

INSIDE: Focus on Pottstown Revitalization • Holiday Gift Guide • Social Media Tips: Make a Good First Impression

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**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 Cadzo 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.

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

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FOR SALE-

504-512 Chestnut St., Pottstown



Attention Real Estate Developers!

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

Reduced to \$665,000

LAND FOR SALE Washington Twp - Berks County

**Approx. 61 acres with road frontage on Rt 100,
Limekiln Rd, and Passmore Rd.**



Various Zoning with various possibilities. Print available in office. Only 38 acres of parcel #89-5398-10-35-7798 is being sold of the 42 acres. Seller will subdivide corner of Rt 100 and Passmore after an offer is received. Taxes TBD after subdivision.

1,995,000

FOR SALE- 355 Circle of Progress Dr. - Pottstown

There is a main general office with kitchen cabinets measuring 15'x36'; 3 smaller offices (10'x16, 10'x11 and 10'x11) Board/conference room 11'6x14' powder room and a 7x9 utility room. This totals approximately **1,352 sq ft of office space.**

This part of building has a heat pump and central a/c. (see LEASE ad to left). The back part of the building is rented warehouse space. **The warehouse is approximately 5,000 sq ft of space** and has a small office, powder room and **loading dock**. Warehouse space is rented year to year for \$2,400 per month.

\$949,000



FOR LEASE 355 Circle of Progress, Pottstown PRIME OFFICE SPACE



Main office, 3 smaller offices, Conference Room, Powder Room & Utility Room. Approx 1,352 Sq ft \$1750/mo plus electric, heat, water, sewer, trash, lawn care & snow removal.



PHOTO BY STEVE LADNER PHOTOGRAPHY

Cover Story: Local nonprofit Community Health and Dental Care (CHDC) expands its service offerings to Boyertown, providing affordable, high-quality healthcare in Montgomery, Berks, and Chester counties, regardless of a patient's ability to pay.



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Published by: MACnificent Pages, P.O. Box 334, Pottstown PA 19464-0334

Subscribe online! www.422bizmag.com

Editor & Publisher – Bill Haley; Advertising Manager – Patti Seigel

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Community Health and Dental Care

CHDC Adds Boyertown Location, Expands Service Offerings to Address the Growing Need for Affordable Quality Health Care

Community Health and Dental Care (CHDC), a nonprofit health center, has been providing affordable, quality, and preventive health care that is accessible to residents of Montgomery, Berks and Chester counties since 2008. Its initial funding came from the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation and local businesses. Community Health and Dental Care is classified as a federally qualified health center. It serves people of all ages in low-income communities and does not turn away patients who cannot pay. As a federally qualified health center, CHDC also receives grant money from the Health and Services Resource Administration (HRSA) to help subsidize its services.

Honoring its mission statement "... to identify gaps in health services and to ensure access to appropriate levels of care for all people in the service area regardless of their ability to pay," CHDC accepts patients with and without insurance and gives discounts based on income and family size. Presently, it has over 25,000 active patients.

Headquartered in North Coventry Township at 351 West Schuylkill Road, behind Dick's Sporting Goods at The Shoppes at Coventry, CHDC offers primary care, pediatrics, podiatry, vision, dental, physical therapy, behavioral health and medication-assisted treatment, phlebotomy, and dispensary services at this location.

NEW BOYERTOWN OFFICE



PHOTOS BY STEVE LADNER PHOTOGRAPHY



CHDC Boyertown Medical

Two additional Pottstown offices — 700 and 802 Heritage Drive — focus on dental care and OB/GYN and CHDC partners with the supplemental nutrition program for women and children (WIC program), which is located on the lower level of 700 Heritage Drive. In 2020, CHDC launched a fourth location on Route 100 in Barto offering medical, dental, and physical therapy, and most recently opened a 2,000 square-foot medical and behavioral health office at 6 E. Philadelphia Avenue in Boyertown.

CHDC also offers virtual visits. “You don’t even have to leave your home,” said Bridgette McGivern, the center’s Chief Executive Officer. “If it’s an appropriate visit you can click on your phone or your computer and we do virtual visits which is great, especially with it getting dark earlier. People don’t want to go out, so that’s another great way to get access to care,” she said.

“Over the last 14 years that I’ve been here, we’ve been steadily expanding, and we are currently growing at an average of 425 new patients per month,” McGivern said. To accommodate this impressive growth — up from an

average of 300 new patients per month a year ago — CHDC opened its newest location in Boyertown in July of this year. “We’ve always pulled patients from Boyertown, with patients going to our Barto or The Shoppes at Coventry and Heritage Drive locations, and that’s been an area where we’ve seen a lot of growth, as far as the needs in that community,” McGivern said.

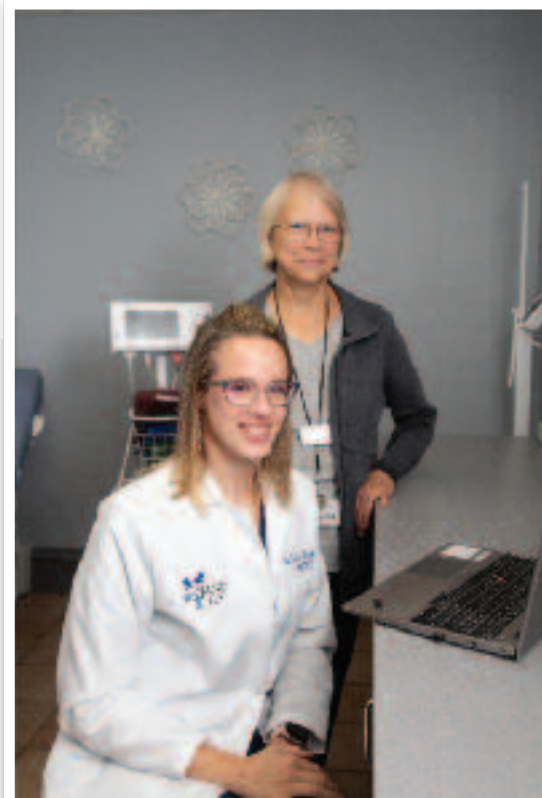
In 2023 CHDC partnered with an outside vendor to do a community needs assessment which revealed there are approximately 2,500 low-income people in the Boyertown area that still did not have access to CHDC’s services or any other viable options. “We also found out from that community needs assessment that there were actually more people who definitely could benefit from becoming a patient of the health center,” McGivern said. “After reviewing the data and looking at the census tracking, we felt that having a site right on the main street in Boyertown would make access easier for people who might be having transportation barriers. As we’re seeing right now, a lot of people are walking to the new location. It’s not a huge office, but when I saw the opportunity, I felt it was a good one to jump on, because it would be easier for people to access our services, and we already have partners right there.”

CHDC has partnered with The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy next door to the new location. “They’ve been a great community partner for almost 30 years in the Boyertown area,” McGivern said, “We have had projects with them where we’re integrating a clinical pharmacist, especially for the Medicare population, to be an addition to the care team, because it can be confusing, how many medications you’re taking, making sure you’re doing a Medication reconciliation with your care team, and determining the need for any other support and advice,” she said.

Because the Boyertown location is only 2,000 square feet right now, CHDC is offering women’s health, pediatrics, and family practice at that location, with plans to add increased behavioral health services. “It’s not a big office,” McGivern said. “We would love to engage with increased access to dental, but dental needs space, so we refer



Free shuttle service.



**Krista Dankiw-Ludwig, MSN, CRNP, WHNP-BC and
LoriAnn Moser, Registered Nurse – CHDC Boyertown.**

patients to our Barto location or The Shoppes at Coventry. We offer free transportation, and that includes the Boyertown site. So, if someone comes in for a medical visit and they hadn’t had a dental exam, and they don’t have transportation, our shuttle will take them to one of our other locations that offers some of our other service lines,” she said.

To assist as many people as possible, CHDC runs a free shuttle service to and from its health centers from many convenient stops throughout the tri-county region. Patients who are 18 years or older can sign up for transportation at the same time that they make an appointment.

In addition to a shuttle service, CHDC operates a mobile medical unit and a mobile dental unit in the tri-county area which functions as a health care home on wheels, eliminating the transportation barrier and bringing health care to community locations. At any of the five office locations, patients can schedule same-day appointments. For the sake of time and convenience, they can arrange multiple appointments on the same day. Weekend and evening visits are also available.

(Continued on page 8)



Bridgette McGivern, CEO

(Continued from page 7)

McGivern said that CHDC is also looking for the opportunity to partner with local businesses in the Boyertown area for employee health visits, if there is gap in insurance coverage. "There are a lot of great community-based businesses in the Boyertown area," she said. "It's just a wonderful area. We could partner with small businesses if they might offer health insurance for their employees but don't offer dental, or vision, or other kinds of services we have, such as physical therapy or MAT (medication assisted treatment), and I think that partnering with these businesses is a great opportunity. We can do an agreement and see their staff come to one of our health center sites to receive services at a fixed cost. That way, they're also giving access to their employees, and we all want healthy and happy employees, and having the right health care accessibility is important to have and be available. What we provide can help complement what they offer to their employees," she explains.

CHDC is fully committed to providing high quality, timely, and preventive care, and staffs its sites accordingly. Depending on their medical needs, patients can choose from seven Family Medicine Providers (consisting of two family physicians, four nurse practitioners, and one physician assistant); four Pediatric Providers (consisting of one pediatrician and three nurse practitioners); three Podiatrists; three Women's Health OB/GYN Providers (one Doctor of OB/GYN and two Women's Healthcare Nurse Practitioners); one MAT (medication-assisted treatment) provider.

CHDC also has six Dentists; eleven Dental Hygienists; four Physical Therapy providers (consisting of three Physical Therapists and one Physical Therapy Assistant); two Optometrists; and three Behavioral Health Providers.

Additionally, CHDC offers medication assistance treatment services that are integrated with behavioral health. Because CHDC does not run an in-patient



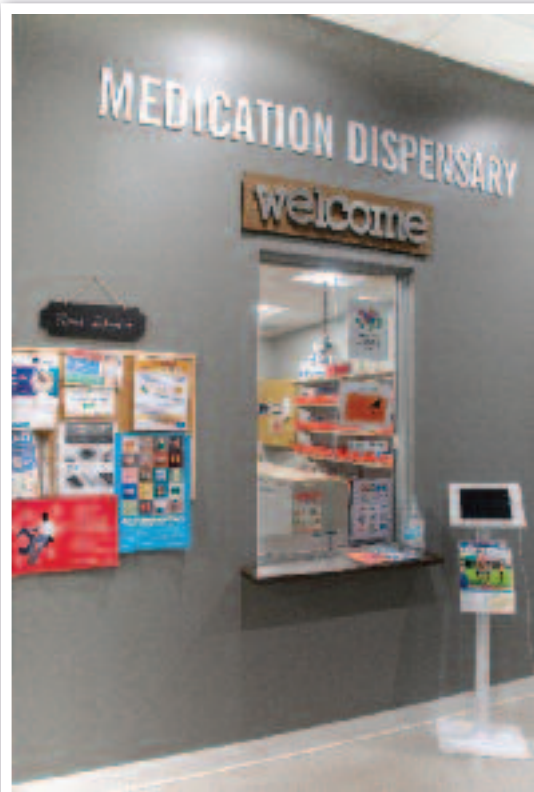
Photos on pages 8 and 9 were taken at the Shoppes at Coventry location.

treatment program, it refers patients to other reputable providers. However, once someone has left an in-patient facility, CHDC provides the person with its Center of Excellence (COE) case management support. As with any CHDC patient, the goal is to keep the person healthy and safe and prevent future issues.

Patients often come to the center through the recommendations of family, friends, and other trusted sources. The center also receives patient referrals through insurance. "There is interest with school districts, public housing units, and community organizations to collaborate and set up a small area so that we can be on these sites. My goal is to go where the people are, where there is a need," McGivern said.

Center of Excellence

In 2016, then Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services selected CHDC as one of 45 state Centers of Excellence for Opioid Use Disorder. At the time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) had ranked Pennsylvania third for highest drug overdose deaths in the country. By 2021, the state had dropped to tenth. "Opioid disorders are not going away," McGivern points out. "We have this great designation and that carries into the Boyertown and any location. We have staff that help people navigate through what their first step is. We'll help them refer out. It's a growing problem, so, I just want people to know we have that great resource."





The Centers of Excellence designation has enabled CHDC to hire COE case managers who focus specifically on those struggling with opioid disorders. Among other things, case managers help arrange patient care, monitor and evaluate the patient's progress, and assist with insurance and/or receiving low-cost prescriptions and services. Care management teams aren't restricted to those with opioid and other substance abuse disorders. "If people are suffering and they don't have heat, they can't pay their rent, or they don't have food, the last thing on the minds is their health. They need to figure out those basic necessities first. That is where case management comes in," McGivern said.

All CHDC patients have a team to help them navigate the increasingly complex health care system. A CHDC care management team includes nurses, a behavioral health provider who is often a licensed practical counselor, a primary care provider, and a dentist. The team also has pharmacy assistance to help patients with medication management. The center is in the process of hiring a nutritionist but, in the interim, a care team nurse addresses patient nutrition, focusing specifically on the diabetic population but also aiding with food assistance.

