUSINESS



Bally Ribbon Mills Celebrates a Century of Textile Innovation

Bally Ribbon Mills, an industry leader in the design, development, and manufacture of highly specialized engineered woven fabrics, is celebrating their 100th Anniversary. Since BRM's founding in 1923 as a custom textile manufacturer in Bally, PA, the company has earned a reputation for meeting new advanced design challenges. BRM offers ingenuity, technical know-how, extensive weaving capabilities, and rigorous quality assurance systems on projects in the aerospace, defense, medical, safety, automotive, commercial, and industrial industries.

A small representation of BRM's accomplishments over the past century include the production of goods for the war effort in World War II, maintaining a continuous ISO quality program for close to 30 years, and numerous contracts, including with the U.S. Department of Defense, commercial aviation safety systems, and NASA. BRM's work with NASA includes using composite material in the construction of the heat shield used on NASA's Orion spacecraft and structural webbing used in inflatable habitats and flight/astronaut suits. BRM has been praised by NASA for its ability to

answer every specification and challenge.

"As a family business, Bally Ribbon Mills is extremely proud to be a trusted partner by some of the largest, well-known companies and agencies from around the world," said Mark Harries, Vice President, at Bally Ribbon Mills. "Our success has been based on a long-term vision of growth, built around our high-quality engineered fabrics manufactured in America, our skilled employees, and our

reputation as a trusted advisor to customers. We will continue to stay at the forefront of technology for the industries we serve, just as we have over the past 100 years."

BRM is currently hiring talented individuals as they expand and innovate at their Bally, PA facility. Apply in person at 23 N. 7th St. Bally, PA or call, 610.845.2211 (EOE, M/F/D/V). Visit ballyribbon.com for more information.

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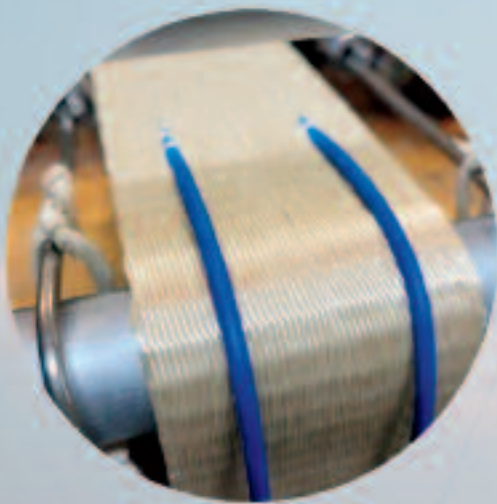


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FOCUS ON SUCCESSFUL BERKS COUNTY BUSINESS

G&T Industries

G&T Industries is located in Reading, PA. The Reading location is one of three locations making up the foam fabrication business unit for G&T with facilities located in Byron Center, Michigan (also location of Corporate HQ), and Jasper, Indiana. Additionally, G&T has two other business units completing the G&T portfolio of companies; Crane Interiors is a manufacturer for marine upholstery located in Woodbury, Tennessee and World Resource Partners specializing in global sourcing and supply chain located in Byron Center, MI.

The Reading business recently moved to a new location within the Reading area completing construction of a new 100,000 sq ft building which became fully operational in May 2022. We were able to make this significant investment due to our continued success in serving our customers — The majority of our customers have been serviced by G&T in excess of ten consecutive years. These long-term relationships are developed through commitment and high-level service by G&T by seeking collaborative development and partnering with its customers. Our ability to meet our customers' needs has made G&T a leader in foam fabrication, being a key supplier to the



Plant General Manager Bob Shumoski.

packaging, medical, furniture, transportation, automotive and sports and recreation markets.

People are at the heart of everything we do. Every aspect of our company is entirely reliant on people. Employee culture is key to our success, our employees are committed, dedicated and customer satisfaction oriented. When real people do real business with each other, everyone succeeds. Not all people may be fit to be a proud member of the G&T Team; customer satisfaction is the



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G&T is proud to make people's lives better. G & T Industries is located at 1025 Epler Way, Reading, PA 19605; 610.374.6700. For additional information, please visit: www.gtindustries.com.



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G&T Industries Grand Opening Celebration.



Morgan Truck Body National Commercial Debut

Morgan Truck Body and EAVX launched a 60-second national commercial that highlights the technology and innovation that have positioned the companies at the forefront of electrification. To watch the national commercial, visit: www.morgancorp.com/ev-commercial/.

Both organizations also recently participated in filming a segment on *Innovation in Transportation* for the series *Viewpoint*, an award-winning national educational program, hosted by actor Dennis Quaid, which airs on public television stations nationwide. The segment will air on 170+ public TV stations throughout the year. To watch the segment go to: www.viewpointproject.com/ptv-segments-morgan-truck-body-llc/



High School Students Earn Credit and Pay Through Morgan Truck Body Welding Internship Program: Five area high schools are now sending students to Morgan Truck Body in Morgantown to pursue a hands-on career in manufacturing—and get paid while doing it! High school seniors who attend Morgan Truck Body's hands-on, skilled welding training program get paid while attending classes for two hours daily that count toward high school credit. With up to eight students per program session, students benefit from a small classroom experience during lab instruction, training on welding equipment, and access to a Virtual Reality Welding Simulator. Seniors in high school who are at least 17 years old can attend Morgan Truck Body's paid welding training program in either the fall or spring session.

Participants who are at least 18 years old may be offered employment at the end of the fall session and earn \$23 per hour working part-time until graduation. Students who are offered employment after the spring session can begin full-time work upon graduation at \$23 per hour and be eligible for 80 percent college tuition reimbursement after working full-time for six months.

"Of the 36 students who have graduated from the program so far, 28 have been hired by Morgan Truck Body straight out of high school at highly competitive, family-sustaining wages," said Richard Dixon, who manages the high school training program. "We'd really like to expand the number of high schools that participate so as many local students can benefit as possible." Interested schools can contact Julie Ubele at Morgan Truck Body at Julie.Ubele@morgancorp.com or call 610-286-2314.

Team Member Engagement: In 2023, Morgan Truck Body held 150 engagement events across all sites. Team members enjoyed events like Taco Day, Easter Celebration, Donut Day, Welcome Spring Event, Mother's Day Lunch, and BBQ for Memorial Day, to name a few. Project teams comprising of cross-functional, multi-level team members throughout the company meet monthly to determine events for each month so all employees can plan to engage in a variety of enjoyable activities at their sites throughout the year.





THE BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS



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- When should we purchase our energy?
- How much should we lock in?
- Which components should we buy?
- How do changes to our operations affect our energy costs?
- What options are there for us to reduce our carbon footprint with Renewable Energy options?

UGI Energy Services, LLC would like to congratulate the recipients of the GRCA 2023 Business Excellence Awards!



UGI Energy Services

UGI Energy Services was recently awarded the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA) Business Excellence Award. This award is presented to the area's most influential for-profit businesses and honors their contributions to the community. On May 23, 2023, the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA) honored several Berks County businesses at their Annual Dinner. The Santander Arena was the stage for the colorful cupcake and sprinkle-themed event. Over 800 people were in attendance, celebrating the all-star businesses that go to work every day in our community.

Along with fifty other companies in the area, UGI Energy Services fell into Category 1 of the Business Excellence Awards. This included for-profit companies, with revenues of at least \$1 million

in each of the past three fiscal years. UGIES is honored to receive such a distinguished award among their stellar peers.

As the only Natural Gas and Electricity Supplier headquartered in Berks County, PA, UGI Energy Services supplies and markets natural gas, liquid fuels, and electricity to 42,000 customer locations across the Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern US. A subsidiary of UGI Corporation, UGIES is a supplier, marketer, and midstream services provider backed by over 140 years of natural gas experience, plus their own expanding energy infrastructure.



FOCUS ON SUCCESSFUL BERKS COUNTY BUSINESS



Van Scoy Jewelers

At Van Scoy Jewelers, we take great pride in being a small independent female-owned jewelry store. As we celebrate our 45th year in operation, we reflect on the challenges we have overcome and the milestones we have achieved. At the heart of our business philosophy lies our unwavering commitment to providing exceptional customer service and a high-quality product. We recognize that our customers are at the core of our success, and their satisfaction is our goal. Over the



years, we have built strong enduring relationships with our clientele, who trust us to deliver not only exquisite jewelry but also personalized attention and a memorable shopping experience. Our dedicated professional team ensures that every customer receives the utmost care and attention, ensuring their needs are met with precision and

care. We have a full-service repair shop and have the ability to custom craft a creation of your dreams. Call for an appointment or just stop in.

Receiving the Chamber's Top 50 Business Excellence Award for the third consecutive year fills us with immense pride and gratitude. We are honored to receive this award and be in the company of other successful Berks County businesses.

Van Scoy Jewelers is located at 1121 Penn Avenue Wyomissing, PA 19610. For additional information, please call 610.374.9330 and visit <http://vanscoy.com>.



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Why Do We Call Ourselves Furniture Soup?

Like a good bowl of soup, we design with just the right blend of ingredients. We include design along with new, refurbished and used office furniture, while adding a wide range of finishes including carpet tile, paint, and fabrics to spice up the recipe. That's how we, at Furniture Soup, Inc., create inspiring workspaces. Today's companies require a balance of private workstations, motivational collaborative spaces, tasteful executive offices, and technologically outfitted meeting rooms.

THIS YEAR Furniture Soup will be celebrating 20 years of helping clients design, and then execute the work environments that allow companies to perform more efficiently and creatively. Detailed planning and cost-conscious selections are key when it comes to providing the ideal environment for a successful, growing company.

Brenda and her expert team at Furniture Soup, the sales & project managers, designers, and installers, have been assisting companies with office expansions, relocations and sometimes even liquidations.



Furniture Soup has outfitted the offices of well-known corporate and manufacturing clients both large and small, locally and nationally. Furniture Soup, located on MacArthur Road, just off Rt. 183, offers a showroom full of new and used office furniture, a design studio of finish choices and samples.

Furniture Soup blends select ingredients into inspiring workspaces! For additional information, please visit FurnitureSoup.com.



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FOR SALE- 504-512 Chestnut St., Pottstown

Attention Real Estate Developers! With a shortage of rentals, this property has a tremendous upside especially for residential, apartment and condo development. The borough also would like to see residential development such as condos and or apartments. A similar warehouse building was converted on the corner of Beech and Evans St in 2016. **\$800,000**

FOR SALE- 268 and 272 Pine Forge Road



10 scenic acres with pond and frontage along creek. 2 houses on property which both have been recently remodelled. Also 2 separate garages. **Many Possibilities \$649,900**

FOR LEASE- 587 High Street, Pottstown



4,380 SF Space For Lease. Various Possibilities. Formerly a Custom Body Shop and Auto Repair business. Space also includes, Office, 2 Rest Rooms, Paint Booth, Service Pit, Air Compressor(s), and an Additional Rear Fenced Lot for parking or extra storage. All Equipment In As-is Condition if needed by tenant. This Unit is on the Corner of Quinter St and W. High St. Asking \$3285 a month. Type of Tenancy must be approved by the Borough of Pottstown. Contact them regarding Starting-a-Business.



**FOR LEASE- (PAMC2041964)
1483 N Charlotte Street, Pottstown**

Unit 3 is 712 sq ft with 1/2 bath for \$1,500 / mo plus utilities; Unit 5 is 845 sq ft with 1/2 bath for \$1200 plus utilities. Various usages allowed.

FOR LEASE- 16 S Keim Street, Pottstown



TURNKEY Pizza Shop and Sandwich Deli For Sale - \$450,000 Owner is selling all Real Estate! Includes building, owned equipment, utensils and fixtures to any to interested buyer. The stock supplies inventory is to be (sold separately). This property has a long great history, mostly famous for great sandwiches. In April 2022, the current owner fully enhanced the operation with the addition of the pizza shop with 2 gas ovens and all equipment necessary to make a delicious, great pizza! There are also state of the art delivery services tapped into the shoppes interface, Door Dash, Slice, Grub Hub and Uber Eats! Inclusions: All owned equipment, fixtures and utensils currently in the store. This is not a 100% complete list. See photos for an idea of extra items. Front of Store: 1 front counter, 2 phone lines, cake display, table with 4 chairs, drink coolers, cash register plus electronics for Door Dash, Uber Eats, Grubhub, Slice. Side Front: Gas double stack pizza oven, stainless steel pizza Bain Marie, Counter and shelving, wash sink, cooler, restroom. Kitchen: Display cooler deli, Grill, Deep Fryer, 4 burner stove, hood and fire suppression system, Bain Marie Hoagie Station, 2 stainless steel freezers, various shelving. Rear: Rear pizza dough mixer Hobart 220 volt, 3 door refrigerator, 1 Berkal slicer, chest freezer, 3 compartment sink, 1 hand sink, 2 additional hand washed sinks, 2nd floor storage rooms, Utility Room Gas HW Heater Cash, Conventional. Seller Financing considered for qualified buyer.



FOR LEASE- (1001359872) FIVE (5) spaces available
Town Plaza Shopping Center 301 North Lewis Road, Royersford
Several spaces available with multiple opportunities for office space, health care space, even a night club! Call for more information and showings.



830 CHESTNUT ST., ROYERSFORD

1900 Sq. Ft of office space. 5 Private offices, Waiting Room, Receptionist Area, Conference Room, Kitchenette, Powder Rm and plenty of storage closets. Central A/C and Gas hot air heat. \$2,500 per month plus utilities of water, sewer, trash, heat, electric, cable/phone/Internet. Owner does snow removal and lawn maintenance.



**FOR LEASE-
355 Circle of Progress
Pottstown**

*Prime office space! Main office, 3 smaller offices, Conference Room, Powder Rm & Utility Room. Approximately 1,300 Sq. feet. \$1750/month plus electric, heat, water, sewer, trash, lawn care & snow removal.

