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**Joseph Albert, DO, MRO,
DOT Certified Medical Examiner
Medical Director**

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



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

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



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

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



**Theresa 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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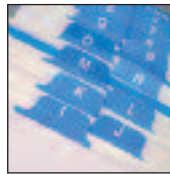


PHOTO BY STEVE LADNER PHOTOGRAPHY

Cover Story: Lana Potgieter of Pottstown-based Lighthouse Leadership Coaching and Development is an internationally acclaimed leadership coach and business strategist who specializes in empowering business owners and executive teams within small to mid-sized organizations.



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Community Foundation:
The Heart of Local
Philanthropy



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network, and keep your
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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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Lighthouse Leadership

Coaching and Development

PHOTO BY STEVE LADNER PHOTOGRAPHY



Lana Potgieter

HELPING YOU BECOME THE LEADER OTHERS LOVE TO FOLLOW

By Kathy Hunt

Occasionally, in business, you need a sounding board, someone who will listen objectively, help to evaluate an idea or decision, and spark insight and action. You may also need support in navigating challenges, fine-tuning management skills, maximizing your and your employees' performance, and reaching your business goals. In any of these scenarios, a leadership, or executive, coach is the person to call.

Although the popularity of leadership coaching has soared over the past decade, the profession has been gaining traction since at least the 1980s. Yet, in spite of its long history, not everyone understands what this type of coach does. The International Coaching Federation (ICF) describes the vocation as, "Partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential."





Globally recognized leadership developer and coach Lana Potgieter takes this definition a step further. She shared that, “As leadership coaches, we don’t steer the carriage. We don’t hand out maps. We walk alongside you — asking the questions, challenging the thinking, and keeping you moving toward your goals. Because modern coaching isn’t about directing — it’s about developing.”

Lana is the founder and owner of Lighthouse Leadership Coaching and Development, LLC, as well as an authorized licensee with Leadership Management International (LMI), Inc. With more than 20 years of experience in coaching, she has aided business executives and their team members from such diverse industries as manufacturing, service, and nonprofit. Her clients work in such familiar Southeastern Pennsylvania communities as Pottstown and such distant lands as the United Kingdom and South Africa. As she is based in Pottstown, Lana’s focus is on helping people in Berks, Chester, and Montgomery counties to reach their full potentials and, ultimately, have their ventures succeed.

When you need a leadership coach

How often have you heard business owners and bosses grumble about employees who don’t do what is asked of them, don’t follow directions, or simply aren’t motivated to get the job done? You may also listen to them complain about the tremendous number of hours that they spend working or about how high staff turnover has led to decreased productivity, morale, and positive public opinion. They admit that there are problems in their workplace, but they don’t see or understand the root causes of them. What they also don’t realize is that by hiring a leadership coach, they could resolve all these issues and more.



“Often, we get caught up in things, and we just need a different perspective,” Lana said. “I identify your challenges, help you implement a proven strategy, and guide you to generate results.”

Lana has received numerous accolades, including LMI’s *Motivator of the Year Award* in 2017 and 2020. Moreover, she understands both sides of coaching, that of the client and of the coach. In 2003, she participated in her then-employer’s leadership coaching program. The following year, she resigned from her job and started training to become a coach.

“I went to my previous coach and went through the process of discovering what I really wanted to do, and how I wanted to structure it, and of putting the plan in place,” she said. “I realized I actually loved coaching and would love to do this with other people.”

While Lana consulted a coach about her career change, more often, clients will approach leadership coaches when they’re seeking a better bottom line. Increased profits frequently result from changing how people operate, Lana said. “It comes from better team cohesion and understanding, greater emotional intelligence and communication.”

Another motivation for hiring a leadership coach is to gain back time. “Very often, it’s as simple as ‘I no longer want to spend my entire life running this business. I also want to watch my kids grow up or spend time with my grandchildren, or I’d really like to be healthier or golf more, but my business just takes up everything,’” she said. “People realize they should be getting better results

and not spending so much time generating those results. They want to know how to do both.”

This is where Lana’s skills prove invaluable.

Countless studies cite the benefits of coaching. The ICF reports that organizations employing a leadership, or executive, coach experience a 70-percent increase in individual performance, 50-percent increase in team performance, and 48-percent increase in company performance. Lana noted that, when people work with a coach, they feel higher accountability. They exhibit a greater willingness to accept responsibility and take charge of their work.

Coaching also improves the aforementioned bottom line. American University in Washington, D.C., indicates that leadership coaching delivers a 788-percent return on investment. This statistic is based not only on increased productivity but also increased employee retention. With such proven and meaningful results, coaching seems like an obvious addition to any workplace.

