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**Joseph Albert, DO, MRO,
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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

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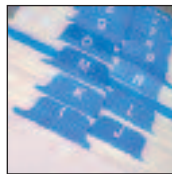
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Cover Story: For more than 50 years, locally-owned CJ's Tires & Automotive has been keeping cars and trucks road-worthy while making automotive maintenance "better, faster, more affordable" with customer safety and satisfaction being the top priority.



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Focus on Education – Profiles of two schools for early childhood development.



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... AND MORE!

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CJ's Tire & Automotive



By Kathy Hunt

Companies and consumers often cite the term “good customer service” as something that they seek to achieve. With articles, books, podcasts, and classes devoted to this topic, it has become a universally desired experience. So, what exactly is customer service and what makes for a good or bad customer service experience? In a July 2023 article, *Forbes* magazine defined it as “the support and assistance given before, during and after customers purchase a product or service.” The article broke down the essentials of customer service, including interacting with customers, answering questions, and resolving issues and complaints. As obvious and straightforward as those tasks may sound, some businesses struggle to carry them out. Failure to do so can have dire results. In 2020, *Forbes* carried out a study indicating that 96 percent of customers would stop shopping at or using a business if they found better customer service elsewhere.



PHOTOS BY STYLISH IMAGES



One company that doesn't fumble with customer interactions is the independently owned and operated CJ's Tire & Automotive. Headquartered in Birdsboro, Berks County, this family-run business has made exemplary customer service a top priority since 1971. Paul "Skip" Levensgood Sr. started CJ's with the belief that people should receive better customer service than what he had experienced at local tire shops. Today, Levensgood Sr. serves as the chair of CJ's, while his son Paul and grandson Haley focus on day-to-day operations.

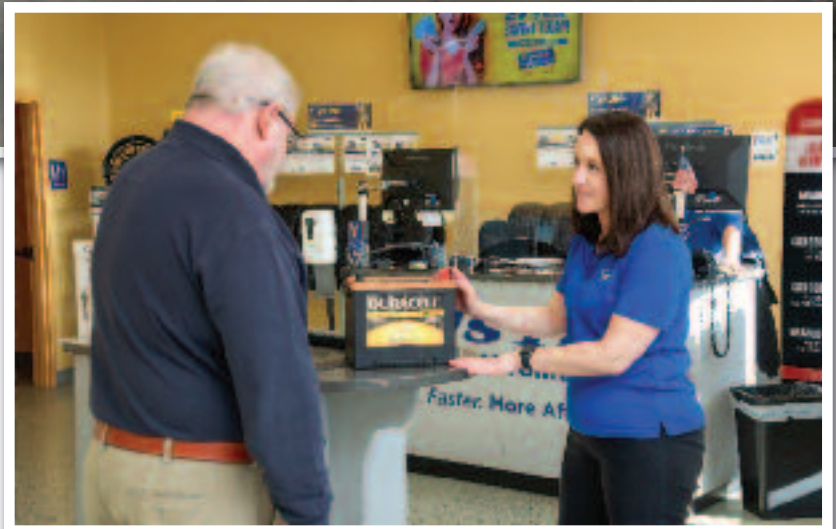
MISSION TO TREAT CUSTOMERS RIGHT

Customer service was so important to Levensgood Sr. that he included it as part of CJ's mission statement.

"We break the mission statement down into three parts," explains Leanne Bolger, CJ's Sr. Director of Marketing. "The first is to provide excellent customer service. We are dedicated to doing this." Bolger replaced Bill Bainbridge, vice president of marketing and business development, who recently retired.

Bolger noted that CJ's has several staff members who devote their time to responding to online reviews on Google, Yelp, and other sites, answering customer questions and addressing issues. "We have an internal process we use to investigate reviews that are under five stars or indicate customers are unhappy," she said. "We will reach out to these customers directly and try to rectify the situation. We train our employees to see an issue as an opportunity to be better."

To further enhance customer experience, CJ's features a "customer touch point" at each of its 17 retail locations in Berks, Chester, Montgomery, and Lancaster Counties. It has tried to eliminate desks, replacing them with pods that are more approachable and visitor friendly, and it requires staff to greet every person who enters one of its locations. Before interacting with consumers, sales staff are trained on the latest tire and automotive technology so that they can pass this education and advice along to customers. The staff works to ensure that anyone visiting CJ's feels not only welcomed but also valued.



BOOSTING CUSTOMER SERVICE THROUGH REWARDS PROGRAMS

CJ's further emphasizes customer service through its rewards programs. With Loyalty Rewards, individual consumers earn points back as a percentage of every dollar that they spend. Accrued points can be applied to anything sold at CJ's, including tires and service. The Loyalty Rewards program includes monthly promotional deals, such as \$10 off a car inspection or special tire financing, and free enrollment bonuses.

Customers should remember that Loyalty Rewards points must be used on future purchases and are not redeemable

for cash. Also, commercial, fleet, and government vehicles are excluded from the loyalty program.

Commercial vehicle owners reap rewards in CJ's Commercial Advantage Program. Aimed at helping fleet owners know and control their costs, Commercial Advantage includes discount pricing on tires and vehicle repair and maintenance, such as parts and labor. These discounts apply not only to a company's commercial vehicles but also to its employees' personal automobiles, enabling both a business and its employees to save money.

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COVER STORY

(Continued from page 7)

The program gives customized pricing on automotive maintenance and keeps maintenance records so that service reminders can be emailed in a timely fashion.

This commitment to positive customer experience has paid off. In 2023, CJ's Tire & Automotive won the *Berks County People's Choice Award* for the ninth consecutive year.

Although it began as a tire shop, CJ's Tire & Automotive has evolved into a much larger enterprise. As its name indicates, the business has expanded into automotive service and repair to its offerings and developed a strong business-to-business (B2B) and consumer client base. Today, small to mid-sized businesses take their fleets to CJ's not only for tires but also scheduled maintenance. In 2022, roughly 15 percent of CJ's customers were B2B and included such professionals as electricians and building contractors.



A PLEDGE FOR EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE

The second part of CJ's mission statement focuses on bettering its employees, helping them to grow and achieve their full potential. "We are dedicated to our employees and want to develop career opportunities for them,"

Bolger said. "We bring in employees not on a skill set but on a positive attitude and good smile. We feel that we can teach them what they need to know in the business and continually build on that so that they don't just get a job, they get a career."

CJ's employs more than 200 individuals at its 17 locations, working in such

departments as retail sales and service, supply chain, accounting, and administration. To keep its large staff up to date on the latest automotive and tire trends and technologies, the company provides in-house training through "CJ's University." In existence for approximately eight years, CJ's University classes are led by senior technicians as well as outside instructors.

CJ's adheres to the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certification and pays for outside training and certification for its employees. Technicians also take self-study courses to advance and become ASE-certified and pass state emissions qualifications.

Along with educational opportunities, CJ's presents helpful tips, free Reading Phillies tickets, and employee recognition in its quarterly company newsletter. "We have an employee spotlight where we recognize one person who may have gotten a promotion, is new to the company, or had a milestone or major life event," Bolger said. "It gives the rest of the company a chance to get to know who they are personally."

The company also uses Nectar employee recognition software to recognize and reward hardworking employees with online shout-outs and points. Accrued points can be cashed in for gift cards to an assortment of national retailers and restaurants. Yet another compensation comes from CJ's employee apparel shop. During the first month of each quarter, it offers a 20 percent discount.



COMMITMENT TO
COMMUNITY THROUGH
CJ's CARES

CJ's commitment to the surrounding communities is so entrenched that the company made community service the third and final part of its mission statement. "We believe in giving back to the local community and do this through our CJ's Cares initiative," Bolger said. "Every year, we choose four to five local charities and collect money in our stores for them. We also match one dollar for every tire sold."

In 2022, the company raised over \$30,000 for such organizations as the Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition and Animal Rescue League of Berks County, both of which are frequent beneficiaries of CJ's Cares. It also supports the pediatric cancer charity Alex's Lemonade Stand, Special Olympics Pennsylvania, Ronald McDonald House Charities, Helping Harvest Fresh Food Bank, and Noah's Ark Rescue Project and Sanctuary, among other nonprofits.

"Each November, we do food bank collections and let each county where we have stores choose where we donate in that county," Bolger said.

SEASONAL SAVINGS AND
OTHER GOOD THINGS

Another gift that CJ's gives to the region is its annual super sale. Held in November, this is the company's largest tire sale of the year and offers deep discounts on tires in stores and online. The event runs from November 15 to November 30, 2023, and is promoted on the radio, through direct mail and email, and on the company's website, cjtire.com. Think of it as an early holiday present and treat yourself, your business, or your loved ones to new tires before winter.

Along with the yearly sale and ongoing tire rebates, CJ's features VIP discounts for active or retired members of the military, police, firefighters and other first responders and senior citizens aged 65 years or



older. In the fall and spring, CJ's has several preventive maintenance packages to prepare drivers and their vehicles for the upcoming season. Information on these discounts and special offers can be found online and in print.

To make purchasing tires and service as seamless as possible, CJ's has set up several payment options for its customers. Those who have the electronic money transfer service PayPal can pay online with it. Customers who prefer a buy now/pay later plan can sign up for Affirm and pay for their purchases over time without late fees. They can likewise apply for and use a Goodyear, Bridgestone, or Continental/General Tire/Synchrony credit card. Traditional financing and lease- to-own plans are available through Koalafi, which was formerly known as West Creek Financial. Information about these payment options can also be found on the company's website.

GETTING READY FOR
WINTER AND BEYOND

If you're purchasing tires at the end of fall or start of winter, you may wonder what type of tire to buy. Should you invest two sets of tires — winter tires for the snowy months and all-season for the rest of year? Do you need to switch from all-season to winter tires or can you get away with one type year-round?

CJ's carries and endorses a newer cold-weather product, the all-weather tire. Containing a different rubber compound than all-season tires, the all-weather tire pairs the firm grip of a traditional winter tire with the durability of an all-season tire. It performs well year-round in all types of weather. Unless you drive in extreme winter conditions that call for snow chains, all-weather tires afford you both safety and convenience.

Generally, winter tires last for up to 20,000 miles. All-season and all-weather tires can last for up to 70,000 miles before needing to be replaced. Premium all-weather tires and premium all-season tires are priced similarly. Manufacturers of all-season tires, such as Bridgestone, Firestone, Continental, and General, produce all-weather tires as well.

Beyond tires, CJ's addresses a multitude of automotive needs, including oil changes; brake or cooling system repairs; vehicle alignment; belt, hose, air filter, or battery replacement; tune-ups; scheduled maintenance; steering and suspension system service; and state emissions and inspection.

Whether you're in need of automotive service, new tires, or guidance on how to keep your vehicle roadworthy, you'll receive sound advice and top-notch customer service at CJ's Tire & Automotive. Consult CJ's website, cjtire.com, or the sidebar for a location near you.

CJ's TIRE AND AUTOMOTIVE, PROVIDING 17 LOCATIONS IN SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

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- Kimberton:** 305 Coldstream Road, Kimberton, Pennsylvania 19442 **(610) 933-5984**
- King of Prussia:** 180 W. Church Road, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406 **(484) 864-5005**

- Lansdale:** 735 E. Main St., Lansdale, Pennsylvania 19446 **(267) 641-9010**
- Leesport:** 343 Hafer Drive, Leesport, Pennsylvania 19533 **(610) 926-0400**
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- Lionville:** 210 Eagleview Boulevard, Exton, Pennsylvania 19341 **(610) 524-1002**
- Lititz:** 4 Copperfield Circle, Lititz, Pennsylvania 17543 **(717) 625-3700**

- Mechanicsburg:** 5306 Baron Court, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania 17050 **(717) 620-2360**
- New Holland:** 728 East Main Street, New Holland, Pennsylvania 17557 **(717) 354-3193**
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- Pottstown/North Coventry:** 18 Glocker Way, Pottstown, Pennsylvania 19465 **(610) 705-5501**

- West Chester:** 1309 Wilmington Pike, West Chester, Pennsylvania 19382 **(610) 455-0400**
- West Lawn:** 30 South Dwight Street, West Lawn, Pennsylvania 19609 **(610) 670-5922**
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Small Gathering to a Major Event — Pottstown Fete en Blanc



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

Pottstown's Fete en Blanc started in 2017 with a simple conversation. Twila Fisher of Hobart's Run and I were discussing a few fledgling events that we were trying to get started in Downtown along with Sheila Dugan who was the Main Street Manager at that time. The three of us were working collectively on mid-week summer outdoor lunches to take place in the Downtown, and monthly Friday night dinners being held on the back patio of the New York Plaza Building. Twila mentioned wouldn't it be great to have a white dinner in the middle of Downtown. Without much planning or lead time we decided to do it in Smith Family Plaza.

