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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,
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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,
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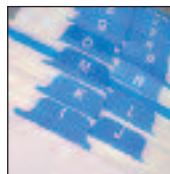


PHOTO BY STEVE LADNER PHOTOGRAPHY

Cover Story: Lezzer Lumber, a three-generation family-owned business established in 1927, helps homeowners easily plan outdoor projects with 12 retail locations and an outdoor living campaign offering competitive pricing on decking, railings and more — showcased in design-focused showrooms that simplify renovations and enhance home value.



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Mohnton location



Outdoor Living Made Easy with **Lezzer Lumber**

By Kathy Hunt

Most people associate the arrival of summer with time spent outdoors, lounging by a pool, grilling with family and friends, or relaxing in the sun or shade with a good book or beverage. Back in the chill and darkness of winter, the lazy days of summer sounded so idyllic. Now, as homeowners stare down at cracked and weed-studded patios, sagging decks, loose porch railings, and insect-or bird-damaged windowsills, summertime starts to feel more like a season of expensive, time-consuming tasks than one of leisure.



When the thought of exterior refreshers and renovations starts to ruin the summer fun, Lezzer Lumber is there to help. With 12 retail locations in Allegheny, Berks, Butler, Chester, Lancaster, Lehigh, and Northampton counties, Lezzer Lumber makes planning and shopping for outdoor projects easy. Plus, its recently launched outdoor living campaign offers competitive pricing on decking and railings as well as updated showrooms in Butler, Curwensville, DuBois, Indiana, Pennssdale, Reading, and Stockertown. Set up as design centers, the indoor and/or outdoor showrooms feature such items as exterior columns, decking, shutters, and siding.

Family-owned for three generations, Lezzer Lumber opened its first location in Curwensville, Pennsylvania, in 1927. Back then, it was called Sandri-Lezzer Lumber and Farm Equipment in honor of its founders Michael Lezzer and his cousins Louie and Charlie Sandri. Today, Lezzer Lumber is the 27th largest

building-supply materials distributors in the United States according to *LBM Magazine*. In addition to its 12 retail locations, it operates commercial door facilities in Lancaster, State College, and Williamsport, and has a truss manufacturing plant that makes roof, floor, and custom trusses in Curwensville.

Guidance on the newest hot trend, outdoor living

According to a May 2025 report from Realtor.com, over the past few years, and as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, interest in outdoor living has soared. The term “outdoor living” refers to outside spaces designed to serve as entertainment or relaxation areas. Occasionally referred to as “outdoor living rooms,” these are places where homeowners can host parties or just unwind outside.



Designers, contractors, and realtors agree that more people are adding features such as patios and porches, outdoor kitchens, and landscaping to their properties. The National Association of Realtors Research Group reported that, in 2023, these renovations were adding not only enjoyment but also value to people's homes. At that time, homeowners could expect a 95-percent cost recovery on new patios and 100-percent cost recovery on outdoor kitchens and landscaping.

Countless home design and contractor websites, podcasts, and videos promote the outdoor living trend, encouraging homeowners to create, or beautify existing, outside spaces. From erecting fences and installing hardscaping to building patios and exterior kitchens, living, and dining areas, all boast the merits of these efforts not only for current leisure activities but also for future resale. What they often don't mention, though, is how to get started on these projects.

When Lezzer Lumber customers start thinking about sprucing up or adding an outdoor feature, the very first thing that they should consider is cost, said Kaethe Huber, manager of Lezzer Lumber's Reading-area store at 3171 Morgan Road in Mohnnton. She has been with the company since 2007. At Mohnnton, she is aided with day-to-day, store needs by her "great assistant manager, Renee Reeser."

Huber said that customers should have a budget in mind. "Because we have so many options, a budget helps us narrow down what products to show," she said.



When coming up with a budget for a deck or other outdoor addition, customers should think about the structure's size, design, materials, and amount of labor needed. The larger and more complex the construction, the more materials and labor required. In general, labor will account for two-thirds of a project's cost. Those skilled at DIY can keep their budgets smaller and costs in check by doing most, if not all, of the work themselves.

In advance of visiting Lezzer Lumber, customers may also want to figure out color schemes and find images or make rough sketches of their design idea. Knowing the desired outcome of the project is also quite useful.

"Having an idea about the end result, about what they're looking for, helps us

point the customer in the right direction," Huber said.

Providing honest guidance and assistance to its customers is part of the company's mission. Its knowledgeable staff has been trained to understand the importance of outstanding customer service and how to achieve it. Whether a customer has scheduled an appointment, requested a quote in advance, or just walked in off the street, each person is treated with the utmost consideration.

Huber noted that at Lezzer Lumber, the sales staff can devote more time and attention to walk-ins. "We have a sales team at the counter who deals with the retail customers and contractors as soon as they come in," she said. "Once we

make an initial contact with contractors, we have outside salespeople who work directly with them. Overall, we're able to give a bit more attention to customers because of being family-owned and the way we're set up."

Its contractor sales teams offer such services as material take-offs and estimating, job site visits, delivery coordination and scheduling, and design assistance. Additionally, the teams keep contractors up-to-date with new products and can arrange supplier meetings. Huber added that contractors can open a charge account with Lezzer Lumber and receive competitive prices on work staples as well as specialty items.

(Continued on page 8)





Trex, Timber Tech, and other options for outdoor structures

Along with a budget and general idea of what they want to accomplish, customers may want to consider what wanders through their neighborhoods or settles in their yards when they're not outside. They need to think about wildlife and what damage birds, carpenter bees, squirrels, raccoons, and other animals and insects can inflict on a new outdoor feature.

"We have customers come in with woodpecker problems, so, even though we carry cedar for decking and siding, wood won't be the best option for those with woodpecker issues," Huber said. "They'd benefit from our composite and PVC deck and siding options."

Lezzer Lumber carries Trex and competing composite brands such as Azek's Timber Tech and Westlake Royal's Zuri Premium Decking. None of these brands' products require painting or staining. All come in a variety of colors and promise durability, fade-resistance, and low maintenance.

Despite their similarities, each brand differs slightly from the other. Known as the inventor and leader in composite decking, Trex makes its eco-friendly boards with 95-percent recycled plastic film and reclaimed wood sawdust. Containing approximately 85-percent recycled plastic, Timber Tech's boards are capped on all



four sides to protect them from moisture. Zuri's Premium Decking is crafted from cellular composite, or PVC, and possesses the look of exotic hardwood.

To meet a range of customer budgets, Lezzer Lumber carries different product levels and price points within each brand. The following sale prices are in effect through July 5: Trex Enhance® is an entry-level composite product at \$2.25 per lineal foot while Trex Select®, at between \$4.15 and \$4.75 per lineal foot, is considered mid-range. Trex Transcend® ranks as luxury decking at \$6.25 per lineal foot. Timber Tech offers eight collections that feature different grains, colors, weights, and fire-zone performances. Zuri's Premium Decking comes in six colors and as square or grooved boards. For pricing



on Timber Tech and Zuri products, visit, email, or call one of Lezzer Lumber's retail locations listed on its website, <https://www.lezzerlumber.com>.

As mentioned previously, Lezzer Lumber also sells cedar and treated lumber decking. In spite of having such a wide assortment of decking materials from which to choose, Huber said that most customers opt for the decking material that's been popular since the 1970s — pressure-treated lumber. The Environmental Protection Agency reported that until the early 2000s, the majority of wood used in outdoor residential settings was chromated arsenical-treated wood. Due to its toxicity, in 2002, this type of pressure-treated lumber was phased out and replaced by wood treated with a copper-based preservative, alkaline



copper quaternary (ACQ), which doesn't contain arsenic.

"Most people are still doing pressure-treated decks," Huber said. "Not many choose to do cedar because of its price and yearly maintenance. If they want to get away from treated lumber, then they look at composites. Lower maintenance, like not having to paint, and warranties are usually the two driving factors in what people choose to use for their decks," she said.





Versatile, new Lezzer Lumber product for landscaping and more

In addition to great deals on decking materials, Lezzer Lumber's outdoor living campaign delivers a new product to its customers, BestPLUS plastic lumber. Based in Jeannette, Pennsylvania, BestPLUS manufactures affordable plastic lumber containing 98-percent recycled plastic. It is privately-owned subsidiary of the environmental services company Triumverate Environmental. All of its products are made in the U.S.

Eco-friendly, weather- and insect-resistant, and impervious to rot and decay, BestPLUS plastic lumber can be used for a range of ground-contact scenarios, including garden edging, raised garden beds, planters, walkways, hardscaping, retaining walls, outdoor steps, fences, and posts, and on playgrounds and even in bocce courts. It can serve as a durable substitute for wood in benches, palettes, tables, and truck and trailer scuff boards. Its reusable CONform™, a flexible plastic form, can replace traditional wooden forms in concrete flatwork. BestPLUS plastic lumber is both versatile and reasonably priced.

The plastic lumber comes in two colors, black and brown. Those who prefer cedar or gray can special order these colors, but minimum quantities will apply.