In terms of food assistance, CHDC has partnered with the Chester County Food Bank and its Fresh2You mobile market. From June to November, the Fresh2You food truck travels throughout Chester County, supplying high-quality, local, seasonal, and affordable fresh fruits and vegetables to communities with limited access to wholesome foods. Customers can use SNAP, Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) checks, and all other forms of payment. Those who use SNAP or FMNP to shop at Fresh2You will earn vouchers that can be applied to future purchases. Additionally, anyone possessing a "food prescription" from CHDC can redeem it for fresh produce at the mobile market.

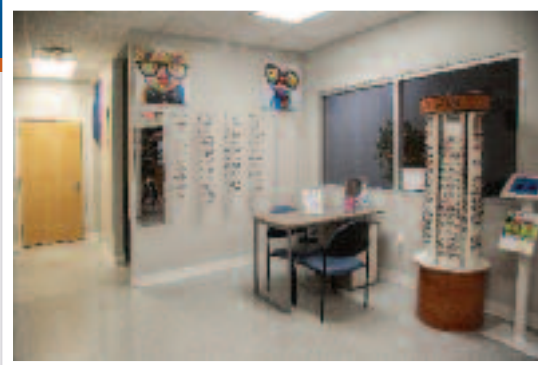
CHDC recently received a grant from Health Resource Service Administration (HRSA) to increase behavioral health services for all their patients at all locations. "There are about 1,900 health centers in the United States and 400 received the award, and we were one of them," McGivern said. "We're going to receive \$1.1 million over

two years to increase hiring behavioral health staffing to help manage the referrals, because it's hard for people to find a place that's not booked out, and we will be able to integrate that visit right then and there, either virtually or in person. We will be adding a tele-site psychiatrist," she said. "That will help with more complicated cases, especially to assist our providers with medication management and coordinating care plans together. One of our providers is going to be a psychiatric nurse practitioner, which, if a provider refers that you have depression and people have a high need, that position can help people get the treatment right then and there."

McGivern said CHDC will be able to do some more group classes for patients with the grant funding. "It could be amongst a thousand areas where people are struggling," she said. "Maybe it's a support group for parents of children with ADHD. We're trying to get more needed, real-life assistance for people, so they don't have to bounce around Montgomery, Chester and Berks counties. We're super excited to receive this award because it's not easy to compete against the whole country and make the case that we have the biggest needs here in the Pottstown surrounding area," she explains. "We need the funding and we obviously told the story well and that will give us more resources."

Caring for both insured and uninsured patients

Community Health and Dental Care accepts over 400 insurances, including Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program), and TRICARE, which covers active and retired military service members and their families. An onsite case manager can assist Medicare and Medicaid-eligible patients with registering for these insurance programs. For this year's Medicare open enrollment, which runs from October 15 through December 7, CHDC patients can consult case managers for help with selecting a plan and understanding the Medicare buy-in program, which helps pay for certain out-of-pocket health care costs.



Patients who do not qualify for either Medicare or Medicaid can apply for a sliding fee discount based on the current federal poverty level — the amount changes every year. For someone who is 100 percent slide and has met the household income and family size, they can come into the health center, apply for the sliding fee discount, and pay a nominal fee of \$25 for a medical visit and \$40 for dental. CHDC's medication dispensary enables patients to get prescriptions for as low as \$7 if they're eligible for the 100 percent sliding fee discount.

Among the dental services offered are routine check-ups, teeth cleaning, cavity fillings and root canals, tooth extractions, crowns, dentures, and night guards. The center encourages its patients to take care of their teeth and stay up-to-date with check-ups. Good dental health translates into good physical health and fewer illnesses and emergency room visits.

"For patients, the first step is to come in and get a medical exam," McGivern said. "If children, adults, and seniors kept up on their medical and dental care and went once a year to get a wellness check and six-month dental hygiene checks, it could change their lives. Screenings are there to be preventive. Don't wait until something really bad happens and you end up in the ER, getting a huge bill and costing the healthcare system so much more money. That's why we have these preventive measures, programs, and screenings, to keep people healthy."

Addressing the growing need for good health care

Every three years, nonprofit hospitals and certain nonprofit medical centers, including CHDC, must perform a community health needs assessment. The assessment ensures that a nonprofit organization helps its intended population, furthers its charitable mission, and does not profit from its work. It also identifies growing needs and changing demographics within a community.

CHDC is currently looking at possibly expanding their footprint at The Shoppes at Coventry. "We're in conversation with the owners of The Shoppes at Coventry to look at taking over a portion of the adjacent space recently vacated by Dick's Sporting Goods," McGivern said. "Over the next couple months, we'll determine if it's a good fit. We'll keep our existing space in The Shoppes at Coventry but we'll look at expanding space for dental and more behavioral health and add community rooms and some more offices. In our region, the need is ever-growing, and we strive to understand what the needs are in our community," she said.

For further information about Community Health and Dental Care or to schedule an appointment or donate to the center, email info@ch-dc.org, visit the CHDC website at www.ch-dc.org or call 610.326.9460.

FOCUS ON POTTSTOWN REVITALIZATION

Pottstown So Much More Than a Street



By Peggy Lee Clark, Pottstown Area Economic Development (PAED)

There is a natural interest in what is new and certainly Pottstown continues to provide opportunity for growth and revitalization. However, it

is good for us all to think about the business and commerce that goes on every day here in Pottstown. Some of the companies have been part of the community for decades and some are new to the area. Some are familiar names and some of them are unknown but, they are all important to the ongoing success of Pottstown.

Throughout the 5.5 miles of the Borough of Pottstown between January and June 2024 Twenty-two new businesses opened. Here is a sampling of those that have set up shop over the years.

- **Aegis Technologies** is a family owned and operated company located in the Circle of Progress that manufactures pipe fittings for the fire sprinkler industry.



- **Toggle, Inc.** is an innovative company developing hardware, software and providing services to automate the pre-assembly of critical construction materials.

- **Dana Incorporated** – For over 100 years, Dana has been one of Pottstown's largest employers, manufacturing and supplying parts to the passenger and medium and heavy-duty commercial vehicle manufacturers.



Light Up High Street will continue throughout the Downtown blocks of High Street, as PAED works diligently on additional funding opportunities and coordinating with Pottstown's Downtown building owners and businesses. Creating the canopy of lights accomplishes many things. It brings visual appeal to the Downtown and it enhances public safety.

- **Precision Polymer Products** has been manufacturing elastomeric products for the Medical, Automotive, and Electronics and Pharmaceutical Industries since 1984.

- **DJ Pallets** moved to Pottstown for the growth potential it provided in their manufacturing and repairing of wooden pallets for a variety of customers.

- **Helwig Woodworks** specializes in the production of fine custom residential cabinetry and millwork.

- **Grocery Bargain Outlet** is a family owned and operated grocery store that opened in spring 2024, increasing the availability of a variety of food to Pottstown Area Residents and jobs for 33 individuals.

- **VideoRay**, an industry leader in underwater robotics for a variety of missions, is about to celebrate its 25th Anniversary.

In addition to these businesses, High Street continues to expand its food and beverage offerings along with multiple retail stores.

The sum total of old and new is all part of an exciting future for Pottstown.



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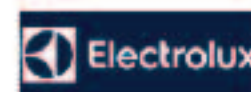
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More Reasons to Pick Pottstown

- Centrally located between Reading, Allentown and King of Prussia, as well as Philadelphia and New York City, with proximity to major highways including Rte. 422, and Rte. 100.

- Industrial history spans centuries and has produced an infrastructure with recent and planned multi-million-dollar renovations, continuing to make the Borough a great location for conducting business in today's global economy.

- Tax Incentives including: Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA), a 7-year, Borough wide tax abatement on approved properties with completed improvements; Three identified Qualified Opportunity Zones in the Borough of Pottstown offer "deferral of, reduction of, or elimination of future" capital gains taxes to investors.

- Central business district features historic architecture, walkable tree-lined streets and a growing list of shops, restaurants, and bars.

- Diversity of space across the 5.5 miles includes industrial, warehouse, commercial and suburban office parks, in addition to the traditional downtown.

- Arts & Cultural Organizations including Steel River Playhouse, originated in 2001, relocated and re-imagined in 2008 after a \$2.4 million transformation of a 20th century vacant department store into a performing arts center. Montgomery County Community College houses its North Hall Art Gallery in a former 19th Century industrial space that is a work of art in its own right, with exposed brick walls and gleaming wood floors- re-opening in early 2022, featuring an array of art and local artists with exhibits changing throughout the year.

- Proximity to retail shopping including Philadelphia Premium Outlets, Upland Square Shopping Mall, Home Depot, Costco, Giant, Target, Staples, Dicks, Walmart, and the Borough's many specialized Downtown shops such as Agnes Edmunds, Dani Bee Funky, Deliah & Dean Food Market, Enchanted Elements Apothecary, Gypsy Dreaming & Counting Stars, Once Upon a Time Consignment Boutique, The Collective, and more...

- Pottstown Municipal Airport, a general service airport with a 2,700-foot-long runway, owned by the Bor-

ough of Pottstown. Nearby privately-owned Pottstown Limerick Airport has a 3,400-foot-long runway. Philadelphia International Airport is a one-hour drive from Pottstown.

- A Class 1 railroad, Norfolk Southern's Harrisburg Freight line, runs along the Schuylkill River through Pottstown. In recent years, Norfolk Southern has made significant investment in modern intermodal facilities within the Borough. This rail line is double-stack capable, providing more efficient transportation services for Pottstown manufacturers.

- Opportunities to stay overnight, including the 119-room/suite Fairfield Marriott and Three Daughters Inn, a three suite Bed & Breakfast, and Motel 6.

- Pottstown Tower Health Hospital with 232-licensed beds, nearly 400 physicians, specialists and providers, Accredited by the Joint Commission; Accreditation with Commendation by the American College of Surgeons, Commission on Cancer; Certified Primary Stroke Center; Certified in Hip/Knee Replacement; Get with the Guidelines - Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award (American Heart As-

sociation/American Stroke Association); American College of Cardiology Accreditation Services- Chest Pain.

- Exceptional education institutions including Pottstown High School's Career and Technical Education programs, enabling students to train in state of the art facilities within 10 fields of study; Montgomery County Community College's Pottstown Campus, opened in 1996 as a second campus (Across 2 campuses, MC3 offers 100+ programs, boasts 78,000 graduates and carries an average annual enrollment of approximately 11,000+ students); The Hill School, accredited by the Middle States Association, and the Ten Schools Admission Organization (TSAO) is a private preparatory boarding high school on 200 acres, with students enrolled from 31 states and 31 countries.



FOCUS ON POTTSTOWN REVITALIZATION

Pottstown Tourism & Recreation District

• Pottstown is home to abundant recreational activities at 17 parks/facilities across 118+ acres, within the 5.5 square miles.

• Bike Pottstown (free community bike share program) bikeschuykill.org.

• Carousel at Pottstown (the 2nd oldest working wooden carousel in the U.S. with an impressive story of finding its way to Pottstown).

• Colebrookdale Railroad (18th Century Railroad provides visitors an authentic rail experience across 35 miles of historic, beautiful, geologically unique, and naturally-unspoiled valleys between three counties.) colebrookdalerailroad.com.

• Manatawny Green Mini Golf Course facebook.com/ManatawnyGreen.

• Memorial Park (45+ acre Memorial Park with Veterans' Island, Trilogy BMX & Skatepark, Bark Park dog park, Fountain of Youth Spray Park, Manatawny Green miniature golf) facebook.com/PottstownParksandRec

• Pottsgrove Manor (Pottsgrove Manor, also known as the John Potts House, is an historic, American home located in the Old Pottstown).

• Historic District; added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. facebook.com/pottsgrovesmanor.

• Riverfront Park (41+ acre park along the river, and across from the Community College).

• Smith Family Plaza (beautiful, landscaped courtyard with central fountain).

• Schuylkill River Trail (Pottstown offers direct access to the Schuylkill River Trail's 120 miles)



• Schuylkill River Greenway Association INHA & Interpretive Center schuykillriver.org.

• Take-it-Outdoors (boat rentals, Bike Pottstown, shuttle services and educational programming) takeitoutdoorsadventures.com.

Downtown District & Annual Events

Annual celebrations and seasonal activities and events attract thousands of visitors to town, including: Summer Cars Shows, the Schuylkill River Sojourn, Volleyball Rumble (largest in the U.S.!), BMX National Event, Pet Fair, Arts Fest, Holiday Parades, Juneteenth, Go Fourth Festival, Pottstown, Haunts on High, Film Festival, Pottstown FARM, Fete en Blanc, Santa Saturday & Tree Lighting, New Year's Polar Bear Plunge... and many more.



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POTTSTOWN, PA MANAGING DIRECTOR
ladymanley56@gmail.com
(215) 817-2525



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Hydier Builders Residential & Commercial

Hydier Builders has been "Serving friends and neighbors since 1968." That sums up their approach to their business. Service.

If you are looking to build a small addition or a brand-new house, Hydier Builders team up with architects and engineers to get the job done. Need new windows? Need your bathroom remodeled? Is it time for a new room or a new deck? Hydier Builders will make your dreams a reality.

Hydier Builders has years of experience planning, managing, and executing construction projects of all kinds. Their team is professional and reliable, and they will work within your constraints. They always stay on the job until it's done to your satisfaction.

Hydier Builders offers special services for landlords and seniors & accessibility. They understand the desire most people have to stay in their homes despite physical changes that have created barriers to everyday living. Through innovative designs and building techniques, Hydier Builders has been successful in helping many people make the necessary modifications to their homes and restore that feeling of comfort that comes from being home. From bathroom components to wheelchair ramps, they look forward to serving you to support your accessibility needs. They can package a set of affordable services to keep your properties in tip-top shape and save you a lot of aggravation.