LAND FOR SALE

81.81 ACRES (PABK100215)

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FOCUS ON POTTSTOWN REVITALIZATION

Establishing a Productive Path Forward is Supported by Taking Valuable Wisdom from the Best of the Economic Development Models



**By Peggy Lee-Clark, Executive Director
Pottstown Area Economic
Development, Inc. (PAED)**

Growing up in King of Prussia during the 1960s I remember the early days of the King of Prussia Mall, farmland, peach orchards, and close-knit neighborhoods. Everyone's parents, other than my own, worked at General Electric mostly in the space program. The office parks became prolific in the 1970s and by the end of that decade, layoffs from GE began. By 2000, the office parks were dated, and large vacancies existed.

In 2010, the King of Prussia Business Improvement District (BID) was established. BIDs are special districts typically funded by an additional tax assessment that goes towards improvements of the area and are managed by a non-profit entity. They have been established in nearly 1,000 major cities and small towns throughout the United States, and many major cities have multiple BIDs. New York City has 76. The establishment of a BID encourages responsible development, functioning like "a gatekeeper" and creating conditions favorable to that development. In twelve years, the King of Prussia BID was successful in diminishing those office park vacancies, and ultimately creating a residential, retail, and recreational hub.

Long-time residents often do not like the development, complain about the traffic, and most recently were overjoyed when the KOP Rail Project came to an abrupt stop. Residents tend to have an idyllic, some would even say nostalgic, vision without thinking about how that vision will be supported. It takes people to pay for products and services and if that market is not there, the business cannot exist. Residents and businesses don't have to be in conflict although they often are. Some residents like the idea of retail shops and restaurants that do not produce traffic or parking problems. Others like outdoor or indoor recreational spaces or entertainment venues. They want job-producing companies to locate in town but not if there is a need for more homes to be built. Regardless of the varying degrees of opinion, when all is said and done, people want to live in places where they feel safe, and their surroundings are clean and well-maintained.

Historically, there is another major difference of conditions that supported business and commerce in past decades. Businesses not only operated out of buildings; the individuals who ran those businesses also owned real estate. This made for a symbiotic relationship for keeping buildings occupied and productive. As real estate investment became a way of life

into the mainstream, people who may or may not have ties to an area started buying property. As with anything this created opportunity and challenges. Buildings that had new investment could be updated and reimagined for new market conditions. Unfortunately, it also allowed other properties to languish and to be leased to less than desirable businesses. Those investors with less experience are more likely to have properties that sit uncared for or projects in various stages simply because they did not understand the financial resources that would be necessary to make their properties productive.

With over 23,000 residents, and a 270+ year history of industry and business, the economic development efforts of the Borough of Pottstown are sometimes met with ire from a small representation of those residents vocalizing their frustration with the pace or type of development. PAED's (Pottstown Area Economic Development) role in establishing a productive path forward is supported by taking valuable wisdom from the best of the economic development models established across the County, State, and Country and adapting them for Pottstown's future.

Peggy Lee-Clark can be reached at 610.326.2900; email: pleeclark@paedinc.org.



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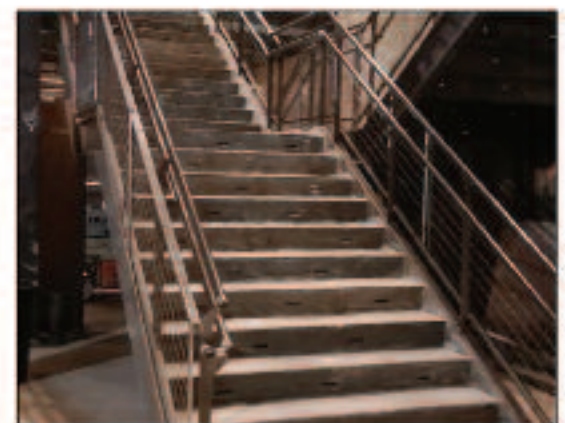
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For the [❤️] of Pottstown

Downtown Dezin provides clients with creative identity solutions in the heart of Pottstown



If you've taken a walk, grabbed a bite to eat, enjoyed a local brew or cocktail, or just passed through downtown Pottstown, chances are you've seen work done by Downtown Dezin, LLC. As a graphic designer for over 40 years, Linda Jacobs established Downtown Dezin in 2015 right here in the heart of town, to provide small businesses in Pottstown and beyond high-quality graphic design services for any size budget. With a strong desire to work with local non-profits, whose budgets are most often non-existent, Linda wanted to give them the image and visibility they needed to be successful; hence the creation of my tagline "advertising and graphic design with a heart."

Linda prides herself on working one-on-one with her clients and becoming a partner/member of their "family" ... their success is her number one priority. She gets excited about what she does, every day. Focused mainly on print media, logo design, brochures, catalogs, newsletters, signage, print and social media ads, and special event promotions, Linda works with new start-up businesses, non-profits, or established businesses that may want to update their existing identity and marketing materials with a fresh

new approach. Linda is proud to say that many of her clients have been with her for over 35 years, and it's one of her main priorities to source local printing and small business vendors with every opportunity she has.

If you walk down High Street in downtown Pottstown, take note of several of Linda's logo designs created for High Street Music Company, High Street Billiards, Operation 143, and the new Espresso Yourself Book Cafe. Many of the non-profits she's done work for over these past eight years include the Pottstown FARM, PDIDA, Veterans' Island Project at Memorial Park, Pottstown Veteran's Community Day, ARTfusion 19464, the Pottstown Children's Discovery Center, the Annual Pottstown Pet Fair, Pottstown GoFourth Festival, the STRIVE Initiative, Love Your Block Pottstown, Hobart's Run Program Initiatives, Pottstown Area Children's Foundation and Greater Pottstown Tennis & Learning. You may see signage for Walk and Bike Pottstown, pass a local bus that bears the takePART logo, or have networking opportunities with the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce and their REACH and Leadership initiatives.

(Continued on page 20)



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FOCUS ON POTTSTOWN REVITALIZATION

(Continued from page 19)

If you venture just south across the river, or a bit north on Route 100, you'll find several of Linda's local restaurant clients, including Giovanni's 724, Gianni's Catering & Events, Los Osorio Mexican Restaurant, Pudge's Steaks & Hoagies, and Brakeman's Cafe. They all surely take good care of the "starving artist" in Linda!

Thinking about a freshen-up for your business identity or materials? Is what you currently have truly representing the image you want to share with the world? Downtown Deziign would love to add you

to their "family" of satisfied clients. Follow them on Facebook!

A Pottstown native, Linda Jacobs is a graduate of Pottstown High School and Moore College of Art and Design in Philadelphia, PA. She is proud to have established her graphic design business in Downtown Pottstown, where we all share the desire to promote positive growth and opportunities for our community.

Downtown Deziign is located at 26 S. Charlotte Street, Pottstown, PA 19464; 484.363.7793; downtowndeziign.com / linda@downtowndeziign.com.

SoulJoels at Sunnybrook Ballroom

On October 31st, 2022, Joel Richardson of SoulJoel's officially took over the historic SunnyBrook Ballroom in Lower Pottsgrove, PA.

After 15 years in the entertainment industry, all roads have led to the new home for SoulJoel's.

Now open six days a week, SoulJoel's at SunnyBrook offers a variety of entertainment options. From Bingo, to all ages magic shows, comedy shows to dances of all styles,

there's literally something from everyone.

Looking for somewhere new to grab a bite to eat? Check out Gatsby's Pub located inside SunnyBrook open Tuesday through Saturday from 3 pm until 12 pm. It's quickly become the Pottstown Area's destination pub, featuring local craft beers, local sourced ingredients and welcoming atmosphere where everyone feels like family.

For more information, please visit www.SoulJoels.com.

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CHDC provides medical, dental, OBGYN, vision, podiatry, physical therapy, medication assistance therapy (MAT), integrated behavioral health, care and case management, phlebotomy, and free transportation to and from all CHDC health center locations in Pottstown and Barto. For time savings and convenience, many appointments can also be integrated so patients can have more than one provider appointment scheduled for the same day.

We accept most major Commercial, Medicare and Medicare supplement plans, Fee for Service Medicaid and Managed Care Medicaid plans and provide a health care discount for eligible uninsured and underinsured patients. For qualified patients receiving a 100



percent healthcare discount, the nominal fee for a medical/behavioral health/vision visit is \$20, \$35 for a dental visit and \$5 for a prescription! CHDC can offer the health care discount because we receive annual funding from our Federal partner, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) since 2012 as a designated Federally Qualified Health Center.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact us at 610.326.9460, email us at info@ch-dc.org or visit our website at www.ch-dc.org.

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Complete Graphics Inc

Complete Graphics Inc is a full service graphic design and printing company with over 39 years in the printing and advertising business. Jim Rittwage Sr. started CGI in the basement of his home in 1984 and expanded to what it is today with the help of his family. In 2018 Jim Sr. & Phyllis stepped away from the day-to-day business and left it in the capable hands of their sons Jim Jr. and Mark. Daughter-in-law Elaine Rittwage overseas the daily administrative duties.

Their current location at 38 East High Street which allows walk in customers to experience a warm and welcoming environment, while customers from across the world can reach them via phone, email and on the web. Some of their customers have never even met them, or know where Pottstown, Pennsylvania is.

Complete Graphics has successfully integrated high-tech graphic design with basic family values, allowing a balance of home and work life. CGI brings this balance to their customers as well, allowing them to forget about large agency fees and know that one person is handling their project from start to finish. Whether it is a project to be printed and distributed via mail, or a banner hung on display for window advertisement, it can be done at CGI.



As the world changes and technology enhances, so do the machines at CGI. We have the ability to print full color or black and white digital prints for products of various sizes and quantities. We offer commercial printing backed by service and quality that is second-to-none and wide-format printing that is unmatched by any other printer in its class. We can take your digital photograph and take it to the press in a matter of hours. From small projects to large scale projects, we are your one stop shop for all your advertising and printing needs.

For additional information, please call 610.327.1780 and visit www.complete-graphix.com.



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EARTH ENGINEERING INCORPORATED (EEI)

Earth Engineering Incorporated (EEI) prides itself on being a leading consulting firm specializing in geotechnical and environmental engineering. Composed of a team of experienced engineers, geologists, and scientists, we offer comprehensive services to meet the needs of diverse development projects. Our strategically located offices in East Norriton, Lehigh Valley, Mechanicsburg (Pennsylvania), and South Jersey enable us to efficiently serve the entire 422 corridor and its surrounding areas.

Since our establishment in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania in 1990, EEI has been dedicated to delivering client-focused services in Pennsylvania and parts of New Jersey. To better meet client demands, we expanded our presence with a satellite office in Turnersville, New Jersey in 1991. This office quickly grew into a full-service branch, extending its reach to Cherry Hill and West Berlin. Today, it continues to provide comprehensive services to the region. In 1995, we

opened our Mechanicsburg branch to cater to clients in the Central PA area, covering Cumberland, York, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, and neighboring counties. Recognizing our growth, we established our Corporate Headquarters in East Norriton, Pennsylvania in 2003. In March 2005, we further expanded our operations to the Lehigh Valley with an office located in Emmaus, PA.

EEI specializes in a range of services, including Geotechnical Consulting, Subsurface Investigations, Construction Inspections & Testing, Infiltration Testing, Geo-Structural Design, Environmental Site Assessments, and Clean Fill Analysis. Our experts evaluate the cost-effectiveness of foundation alternatives and geotechnical data, considering site development issues to provide comprehensive and thoughtful recommendations. This approach has consistently added value to numerous projects, contributing to their successful development.



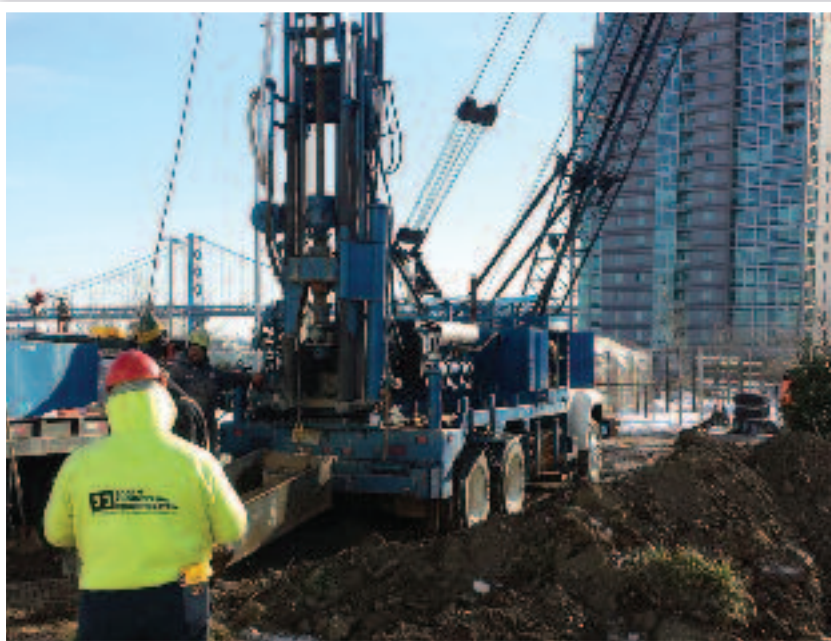
Our mission at EEI is to deliver top-quality geotechnical and environmental consulting services, prioritizing excellence and client satisfaction. We uphold core values of reliable and quality-driven engineering, providing services that are on time, within budget, and centered around effective communication and our clients' best interests. We are committed to integrity, honesty, and trustworthiness while actively working towards building better communities.

In line with our commitment to community engagement, EEI sponsors various important causes, including the Committee to Benefit Children for St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, Family Promise (assisting families with children in transitioning from homelessness to self-sufficiency), and Mitzvah Circle (providing essential support to those in need). These initiatives reflect our dedication to giving back to the community we serve.

By striving for excellence and adhering to our fundamental principles, we consistently provide services that contribute to the success of our clients. Your success is our ultimate mission.