“I help people get clarity so that they get out of the weeds and take the steps needed to get the results they want,” Lana said.

Throughout her career, Lana has worked with everyone from entrepreneurs and sole proprietors to owners of small, medium, and large businesses. Presently, she is in the market for clients comprised not only of owners and executives but also of teams of 10 or more people. “When you start to empower team leads, supervisors or managers, instead of the faithful few trying to pull the business up a hill, everyone becomes part of the solution,” she said.

(Continued on page 8)

DEVELOP LEADERS



1 IN 5

1 in 5 employees is at risk of burnout due to low employee and leadership engagement.

EMPLOYEES



DOLLARS



190 BILLION

Stress-related burnout may cause a health-care cost of \$190 billion a year in the U.S.

93%

93% of workers would stay at a company longer if the organization invested in their careers.

WORKERS



1/3

MORE THAN 1/3 WORKERS ARE SEARCHING ACTIVELY OR CASUALLY FOR A JOB.

19%

THE AVERAGE ANNUAL TURNOVER RATE IS 19%

\$2.9

U.S. EMPLOYERS SPEND \$2.9 MILLION PER DAY LOOKING FOR REPLACEMENT WORKERS



COVER STORY

(Continued from page 7)

What business can expect from Lighthouse Leadership Coaching and Development

As an authorized licensee of Leadership Management International's (LMI) programs and methodologies, Lana uses LMI's tools to help leaders at all levels of management. Founded in 1966 by renowned Texas entrepreneur, author, and philanthropist Paul J. Meyer, LMI characterizes strong leaders as people who excel "in people skills and the ability to create a motivational environment. They focus on their vision for their organization, clearly communicating defined goals to the people within that organization. They value their employees and customers and genuinely listen to them. Effective leaders are organized and focused and always keep their commitments."

Lana and her coaching associates tailor LMI's teachings to meet a client's specific needs. Whether you are a sole proprietorship or run a large organization, Lighthouse Leadership Coaching and Development can address your situation and make your business more sustainable and, ultimately, more saleable.

With any new Lighthouse Leadership client, Lana begins by performing a needs analysis. She determines what obstacles the business faces and how they impact its goals. Then, she confirms what objectives must be met to achieve these goals.

Working with small groups of employees, Lana runs a series of brief, action-oriented sessions. Over a period of several months, the groups learn how to succeed through "head, heart, and hands." Lana explained that the head refers to the knowledge gained from books, articles, podcasts, and other materials. The heart deals with reflection and looking at how this new knowledge applies to each individual. She pointed out that what one employee requires to become more productive will not be the same as what another employee needs. The hands relate to the actions needed to create new habits and get the desired results.

Three flexible options for leadership coaching and development

Keeping with the "one size does not fit all" approach, Lighthouse Leadership Coaching and Development offers three flexible delivery options for its services. Open Enrollment Groups are ideal for owners and managers of small businesses who want to try out leadership coaching before introducing it into their workplaces. With this option, six to eight leaders from a range of industries learn together through coaching sessions and conversations with their fellow participants. Open Enrollment is a way to "try before you buy."

For businesses with between 20 and 200 employees, Lighthouse Leadership has In-House Programs. Who

Build the Business Together as a Team

- 1. Crystallize your Thinking
- 2. Develop an Action Plan
- 3. Develop Desire
- 4. Develop Confidence
- 5. Develop Determination