In stock at Lezzer Lumber's Mohnton location are BestPLUS 3-inch by 5-inch by 8-inch rounded landscape timber, 4-inch by 4-inch by 8-inch timber, and 6-inch by 6-inch by 8-inch timber. All other dimensions can be ordered or transferred from another store. It takes a week for the plastic timber to arrive.

Lezzer Lumber ships to anywhere in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey and to parts of New York, Maryland, and Ohio. Long-time customers know not to waste time worrying about goods being damaged during transit. The company's dedicated shippers and drivers know how to safely pack and transport all manner of materials.



Even more in store for its customers

As part of its outdoor living campaign, Lezzer Lumber is highlighting its wood, chain link, composite, capped PVC, aluminum, and pressure-treated wood railings as well as vinyl and aluminum railings and kits from rdi® Railing. It also has vinyl siding and soffits from Westlake Royal Building Products, engineered wood siding from LP® Building Solutions, and stock metal siding, and Atlas Pinnacle shingles treated with Scotchgard™ Protector-treated. This protects the shingles against algae, which can cause stains and black streaks on a home's roof and exterior walls.

Along with numerous product lines, Lezzer Lumber provides such services as the aforementioned contractor sales as well as commercial sales for developers and professional builders and installed sales. Installed sales deal with complete framing packages for exterior doors and

windows for new construction projects. They also cover the installation of siding, insulation, cabinets, countertops, decks, windows, and interior and exterior doors.

Lezzer Lumber also supplies customized millwork. Its Lancaster-based mill and trim shop creates such custom millwork as stock boards and molding profiles. Working with all wood species as well as PVC, the shop can craft the following custom items: cabinetry, libraries, and entertainment centers; fireplace mantels and surrounds; interior or exterior doors; entrance, window, and door trim; exterior rail, balusters, posts, and brackets; raised-panel wainscot; columns and ceiling beams; and straight or curved stairways with pre-fit rail and baluster.

For additional information about the services, products, sales, and locations of Lezzer Lumber, or to follow the company on such social media platforms as Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, and YouTube, visit the website <https://www.lezzerlumber.com/>.



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Magic Meets Motivation at GRCA's Annual Dinner

The Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA) last night celebrated the vitality of the Berks County business community at its 112th Annual Dinner held at the Santander Arena.

Nearly 700 people gathered for the Las Vegas-themed event.

The evening began by instantly transporting attendees to the glitz and glamour of the Vegas Strip. VIP Sponsors were treated to an exclusive experience, complete with signature cocktails, gourmet hors d'oeuvres and a photo opportunity with the legendary Penn Jillette. As other guests arrived, they were welcomed by glamorous showgirls and offered sparkling wine, setting a festive tone for the night. The excitement continued with lively photo opportunities featuring a vintage convertible and an Elvis impersonator.

During Jillette's 40-minute interactive speech in which multiple audience members helped during his tricks, he spoke about how he and Teller wanted to do magic differently.

"Magic is always claiming it can do something you can and laughing at you about it," he said.



Instead, he and Teller wanted to build trust and be honest with their audience, much like businesses need to with their customers.

"Magic doesn't fool you because you are stupid," he said. "It fools you because it is stupid."

He said there is beauty in the "aha moment," that should be celebrated, and that is one of the reasons he and Teller are the longest running show in Las Vegas history.

The evening continued with recognizing the 50 companies that made up the Business Excellence Awards in Category 1. American Crane & Equipment Corpo-



ration, Reading Truck Equipment, LLC and Vision Mechanical, Inc. took the top three spots. The honored businesses in Category 1 are for-profit companies, with revenues of at least \$1 million in each of the past three fiscal years.

Ten smaller businesses were recognized in Category 2 with FXV Digital design, Our Konnection, LLC and Financial Planning Advisors, Inc. making the top three. The recognized companies in Category 2 are for-profit businesses, with revenues of at least \$250,000 in each of the past three fiscal years.

"The Dinner was more than just a finely curated and magical celebration—it was a vibrant reflection of the spirit and strength of the Greater Reading business community," said Kristi Gage-Linderman, vice chairwoman of the board. "From the moment guests arrived, the energy was electric, but what truly lit up the room was the shared pride in our local entrepreneurs and business leaders. Their success fuels our economy, strengthens our community and inspires a brighter future."



The Title Sponsor of the event was JPMorgan Chase & Co. and the Platinum Sponsor was Shuman Development Group.

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

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2024 STATE OF THE BERKS COUNTY ECONOMY

The Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA) is proud to share the latest insights into the region's economic performance with the release of the 2024 Berks County State of the Economy Report. Developed in collaboration with the Lancaster EDC's Center for regional Analysis, the report provides a comprehensive snapshot of key trends shaping the local economy, from employment and wages to housing, demographics and more.

This annual update serves as a valuable resource for business leaders, policymakers and community stakeholders seeking to better understand the opportunities and challenges influencing growth in Berks County.

Economic Growth Highlights

In 2024, Berks County experienced steady progress across several key economic indicators, including increases in gross domestic product (GDP), employment and average earnings.

- Manufacturing remains the cornerstone of the local economy, leading all

sectors in both GDP contribution and employment. Average wages in the sector exceed the countywide average by more than \$10,000 per year.

- The Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities sector experienced the largest percentage increase in employment from 2019 to 2024.

- Berks County recorded its fourth consecutive year of employment growth, with an average of 211,200 people employed throughout 2024.

- The county's unemployment rate dropped to an annual average of 3.7%, tying the all-time low last seen in 2023.

(Continued on page 12)



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(Continued from page 11)

• Although wages did not keep pace with inflation in 2024, average hourly earnings have grown by more than 32% since 2020, outpacing the national rate of inflation of 22.3% over that five-year period.

Despite these strengths, the region faces several ongoing challenges:

• The population is aging, reducing the share of residents in the prime working-age category (25–54). From 2013 to 2023, this group shrank by 2.3% or 9,700 workers.

• The housing market remains tight, with a 5.5% vacancy rate limiting availability and affordability.

To explore the full 2024 Berks County State of the Economy Report, including detailed charts and additional insights, please download the full 2024 Berks County State of the Economy Report conducted by Lancaster EDC's Center for Regional Analysis: <https://greater-reading.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/2024-Berks-County-State-of-the-Economy.pdf>.

Why the Data is Important

Having a clear understanding of economic conditions helps residents, businesses, community leaders and policymakers make informed decisions. The trends and data in this report offer a valuable window into the strengths and challenges shaping Berks County's economy.

By analyzing this information, stakeholders can plan for growth, address workforce needs, attract talent and guide strategic investments.

GRCA's Commitment

GRCA remains committed to providing access to reliable, timely economic information. We believe transparency and data sharing are essential to building a vibrant and resilient economy in Berks County. This report reflects our dedication to supporting business and community leaders through informed decision-making and long-term planning.

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Rothenberger Insurance Recognized for Rapid Growth at 2025 Business Excellence Awards

When steady growth turns into significant momentum, people notice. That's exactly what happened with Rothenberger Insurance Services, recently honored by the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance at the 2025 Business Excellence Awards for achieving impressive revenue growth over the past three fiscal years. It's a standout moment for a firm that's built its reputation not on flash, but on fundamentals: relationships, responsiveness, and real-world expertise in both personal and commercial insurance.

With offices in West Reading and Wyomissing, the strength of their team is central to their success. At the West Reading office, you'll find founder Ron Rothenberger alongside Sean Wyant and Heidi Peters—seasoned professionals who know this region, this economy, and how to protect what matters most. Their Wyomissing team—Brady West, Claudia Jeronimo, Gail Schrantz, Nate Kutz, and Iris Panjota—brings a deep bench of experience and insight to every policy, whether it's safeguarding a small business, covering a new driver, or guiding a client through claims.

If your business has outgrown one-size-fits-all coverage—or you're ready for a more proactive, personalized approach—Rothenberger Insurance is here to help you move forward with confidence. From liability and property to specialized coverage for your unique industry, they make sure your protection grows alongside your business. Visit risquote.com/commercial-insurance to explore what's possible—or connect directly with their team to start the conversation.

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Ready to Grow Smarter? *See How Interlace Communications Helps Local Businesses Streamline with AI and Marketing That Works*

Behind every website launch, social campaign, bulk email, print piece, or AI integration is a team who knows how to keep things achievable while being practical. Founder and President Alyse Mitten, who is now also General Practitioner AI Consultant, brings decades of know-how to the table, guiding companies through the maze of new tech and marketing choices. Supporting her are Victoria McCloskey, VP of Operations; Annie Crider, Website Director & AI Oversight Manager; and Erin McVaugh, Administrative Assistant—a tight-knit crew dedicated to giving every client the attention, clarity, and follow-through they deserve.

Interlace Communications recently earned 5th place in Category 2 of the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance's 2025 Business Excellence Awards—a recognition of the real, measurable growth they've helped local businesses achieve over the past three years. For more than 30 years, Interlace has stayed true to one mission: make marketing simple, clear, and results-focused, so business owners can spend more time doing what they do best—running their business.