The professionals at EEI, many of whom reside along the Route 422 corridor, are ready to support and contribute to the ongoing progress in the region. We eagerly anticipate the opportunity to contribute to the success of your next project.

**For more information,
please contact us at
610.277.0880, via email at
eei@earthengineering.com,
or visit our website at
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WESTWARD DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES IN DOWNTOWN PHOENIXVILLE

Construction is well underway at Bridge Street Residential at 348 Bridge Street, Downtown Phoenixville. The site, which was settled last year, turned less than a half an acre into \$1,500,000, a record price for the area. The development is a five story, mixed-use project consisting of thirty-two residences and about 9,600 square feet of commercial space and structured parking. This undertaking represents one of the first entirely new construction, private sector

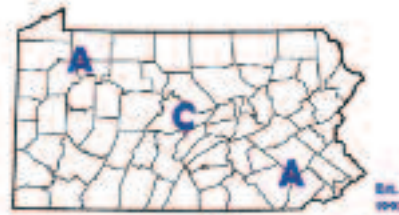
developments in the westward revitalization of the Central Business District of Downtown Phoenixville.

Joseph Scott McArdle, CCIM of Keller Williams Realty in Collegeville was recommended to maximize the return on the properties based on his reputation and vast knowledge of development from 38 successful years in the real estate industry. He is especially known for his revitalization endeavors in the Phoenixville area.

(Continued on page 24)

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WESTWARD DEVELOPMENT DOWNTOWN PHOENIXVILLE

(Continued from page 23)

According to Thomas "Skip" Clark, the seller/developer of the project, "We succeed as planned. We settled all the properties between 348 through 366 Bridge Street without displacement of any of the businesses. This mixed-use development at 348 Bridge Street sets the stage for new mixed-use development to finally occur along the 300 block of Bridge Street. We have proudly served the Phoenixville community for nearly twenty-five years. This project represents the natural progress along the Central Business District of Bridge Street. Twenty years ago, there were less than 100 residential addresses in the 100 block of Bridge Street. With all the new construction there is over 300 today. The 200 block of Bridge Street has undergone renovation to most of the existing buildings, with the anchor being the original Colonial Theatre and its expansion into the neighboring bank/newspaper building. This project will only enhance the great opportunities that downtown Phoenixville embodies. We have assembled the best team of professionals for this project, and we are looking forward to this project leading to the renaissance on the 300 block of Bridge

Street similar to what has occurred on the one and two hundred blocks."

McArdle is a 38-year veteran of the real estate industry and a consistent multi-million-dollar producer with a GREEN Designation and the prestigious Certified Commercial Investment Member (CCIM) designation by the National Association of Realtors (NAR). He holds a bachelor's business degree with distinction from the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business and a master's degree with distinction from Harvard University in sustainability. His master's thesis is Value Premiums of Sustainable Elements in Residential Homes in the Greater Philadelphia Area.

A member of the Tri-County Suburban Realtors, McArdle has an in-depth knowledge in the Delaware Valley and serves both commercial and residential transactions along the Main Line area as well as those in Montgomery, Chester, Lehigh, and Philadelphia counties. To reach out to McArdle for your next real estate need, please email pvilleguy@gmail.com or call 610.792.5900.

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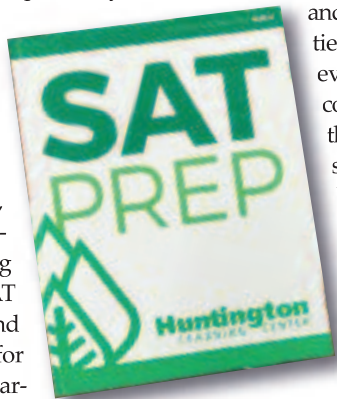
IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE SAT

Provided by Huntington Learning Center

In the world of SAT and ACT test prep, a lot has changed in the last few years. Both exams were impacted by the pandemic, sparking a number of changes (to join some that were already underway). At Huntington, we've seen plenty of SAT and ACT updates, ranging from minor adjustments to sweeping overhauls. Taking SAT and ACT tests in 2023 and 2024 will be different for students. Here's what parents and students need to know:

SAT updates

- The SAT and all PSAT-related assessments are going digital in Spring of 2024. The paper-and-pencil SAT will no longer be offered after December of 2023.
 - The digital SAT will be shorter. The digital SAT will be around two hours long, still testing students in Reading, Writing, and Math, but will only have two sections.
 - The digital test will be adaptive. The digital SAT will consist of two sections, Reading & Writing and Math, and each section will contain two parts, or modules. **Students take the first module and their performance in that module will determine which questions the student will receive in the second module.**
- Even with some colleges and universities being test-optional, taking SAT and ACT tests is worthwhile. Strong SAT or ACT scores can open up opportunities for students to earn scholarships and direct admission into certain colleges or programs within a university.



SAT and ACT test prep with Huntington is an excellent way to improve a score and open the door to more competitive colleges and scholarship opportunities. Huntington begins every program with a comprehensive evaluation that identifies a student's strengths and weaknesses. We feel it is important to personalize each student's SAT/ACT test prep program to their abilities and goals. In a Huntington test prep program, students strengthen their knowledge, learn test-taking tips that will help them on the exam, get comfortable taking practice exams and improve their confidence.

Learn more about the changes to the SAT & Huntington's exam prep tutoring for the SAT and ACT by calling 1-800 CAN LEARN.

About Huntington: Huntington Learning Center is the nation's leading tutoring and test prep provider. We offer customized programs in person, online, and hybrid options. Our certified teachers provide individualized instruction in phonics, reading, writing, study skills, elementary and middle school math, Algebra through Calculus, Chemistry, and other sciences. It preps for the SAT and ACT, as well as state and standardized exams. Huntington's programs develop the skills, confidence, and motivation to help students succeed and meet the needs of Common Core State Standards. Huntington is accredited by Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Founded in 1977, Huntington's mission is to give every student the best education possible.

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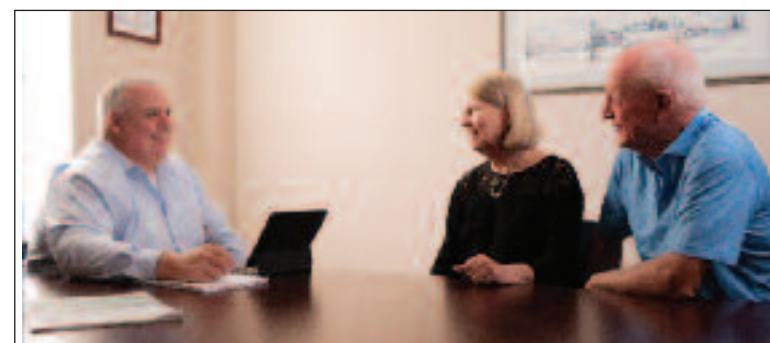
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David Morrison giving a consultation to Jay and Cathy McKeever.

Introducing TriCounty Health Plans

Beginning July 1, 2023, Medicare Education Services, a local leader in Medicare planning will become TriCounty Health Plans. We will still primarily focus on serving the needs of the community with all things Medicare, however, we will be expanding our product offerings to include individual health insurance through the Pennsylvania Marketplace (Pennie.com), long term care plans, life and final expense plans.

In addition to transitioning to TriCounty Health Plans, in September we will be launching a new physical location at 80 Robinson St, Suite D, Pottstown, PA 19464. This office is conveniently located in the same plaza as the Pottstown Social Security Office.



For additional information, please call David Morrison at 484.424.5222.

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Balestrieri Services LLC is a family-owned business located in Gilbertsville, PA providing a variety of services, including interior and exterior painting, drywall installation and repair, pressure washing, driveway sealing, HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and various handyman services.

Balestrieri Services LLC is a new business name, but the experience and knowledge goes back for generations. Father and son co-owners Joe Balestrieri and Andrew Balestrieri have worked together for many years and hope to continue working side by side while making their customers happy.

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Balestrieri Services LLC is licensed and fully insured to perform the services that they offer. They service residential and commercial properties and will always give free estimates. Please contact them at 610.310.3694 or email, balestrieriservicesllc@gmail.com for a free estimate today!

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VIDEO SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT IN 2023



SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

By Theresa Mintzer

In 2023, video is still an essential tool for your social media content.

It is favored by all the algorithms and people will stop their scroll to watch it. That's why businesses should try to use video in their social media plan. The bonus is that you can do it right from your phone.

Here are some helpful ideas for using video as social media content.

- Highlighting important features of your business or products.
- Introducing employees to customers. This is great if you have a service-related business.
- Reviewing or featuring complimentary place. For example, a dog walker could review local parks. If you geotag the review, you will come up on local searches.

Video content can help with customer

service. If you walk a customer through a procedure that can confuse them, you'll have less phone calls for help. You also can manage the expectations of the customer. This will quickly clear up any miscommunication.



A great way to grow your Instagram reach is to make Reels. These short video clips are a great way to communicate quick bits of information. Nervous about video? You can take a video of something else and do voiceover. If you don't have a video, you can use Canva

to make a video out of photos. This is a trick you can use for TikTok as well.

In conclusion, video is an important on social media. The more that you use video as part of your content plan, the more visible you will become. Plus, it's a great way for customers to learn about you and your business so they will know, like, and trust you.

For additional information, call 484.686.2995; email: Theresa@MintzerSolutions.com; and visit: MintzerSolutions.com.

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WHY YOU SHOULDN'T CUT MARKETING DOLLARS DURING A RECESSION



MARKETING TIPS

By Michael Ianniello,
Communications
Coordinator,
beMarketing

Cutting down on your advertising and marketing budget during a recession might be a quick fix to counterbalance any reduced sales. The problem with this approach is that when consumers are also cutting their spending, marketing dollars become even more vital to generate new leads and discovering avenues for new business.

Research from previous recessions shows that maintaining strong marketing is crucial to a business's success as they navigate through a company slump. Businesses are much more likely to come out of the recession in a good position when they do not make significant marketing budget cuts. Here are some tips to successfully manage your marketing budget, without decreasing it.

Timing — Your advertising budget should be viewed more as an investment than an

expense. If your competitors are cutting their marketing budgets, this creates a greater market share available for you. Increasing your budget in these times can give you a great opportunity to strengthen your company's position in your industry and market.

Maintain Pricing — Some businesses attempt to raise prices in order to generate more revenue. Others try to slash prices to help attract new customers and encourage spending. The best approach is to keep your pricing steady and not veer off regular business. Sudden raises or drops in pricing will create more issues in the long term and can give off a perception of an unstable business that is in panic mode.

Consumer Behavior — Consumer spending tends to change quickly during a recession. By monitoring consumer behavior and spending habits, you can see how and where people are spending, and alter your messaging or promotions to capitalize.

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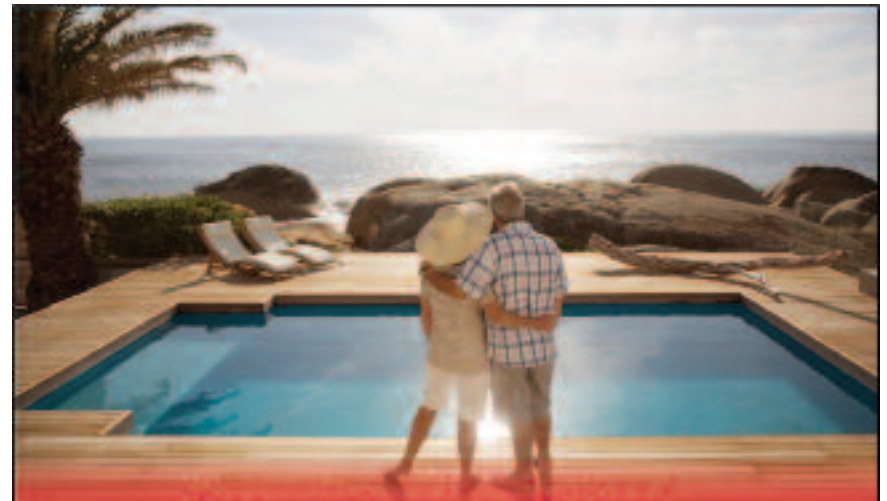
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Aero-Flex: This high-intensity/low-impact workout is everything you need in one hour! Set to lively music, this full-body workout includes a cardio segment for burning calories and a strength segment utilizing light weights and resistance tubing. Some Pilates and Yoga exercises makes this a complete workout.

Aqua-Size: This water aerobics class is designed to increase stamina, improve strength and increase tone all while having fun with your friends! Set to music, this lively and varied class allows you to burn calories without taxing your joints. It is designed for all age and fitness levels so jump in the pool and get energized!

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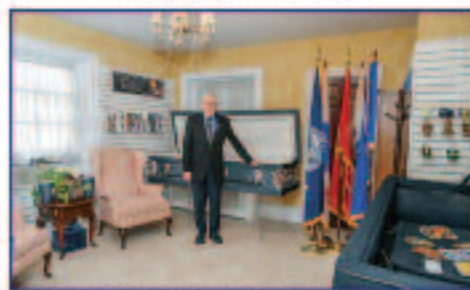
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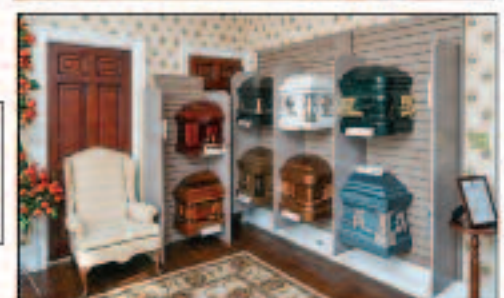
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THINGS YOU MAY NEED TO UPDATE ON YOUR SIGNS

By Phil White, Signarama Limerick

Change is the only constant. It can be difficult to keep up with everything when you are running a business. And in the process, the condition of your business signs might fall along the wayside.