I think we probably shared it through Facebook with less than a month's notice. Twila and I set up a few tables with white cloths and chairs. We asked a winery to be there, a couple of restaurants set some food out and somehow between 25 and 28 people dressed in white showed up, including kids in strollers. It was a beautiful September evening and Twila and I ended up having to chase out the stragglers so we could load up the tables and chairs in our cars.

Fast forward to 2023, for the 6th Annual Pottstown Fete. Like many things in life, Fete has evolved. Our mission with this end of summer event is two-fold — we do it to celebrate the Pottstown Community but, we also do it

to showcase Pottstown to the outside world. This year, over 60 percent of the 750 tickets sold were purchased by people who live outside of Pottstown. We have people attending from outside of Pennsylvania.

Neither PAED nor Hobart's Run are in the event business, but our organizations are committed to finding ways to tell Pottstown's modern-day story. Fete en Blanc provides the platform to do just that. We have had the event annually since 2017 with one year off during the COVID shut down. The event now sells out quickly. We have generous sponsors and tickets are no longer free for attendees.

(Continued on page 12)

Join us at Sanatoga Park Bandshell (223 S. Sanatoga Rd., Pottstown PA 19464) for a **STUDENT COMPOSITION CONCERT** on **Saturday, Oct. 7 at 3pm!** Admission is \$8 for adults and \$5 for students & seniors. Funds help with future concerts including Nutcracker. Visit pottstowndance.com or call **610-323-2569** for more info.



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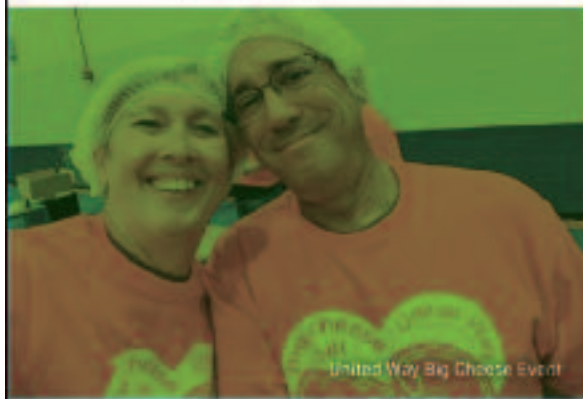
United Way Day of Caring at New Journey Community Outreach



United Way Day of Caring at New Journey Community Outreach



Clothing Drive for New Journey Community Outreach



United Way Big Cheese Event



Food Drive for New Journey Community Outreach



United Way Day of Caring at the Opportunity House

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United Way of Berks County helps people in need and addresses critical issues to make our community a better place for everyone. Their work is centered on raising and distributing funds to support a vital network of health and human services, as well as tackling our community's key issues and working towards solutions in the areas of *Education, Health, Financial Stability, and Safety Net Services*. For 27 years, UECU employees have been supporting the United Way of Berks County by making monetary donations, collecting items for those in need, and volunteering in the community.

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POTTSTOWN FETE EN BLANC

(Continued from page 10)



Even though PAED's Staff and Hobart's Staff donate their labor, which is hours and hours, our expenses continue to grow. We no longer procure our own tables, chairs, and linens from a variety of sources. We learned that lesson a bit late. Three years into this idea we had 500 attendees. Set up wasn't too bad with our mighty little team but, it's tough to clean up after a party of that size with six people. Thank goodness for several kind-hearted attendees that helped us break down all those tables and chairs and collect the mountain of trash that was left.

I'm not sure if the cleanup lasted longer than the actual event but, it sure did seem like it. We have always promoted the event as a rain or shine event but, I'm not sure we envisioned the violent deluge that came through Pottstown this year in the afternoon bringing down branches, creating gullies of water, and tearing apart one of the tents protecting the sound board. At 5:00 p.m. our planning team were all watching the weather from our second-floor conference area and pulling up various weather apps on our smartphones deciding what to do. At about 5:10 p.m., Twila and I both agreed we both would meet in Smith Family

Plaza dressed in our white, sit with whoever showed up and celebrate as we always had. We got a few looks from our colleagues like we both had lost our minds but, down to the venue we went to dry chairs, put out flowers, place recycling bins, and set up the registration table.

Guests began to arrive shortly before 6:00 pm. They helped wipe things down, wrung out tablecloths and proceeded to decorate their tables with candles, dishes, and centerpieces. Nobody seemed to give it another thought to what had been transpiring 45 minutes prior. Once again, we had a beautiful evening with 600+ showing up to wave goodbye to summer, enjoy the music of the Louis Rieger Quartet, sip on something from Kiki Vodka or a beverage from Sly Fox, eat a delicious meal or snack they bought from one of our local restaurants and revel in what is special about Pottstown. There was a shared feeling when we all left that anything is possible with persistence and passion. People will be talking about this one for years to come and have already started asking how they can be part of next year's story.

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

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BEN FRANKLIN LEARNING CENTER OFFERS FREE TWO-PART WEBINAR ON GENERATIVE AI ADOPTION

The Ben Franklin Learning Center (BFLC) is thrilled to announce its Fall 2023 Sessions, a power-packed lineup of subject matter experts and knowledge-enhancing sessions designed to provide valuable insights and a roadmap for success in today's competitive business landscape. Aimed at small businesses, entrepreneurs, and startups, the sessions dive into essential topics such as marketing, generative AI, investor relations, and funding opportunities to help your small business thrive.

In October, the BFLC will present a two-part session titled "The Executive Guide to Generative AI Adoption." Small business leaders will gain the knowledge and confidence to explore the transformative potential of Generative AI and its applications within their business operations.

The Executive Guide to Generative AI Adoption — Two Part Webinar Sessions

Small Business Leaders Learn How to Explore Generative AI's Transformative Potential to Solve Business Problems

- **Part I: Thursday, October 5, 2023;** Time: 10:00-11:30 AM <https://bfcnp.org/GuideGenAIpt1>
- **Part II: Thursday, October 19, 2023;** Time: 10:00-11:30 AM <https://bfcnp.org/GuideGenAIpt2>

"We are excited to present these thought-provoking sessions, introducing new topics like the Generative AI adoption that will demonstrate how this new tech can help small business solve business problems more efficiently," said Cathy von Birgelen, Director at the Ben Franklin Learning Center. "Our goal is to support entrepreneurs, small business owners, and startups with the knowledge and tools they need to grow and compete."

All sessions are Free for Members and Free to Join. Attendees can register for these sessions on the Ben Franklin Learning Center's website: www.benfranklinlearningcenter.org.

About Ben Franklin Learning Center

The Ben Franklin Learning Center is dedicated to empowering entrepreneurs, small business leaders, and startups with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to thrive in the ever-evolving business world. Through targeted programs, workshops, and events, the center fosters innovation and growth within our business community.

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Our posture tells the world quite a bit about us — whether you want it to or not. Your body keeps an accurate record of all the trauma and troubles you've had in your life — Accidents. Abuse. Attitudes. Stress. All are right there for everyone to see. No matter how you dress or try to conceal who you are inside, body language never lies.

And poor posture is a pain. It can trigger physical ills such as chronic backache, headaches and migraines, shoulder and neck discomfort, tension and physical stress, arthritis-like pain, and even sexual dysfunction. Quite simply, poor posture is a pain, and the older you get the worse it becomes.

WHAT IS ROLFING? Rolfing was developed in the 1960s by Ida P. Rolf, a Ph.D. in biochemistry who discovered the magic of connective tissue. She

developed a program of mind body transformation that affectionately became known as Rolfing. Initially there is a series of ten sessions, usually weekly, approximately an hour or so long. Each session addresses a different area of your body and corresponding issues in life — Letting go of what you may or may not know is holding you down or holding you back. Stepping up and stepping out, moving in a new direction.

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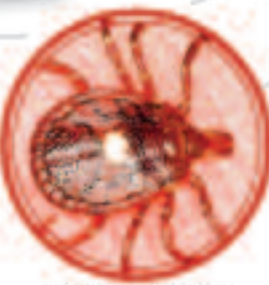
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Ask SCORE

BEING ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY IS BOTH EASY AND COST-EFFECTIVE

With climate change and diminishing resources dominating the news these days, small business owners are looking for ways to make their operations more environmentally friendly. Simple steps such as recycling soda cans and turning off lights are a good place to start, but there are many other ways you can make a big difference without a lot of effort and expense. What's more, these measures will benefit both the environment and your bottom line.

Take energy use, for example. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star program (www.energystar.gov), cutting energy waste can typically save small businesses as much money and prevent as much pollution, per square foot, as large organizations—including those in leased space. Performed properly, business-specific energy efficiency upgrades can provide a positive cash flow right from the beginning.

Some "sure energy savers" include replacing incandescent light bulbs with Energy Star-qualified compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs), which cost about 75 percent less to operate, and last about 10 times longer. Regularly changing heating and air conditioning filters and investing in regular "tune-ups" will also keep the system operating as efficiently as possible.

Making greater use of email and electronic file transfers are sure to cut down on the amount of paper your business uses. If your business relies on incoming or outgoing faxes, a computer fax modem will enable you to exchange these documents without the need for making printed copies.

There are likely more recyclable items around your office than you realize. Your

municipal solid waste department can provide information on materials and recycling procedures. Another good source is the Electronic Industries Alliance's e-Cycling Central Web site at www.eiae.org, which provides information on finding local agencies and organizations that will recycle computers and printers. And, many charities accept unwanted office furniture for repair and reuse by other businesses, organizations, schools, and charities.

Purchasing products and equipment made from recycled or sustainable materials is also a good way for small businesses to do right by Mother Earth. According to GreenBiz.com, recycled-content products typically perform as well or better than virgin products and often are competitively priced. And when it's time to upgrade computers or appliances, purchasing Energy Star-qualified products will ensure that you're getting the most from every kilowatt of power.

For more guidance on cost-effective environmental practices, contact SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business." SCORE is a nonprofit organization of more than 10,500 volunteer business counselors who provide free, confidential business counseling and training workshops to small business owners. Call 610.327.2673 for the Pottstown SCORE office or visit www.pottstownscore.org on the web.

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Reppert's Candy

Reppert's Candy is a locally owned and operated small business operating out of a 12,000 square foot facility in Oley Township, offering more than 65 varieties of candy and approximately 200 different style chocolate molds.

The company installed has new machines and expanded their workforce in recent years, allowing them to expand their wholesale offerings. They now sell their product in 40 USA states wholesale. They are currently looking at greatly expanding their current business into a national supplier for finished Chocolates.

Would you like to support a local small business when shopping for friends and family? Have one those "hard to please" people on your gift list? A box of assorted chocolates is a perfect gift that is sure to please anyone! As you walk through the doors of Reppert's retail store, you will be pleasantly overwhelmed by the sweet aroma of chocolate. As you walk further into the store, the enormous variety of chocolate candies, holiday treats, not to mention the beautifully detailed packaging, will certainly overwhelm all your senses.

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

Reppert's Candy is located at 2708 W. Philadelphia Ave., Oley, PA 19547. They would love to have you stop in to check out their new candies and their new look. For additional information, please visit: www.reppertscandy.com.



Caramel Apples are now available at Reppert's Candy! We have plain, milk chocolate, dark chocolate and a cinnamon swirl. Our apples are also sold at Frecon Orchard.

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

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The Crossroads Guitars & Art An "Arts Experience" Like No Other

After several months of renovations, The Crossroads Guitars & Art opened to the public on October 2nd. This exciting new business fosters a unique cultural experience for local area patrons, resulting in the creation of music-makers and enjoyable arts encounters. Musicians, artists, and customers from all walks of life are welcome at the spacious showroom, an inviting abode more like a comfy living room than a typical cluttered music store.



The Crossroads comes out of the gate chock full of modern digital art, classical photography and a host of acoustic guitars, ukuleles, cajons, bluegrass instruments, digital pianos, and accessories. There are four state-of-the-art music lesson rooms, a sizeable group instruction area, master classes and educational seminars planned, along with a live performance venue in an intimate "listening room" environment. A highly trained staff will assist in finding the best fit for you in a musical instrument, or placement in private or group lesson programs.

For regional artists, this gorgeous space provides an opportunity to host a curated

gallery showing, and other cultural arts may be placed on consignment. It's worth the trip to 1041 E. Philadelphia Ave (Route 73 directly across from the Gilbertsville Shopping Center) to visit a true "Arts Experience" store. Mark your calendar for a grand opening celebration on Saturday, October 21st starting at 11:00 am with live music, food trucks and artist booths. We've been waiting for a business such as the Crossroads Guitars & Art to arrive in our area for some time, and you can now "have it all" as it pertains to cultural arts, music lessons, live performances and more!

Visit the website at www.guitarsandart.com or call 1.833.696.8737 to speak directly to store owner Doug Nestler.