Should you feel ready to trim the busy-work, boost your marketing, or explore what AI can really do for your day-to-day operations, Interlace Communications is ready to walk you through it—no jargon, no pressure, just smart steps that fit how real people work. Whether you need a single ad, a fresh website, or help automating repetitive tasks, you'll have a local team right beside you to make it happen—so your business can stay ahead, without feeling left behind.

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FOCUS ON BERKS COUNTY BUSINESSES

PA INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT – Opening new location this summer!



This Summer PA Industrial Equipment Inc. will be moving from their rented Leola facility and opening a permanent Lancaster County location at 280 Earland Drive in New Holland, Pa. We are excited to make this move and to be able to assist our Lancaster County customers for years to come. Forklift service, rentals and sales are available at this location as well as our headquarters in Boyertown, Pa.



PA Industrial Equipment stocks a full inventory of new and used forklifts. The forklifts at PA Industrial Equipment range from 3,000 lb. capacity to 20,000 lb. capacity and are available with LP, gas, diesel and electric motors. One of PA Industrial Equipment's experienced salesmen can assist you in determining the correct equipment for your application. Many new Clark and Komatsu forklifts are available now for quick delivery. We also stock scissor lifts, pallet jacks, floor scrubbers, industrial batteries and chargers.

Forklift repair services – both breakdowns and scheduled maintenance – are



The new PA Industrial Equipment location at 280 Earland Drive in New Holland, Pa

provided throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania. One of PA Industrial Equipment's factory trained technicians can be dispatched to your location quickly and efficiently. PA Industrial Equipment's well-stocked service vans allow technicians to complete many repairs on site at your location, often in one trip saving you time and money. More extensive repairs can be completed in one of our clean, well-equipped shops and rental forklifts can be provided for

the duration of needed repairs. Parts for all makes and models of forklifts are available through PA Industrial Equipment's parts department.

Remember to call PA Industrial Equipment, with 48 years in business, for all your forklift and material handling needs. PA Industrial Equipment can be reached at 610.369.9778 or 717.355.2110 or via our website at www.paindustrial.com. We look forward to helping your business grow and succeed.

Bell Media Group

Since 2019, Bell Media Group has been redefining what it means to create meaningful connections between businesses and their audiences. Founded on the principle that “real resonates,” this Berks County-based marketing agency has built its reputation by developing people-focused campaigns that cut through the noise of today’s saturated digital landscape.

What started as a passion project by husband-and-wife team Zachary Bell and Kyra Denlinger, who bootstrapped their vision while juggling demanding 9-5 careers, has evolved into a full-service marketing firm that serves clients across diverse industries. Their entrepreneurial journey began with late nights and early mornings, building client relationships and crafting campaigns around their full-time commitments — fueled by copious amounts of coffee, sustained by shared learning experiences, and occasionally punctuated by a few tears along the way!

At the heart of Bell Media Group’s philosophy lies a commitment to storytelling and strategic partnership. “We do our best work when we ‘eat at the table together,’” explains Co-founder Zachary Bell, emphasizing their collaborative approach to client relationships. Bell Media Group’s goal isn’t delivering transactional marketing services from arm’s length — it’s about becoming an extension of each client’s team, understanding their challenges, goals, and unique market position.

What truly sets Bell Media Group apart in the competitive marketing landscape is their deep-rooted belief that storytelling is the key to unlocking successful marketing. This philosophy stems from understanding that in an era of information overload, consumers don’t just buy products — they invest in brands that align with their values and aspirations. By leveraging innovative marketing technology platforms and data analytics, they transform concepts and information into dynamic, multi-touchpoint digital experiences that surprise and delight audiences.

The agency’s client roster reflects their versatility and effectiveness, spanning industries from retail and hospitality to professional services and technology.

What unites these diverse partnerships is Bell Media Group’s ability to distill complex business objectives into clear, compelling strategies that drive measurable results. Their track record of helping clients achieve significant improvements in engagement rates, conversions, dwell time, and overall marketing ROI has established them as a trusted partner for businesses serious about long-term growth.



For additional information, please call 610.207.7604 or email zach@bellmediagrp.com, and visit www.bellmediagrp.com.



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Ludgate Engineering has provided civil engineering for land development since the company was founded by Bob Ludgate Sr. in 1976. Although rules and regulations have changed, the planning process still deals with the several impacts imposed by almost all development plans. While the site civil engineer provides plans to identify and offset or mitigate impacts, the Engineer must do so in a way that does not impede the essential functions the site shall provide,

nor shall the plan compromise the Architect's vision of the development. Each site plan deals with the impacts of traffic management and parking layout. Managing stormwater for drainage and flood prevention often governs the design. Bringing sewer, water, and other utilities to the site can present difficult problems for the Engineer to solve.

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By Lana Potgieter,
Lighthouse Leadership

As a leader of a team, your job is to get the results "with and through your team." As a person, you have goals to achieve in your personal and business life! You have bills to pay, fun adventures to go on, relationships to nurture, and communities to serve, as well as challenges to overcome.

You are pulled in many seemingly opposing directions! This is why our July 2025 Open Enrollment Class is an opportunity for leaders to participate in the EFFECTIVE COACHING AND EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM.

How you lead in business, whether as an owner, executive, or any other position in an organization, is a function of your skills, activities, attitudes, and the level of clarity of your purpose.

Said another way: **Success = Activities x Skills x Attitude x Purpose.**

This applies to you, as well as to each member of your team and organization.

The July program will:

- Develop your leadership capacity and
- Empower your team to take more initiative, ownership, and
- Align your team's focus to achieve business success as a means to realizing their purpose and goals.
- Achieve greater bottom-line results for the business. Let the business work for you, not the other way around.

Over eight weeks, we will address each of the areas of the success formula, $S = A \times S \times A \times P$, to ensure you have greater skills to coach and empower your team to ensure everyone wins and achieves the results you want from your business.

Using coaching along with other modalities and structured reflection, you will be able to operationalize the learning from the very first week. Our intent is for you to experience measurable results.

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SHORT-FORM VIDEO TRENDS IN 2025: WHY YOU CAN'T IGNORE THEM



SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS By Theresa Mintzer

In 2025, short-form video is no longer optional, it's a must-have in your content strategy. Platforms like Instagram Reels, TikTok, and YouTube Shorts continue to prioritize short videos in their algorithms, and audiences love them for their quick, engaging format. These videos, typically 5 to 90 seconds long, are one of the fastest ways to grow your brand, boost engagement, and stay relevant online, all straight from your phone.

Trending Short-Form Video Ideas for 2025:

- Product Teasers & Drops
- Answering FAQs (with personality!)
- Behind-the-Scenes Clips
- Customer Testimonials or UGC
- Quick Tips & How-To Tutorials

Short videos are also powerful for customer service. A 30-second walkthrough can prevent confusion, reduce support

tickets, and set clear expectations, saving you time and keeping customers happy.

Nervous about being on camera? You're not alone. Try voiceovers, screen recordings, or turn still images into engaging videos using Canva, CapCut, or Instagram's in-app tools. AI tools in 2025 also make editing and captioning easier than ever.

Want to grow your reach? Reels and Shorts are where it's at. Use trending audio, captions, and hooks in the first three seconds to stop the scroll and boost watch time.

Bottom line: Short-form video is a powerful way to connect, educate, and convert. The more consistent you are, the more your audience will know, like, and trust you.

Ready to build video into your content strategy? I offer 1:1 social media coaching to help you plan, create, and grow with confidence. Head on over to my website at <https://www.mintzersolutions.com/> for more information and to schedule an appointment.



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AI IN MARKETING: SMARTER CAMPAIGNS, BETTER CONVERSIONS



MARKETING TIPS

By Julie Huff, Copywriter,
beMarketing

AI isn't the future of marketing anymore. It's the present. And it's reshaping the way we

do everything, from strategy to execution. By taking guesswork out of the equation, AI helps marketers make smarter, data-backed decisions and gives them a competitive edge to do more with less.

Make Your Data Work Harder

Most businesses are sitting on a goldmine of customer data and aren't using it to its full potential. AI changes that. With predictive analytics, AI tools analyze past user behavior to reveal what's working and what will likely convert next. This goes beyond simple metrics to uncover actionable insights, like when your audience is most active and which messages drive real action, leading to highly optimized campaigns.

Personalization Made Easy

The data is what fuels personalization. By tracking consumer behavior, you can automatically provide the customized content and product recommendations that customers now expect. Studies show that AI-powered personalization significantly increases engagement, loyalty, and conversions. By automating tasks like writing ad copy and scheduling emails, your team is freed up to focus on high-level strategy.

Be Brilliant at the Basics

Technology is only one part of the puzzle. The key is integrating the right AI while maintaining your brand's authentic voice. At beMarketing, we combine human insight with cutting-edge digital marketing services to launch campaigns that convert. We act as your partner, ensuring your technology always supports your unique business goals.

Ready to take your marketing to the next level? Contact us today to see how AI can transform your results.