Depending on the specifics, a sign can last quite a while. You can benefit from a well-made sign for years to come before you will need to replace it.

Damage and age aren't the only reasons to make changes to your signage. Read on for a guide to what you need to update on your signs as soon as you can.

When is it time to update your signs?

New brand identity: More likely than not, your company will grow and evolve. Because of this, your brand's identity will probably change too. Your signs should reflect this. Consistency is a critical part of effective branding. Your brand includes the following features: colors, logo, business name, slogan, and font.

Your Sign Is Not attracting customers:

Overall, the primary goal of promotional signage is to gain new business. You want to increase your profits by increasing sales of your products or services. That's why you must make some changes if they are no longer serving this purpose.

Wear and tear: Signs are the face of your business. They are the first thing that most potential customers will see about your company. Therefore, as a direct representation of your business, you must keep it in tip-top shape, or else it can reflect poorly on your business. First impressions are important. If your signage has been damaged, it is time to replace it. This is the perfect opportunity to make any necessary updates.

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Here are some of the updates you should consider changing.

Outdated elements: What was in style five years ago, usually isn't anymore today. That's why it can be a great idea to review your designs every few years to see how they are holding up. You will also want to make sure that elements of your signs haven't become clichéd. Unfortunately, some features like fonts might become so overused that they lose their impact.

New products or services: One of the things that often change is the products or services that companies offer. It can be an excellent idea to change your signage to reflect this. These updates will be particularly impactful if the new item is high in demand. Of course, this will also be an essential update for a business like a restaurant that might seasonally change most of their offerings.

Trading information: This update is critical. No one can see into the future, so, you might not have foreseen the upcoming changes to your business when you created your signs. Two of the most common changes are to your business hours and address. In both these cases, outdated information can directly cost you business. Therefore, you must update this as soon as possible.

Be friendly and clear: In many ways, people have more access to your business than ever before. Your business should show that you are welcoming to everyone. Or, if you aren't able to accommodate everyone, that should be clear as well – without being discriminating. Check your signs for any unfriendly language or graphics. If you cater to families and those with disabilities, say so. If your business (for example, a retirement facility) only serves senior citizens, make sure your signs say so clearly, but in a friendly manner.

Your contact information: In the super-competitive world of business, the smallest detail can cost you. One example is having outdated contact information on your signage. Customers are unlikely to follow up if they struggle to reach you so you must update your signs if any of your communication channels aren't in use anymore. You should also make changes if you've added some new ways for your customers to contact you. For example, did you create a Facebook page? Does your business have a new online store? There are more and more opportunities to communicate with existing and potential clients. This can lead to a significant increase in business if you give them different ways to engage with you.

(Continued on page 32)

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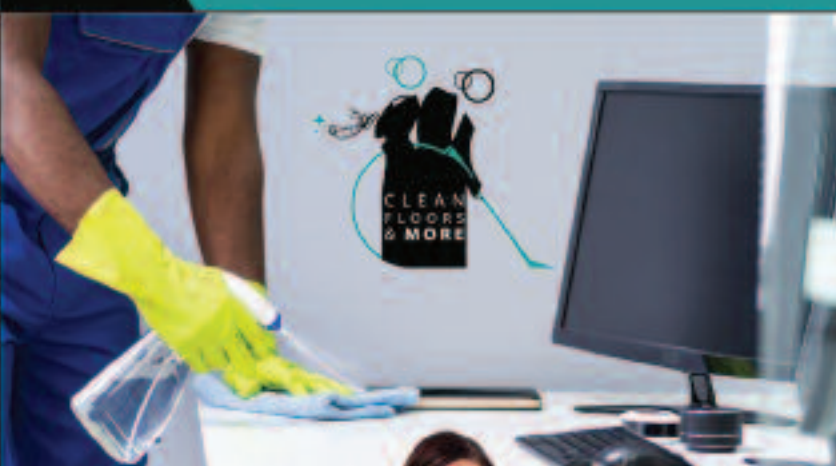


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THINGS YOU MAY NEED TO UPDATE ON YOUR SIGNS

(Continued from page 31)

Rebranding: As we've said, one of the key reasons to update your signs is if you have updated your business' visual brand identity. You need to keep your branding consistent across all your platforms.

Overall, it will make your company and your promotions much more memorable. And your customers will be able to recognize your signs at a glance. In the end, your signs will usually be more attractive and eye-catching, thanks to the rebrand. Remember that this needs to include all the aspects of your branding like the color scheme, logo, slogan, etc.

Stay current: Some days it seems that the world is changing at a rapidly increasing pace. It is all you can do to keep up. But it's crucial for your business that you try to stay on track. This counts for your signs too. One update you may need to make involves smoking and vaping. Your business will probably have the appropriate signs to prevent smoking in certain areas. However, you may need to change them to refer to vaping and e-cigarettes specifically.

Lighting: Another crucial element that you should think about updating is lighting. First, the light bulbs may have

faded, or some of them might no longer be working. Unfortunately, this will mean that your sign will be less visible. But it can also seriously detract from its overall appeal.

Secondly, you might want to change the type of illumination that you use. In the past, most fabricators made their products with neon tubing. However, now we mostly use LED lighting. They are more energy-efficient and require less maintenance. So, you might want to make the switch.

On the other hand, your signage might not have any illumination at all. In this case, you might want to add some lighting. It will not only help you attract more attention throughout the day and night but can help enhance its appearance too.

Optimize your signage: The point of all these updates is to get the best out of your signs. You want them to be as effective as possible. They should help you get more business, not lose any. That's why you want to build and maintain a good working relationship with your sign company. Undoubtedly, we can help you keep your signage in excellent shape.

Canon Capital — THREE THINGS TO KNOW RIGHT NOW

Updated IRS Filing Regulations

If your business regularly files paper returns, you will want to pay attention to this update. Effective January 1, 2024, the threshold of the number of paper returns the IRS will accept from one business entity has been reduced from 250 to 10 returns in a calendar year. For example, if your business files 10 or more of any type of return — such as W2s or 1099s — by paper within a calendar year, you will be required to file them electronically. Learn more here:

www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-and-treasury-issue-final-regulations-on-e-file-for-businesses

Spring Cleaning for Your 401(k)?

You may have noticed recent market fluctuations — both positive and negative — but have you considered how these changes impact your asset mix? Employer-sponsored retirement plans (401(k), 403(b), etc.) offer plan-

specific investment options. We suggest a full account rebalance at least once per quarter. Taking this step will ensure that you are still holding your desired allocation — like if your 80 percent equity exposure slipped down to 75percent — allowing you to sell investments with increased value and buy what is low. If you need help determining the right asset allocation for your situation, our team of Investment Advisors is ready to help.

AI-generated Content: Convenient but Lacking

AI (artificial intelligence) tools can be timesavers, but you must be on guard when using them. AI tools often generate incorrect or plagiarized content, so it always needs to be reviewed by a person. People relate to people best, so even better — stick with having human team members create your content.

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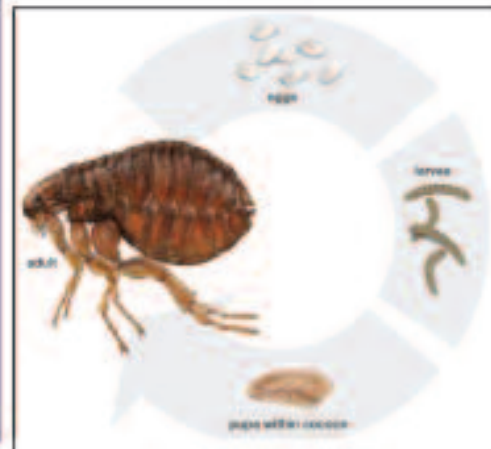
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FLEAS & Ticks



- Fleas are parasites that feed on humans and other warm blooded animals.
- When you have a flea problem, you and your pets serve as the host.
- Just treating your pet alone and bombing will not take care of the problem long term, due to the fleas life cycle.
- Proper preparation is key to a successful flea treatment.
- Call today to schedule your flea treatment before they take over your home.



- Ticks (order Ixodida) are parasitic arachnids that are part of the mite superorder Parasitiformes.
- Adult ticks are approximately 3 to 5 millimeters in length depending on age, sex, species, and "fullness."
- Ticks are external parasites living by feeding on the blood of mammals, birds, and sometimes reptiles and amphibians.
- Call today to schedule your tick treatment to protect your family and pets.



GENERAL CONTRACTING SERVICES IN READING, PA

The Blatt Group takes pride in being a different, innovative, family-owned and operated business. We design, build, remodel, excavate, fabricate, paint and more. Our company has over 35 years' experience as a General Contractor serving the Reading, PA area and beyond!



The Blatt Group is dedicated, ethical, experienced, and service-oriented individuals. We are proud of the work we have done for our clients and equally proud of the pioneering contributions we have made to construction. Our people bring decades of experience in many construction and building skills to each client that we serve.

Those of us working for The Blatt Group like to think that we are not your usual construction company. Our customers must agree. We take great pride in the many customers we serve who are repeat customers.

Our divisions are Blatt Construction and Blatt Welding & Fabrication. Blatt has worked for many industries, manufacturers, churches, hospitals, colleges, nursing homes, private individuals and other businesses in Reading and Berks, and surrounding Lehigh, Schuylkill, Montgomery, Chester, Lebanon and Lancaster counties.

Blatt builds. Blatt designs. Blatt remodels. Blatt does the high work. Blatt excavates. Blatt welds. Blatt pours concrete. Blatt paints. Blatt manages. Blatt fabricates. Blatt knows that you want a partner who can do it all for you.



Blatt Philosophy: It is Blatt Construction's responsibility to develop and maintain an economically sound prosperous business for ourselves and the people who join our team. We are committed to being truly customer focused and delivering the expected quality at the promised time. By adding value and exceeding expectations, Blatt gains the long-term trust of its clients.

We are proud of the work we have done for our clients and equally proud of the pioneering contributions we have made in the field of construction.

Successful projects and customer relations depend on good employees. Blatt has an exceptional team, meticulously gleaned from among the most capable people in the construction industry. Each individual brings a unique skill to the team, furthering the company's goal of providing the finest and the most comprehensive services to our clients.

The construction and development industry had been waiting for a new and innovative company, like Blatt, made up of dedicated, ethical, experienced and service-oriented individuals. We are proud of the work we have done for our clients and equally proud of the pioneering contributions we have made in the field of construction.





Our services are customized for every client. We provide an owner with the service, information and flexibility which meets all the aspects and requirements of the project. We are a service-oriented organization.



Blatt Construction
General Contractors &
Facility Maintenance

Your Partner in Transforming Commercial Spaces

Blatt Construction is your trusted ally in creating exceptional commercial spaces that inspire, engage, and thrive. As a leading general contractor specializing in renovations and additions, we bring unmatched expertise, an unwavering commitment to quality, and a passion for excellence to every project.



With Blatt Construction by your side, you can expect superior craftsmanship, innovative solutions, and a seamless construction experience that surpasses your expectations.

Unleash the Potential of Your Space: At Blatt Construction, we believe that every commercial space has untapped potential waiting to be unlocked. Whether you're envisioning a stunning office redesign, a revitalized retail space, or a functional Medical establishment, our team of experts will bring your dreams to life. We are equipped to handle projects of all scales and complexities, transforming your space into a captivating environment that reflects your brand and exceeds your goals.

Comprehensive Project Management: With Blatt Construction, you can rest assured that your project is in capable hands from start to finish. We offer comprehensive project management services that cover every aspect of your renovation, addition, or building repair. From the initial planning and design stages to the final construction and finishing touches, our experienced team will guide you through the entire process. We coordinate subcontractors, manage budgets, secure permits, and ensure strict adherence to timelines, allowing you to focus on your core business.

Craftsmanship and Quality: At the heart of Blatt Construction is a deep commitment to delivering unparalleled craftsmanship and exceptional quality.



We employ a team of highly skilled professionals who possess a keen eye for detail and take pride in their work. With access to the finest materials and utilizing advanced construction techniques, we create spaces that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also built to withstand the test of time. Your satisfaction and the longevity of our projects are our top priorities.

Innovation and Customization: Blatt Construction understands that each project is unique, and we approach every endeavor with a fresh perspective. Our team of innovative thinkers collaborates closely with you to understand your vision, objectives, and functional requirements. We pride ourselves on delivering creative solutions tailored to your specific needs. Whether it's incorporating sustainable practices, integrating cutting-edge technology, or maximizing space utilization, we bring innovation and customization to every aspect of your project.

Exceptional Client Experience: At Blatt Construction, we prioritize building strong and lasting relationships with our clients. We understand that open communication, transparency, and exceptional customer service are key to a successful partnership. Our team is responsive, accessible, and attentive to your needs at every step of the journey. We value your input and actively involve you in the decision-making process, ensuring that your vision is brought to life in a collaborative and enjoyable manner.



Experience the Blatt Construction Difference: When you choose Blatt Construction as your commercial general contractor, you're choosing a partner that is dedicated to your success. Our unwavering commitment to quality, expertise in renovations and additions, and customer-centric approach set us apart. Let us elevate your commercial space, enhance its functionality, and create an environment that impresses clients and inspires your team. Contact Blatt Construction today to embark on a transformative journey and experience excellence in construction like never before.



Blatt Welding & Fabrication
Welding and
Fabrication Specialists

The Blatt Group's full-service welding and fabrication division provides a wide range of services in support of Blatt Construction and Blatt Industrial Services. Our team of multi-skilled, experienced and AWS-certified technicians offer the full gamut of capabilities—CNC plate cutting; stainless, carbon and aluminum welding (MIG, STICK and TIG); fabrication, especially large components that we also install; design; mobile welding; and metal sales. We know welding because we keep our welders up to date with the latest techniques and equipment. In fact, we own equipment that other contractors do not, which gives us more control of the work we do. We love steel...working with it, fabricating it, welding it, and even creating metal art which we've done!