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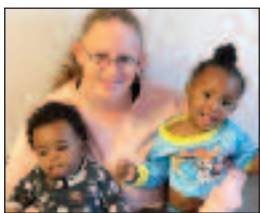
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Magic Memories was founded in 1987 in the community of Phoenixville. The program was started by a local mother hoping to help her community and the working family. Neydary Zambrano became the owner in 2006 when she fell in love with the school, its mission and she was looking for a warm, safe and caring place for her children. Magic Memories is proud to continue to provide a warm, loving, home-like setting for all families and children. Magic Memories strives to provide a learning experience that allows each child to grow at their own individual pace. In 2019 Magic Memories expanded from three locations

to nine across Chester and Montgomery Counties. Magic Memories provides care for infants through pre-kindergarten, before & after care, and summer camp. When you enter our schools, you will immediately feel the warmth of home and know that you have a new family you can rely on. The staff are always ready with a hug and consistently keep the children as their first priority. Families feel secure knowing that their children are with their second family every day.

**For additional information,
please call 610.400.8587 and visit
www.magicmemories.org.**

OUR MISSION
Our schools were established to provide your child a loving, caring, and stimulating environment. We provide a safe, healthy, nurturing, well-balanced meals and a concerned staff, at a warm, trusting, home-like setting. Our mission is to provide the emotional, security, self-esteem and social development of our children in our care, with a strong value system of respect, kindness and love for one another.

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We look forward to meeting you and your family. Feel free to check out our website at www.goddardschools.com, contact us by email at royersfordpa@goddardschools.com, or give us a call at 610.948.1208 to set up an opportunity to tour our school.

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Kick Off to 2023's Impact Campaign!

FOUNDATION FOR POTTSOWN EDUCATION

IMPACT

Thank you to our donors for leveling the educational playing field.

- 412 Scholarships totaling \$228,579 awarded to graduating seniors.
- Pottstown area preschoolers prepared for kindergarten with early learning classes offered by the PLAR program.
- 1,806 students continued to read during the pandemic with the purchase of ebooks for the libraries.
- Provided 875 Chromebooks and electronic devices enabling students to continue their education during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 137 students participated in the The Early College Program, earning a combined 1352 college credits and saving over \$1 million in future tuition.
- 3,200 Pottstown students sparked their creativity with the purchase of supplies for the Art program.

The need to continue leveling the playing field exists. Scan the QR code to make an impact today.

The mission of the Foundation for Pottstown Education is to raise funds for and support life-changing educational opportunities for the students and teachers in the Pottstown School District promoting the enhancement of our community.

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SMART GOALS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA



SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

By Theresa Mintzer

With two months left in 2023, set SMART goals for your social media to finish the year off strong. Creating monthly or quarterly goals will dial down your message and create metrics to measure impact. Take some time to brainstorm your social media goals. Next look at the goals to see if they meet the criteria below.

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

Measurable — You can use your Facebook analytics to see new followers. How many followers do you have now? Do regular check-ins along the way to make sure you are on the right track. This allows you to make changes as you go.

Achievable — Set obtainable goals. You cannot set an unrealistic goal such as "I will have 1M new followers" in the next month. You can say "I want to increase my followers by ten percent."

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

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

The extra effort of setting goals comes in handy when creating content. You now have a focus for your content. I offer Social Media and Facebook Ad Coaching to help businesses create a plan that works. Head on over to my website at <https://www.mintzersolutions.com/for> more information and to schedule an appointment. For additional information, call 484.686.2995; email: Theresa@MintzerSolutions.com.

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We operate 14 Flooring Superstores serving Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, South Jersey and South Carolina. Now we are bringing the Carpet & Tile Mart value proposition and buying power within reach of flooring customers from Coast to Coast in the US on our website CARPETMART.COM.

Q: How does Carpet & Tile Mart keep prices so low?

A: We buy direct from mills and manufacturers for all flooring categories, eliminating middleman and mark-ups that are normally associated with flooring franchise stores, big-box home center flooring departments and floor covering buying group operations. Working closely with the mills and flooring suppliers for decades, we have also been able to maintain a superior product-quality level that

other 'flooring liquidators' cannot match. Our long-standing history with these vendors, and a unique liquid position in the marketplace, allows our buyers to negotiate and buy at deep discounts, and obtain goods or special limited deals not readily available to other retailers. Combined, this cost and pricing advantage has allowed us to pass all those savings on to our customers with products and prices you can't find anywhere else.

Q: How many flooring options are there?

A: We have thousands of area rugs, miles of the finest tile and natural stone, durable luxury vinyl tile, hardwood flooring from the USA, and of course the largest selection of carpet around. The best part is it's all in-stock at Carpet & Tile Mart! You can take most new floors home today. Or if you prefer we'll deliver it to your home. We also offer professional installation services on all of our floors. Pick, pay, take it away, or we'll install it as soon as you say!

Q: Are there any Waterproof floors?

A: Yes! Waterproof Floors are the fastest-growing category that includes many Sheet Vinyl and Luxury Vinyl Tile and Plank options, not to mention inherently



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

PHOTOS BY STYLISH IMAGES



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Q: When is it time to replace our floors?

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

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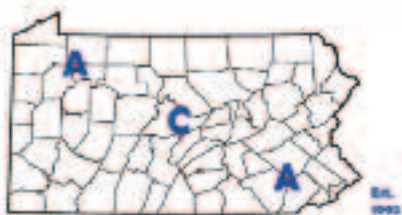
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WHY OMNICHANNEL STRATEGY IS ESSENTIAL FOR BUSINESSES OF ALL SIZES



MARKETING TIPS

By Michael Ianniello,
Communications
Coordinator,
beMarketing

In today's rapidly changing business landscape, an omnichannel strategy has become essential for businesses of all sizes. This comprehensive approach integrates all available channels and touchpoints, such as physical stores, e-commerce websites, mobile apps, social media, and email, to create a seamless and consistent customer experience. By prioritizing the customer's needs and preferences, an omnichannel strategy enhances satisfaction, fosters loyalty, and encourages repeat business.

There are five key reasons why businesses are embracing omnichannel strategies:

1. Enhance Customer Lifetime Value: By offering personalized experiences across various channels, businesses can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, leading to higher customer lifetime value.

2. Expand Reach to New Customer Segments: Omnichannel marketing allows businesses to reach a wider audience and target specific customer segments more effectively, adapting to changing preferences and demographics.

3. Boost Operational Efficiency: Integrated systems and processes streamline operations, enabling businesses to re-

spond more efficiently to customer inquiries, manage inventory effectively, and optimize resource allocation.

4. Drive Increased Sales: A cohesive omnichannel strategy can lead to higher sales by providing customers with a consistent and convenient shopping experience, increasing conversion rates and revenue.

5. Enhance Inventory Turnover: Integrated data and inventory management helps reduce overstocking and optimize inventory turnover.

To build a successful omnichannel strategy, businesses should:

- **Prioritize Personalized Experiences:** Utilize data through CRM systems and in-store technology to understand and cater to customer needs and preferences.

- **Craft Unforgettable In-Store Interactions:** The future of retail lies in creating captivating in-person experiences that solidify your brand's identity.

- **Leverage Consumer Insights:** Utilize data insights to fine-tune your omnichannel approach and ensure you have the right tools for a data-driven strategy.

- **Energize Your Social Media Presence:** Engage customers where they spend the most time by effectively reaching new customer segments through social media channels.

beMarketing is here to carefully plan and implement your omnichannel strategies to maximize your business growth and customer engagement. Give us a call today at 484.246.8504 to get started



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ORGALLA DESIGNS LLC ANNOUNCES GRAND OPENING

Orgalla Designs LLC, located at 218 E. High Street in Pottstown, will have their Grand Opening, on Thursday, October 5, 2023.

Orgalla Designs LLC offers a large assortment of body jewelry from all over the world, and knowledgeable/ educated body piercers, in addition to fine hand-crafted jewelry, paintings, sculptures, T-shirts, stained glass, dream catchers, wood engraving, etching and assorted gifts, that you will not find anywhere else.

With over 25 years of experience in the tattoo and body piercing industry, Orgalla Designs offers on-site autoclave sterilization/disposables, single-needle-use only & custom body art for the unique individual.

Heather Kingsley (CEO), Owner and Operator of Orgalla Designs LLC & Viable Ink Solutions, is an educated body piercer (through Gauntlet NY, 1997), and is a certified nurse and certified jeweler & designer. Kingsley has a master's in micro-pigmentology/ cosmetic tattooing, is Reiki certified and offers solution management services nationwide for infectious waste removal.

Orgalla Designs LLC is also a fine art gallery, consignment art & Healing Center. Local artists are encouraged to place their art on consignment, as Orgalla Designs is dedicating five percent of the funds received from consignment art that is sold, towards an art scholarship

program. A yearly contest will be announced, and ONE lucky winner will be chosen, upon meeting the requirements of the contest.

Orgalla Designs LLC continues to uplift the needs of the community & contributing to the accountability of the tattoo industry needs, by providing solutions to trash & medical waste removal services, nationwide, with high quality standards, needed to comply with any laws and regulations of the client's state, to help gain knowledge & awareness on how to protect the environment and be accountable for proper handling, removal, destruction and disposal of medical waste & sharps containers.

Orgalla Designs LLC, wishes to reach out more to the community, and encourage parents to spend more time with their children. They offer age-appropriate workshops to children & adults, such as creative, writing, knitting, sewing, jewelry, making, painting, stained glass, drawing, dream catchers, sun catchers, origami, crane folding and various other crafts.

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6 SIMPLE STEPS FOR GETTING THINGS DONE AT YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

Whether you are running a for-profit or nonprofit business, an ability to organize efforts and initiatives is a necessary skill to achieve success. Effectively executing efforts and accomplishing goals requires planning and coordination among team members (which may be a combination of employees, vendors, suppliers, contractors, etc.).

While some small business owners seem to have a natural knack for project management, it is not everyone's strength. Do not feel defeated if it is not yours and you do not have the resources to hire a professional project manager.

With a process in place to guide you, you — or a designated person from your team — will become more adept at moving projects from start to finish.

The following tips will help you create a roadmap that you can follow whenever embarking on any new project.

1. Define your goal and get buy-in from all project team members. As you do this, you will want to determine each team member's role and responsibilities. In this step, also consider how the project will affect your company and how you will measure the project's impact.

2. Determine the project deliverables. What key tasks do team members need to accomplish to move the project along the path to completion? You will also need to identify which deliverables depend on other deliverables, so you can establish a timeline that puts tasks in a logical order.

3. List the resources you will need. Assess what you will need regarding budget, personnel and tools to complete the project.

4. Set a timeline and identify milestones to mark your progress. After knowing what needs to be done and by whom, create target completion dates for your project deliverables. In your timeline, identify interim goals ("milestones") that can serve as major landmarks along the way. As the project progresses, your ability to reach milestones will help you know if you'll need to adjust your scope, budget or expectations. Milestones also

help boost morale as they help project team members see the progress they have made.

5. Define the collaborative process. Determine how often your team members will meet as a group to report their progress and share any challenges that might prevent them from fulfilling their deadlines. Schedule your meetings well in advance, so everyone on your team can reserve the dates and times on their calendars.

6. Select a tool to help you stay organized and keep all project documentation in a single place accessible to all team members. A variety of online tools exist that can help you manage projects. Some are more intuitive than others, so assess your team members' comfort level with the technology involved before choosing what you will use. A few examples that might be a good fit for your business include Trello, Evernote, Asana, Dropbox, and Google Drive.

Although you might try to save time by skipping some of the initial steps in the process, you should resist that temptation. Successful project management begins with thorough planning. Shortcuts in the beginning could lead to misunderstandings among team members—and missed deadlines.

If you need suggestions on how to manage your projects more efficiently, consider reaching out to SCORE. SCORE mentors have expertise in all aspects of starting and growing a small business, and they can provide you with free guidance as you hone your project management skills.

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

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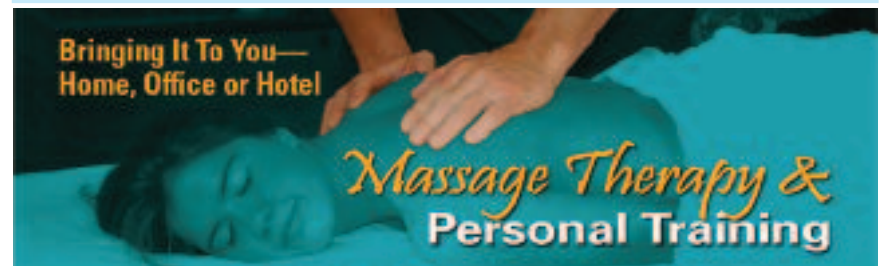
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TIPS FOR CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

Social media in the workplace is a huge gray area for employers. Putting guardrails around social media use has been a growing challenge as these platforms have become a central part of our lives – and our work.