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H&G Travel Adventures: Turning Travel into Memories — and Meaning

Travel That Brings People Together

There's just something special about packing your bags, hitting the road (or the skies), and sharing adventures with the people you love. Whether it's a girls' getaway, a multigenerational trip, or a bucket-list vacation with friends, travel has a way of bringing us closer and making memories that last forever.

That's the heart behind **H&G Travel Adventures**, a locally based travel agency, and a mission to turn great trips into even greater memories.

Founder **Diane O'Cain** spent over 20 years planning meetings, conferences, and incentive travel for major corporations. She's managed everything from luxury client retreats to large-scale programs—and learned exactly what it takes to make a trip smooth, stress-free, and unforgettable.

But it was her *personal adventures* that truly inspired H&G. Diane began taking yearly trips with her grandchildren Hayden & Maddie, and the connection they shared through those experiences became something more. Hayden even started a YouTube channel, *Hayden &*

Grammy Adventures, to document their journeys.

"Those trips were the spark," Diane shares. "And now it's something I do with all of my grandkids—it's become a family tradition that we all look forward to every year."

The name **H&G** honors the origin—*Hayden & Grammy*—but the heart of the company is about helping *every family, friend group, or organization* create those same kinds of moments.

Whether it's reconnecting with loved ones, exploring someplace new, or traveling with a purpose, **H&G Travel Adventures** helps make it easy—and meaningful.

Group Travel, Made Simple (and Fun!)

From European river cruises to Nashville girls' trips, Alaska adventures, and Clearwater Beach getaways, H&G offers **pre-planned group trips** where everything is taken care of—or helps you build a **private trip just for your own group**.

(Continued on page 22)



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H&G TRAVEL ADVENTURES

(Continued from page 21)

You'll get:

- Thoughtful planning tailored to your group's interests
- All the logistics handled (yes, even the tricky stuff!)
- Support every step of the way
- A personal touch that makes it all feel easy and special

"We don't just book trips—we help people make memories," Diane says.

Adventures for a Cause: Travel That Gives Back

Here's where it gets even more meaningful...

H&G Travel Adventures also offers **Adventures for a Cause**—a unique fundraising program that turns group travel into a powerful way to support nonprofits, schools, and community organizations.

No raffles, bake sales, or auctions required. Just unforgettable trips that give back.

Here's how it works:

- Your organization invites supporters to join a group trip (choose from H&G's lineup or plan your own)

- A portion of each traveler's trip cost is donated back to your group, at no additional cost to them

- Everyone gets an amazing travel experience—and your organization gets funds and connection-building momentum

Let's Go Somewhere Amazing—Together

At H&G Travel Adventures, it's not just about where you go—it's who you're with and how the journey brings you closer.

Whether you're:

- Planning a family reunion or girls' trip
- Exploring fundraising ideas for your nonprofit or alumni group
- Or just ready to say *yes* to new adventures

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We started Renegade because we kept seeing the same issue: plants with control systems that didn’t work for the people using them. So, we did something a little unusual; we became licensed Operators ourselves. We wanted to speak the same language and build solutions that make sense in the field, not just on paper.

When we started studying for the exams, we were surprised by how few solid resources were available. So, Heather (our founder) decided to build one. That’s where Randy “Renegade”



Raccoon comes in. He is a friendly, AI-powered chatbot who helps students’ study for their State-certified Water and Wastewater Operator license (through DEP). Randy.ai offers tips, practice questions, and real explanations in plain English with a bit of fun thrown in the mix. He’s trained solely on DEP and EPA content and focused 100% on exam prep.

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We published Randy.ai to our website, and before long, aspiring Operators from across the country began using Randy to prepare for their certification exams. The feedback came in quickly! Randy was helping them pass and the most common question we heard was, “Do you have an app?”

We got to work right away.

In the coming months, Randy.ai will be available on both the App Store and Google Play, free to anyone studying for

their State-Certified Operator license. For those already working in the field, we’ll also be launching “Reagan the Ren-e-gator”, Randy’s technically skilled counterpart, available by subscription to provide real-time troubleshooting support.

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Built on a Legacy of Grit and Service

The story begins in 1935, in the midst of the Great Depression. Morris Bailey, driven by determination and a simple mission to help his neighbors, launched a small outhouse cleaning and well-drilling service. Even in hard times, people needed clean drinking water—and a place to put waste. Morris stepped up, providing both with a commitment to reliability and community care.

As the business grew, so did the Bailey family's involvement. Morris's son, John Bailey, joined and eventually took over the company. After John's passing in 1969, the reins passed to Les Bailey, the third generation, who had been helping out since he was 16. Under Les's leadership, the company expanded its services and footprint in the region.

A Modern Era with Traditional Values

In 1996, Les's son, Todd Bailey, joined the business and brought a fresh chapter of growth. Seeing an opportunity to serve the growing need for event and construction sanitation,

Todd founded the portable toilet division. Balancing daily pumping and scheduling with big-picture growth, Todd helped lead Bailey's into a new era—while keeping the same values that built the company.

Now in 2025, Zachary Bailey represents the fifth generation to proudly step into leadership. With deep respect for the company's roots, Zachary brings innovation, modern technologies, and fresh energy to the field—all while learning from Todd, who remains deeply involved in daily operations and customer service.

Service You Can Trust

Bailey's offers a full suite of professional sanitation services, including:

- **Septic Tank Cleaning**
- **Grease Trap Cleaning**
- **Septic Inspections**
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- **Portable Restroom Rentals**

Whether it's for a residential home, commercial property, community event, or construction site, Bailey's provides timely, respectful, and thorough service every time.





Family-Owned, Community-Focused

Today, Bailey's operates with a dedicated team of a dozen employees—many of whom are like family themselves. The company remains small enough for the Baileys to stay personally involved, yet large enough to handle major service needs throughout Berks County and surrounding areas.

The Baileys take pride in their long-standing relationships with customers, contractors, and municipalities. They're proud members of the *Pennsylvania Septage Management Association* and the *Greater Reading Chamber Alliance*, staying active in industry standards and local initiatives.

Get in Touch

For more information, call **610-929-1500** or submit a request for service at www.baileyssepticsservices.com



*From outhouses to innovation,
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Area's Oldest Dance School
Accepting New Summer Students

Dancing Princess Camp and
Nutcracker Boot Camp —
Week of August 11



Registration and
Open House for
2025-2026 School Year
will be August 23,
from 12:00 noon to
7:00 PM and August 27
from 5:00 - 8:00 PM



Pottstown Dance Theatre
Michelle Jones Wurtz, Director
610-323-2569
72 W. Main St., Pottstown PA 19463
www.pottstowndance.com
*Ballet and pointe, tap, hip-hop, jazz,
modern/contemporary/lyrical, Irish
Dance, African Dance, break dance,
creative movement, Acro, and Pilates!*



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Senior Insurance Broker

610-428-9901

Bonnie@thefreedomportal.com



Serving the Tri-County Area for over 10 years!

The client is the center of everything I do: their needs, goals, and preferences, their financial considerations, and what type of coverage they are accustomed to. I have lots of happy customers who enjoy being able to call throughout the year when something comes up they want to discuss. For this reason I get many referrals, for which I am grateful. We form lasting relationships and there is hardly anything I would not do for my clients.

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GRCA ROUNDUP

GREATER READING CHAMBER ALLIANCE

GRCA

**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.

SHOULD I OR SHOULDN'T I... THE INVESTMENT IN SUPERVISOR TRAINING



**By Mark Dolinski,
VP of Training &
Professional
Development, GRCA**

Peter Drucker, known as the "Father of Management" once said, "The best way to predict the future is to create it."

The impact of a high-performing supervisor on an organization's success cannot be overstated. From driving operational efficiency to enhancing employee engagement, supervisors are at the heart of team performance and workplace culture.

The COVID-19 pandemic served as a wake-up call for many organizations, exposing the growing importance of soft skills such as communication, empathy and adaptability. In today's workplace, supervisors are expected to do more than manage tasks — they must cultivate a culture of collaboration, encourage initiative, support problem-solving and remove barriers so their teams can thrive.

Investing in supervisor training is no longer a luxury — it's a strategic necessity. High-quality training can reduce employee turnover, improve morale, enhance quality and positively impact both revenue and operational costs.

Despite this, many new supervisors are promoted based on technical expertise alone, without the leadership training needed to succeed in their new role. The transition from peer to leader is one of the most difficult professional shifts an employee can make. Without adequate support, even the most talented individuals can struggle — leading to disengagement and high turnover among team members.

As the global leadership consulting firm DDI notes, "People leave managers, not companies."

In fact, 57 percent of employees have left a job specifically because of their manager. This powerful statistic highlights the critical need for supervisors who are not only competent, but also inspiring and supportive leaders.

Effective supervision requires more than technical skills. It requires a new mindset. New supervisors must learn how to empower others, communicate with clarity, manage

conflict and focus on team success rather than individual contribution. One of the most effective ways to build this foundation is through structured supervisor training.

The Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA) offers a thoughtfully designed supervisor training program that equips leaders with the tools they need to guide high-performing teams. This comprehensive program supports not only new supervisors transitioning into leadership roles but also experienced supervisors looking to refine their approach and stay current with evolving leadership practices.

In today's fast-changing workplace, even seasoned supervisors benefit from ongoing development. Leadership isn't static — effective supervision requires continuous learning to stay responsive, relevant and resilient. GRCA's program acknowledges this by offering a structure that promotes both foundational learning and advanced growth.

The training is divided into three distinct modules, an intentional design choice that supports progressive learning without overwhelming participants. Participants are exposed to approaches such as DISC, which provides a framework for the supervisor to understand their employees and improve communication, teamwork and leadership skills.

Other core competencies integrated in the training program include communication skills, conflict resolution, delegation, problem solving, performance feedback and emotion intelligence, through self-awareness, self-management and empathy enable supervisors to manage their own emotions and understand and respond to the emotions of their team members, fostering a positive and productive work environment.

This modular approach allows for longitudinal development — where skills are built gradually over time — enabling deeper understanding and retention. It also offers flexibility, allowing supervisors to balance their learning with day-to-day responsibilities while continuing to grow as leaders.

So, should you invest in supervisor training? If you're looking to build a resilient, engaged and high-performing workforce, the answer is clear: you can't afford not to.

REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP



MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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

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

BENEFITS OF JOINING THE CHAMBER:

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

Connection Starts Here

Events that grow your business through real relationships.



As the longest-standing Chamber in Montgomery County, we help businesses grow through connection, education, and advocacy — backed by one of the region's strongest networks.

What You'll Find at Our Events:

- Learn from marketing & business experts
- Build real relationships over lunch or coffee
- Celebrate with us at high-impact signature events

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 10, 2025 –

Getting Ahead: A Chat & Chew with Headshots

5:15 PM - 7:30 PM at DoubleTree by Hilton

Expand your presence, your confidence, and your business—starting with your headshot.

July 15, 2025 –

Township Managers Luncheon - Seating is Limited

11:15 AM - 1:30 PM Location TBD

A one-of-a-kind gathering where local leaders, Chamber members, and engaged professionals come together for real conversations, real updates, and real impact.

July 17, 2025 –

Members-Only Club

5:15 PM - 7:30 PM at Uplink KOP

Join us for our New Member Orientation, held every 60 days to help you get plugged into the Chamber's offerings, benefits, and initiatives. This session is open to new and existing members alike, and is designed to help you feel more connected, informed, and empowered.

July 31, 2025 –

Business Builders: Build Your Digital Footprint

8:15 AM - 10:00 AM at The Hallwayz in King of Prussia

Join us for an engaging Business Builders session hosted by the team at DSG. You'll walk away with clear, actionable strategies to help your business get found online and stand out in today's digital landscape.



Join us at our next event—your seat's waiting.

Scan the QR code or visit:
<https://members.montcochamberpa.org/events>



TRICOUNTY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Resources. Relationships. Recognition.

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

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

I am incredibly honored and excited to address you today as your Chamber President, effective June 2025. It is with immense gratitude and enthusiasm I take this opportunity to lead an organization so vital to the growth and prosperity of our TriCounty business community.

My journey to this role has been shaped by over a decade of experience focused on business development and marketing across various industries. Most recently, I spent four fulfilling years at a chamber in South Carolina, an experience which has further deepened my understanding of the crucial role chambers play in fostering economic vitality.



Similar to many of you, my roots are right here in this community. Born in Villanova, PA, I moved to the area at the age of five and attended East Coventry Elementary and Owen J. Roberts Middle & High School. My educational path led me through the University of Pittsburgh, Montgomery County Community College, Rosemont College, and Villanova University. My time in South Carolina gave me the opportunity to step back and view our area from the outside, it was then that I realized how truly amazing and diverse our community is. I look forward to leading the chamber in spreading that message to everyone who will listen.

I am eager to leverage my experience, passion, and deep connection to this region to serve you, the members. I look forward to collaborating with each of you to solve the issues that truly matter and create new opportunities for those who will follow. Our dedicated Board of Directors, staff, and committee members will all continue building upon the Chamber's strong foundation, advocating fiercely for your interests, and creating new opportunities for all.

Thank you for your trust and support. I am truly excited for what we will accomplish together.

Sincerely,
Harrison Santangelo, President
The TriCounty Chamber of Commerce

Member Renewals and Voluntary Contributors!

Thank you to the following Members who recently renewed their commitment to the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce:

4 Point Development

****AAA East Central**

Armato & Associates Training and Development

****Avante Apartments**

****Cornerstone Advisors
Asset Management**

**David McSurdy
D.M.D. Orthodontist**

****Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott
Pottstown Limerick**

Heart of God Family Worship Center

Jack Cisick / Cisick Planning

****Mom's House, Inc. of
Greater Philadelphia**

****RiverCrest Golf Club & Preserve**

Sealstrip Corporation

St. Gabriel Lodge

The Bowman Group

***Voluntary contributors pay over their dues amount to help us provide additional programs and services to the entire Membership.*

MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

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

35 years

Reading Fightin Phils

10 years

Heritage Coach Company, Inc.

Gerhart, Hartman & Ritner, Ltd.

LEADERSHIP TRICOUNTY CELEBRATES THE GRADUATION OF THE CLASS OF 2025

Leadership TriCounty celebrated the graduation of its 2025 class in June, marking the culmination of a ten-month journey for emerging and existing leaders in the tri-county region. First developed in 1993, Leadership TriCounty is the flagship initiative of the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

Leadership TriCounty is a tuition-based program designed to equip participants with essential skills and in-depth knowledge of the assets and challenges within Berks, Chester, and Montgomery Counties. It also provides foundational education to enable them to take on leadership roles in their communities. The

program aims to cultivate informed and engaged leaders who are prepared to contribute significantly to the region's growth and development.

The graduating class included a diverse group of professionals from various sectors, including Kirsten Aiken, Zak Andrews, Dr. Rosann Bar, George Barreca, James Boyer, Marcus Dixon, Amanda Eckert, Dr. Stephanie Freed, Tom Frevert, Akayla Hill-Laws, Andrew Jackson, Aimee Kibbler, Jamie LeVan, Kimyetta Lewis, Lauren McCloskey, Kristy Morris, Tracy Myers, Nicole O'Callaghan, Mina Pomante, Allie Robertson, and Jamie Sanchez.



The graduating class of 2025 are now equipped to apply their enhanced leadership skills and regional understanding to make a positive impact in their workplaces and communities. The program's emphasis on community leadership ensures that graduates are well-prepared to serve in various capacities within the non-profit sector and beyond.

The Leadership TriCounty program continues to be a vital resource for developing effective and engaged leaders in the tri-county area, contributing to the region's overall prosperity and well-being.

The program is strongly supported by its sponsors. Montgomery County Community College served as the Location Sponsor, while Pottstown Area Rapid Transit (PART) was the Transportation Sponsor. Their commitment is vital in empowering the region's future leaders.

If you would like to learn more about the program or apply for the next class, please head to www.tricountyareachamber.com or call us at (610) 326-2900!



UPCOMING EVENTS.



JULY
16

Wednesday, 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Business After Hours: July

Join us for an open house of Dr. McCurdy's Gilbertsville location. Light fare and wine/beer will be offered. Come out to see their state-of-the-art facility and meet their amazing staff and network with fellow Chamber Members. Door prize and swag for attendees.

JULY
25

Friday, 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM

REACH Relationships & Coffee

The TriCounty Area Chamber's REACH group is offering you the opportunity to make more connections over coffee. This monthly connection will build your relationships with fellow REACH Members. Join us to meet new people, check in with each other, and share inspiration. Grow your network and connect with other professional women in the tri-county region.

AUG
7

Thursday, 4:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Kayaking Group Expedition

Join fellow Members for a leisurely kayak expedition down the Schuylkill River, led by Take It Outdoors. Join us to network and build relationships on the river! The guided kayaking portion will take about 2 hours. This event is open to ALL Chamber Members and is presented by the TriCounty Young Professionals and sponsored by Schuylkill River Greenways NHA. \$25 per Member - includes kayak rental and guided tour

AUG
22

Friday, shotgun start at 9:00 AM, lunch at 1:30 PM

Annual Golf Outing

Get ready for a day of golf, camaraderie, and non-stop fun at Twin Ponds Golf Course! Whether you're swinging solo (\$150) or bringing a foursome (\$550), this event is packed with excitement—player packages, contests, prizes, special challenges, raffles, a 50/50, and SO much more! Not a golfer? No problem—come for the BBQ lunch and all the vibes for just \$40. It's more than a day on the course—it's the event everyone will be talking about. Don't miss it!