Remodeling & Additions

Ready to really expand? Hydier Builders is ready to make it happen for you. For kitchens and baths, Hyder Builders does it all, from making simple repairs and alterations to creating your dream kitchen or bath. You may owe it to yourself to upgrade windows and doors to stop leaks, improve energy efficiency

and improve the appearance of your property. Decades of experience make Hydier Builders a great choice for your roofing and siding work to ensure that you have a quality, trouble-free installation.

When it comes to electrical, plumbing and HVAC, you can count on Hydier Builders for efficient and cost-effective repairs, additions and improvements of electrical wiring and plumbing systems.

Are you considering — or already in the process of — selling your home or other property? Did you know that your house will likely sell much faster — and for a much higher price — if you take the time to fix the existing problems before you try to sell it?

Let's face it... if there are things obviously wrong with your property, potential buyers are likely to have serious concerns about making an offer on it. They are more apt to skip your property entirely, and just move on to the next home on their list. And if they do make an offer... it will surely be for much less than you're asking.

You can significantly shorten the sales cycle and get much higher offers by having a professional contractor check out and fix these issues with your house BEFORE they become issues with your potential buyers. By taking this proactive step and getting your home ready for sale, there will be fewer potential obstacles between you and the offer you want.

So, if you're considering selling your home in the near future, give Hydier Builders a call to check out and remedy any problems so that they don't prevent your house from selling... or prevent you from getting the price you want when you do sell it.

Contact Hydier Builders by calling Brian Hydier direct at: 610.724.6104 and visit www.hydierebuilders.com.

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POTTSTOWN, PA

610-323-7003

www.stevesmowershop.com



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up to

\$1,250

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available
W.A.C.

Steve's North End Mower Shop

At Steve's North End Mower Shop, our attention to service and quality has made us an industry leader. At our company, the customer always comes first, and we constantly strive to exceed your expectations.

We service most makes and models of outdoor power equipment. Normal maintenance provided for lawn tractors and zero turns will include a visual inspection for fuel or oil leaks, and the unit will be pressure washed if needed to clean the cooling fins. All fittings will be greased. All cutting and transmission belts, pulleys and cutting spindles will be inspected. The engine oil will be changed and all filters (air, fuel and oil) as well as spark plugs will be replaced. Blades will be sharpened or replaced. The engine RPM's will be checked and adjusted if needed. The transmission oil and filter will be changed on serviceable units. The battery terminals will be cleaned and the battery charged and tested.

We will service any brand or model of outdoor power equipment. Bring your item in or, we can pick it up from your location. Pending your location, local pickups and deliveries are various prices roundtrip. We will quickly prepare a



full diagnosis. There are no hidden fees. Diagnosing small tools takes time. You may decline service after diagnosis, however we require a minimum fee per tool. Your equipment will be returned in diagnosis form - partially or completely deconstructed.

Lawn mower blade sharpenings are available for next day pick up. Chainsaw chain and hedge trimmer sharpenings are available in a timely manner.

Visit www.stevesmowershop.com to get detailed information about us and meet our dedicated staff members. We're looking forward to working with you.

Steve's North End Mower Shop is located at 435 Mangers Mill Road, Pottstown, PA 19464. For additional information please call 610.323.7003.

CELEBRATING Non-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Boyertown Area Multi-Service Festival of Trees Event

The Boyertown Area Multi-Service will be hosting the 18th Annual Festival of Trees Open House on Friday, December 6th, 2024, from 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm and Saturday, December 7th from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm at The Boyertown Area Multi-Service, 200 West Spring Street in Boyertown.

Each year, trees are donated and decorated by the community — individuals, families, businesses, clubs, and organizations. Admission is FREE and the event is enjoyed by people of all ages. The Festival of Trees is also a stop on the Boyertown Holiday House Tour!

Event attendees can look forward to going through a wonderful array of gorgeous Christmas trees and enjoying delicious refreshments. Throughout Friday evening, visitors will have the opportunity to visit with Santa and to purchase raffle tickets for chances to win one of the many completely decorated trees.

For 50 years, The Boyertown Area Multi-Service, Inc. has provided resources and services to meet human and community needs throughout our 211 square mile service area within Southeastern Berks and Northern Montgomery Counties. Multi-Service provides Case Management, food assistance through Preston's Food Pantry, energy assistance, resources, and referrals. Multi-Service also has a Meals on Wheels program and provides office space for partner agencies.

The Ricketts Center, a program of The Boyertown Area Multi-Service, strives to provide activities and programming that everyone within the community can benefit from. The Ricketts Center is dedicated to making advancements and moving in positive directions to best serve everyone within the Pottstown community and surrounding areas. The Center at Spring Street, a program of Boyertown Area Multi-Service, is a lively program for active adults 55 years of age



and older, providing social, recreational, educational, and health and wellness programs and activities as well as a hot, delicious lunch prepared on-site every weekday.

Please join Multi-Service for this beautiful fundraising event as a wonderful way to ring in the holiday season! Proceeds from this event support assistance to individuals and families in need through the many programs and services Multi-Service offers.

If you're interested in supporting The Boyertown Area Multi-Service through this event as an Event Sponsor or a Tree Sponsor, please call 610.367.6957, ext.#230 or email Frank Buttaro at fbuttaro@boyertownareamulti-service.org for more information.



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Boyertown Area Multi-Service

Preston's Pantry Case Management The Ricketts Center Meals on Wheels

2024 Festival of Trees
Friday, December 6th
4:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Saturday, December 7th
10:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Please Join Us To:
EXPERIENCE A MAGICAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION!
Enjoy a winter wonderland of lights, music and a hot holiday event!
All Proceeds Support All the Charitable work done by the Boyertown Area Multi-Service in 2024
Sponsorship opportunities are available
Call or Email Frank at 610 367-6957 Ext. 230
FButtaro@boyertownareamulti-service.org

Multi-Service



Pottstown Plaza
799 N. State St., Pottstown
484.374.6300

Mon-Sat 9am-8pm; Sun 12-6pm

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Realizing The Vision of Affordable Housing with Habitat for Humanity

Affordable housing is more critical now than ever, and Habitat for Humanity is at the forefront of addressing this pressing need. As communities across Montgomery and Delaware Counties face increasing housing costs and economic challenges, Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery and Delaware Counties (HFHMDC) stands as a beacon of hope. We partner with families to build safe, affordable homes with affordable mortgages. This collaboration results in stable shelter and a sense of investment in their community, providing a place for families to thrive, and transform their lives.

One homeowner, Kesha, bought a Habitat home in Glenside, PA. She recalls what life was like before her new home. "I was living in a small two-bedroom apartment with my four children. The apartment was overcrowded, and the rent was increasing every year. It caused a strain on my finances; most of my monthly income was spent on rent. I was desperate to find a larger affordable home for my family but realized that I wouldn't be able to purchase the traditional way as mortgages were not affordable. I felt hopeless." She decided to take a leap of faith and apply for a Habitat home.

Initially, she was skeptical about Habitat for Humanity's mission and its promise of affordable homeownership. "I was not convinced that Habitat for Humanity was a legitimate organization that partnered with families to build affordable homes. I thought it was too good to be true." However, after attending an orientation and a financial literacy program, her perspective began to shift. "The process was one of the best experiences in my life. It gave me hope. My life changed when I was selected to partner with HFHMDC. I learned how to budget and save money by attending the financial literacy course. I learned about home maintenance, and I have met wonderful people."

The journey was not without its challenges. "Habitat does not hand people homes; you must be willing to partner with them to help yourself buy a home," she explains. "I had to participate in 400 hours of sweat equity. I helped build affordable housing for other families. I was painting, hanging drywall, and even helped dig a ditch." Despite the hard work, the rewards were immense.

(Continued on page 16)



every veteran
 deserves a decent place to live.

In honor of Veterans Day this month, we pay tribute to those who have served our country. Veterans Build is dedicated to providing safe, affordable housing while expanding efforts to preserve and improve homes. Habitat MontDelco's Home Repair Program prioritizes critical repairs for veterans, with over 45% of completed repairs benefiting veteran homeowners.

Support our next Veterans Build!
 Together, we can ensure veterans have a safe and dignified place to call home.

Scan the QR code to get started!



Habitat
 for Humanity
 of Montgomery and
 Delaware Counties

Habitat For Humanity MDC
 533 Foundry Road
 West Norriton, PA 19403

Contact Us
 610-278-7710
habitatmontdelco.org

CELEBRATING Non-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

(Continued from page 15)

She shared her story at an annual fundraiser, volunteered at the Habitat West Norriton Restore, and found patience and perseverance throughout the year-long process.

Now, almost eight years into homeownership, she reflects on the best part: having a stable home for her family. "We are creating our own traditions and memories here. Two of my children are now adults and are on their own. This is our gathering place. We are a close-knit family, and I love that I have a big backyard for my grandchildren to play in. I earned my master's degree in 2020, and my daughter earned hers in 2022." Her experience with Habitat exemplifies the transformative power of secure and affordable housing. Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery & Delaware Counties continues to impact families and communities. As Keshia enjoys the stability and joy of her home, her story stands as a testament to what is possible when families and organizations work together to build a brighter future.

We continue to help families across both counties and garner support from the community because of our mission and advocacy for affordable housing in the areas we serve.

There are many ways to support Habitat's mission, either as an individual or corporation. We appreciate individual donations in the form of Habitat's "Hope Builder" program, which individuals can support via a small monthly donation. As an organization, corporate partners can donate to our mission and volunteer on a build site or at our donation-based retail outlet, ReStore — an independently owned thrift store that accepts donations and sells a constantly changing inventory of diverse, high-quality merchandise at a fraction of the retail price. Proceeds from ReStore sales directly support Habitat's mission to build and renovate homes in our communities. Lastly, Habitat for Humanity offers a vehicle donation program, Cars for Homes, where individuals can donate old vehicles (cars, motorcycles, RVs, motorcycles, boats) if they have inflated wheels and can be towed. All vehicles are eligible for a tax deduction.

Together, we can create a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Visit our website to learn more about how you can get involved and make a difference today.

For more information about our program, or to get involved, visit habitat-montdelco.org.

Adventures for a Cause Travel with Purpose

Here at H&G Travel Adventures, we truly believe in the power of travel to create positive change. That's why we've introduced **Adventures for a Cause** — an initiative that combines the excitement of exploring new places with the opportunity to support important causes.

Through this program, we partner with non-profit organizations to organize memorable group travel experiences that also serve as fundraisers. By merging the joy of travel with giving back, travelers can embark on enriching adventures while knowing that a portion of their trip's cost will go towards supporting a non-profit's mission.

With Adventures for a Cause, your organization can tap into our existing group experiences or offer a unique travel opportunity tailored for your supporters. This not only enhances your supporters' travel experiences but also boosts your fundraising efforts.

When supporters book their vacation through our Adventures for a Cause program, a portion of our commission is donated directly to your organization. Your

supporters can contribute to your cause simply by embarking on an unforgettable journey at no extra cost.

Adventures for a Cause can be a fantastic tool for fundraising, community building, and raising awareness for organizations. Your organization will receive increased exposure through our marketing channels by partnering with us. We will shine a spotlight on your mission and the impact of your work, potentially attracting new supporters and boosting community engagement.

We handle all the logistics to ensure a hassle-free experience for your supporters and staff. Our team will collaborate closely with you to customize the program to align with your goals and values.

For more information about Adventures for a Cause, call H&G Travel Adventures at 484.864.4600 or email Diane@HGTravelAdventures.com.

Let's embark on a journey of exploration and impact together. For more details about Adventures for a Cause, please don't hesitate to contact us at H&G Travel Adventures.



Adventure for a Cause

An initiative that combines the excitement of exploring new places with the opportunity to support important causes. Book this trip and \$100 will be donated to your favorite non-profit.



For additional information or to request the full itinerary contact us at Diane O'Cain 484-864-4600 or Diane@HGTravelAdventures.com

HGTravelAdventures

Globus Tour - Rome to Milan September 7-14, 2025

Experience Italy just as you've imagined! Marvel at Rome's Colosseum, drift through Venice's canals, explore Assisi's quiet charm, and shop Milan's lively streets. From the beauty of Lake Como to sipping Aperol in Padua, this trip brings your Italian dreams to life

What's Included

- First-class hotels in Rome, Assisi, Padova, and Milan
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- Private boat tour of Venice's landmarks
- Private, air-conditioned motorcoach with free Wi-Fi
- Tour directors and local guides with headsets
- Meals: Breakfast daily, two dinners



Tour rate: \$2,999

Space is limited, book today to secure your spot on this fantastic trip!



Hollenbach Construction, Inc.

As a third-generation family-owned company, Hollenbach Construction, Inc. celebrated its 56th anniversary on April 1, 2024. From our modest beginnings in 1968 to becoming the professional, full-service, award-winning company we are today, our mission to develop and deliver strategic client focused solutions to meet facility needs and go ONE STEP BEYOND for our clients has not changed.

Hollenbach's services include a wide range of commercial project types such as industrial, institutional, healthcare, retail and religious. From minor renovations to building additions, to new multi-million-dollar facilities, we have experience with

projects of all sizes. We are also an Authorized Dealer of Varco Pruden pre-engineered metal buildings. Hollenbach Construction, Inc. can take you from constructability review and budget pricing all the way to building occupancy and project completion.