Social media use in the workplace was once simply a concern over time management. Could you trust your employees to get work done with the distraction of Facebook notifications popping up on their phones throughout the day? Today, there's another layer of complexity as more and more professionals use and rely on social media to do their jobs. Even more, many businesses now rely on their employee's social media content to promote the company and drive customer awareness.

If you haven't already, consider creating a social media policy for your small business. A written policy will help you clarify the gray area into a more black and white set of social media usage expectations that support and protect not only your business, but your employees as well.

Create a social media policy that clearly states the do's and don'ts of social media use related to your business.

There's a lot to consider when deciding what goes into your social media policy and how to find a balance between the legal rights of the employees, your rights as an employer and the general wellbeing of your entire team.

Consider these tips as you set out to create a social media policy for your business.

Tip #1: Recognize that Your Employees Have Rights

Protecting your company from the financial impacts of lost time and reputation damage by restricting social media

usage and certain types of content can begin to infringe on your employee's right to freedom of speech and other rights. Do your homework to understand your employees' rights and your rights as an owner before you draw up your social policy.

The National Labor Relations Board is a great resource for learning the details of the National Labor Relations Act and its protection of an employee's freedom of speech.

Tip #2: Be Clear on Your Expectations About Social Use in the Workplace

You need to be upfront with your team about their use of social media during work hours. And, those stipulations need to be spelled out clearly in your policy. If you feel that it's in the best interest of the company to limit social media use to breaks or the lunch hour, then that goes in the policy as a line item. Be specific so there's no confusion.

Tip #3: Talk to Your Employees Before They Endorse Your Product on Social

There's a fine line between employees rallying behind your brand with positive social posts and coming across as endorsing or promoting a product to an unknowing audience. The Federal Trade Commission's Endorsement Guide details specific rules to prevent paid company endorsements as a way to protect consumers. Employees who use their social accounts to promote your product without disclosing that they work for your business put themselves – and your company – at serious risk. Take your lead from the FTC's guidelines and make sure this is clearly spelled out in your social policy.

(Continued on page 28)

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(Continued from page 27)

Tip #4: Create a Policy that Addresses Both General Employees and Social Media Managers

Your policy needs to account for the actions of employees tasked with managing your business' social media accounts. This can include posting and sharing content and commenting on your behalf. Create a separate policy for these members of your team, or create an addendum to your policy that details the guidelines for posting, including a social strategy and plan for the business. Whichever you choose, make sure your expectations are clearly documented and communicated.

Tip #5: Discuss Your Social Media Policy Openly with All of Your Employees

Documentation is important, but openly communicating your expectations is the secret to the success of your social media policy. Discuss the policy with your employees and welcome their feedback.

Before you add your social media policy to your employee handbook, run it by a group of advisors.

Your social media policy, like any other business policy, has a legal impact on your business and should be run past

your attorney before being implemented. It's also a good idea to consult a Human Resources professional to make sure you've thought through every aspect of how social media could impact your business.

Another smart source of guidance is your SCORE mentor. A SCORE mentor can support you as you draft your policy and connect you with a small business attorney and HR consultant who can help you put the best policy in place for your small business.

For more information about starting or operating a small business, contact SCORE TriCounty, <https://tricounty.score.org/content/find-mentor-183>.



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GOOD HABITS CAN TRANSLATE INTO GREAT SALES

The longer you're in business, the more you realize that the only constant is change. You may be enjoying strong sales across a broad customer base, but those conditions could be far different in just a matter of months. A competitor's offer may tempt your customers to try something different. Organizational and operational changes may require you to build relationships with new people from scratch.

While there are to approach these challenges, all share the same fundamental elements — good selling habits. For example, it's important for your business to approach selling with a positive, service-minded attitude that focuses on your customer's needs, desires and expectations. How do you get these valuable insights? Ask them. Most people love to talk about themselves, and what you learn will help you adjust your sales and service tactics accordingly.

Keeping the attention on them, rather than you, will also help you tune in to why they buy, or why they don't. Plus, if you take time to listen and ask questions, customers will start to think of you and your business as a valued resource, rather than just a selling machine. You can easily show that you are willing to help the customer by anticipating what they need

and having answers to potential objections.

Train yourself and your employees to smile. It's easy to get grumpy or cynical if sales go south. But that's when a good attitude becomes most important. Don't be afraid to take a risk or try out a new approach from time to time. It could be a new marketing pitch or advertising channel. When operating a business in today's competitive world, the greater risk is in thinking that the status quo will suffice.

Remember too that today's customers have higher expectations than ever before. You can't accommodate everybody's needs, but automatically declining an unusual request will get you nowhere. By adopting a positive, can-do attitude, your mind will instinctively be alert to ways for doing things that once might have seemed unreasonable. That will ensure your customers keep coming back and, just as important, keep recommending you to others.

To learn more about sales and marketing issues facing your small business, contact SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business." SCORE is a nonprofit organization of more than 10,500 volunteer business counselors who provide free, confidential business counseling and training workshops to small business owners. Call 1.800.634.0245 for the SCORE chapter nearest you, or find a counselor online at www.score.org.



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Helping Hands, Inc.

610.754.6491

www.HelpingHandsInc.com

Facebook: HelpingHandsPA

Instagram: helpinghandsincpa

Helping Hands, Inc. offers programs to persons with intellectual disabilities who are mentally and physically challenged.

Our programs are designed around each individual's needs and implemented in the least restrictive environment for the safety and well being of the individual.

415 Hoffmansville Road, Bechtelsville, PA 19505



The Blatt Group is a Full-Service General Contractor serving the Reading, PA area & beyond...



Below is a list of some of our general contracting and construction services we offer:

- General Construction • Excavation / Demolition
- Interior and Exterior Maintenance
- Concrete Work — New and Repairs
- Office Design / Office Fit Outs
- Welding and Fabrication
- Renovations • Woodworking / Carpentry

BLATTGROUP.COM

610.916.9828

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GREATER READING CHAMBER ALLIANCE



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

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

EXPANDING YOUR TALENT ATTRACTION OUTREACH

Thursday Oct 5, 2023 | 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM EDT
Center for Business Excellence

49 Commerce Dr., Wyomissing, PA 19610

This session is free of charge and open to GRCA members and future members.

Contact Information

Keith Stamm kstamm@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11480>

REGIONAL BUSINESS WOMEN'S NETWORKING MIXER (LANCASTER, YORK & HARRISBURG)

Thursday Oct 5, 2023 | 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM EDT
The Hotel Hershey, 100 Hotel Rd., Hershey, PA 17033

\$25 per person / W2W Member Exclusive Event

Limited amount of tickets available - please register max of 2 per company

Contact Information

Rachael Romig rromig@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11483>

BREAKFAST4SUCCESS - OCTOBER 2023

Wednesday Oct 11, 2023 | 7:30 AM - 9:30 AM EDT
Berks Nature, 575 St Bernardine St, Reading

Member Exclusive \$35 / Member

Contact Information: Katie Johnsen

610-898-7779 kjohnsen@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11314>

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE WORKPLACE - LATE FALL 2023

Thursday Oct 12, 2023 | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM EDT
4 weeks on Thursday: Oct, 12, 19, 26, Nov.2

Time: 9 a.m. - noon

Center for Business Excellence

49 Commerce Dr., Wyomissing, PA 19610

\$695/person for Chamber Members; 845/person for Future Chamber Members

Training is WEDnet eligible

Contact Information:

mdolinski@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11456>

EVENING OF EMPOWERMENT 2023 With Liz Murray: Homeless To Harvard

Thursday Oct 12, 2023 | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM EDT
Abraham Lincoln Events - Presidential Ballroom

100 N 5th St., Reading, PA 19601

**complimentary parking in Abraham Lincoln parking garage

\$60 / GRCA Member; \$75 / Future GRCA Member

**price includes appetizers & drinks

Contact Information: Rachael Romig

610-898-7775 rromig@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11316>

SUPERVISOR TRAINING MODULE 2: MANAGING PERFORMANCE & DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES - FALL 2023

Tuesday Oct 24, 2023 | 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM EDT
2 weeks on Tuesdays: Oct. 24, 31, Nov. 7, 14, 21, 28

Time: 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Center for Business Excellence

49 Commerce Dr., Wyomissing, PA 19610

\$625/person for Chamber Members;

\$780/person for Future Chamber Members

WEDnet eligible

Contact Information

Mark Dolinski, Vice President Training and

Professional Development 610-898-8386

mdolinski@greaterreading.org

register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11455>

ESSENTIALS OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP - FALL 2023

Wednesday Oct 25, 2023 | 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM EDT
Dates: Five weeks on Wednesdays, Oct. 25,

Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22

Time: 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Center for Business Excellence

49 Commerce Dr., Wyomissing, PA 19610

\$695/person for Chamber Members;

\$895/person for Future Chamber Members

WEDnet eligible

Contact Information

Mark Dolinski, Vice President Training and

Professional Development

mdolinski@greaterreading.org

register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11453>

2023 BUILDING BERKS AWARDS & TRADE EXPO

Wednesday Oct 25, 2023 | 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM EDT
Expo/Networking/Cocktails & Appetizers:

5 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Awards Program: 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Reading

701 Penn Street

Reading, PA 19601

**complimentary parking available in DoubleTree garage

\$100 per GRCA Member

\$130 per Future GRCA Member

**ticket includes expo, appetizers and cocktails, and awards ceremony

Cancellations are non-refundable after Oct. 4.

Sponsorship and expo opportunities available: [click here for details.](#)

Contact Information

Aaron Gantz agantz@GreaterReading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11327>

BERKS FAMILY BUSINESS ALLIANCE HOSTS PANEL ON NO. 5 PRINCIPLE OF A HEALTHY BUSINESS

The Berks Family Business Alliance (FBA), a signature program of the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA), invites you to attend "Seeing the Future: Prepare Now," the No. 5 principle of "The 7 Principles of a Healthy Business," presented by an expert panel on Tuesday, October 10 from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM at the GRCA Center for Business Excellence, 49 Commerce Drive in Wyomissing. Onsite parking will be available.

Brian Boland, Attorney at Kozloff Stoudt Attorneys; Michael Koch, CVA, Consultant at RKL LLP; Ryan Hurst, ASA, Partner & Leader of Business Consulting at RKL LLP and Jay Wagner, Co-Chair Estates and Trusts Practice Group at Stevens & Lee, will lead a discussion about financial business planning, transition planning and succession planning — legally and financially. Registration is required: \$30 for members, \$40 for future members. Includes lunch, networking and workshop. Register at www.greaterreading.org.



Brian Boland



Michael Koch



Ryan Hurst



Jay Wagner

ABOUT THE GREATER READING CHAMBER ALLIANCE: Our mission is with excellent and committed leadership and coordination, we: attract new businesses to our community, support the businesses which are already here, nurture local start-ups, develop the workforce for today and the future, and advocate on behalf of the business community.



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

HAPPY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MONTH!!!

OCTOBER 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4 Made in the Tri-County Area Tour at Dada Incorporated 8:00 AM - 12:00 AM	5	6 WIN & REACH Coffee Club 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM Net-Walking 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	7
8	9	10 Coffee Connection 8:30 AM - 9:30 AM	11 Eats & Greets - Invite only 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	12	13 Refresh Friday - Cyber Security 8:30 AM - 12:00 AM	14
15	16	17 Board Member Breakfast - Invite only Expo & Mixer 6:00 PM - 6:00 PM	18	19 Challenger Interactive Experience 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	20 REACH: Create a Pumpkin Centerpiece with the Chamber 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	21
22 Young Professionals Fall Fest at St. Peter's Village 12:00 PM	23	24 Tri-County Caring to you - Limerick 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM	25	26 Cigars in the Lounge 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM	27	28
29	30	31	1 Member Orientation 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	2 Membership Breakfast - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion 8:00 AM - 9:30 AM	3	4
5	6	7 Made in the Tri-County Area Tour at Martin Stone Quizzes 8:00 AM - 10:30 AM	8	9 3rd Annual REACH Conference 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM	 Scan the QR Code to learn more and register for these events! For questions or to learn about sponsorship opportunities, please call 610.326.2900 or email info@tricountyareachamber.com	

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!
Congratulations to the businesses listed below for becoming new TCACC Members!

Cardinal Communications LLC
(610) 656-5800
<http://www.cardinalcomms.com/CommunicationsConsultants>

Balaguer Guitars LLC
(610) 597-6644
<http://www.balaguerguitars.com/ManufacturersandProcessors>

Help at Home with Pam
(610) 505-4777
<http://www.helpathomewithpam.com/CleaningContractors>

Informed Family Financial Services, Inc.
(610) 630-4495
<http://www.informedfamily.com/FinancialServices>

SpotON
(717) 342-1431
<https://www.spoton.com/Restaurants>

The Residences at Manatawny Manor
(610) 412-8884
<https://manatawnymanorpa.com/RetirementCommunities,AssistedLivingCommunities,DayCareProviders-Adults,NursingHomes,SkilledNursingandRehabilitationCenters/Services>

Transplant Alliance Foundation
(484) 752-8985
<http://www.transplantalliance.org/NonprofitOrganizations>

Working Together PA Inc
(610) 329-0178
<http://www.workingtogether.work/NonprofitOrganizations>

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

45+ Years
Universal Machine Co.