SEP
24

Wednesday, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

REACH Conference - 5th Annual

Don't miss one of the most empowering events of the year! Join over 150 professional women from the tri-county area for a high-energy afternoon featuring 3 dynamic speakers, a delicious lunch and dessert buffet, raffle prizes, REACH Awards, and table hosts ready to spark meaningful conversation. Plus, every guest receives a commemorative gift to remember the day. It's the perfect chance to connect, grow, and celebrate with a powerful network of women—all for just \$150 per person. Seats are filling fast—don't be the one who hears about it after!

VISIONARY

TriCounty
HEALTH PLANS

STAKEHOLDER



BUILDING COMMUNITIES



CREATING CONNECTIONS



SUPPORTING COMMERCE



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."

Visit our events page
for details on these
events and more.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

HAPPY HOUR

WHERE OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES, COMMUNITY, AND NON-PROFITS UNITE FOR CHANGE

FREE NETWORKING HAPPY HOUR | 2ND TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH — 5:30PM - 7:00PM

JULY 08, 2025
127 Bridge St, Mont Clare, PA 19453

THIS MONTH'S EVENT POWERED BY: SPONSORSHIP AVAILABLE

HOSTED BY: **LOCK L29K** MONT CLARE, PA

NONPROFIT PARTNER: **ORION Communities**

Presented by: **PHOENIXVILLE REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP

PERKIOMEN VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



521 Main Street, Trappe, PA 19436 • 610.489.6660

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

Welcome to the Perkiomen Valley Chamber of Commerce!

For 65 years the Chamber has been the recognized voice & advocate for the business community. Creating opportunities for members to connect with business professionals, mentors, and potential customers, the Chamber helps members improve business and create a thriving community for themselves and their employees. We can help grow YOUR customer base in Collegeville, Trappe, Schwenksville, Upper Providence, Lower Frederick, Lower Providence, Perkiomen, Skippack, and Oaks. Visit www.PVchamber.net to view membership directory. To sign-up for E-news, send request to info@PVchamber.net. Follow the PV Chamber Facebook Page @PerkValleyChamber.net

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

LaBrusciano Roofing & Exteriors

Exterior renovations, roofing, siding, more
Anthony LaBrusciano (610) 890-9078
www.labruscianoexteriorsllc.com

Beem Light Sauna

Red light & infrared therapy
Bayo Ayode (484) 961-0919
www.beemlightsauna.com/collegeville

Native Ceuticals Collegeville Hemp

Natural wellness products
Lisa Weaver (267) 567-2791
www.nativeceuticals.com

Get Clean with a Disco Queen

Cleaning and Organizing Services
Vanessa Disco (215) 264-7246
[facebook/GetCleanWithADiscoQueen](https://facebook.com/GetCleanWithADiscoQueen)

Pegasus Home Services

HVAC, electrical and bathroom remodeling
TJ Hartnett (484) 303-3346
www.TrustPegasus.com

KJS Electric LLC

Lighting and electrical services
Kaitlyn ODonnell (215) 962-0379
www.kjselectricpa.com

EVENTS

FEATURED EVENT: Curious about the Chamber? Join us for our Summer BBQ Party! Enjoy BBQ, cornhole, wine, and beer—and connect with our welcoming Chamber community. All are welcome—come see what we're all about!



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!



PV Next-Gen is a dynamic network of young professionals ages 22 to 40, united by ambition, community spirit, and diverse career paths. Based in the Perkiomen Valley and extending across Montgomery, Berks, and Bucks Counties, our members are entrepreneurs, innovators, and rising leaders committed to growing professionally while making a positive impact locally. Whether you're looking to build connections, expand your skills, or give back to the community, PV Next-Gen is your place to thrive.

Annual membership is just \$25 for employees of PV Chamber member businesses, and \$50 for non-members. Learn more and view our upcoming events at www.PVchamber.net.

Annual Night Out at Reading Phils - July 23, 2025

Call the Chamber office for ticket information. 610-489-6660.

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 US AT LIMERICK COMMUNITY DAY

Vendors

Food Trucks

Family Fun

Saturday
16 August 2025
12pm-3pm

Limerick Community Park

Vendor Pricing:

- Vendor Rate - \$150
- Non-profit Vendor Rate: \$50
- Food Truck Rate: \$150

Sponsorship Opportunities:

- Platinum Sponsor: \$5,000
- Gold Sponsor: \$1,000
- Silver Sponsor: \$500

Contact Us
610-495-6432
dhouseholder@limerickpa.org

VENDOR REGISTRATION

Join Us at Limerick Community Day – Saturday, August 16th!

Bring the whole family out for a fun-filled afternoon at Limerick Community Park from 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM! Enjoy food trucks, local vendors, entertainment, and exciting activities for all ages. This is a fantastic way to support our community, connect with neighbors, and celebrate summer together.

Location: Limerick Community Park
Date: Saturday, August 16, 2025
Time: 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Interested in becoming a vendor or sponsor?

Vendor Rate: \$150 | Non-Profit Rate: \$50
Food Truck Rate: \$150
Sponsorship Opportunities: Starting at \$500
Contact: dhouseholder@limerickpa.org |
Let's make this year's Community Day the best one yet!

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 mileva@springfordchamber.com

BECOME A MEMBER

Networking | Community Service | Business Growth

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!

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 mileva@springfordchamber.com for more information on membership benefits and how to join. Let's grow together!

Spring-Ford Chamber Announces Upcoming Professional Networking Events

The Spring-Ford Chamber of Commerce invites local professionals to three exciting networking events designed to foster connections, collaboration, and business growth.

- **July 24th – Professional Networking Event at the Alley on high Street (5:30PM)**
- **August 27th – Professional Networking Event at Downtown on 401 Main street (5:30PM)**
- **September 25, 2025 – Professional Networking Event at Brookside Country Club N Adams Street, Pottstown (5:30 PM)**

These events provide a fantastic opportunity to meet local business leaders, exchange ideas, and grow your professional network in a welcoming and engaging atmosphere. Don't miss out! Mark your calendars and join us for an evening of fun, networking, and new opportunities.

BE BETTER.
GROW FASTER!



JOIN THE SBRA

The Ultimate Small Business Community

JOIN
TODAY!



www.sbrassociation.com



THE SBRA COMMUNITY

Time to PRUNE—The PURSUIT of LESS



By Gary Seibert, CEO,
Small Business Resource Association

My wife is a Master Gardner. That means that over the past 25 years she's taken multiple courses, attended numerous workshops and seminars, put in several thousand hours of volunteer work and continually researches and experiments on ways to better grow and maintain her vegetable and flower gardens.

No one is a true Gardner until they thoroughly understand and master the art of pruning. By definition, pruning is described as "removing dead, diseased, and injured parts of a tree, shrub or plant to maximize their vigor and aesthetic qualities. Removing vulnerable parts of the plant will also minimize the potential for pest damage. Plus, pruning encourages good growth patterns and improves air circulation".

In everyday life we need to get rid of the things that are preventing us from being happy, healthy and productive. By doing so we can have more energy to do what we need to do to find significance and importance in things and actions that help us determine how we live and perform best.

Much like pruning the plant so it can be more beautiful or bare more fruit, we need to take a deeper look at our business lives to see what we can get rid of that will provide a more successful and profitable business while providing a better, well-balanced personal life. I describe this as "Doing Less Better".

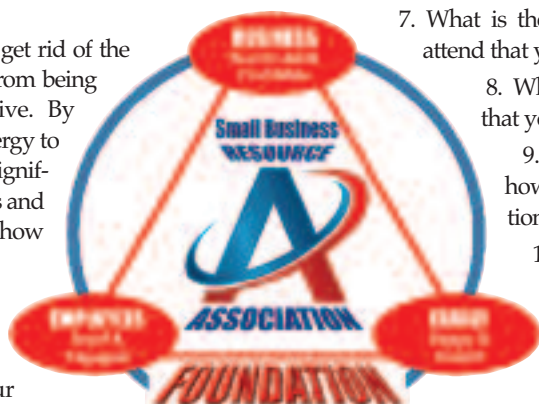
Pruning in business is simply getting rid of the clutter, distractions, dead weight and meaningless time and efforts that produces NO fruit. Let me give you some questions to consider.

1. What is one product or service you should prune right now?
 2. Is there a product or service that takes more time and effort than it is worth?
 3. What is one marketing expenditure that you do not need right now?
 4. What cumbersome, underutilized software should you prune?
 5. Is there a supplier or vendor who consistently causes more problems than they solve?
 6. Who is the client or employee draining your love for your business that needs pruning?
 7. What is the one event that you frequently attend that you need to prune?
 8. What is a personal activity or routine that you need to eliminate right now?
 9. If you could start over today how different would your organization look?
 10. If you spent less time chasing new customers and focused more on maintaining your current customers, would your business grow? The answer is YES.
- So, if you actually spent the time addressing the above 10 questions and you successfully got rid of all the dead wood and wistful efforts in your business, what would you do with the newfound time?