Our team of multi-skilled, experienced and AWS-certified technicians offer the full gamut of steel welding and fabrication capabilities.

**For additional information,
please contact
Timothy Blatt, President,
Construction Services at
610.916.9828 EXT. 114;
tblatt@blattgroup.com.**

www.Blattgroup.com

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VALLEY FORGE TOURISM AND CONVENTION BOARD ANNOUNCES RETURN CRAVE MONTCO MONTH!



Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board is excited to announce the return of their third annual Crave Montco Month! Starting July 1st, find your craving at dozens of restaurants, breweries, and eateries across Montgomery County. From Ambler, to Pottstown, and everywhere in between, special promotions and menu items will be available at participating locations. New this year, VFTCB partnered with Bandwango to create a downloadable pass to track your Crave Month progress! Earn points for each participating business you visit, to be redeemed at the end of the month for prizes! Satisfy your craving this July at any of our participating restaurants, including Iron Abbey Gastro Pub, Five Saints Distilling, Morgan's Brooklyn BBQ, Autograph Brasserie, and more! For additional information, please visit <https://www.valleyforge.org/restaurants/crave/>.

#CraveMontco

REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

GREATER READING CHAMBER ALLIANCE



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

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

PENN STREET MARKET 2023

Thursday Jul 6, 2023

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM EDT

Every Thursday June-September rain or shine*

*Delay or cancellation may occur if the weather is deemed to be unsafe due to high winds, lightning, and/or thunder. Free to attend! All ages!

638 Penn Street, Reading, PA 19602

<https://www.pennstmarket.org/>

Aaron Gantz agantz@greaterreading.org

ADVANCED EXCEL - JULY 2023

Four weeks on Mondays: July 10, 17, 24, 31

Time: 8 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Shearer Technical

727 Penn Ave., West Reading, PA 19611

\$300/person - Chamber Members;

\$375/person - Future Chamber Members

Website: <http://GreaterReading.org>

Mark Dolinski mdolinski@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11419>

ESL FOR RISING LEADERS - SUMMER 2023

Starting July 17 and Ending Sept. 6, 2023

Mondays and Wednesdays

from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Center for Business Excellence, 49 Commerce Dr., Wyomissing, PA 19610

Date and Time: June 28, 2:30 p.m.

Location: 49 Commerce Drive,

Wyomissing, PA 19610

Registration Fee: \$25

Once registration and assessment has been completed you will receive a link to register for the class.

\$750/person for Chamber Members;

\$935/person for Future Chamber Members

WEDnet eligible

Please contact Mark Dolinski

at mdolinski@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11451>



MEMBERSHIP ENSURES YOUR SUCCESS

Our membership community is represented by over 500 local businesses and organizations throughout Southeast Pennsylvania.

CONTACT OUR MEMBERSHIP SALES MANAGER FOR INFO

Aja Cramer

cramer@valleyforge.org

(610) 834-7975

Scan to learn more about Membership and its benefits!



Connect

Cultivate relationships with our 500+ members and attend exclusive networking events with industry leaders



Engage

Inclusion in all printed publications plus a detailed listing on valleyforge.com and the Visit Valley Forge App



Grow

Post Special Offers and Events for local promotion and receive qualified sales leads and business referrals



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

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

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

Follow us on:



#WhyTCACC

#tcaccbettertogether

Over 100 TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce Members attended May's Membership Breakfast



**By Eileen Dautrich,
TCACC President**

On May 10 over 100 TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce Members attended our Membership Breakfast.

This Breakfast was complimentary, and the Membership was invited to be the guests of our TriCounty Chamber Board of Directors. In January, February, and March, the Chamber Board spent one half day per month together participating in strategic work sessions to review who we currently are as a membership-based business advocacy organization, brainstorm on what we could be, and develop a plan on how to get there.

There were 5 key areas that the Board conversation kept coming back to:

- Grow the Membership
- Attract Younger Members
- Membership Engagement
- Generate Revenue
- Communicate Value

Several Members of the Board of Directors attended the Breakfast and took a role in introducing and sharing details for each of the key areas that became consistent themes throughout the conversations that took place during the work sessions.

Recommendations for growing the membership included providing existing Members with the tools to invite their own contacts to become involved in the organization. In addition, the Board discussed, and we will research and pursue partnerships that offer benefit to our Members that we cannot easily provide alone.

It was also very apparent that through our conversations that everyone recognizes the necessary engagement of young professionals for the sustainability of an organization like ours. We were excited to share that we had already reconvened our Young Professionals Committee and relaunched the program. The Committee continues to meet and has events planned for the next few months.

To aid Members in how to better engage and squeeze every ounce of value out of their Membership, all attendees walked out of the Breakfast with a full folder highlighting upcoming events, and details of other Member benefits and how to use those benefits. It was a perfect opportunity for Members to receive a mini orientation and determine what engagement can look like for them. To follow up on the mini-orientation that was provided, an easy check-off style, online survey that listed all topics covered, was distributed in an email so Members in attendance could easily request additional information on Member benefits of interest to them.

As a non-profit organization that tries every day to run itself like a small business, diversifying and finding new resources for non-dues revenue is crucial to our future. We look forward to being able to announce some new initiatives that we are researching and will announce to the Membership soon!

Finally, it was our opportunity to share with the Membership that we set a new value proposition – “the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce is your strategic business connector. We provide each Member with the **Resources, Relationships, and Recognition** to help grow your business and maintain our region's economic vibrancy and resiliency.” We chose to re-identify the cornerstones that we use to define the events, programs, and Member benefits that we offer. During the work sessions the Board was asked why they are Members of the TriCounty Chamber and where they find value in being a Member. In various ways, with various terms, the Resource, Relationship, and Recognition were at the heart of what each board Member valued in their TriCounty Chamber Membership.

The Board of Directors and staff are excited about new programs to brainstorm to fit the priorities that the Board has put in place for the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce for 2023-2024 and the opportunities that we will be able to create for our Membership.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER!

Congratulations to the business listed below for becoming a new TCACC Member!

4 Point Development
(610) 420-6082

<http://www.4pointdevelopment.com/Consultants>

Ann Frances Outreach Foundation
(484) 374-3091

<http://www.annfrances.org/NonprofitOrganizations>

MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Happy anniversary to the following Members for their consecutive years of Chamber membership:

45+ Years

McDonald's - Pottstown

Sawchuk's Garage, Inc.

Smale's Printery

35 Years

Hickory Valley Golf Club

16 Years

Mom's House, Inc. of Greater Philadelphia

6 Years

Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Reading

Patient First Urgent Care

Stored Energy Concepts, Inc.



Resources

Relationships

Recognition

Membership opens the door for your business to exchange ideas with other talented leaders in business, community, and government.

REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: 101

TRICOUNTY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Join the TriCounty Young Professionals for a Professional Development Breakfast with Headshots

Speaker: Jenna Armato, Growth & Success Coach
Topic: Effective Workplace Communication
 Effective communication in the workplace can help reduce conflict, build trust, increase innovation, productivity, collaboration, and job satisfaction. In this session, we'll explore specific strategies you can implement to increase communication effectiveness in the workplace.

Photographer: Moments by Amy Photography
 If you've been meaning to update your professional headshot, this is your chance! Refresh your photo with a quick and painless session during the event. Business / industry professional attire is recommended.

When: Thursday, July 13th from 8:00AM - 9:30AM
Where: Spring Hollow Golf Club
 3350 Schuylkill Rd., Spring City, PA 19475
Who: Professionals between the ages of 21 and 40
Pricing: \$40 per person
 Includes breakfast, professional insight, and headshots

Scan the QR code to register, sign up by July 6th to secure your spot!



TRICOUNTY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Annual GOLF OUTING and CLAMBAKE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

HICKORY VALLEY GOLF CLUB
 1921 LUDWIG RD. GILBERTSVILLE, PA 19525

REGISTRATION OPENS AT 10:30AM | SHOTGUN START AT NOON

PRICE PER MEMBER: \$200
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- Tuition-based program administered through the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Inc.
- For over 29 years, the program has prepared more than 250 community members for leadership positions in the tri-county area.
- Each Leadership class is comprised of no more than 25 individuals who have been selected for their potential to expand their involvement in the development of the tri-county area.

Scan the QR Code to learn more or fill out an application!

Contact Eileen Dautrich at 610.326.2900 with questions.

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REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

SPRING-FORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE Powered by TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce

• 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

Registrations can be found at www.springfordchamber.com

WIN COFFEE CLUB
August 4th | 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM
Location:
TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce
152 E. High St., Suite 200, Pottstown, PA 19464

Join Spring-Ford Chamber's Women In Networking Group to meet others, share and discuss your business, and have a cup of coffee. Discussion led by Michelle Govan of Govan Coaching Consulting LLC.

ATTENTION BUSINESS OWNERS

Join our **SHARK THINK TANK**

Monthly Luncheon Roundtable Discussions
for business owners only



Next Meeting:

Thursday, July 20th
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Copperfield Inn at Lakeside

[Register here](#)



FOOD TRUCKS FAMILY FUN BEER GARDEN

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 12TH | 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

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REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

PHOENIXVILLE REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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

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PHOENIXVILLE
REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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

The Chamber's mission is to "advance the principles of free enterprise by providing the leadership which will enhance the economic climate of the region, address the priority needs of its members, and interact with other individuals and organizations for the overall benefit of the business community."

UPCOMING EVENT

2023 is your year to *build connections* – find dozens of networking events with the Phoenixville Chamber.
Keep an eye on our events page...



Rhythm & Brews
LIVE MUSIC | CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT | BEER GARDEN
JUNE 24 | AUG 19 | SEPT 16

COFFEE & CONNECTIONS
9:00AM-10:00AM
~~WED. MARCH 15~~
~~WED. APRIL 19~~
WED. JULY 26
WED. DEC 13
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NETWORK 2023
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- Club Growth
FEB 21
MAY 23
AUG 22
OCT 24
9am
PHOENIXVILLE
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205 BRIDGE STREET PHOENIXVILLE, PA 19460

A Masquerade at the Opera
RiverCrest Golf Club & Preserve
November 18
5:30 - 10:30pm

REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP



MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

• 101 Bill Smith, Blvd King of Prussia, PA 19406
• 610-265-1776 • montgomerycountychamber.org

ADVOCACY: The Chamber works for your business interests and the future of small and large companies in Montgomery County. The Chamber works for business reforms and promotes legislative action on a county, state and federal level to ensure Montgomery County is an attractive place for businesses to prosper. **NETWORKING:** For business development, nothing can work better than the personal contacts developed through the Chamber. Chamber events offer nearly 40 events annually designed for you to meet and connect with other members. Events include monthly Business Builders, quarterly Lunch & Learns, quarterly Chamber Chats, Legislative Forums, and four Signature Events.

BENEFITS OF JOINING THE CHAMBER:

Advocacy | Networking | Grow Your Business | Referrals | Benefits Management
e-news | Website | Mailing Lists | Recognition... **BECOME A MEMBER A MEMBER**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Register for all Events on
montgomerycountychamber.org

July 13 – Business Builders

Merrymeade Farm in Worcester
Networking and FREE ICE CREAM!
Registration is Open

July 21 – State Representative Luncheon

Hotel West & Main
Sponsored By: Montgomery County Community College, Independence Blue Cross, Comcast, PECO
Registration is Open

July 27 – Lunch & Learn

12:00pm – 2:00pm
Details coming soon

SAVE THE DATES:

August 15 – Chamber Chat

9:15am

September 14 – Business Builders

5:30pm-7:00pm

September 29 – Community BINGO

6:00pm – 9:00pm

REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

PERKIOMEN VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



521 Main Street, Trappe, PA 19436 • 610.489.6660

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

Welcome to the Perkiomen Valley Chamber of Commerce!

For 65 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. Visit www.PVchamber.net to view membership directory. To **sign-up for E-news**, send request to info@PVchamber.net. Follow the PV Chamber FaceBook Page @PerkValleyChamber.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Registrations can be found at www.PVchamber.net

July 19, 2023 @ 11:45am – 1pm

PV Chamber Annual Summer Barbeque

ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND! Join us for a fun afternoon of networking, grilled burgers, hot dogs and salads courtesy of The Pink Moose, and adult beverages served by the Chamber board. Not a member of the PV Chamber? Even Better! This is a great opportunity to meet the Chamber board and members and learn more about the local business community. A large tent will provide shade and protection in event of inclement weather. Sponsorships available. Please RSVP by July 6th.

July 26, 2023 @ 7pm — Annual Night Out at Reading Phils

Become a Sponsor - YOUR logo will be printed on 10,000 tickets and receive 400 tickets to gift to clients, employees, friends and family. Sponsor rep invited to throw out a ceremonial first pitch. Sponsorship \$425. Sponsorships are close to sell-out; check the chamber website for registration details.

July 27, 2023 @ 11:45am – 1pm

Business Roundtable Luncheon

Join us for interactive discussion and sharing of best practices among other business owners and key decision makers. Member-only event

Visit website www.pvchamber.net
for more events!

You're invited...



3pm – 6pm @ PV Chamber July 19, 2023 @ 3-6pm

A Summer BBQ & Mixer – ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND!

Back by popular demand - BBQ Picnic & Mixer at the PV Chamber office! Stop by between 3pm – 6pm to network with business leaders, enjoy food, catered by The Pink Moose Café, refreshments, raffles and tour the chamber office. A large tent will provide shade and protection in event of inclement weather. All welcome to attend. Not a member? Even better. Sponsorships available. **RSVP no later than July 12th**

New Member Promo!

Thinking about membership with the PV Chamber? Don't delay! JOIN NOW during our Summer Promotion and boost your benefits! Receive a complimentary advertising package, membership discount (extended month), and more! Contact Renee Blomstrom for details at 610-489-6660.