20 Years
Permabond, LLC

Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation

10 Years
Patient First

5 Years
Yucha Hearing Aids

REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP



EXPO & MIXER

In celebration of Chamber Month, TCACC wants to honor our Members and offer you a unique opportunity to gain exposure for your business and make connections with other Chamber Members. Come out to display your business and meet your fellow Members.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17TH
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, SOUTH HALL
101 COLLEGE DR., POTTSTOWN, PA 19464

EXPO SPONSOR - \$400
TABLE SPONSOR - \$50 PER TABLE
FOOD VENDORS - DONATION OF FOOD (CALL 610.326.2900)
ATTENDEES - \$25/MEMBER

For more details or marketing and exposure opportunities, please call Alice at 610.326.2900 or email alice@tricityareachamber.com. Scan the QR Code to register or visit tricityareachamber.com.

EVENT SPONSOR:



MEMBERSHIP Breakfast

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

AnNette Hines, Director of Cultural Advancement of Customers Bank

Darryl Mace, PhD, Alvernia University's VP for Mission, Diversity, and Inclusion

Tasha Santiago, Director of Education for the LGBT Center of Greater Reading

Thursday, November 2nd
8:00 AM - 9:30 AM

Spring Hollow Golf Club
3350 Schuylkill Rd., Spring City, PA 19475

\$35 per Member | \$70 per Non-Member

Sponsorship Opportunities Are Available

For more details or to register, please call 610.326.2900, scan the QR code to go directly to the event page on our website, or email alice@tricityareachamber.com.

3RD ANNUAL REACH CONFERENCE

Thursday, November 9th | 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
RiverCrest Golf Club & Preserve

Access to other professionals to build relationships & expand your circle of influence. Voted the Winner of the 2023 Everything Montco: Business or Chamber Event.

Be Authentic



Tracy Babin, Rachel DeAlto, Erica Walker-Will
Montgomery County Executive, Mayor, and County Commissioner

\$150 per person for TCACC Members; \$300 for Non-Members
Registration fee includes: lunch, giveaway, chance to network with over 150 other professional women at dessert buffet, and the book: "Relatable: How to Connect with Anyone, Anywhere" by our Keynote Speaker, Rachel DeAlto.

For more details or to register, please call 610.326.2900, scan the QR code to go directly to the event page on our website, or email alice@tricityareachamber.com. Sponsorship Opportunities are available as well as Group Rate tickets.

TCACC 2023 TIERS INVESTORS STAKEHOLDER

CEG **Constellation** **DANA**

Pottstown Hospital **PPF**
TOWER HEALTH **Precision Polymer Products, Inc.**
Advancing Health. Transforming Lives.

SCHULTZ technology **TOMPKINS**
BANKING | INSURANCE | WEALTH

BUILDING COMMUNITIES

Community Health & Care **Herbein** **Maillie** **VICTORY BANK**
Chief & Advisors ACCIDENTALITY - ADVISORS

CREATING CONNECTIONS

Colonial COMMUNITY BANK **COMCAST BUSINESS** **Diamond CREDIT UNION** **MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
Powering Possibilities

OWM **POTTSWATER AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** **POTTSWATER AREA HEALTH & WELLNESS FOUNDATION** **Rhoads Energy**

SUPPORTING COMMERCE

benXchange **FAST SIGNS** **GLUCKER** **Martin**
More than just. More than signs. **QUALITY & INTEGRITY**

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!

Hello members of the Spring-Ford Chamber of Commerce. For those of you that I do not know, I am Eileen Dautrich and I am the President of the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce.



It has been the pleasure of the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce team to administer your organization over the last 5 months. As you are well aware, the process has not been without its issues.

Please accept this correspondence as my personal apology to each one of you for the invoicing errors that have occurred. I have worked at our organization for over 24 years and I am confident in the skills of our team.

However, we have experienced some issues in learning the capabilities of the database software (which tracks membership, invoicing, event registration, etc.) that Spring-Ford Chamber of Commerce has contracted. It is a much different platform and the procedures to complete the tasks that we can complete internally are limited and have not gone smoothly.

As has been reiterated, the relationship between the Spring-Ford Chamber of Commerce and the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce was not a merger but a transactional agreement for the TriCounty Chamber team to provide administrative services for 6 months. Those 6 months conclude on Friday, October 13 at which time the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce will be turning over all administration back to the board of directors of the Spring-Ford Chamber of Commerce.

Again, my sincerest apologies for the inconvenience and confusion that the invoice billing has caused. Please note that if you received the previous email and the most recent email (September 5) according to the database records you still have an outstanding balance (those of you that have sent proof of payment – THANK YOU – we are working with the software company to have your account updated) and the Spring-Ford Chamber of Commerce appreciates your continued support.

If you have any questions and/or comments that you would like to address to me personally please feel free to contact me at 610.326.2900 or eileen@tricountyareachamber.com.

Eileen Dautrich,
President of
the TriCounty Area
Chamber of Commerce

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 at montgomerycountychamber.org

The 2023 Commissioners Luncheon and Forum October 12, 2023 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (EDT)

Come meet and hear from ALL 4 Candidates running for County Commissioner. This event includes a buffet lunch, a moderated panel discussion and a Q & A.

Featuring: Tom Dibello (R), Liz Ferry (R), Neil Makhija (D), Jamila Winder (D)

2023 COMMISSIONERS LUNCHEON & FORUM



October 12

**12:00pm - 2:00pm * Bright Hall
Temple University * Ambler Campus**



Tom Dibello (R)



Neil Makhija (D)



Liz Ferry (R)



Jamila Winder (D)

montgomerycountychamber.org



Women's Symposium

October 25, 2023 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (EDT)

Featuring an all-women panel. Hosted by The Arc Alliance. Sponsored by American Heritage Credit Union and K9 Resorts of Audubon and Montgomery Bar Association. Speakers so far include Commissioner Jamila Winder, Nikki Krelovich of The Arc Alliance, Madhu Munthala of K9 Resorts, and Dr. Kristin Legnola of Community Chiropractic and Chamber Board Member.

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



**October 25, 2023
@ 8am – 12pm**

This is the must-attend event of the year! Featuring Breakout Sessions, Expo, CEO Roundtable, Networking, Municipal Updates and more.

Welcome to the Inaugural PV Summit, a gathering specifically designed for forward-thinking business owners like you! Join us for this comprehensive event that will provide a unique opportunity to **NETWORK, COLLABORATE, and LEARN** from some of the **industry's leading thinkers and innovators**. Our speaker roster is packed with top executives, business strategists, and industry disruptors who will share valuable insights on navigating the current business landscape, shaping the future of industries, and leading in a post-pandemic era. Furthermore, our expansive **exhibition area** will showcase cutting-edge business technologies and services, promising an immersive and interactive experience. So, seize this chance to **ENGAGE, EMPOWER, and ELEVATE** your business to the summit!

Limited sponsorships available. All welcome to attend. Discounted admission for PV Chamber members. Early Bird Specials!

See page 38 for event schedule.

REGISTER at www.pvsummit.net

October 17, 2023 @ 5pm

Mixer at The Victory Bank

Back by popular demand! Network with Chamber members, staff and guests, enjoy delicious food and adult beverages. FREE for members; \$10 future chamber-members. RSVP no later than Oct. 10

October 19, 2023 @ 4:30pm

PV Men's HH

Join the fellas for networking happy hour at Trappe VFW. Appetizers served. Cash bar. \$20 members; \$25 future chamber-members. RSVP www.PVchamber.net

SAVE THE DATE: Annual Holiday Mixer

December 5, 2023 @ 5pm

Join us for an evening of gratitude and celebration!

Limited sponsorships available. Now accepting gift basket and wine donations. All welcome to attend!

2-hour reception with open bar (wine, beer and signature cocktail), food stations, dessert, music, silent auction, wine and basket raffles, exhibitors and more! Visit PVChamber.net for more information.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

CertaPro of the Main Line

Commercial and residential
painting services

James Williams (610) 525-8484

www.certapro.com/bryn-mawr

Bra Spectrum

European Bra and lingerie shop

Tatyana Ponomareva
(610) 400-8460

www.BraSpectrum.com

REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

PHOENIXVILLE REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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

Celebrating 90 years in the PXV Business Community



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 EVENTS

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



BE BETTER.
GROW FASTER!



JOIN THE SBRA

The Ultimate Small Business Community

JOIN
TODAY!



www.sbrassociation.com

**Small Business
Resource Association**



THE SBRA COMMUNITY Is Happiness Enough?



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

In today's world, HAPPINESS seems to be brought on by visions of unwrapping gifts on Christmas morning, strolling hand-in-hand with the one you love, responding with unbridled laughter to a comedian's jokes, vacationing on an exotic island resort, making the biggest sale of your life or buying that new piece of software that will make your job so much easier. Everyone wants to be happy. We make this elusive ideal a lifelong pursuit: spending money, collecting things, and searching for new experiences. But if happiness depends on our circumstances, what happens when the new toys rust, a loved one dies, health deteriorates, money runs out or is stolen, and the party's over? Often happiness flees and despair and depression set in. Happiness therefore is driven by external pleasures.

In contrast to happiness stands JOY. Running much deeper and stronger in your life's feelings, joy is that quiet, confident assurance that something more powerful than our circumstances is at work in our lives. Something in our Spirit tells us that no matter what happens we will be OK and we will be able to deal with it. Happiness depends on happenings (things), but JOY depends on that inner peace that gets you through all circumstances.

The harder we work to be successful, to provide for our families, to be the problem solvers, to be one step ahead of our competition and to make sure we have enough money for the future, the closer we get to closing the door of happiness. Happiness, driven by STUFF, is false security

because you will never be able to get enough STUFF to really make us happy. The more we get the more we want, the more we want, the harder we have to work, and the harder we work the less happiness we experience because we don't have the time to enjoy what we have.

I sacrificed time with my family by working hard to provide what, I thought, were their needs, only to find out that all they really wanted and needed from me was my LOVE, something internal and not tangible. I will never get back the missed sports games, school-plays, helping my kids with their homework, spending a Saturday at a family outing or numerous other opportunities to spend time with my wife and children. My hard work actually stole my happiness.

One day a friend told me "Did you ever see a U-Haul behind a Herse? At the end of the day, you will not be able to take it with you. What will your friends and family say about you when you are gone forever? You were a really hard worker, a nice person, a good provider but there was just something missing. Your search for happiness disallowed time for JOY". That really hit me right between the eyes and I decided, at that

moment, to start to make some changes. Here are a few suggestions to help you find some JOY.

1. HUMBLE yourself by asking, why are you really doing what you are doing? Could it be that all this hard work is really all about your happiness that was really found in all your stuff— External Happiness. This is known as self-interest as we search for personal recognition. However, when you renounce personal recognition and

merit and replace it with serving others your happiness (external pleasures) will turn to JOY, love and kindness (internal expressions). Joy is not influenced by stuff and will give you happiness even in difficult times.

2. SELF-SACRIFICE for others is a way to turn happiness into Joy by laying aside our personal needs for others. How much of your stuff might be a blessing to someone in need? What if you took 20% of your work time and gave it to your family or a local charity. Don't think only about yourself, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing. Watch happiness turn to Joy.

3. UNITY with others is why you were placed on this earth. Working your tail off, sitting behind the computer for hours on end, staying late and going into work early is taking away from your ability to be with others. Unity also stands for teamwork; consideration of others needs and unselfishness. These are all inward attributes that will give you a sense of JOY.

4. Your CHARACTER will determine your level of JOY. Developing our character begins with our morals, ethics and having a good handle on what is right verses wrong. It is also dependent on self-discipline, obedience and commitment to truth. Character is who you really are and when your character is right there will be JOY in your life. You will no longer need all the stuff.

Happiness can never be enough because it is driven by external experiences (stuff) and can never be satisfied. Joy, on the other hand, can be experienced even in hardships because it does not come from outward circumstances but from inward strength. Be HUMBLE, practice Self-Sacrifice, Unity with others and always maintain good Character and you will find JOY instead of happiness.