1. Would you use that time to recharge and innovate?
2. Would you use that time to start a creative project you always wanted to explore?
3. Would you invest time into your spiritual growth?
4. Would you spend more time with family and friends?
5. How would you use extra time for recreation and self-care?
6. What's one educational pursuit you'd take on if you had the time?
7. What friends from high school or college would you call?
8. What possible new markets would you like to explore?
9. Would you spend more time training and supporting your staff?
10. Would you put together an advisory board to do a S.W.O.T. analysis?

Getting rid of things we have been doing, for things that we should be doing, is much easier said than done. I would suggest that you meet with a trusted advisor before you start pruning to make sure you are making decisions based on what is in the best interest of your business, employees and customers. DO NOT allow your emotions to be part of your decision-making process. Remember, you are getting rid of the things that are not allowing you or your business to prosper and grow so you can substitute them with things that will help you improve and expand.

Pruning is getting rid of things that you do not need so you have the time and resources to invest in things that you do need to help you grow and prosper. Prune for less and strive for best.



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GROW, OPTIMIZE, EXIT: BUILD A BUSINESS BUYERS CAN'T RESIST



By Nick Piscani, Piscani Consulting Services

Every small business owner will exit their business one day, whether through retirement, a sale, passing it to family, closing down, or an unexpected twist. The catch? You don't always get to choose when.

Half of all exits are involuntary, triggered by illness, divorce, distress, or disagreements (CNBC). That's why it's crucial to always run your business like you're preparing it for sale. Yet 48% of those looking to sell have no exit strategy, and 75% think they can sell in a year when it really takes 3-5 years to prepare your business to sell at maximum value.

Without solid processes, systems, and structures, your business's value can take a hit. So, how do you stay sale-ready?

Start by developing an exit strategy; think about your preferred exit path (selling to a third-party, passing the business on to family, merging with another company, etc.). Consider your post-exit plans, such as retirement or starting a new venture, and calculate the financial needs to cover liabilities, taxes, and desired leftover cash.

Clear financials are essential for clarity and buyer confidence. Buyers, banks, and lenders typically require three years of financial records to assess the business's health. Disorganized or incomplete records signal risk and can derail a sale.

A business overly reliant on its owner is a red flag for buyers, who seek operations that run smoothly without constant oversight. Develop documented systems to ensure consistency and scalability. Invest in a strong management team by training employees or hiring skilled leaders to handle daily operations. This reduces owner dependency, making

the business more attractive and freeing you up for strategic tasks.

High customer concentration, where one client accounts for a significant portion of revenue, scares buyers due to the risk of losing that client post-sale. Diversify your customer base by targeting new markets or expanding product offerings. Additionally, explore recurring revenue models to stabilize income and increase customer lifetime value.

Preparing a business for sale can take 3-5 years, especially if significant changes are needed, yet 75% of owners underestimate this timeline. Create a detailed preparation plan and share this plan with your management team to align efforts and maintain accountability. Track progress with measurable goals. Hold regular meetings to review progress, address challenges, and make needed changes. This disciplined approach ensures steady improvement, maximizing value and readiness for any exit scenario.

In 2025, with small business sale values up 15% (Forbes), there's no better time to prepare your business for an exit. By always running it as if it's for sale, you'll boost its value and make it more profitable and resilient today. Don't let poor preparation lead to a discounted sale or no sale at all. Start these steps now, and you'll be ready to exit on your terms at maximum value, whether by choice or life's unexpected turns.

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- SBRA Mingle - July 30th at Café Folino

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Joseph Scott McArdle, C.C.I.M., celebrates ten years at Keller Williams and 40 successful years in the Real Estate business. McArdle has been appointed by the National Association of Realtors to their national Commercial Committee as an at-large member for 2025, as well as the Certified Commercial Investment Member Institute's National Networking Subcommittee. Locally, McArdle is often credited with helping lead the renaissance of Phoenixville. He has also been tapped to be the host of the Tri-County Suburban Board of Realtors Commercial/ Industrial Marketing Exchange as well as being added as a member of their Commercial Chapter Advisory Committee.



Thomas McCouch and Joseph Scott McArdle

McArdle achieved the prestigious industry pinnacle designation of Certified Commercial Investment Member (C.C.I.M.) in 2009. 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 our community, including recently co-founding the "100 Men of Phoenixville" charity focused group.



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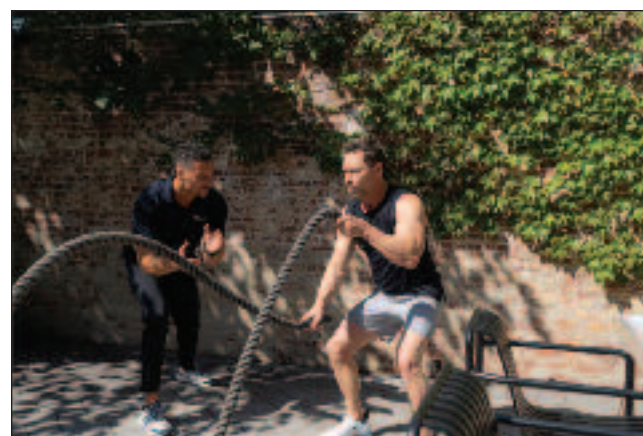
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2. Keep It Light & Hydrated: Drinking at least 8-10 glasses of water a day is a

must in the summer. Also, opt for light, protein-packed meals instead of heavy foods that can slow you down.

3. Make Workouts Fun & Social: July is peak vacation season, so mix fitness with fun—beach runs, pool workouts, or even bodyweight circuits while traveling. GYMGUYZ offers customized sessions no matter where you are, so you can keep up with your fitness goals while enjoying summer.

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CURRENT UPDATE ON NON-COMPETE AGREEMENTS



LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

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

While non-compete agreements survived two *federal* agencies' attempts to ban or deem them invalid in 2024, more *states* are adopting laws restricting the use of non-competes for lower-paid employees and medical professionals. State courts also issued decisions invalidating non-competes that were overly broad or not supported by adequate consideration.

This means that prudent employers should (1) review the terms of their non-compete provisions to ensure compliance with state laws; (2) consider strengthening agreements to include non-solicitation and confidentiality provisions; and (3) be prepared to promptly enforce these agreements when violations happen or risk a court declining to provide certain relief.

Currently, four states ban the use of non-competes entirely and 33 states, plus Washington, D.C., have legislation restricting their use. States have continued to adopt salary-level thresholds for the use of non-competes.

In 2025, Pennsylvania remains one of three states, including Louisiana, Maryland which will prohibit or limit the use of non-competes for various types of health care professionals. They join 17 other states, including Colorado, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas, which have some limits on non-competes for health care professionals. Pennsylvania's new law limits non-competes for health care practitioners to one year in duration and voids non-competes for health care practitioners who are dismissed by their employers. Increased limits on non-

competes at the state level are expected to continue in 2025.

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court also issued a decision holding that non-competes must be signed at or before the start of employment for an offer of employment to serve as consideration for signing a non-compete. In *Rullex Co., LLC v. Tel-Stream, Inc.*, the court refused to enforce a non-compete agreement that was signed by a new employee approximately two months after the start of his employment, even though the employer gave and explained the non-compete agreement to the employee prior to the start of employment, informed him he could take time to review it with a lawyer, and the employee didn't request to make any changes to the non-compete before signing — albeit belatedly.

The *Rullex* court held that the agreement was not supported by the necessary consideration because the employee, who was now working at a direct competitor, had not signed the non-compete at the start of employment and was not given any additional consideration when he ultimately signed the agreement.

(Continued on page 38)

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LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

(Continued from page 37)

Non-compete provisions are still valid ways to protect an employer's reasonable business interests in most states. Employers should consider taking the following steps when it comes to non-compete agreements:

- Review the terms for compliance with state laws.
- Realize that non-competes are not a one-size-fits-all provision and narrowly tailor the non-compete to the employee's actual job duties and geographic areas.
- Confirm that the non-compete agreement is supported by sufficient – not nominal – consideration given at the time of signing.
- Give new employees non-competes for review before the start of employment and have the employee sign at or before the start of employment. For current employees, some courts have ruled that continued employment is sufficient consideration.
- Consider if non-solicitation provisions (provisions that allow the former employee to work in the same industry but restrict solicitation of former or current customers or employees) are sufficient safeguards.
- Strengthen confidentiality provisions.

- Provide a copy of the non-compete/non-solicitation agreement upon termination of employment.
- Promptly issue cease and desist letters and pursue court action if necessary, through an attorney, when a former employee breaches their non-compete obligations.

It's always a good idea to work with an attorney when dealing with specialized legal issues such as non-compete agreements.

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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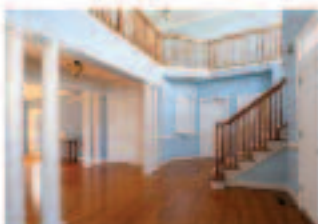
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RIOTS IN LOS ANGELES



DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

By Barry Cassidy

Not many people deal with riot control on a civilian level. As I watch TV and observe the rioting, I think about the measures that I had to invoke after the Mardi Gras riots and the Greek Picnic sexual assaults on South Street.