We invite you to visit our website www.hollenbach.com and check out the current projects we are working on. You can contact Timothy Little, President or Stephanie Hollenbach by calling 610.367.4200 and let them know how Hollenbach Construction can help you with your construction project and take it from conception to completion.

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What is Check Washing?



Criminals can steal mailed paper checks, such as by fishing them from USPS mailboxes, robbing postal workers, or taking them from personal mailboxes. They alter the checks by washing off the ink, changing the amount or payee, and then depositing them to steal money from your account. If a check you sent was never received by the recipient, you might be a victim of check washing.

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF?

- Use pens with indelible black ink so it is more difficult to wash your checks.
- Follow up with charities and other businesses to make sure they received your check.
- Use online banking to review copies of your checks to ensure they were not altered.
- If you still receive paid checks back from the bank, shred – don't just trash them.
- Regularly review your bank activity and statements for errors.
- Don't leave blank spaces in the payee or amount lines of checks you write.



FDIC-Insured



Holiday Gift Guide

Reppert's Candy

Reppert's Candy has a sweet history and long-standing tradition of providing fine chocolates since Floyd and Dorothy Reppert founded the company in 1945. In 1978, the Repperts decided to retire and sold the business to Larry and Jean Schell. Today, the business remains in the Schell family, and Keith Schell is the current owner.

Reppert's Candy, operating out of a 12,000 square foot facility in Oley Township, now offers more than 65 varieties of candy and approximately 200 different style chocolate molds. Reppert's Candy retail store is filled from end to end with seasonal chocolate decorative pieces, Halloween candy, and Thanksgiving treats. From full-size jack-o-lanterns, turkeys and cornucopias to chocolate and marshmallow ghost pops, the variety of seasonal treats will get you in the autumn



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

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

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

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2708 W. Philadelphia Ave., Oley, PA 19547

Billy's Homemade Candies

For nearly a century, Billy's Homemade Candies in Temple, Pennsylvania has been crafting superior handmade candies. Traditional recipes passed from family to family are still prepared in copper kettles over open flame before being covered in a fountain of the finest Milk and Dark Chocolate available.

You'll also find local gifts, gummy candies, ice cream novelties and more in the nostalgic retail location at 4949 Kutztown Road. Discover the joy of

picking your favorites from the large variety available or indulge someone with a pre-packed gift assortment.

Billy's offers gift-giving ease, with complimentary gift wrapping and the option to ship directly to your customers, colleagues, and friends. Order anytime at www.billyscandies.com or visit in store for the largest selection of Superior Chocolates since 1935!

For additional information, please call 610.929.1673

Revitalized Massage and Wellness LLC

Inhale the Future, Exhale the Past

Revitalized Massage and Wellness LLC opened in 2022 and recently moved to their new fully handicap-accessible location with plenty of parking at 508 North Park Road, Wyomissing, PA 19610.

Licensed Massage Therapist Nicole B. Greiss offers medical massage therapy services, body contouring, trauma-informed and trauma and resiliency coaching, yoga and nutrition.

Specific massage services include: Swedish: Cupping; Deep Tissue; Hot Stones; Buccal massage; British Sports; Soft-Tissue Release; Myofascial Release; Trigger Point Therapy; Manual Lymphatic Drainage; Prenatal Massage; Infant Massage; Wood Therapy; Craniosacral; Migraine Relief; and TMJ.

Revitalized Massage and Wellness LLC is a registered Medical Provider Facility. They accept HSA/FSA cards, cash, credit card, Venmo and CashApp. ApplePay will be coming soon!

Body Contouring services are noninvasive and organic. Sessions include a customized treatment plan with services to target client's specific areas as well as wood therapy and lymphatic massage.

Trauma and Resiliency Coaching is geared to clients with trauma. Not a one-size-fits-all, trauma comes in all shapes and sizes. I offer individual and group sessions.

dable at \$1.00 per minute starting with a 60-minute massage, and 30-minute services are \$40.00. They offer a loyalty card for clients. After 10 paid sessions, a client gets to pick a service of their choice for free for being a valued and loyal client.

For additional information, please call 484.272.5225 or email nikki@revitalized-massageandwellness.com, and visit: <https://revitalized.noterro.com>

<https://linktr.ee/revitalizedmassageandwellness>

508 North Park Rd, Wyomissing, PA 19610

revitalized

Massage & Wellness LLC

484-272-5225

nikki@revitalizedmassageandwellness.com
<https://revitalized.noterro.com>
<https://linktr.ee/revitalizedmassageandwellness>

Medical massage therapy services, body contouring, trauma-informed and trauma and resiliency coaching, yoga and nutrition.

- Affordable prices at \$1.00 per minute with a 60-minute massage. 30-minute services are \$40.00
- Registered Medical Provider Facility. We accept HSA/ FSA cards, cash, credit card, Venmo and CashApp. ApplePay will be coming soon!
- Loyalty card for clients. Pick a service of your choice for free after 10 paid sessions.

Nicole B. Greiss, LMT



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Betty's Originals Gift Baskets for ALL Occasions

Betty's Originals Gift Baskets for ALL Occasions is a family-owned business, operated by myself and my mother-in-law, Georgeann. We purchased the business from long-time owner, Irma Burns (Schwenskville, PA), in early 2021. Since then, we have been working hard, adding different varieties of gift baskets to meet the requests of our customers. Whether you need a gift for family/ friends or an employer who needs holiday employee gifts, we have something for all.

Some of our customer favorites are Movie Night, Dunkin Donuts and Starbucks baskets, Baby Shower baskets, Sympathy and Holiday Baskets, just to name a few. And of course, the "Original Snack and Candy Tower" is our overall best seller, which contains a little something for everyone! We even offer gift baskets for pets!

Whether you are an individual, small business/group, or corporation we are confident that we can meet your gift

giving needs. We strive to offer affordable gift baskets for any budget. We accept cash, credit cards, Venmo and PayPal payment methods.

We offer local delivery to the Pottstown area and surrounding communities. As well as, 2-day Priority Mail shipping to anywhere in the world.

There are several ways to purchase a gift basket from us, you may call us at 484-500-1898 to place an order or discuss any questions you might have. You may contact us through our FB page @giftbasketsbybettyoriginals. Or email to bettyoriginalsbaskets@gmail.com.

We also participate in various vendor events throughout the area such as Craft Shows, Church Bazaars, Pop Up Markets, Pet Fairs and many others. Follow our FB page for event info!

We take pleasure in putting together thoughtful gifts for our customers. The process is creative, fun and rewarding in so many ways!

Billy's
home made candies
4949 Kutztown Road
Temple | 610-929-1673

Homemade Chocolates have been the specialty at Billy's Candies since 1935. Utilizing the original handwritten recipes that have been passed on from family to family, Billy's still creates extraordinary candies using only the freshest ingredients and finest Chocolate. Take a step back in time and choose a box of your favorites from our large variety of Milk and Dark Chocolate. From small gestures to large favors, we make gift giving a sweet treat!

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mickenzie@jprutzman.com | (610) 376-4927

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What is EOS?

The Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS) is designed to help owners, leaders, and managers of entrepreneurial companies address these common frustrations:

- **Lack of control** — over time, markets, or the company
- **People** — who don't listen, understand, or follow through
- **Profit** — there's not enough of it
- **Growth** — they can't seem to break through to the next level

Using a simple set of powerful, practical tools, leaders learn to run their businesses more efficiently and effectively to experience more consistent growth — and have freedom to pursue other passions!

2 Ways to Learn About EOS

- 📍 **Request a free copy of Traction by Gino Wickman**
Contact me to request a free copy of the book that started it all, *Traction* by Gino Wickman, creator of EOS.
- 📍 **Schedule a free 90 Minute Overview of EOS**
This session is designed for the leadership team of an entrepreneurial company. During the meeting I will paint a clear picture of the system to help the team decide whether to move forward with EOS.




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MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION



SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

By Theresa Mintzer

Social Media bios help new customers find your business through search. For some, they are the first impression a customer has of your brand. Make it a good one!

The two important factors to consider when writing a bio are platform and audience. LinkedIn is more formal and professional than a bio for Facebook or Instagram. For all platforms think about keywords your ideal customer is searching for when you write the bio. What problem are you solving for them? Someone should read your bio and have a clear understanding of what solutions you will provide for them to solve their specific pain points.

Another important concern is branding. Make your picture, logo, and colors consistent across all platforms. Gather all this information into a style guide. In the future, someone working on your social media can easily take over the task.

You also want to have a call to action. It can be "Join my email list," or "Check out my blog." Then give them a link to follow. This information can change depending on the season or your current offers. Remember to change links when the offer is over or the season changes. For Instagram, I have a link to a webpage with all my social media information. In addition, I place my current offer, a scheduling link, and a link to my website.

Every month or two, quickly look over your bios to make sure that all the information is current and that the links work. You never want to give a customer outdated information about your business. This is another task easily delegated to an employee. Good luck with your new and improved bio.

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.



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McArdle was Passed the Gavel

Joseph Scott McArdle, C.C.I.M. was recently appointed official host of Tri-County Suburban Commercial/Industrial Marketing Exchanges. The Commercial/Industrial Marketing Exchanges are open to all REALTORS® of the Tri-County Suburban REALTORS® with over 9,500 members as well as other industry professionals in the area. McArdle said, "I am honored and humbled to be able to serve in this capacity and help lead our industry in such a manner."

Joseph Scott McArdle, C.C.I.M. has just celebrated his fortieth anniversary in the real estate business. McArdle is often credited with helping lead the renaissance of the Phoenixville area. Recently McArdle was chosen by the local Chamber of Commerce to help them purchase a new facility to expand their programming as was needed with the ever-booming nature of the area. He was also enlisted to assist in the sale of their existing facility which had long since been outgrown due to the desirability of the region. During a competitive bid situation, he was instrumental in their acquisition and helped them navigate multiple bids far above their asking price on their sale.

McArdle achieved the prestigious industry pinnacle designation of Certified Commercial Investment Member (C.C.I.M.). He is an award-winning



graduate with distinction from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School with a Bachelors in Business Administration (BBA) in marketing and graduated Summa cum Laude from Harvard University with a Masters in Liberal Arts (MLA) in sustainability. He is an active member of the Tri-County Suburban Board of REALTORS®.

Joseph Scott McArdle, C.C.I.M. (RS141715A) of Keller Williams Realty Group, 400 Arcola Road, Suite A5, Collegeville, PA 19426, can be reached by email pvilleguy@gmail.com or call 610.792.5900.

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Your Success Story Starts Here

Class Is in Session at Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences & There Is a Lot to Learn

Whether you've always enjoyed caring for others, or you're looking for a career change, there has never been a better time to prepare for a future as a healthcare professional.

Reading Hospital School of Health Sciences (RHSHS) is a nationally recognized, high-tech facility that offers accredited diploma and certificate programs. Established in 1889 and located in West Reading, Pa., the RHSHS campus has provided outstanding academic, clinical, and student engagement experiences for generations.

With the certification and/or licensure pass rates consistently exceeding national averages, RHSHS students graduate fully prepared to successfully pass their certification exams and begin their careers. Our enrollment team can help you find the best program to match your interest and talents, and our expert educators will train

you for various healthcare environments, from hospital bedside and radiology to operating rooms, laboratories, and emergency accident scenes.

Scholarships and financial aid are available for RHSHS students. Visit our website to learn more about our hands-on healthcare programs, which have varying requirements and completion timeframes:

- **Diagnostic Medical Sonography** (Ultrasound) - 27-months
- **Emergency Medical Technician** (EMT) (Pre-hospital) - 3 months
- **Emergency Medical Services** (Paramedic) (Pre-hospital) - 11 months
- **Medical Imaging Program** (Radiologic Technologist) - 27 months
- **Medical Laboratory Science Program** (Medical Laboratory Scientist) - 11 months
Nursing Program (RN) - 3 years
- **Phlebotomy Technician Program** (Phlebotomist) - 3 months
- **Surgical Technology Program** (Surgical Technologist in operating room) - 20 months



Students in the Nursing, Medical Imaging, Diagnostic Medical Sonography and Surgical Technology programs are also dual enrolled at nearby Alvernia University, meaning that the graduates from these programs earn a certificate or diploma from RHSHS (permitting them to take their certification examinations) and at the same time, for no added time or cost, earn an associate degree from Alvernia University. RHSHS nursing graduates can continue their education at Alvernia University for one additional

year to receive their BSN degree, and graduates who become employees at one of Tower Health's hospitals will also receive tuition assistance in that final year of study.

Remember, your success story starts here. Register for an Open House this fall to explore RHSHS and meet our students and staff. Or schedule a tour and find out how you can have your application fee waived. For more information, visit TowerHealth.org/SuccessStory or call 484.628.0100

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United Real Estate Strive 212 — Jeff Wittig, Realtor®

Berks County native Jeff Wittig, Realtor® with United Real Estate Strive 212's Wyomissing office, was recently recognized as Top Producer in August 2024, with more than \$1.8 million in real estate sales YTD 2024.

Graduating from Exeter High School in 1990, Wittig enlisted in the US Navy, where he was accepted to the USN nuclear engineering program. He is a veteran of the first Gulf War, and also served in the Yugoslavian conflict zone in 1992, and Somali conflict zone in 1994.