SBRA Business Spotlight



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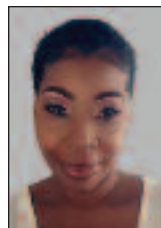
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SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE AND FIND HAPPINESS THROUGH RIGHT-SIZING AND DECLUTTERING



By Karen Superville,
Right-Sizing Specialist,
Sterling Senior Life
Solutions, LLC

Life has a way of accumulating more than we can handle, keeping our homes filled with possessions that no longer align with our present selves. As a Right-Sizing Specialist, I've had the privilege of guiding individuals on a transformative journey to declutter and right-size their homes. It's an opportunity to liberate your living space from the weight of accumulated years and find a renewed sense of serenity and purpose.

Over time, our homes become repositories for memories, experiences, and possessions. However, this accumulation can lead to a cluttered and overwhelming environment. As we grow and change, it's natural for our needs and priorities to shift. Right-sizing and decluttering your home is about creating a space that harmonizes with who you are today, not who you were years ago.

Right-sizing is the process of aligning your living space with our current lifestyle and values. It's not about downsizing for the sake of it, but about optimizing your surroundings for a more intentional and fulfilling life. Begin by reflecting on your needs, aspirations, and what truly matters to you now. This self-discovery journey lays the foundation for making conscious decisions about what to keep and what to let go.

Decluttering is the practical manifestation of right-sizing—a transformative journey that allows you to let go of possessions that no longer serve a purpose. It's about creating a living space that supports your present and future, rather than being weighed down by the past. Tackling one area at a time,



assess each item and ask yourself if it resonates with who you are now. By curating your belongings, you create room for what truly brings you joy and comfort.

Imagine stepping into a room where each item has purpose and significance. It's a place where you can breathe freely and move without obstruction. This newfound spaciousness brings not only physical comfort but also a sense of mental clarity and emotional ease.

Right-sizing and decluttering your home is an opportunity for a fresh start. It's a chance to reassess your priorities, reclaim your space, and create an environment that resonates with your current desires. As you embark on this journey, remember that it's not about letting go of the past, but about honoring it while embracing the present.

Enlisting the help of a Right-Sizing Specialist can make the journey smoother and more rewarding. Their expertise in guiding you through the process, offering practical advice and emotional support, can lead to lasting change in your living environment and mindset.



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• **Tune-Up Tuesday Workshop** –
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presented by Larry Miller, Esq. of
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• **Members
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Friday, October 6th 7:30-9:00 a.m. at
B2 Bistro in West Reading

• **Tune-Up Tuesday Workshop** –
Tuesday, October 17th, 9:30-10:30 a.m.
“Decluttering Made Easy: Transform
Your Workspace in Minutes a Day”
presented by Cindy Gerber-Tomlinson
of Sterling Life Solutions

• **Members
Referral Breakfast** –
Friday, October 20th 7:30-9:00 a.m. at
B2 Bistro in West Reading

• **Member Networking Mingle** –
Wednesday October 25th, 5:30-7:00 at
Legacy Cigar in West Reading

• **Learn How the SBRA Can Help
Your Business Grow** –
Membership Benefits Update Wednesday,
October 25th 9:00-9:30 a.m., on Zoom

• **Tune-Up Tuesday Workshop** –
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beMarketing Earns 2023 Netty Award for Best SEO Campaign

beMarketing, a leading Philadelphia-based marketing agency, is thrilled to announce that it has been awarded the prestigious Netty Award for Best SEO Campaign. The Netty Awards recognize excellence in the field of digital marketing and celebrate the outstanding achievements of agencies and professionals in the industry. This year, our exceptional work on CCI Consulting has earned us the prestigious award.

The Netty Awards celebrate achievements in the digital landscape, honoring top companies and leaders across more than 100 distinct categories. It sets a benchmark for excellence and is a testament to the creativity, innovation, and technical prowess demonstrated by the winners. beMarketing's exceptional SEO campaign stood out among a competitive field of nominees, showcasing the agency's dedication to delivering top-notch results for its clients.

CEO of beMarketing Brandon Rost expressed his gratitude and excitement

about the company receiving this esteemed award. "We are truly honored to be recognized with the Netty Award for Best SEO Campaign. This achievement is a testament to the hard work and commitment of our talented team who consistently go above and beyond to help our clients succeed in the digital landscape. We believe that effective SEO is about more than just ranking high on search engines; it's about delivering real, measurable results, and this award reaffirms our dedication to that mission."

Netty Awards recipients are selected based on a number of factors including creativity, technical proficiency, innovation, and overall excellence in the respective field. beMarketing's win serves as an affirmation of the hard work, innovative thought, and dedication that we put into our work.

As we celebrate this achievement, we want to extend our deepest gratitude to our incredible team whose talent and commitment made this win possible. We would also like to thank our clients for their unwavering support and trust in our work.

About The Netty Awards

Established to celebrate achievement in the digital age, the Netty Awards are one of the most trusted accolades in the industry. Recognizing excellence across over 100 unique categories, the awards honor top leaders and companies that demonstrate creativity, technical proficiency, innovation, and overall impact in their field.



About beMarketing

Since 2010, beMarketing has been building brands and helping businesses succeed through integrated marketing communications, advertising, and a complete array of other marketing services. The beMarketing team provides a unique blend of cutting-edge tactics and personal service to a broad range of industrial and consumer clients. beMarketing currently works with many local and regional brands on managing their advertising efforts and building their presence through their integrated marketing solutions. For more information, visit <https://bemarketing.com/>.



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PV Summit Schedule

7:00 am – Expo Vendors Set Up
7:30 am – Registration / Continental Breakfast
8:00 am – Exhibit Hall opens in the Main Ballroom
9:00-9:45 am – Breakout sessions 1 & 2
9:45-10:00 am – Break time / Exhibitor Visits
10:00-10:45 am – Breakout Sessions 3 & 4
10:00-11:00 am – CEO Roundtable (Invitation Only)
10:45-11:15 am – Break time / Exhibitor Visits/Lunch Boxes Available
11:15 am-12:30 pm – Keynote Speakers

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RIVERFRONT FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Riverfront Federal Credit Union started in 1948 as the credit union for the Reading Railroad and has focused on improving the financial position of its members and contributing to the community ever since. Riverfront has continued its growth since then, and now serves individuals and businesses throughout Berks County. While the Credit Union offers a full line of financial services similar to other financial institutions, what makes it stand out is its wholehearted commitment to the community.



In 2023 Riverfront will mark 75 years of service by performing "75 Gestures of Goodwill" throughout the year to benefit individuals and other non-profit service organizations in the Berks County area. "Riverfront is very proud of its roots in the Berks County community," says Jamie Denunzio, Riverfront's Chief Operations Officer. "We look forward to continuing to evolve to serve not only the members we have today, but those who will join us in the years to come."

Members can enjoy using many innovative financial tools including a

robust electronic services offering. With Riverfront Live video banking, a consumer can work face-to-face with a Riverfront representative virtually from anywhere in real time to open an account, add services and apply for a loan.

Riverfront's commercial services division offers commercial mortgages, working capital loans and other products designed to help businesses in Berks County grow.

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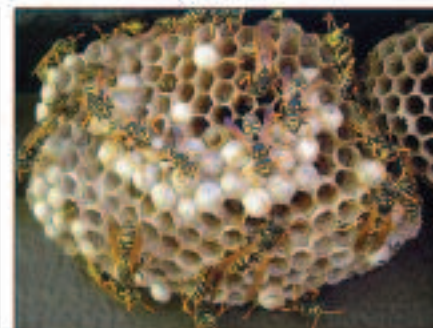
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THE CASE OF THE MISSING BENEFICIARY



LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

By Supriya G. Philips, Esquire, Wolf, Baldwin & Associates, P.C.

Wills are comprehensive legal documents. They are the foundation of estate planning, allowing individuals to direct how their assets will be distributed and who will distribute them. There are many considerations when drafting a Will that the average person may not be privy to, which is why meeting with an attorney is highly recommended. Other than the usual drafting errors, such as ambiguity or misspellings, one of the biggest blunders a person can make when drafting or failing to update a Will is leaving property to an estranged family member or friend. If you thought replacing your broken water heater was expensive, wait until you hear about the duty to locate missing beneficiaries in Pennsylvania.

Personal Representatives and the Fiduciary Duty

When a Pennsylvania resident dies with a valid Will, a "testate" estate is born. The personal representative of a testate estate is usually appointed by the decedent's will and is called an Executor. An Executor plays a primary role in administering an individual's estate; he or she has the responsibility of overseeing the distribution of assets, settling debts and obligations, and filing necessary paperwork with the local and state government. An Executor owes a fiduciary duty to the beneficiaries under the Will. The Supreme Court holds that the level of "diligence and care required of [an Executor] is precisely that which a man of ordinary prudence would practice in the care of his own estate... A reasonable degree of vigilance and the exercise of good faith is the standard of the [Executor's] duty." In *re Estate of Stephenson*, 364 A.2d 1301, 1306 (1976).

Notification of Estate Administration to All "Known" Potential Beneficiaries

The Executor of an estate is legally required to notify every person known to him as a potential beneficiary under the Will. 20 Pa.C.S. § 3503 states, "The [Executor] shall give written notice of ... confirmation to every person known to [him] to have or assert an interest in the estate as beneficiary, heir, next of kin or claimant." Similarly, Orphan's Court Rule 6.3 requires notice to every person "known" to have or claim an interest in the estate. The Superior Court has held that under 20 Pa.C.S. § 3503 and Orphan's Court Rule 6.3, a presumption arises that the Executor, as an officer of the court and a fiduciary, will "make an honest effort to determine those persons lawfully entitled to the estate." In *re Estate of Alexander*, 758 A.2d 182, 187 (Pa. Sup. 2000).

(Continued on page 42)






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

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LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

(Continued from page 40)

The Standard of Due Diligence

But what does “an honest effort” entail exactly? The Superior Court offers clarification. In 1986, a woman named Lydia Alexander passed away after executing a valid Will leaving her estate to her “relatives in Russia” if they could be identified and located within one year. Under the terms of the Will, the Executor was to expend “every effort” to contact her family. Six months into the estate administration, the Executor began his search by hiring a Russian translator. He provided the translator with several papers regarding potential relatives and the translator sent two letters to an address found within those documents. The translator’s efforts were to no avail. At the expiration of the one-year deadline, the Executor obtained a Court order to distribute Alexander’s estate, approximately \$120,000.00, to the Will’s contingent beneficiaries: St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and St.

Christopher’s Hospital of Philadelphia.

Ten years after the final distributions of the estate, Alexander’s relatives in Russia filed a petition in the Orphans’ Court Division of Bucks County to recover and redistribute the estate’s assets, arguing that their lack of notice rendered the Court order null. The trial court agreed. On appeal, the Superior Court stated that, “potential beneficiaries entitled to notice include those who [are] ascertainable by the exercise of due diligence on the part of the [Executor].” In *re Estate of Alexander*, 758 A.2d 182, 187 (Pa. Sup. 2000). The Court held that the Executor failed to meet that standard. First, the Executor neglected to utilize information from additional documents in his possession and identify the surnames of Alexander’s relatives. Then, he hired a translator to locate the relatives instead of an experienced genealogist. He delayed his investigation by six months despite the one-year deadline and he violated Orphans’ Court Rule 13.2 by failing to notify a foreign consulate.

(Continued on page 44)

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Phoenix Village Luxury Apartments

Imagine Your Life In Walking Distance

Phoenixville is known to be one of the best places to live in Pennsylvania. Many people choose to live in Phoenixville because of the downtown charm and walkability.

Are you looking for unique local restaurants with eclectic menu options? Check. How about multiple award-winning craft breweries, a few wineries and even a distillery? You bet. Perhaps it's nightlife or art galleries, cafes, and upscale boutiques? Indeed. You say you want all of this within close, comfortable walking distance? Yep, that just about sums up the town of Phoenixville. Yet one cannot capture the feel of Phoenixville without the strong sense of community that Phoenix Village Apartments provides. Anchored in the heart of Bridge Street, directly across from the Great American Pub, Phoenix Village is just doors down from all Phoenixville has to offer, including many on-site shops and restaurants such as Sedona Taphouse, Vintner's Table and Chikara Sushi, just to name a few. Imagine living in an exciting town, full of color and life, yet also passing your neighbors on the sidewalks and feeling a sense of belonging.

Phoenix Village offers spacious Studio, 1, 2, and 3 bedroom luxury apartments with all the contemporary finishes you have come to expect including stainless steel appliances, granite counters, washer/dryer in each residence, and walk-in closets. Phoenix Village isn't just a place to live, it's a place to live life to the fullest. The community amenities include a sophisticated resident lounge with billiards and fireplace, resort swimming pool and spa, fitness center, business center, theater room, courtyard with grilling area, fire pit and outdoor flat screen, and much, much more! Residents enjoy an extensive event calendar.

Imagine your life in walking distance to everything you need. Jog or walk with your favorite furry friend by the river or take a leisurely stroll to one of our many local artisan coffee shops.