LMI

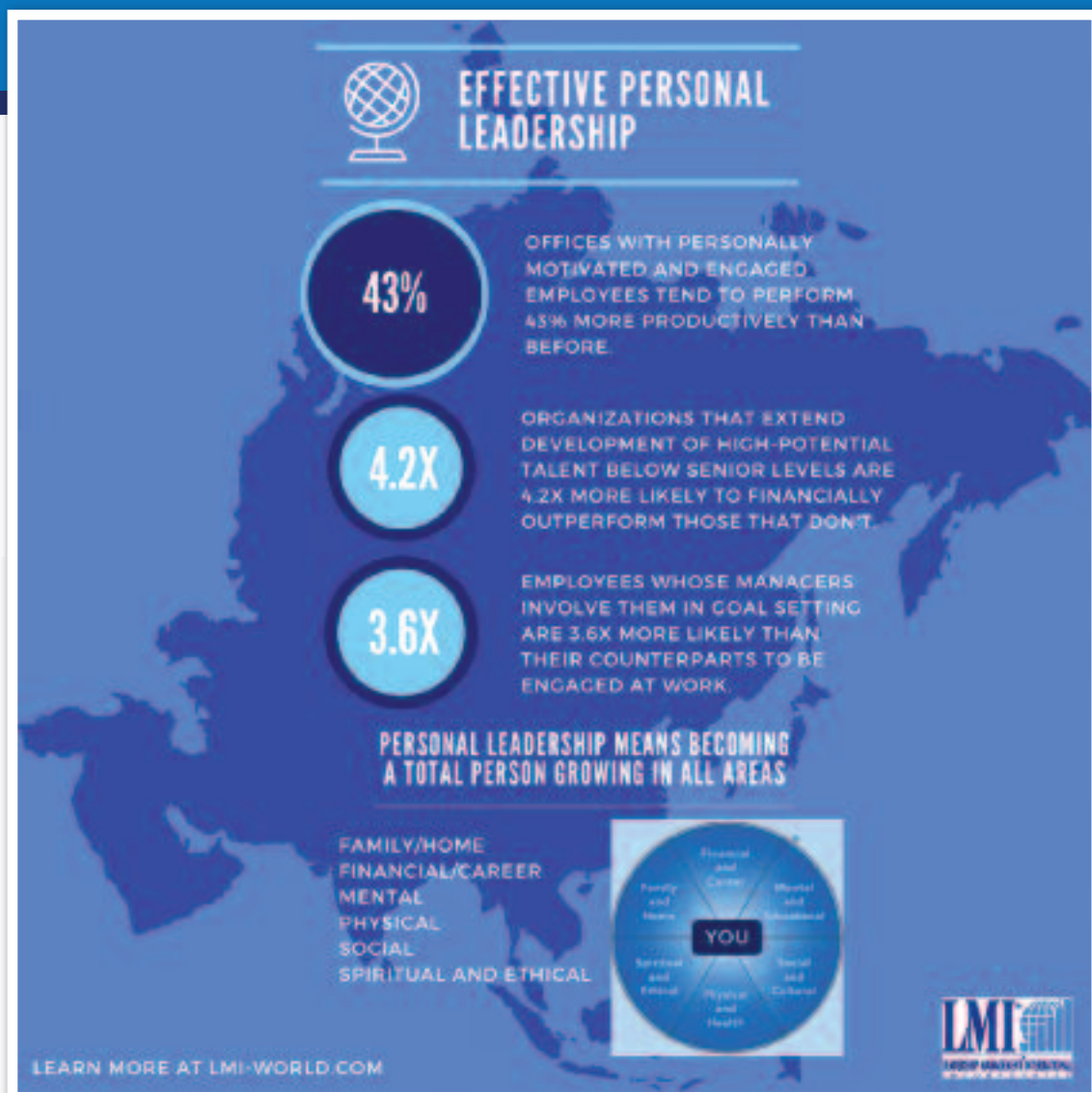
finds this option beneficial? Businesses heading into a period of growth or major changes, possessing several underutilized, high-potential employees and/or underperforming teams, or experiencing lost opportunities due to lack of understanding. Family-owned businesses struggling to align family members with their goals, businesses in need of successors, and those looking to sell are also good candidates for In-House Programs. Lighthouse Leadership Coaching and Development works with the business's executive team before introducing the program to the entire organization. This strategy helps to build alignment, acceptance, and accountability throughout the company.

The final delivery option is One-to-One Coaching. The name says it all — an executive works one-to-one with a coach to learn and hone leadership skills and reach the desired work outcomes. While anyone can profit from private coaching, time-pressed leaders with extremely inflexible schedules and those reluctant to learn alongside possible competitors see one-to-one coaching as advantageous.

Continued support, no matter what direction a company goes

Lighthouse Leadership Coaching and Development's services don't end once a client completes a program. Lana provides ongoing mentorship to ensure that her clients continue to navigate problems and uncertainties successfully and excel. An example of her long-lasting commitment to clients is Wilhelm Strümpher of Nano Fibre. He started using Lana's coaching service in 2017. During that time, Strümpher moved his business to the United Kingdom but maintained his coaching relationship with Lana.

"Over the past eight years, Lana and the team at Lighthouse Leadership have been an invaluable part of our journey at Nano Fibre," Strümpher said. "As a coach and trusted sounding board, Lana has supported both myself and Dirk Mostert (Nano Fibre's chief operating officer and co-founder) through the many challenges that come with leading a business in hyper-growth. From navigating complex staff dynamics to fostering personal growth and leadership development, Lana's insight and guidance have been instrumental. Beyond our own



development, we've entrusted many of our team members to her care for mentoring and training — and the results have been remarkable. Her work has helped shape a stronger, more resilient, and more empowered team. The impact of Lighthouse Leadership on our business has been profound, and we are deeply grateful for the role Lana has played in our success," he said.