Sitting down and reviewing everything with the city and state police was eye-opening. Much of it was about the preparation and the initial setup of barriers. For the most part, my role was the public information portion and the voice, eyes, and ears on the street to call in potential issues.

None of that was applicable on the first day of the LA riots. I was surprised that the Apple store was not looted until the third day. You would think getting the electronics would be a priority for rioters. The Federal buildings were a priority, which shed a different and more political light on the situation.

I found it interesting that Mexican flags were flying everywhere. As I explained in previous articles, many of the true migrants come from Nicaragua and Guatemala. Palm oil plantations play a significant role in the agricultural landscape of both Nicaragua and Guatemala, being crucial for their economies and a major factor behind dislocations and migration. Guatemala is a leading producer of palm oil in Central America, while Nicaragua's palm oil industry has seen substantial growth in recent years.

So Where were those flags? Oil palm plantations are rapidly gaining ground in Latin America, driving communities from their lands and causing deforestation, violence, and poverty. They weren't there because the rioting was not about migrants; it was about facilitators.

During the time of the "Day without Migrants," I wrote a couple of articles

about human trafficking and how many migrants were sold into slavery in places like chicken farms in Iowa, where the so-called "Coyotes" held a debt over people's heads for smuggling them into the country and acting as their employment/slavery agency. I noticed a raid far from LA in Omaha, Nebraska, on a Glenn Valley Foods meat processing plant.

Before the raid, law enforcement audited the I-9 forms of Glenn Valley Foods' employees. Authorities indicated that the audit uncovered a significant number of suspected fraudulent identification documents and documents that did not authorize employees to work in the U.S. It also revealed that workers were fraudulently using the identities of multiple United States citizens, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office. Authorities stated that Homeland Security received numerous reports from victims regarding these stolen identities.

I watched a YouTube video featuring Gary Rohwer, the CEO of Glenn Valley Foods. He talked about how he never knew these individuals were illegal immigrants. He spoke about how they were like family, provided them with pizza on Fridays, and mentioned how they enjoyed ice cream. It was touching.

Heartland Workers Service Executive Director Lina Traslavina Stover said, "What happens then, is that we have paralyzed people not being able to — choosing not to leave their homes, choosing not to engage in the economy, choosing not to go to work. So, the consequences now... What happens if 30 percent of the workforce does not show up to their construction site, right? There are real consequences for this paralysis that is happening in this community."

My personal feeling is that if you steal my identity and make my life a nightmare just so you can work for some meatpacking place, you better hide. What are the consequences for me? Bad credit, IRS questions, and giving his kids my last name. Those are real consequences.

(Continued on page 44)



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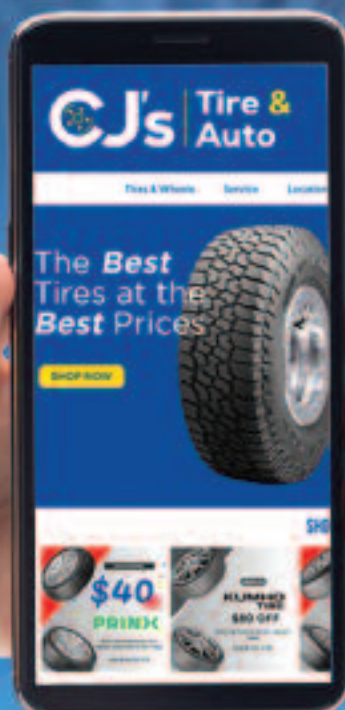
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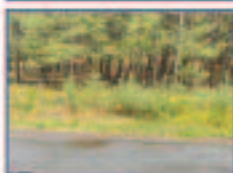
Online bidding closes Wednesday, July 9th at 6:00pm



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DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

(Continued from page 42)

Thirty percent of workers not showing up at a construction site only impacts cheap labor/wage slave accessibility.

Most of the assistance people receive comes from non-profit organizations that provide services. I wonder how involved they get when offering legal representation, like the Center for Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (CIRA). They are essentially supplying legal services to individuals who commit identity fraud. Again, are they part of the solution or more part of the problem? On the CIRA website, they say *Our refugee services team offers comprehensive support to help refugees resettle and thrive in their new communities.* Are they providing fake names from some stolen identity list or something?

This all feels too organized for me. Mexican cartels have a lot of money because they prey on displaced and terrorized migrants. Perhaps that is why the only flags you saw waved in LA were the Mexican flag.

This operation is vertically integrated — reminiscent of the George Floyd disruptions, with pallets of bricks and

people breaking windows with hammers. It lacks the stochastic quality to be genuine, either from the heart or from your gut. Organized civil unrest is occurring, and if we allow it to be framed by references to 30 percent of a construction force not showing up, we are in trouble.

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

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PAED LAUNCHES COMMUNITY PERCEPTION SURVEY TO SUPPORT POTTSTOWN'S DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

As part of further revitalization efforts in the Borough of Pottstown, Pottstown Area Economic Development (PAED) became members of PA Downtown Center and Main Street America. These memberships support PAED's efforts to pursue a National Accreditation and a Main Street Designation for the Borough of Pottstown, unlocking access to funding, business resources, and expert guidance.

PAED is inviting residents, business owners, and visitors to participate in a brief **Community Perception Survey** to share their views on Pottstown's downtown and its sense of place. Questions cover topics including Comfort and Appearance, Economic Characteristics, Community Attitude, Activities, and Access and Linkages. The survey takes approximately 7-8 minutes to complete. Participants who provide their email will be entered to win a \$50 Visa gift card. Survey results will be collected by PA Downtown Center and used to guide future revitalization strategies.

Take the survey at: <https://ipickpottstown.org/2025/05/14/pottstown-community-perception-survey-may-2025>



Pottstown Area Economic Development (PAED) provides services to businesses and organizations seeking to invest, expand or relocate including assistance with site selection, commercial and industrial real estate development, access to resources and workforce development. PAED's efforts stimulate investment, which helps maintain and enhance the tax base, retain and create job opportunities, and restores, utilizes or removes under-utilized buildings.

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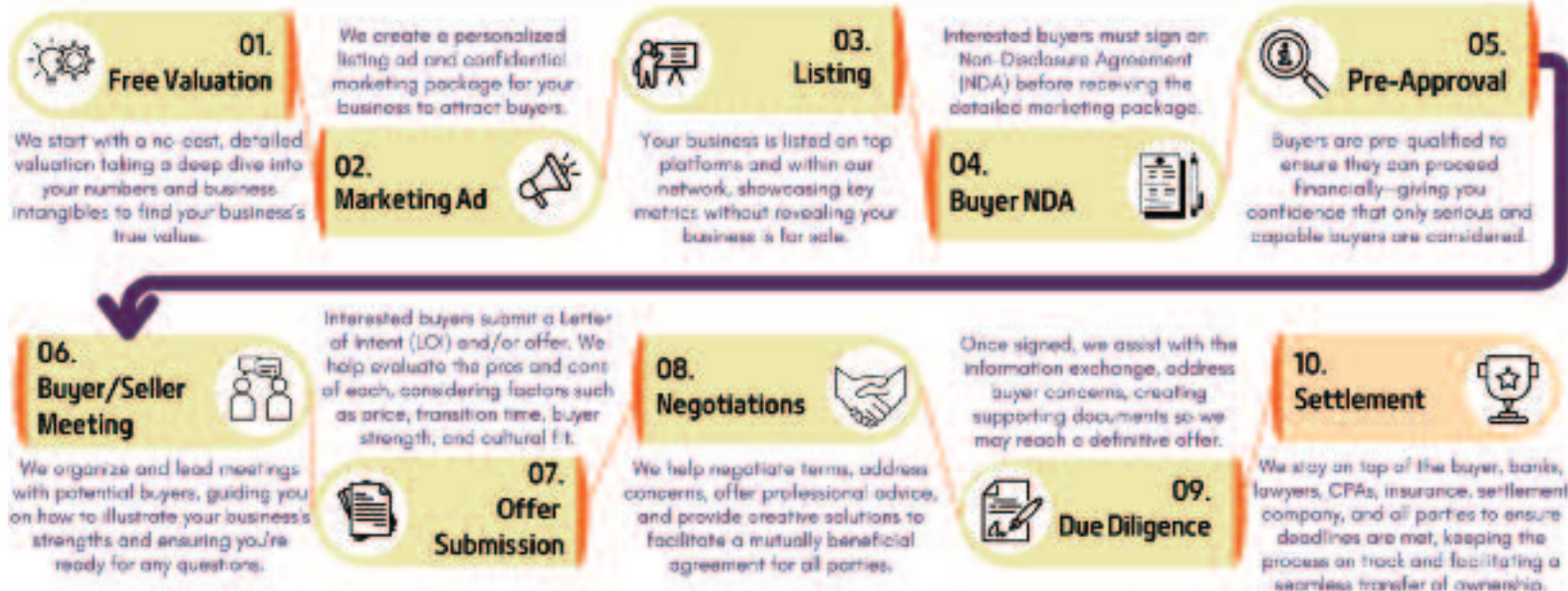
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