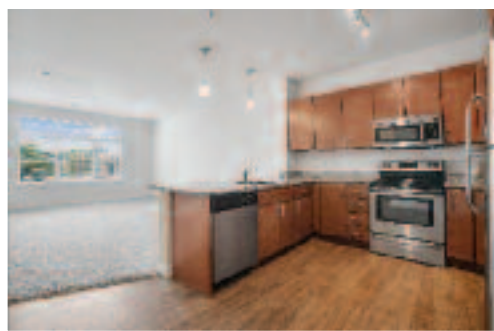
Enjoy a movie or live performance at the historic Colonial Theatre. Visit artisan galleries, eclectic boutiques, or the local farmer's market. There's no end to the variety of delicious local restaurants and vibrant nightspots. As noted by Forbes Magazine: "Nightlife is buzzing on a weeknight at craft breweries, fine restaurants, shops and live music venues, and one wonders why there's such a volume of activity in a locale with a population of about 19,000."

Local and nearby parks and recreational facilities allow residents to enjoy boating, kayaking, canoeing, tubing, hiking, biking, yoga, rock climbing, a virtually endless amount of activities. The Phoenixville community is well-located, offering easy access to Valley Forge, King of Prussia, Malvern, and other surrounding neighborhoods.

Weekend festivals are a regular occurrence and another reason to love this town, with some, like the yearly "Blob Fest" and the "Firebird Festival", attracting national attention and visitors from around the globe.

Phoenix Village offers a lifestyle within walking distance to all the charms that downtown Phoenixville offers.

For more information about luxury apartment living at Phoenix Village, please call 833-810-7226 or view www.phxvillage.com.



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LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

(Continued from page 42)

Notice and Jurisdiction

Unfortunately for the contingent beneficiaries, the Executor's failure to exercise due diligence in ascertaining the existence and whereabouts of potential beneficiaries created a jurisdictional defect. The Supreme Court held that notice to potential beneficiaries who are entitled to notice "[is] indispensably necessary to give jurisdiction." In *re Galli's Estate*, 17 A2.d 899, 903 (Pa. 1941). Without jurisdiction, the Orphans' Court order directing payment to the hospitals was null and void. The Superior Court affirmed the trial court's order to return the estate assets, and additionally imposed interest on the recovered funds.

Conclusion

Sometimes exercising due diligence to locate a missing beneficiary can cost an estate a round-trip ticket to Russia. As if being an Executor isn't arduous enough. Why burden your personal representative with the additional headache of finding your elusive third cousin twice removed? Ultimately, it's the locatable beneficiaries that bear the cost of locating the missing one. The more money spent on administering your estate is less money in your loved ones' pockets. If a

family member alienated himself from the rest of the family or you had a falling out with a close friend, and you've previously named that person as a beneficiary in your Will, spare your Executor the time, energy, and money by meeting with an experienced estate planning lawyer, and creating a new one.

Supriya G. Philips, Esquire is an associate attorney of Wolf, Baldwin & Associates, P.C. at the firm's Pottstown office and focuses her practice on estate planning and estate administration. She may be reached at 610.323.7436 or by e-mail to sphilips@wolfbaldwin.com.



SMALL BUSINESSES BLAST IRS OVER NEW TAX CREDIT ANNOUNCEMENT



By Casey Harper,
The Center Square

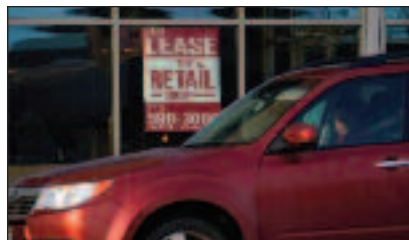
Small businesses are crying foul after the Internal Revenue Service announced it would delay processing of a

key tax credit, the latest in a series of delays for the agency.

The IRS recently announced it will significantly slow its processing of Employee Retention Tax credits that have already been filed and not accept any new claims of this kind until next year. The agency says a flood of fraudulent attempts means it will have to take extra care to avoid fraud.

The tax credit was meant to help businesses and nonprofits hold on to employees during the pandemic. Now, Small businesses say the IRS moving slowly means they will pay the price.

"The IRS is increasingly alarmed about honest small business owners being scammed by unscrupulous actors, and we



could no longer tolerate growing evidence of questionable claims pouring in," IRS Commissioner Danny Werfel said in a statement. "The further we get from the pandemic, the further we see the good intentions of this important program abused. The continued aggressive marketing of these schemes is harming well-meaning businesses and delaying the payment of legitimate claims, which makes it harder to run the rest of the tax system. This harms all taxpayers, not just ERC applicants."

The National Federation of Independent Business, a leading small business group, blasted the IRS after the announcement.

(Continued on page 46)

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SMALL BUSINESSES BLAST IRS

(Continued from page 45)

"While misleading marketing for the Employee Retention Tax Credit remains a problem, the IRS should not penalize the hundreds of thousands of small businesses that have followed the eligibility rules, correctly filed claims, and need help now," Kevin Kuhlman, NFIB Vice President of Federal Government Relations, said in a statement. "NFIB has heard from many small business owners who are frustrated by the delays in processing claims and lack of communication from the IRS."

A recent NFIB survey found that small businesses are already hurting, in large part because of rising inflation. According to federal data, inflation spiked in August well beyond expectations.

The NFIB poll of small business owners found that they cite inflation as their number one business concern, more than the labor shortage or anything else.

Pandemic-era fraud led to hundreds of billions of dollars being taken from taxpayers across several government programs. Werfel, citing this kind of concern, seemed to suggest that process-

ing could be delayed even further if needed to avoid fraud.

"For those people being pressured by promoters to apply for the Employee Retention Credit, I urge them to immediately pause and review their situation while we look to add new protections and safeguards to stop bad claims from ever coming in," Werfel said. "In the meantime, businesses should seek out a trusted tax professional who actually understands the complex ERC rules, not a promoter or marketer hustling to get a hefty contingency fee. Businesses that receive ERC payments improperly face the daunting prospect of paying those back, so we urge the utmost caution. The moratorium will help protect taxpayers by adding a new safety net onto this program to focus on fraudulent claims and scammers taking advantage of honest taxpayers."

Kuhlman said the IRS delay will only make things harder on small businesses.

"By further delaying the processing of existing claims, the IRS is making it more difficult for small businesses to operate, keep employees, and create jobs," Kuhlman said.



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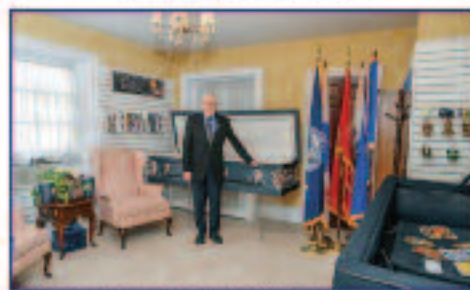
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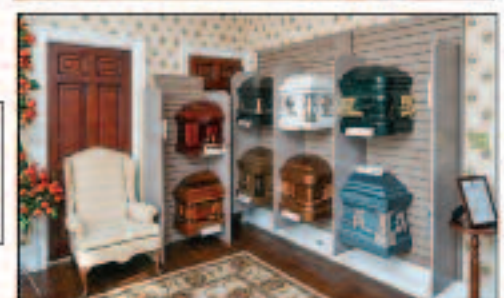


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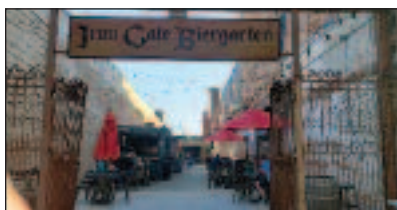


By James Vlahos

In 2007 after having a great year in our insurance business, my partner (Tom Dunn) and I decided to look into making another investment in Pottstown. Our insurance agency

Vlahos Dunn Insurance has been a staple in the community for more than twenty years, living and breathing the changes that the Pottstown community has experienced over the past two plus decades. As our agency was growing nicely, we acquired a nice open lot right in the middle of town. A friend of ours suggested that the lot at 230 E. High Street would make a perfect Beer Garden. We did our research and built our beautiful beer garden — The “Iron Gate Biergarten” — that is now open for all to enjoy.

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We also invite you to check out our Instagram page and follow us and visit www.irongatebiergarten.com or call 610.203.4579. Thinking of a place for your event, bridal shower, birthday, or just the right place to gather with friends? Come join us as we grow together, and don’t forget to bring your furry friends!



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This COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccine Update Initiative for Older Adults and People with Disabilities is supported with funding from the Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Phoenixville Area Senior Center Has Been Awarded \$10,000 by the National Council on Aging to Help Older Adults Get Vaccinated

Phoenixville Area Senior Center is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a \$10,000.00 grant by the National Council on Aging (NCOA) for the COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccine Uptake Initiative. The program is supported with funding from the Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The grant will support Phoenixville Area Senior Center's work in making it as easy as possible for older adults and people with disabilities to get their updated vaccinations and protect their health. The Senior Center will use the funds to reach local Seniors with trusted information and support getting to vaccine appointments. The Phoenixville Area Senior Center also will host 2 vaccine clinics, the first one scheduled for the Health Fair on September 21 at the Phoenixville Area Senior Center at 153 Church Street in Phoenixville, PA. The Second on October 19 during the Oktoberfeast. No appointments necessary. Please bring your Medicare or Insurance card.

Today, nearly nine out of 10 deaths from COVID-19 are among people 65 and over, and 70-85 percent of seasonal flu-related deaths occur in older adults, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While lifesaving vaccines are available, research shows COVID-19 vaccine uptake has slowed among older adults. Thanks to this grant, the Phoenixville Area Senior Center will organize a robust vaccination program to address this challenge in Northern Chester County and Central Montgomery County.

"Everyone's life changed during the pandemic, especially Seniors. If we can



prevent one person from getting and spreading this disease to others, we have to try." said Julie Gaudan, Executive Director of Phoenixville Area Senior Center.

ABOUT PHOENIXVILLE AREA SENIOR CENTER: The Phoenixville Area Senior Center exists to serve, support and enhance the lives of all senior citizens, 55 years of age and older by providing opportunities in the way of programs and activities designed to promote active, independent, healthy lifestyles. For more information about Phoenixville Area Senior Center, visit www.phoenixville-seniorcenter.org.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON AGING: The National Council on Aging (NCOA) is the national voice for every person's right to age well. NCOA believes that how we age should not be determined by gender, color, sexuality, income, or ZIP code. Working with thousands of national and local partners, NCOA provides resources, tools, best practices, and advocacy to ensure every person can age with health and financial security. Founded in 1950, NCAO is the oldest national organization focused on older adults. Learn more at www.ncoa.org and @NCOAging.

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PENNSYLVANIA OPTS INTO AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION



**By Christen Smith,
The Center Square**

Pennsylvania residents receiving or renewing driver's licenses and state ID cards will be automatically registered to vote.

Gov. Josh Shapiro made the announcement on September 19, joining Pennsylvania to a list of 23 other states — including Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Georgia, Virginia, and West Virginia — that automatically walk applicants through the process, unless they opt out.

"Pennsylvania is the birthplace of our democracy, and as Governor, I'm committed to ensuring free and fair elections that allow every eligible voter to make their voice heard," Shapiro said. "Automatic voter registration is a commonsense step to ensure election security and save Pennsylvanians time and tax dollars."

He said the new provision "makes



sense," given that residents provide proof of residency, age, citizenship, and identity when applying for licenses and identification cards.

The announcement comes after a contentious few years over the security of the state's voting procedures after no-excuse mail-in voting was adopted in 2019. Legislative Republicans have pushed for voter ID to close what they call glaring loopholes in the process, while Democrats have long opposed the measure as intentional disenfranchisement of marginalized communities. Democratic leaders, however, agree with the administration's policy change as a win for universal voting access.


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A BUSINESS REFRESH PROJECT



By Jim Sarro, AIA,
LEED AP, BD+C,
Principal,
MG Architects

This business technology supplier's 24,048 SF building is located in a landlocked urban setting. Poised for growth, the company plans included a future acquisition to provide more choices for office technology needs, and expanded services. This required updating their floorplan for new open work areas, offices, a staff kitchen, and showroom space.

Our project scope included a site survey followed by design services for the office renovations with the goal of expanding the open office areas. We prepared Schematic Layouts for these renovations and several layout options to identify potential groupings for workstation configurations and interspersed collaboration spaces.

The Schematic layouts included renovation to the existing break room space and conversion of the storage area to a showroom and kitchen. Designs also included increasing daylight harvesting



with new windows in the office area and kitchen. Suspended ceiling clouds with integrated lighting and painted exposed structure opened the space while maintaining acoustical conditions for an office setting.

Contact me at JimS@MG-Architects.com or 610.376.4927 if you have a question or need a solution to refresh the interior of your business.