SAVE THE DATES:

- Oct 2nd – Annual Sporting Clays Tournament and Luncheon
- October 25 – ****New Event**** Business Conference & Expo

POST-EVENT FEATURE



The PV Chamber's 37th Annual Golf Outing was held on June 12, 2023 at Spring Ford Country Club. The annual golf outing is our largest fundraising event of the year. We are grateful for the outpouring of support from our members and are excited to report we exceeded our fundraising goal! Special thanks to Keyser Miller Ford (Title Sponsor), Kelly Insurance Group (Gold), Maillie LLP (Silver), 1st Colonial Community Bank (Silver), Marshall Services (Silver), The Princeton Group (Silver) and Cyclebar Collegeville (Silver). Event photos and full list of sponsors at www.pvchamber.net.

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www.skyhighservice.com

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THE SBRA COMMUNITY

How to Create EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT



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

Wouldn't it be great if every employee came to work each day with a smile on their face, full of positive attitude, eager to

help and support the team in whatever project was given to them that day, thinking of ways to grow and better the organization, with a work ethic that was not equal to but better than your expectations, that was liked by all the other employees and management, that could be trusted regardless of the situation and you knew would get the job done, the right way, when the job needed to get done, maybe even before.

I know what you are thinking but this person is NOT you. It should be because the example you set is most likely the result you get. People look at the owner of the business and study their behavior and work ethics. That will almost always set the tone for the company. You cannot expect others to be something you are not. What you need to be, if you really want Engaged Employees, is to be Engaged.

This article will focus on a. The critical importance of organizational culture b. What Employee engagement is and why it matters c. The basics of employee engagement and d. How to create employee engagement.

a. The critical importance of organizational Culture. Organizational Culture is the behavior of humans within an organization and the meaning people attach to those

behaviors. The organization's culture impacts what is "ethical" for employees. It is just how they behave. It also impacts how employees interact with their supervisors. The culture defines how people are expected to behave and what is acceptable performance. Actually, Culture is driven by Character and great leaders define culture by their behavior. If leaders are disengaged from their followers (employees), a different, less healthy culture will emerge on its own. The employees might establish their own culture that may not be in the best interest of the company.

The definition of character is "Moral excellence and firmness". People with character will do the right thing when it appears to be against their immediate interest. Character builds trust and trust is a mandatory basis for engagement. The cornerstones of Character are *Trustworthy *Respectful * Honest * Responsible * Fair and Impartial * Inspired * Lead by Example.

b. What Employee Engagement is and why it matters. An engaged employee "is one who is fully absorbed by and enthusiastic about their work and so takes positive action to further the organization's reputation and interest".

Why does this matter? Lack of employee engagement costs a great deal, such as wasted time, on the job errors, accidents and turnover. Research studies have shown that only 11% to 29% of employees in America are fully engaged by their work. Best case, about 70% of employees are operating at less-than-optimal performance. Would you accept that from the equipment you purchase?

Engaged employees are more likely to be focused on their work causing fewer errors and accidents. Research has shown that companies with engaged employees have 49% fewer safety incidents than companies with unengaged employees. The average cost of an incident for an engaged worker was \$63 compared to \$392 for an unengaged worker.

Cost of Turnover—When an employee leaves or is let go, there are significant costs that the employer will incur for Recruitment, Training, Operational Disruption, Errors and Accidents, The "Learning-Curve", Potential problems with customers and suppliers. Estimates of total cost can range from 90% to 250% of the employee's annual salary.

c. The Basics of employee engagement is loyalty and commitment to being with the company. Initiative by the employee to find ways to make the company better. Accountability to the process of "Best Practices" because they want the company to be successful, willingness to go "the extra mile", desire to learn and grow in their position, competence and contribution. The sign of a fully engaged employee is when they do their best work when no one is looking.

d. How to motivate employees to become ENGAGED. So, which comes first, Motivation or Engagement? Most employees are not self-motivated. They need someone to set the bar, be the leader, show them the way. For starters,

you are the person that will help develop the Culture of the company. You will walk the walk and talk the talk and set the example for everyone to follow. You will create an environment that employees feel comfortable and refreshed in. They will feel safe and have job security with a fair and competitive compensation package. You will meet their social needs by having a friendly environment with interaction with other employees and customers and a supervisor that treats them with dignity and respect. You will provide them with opportunities for advancement, promotions, praise and recognition. Lastly you will meet their self-actualization needs by creating challenging work with opportunities to participate in the decision-making process.

You motivate your employees from within by acceptance, curiosity, honor, independence, power, social contact and status. You motivate your employees from the outside by pay and benefits, awards and bonuses. Internal motivation always wins out.

An Engaged employee Wants to work, Wants the company to succeed, Respects the character of their leaders, Trusts their leaders and Trusts their leaders to do the right things.

Focus on Engaging Employees and they will FOCUS on Building your Successful Company.



SBRA Business Spotlight

The Brothers That Just Do Gutters

Berks Address: 3608 St Lawrence Ave Suite 104, Reading PA 19606

Allentown Address: 1302 N. 18th St. Allentown, PA 18104

Phone: 610.285.7770

Website: www.brothersgutters.com/pa



The Brothers That Just Do gutters is a company founded on the passion of reinventing contractor experience. We are a full gutter service provider specializing in cleaning, repair, installation of gutter guard and gutters on residential, commercial and industrial projects. We keep our minds in the gutter so you don't have to.



The **Emerging Entrepreneurs Academy** Provides High School Students With the Opportunity to Explore a Career as an Entrepreneur

The Small Business Resource Association (SBRA), in collaboration with Career Ready Berks, has launched the second year of the Emerging Entrepreneur's Academy (EEA), a unique educational program for high school students who aspire to someday own their own business. The EEA provides 11th and 12th grade students with both classroom instruction and in-the-field training through internships, allowing them to benefit from the knowledge and experience of local business owners. The six-week summer program for 2023 will be held at Penn State Berks and is being offered to 36 students selected from Berks County school districts. Students of the EEA will learn the fundamentals of being an entrepreneur - how to analyze the market and competition, create a business plan, develop and execute a marketing plan, hire staff, manage a sales team, create a culture and more.

Students will gain valuable insight and

knowledge in recognizing opportunities and understanding the challenges and rewards of owning a business... directly from local entrepreneurs. This interactive curriculum delivers a unique combination

of educational workshops along with internships for greater guidance to

career decision making - beyond the choices of college, trade school or entering the workforce after graduation. The SBRA aims to reverse statistics that

show Berks County has the lowest business birth rate compared to neighboring counties, the State of PA and the entire nation. Launching this program makes perfect sense for the SBRA to help build a stronger Berks by fostering the growth of business.

Local business owners are encouraged to support this program as a presenter, an instructor, participating on a panel, offering an internship or sponsoring students. For details about the EEA visit www.eeainpa.org.



SBRA Monthly Member Shout Out

Members Helping Each Other Grow



www.vrmarathon.com



www.myhst.com



www.salsaburrito.com



www.prudentialpest.com

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Salsa Burrito
Christina M. Baldino
JSH Group/Healthcare Solutions Team

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Marathon Business Advisory Services
Furniture Soup
Emerging Entrepreneurs Academy
REX LLC
Pagoda Apparel

SBRA EVENTS - BE BETTER. GROW FASTER.

TUNE-UP Tuesdays
information. sharing. motivating.



Small Business Resource Association
Be better. Grow faster.

• **Tune-Up Tuesday Workshop –**
Tuesday, July 11th,
9:30-10:30 a.m.

• **Tune-Up Tuesday Workshop –**
Tuesday July 25th,
9:30-10:30 a.m.

Free to the public. Get more details and register at <https://www.sbrassociation.com/#EVENTS>

MEMBER NETWORKING MINGLE

Register: <https://www.sbrassociation.com/#EVENTS>

Wednesday, July 26th, 5:30-7:00

Learn How the SBRA Can Help Your Business Grow – Membership Benefits Update
Wednesday, July 26th, 9:00-9:30 a.m.

Register: <https://www.sbrassociation.com/#EVENTS>

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TECHNOLOGY TIPS

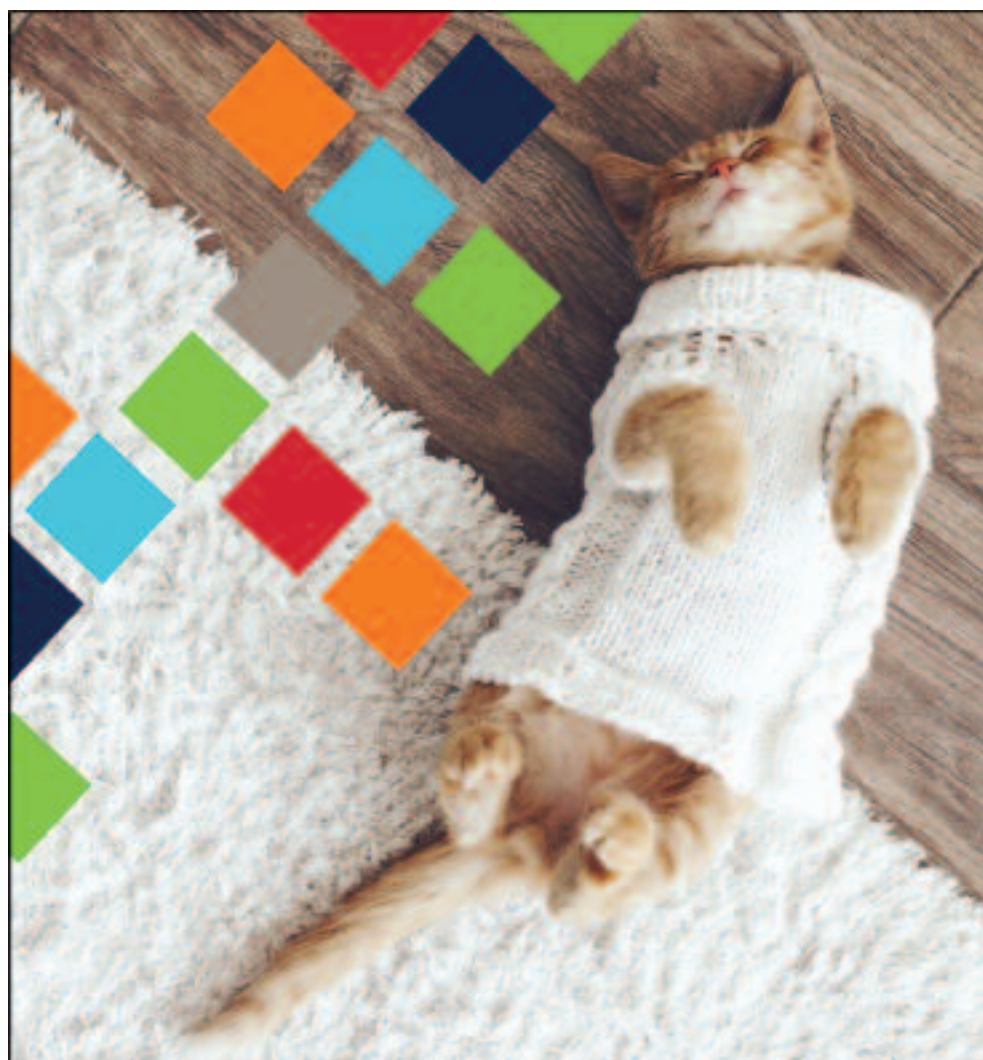
By Marc Umstead, Plus 1 Technology

Summer has arrived and that means that leadership and employees are looking for ways to get work done from outside the office. Thankfully, remote computer access makes it possible for professionals to work from anywhere, any time. This article explores five powerful ways businesses can harness various technologies to minimize location barriers and maximize their employees' potential.

Remote Desktop Software: Gone are the days when you had to be physically present at your desk to access your work computer. With remote desktop software, your employees can access their workstation from any device with an internet connection. From file access to running applications, they can control their work environment just as if they were sitting in front of their computer. The result? Enhanced productivity, flexibility, and a familiar environment that boosts morale.

Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI): Take remote access to the next level with Virtual Desktop Infrastructure technology. With VDI, your employees can access their desktop environment, applications, and files from any supported device while maintaining security and consistency. VDI saves on hardware costs, reduces downtime, and provides reliable connectivity to your business network.

(Continued on page 48)




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TECHNOLOGY TIPS

(Continued from page 46)

Cloud-based Collaboration Platforms:

Collaboration is critical for businesses that want to stay competitive. Cloud-based collaboration platforms provide an array of useful tools that facilitate remote work and team collaboration. From document sharing to task management and real-time co-authoring, these platforms bring your teams together regardless of their physical location. Expect increased productivity, more efficient workflows, and streamlined communication.

Mobile Device Management (MDM)

Solutions: Mobile devices aren't just for personal use anymore. With Mobile Device Management solutions, you can securely manage employee devices, control security policies, and enforce data protection. MDM ensures that employees can work from their preferred device while maintaining data security, making remote work more accessible than ever.

Secure File Sharing and VPN Alternatives:

Secure file sharing solutions are essential for businesses that require employees to access sensitive information outside of the office. VPN alternatives can provide controlled access to servers and cloud storage, so your employees can work together on important documents



securely. These platforms maintain data security, reduce the complexity of traditional VPN setups, and provide secure remote access to specific applications and systems.

Remote computer access is a game-changer for businesses looking to enable mobility and boost productivity. With the right tools and strategies, your employees can work from anywhere and maximize their potential. Remote desktop software, VDI, cloud-based collaboration platforms, MDM solutions, and secure file sharing alternatives are essential for creating a flexible work environment that fosters collaboration. By implementing these tools, your business can stay ahead of the competition and empower your team to achieve greatness no matter where they are.

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KEY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN FIRING AN EMPLOYEE

While carefully selecting employees can help prevent human resources issues, your small business might still find it has hired a staff member who is not a good fit. A number of issues may justify termination of an employee such as Sub-par performance, Disruptive or abusive behavior, Repetitive tardiness, Excessive or unapproved absences, Dishonesty, and theft.