After enlistment, Wittig returned to Berks County and began a Law Enforcement career in 2002, following in the footsteps of his late father, who was a USN Vietnam Veteran and Berks County Police Chief until his passing in 2001. Wittig also serves as his jurisdiction's fire

and arson investigator. He received multiple awards over his 22-year law enforcement career, including the prestigious 2016 American Red Cross Law Enforcement Heroes Award.

With retirement approaching, Wittig expanded his desire to assist the community with honesty and integrity, and obtained his real estate license in 2020, becoming a member of the National Association of Realtors. He

currently resides in Exeter Twp with his wife. He is a father to three children who are graduates of Pitt, West Chester University and Carnegie Mellon University. He is also managing partner of a small family business which invests in Real Estate.

For additional information, please call jeff at 610.372.0212 or 484.278.1855 and visit www.UnitedRealEstateStrive212.com.



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OPENAI'S STRAWBERRY MODEL: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



MARKETING TIPS By Julie Huff, Copywriter, beMarketing

OpenAI has officially unveiled its new AI models: ChatGPT o1-preview and o1-mini.

These advancements, also known as the "Strawberry" model, represent a massive shift in how large language models (LLMs) process information, with these new updates looking to provide more thoughtful, accurate responses.

Unlike its predecessors, ChatGPT o1 is programmed to take its time "thinking" through answers. Before, it was common to tell the LLM to take its time in order to improve responses, but now, the model does so automatically. This has helped improve its ability to refine and verify responses before presenting them. This change helps address some of the previous issues seen with AI-generated content, such as hallucinations and errors, though they do still occur.

One of the inspirations for this update was the "strawberry" problem, where models struggled to recognize the correct number of

letters in the word "strawberry" due to tokenization issues. Many users saw this as verification that the model isn't smart, which it isn't. However, it did highlight a broader need for precision in language processing.

The Strawberry model's advancements include deeper contextual understanding and increased efficiency. This is the introduction of a "reasoning" model, meaning you can ask it complex questions and it will attempt to figure out the answer on its own. By refining the model's comprehension, ChatGPT o1 delivers more coherent and contextually relevant responses, making it an ideal tool for strategy, data analysis, and personalized marketing.

For marketers, these improvements translate into faster, more accurate AI-generated content that can drive engagement, improve search engine rankings, and create personalized experiences for audiences.

At beMarketing, we stay at the forefront of AI technology to help businesses leverage these advancements for digital marketing success. Contact beMarketing today and let us help you stay ahead of the AI revolution.

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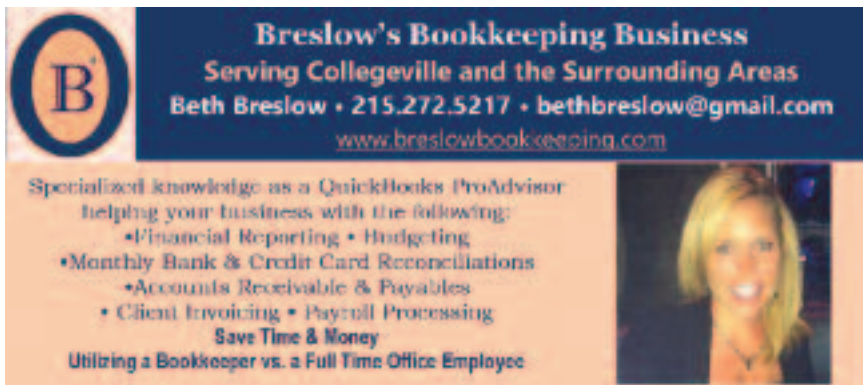
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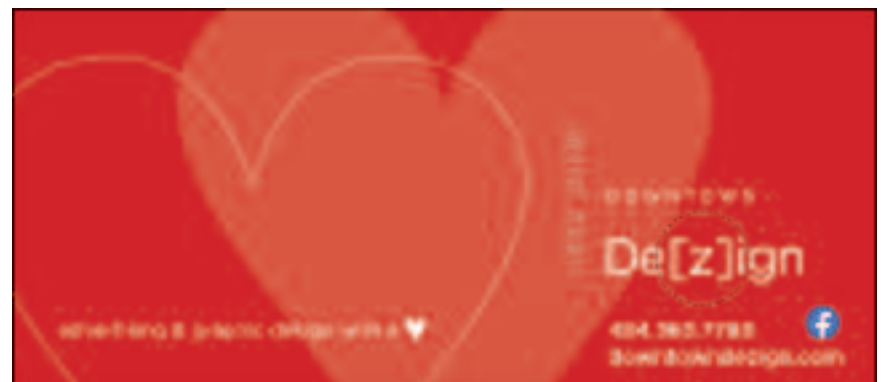
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Earth Engineering Incorporated (EEI) is a full-service geotechnical engineering firm, headquartered in East Norriton, Pennsylvania. With a strong commitment to delivering high-quality engineering solutions, EEI has built a solid reputation for providing expert geotechnical, geo-structural, environmental, and construction materials testing services. Founded in 1990, the firm has since expanded its reach across the Mid-Atlantic region, serving clients in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and beyond.



INVESTIGATION

At the core of EEI’s success is its talented team of engineers, geologists, and technical experts. Their extensive experience and expertise enable us to tackle a wide range of projects, from complex infrastructure developments to large-scale commercial and industrial ventures. EEI’s portfolio includes work on local projects along the 422-region including Top Golf in King of Prussia, Limerick Autopark, Providence Town Center and Sanatoga Green to name a few. Major projects such as the Interstate I-95 in Philadelphia, the Barnes Museum, and large distribution centers for nationally recognized companies are also part of our portfolio. Our ability to handle high-profile projects has made EEI a trusted partner for both public and private sector clients.

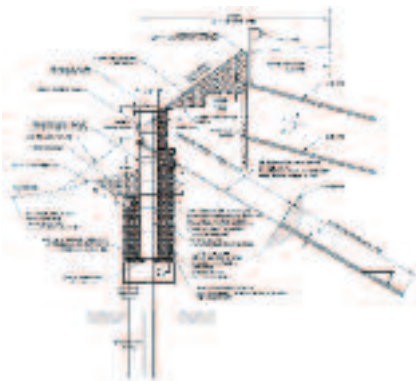
One of EEI’s key strengths lies in its comprehensive suite of geotechnical and geo-structural engineering services. The company offers subsurface investigations, foundation design, slope stability analysis, support of excavation/sheeting and shoring, and more. Whether it’s a small-scale project or a large infrastructure

endeavor, EEI provides tailored solutions using state-of-the-art equipment and technologies to develop reliable recommendations, which have been instrumental in the success of significant regional projects.

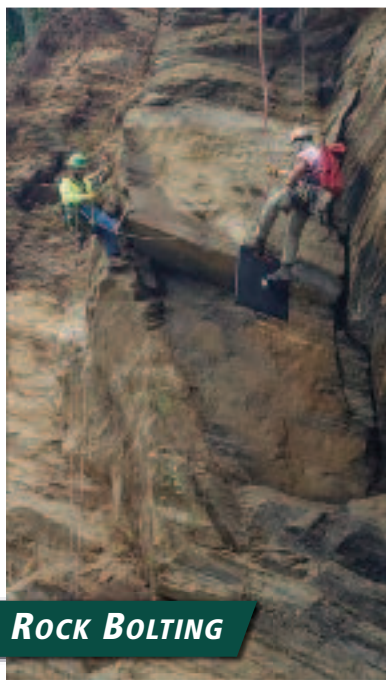
In addition to geotechnical services, EEI also provides environmental consulting. The firm helps clients navigate complex regulatory landscapes and provides essential services such as environmental site assessments, soil and groundwater investigations, and remediation strategies. EEI’s involvement in environmentally sensitive projects like land redevelopment for public parks and clean fill assessments demonstrates their ability to manage environmental risks while ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal regulations.



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At the core of EEI's success is its talented team of engineers, geologists, and technical experts. Their extensive experience and expertise enable us to tackle a wide range of projects, from complex infrastructure developments to large-scale commercial and industrial ventures.
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THE EEI TEAM

EEI is also expanding its geo-structural design services across the country. With the increased demand for high-quality engineering, the firm is extending its services to new markets in the Midwest, Southeast, and beyond. This expansion is part of EEI's strategic growth plan to meet the needs of a rapidly evolving industry and to bring our expert solutions to more regions.

With over three decades of experience, Earth Engineering Incorporated continues to be a trusted name in the geotechnical and environmental engineering industry. Our dedication to excellence, client-focused approach, and commitment to innovation are a key focus for EEI.

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sbrassociation.com/membership-benefits







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REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

GREATER READING CHAMBER ALLIANCE



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

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



UPCOMING EVENTS

Go Taste Berks 2024 - All Month Long!

Friday, Nov 1, 2024

Location: All over Berks County!

Don't hesitate; passports sold out last time!

\$20 / GRCA Members; \$25 / Not-Yet Members

Note: All tickets are non-refundable but transferable to a friend/family member.

Want to purchase 10 or more passports?

Contact Anna Lisa at ALisa@greaterreading.org to receive a special discount.

Contact: Katie Johnsen
kjohnsen@GreaterReading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11628>

Chamber Trip - Irish Charm 11/4-11/12

Monday, Nov 4, 2024

Trip Pricing: Please click on the full chamber itinerary to your left for pricing.

Click here to BOOK YOUR TRIP TODAY!

****Please list requests for upgrades, TSA Precheck, and Global Entry information at the time of booking****

Contact: Katie Johnsen 610-898-7779
kjohnsen@GreaterReading.org

Intro to Excel - November 2024

Four weeks on Thursdays:

Nov. 7, 14, 21, and Dec. 5

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

Shearer Technical, 727 Penn Ave.

West Reading, PA 19611

\$300/person - GRCA Members;

\$375/person - Future Chamber Members

<http://www.greaterreading.org>

Contact: Mark Dolinski, Vice President of Training and Professional Development
mdolinski@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11826>

Environmental Health & Safety Roundtable 2024

Thursday, Nov 7, 2024

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM EST

Center for Business Excellence

49 Commerce Dr., Wyomissing, PA 19610

For registration and fee information, please contact Keith Stamm.

Contact: Keith Stamm, 610-898-7776
kstamm@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11803>

Women2Women Networking & Public Speaking Essentials - Nov. 2024

Thursday Nov 7, 2024

5:30 PM - 7:30 PM EST

\$25 / GRCA Member; \$30 / Future GRCA Member

Advanced Registration Required

High School & College Students are free -

email kjohnsen@greaterreading.org

Contact: Jackie Stiles 610-898-7785

jstiles@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11593>

Lunch&Learn - 1099 Reporting from A to Z! (Nov 2024)

Tuesday Nov 12, 2024

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM EST

Center for Business Excellence

49 Commerce Dr., Wyomissing

\$25 /member (member exclusive)

Contact: Katie Johnsen 610-898-7779

kjohnsen@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11601>

MFG IP Workshop: Beginner 3D modeling and printing for manufacturing companies

Tuesday Nov 12, 2024,

3:00 PM - 5:00 PM EST

Berks LaunchBox in the

GoggleWorks Center for the Arts

201 Washington Street, Reading, PA 19601

Free class, but please register!

3D Printing for Small to Mid-Size Manufacturing Companies ([google.com](https://www.google.com))

Contact: Erica Kunkel els5014@psu.edu

Ultimate Excel 2019/365 - November 2024

Four weeks on Wednesdays:

Nov. 13, 20, 27, and Dec. 5

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

Shearer Technical, 727 Penn Ave.

West Reading, PA 19611

\$300/person - GRCA Members;

\$375/person - Future Chamber Members

<http://GreaterReading.org>

Contact: Mark Dolinski

mdolinski@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11827>

De Mujer a Mujer - Superar la Diferencia Salarial de Género (Overcome the Gender Pay Gap) - Nov. 2024

Thursday Nov 14, 2024

5:30 PM - 7:00 PM EST

Centro Hispano, Casa de la Amistad

25 N 2nd St, Reading, PA 19601

\$15 / GRCA Members

\$20 / Future GRCA Members

Contact: Jackie Stiles 610-898-7785

jstiles@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11607>

Intermediate Excel - November 2024

Four weeks on Mondays: Nov. 18, 25, Dec. 2, and 9

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

Shearer Technical Computer Consultants

727 Penn Ave., West Reading, PA 19611

\$300/person - GRCA Members;

\$375/person - Future Chamber Members

<http://GreaterReading.org>

Contact: Mark Dolinski, Vice President Training and Professional Development

mdolinski@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11828>

Intro to Excel - Late November 2024

Four weeks on Tuesdays: Nov. 26, Dec. 3, 10, and 17

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

Shearer Technical, 727 Penn Ave.

West Reading, PA 19611

\$300/person - GRCA Members;

\$375/person - Future Chamber Members

<http://www.greaterreading.org>

Contact: Mark Dolinski, Vice President Training and Professional Development

mdolinski@greaterreading.org

Register: <https://greaterreadingchamber.chamber-master.com/eventregistration/register/11829>



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

Believe me – relationships matter!



**By Eileen Dautrich,
TCACC President**

Maybe you saw the video I posted, maybe you did not. If you did not view you can watch by scanning the QR code. I want to take this space to reiterate the overall message in that video and add a little bit more of my story.



The announcement as I made it on Monday, October 7, announced that I have made the very difficult decision that it is time for me to retire from the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce. I will be staying on until the end of the year to help with the transition and help set the Chamber up for the remainder of the program year during the first 6 months of 2025. What I did not share in the video was that my time and dedication to the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce actually extends beyond 25 years.