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Joseph K. Koury, Esquire Named a Principal of O'Donnell, Weiss & Mattei, P.C.

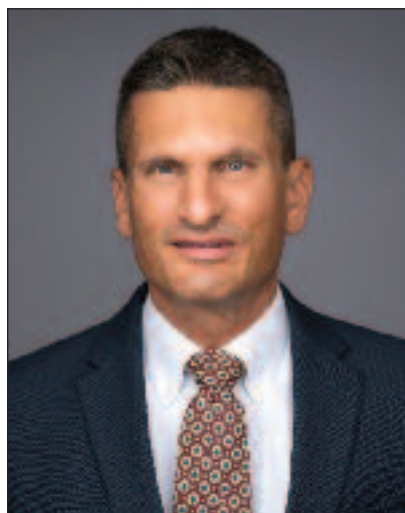
The law firm of O'Donnell, Weiss & Mattei, P.C. recently announced that Joseph K. Koury, Esquire has been named a Principal of the firm effective July 1, 2023.

Attorney Koury joined OWM's Business Department in 2007. He received his undergraduate degree from Dickinson College with a Bachelor of Arts in English, and his Law Degree from Widener University School of Law in Delaware. Mr. Koury also received his L.L.M. in Taxation from Villanova University School of Law. He was admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar in 2002.

As Co-Chair of OWM Law's Business Law Practice Group he advises a broad spectrum of corporate clients and businesses in a variety of matters, including mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, affiliations, and tax structures. He also practices in commercial and residential real estate, and he possesses experience in commercial litigation. Joe is extremely responsive, with excellent communication skills. He enjoys working as part of a team. Mr. Koury works out of the firm's Phoenixville office located at 347 Bridge Street, Phoenixville, however, as with all of OWM's attorneys, Joe is available to see clients in both offices as needed.

Attorney Koury lives with his wife and family in northern Chester County. In addition to his law practice, he is very involved in his community as a member of the Phoenixville Library Board of Trustees and as Solicitor for the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce.

O'Donnell, Weiss & Mattei, P.C. has been serving the Tri-County area for more than 60 years. In addition to the Pottstown office which has been operating since 1955, the firm established its Phoenixville



office in 2006. The firm currently has 14 attorneys who work in client service teams which focus in five central practice areas: Elder Law/Estate Administration/Estate Planning /Special Needs Planning, Business Planning/Banking, Family Law/Divorce/Custody, Accidents/Criminal/DUI/Personal Injury, and Real Estate/Title/Land Use. In addition, several OWM attorneys, including Attorney Koury, are also licensed title agents who regularly conduct residential and commercial real estate settlements.

Attorney Koury is a tremendous asset to the Firm, and very enthusiastic about his commitment to the future of OWM. We look forward to his continued growth and participation in management of the practice.

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TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ELITES IN TODAY'S SOCIETY



DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

By Barry Cassidy

My first job out of college was working for the AFL-CIO in the international headquarters across from Lafayette Park in Washington, D.C. I was tasked with compiling a manual explaining the new *Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1971* and managed speakers at ten workshops nationwide. I had a lot of time on my hands and was tasked with the federal register monitoring on the Act.

I learned how to read government regulations. This became my skill. I can do things others can't because I know when something is tacitly allowed. It is a good skill to have, and it helped me get money for projects and do things like hose down the street in the morning when I was in charge of South Street in Philly. During that time, I identified leaked garbage truck waste as toxic and had at least one truck seized. It was registered to a vacant lot ... but that is another story.

In a way, it is like a government superpower to do things for the public good through technical rules and regulations. If you do it right, there will never be a zero-sum outcome ... where everyone wins. I always thought the public good wins, and that should be enough.

I never operated with a narrative or in a self-motivated manner. I am an environmentalist, but I also believe there are people. People are the ones who, at times, affect actions or, many times, are affected by environmental actions.

If one operates with a narrative, sometimes staying within the bounds of action on a particular item affects different areas of interest. The ones who work on making the narrative apply across jurisdictions are technical people and

have acquired status as technical elites. This is where some political stuff does not make sense because the narrative on one item may run cross-purpose to what is good in another interpretation.

People get into positions of authority and can conspire to slant reality to their benefit. This is where it gets cumbersome, as some individuals are not up to understanding the public good. The effort to help could start something that initially was a good idea, but when things became difficult, the cursory interpretation of the regulations on what you can and what you can't do gets murky.

It comes back to "Trust the Science," and all those papers proved to be propaganda rather than science. But it does not stop there. I liken it to when I lived in Baltimore and had a nice position in the Baltimore County Executive's office. You meet many people, and one person I met said she would let me and my friends into the Colts game for free. She was at the gate and would wave us through. I'm not proud I did that, but this is for the illustration process only.

So, I walked through, my friend Mike walked through, and my cousin Bob was stopped because he had beers in his pocket.

(Continued on page 54)

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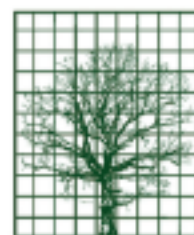
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DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

(Continued from page 52)

They took the beers and let him in; it was not questioned that he did not have a ticket. This is what is happening now in government. It distracts you with a side issue and moves forward with the narrative.

Let me also denote that the people who are the technical elite many times double as the administrative elite. In many cases, the government is run by appointed officials who come to the table with a political agenda. They also could come as a code enforcement guy who is too literal in interpretation to someone who takes a broad view of their work and tramples on other disciplines for the sake of their narrative.

During my attempt to establish a transportation project, I had a high-ranking administrative person laugh in my face based on their limited understanding. It was one of those cases when you start to say something and know you are wasting your breath. I was also on my best behavior and had checked "take no prisoners" at the door.

And what I have concluded ... It is all like that anymore. You cannot trust much in the public sector, and maybe I have the energy to fight, but for what purpose? To say I am right? It does not matter any longer if there is an objective truth; if it conflicts with the

narrative, it must be silenced.

People in administrative positions have acquired power, the political narrative's power. In some cases, it is the power of self-interest. It is where these mix that there becomes a real problem. If you or my gate-crashing cousin Bob will benefit personally from something, there is a moral obligation, a standard of integrity that must be followed. That is no longer the case on a national or local level. The headlines may be national, but the part that makes your life more difficult is on the local level.

It is time to question authority locally and see the response. If it is overwhelming denunciation, try to make you look like a fool, and the question is so outrageous no one should get behind you, or they will be labeled as horrible ... then you know you are right.

Fooling around with all of the flood stuff in Downingtown has been confusing. I believe I have found one of those instances. I don't particularly appreciate how some locals were put in a basket of deplorables when they voiced concerns. I believe I am going to follow up just for my own satisfaction.

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



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FINAL NATIONAL SECURITY GUARDRAILS FOR CHIPS FOR AMERICA INCENTIVES PROGRAM RELEASED

**Guardrails Finalized by the Department of Commerce Will Ensure
Manufacturing and Technology Investments Under the CHIPS Act Bolster
Technological and National Security of America, Allies, and Partners**

The U.S. Department of Commerce recently released the final rule implementing the national security guardrails of the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act. The rule elaborates on two core provisions of the statute: the first, prohibiting CHIPS funds recipients from expanding material semiconductor manufacturing capacity in foreign countries of concern for ten years; and the second, restricting recipients from certain joint research or technology licensing efforts with foreign entities of concern.

The rule will help ensure CHIPS investments enhance global supply chain resilience in coordination with allies and partners. The CHIPS and Science Act is part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda for unleashing a manufacturing and innovation boom, driving U.S. competitiveness, and strengthening economic and national security.

This final rule follows careful consideration of comments submitted in response to the proposed rule, which was published in March 2023. The Department reviewed and incorporated suggestions from stakeholders, including representatives of the domestic and

foreign semiconductor industry, academia, labor organizations, trade associations, and others in developing this rule. The rule offers details and definitions on national security measures applicable to the CHIPS Incentives Program, including limiting funding recipients from expanding semiconductor manufacturing in foreign countries of concern.

The bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act included clear guardrails to strengthen national security. The statute: Prohibits recipients of CHIPS incentives funds from using the funds to construct, modify, or improve a semiconductor facility outside of the United States;

Restricts recipients of CHIPS incentives funds from investing in most semiconductor manufacturing in foreign countries of concern for 10 years after the date of award; and,

Limits recipients of CHIPS incentives funds from engaging in certain joint research or technology licensing efforts with a foreign entity of concern that relates to a technology or product that raises national security concerns.

(Continued on page 56)

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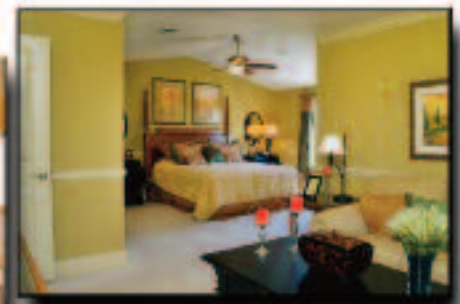


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NATIONAL SECURITY GUARDRAILS FOR CHIPS

(Continued from page 55)

If these guardrails are violated, the Department can claw back the entire federal financial assistance award. This final rule provides details on and definitions for these national security guardrails. In particular, the rule:

Establishes Standards to Restrict Expansion of Advanced Facilities in Foreign Countries of Concern: The statute prohibits the material expansion of semiconductor manufacturing capacity for leading-edge and advanced facilities in foreign countries of concern for 10 years from the date of award. In addition to front-end and back-end processes, the rule clarifies that wafer production is included within the definition of semiconductor manufacturing. The final rule ties expanded semiconductor manufacturing capacity to the addition of cleanroom or other physical space and defines material expansion as increasing a facility's production capacity by more than five percent. This threshold is intended to capture even modest transactions to expand manufacturing capacity but allows funding recipients to maintain their existing facilities through normal course-of-business equipment upgrades and efficiency improvements.

Limits the Expansion of Legacy Facilities in Foreign Countries of Concern: The statute places limits on the

expansion and new construction of legacy facilities in foreign countries of concern. The rule provides details regarding this restriction, prohibiting recipients from adding new cleanroom space or production lines that result in expanding a facility's production capacity beyond 10 percent. The rule establishes a notification process for recipients that have plans to expand legacy chip facilities so the Department can confirm compliance with the national security guardrails.

Classifies Semiconductors as Critical to National Security: While the statute allows companies to expand production of legacy chips in foreign countries of concern in limited circumstances, today's rule classifies a list of semiconductors as critical to national security, thereby subjecting them to tighter restrictions. This designation covers chips that have unique properties that are critical to U.S. national security needs, including current-generation and mature-node chips used for quantum computing, in radiation-intensive environments, and for other specialized military capabilities. This list of semiconductor chips was developed in consultation with the Department of Defense and U.S. Intelligence Community.

Details Restrictions on Joint Research and Technology Licensing Efforts with

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Foreign Entities of Concern: The statute restricts covered entities from engaging in joint research or technology licensing with a foreign entity of concern that relates to a technology or product that raises national security concerns. Foreign entities of concern include those owned or controlled by foreign countries of concern, those on the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) Entity List and Treasury Department's Chinese Military-Industrial Complex Companies (NS-CMIC) list, and others as outlined in the statute. This restriction does not apply to several types of engagements which are necessary to existing operations and do not threaten national security, such as activities related to international standards, involving patent licensing, and to enable funding recipients to utilize foundry and packaging services.

International Coordination with U.S Partners and Allies

The Department appreciates the extensive input and cooperation from U.S. partners and allies while developing this rule. The Department will continue coordinating with international allies and partners to support a healthy global semiconductor ecosystem that drives innovation and is resilient to cybersecurity threats, natural disasters, pandemics, geopolitical conflict, and more. As semiconductors and technologies continue to evolve, the United States will work with allies and partners and develop coordinated strategies to

protect our collective economic and national security.

As the Department has been implementing the CHIPS and Science Act, it has remained in close contact with U.S. partners and allies, including through engagements with the Republic of Korea, Japan, India and the United Kingdom, and through the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, European Union-United States Trade and Technology Council and North American Semiconductor Conference. The Department will continue coordinating closely with the U.S. partners and allies to advance these shared goals, advance our collective security, and strengthen global supply chains.

About CHIPS for America: CHIPS for America is part of President Biden's economic plan to invest in America, stimulate private sector investment, create good-paying jobs, make more in the United States, and revitalize communities left behind. CHIPS for America includes the CHIPS Program Office, responsible for manufacturing incentives, and the CHIPS Research and Development Office, responsible for R&D programs, that both sit within the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) at the Department of Commerce. NIST promotes U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology in ways that enhance economic security and improve our quality of life. NIST is uniquely positioned to successfully administer the CHIPS for America program because of the bureau's strong relationships with U.S. industries, its deep understanding of the semiconductor ecosystem, and its reputation as fair and trusted. Visit <https://www.chips.gov> to learn more.



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