In some circumstances, a warning, coaching, or amended responsibilities might correct the problem. Depending on the nature of the issue, however, you may find the best course of action is to part ways. Keeping employees on the payroll when they are not measuring up to expectations could thwart your business's growth, create a stressful working environment, and do permanent damage to your reputation.

In most states including Pennsylvania, an employee may be fired "at will" — at any time for any or no reason. However, there are limits and exceptions. For example, federal law prohibits employers from terminating employees for reasons of race, gender, age, religion, or a disability. Nor can you legally fire employees for complaining about illegal activities, health and safety violations, or discrimination and harassment in the workplace. Other exceptions may exist in your state as well.

Documentation is imperative. One must be consistent to document behavior, action, and results. Are there witnesses? Has there been a performance improvement plan developed and communicated to the employee? Make sure to have the employee sign that the plan has been communicated. It is always good to review with an attorney prior to the termination.

If you believe you need — and have legal grounds — to fire an employee, document your

reasons, all incidents that demonstrate them, and disciplinary measures (if any) prior to the termination. Having this information on record will give the employee an understanding of your decision, and it can help protect you against any claims of discrimination.

Plan to break the difficult news to the employee in a private setting with a witness present to observe the conversation. If you have concerns about the employee becoming violent, consider having security personnel nearby.

In breaking the news to the employee, one should be straight and to the point. There should always be a witness to the discussion. Upon termination, the employee should be escorted to their workstation to collect their possessions and escorted to the exit.

Either during the meeting or in follow-up to it, you are required to inform the employee of eligibility for unemployment and any applicable optional continuation of benefits (such as health insurance). Also, address any entitlement to accrued vacation pay or sick leave, outstanding commissions and bonuses, and not-yet-reimbursed company expenses.

Because of the potential legal ramifications when terminating an employee, make sure you do your research and consider consulting a human resources professional or attorney who can guide you. Also, consider reaching out to your local SCORE chapter to talk with a mentor who can offer input, feedback, and guide you to knowledgeable resources within your community.

For more information about starting or operating a small business, contact SCORE TriCounty. You can call 610.327.2673, email tricity@scorevolunteer.org or visit the website at www.tricity.score.org.

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MEET THE TEAM

Our team here at Lucky Squirrel Printworks consists of many individuals working together. When you first walk in or call, you will be greeted by Cheyenne or Rachel in the front. In the back, we have our screen printer, Justin, accompanied by Tim as well as our part-time graphic designers, Sadie and Heather. Everyone here strives to do their best and work as hard as we can to make customers happy with our services.



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INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

In late 2022, Daniel Boone High School contacted Lucky Squirrel Printworks asking if they would be willing to have an Intern who was thinking of pursuing Graphic Design. Agreeing, they took on a Senior Student, Sadie, who later became an employee for the company.



Work designed and created by Sadie

"During my internship, I got to see the ins and outs of a professional environment for the world of Graphic Design. Everyone at the company was so kind and willing to give me work and practice. I learned a lot through my internship here and am very grateful that I get to keep working for an amazing business. I am thankful that Daniel Boone was able to reach out to Lucky Squirrel Printworks and would recommend this place as a great starting point for other future Graphic Designers or students interested in pursuing something of that field."
- Sadie

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WHY DID THE INSURANCE COMPANY DENY MY WORKERS' COMP CLAIM?



LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

By Daniel E. McCabe, Esq., Wolf, Baldwin & Associates, P.C.

One of the most asked questions that we hear at our firm is "why did my claim get denied?" Pennsylvania workers' comp claims get denied for all kinds of reasons. In this article

I'm going to go over some of the most common reasons and try to highlight and guide any injured worker as to how to keep the claim from being denied.

When an injury occurs at work the insurance carrier for the employer has 21 days to accept or deny the claim. There's a misconception that there is some Central Bureau that makes this determination, but it is not anything more than an insurance company who is usually collecting medical records and making a determination as to whether the claim is compensable. Thus, within 21 days, an injured worker is usually contacted by an insurance adjuster who takes a statement which is recorded and then collects medical records to determine whether the injury in question is compensable under the Workers' Compensation Act.

One of the early pitfalls that often derails claims is when the injured worker simply does not cooperate with the insurance company. This can happen in a number of ways. First, it's vitally important for the injured worker to return the calls of the adjuster who is doing the investigation. Many of my clients will tell me that they received phone calls from the adjuster but were afraid to discuss the case with them. If the adjuster doesn't have the ability to speak to the injured worker and take a statement, a denial is sure to follow.

Another early blunder can be the lack of medical documentation regarding any work injury. Not because of the lack of medical records, but for the simple fact that many injured workers are afraid to sign medical releases for the insurance

company, leaving the insurance carrier with no legal way of getting the medical records necessary to investigate the claim. Anyone injured at work should realize that an insurance company that is going to be paying benefits certainly has the right to review medical records from both the treating physician and any background medical records such as those of a family doctor or previous treating physician.

Records from treating physicians and from previous injuries are fair game for the insurance company to see. Often injured workers don't feel that the insurance company has the right to see previous medical records, and therefore they don't sign the release and the claim is denied before any records are even reviewed. The injured worker must be aware that if the workers' comp carrier is going to be responsible for medical treatment and is going to be trying to make a determination as to whether a claim is valid, it has the right to review his or her medical records, especially if they are pertaining to the same body part. For example, if an injured worker injured his back but has been treating with a chiropractor for the last two years, the insurance company has the right to review the chiropractor's records.

(Continued on page 54)

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LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

(Continued from page 52)

Along these lines, if there are medical records showing a previous injury to a similar or even the exact same body part, that does not necessarily bar a claim from being compensable. Injured workers commonly think that if there are any previous medical records or previous history of a similar injury that the claim will automatically be denied. This is because most injured workers are not aware that an aggravation of a pre-existing condition is indeed a work injury. For example, someone may have been suffering with backaches for years and even had to have various chiropractic treatments to help keep those back problems stable. However, that back condition which was stable and not debilitating may be aggravated by some injury at work causing disability. The injured worker needs to realize that an aggravation of a pre-existing condition is a work injury. The employer and/or the insurance carrier will likely deny the claim based on the pre-existing condition, but an experienced lawyer can show in court that the work injury aggravated that pre-existing condition and have a judge order the insurance carrier to accept the claim.

Another common fact scenario is that the insurance company, when investigat-

ing a claim, will also often accept the claim on a 90-day temporary basis, using a Notice of Temporary Compensation Payable. Inside of that first 90 days, assuming that the insurance carrier has provided a panel list of doctors and asked the injured worker to sign that list, the insurance carrier does not have to pay any doctors other than the panel physicians. This part of the law was instituted to try to avoid injured workers simply shopping for a doctor who will give them the opinion that they want.

If the injured worker treats with a physician who is not on the panel list, the insurance company may improperly use this as an excuse to deny the claim from the outset. In reality, the only thing that happens if the injured worker receives treatment from a non-panel doctor is that the insurance company can refuse to pay that doctor's bills. However, treating with a non-panel physician is not a reason to deny a valid workers' comp claim. Again, the injured worker would be wise to cooperate for the first 90 days and treat with doctors recommended by the insurance company.

Another very common reason for a denial in a workers' comp claim is *notice*. Technically, injured workers have 120



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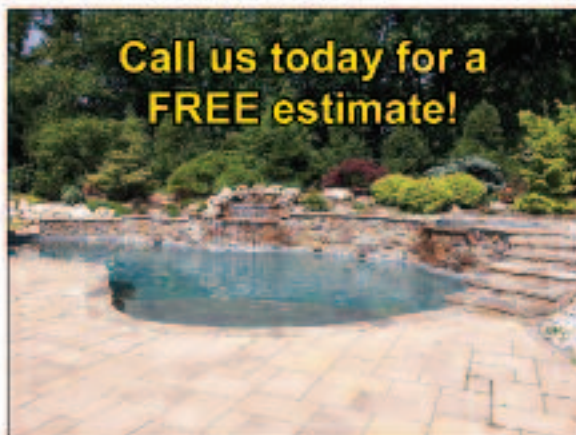


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days to give notice to their employer that they have been injured, from when they knew or should have known that their injury is work-related. This notice requirement gives the injured worker considerable leeway in reporting their injury. Thus, if the condition the Claimant is suffering from is not obviously work-related, the injured worker simply must notify the employer when they knew or should have known that the condition was work-related. The most common scenario is when someone is injured at work but not bad enough that they feel they should report the injury. For instance, in a labor-intensive job small

bumps and bruises are commonplace. Many employees don't want to report an injury every time they bang their knee or scrape their arm. However, there are plenty of times when what seems to be a knee sprain is in reality a ligament or cartilage tear, or a minor scrape becomes horribly infected. Then when the employee comes to the employer days or even weeks after the injury occurred, the insurance company may use the delay as a reason to improperly deny the claim. Any employee who is injured at work should notify their employer as soon as possible to try to avoid this situation. For sure, there are certainly times when an injury doesn't seem as serious as it might be inside of the first few days, but then when the injury does not resolve, notice should be given to a supervisor right away. It is this notice which triggers the obligation of the employer to investigate the claim.

On a side note, employers often have their own policies of reporting injuries right away. However, just because the employer has its own reporting policy which might be different than the what the Pennsylvania Workers' Compensation Act requires, that does not change the legal notice requirement of 120 days. In other words, even if the employer requires notification of an injury inside of the first day it happens, the Workers' Comp Act allows much more time.

Another common fact scenario for claims being denied is when an injured worker doesn't have a definitive body part that is injured. Sometimes an accident may occur, and the injured worker feels sore "all over." While it is certainly true that the following day after a traumatic injury a person's body may be sore all over, the injured worker would be wise to try to be specific in explaining what body parts are injured. The insurance carrier is going to be much more likely to take the claim seriously if the injuries are better defined rather than "it hurts everywhere."

(Continued on page 56)

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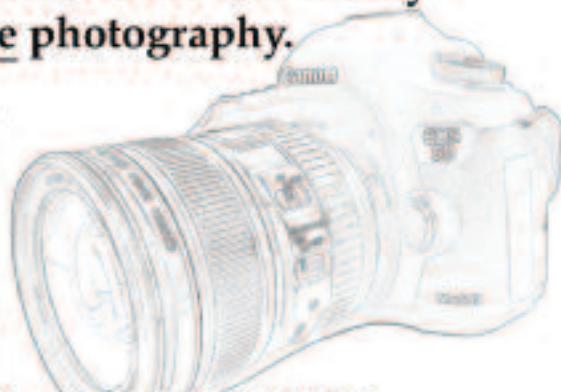
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LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

(Continued from page 55)

Yet another reason a claim can be denied is because the initial injury suffered may be different than what ends up being the injury that could be debilitating. For example, a worker may trip and bruise her knee falling onto the ground, and a day or so later neck or back pain may develop due to the fall. If the initial injury report was only for a knee bruise, the insurance company may only accept a knee injury and then deny any injuries to any other body parts. While it may not result in a full denial, this scenario can result in protracted litigation regarding the injury description. Anyone injured at work would be wise to be make sure her treating doctor knows about problems with all injured body parts. Our clients often tell us that they told the doctor that their back was hurting, but the doctor seemed only interested in treating the more acute injury such as torn knee cartilage. Having early doctor notes which describe all injured body parts makes it easier to eventually win the claim for all of the injuries, even if the claim is initially denied.

Hopefully this article is useful to guide someone through the initial stages of an

unfortunate work injury. The best thing someone can do after an injury at work is to contact a certified specialist workers' compensation attorney, so that the attorney can help guide them through the twists and turns of their case.

Daniel E. McCabe, Esq., is an associate in the law firm of **Wolf, Baldwin & Associates, P.C.** He and managing attorney **Levi S. Wolf** are two of about 200 lawyers across the state who have been certified as specialists in the practice of workers' compensation law by the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Section on Workers' Compensation Law as authorized by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. His practice, located in the firm's West Chester office, concentrates on the representation of injured workers and medical providers. He can be reached by phone at 610.436.8300, or by e-mail at dmc-cabe@wolfbaldwin.com.

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By Barry Cassidy

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The committee started by establishing The Downingtown Resilience Fund. The fund is organized to aid and relieve human suffering caused by a natural or civil disaster or an emergency hardship. It is a charity in its most basic form. It will be a central point for contributions to be distributed to those impacted by the floods. They established the area as Downingtown, Caln, and East Caln, constituting the sub-catchment area.

The appropriate aid type depends on the individual's needs and resources. Immediately following a devastating flood, a family may need food, clothing, and shelter, regardless of their financial resources. However, they may not require long-term assistance without adequate financial resources. Individuals who are financially needy or otherwise distressed are appropriate recipients of long-term assistance.

Financial need and distress may arise through a variety of circumstances.

Aid is considered for individuals and families who are:

- Temporarily in need of food or shelter when stranded, injured, or lost because of a disaster.
- In need of longer-term assistance with housing, childcare, or educational expenses.
- In need of counseling because of

trauma experienced as a result of a disaster.

Disaster assistance may also be provided to businesses to achieve the following charitable purposes:

- To aid individual business owners who are financially needy or otherwise distressed.
- To augment government funding.
- To aid in restoring the Downingtown area's overall well being.

The group then established the neighborhood model for disaster response. Current disaster recovery models are often planned, executed, and staffed by individuals without specific knowledge of the most marginalized populations in a disaster area. At the same time, communities are often undervalued or ignored in favor of one-size-fits-all disaster strategies.

Recovery efforts will be led by the community-based nonprofit "Downingtown Strong." This organization is already connected to neighborhood survivors and is naturally situated to lead to:

1. Take on more responsibility to assist one another.
2. Share information.
3. Reinforce opinions on recovery strategies throughout the disaster recovery process.