My story with this organization started the summer after my first year at college. I returned to my high school to shadow one of my teachers as I was pursuing an education degree. That teacher told me about a request for office help they had just received from the new director of what was, at that time, the Boyertown Area Chamber of Commerce. I was hired at the Boyertown Chamber and worked full-time over the summer as an administrative assistant and learned a lot. I left of course to return to school and each summer I came home from Bloomsburg University, having built a relationship with the Chamber, I would be hired back for a summer project. After graduation I returned to TriCounty for the

summer and 2 weeks before the start of the school year I got my first teaching job. It was to fill in for a teacher taking a one-year sabbatical so we knew it would only be for that one year and of course when the school year was over the TriCounty Chamber had an opening. I was a business education teacher, so it was difficult to find a full-time permanent position. I kept trying but TriCounty was always there to fill my need for a job when I had one.

And of course I came back one more time! I ran into my old boss, I think at the mall. I was teaching again but unhappy and she was looking to hire a person to handle day-to-day operations so she could focus on the mission work of the Chamber. I think we all know how that went. Having done most every job in the organization at one time or another and not being happy it was a natural fit for both of us.

So, the story here is never hesitate to build those relationships! One relationship with my school, led to another in building a relationship with the person I worked for in Boyertown and gave me the access to contact TriCounty the next summer and keep contacting them. That relationship led to a 25-plus year story, a fabulous mentor who is the reason I have been in this organization for 25 years, and the other leaders that I had the great fortune to get to know and to work with, and so many of these people are lifelong contacts and friends that I know I can reach out to at any time. And our Members, I have enjoyed learning as much as I can about each of you and I do hope to stay in touch! Use every interaction as the great opportunity that it is to build relationships and friendships.

Thank you so, so much!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

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

The Auto Tag Place, LLC
(484) 751-5950
<http://autotagplacepa.com/>
Auto Tag Services

Better Tomorrows
(610) 323-2554
<https://bettertomorrows.org/>
Nonprofit Organizations

Eshbach Brothers, LP
(484) 824-1976
<http://www.eshbachmasonry.com/>
Masonry Contractors

Gorilla Disposal
(484) 925-8796
<http://www.gorilladisposal.com/>
Trash and Recycling Services

Grandifi Enterprises
(484) 366-1656
<http://grandifi.com/>
Communications Consultants

HRTeammate LLC
(484) 366-1243
<http://hrteammate.org/>
Human Resource Consultants

Kinetic Business
(484) 567-9033
<https://business.windstream.com/>
Telecommunications Equipment / Services

Thrivent
(215) 368-4888
<https://connect.thrivent.com/herald-financial-group>
Financial Services

MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

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

35 Years
American Crane & Equipment Corp.

30 Years
North Coventry Township

25 Years
A. Jackson Ecker, Inc.
Herbein + Company, Inc.

20 Years
Building a Better Boyertown

15 Years
Meridian Bank

10 Years
Heritage Coach Company, Inc.

5 Years
KUSBDC
Open Wealth Network
Styer and Associates Inc.



Thanksgiving Meal Distribution

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH
2:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CHOOSE YOUR TIME SLOT!)

BOYERTOWN AREA MULTI-SERVICE
200 SPRING ST., BOYERTOWN, PA 19512

JOIN FELLOW YOUNG PROFESSIONALS FOR A FEW HOURS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE AT BOYERTOWN AREA MULTI-SERVICE TO DISTRIBUTE NON-PERISHABLE, PRE-PACKAGED THANKSGIVING MEALS. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THERE WILL BE ROUGHLY 225-250 BAGS OF FOOD BEING DISTRIBUTED THIS AFTERNOON.



SCAN HERE!



What can Taylor Swift teach us?

LUNCHEON

Wednesday, November 20th
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
Copperfield Inn at Lakeside
594 W. Ridge Pike, Limerick, PA 19468

Member Price: \$45
Non-Member Price: \$90

Featuring **Dr. E. Michele Ramsey**
Associate Professor of Communication Art & Sciences and Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies at Penn State Berks



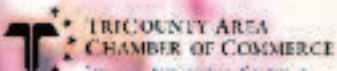
You will learn:

- How Taylor Swift has crafted her own audience.
- A look at the impact of Taylor's work on women of all ages.
- How marketing and social media have helped Taylor's image.



Sponsored by: **MOREFIELD**

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




BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Thursday, November 21st
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Becker Home's new location
220 S. Reading Ave., Boyertown, PA 19512
\$10 per person

Host: **BECKER HOME**
Creating the Suburban Ideal

Join us for this monthly mixer to connect, share and meet your fellow Members. We are excited to celebrate Monique Becker's new location with a ribbon cutting at this event.

For more details regarding this event, or to make a reservation for a future Business After Hours event, please call Alice at 610.326.2900 or email alice@tricountyareachamber.com



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REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

PHOENIXVILLE REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

• **Future headquarters:** 710 Main St., Phoenixville, PA 19460 • 610.933.3070
• fax 610.917.0503 • info@phoenixvillechamber.org • www.phoenixvillechamber.org



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



Phoenixville Social Hour -

November 05, 2024 -
Bistro on Bridge - 6:00PM



First Friday -

November 1, 2024 - 5:30PM

Each and every First Friday the 100 & 200 Blocks of Bridge Street are closed to vehicles, to give residents and visitors more space to shop, eat and enjoy Phoenixville. Shops and Restaurants extend into Bridge street, so visitors and residents can experience an open-air experience every First Friday.

There will be live musicians placed throughout the downtown on Bridge and Main Streets, and handmade craft/artist vendors in the Main and Bridge Street parking lot.

**INTERESTED IN
MEMBERSHIP?
LEARN MORE:**



BUILD CONNECTIONS

– visit our events page
to find events for
networking and getting to
know local businesses!



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 @PerkiomenValleyChamber.net

UPCOMING EVENTS



Monthly events include Business Roundtable Luncheons, PV Men's HH.

Join us for bi-monthly Membership Orientation, quarterly PV WIN

events, and quarterly Non-Profit Meet & Greet...just to name a few!

Chamber Mixer - November 14, 2024

Join us for an exciting Chamber Mixer & Business Card Exchange, co-hosted by Menninger & Associates, a seasoned financial expert, and Julie Kovaleski, Upper Providence Living Magazine, the driving force behind our vibrant local publication. Bring your business cards, enjoy light refreshments and adult beverages, and take advantage of this great opportunity to build valuable relationships and grow your network. FREE event for PV Chamber members. \$10 guest admission. Must pre-register at www.PVChamber.net.



SAVE THE DATE...

March 5, 2025 – PV WIN Healthy Women's Conference & Expo

REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

SPRING-FORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

• P.O. Box 127, Royersford PA 19468 • 610.489.7200 • www.springfordchamber.com



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!

Join the Spring-Ford Chamber of Commerce and Become Part of Our Thriving Business Community!



Are you looking to drive economic growth, connect with local businesses, and enhance your community impact? Look no further! The Spring-Ford Chamber is dedicated to supporting and fostering the success of businesses like yours.

As a member, you'll enjoy:

- Networking opportunities with fellow entrepreneurs and professionals
- Access to valuable resources and tools for business growth
- Participation in exclusive events and workshops
- Promotion of your business through our channels
- And much more!

Exciting News! We are thrilled to announce the launch of our new website, designed to provide even more resources and support for our members. Visit us online at www.springfordchamber.com

to explore the new features and opportunities available to you.

Join us in our mission to drive progress and prosperity in our community. Reach out to sfchamberofcommerce@gmail.com for more information on membership benefits and how to join. Let's grow together!



Spring-Ford Chamber Holiday High Tea

Join us for a delightful and festive afternoon at the **Spring-Ford Chamber Holiday High Tea!**

Date: Wednesday, December 18th, 2024

Time: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM EST

Location: Western Montgomery Career & Technology Center

Celebrate the holiday season with friends and colleagues while enjoying delicious tea, light bites, and warm conversations. This event is the perfect opportunity to unwind, network, and share in the holiday spirit!

Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more details on how to RSVP. We look forward to celebrating with you!



Get Ready to Laugh!

Join us for a night of side-splitting fun at our **Comedy Event on Friday, November 1st, 2024**, at the **Steel River Playhouse** in Pottstown!

Enjoy an evening filled with great humor, delicious refreshments, and an unforgettable atmosphere. Whether you're looking to unwind after a long week or simply enjoy some top-notch entertainment, this event is the perfect way to spend your evening.

Event Details:

VIP Cocktail Reception: 5:00 PM

Doors Open: 6:00 PM

Show Starts: 7:00 PM

Sponsorship Opportunities:

Table of 4: \$300

Table of 8: \$500

(Includes prime seating, name on the table, company advertisement in the program, verbal recognition, and an invitation to the VIP reception!)

Don't miss out on this fantastic night of comedy and networking! Grab your tickets and bring your friends for an evening of fun and laughter.

Business Connect

This event is a fantastic opportunity to gain insights, expand your professional network, and discover innovative ways to grow your business.

Venue: Sunshine Cafe
Date: Every Tuesday

Event Logistics:

- 8:00-8:30am- Networking
- 8:30-8:45am- Introductions
- 8:45-9:00am- Presentation
- 9:00-9:15am- Wrap up

Contact Us:
(610)-489-7200
sfchamberofcommerce@gmail.com

The Spring-Ford Chamber of Commerce is committed to driving economic growth, retaining and growing local businesses, and fostering relationships that will continue to enhance the progress and prosperity of our members and the community we serve. We are excited to share upcoming events!

The Spring-Ford Chamber of Commerce is thrilled to continue our thriving- Spring-Ford Chamber Business Connect! This event is held every Tuesday at the Sunshine Café. Interested in speaking? Reach out to us at sfchamberofcommerce@gmail.com

Woman IN NETWORKING

Friday November 1st, 2024
Friday, December 6th 2024

Lincoln Township Building
515 W. Ridge Pike, Lincolnton, PA 19468

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Join us for our Women in Networking events! Don't miss this valuable opportunity to connect with like-minded women, share experiences, and empower each other towards achieving harmony and success in both personal and professional endeavors. Our events, held primarily on the first Friday of every month, provide a supportive and inspiring environment for networking and collaboration. Mark your calendars and be part of a dynamic community of women driving positive change and growth

BE BETTER.
GROW FASTER!



JOIN THE SBRA

The Ultimate Small Business Community

JOIN
TODAY!



www.sbrassociation.com

 **Small Business
Resource Association**



THE SBRA COMMUNITY

Successful Entrepreneurs are HUMBLE



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

In talking to a group of High School students about what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur, one of the students asked me if you had to know everything about running a business in order to be successful. The answer, of course, was no but that led into a discussion about creating a team of people that were subject matter experts, in areas of business that you were not, and allowing them to help you build a successful business.

This discussion led me to a story of when I was in college and was asked to be the student director of a three-day Gymnastics workshop that my college was providing to high schools across the state of Pennsylvania. I had 4 months to organize every detail of the event. Every other week I met with the Physical Education Department Head to go over the details of what I had done. She told me that in her 30 years as the department head, she had never met a student that was more detailed with the organizational structure of putting together an event. Of course, that encouragement made me work even harder.

Two weeks prior to the event, which had over 30 high schools and 250 students participating, Dr. Zimmerly called me into her office. She asked me how everything was

going. I replied with a very confident voice, "awesome—everything is set-up and ready to go". She replied "I don't think so".

She then asked me who would be teaching all the students coming to the event and I replied, "all the other physical education major students—my peers". She once again replied "I don't think so". She went on to tell me that although I had done a remarkable job of organizing the structure of the event, I failed to include any of my fellow students in the process, nor did I talk to them about helping with the event itself. I was so consumed in doing a great job myself, that I failed to realize the importance in including others. This event was designed to be a learning experience for many and I took it as an opportunity to display my ability to pull off a huge undertaking.

My peers were not happy with my lack of considering them to be part of the planning process and therefore, they decided to not help me with the event itself.

At that moment, I was speechless, my heart was beating so hard I could hardly breathe and all I could say was "what do I do now"? She told me that in two days she was holding a P.E. Majors meeting in the field house and I was the "Guest Speaker".

Two days later, as I walked in the field house and saw 200 of my peers sitting in the bleachers, I was terrified. I had never felt so humiliated in my life. What was I going to say and what were they going to do? Then, the moment of truth surfaced as I opened my mouth

and said "I humbly apologize for my stupidity and selfishness for not including you in all I have been doing for the past three and a half months. I am asking for your forgiveness and understanding that it was not intentional. The gymnastic workshop will not take place without your help—I cannot do it without you". One-by-one they started to clap and stand up and came down out of the bleachers, shook my hand and hugged me. With tears in my eyes, I thanked them.

I truly believe that, everyone in that field house learned two very important lessons that day. 1. The importance of Humility 2. Understanding the difference between your ability to get the job done vs. your ability to influence others to join with you to get the job done. Successful business owners are Good Leaders.

Being HUMBLE is a characteristic that defines a great person. Being HUMBLE means not being proud or arrogant, and not thinking of yourself first or better than others. It can also mean being modest, unassuming, or unpretentious.

Lack of Humility comes from lack of wisdom and can lead to embarrassment, disgrace, arguments and departing friends or employees.

As business owners or managers, we need to be great Leaders, not just great doers. We need to hire and surround ourselves with people equal to or greater than ourselves. We need to get others to do what we want done, because THEY want to be part of it and do it. We must be HUMBLE and support others being successful—there is no "I" in HUMBLE. **SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS ARE HUMBLE**



SBRA Business Spotlight

Maid to Bee Clean

Maid to Bee Clean is a cutting-edge cleaning service committed to delivering a seamless and eco-friendly experience for busy individuals and families. With a focus on personalized service, the company offers a range of cleaning solutions tailored to clients' needs, all while integrating technology for real-time tracking and convenience. Emphasizing sustainability and efficiency, Maid to Bee Clean ensures a spotless home and peace of mind, leaving every space refreshed and ready for life's moments.

Phone: 484-509-7197 Website: Maidtobeeclean.com



Located at 3126 Oley Turnpike Road, Reading, PA 19606



AI GENERATED IMAGE

SOCIAL SECURITY DATA BREACH – WHAT CAN YOU DO?



By Anthony Pomponio, Riverfront Federal Credit Union

Recently, it has been reported in the news that millions of social security numbers have been leaked to the dark web. The data breach occurred from a background checking company. If your Social Security number (SSN) has been found on the dark web, it's important to take immediate steps to protect yourself. Here's what you can do:

- 1. Monitor Your Accounts:** Check your bank and credit card statements regularly for any unauthorized transactions.
- 2. Credit Monitoring:** Sign up for a credit monitoring service that alerts you to changes in your credit report.
- 3. Credit Freeze:** Consider placing a credit freeze on your reports with the three major credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion). This makes it harder for identity thieves to open accounts in your name.
- 4. Fraud Alerts:** Place a fraud alert on your credit reports. This will require creditors to verify your identity before opening new accounts.
- 5. Report Identity Theft:** If you notice any suspicious activity, report it to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at

IdentityTheft.gov. They can guide you through the recovery process.

6. Review Your Credit Reports: Obtain your free credit reports from AnnualCreditReport.com and review them for any unauthorized accounts or inquiries.

7. Update Passwords: Change passwords for your online accounts, especially financial ones. Use strong, unique passwords and consider enabling two-factor authentication.

8. File Taxes Early: If you suspect your SSN has been compromised, file your taxes as soon as possible to prevent someone from using your SSN to file a fraudulent return.

9. Consider Identity Theft Protection: Look into identity theft protection services that can help monitor your personal information and assist with recovery if needed.

10. Stay Vigilant: Continue monitoring your financial accounts and credit reports regularly for any unusual activity.

Taking these steps can help mitigate the risks associated with your SSN being compromised. If you have any specific concerns, it may be helpful to consult with a professional specializing in identity theft.

Anthony Pomponio, Certified Fraud Examiner, Chief Lending Officer Riverfront Federal Credit Union

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- **Friday, November 1st**
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- **Friday, November 15th**
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Tune Up Tuesday Zoom Workshop –

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GRCA Opens Candidate Marketplace to Local Business Community

The Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA) recently announced the opening of the Candidate Marketplace, the newest feature of the Meet Greater Reading talent attraction program, to all Berks County businesses. This platform is designed to connect prospective residents and job seekers with local companies in the community.

The Candidate Marketplace was developed in partnership with RoleCall, a national talent attraction consulting agency, to address a top pain point of local companies — talent attraction. This new platform allows employers to access a pool of potential candidates who have expressed interest in relocating to the Greater Reading area and are seeking job opportunities.

The Greater Reading area's low cost of living, outdoor amenities, safety rankings and quality schools continue to attract new residents. GRCA's Meet Greater Reading brand highlights these selling points and more through a targeted digital marketing campaign aimed at those who once lived here, recent college graduates, individuals open to relocation and those working in priority industries such as education, health-care, engineering, manufacturing and skilled trades.

Employers who join the Candidate Marketplace will receive regular updates when new candidates are entered into the platform. They can easily search, filter and

sort candidates based on industry, experience, timeline to move and education—making it a user-friendly tool for finding top talent.

Prospective candidates also will receive regular emails with curated information relevant to their industry and interests to keep them engaged and informed about the Greater Reading area.

"Through the Candidate Marketplace, we are bridging the gap between local businesses and a highly motivated talent pool. This platform will empower employers to connect with prospective residents who are eager to make Greater Reading their home. It's a key step in addressing the region's talent needs and helping our community continue to thrive," said Keith Stamm, Director of Workforce, GRCA.

To sign up to join the Candidate Marketplace, Berks County employers must visit talent.meetgreaterreading.org/talent-roster-employer-access-request. Job seekers may visit talent.meetgreaterreading.org/live-here to fill out the form.

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GRCA Welcomes Five New Board Members to Two of its Boards

The Greater Berks Development Fund (GBDF), an affiliate of the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA), recently announced the appointment of Alvernia University President Dr. Glynnis A. Fitzgerald, Ph.D.; Nicholas D. Stoltzfus, DESCCO Design and Construction President; and Fromm President & COO John Hanna to its board of directors.

In July, Dr. Fitzgerald became Alvernia University's eighth president and the first female layperson appointed in the University's history. She served as senior vice president and provost for four years, helping lead Alvernia through exceptional growth and transformation.

Stoltzfus has led DESCCO since 2005. The company has been operating in Eastern Pennsylvania since 1976 and provides high-quality construction, refurbishing and renovation services to its clients.

Hanna has spent his career in the electrical distribution industry. He joined Fromm in 1997 as Commercial Construction Channel Manager and received a steady stream of promotions with increased responsibility including VP Sales, Executive VP and ultimately President and COO.

"We are excited to add three local leaders with wide-ranging expertise, who will use their time and talents to further the goals of GBDF," said Dan Langdon, GBDF Board Chairman.

Additionally, Jaime Perez, Deputy Director at Berks County Redevelopment Authority, and Chris Shellhammer, Reading Hospitality COO, have been appointed to the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce & Industry Board of Directors (GRCCI).

In his role, Perez assists the Executive Director in overseeing the Authority's activities, which contributes to making Berks County an excellent place to live, work and play. He is a seasoned professional in the redevelopment of obsolete housing, preservation of historic properties and lands, and new construction projects.

Shellhammer has more than 20 years of experience in the hospitality industry, where he has built a proven track record of sustaining revenue and profit gains.

"Chris and Jaime's expertise and diverse perspectives will further propel the organization toward its goals. We look forward to their input and contributions as we move forward," said Laura B. Haffner, GRCCI Vice Chairwoman.

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NAVIGATING NUTRITION AND FITNESS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

A Guide for Business Owners and Their Teams

Provided by GYMGUYZ

Main Line & Montgomery County

The holiday season is a time of celebration, connection, and indulgence, but for many, it also presents challenges in maintaining health goals. At GYMGUYZ Main Line & Montgomery County, we're here to help business owners and their employees stay on track with simple, effective strategies that support both fitness and well-being through the festivities.

Balanced Nutrition: Enjoying the Season Wisely – Holiday meals are often full of extra calories, but that doesn't mean you have to miss out on your favorite dishes. Focus on portion control, choose nutrient-dense options, and be mindful of frequent snacking throughout the day. Simple choices like these can help keep your energy steady without sacrificing enjoyment.

Fitness Tips: Keep Moving – Staying active doesn't require big changes during the holidays. Encourage your team to incorporate small bursts of activity throughout the day—whether

it's a quick walk after lunch, a morning stretch, or even taking the stairs at the office. At GYMGUYZ, we create efficient workout routines that can easily fit into a hectic holiday schedule, ensuring fitness remains a priority.

Wellness Strategies: Stay Hydrated and Set Realistic Goals – Hydration is key, especially when holiday gatherings often involve alcohol. Encourage your team to stay hydrated and set practical goals—such as maintaining their current weight rather than losing it. This makes for a more enjoyable and stress-free holiday season while staying aligned with health objectives.

Make Health Part of Your Holiday Tradition – At GYMGUYZ, we believe that a healthy lifestyle and holiday cheer can coexist. For business owners, promoting wellness during this season is a powerful way to show care for your team's well-being. Reach out to us for personalized nutrition and fitness plans to support your team in staying active, healthy, and happy this holiday season.

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QUESTIONS UNMARRIED COUPLES SHOULD ASK BEFORE BUYING A HOUSE



LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

By Alexis I. Roth, Wolf, Baldwin & Associates, P.C.

It's 2024, and many couples decide to live together without tying the knot. About 38 percent of couples move in together before getting married. However, as with any other major life decision, there are a few key factors to consider.

How will the down payment be split?

Typical down payments are 10 percent to 20 percent of the cost of the home, i.e., it's a significant amount of money. If the relationship goes south, both parties will want to get this money back. If both parties agree to sell the house upon a breakup, they can agree that each party's downpayment will be returned when splitting any proceeds. For example, if the house profit is \$50,000, and party one paid \$10,000 and party two paid \$5,000 towards the down payment, each of these amounts would be returned to the appropriate person before splitting any profit. However, this scenario is assuming an amicable agreement. Either party can claim that the down payment was a gift to the other person. If that happens, the proceeds may be divided evenly between the parties even though one person paid a higher down payment amount. It's best to put an agreement in writing before purchasing the property to avoid the second scenario.

Who will apply for the mortgage?

Unmarried couples would apply for a mortgage as separate individuals. Therefore, the partner with the stronger financials and credit score may want to purchase the home to get better mortgage terms and interest rates. This is, perhaps,

one of the biggest benefits of buying a house unmarried, particularly if one person has less-than-stellar credit. Most mortgage lenders require a credit score of at least 580 to qualify for a home loan, but the higher your credit score is, the better your terms and interest rates will be. This will save you money on interest throughout your loan repayment term. If you are allowed to apply for a mortgage together, this may help you and your partner qualify for a larger mortgage because your incomes will be combined. Just keep in mind that there might be a trade off if one person has a low credit score. Similar to the down payment, the parties can agree that on what each person's mortgage payments should be if they split up; however, the mortgage company or bank will not be a party to that agreement and will want its full payment regardless of which parties has paid and which has not.

What is the best way to hold title?

Your house title provides proof of ownership and a physical description of the property. It may also include liens on your property that allow others to have a claim on the property in certain situations. Your lender will have a lien on your title until the mortgage is repaid in full.

(Continued on page 42)



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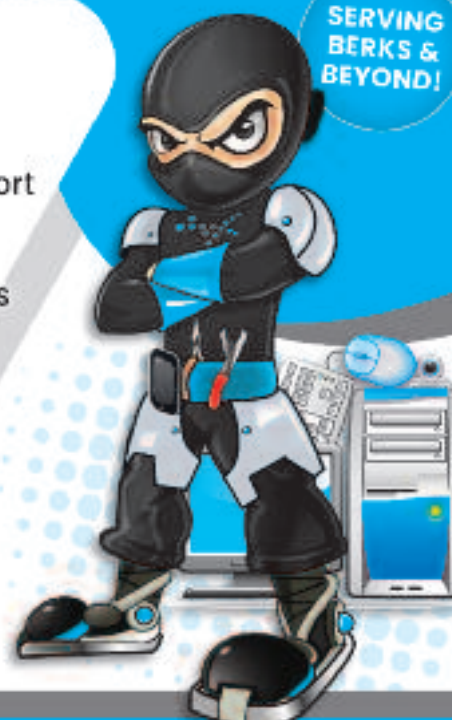
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LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

(Continued from page 41)

The way the title is worded can impact the way ownership is transferred as well as each parties' rights to transfer ownership to others. Here are some options:

- **Sole ownership:** If one partner wants to own the property outright, they may select sole ownership.

- **Joint tenancy:** If each partner wants equal shares of the property, they may choose a joint tenancy created under a single instrument with the right of survivorship. This means that, upon the death of a partner, the surviving partner will receive the deceased partner's share (half) of the property.

- **Tenants in common:** Under tenancy in common, the co-owners enjoy undivided interest or equal rights to the entire property. Tenancy in common differs from joint tenancy because tenants in common hold individual titles for their share of the property and can dispose of it by selling their share, or, if they die, the share will not automatically go to the other owner, so an heir can inherit their interest in the property.

- **Trust:** A living trust of real property holds legal title to the real estate. The

trustee holds the title for the trustor (a/k/a beneficiary) who retains a beneficial interest in the property.

How you title your property will impact the outcome of a later sale. It can also impact the taxes and fees associated with selling your home. Ultimately, the person whose name is on the property's title is the owner of the property. That person or trust will have full control over the home and can sell it with or without their partner's permission. If one party does not have their name on the title, they will have no provable ownership stake in the property.

What Happens If One Person Wants to Move Out?

Whether it's a breakup or a partner getting a job in another state, having a plan in place for these types of situations is essential. Situations change and relationships change. While it might sound pessimistic to plan ahead for these occurrences, you can avert potential headaches and legal issues by being proactive. Here are a few options.

- You might be able to sell the house, or one of you can buy out the other, assuming you both are on the home's title.

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• It's also possible that if you decide to break up, the bank may force the sale of the property if the mortgage is not paid. If the partner keeping the property can't buy out the partner who's leaving, the best option would likely be to sell.

• Depending on your agreement, any party who owns a portion of the property can force a sale through a legal process known as partition. If you own 70 percent of the home and your partner wants to move out, you may need to pay them 30 percent of ownership.

• If you're both on the mortgage, you could also consider refinancing the mortgage into one name to remove one person's liability.

Should we write a cohabitation agreement?