(Continued on page 60)



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DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

(Continued from page 59)

4. Allow state and local government officials to learn about community needs.

5. Disseminate supplies and information.

6. Design recovery and mitigation strategies concerning flood map revisions.

7. Integrate with municipal disaster response to maximize the benefits of both.

8. Education and training to be provided to recovery workers, allowing them to gain credibility among community members.

9. Be recognized as a major asset in ensuring shelter and care for displaced survivors during post-disaster recovery.

This local model merging donation funding with a use determined by the community that includes a program delivery will enable the Borough to control their destiny. The mayor also sits on the Flood Committee, which has partnered with Caln and East Caln Townships to develop a mitigation plan to serve the area.

Only through combined efforts and citizen action will these kinds of disasters serve the community's interest. FEMA

offers training classes, and a cadre of people in the area will take the training to enable people to navigate the system.

I sat in the council meeting when people came in and cried because the FEMA process hampered them. In my work, I found that the FEMA process is somewhat daunting. I do service delivery for a living, and when I am perplexed about the path to recovery, I know it isn't easy.

I am not saying that FEMA is bad, but the rules and regulations are complex. I had to request the manual to understand what was happening fully. Funding opens and closes, and it is easy to become confused.

Downingtown will most likely have another catastrophic flood in the next ten years. I have seen three in 20 years as a resident. Having people trained and mechanisms in place to be implemented on a local level will make the flood response more targeted and more fruitful to those impacted.

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

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Pottstown Hospital Ranks Top 10 Percent Nationally as Healthgrades 2023 Patient Safety Excellence Award™ Recipient

Pottstown Hospital-Tower Health announced it has been recognized by Healthgrades as a 2023 Patient Safety Excellence Award™ recipient. This distinction places Pottstown Hospital among the top ten percent of all short-term acute care hospitals as evaluated by Healthgrades, the leading marketplace connecting patients and providers.

"Pottstown Hospital's dedication to clinical quality and patient care over the past three years in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic never wavered," states Rich Newell, CEO of Phoenixville Hospital and Pottstown Hospital. He adds, "Patient safety remains a top priority to all staff, and I commend the hospital staff on achieving this award."

During the 2019-2021 study period, Healthgrades found that just four patient safety indicators accounted for 74 percent of all patient safety events. The Healthgrades Patient Safety Excellence Award is based on an analysis of inpatient MedPAR data that measures clinical performance across 14 patient safety indicators. To be eligible for the award, hospitals must meet certain clinical quality thresholds, have zero instances in which a foreign object was left behind during a procedure, and have data on at least seven out of eight core Patient Safety Indicators.

Healthgrades' analysis revealed that patients treated at recipient hospitals are less likely to experience the following safety events than patients treated at non-recipient hospitals:

- In-hospital fall resulting in hip fracture (61.6 percent less likely)



- Collapsed lung due to a procedure or surgery in or around the chest (52.7 percent)
- Pressure sores or bed sores acquired in the hospital (66.1 percent)
- Catheter-related bloodstream infections (67.3 percent)

"Through our 2023 Patient Safety Excellence Awards, we seek to recognize hospitals that excel in providing top-quality care for their patients while preventing serious injuries during hospital stays," said Brad Bowman, MD, Chief Medical Officer, and head of Data Science, Healthgrades. "We are proud to name Pottstown Hospital as a 2023 Patient Safety Excellence Award recipient and look forward to their continued efforts to make patient safety a top priority."

Consumers can visit [healthgrades.com](https://www.healthgrades.com) for more information on how Healthgrades measures hospital quality and access the complete methodology.

*Statistics are calculated from Healthgrades Patient Safety Ratings and Excellence Award methodology which is based primarily on AHRQ technical specifications (Version 2022.0.1) for MedPAR data years 2019 through 2021 and represent three-year estimates for Medicare patients only.

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Located in Pottstown, Pa., and a member of Tower Health, Pottstown Hospital is a 213-bed hospital that offers a full range of health services, including inpatient and outpatient, medical and surgical, and diagnostic and emergency care. Accredited by The Joint Commission, Pottstown Hospital has been recognized for its quality outcomes and clinical expertise across many service lines. The Hospital is Joint Commission-certified for hip and knee replacement and is also an accredited Chest Pain Center. Recently, Pottstown Hospital was recognized as a recipient of Get with the Guidelines/American Heart Association/American Stroke Association—Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award with Honor Roll Elite and Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll. The Cancer Center at Pottstown Hospital is also nationally recognized, bringing over a decade of award-winning care to our region. The Pottstown Hospital Emergency Department, a Primary Stroke Center, is the second busiest in Montgomery County, seeing more than 45,000 patients a year. For more information, please visit towerhealth.org.



ABOUT HEALTHGRADES:

Healthgrades is dedicated to empowering stronger and more meaningful connections between patients and their healthcare providers. As the #1 platform for finding a doctor and a leader in healthcare transparency, we help millions of consumers each month find and schedule appointments with their healthcare professional of choice and prepare for their appointments with best-in-class, treatment-focused content.

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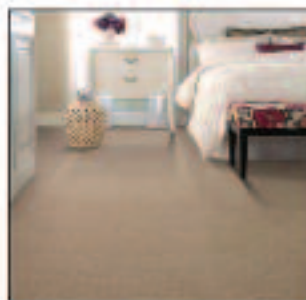
Healthgrades is part of RVO Health, a partnership between Red Ventures and Optum, part of UnitedHealth Group. RVO Health has the largest consumer health and wellness audience online across its brand portfolio including Healthgrades, Healthline, Medical News Today, Greatist, Psych Central, Bezzly and Platejoy which touch every part of the health and wellness journey. Each month, RVO Health helps more than 100 million unique visitors live their strongest and healthiest lives.

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Planning is an ongoing necessity because the environment in which your small business operates continually changes. New opportunities and challenges will arise that are different than those assessed during the start-up stage. Your initial financial projections may be literally and figuratively on the money—or trending in a different and unexpected direction.

Here are some planning tips to help keep your small business on track for long-term growth:

Revisit your business plan. Your business plan shouldn't become a "trophy" of your start-up success. Refer to it every quarter or six months to match estimates with current realities. Update your plan as needed with new or modified contingencies, and adjusted time frames for key milestones such as expansions or new product/service lines.

Watch those numbers. Financial statements provide a window into the health of your business. Project cash flow several months into the future based on reasonable expectations for sales and income, customer demand, regular payments (e.g. loans and rent), and other factors. By comparing actual cash flow to projections, you can spot opportunities to improve performance.

Watch your industry. In today's interconnected global economy, any change anywhere can have a ripple effect on any small business. The influences may be as far-reaching as a shift in demand for a certain commodity, or as local as a new spotlight near your store. Stay current with world and community events; study your sales records; and communicate with customers, suppliers, and colleagues. You'll be less susceptible to surprises, and better prepared to anticipate and capitalize on these changes.

Develop relationships. Although growth usually implies investing in additional resources, there may be more cost-effective options better suited to your immediate and long-term needs. Building partnerships with other businesses in your field and specialty consultants can help stretch your capabilities. They may also call on you when they need help—perhaps during a period when you have time or capacity to spare.

Invest in your staff. Because a growing business will demand more of your time, identify employees who can take on routine and management responsibilities. They'll relish the opportunity to grow personally and professionally, and you'll be free to focus on more important issues.

An experienced, outside perspective can benefit any small business, which is it's a good idea to contact SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business." Call 610.327.2673 for the Pottstown SCORE office, or visit www.pottstownscore.org.

Since 1964, SCORE "Mentors to America's Small Business" has helped more than 10 million aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners through mentoring and business workshops. More than 11,000 volunteer business mentors in over 320 chapters serve their communities through entrepreneur education dedicated to the formation, growth and success of small businesses. For more information about starting or operating a small business, contact SCORE. You can call 610.327.2673, email or visit the website at www.pottstownscore.org.

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SURGING CHILD LABOR VIOLATIONS PROMPT LEGISLATIVE ACTION



By Christina Lengyel, The Center Square

Amid a worsening workforce shortage, more employers – both across the state and the country – may set aside child labor laws as a solution, officials say. The alarming trend prompted lawmakers on the PA House Labor and Industry Committee to advance legislation that would double penalties for these violations: \$1,000 for first-time offenders and up to \$3,000 for repeated incidents.

“When the fines are too low, they are seen as just another cost of doing business,” said the bill’s sponsor, Rep. Regina Young, D-Philadelphia.

Mirroring federal trends which have shown a staggering 283 percent increase in violations since 2015, the state Department of Labor and Industry has noted an uptick in child labor complaints this year. The numbers suggest that – in the face of staffing shortages – employers have indeed begun to look at these violations as a calculated risk.

Several recent exposes have brought to light the prevalence of minors working in harsh conditions, conjuring images from America’s industrial past. Young de-

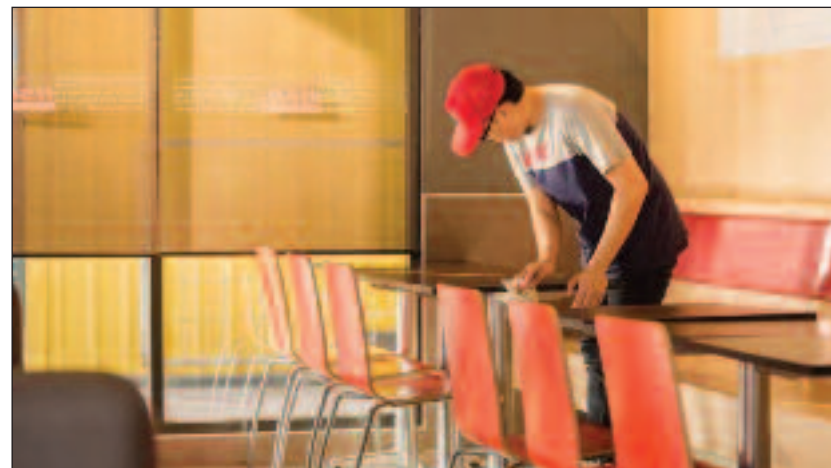
scribed instances of violations within the state, including a 17-year-old who fell 24 feet from a roof, and 154 children – all 14- or 15-years-old – working illegally for a single McDonald’s franchise owner in Erie and Warren Counties.

Despite unanimous support, the legislation didn’t come without its concerns.

Majority Committee Chairman Jason Dawkins, D-Philadelphia, said the department’s investigators are not currently mandatory reporters, nor do they have the training to make these determinations.

“Suspicion, as we all know, can be an awfully low bar to trigger a requirement to report,” he said.

Minority Chairman Rep. Ryan MacKen-



zie, R-Macungie, also noted that different types of child labor require different responses. The exploitation of unaccompanied migrant children, he said, differs from a high schooler working a few extra hours at a miniature golf course throughout the week.

“These unaccompanied minors, sometimes 12 or 13 years old, have been found cleaning slaughterhouses at night, working in factories, or doing other dangerous prohibited occupations,” Mackenzie said.

He offered an amendment that would add a misdemeanor offense “if the violation was willful and the person knew or reasonably should have known that the minor was without proper parental care, supervision, and control.”

A second provision required reporting to ICE when an employer is suspected of violating federal law regarding undocumented immigrants. Child welfare authorities would also be notified if the victim is a child or there is suspicion of abuse.

Young criticized Mackenzie’s amendment for wading into the polarizing politics of immigration policy and enforcement.

“Children are children,” she said.

The amendment failed along a party-line vote, as did a second proposal establishing an annual reporting requirement to the legislature. The bill then advanced to the House floor for further consideration.

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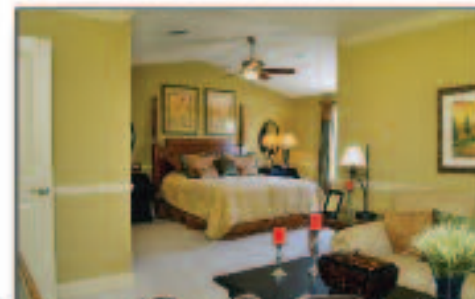
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Muhlenberg Greene Architects Welcomes New Design Technician

MG Architects recently announced that Jacob M. Sockel has joined their firm as Design Technician II.

Jacob will assist the firm's Architects and Project Managers with all phases of design documentation and construction contract administration, develop detailed 3D/BIM models and will create construction documents and schedules from those models. He will also assist Project Managers with construction phase contract administration.

The Design Technician II title recognizes Jacob's professional abilities, creative skills, excellent track record with the firm, and confidence that Firm Principals, Scott Graham, AIA, Bob Conklin, AIA, and Jim Sarro, AIA have in him.

Mr. Sockel is an Associate Member of the American Institute of Architects and is working towards the licensure process in the field of architecture.

Previously employed by the firm for two years as a summer intern, Jacob has been documenting his real-world experience via the industry-standard Architectural Experience Program® (AXP®). Developed by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) and required by most U.S. licensing boards, the AXP provides a framework to guide emerging designers through earning and reporting their professional experience.

Earning a Bachelor of Architecture degree in 2023 from Marywood University School of Architecture, Mr. Sockel is a graduate of Berks Catholic High School, and currently lives in Reading, PA.



Jacob M. Sockel

Jacob will work out of the firm's Wyomissing office, but as customary, he will support projects throughout the firm's service area, including eight states (Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Maryland, South Carolina, Virginia, Vermont) and the District of Columbia.

MG Architects has been providing design, planning, and construction administration services for this area and surrounding states for over 100 years. The firm participates in projects, initiatives and events which nurture local workforce development and provide opportunities for architectural professionals at all stages of their career. We believe that it is our professional responsibility as leaders to provide encouragement, mentoring, and assistance for young architects to gain the broad experience required on their path to licensure. Welcome to the team Jacob!



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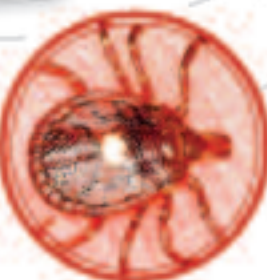
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