Houses usually accumulate equity. But, unlike married couples, unmarried couples do not have the same innate property protections of the equity being "marital property." Because of this, it's best to prepare a cohabitation property agreement with an attorney before purchasing the property. The agreement will outline who owns what and what happens if a couple separates. Without a cohabitation property agreement, you could experience time-consuming and expensive legal battles.

Your agreement could include:

- The type of ownership on the title and deed;
- How income and expenses are shared, including tax liabilities and deductions;
- How newly acquired assets are divided;
- A buyout agreement;
- An action plan for a job transfer;
- A dispute resolution process; and
- An exit strategy.

Creating a cohabitation agreement with an attorney will help you to focus on the exciting aspects of buying a house without worrying about how your rights and assets will be protected. The relative costs of working these issues out ahead of time pale in comparison to the headache, time, and money expended if things go wrong and an agreement is not already in place.

It's always a good idea to work with an attorney when buying a house as an unmarried couple. The attorney can make sure any rights of survivorship are put in writing and can be upheld.

Alexis Roth, Esquire is an experienced attorney with the law firm of Wolf, Baldwin & Associates, P.C. with offices in Pottstown, Reading, Pennsburg, and West Chester. She concentrates her practice in small business representation, commercial litigation, employment law, and FCRA compliance. Ms. Roth can be reached at 610.323.7436 or by e-mail to aroth@wolfbaldwin.com.

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Once this coffee is picked, processed, imported, roasted and delivered to the cafe, it is paired with a variety of gluten free and vegan syrups and sauces made in house to complement its natural flavor profile. Using no artificial ingredients and making these ingredients weekly ensures all patrons leave feeling well and nourished.

While customers await their specialty beverages being made, there is a selection of local artisanal goods to peruse, fresh treats baked by local bakers to munch & games to play with companions.

Many have little awareness when it comes to the ethos of the coffee industry on the farm level being, shall we say subpar in general. Thanks to greenwashing and various propaganda most people believe "fair trade" on the label means that everyone involved is being paid fairly, the environment surrounding them is singing and the black box they are paying into is subsidizing good things.

Unfortunately, much like many other labels, "fair trade" is a label that businesses can buy into if they meet very rudimentary requirements. The

Beekeeper's Cafe holds the belief that fair trade should be the foundation, not the standard. Beyond farm-direct with those that grow the coffee they use in all their beverages help to ensure that that ethos is matched right down the line. In San Lazaro, Honduras, there is a farm that is owned and operated by Mission Lazarus. This farm invests in their employees, paying the women who work there salaries equivalent to 25 percent above the fair trade stipulations, providing them a chance to continue their education, and fostering a dignified work environment.

This is a farm frequently visited by Roasted Pearl, the small batch roaster who roasts weekly for the cafe. Most recently Pearl was accompanied by the owner of Beekeeper's, where they built latrines — three of which were funded by the beautiful community surrounding the cafe after months of fundraising — for local villagers with a group of like-minded missionaries.

If there is one thing to take away from a trip to Beekeeper's, it is that every small decision has a ripple effect, whether one sees it or not; every purchase is a vote for the type of world one wants to live in. Vote well.

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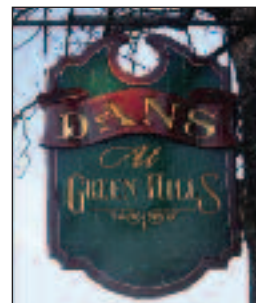
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Of all the things you'll do to get your startup off the ground, choosing the right business structure is one of the most important.

Everything from your personal liability to the way you'll use your profits depends on the business structure you choose. Consider the following when selecting the organization type for your business: flexibility, complexity, liability protection, implications for your taxes, and permits and licensing requirements.

There are several types of business structures to consider, each with advantages and disadvantages. Below is a roundup of the most common structures with guidance on how to choose a business structure that's right for you.

Sole Proprietorship

A sole proprietorship is the simplest and easiest business structure to form. In fact, it's the default structure if you're actively in business, but don't register as something else.

As a sole proprietor, you can operate under a trade name, commonly known as a DBA ("Doing Business As") or a fictitious name.

Under this structure, your business is you — you're responsible for all the business' assets, liabilities and debts since they're not considered separate from your own. As the owner you are in direct control and all the profits go to you. It offers the greatest freedom from regulations. Another advantage is the bookkeeping is simple. Be aware though that there is unlimited liability with a sole proprietorship. If you need capital to expand, it is more difficult to access with this formation.

Partnership

If a sole proprietorship is the simplest business structure for one business owner, a partnership is the simplest structure for two or more owners. With a partnership, you have additional sources of capital and a broader management base. Partnerships can take a variety of forms — general partnerships, where everything is shared equally among all partners; limited partnerships, where one person has control of the company and is responsible for all its liabilities; and limited liability partnerships, where all partners have a share of the company's liabilities.

(Continued on page 48)



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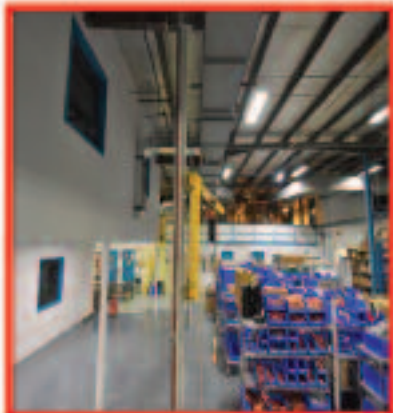
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Ask SCORE

(Continued from page 46)

Like sole proprietorships, partnerships are common structures for new businesses with more than one owner, or for entrepreneurs who want to test the waters before forming a more formal business structure.

Corporation

Corporations are generally the most complicated business structure, cost the most in legal fees to set up and are legal entities in their own right — they can own property, sell ownership rights in the form of stocks and be a party in a lawsuit, for example.

There are several different types of corporations, but the most common are C corporations (or C corp), S corporations (or S corp) and nonprofit corporations.

The differences between the two generally come down to how profits are taxed. In a C corp, profits are taxed twice — once on the business or corporate level and then again on the personal level when those profits are passed on to shareholders.

In an S corp, profits are taxed once because they can be passed through and treated as a shareholder's personal income. S corps are still legal entities but face more limitations than a C corp in terms of ownership eligibility and filing requirements. They are expensive to organize and closely regulated. Both S and C corps require

extensive record keeping, annual Board of Directors and stockholders meetings and reporting of those meetings compared to other formations.

Limited Liability Company (LLC)

An LLC combines aspects of a corporation with a sole proprietorship or partnership. Like a corporation, your personal assets are separate from the business and aren't at risk, while profits can flow through to your personal income and not be subject to corporate taxes.

Factors to help you choose the business structure that's right for you

It's always a good idea to consult an expert, such as an attorney, who can go into more detail about which structure may be most beneficial for your business. It's also a good idea to seek out the advice of a mentor to help guide you.

Here are four factors to consider when choosing a business structure.

- **Personal Asset Protection:** In sole proprietorships and partnerships, you can be held personally responsible for any liabilities incurred by your business. In LLCs and corporations, your personal assets are afforded a level of protection.

(Continued on page 50)



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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.

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(Continued from page 48)

This liability can be a major factor in which structure you choose.

- **Tolerance for Complexity:** Corporations are complex business structures that will most likely require help from lawyers and accountants to set up and properly maintain. You'll also need to comply with annual filing requirements with a corporation, whereas non-corporate structures are simpler.

- **Long-Term Goals:** If you plan to seek investments, become publicly traded or

bring on shareholders, then a corporate structure is a must.

- **Tax Implications:** As described above, profits are taxed differently depending on the business structure you choose. Consult a professional to help you determine which form of business gives you the most advantageous tax structure.

For more information about starting or operating a small business, call 1.800.634.0245 for the SCORE chapter nearest you. Visit SCORE at www.score.org.



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DISRUPTING THE ADMINISTRATIVE ELITE



DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

By Barry Cassidy

In my last few columns, I have discussed how things work in government. In my August column, I discussed how the administrative elites can make problems disappear through interpretation. In September, in my interview with Phoenixville philanthropist Manny DeMutis, I discussed how environmental issues impacting local beaver habitats in the revitalization of Phoenixville impacted potential development.

I work for Manny and have been instructed to do "good works." The Phoenixville train project was an assignment that met with staff resistance locally, but after an alliance with Reading, everyone got behind the Mayor's Taskforce, and the project moved forward.

I asked to be assigned to fix the flooding in Downingtown, and Manny agreed it was an excellent project to help save affordable housing and the environment. After a brief inventory of the facts, I reported that there may be some collateral

damage. He listened, thought about it, and said, "So be it."

In examining the flood issue in Downingtown, I was drawn to the removal of the 1751 A. Samuel Bicking dam. I will not be technical here, but when a dam has been there since 1751, it is safe to say there will be affects to the stream flow when removed. I thought about potential impacts, and instincts called me from afar and said, "Barry, the devil is in the details here. Examine the process."

I examined the process, and people appeared to be going through the motions. That is when I reported back to Manny about collateral damage. I decided to take a path less followed; I chose to work within the system's process by examining documents within the confines of the process.

I was surprised to find no issue with the dam's historical significance. Built in 1751, it was the cornerstone of economic development for the town, then called Milltown. The area was heavily promoted as a recreation area, with the legendary "rope swing" featured as a place where childhood memories are made.

(Continued on page 52)

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I checked everything on Dam Removal, and Pennsylvania leads the free world in dam breaches with over 250, whereas the rest of many states struggle to breach 50. This has almost become rote. Someone has found the key to large-scale dam removals. I could see that they were prolific in their achievements.

I started to examine the process of being a prolific dam breacher. I found some classifications and forms that needed to be filled out to accomplish a dam breach. I made a right-to-know request to several agencies to garner multiple copies of these forms and classifications. The exciting part is that various agencies had some information that others did not, and I ascertained a clear picture of the events in this process.

I looked at the environmental testing when the dam was breached. This was a tight-budget operation, and things got narrowed down with specific scopes that were adhered to, while the general report narrative seemed unchanged from 2011 until the breaching.

The annual dam reports found that although the dam was not in danger of collapsing, a \$31,000 cost was associated with repairing a wall and beginning to

scour the stream bank. But alas, the dam became “dangerous” because of the threat of “hydraulic backwash,” which, in a nutshell, means if you are kayaking down the Brandywine in a high water storm, you may lose some stability when the kayak goes over the dam. An area 100 feet downstream of the dam exists where the current would or could be dangerous. I say storm because, typically, the water is ankle-deep 100 feet downstream.

It continues, and all the official documentation has been completed. I had Penn DOT at a few locations where I thought we experienced potential PCB release because the dam fed PCBs into Kardon Park. The Park was my brownfield project when we sought to relocate Jefferson Bank to the Kardon parcel. At the time of the breach, it was an active brownfield.

I have said to a state agency that I believe PCBs were dumped in the Brandywine and provided documentation. I am trying to be a team player and seeking administrative relief. I have said it publicly... not getting too much feedback, but I have been assured the issue is being investigated. There are other priorities, which I certainly understand.

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So, I decided while other priorities were being addressed, I would do my second round of right-to-know requests. I figured, why not... I am just some guy asking some pointed questions... let me continue defining the completeness of the process. After seven days, I got a PADEP request to extend the period of my response an additional thirty days, which I viewed as progress. I listed the two specific documents I wanted and told them when I asked before they were not in the file when I did a file review. They responded by asking if I wanted to withdraw my request, and I told them no

because the documents may have been misfiled, and I don't know. I said that if the documents did not exist, I wanted them to tell me they "do not exist."

I remember my experience with the beaver dams being breached in Phoenixville. People were screaming for my head. I had spent time down there looking for beavers, trying to address the issue for our approvals. This is a case of permission being given already so that it may be a minor priority to some.

A stark difference between my interaction with the lack of beavers in Phoenixville and this process of examination is that the documents are the documents, whether they are part of the process or not, and the record has already been determined.

To complicate matters further, this dam breach is part of the mitigation for wetlands destroyed on the Route 322-widening project. Mitigation action was awarded through U.S. Fish and Wildlife, which ironically reported the PCB contamination in the early 1990s.

The federal contract contains provisions guaranteeing the integrity of the process.

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

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SEPTEMBER JOBS REPORT COMPLETES PENNSYLVANIA'S "A" ON ITS FALL TERM ECONOMIC REPORT CARD

Following release of the Pennsylvania jobs report for September 2024 on October 18, Keystone Research Center economist and executive director, Dr. Stephen Herzenberg, released the following statement:

"This morning's Pennsylvania employment report for September from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry provides the final data that will be available on the Pennsylvania economy prior to the November 5 election.

"Pennsylvania's unemployment rate in September remained at 3.4 percent for the 12th consecutive month and is seven tenths of a percentage point below the U.S. 4.1 percent unemployment rate for September. September was also the 27th consecutive month that Pennsylvania's unemployment rate fell below the

previous low from 1976 to the 2020 pandemic.

"Pennsylvania's total nonfarm jobs were up 6,800 in September to a record high of 6,205,000, the 14th consecutive record high for Pennsylvania's jobs count.

"If today's unemployment and jobs report serves as an unofficial end of an economic "fall term," Pennsylvania would earn an "A" on its report card. That grade includes the states' across-the-board rising wages (as reported in the

State of Working Pennsylvania 2024 — page 15, Table 1) and the September inflation rate of 2.4 percent in the last 12 months."

The Keystone Research Center is a nonpartisan economic think tank dedicated to conducting research and advancing policies that promote shared prosperity and economic opportunity for all Pennsylvanians.




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