No matter where clients go, either geographically or professionally, Lana will continue to support them for as long as they desire.

Global reach, local focus

Lana's reach may extend globally, but her focus remains on being invested in the community and helping Southeastern Pennsylvania businesses prosper. She is a member of the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce, which serves businesses in southeastern Berks, western Montgomery, and northern Chester counties, and a participant in such Chamber-hosted events as Coffee and Connections and member breakfasts. As a sponsor of the Chamber's REACH events, she will host a table at September 24, 2025, conference at RiverCrest Golf Club and Preserve in Phoenixville. With a goal of empowering and connecting working women, REACH offers assistance with professional development and provides opportunities to connect with other professionals in the region.

Lana also co-leads the Pottstown branch of Free Trade Networking, a nonprofit committed to sharing ideas and providing support for ongoing business challenges in the Pottstown community.

Along with her involvement in professional organizations, Lana volunteers with Operation 143, a nonprofit helping to alleviate hunger in local homeless and food-insecure students. It presently serves children in Pottstown, Pottsgrove, Boyertown, Upper Perkiomen, and Spring Ford school districts. Originally known as "Operation Backpack," Operation 143 packs and distributes backpacks filled with enough food for dinner on Friday and three meals and snacks on Saturday and Sunday. The food is ready-made, so no cooking is required.

Originally from South Africa, Lana and her husband relocated to Pottstown so that they could live closer to their daughter and grandchildren, who reside in South Coventry.

To find an award-winning leadership coach who is globally recognized, highly experienced, and ready to take on new clients is rare. To have such a skilled professional figuratively in your own backyard is extraordinary. Take advantage of this unique situation and learn more about how Lighthouse Leadership Coaching and Development can help your business. Contact Lana Potgieter at lana@lighthouseleadership.today or call 484.347.0515.



MCCC is Building a Stronger Workforce

Montgomery County Community College’s Workforce Development Department is committed to meeting the evolving workforce needs of the regional economy through a demand-driven approach to education and credentialing. By aligning programs with real-time industry requirements, the department ensures its offerings are directly related to today’s workforce requirements.



MCCC’s short-term training programs prepare individuals for high-demand occupations in key sectors such as healthcare, information technology, business, and manufacturing. These programs focus on equipping students with the credentials and licenses needed for immediate workforce entry and career advancement. Training is designed with flexibility in mind, supporting both job seekers and working professionals who are looking to upskill or reskill.

In addition to training individuals, MCCC plays a vital role in supporting local businesses. Since 1999, MCCC

has served as Montgomery County’s administrator for Workforce and Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania (WEDnetPA), a state-funded training initiative supporting workforce development. In 2024-25, MCCC administered more than \$416,000 in WEDnetPA funding to 27 companies, training more than 1,100 employees. MCCC’s Workforce Development Division retains a talented pool of highly qualified workforce trainers that can complete customized training onsite at companies. All instructors are subject-matter experts with industry experience. For more information, contact bdebias@mc3.edu and visit mc3.edu/workforce.

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ing stations. The learning stations focus on sensory exploration, arts and crafts, reading, manipulative play and dramatic play. Our Fascination Station is a favorite among our Toddler children, and the Discovery Room is a special place for our Get Set through After School students.



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Magic Memories was established in 1987 in the heart of Phoenixville. The program began with a local mother's vision to support her community and working families. In 2006, Neydary Zambrano became the owner after falling in love with the school, its mission, and the warm, safe, and nurturing environment it offered her own children.

Today, Magic Memories proudly continues to provide a loving, home-like atmosphere for all families and children. The program is dedicated to creating a learning experience that supports each child's growth at their own unique pace. In 2019, Magic Memories expanded from three locations to eight, now serving

families across Chester and Montgomery Counties. We offer care for infants through pre-kindergarten, as well as before and after school programs and summer camp.

When you walk into any of our schools, you'll immediately feel the warmth of home and know you've found a new family you can count on. Our staff are always ready with a hug and remain deeply committed to keeping children at the center of everything we do. Families find comfort in knowing their children are spending each day with their second family.

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BUILDING CONNECTIONS FOR A THRIVING COMMUNITY

– A Recap of Business After Hours

At Muhlenberg Greene Architects, we know great communities are built on strong partnerships. For more than a century, our firm has designed spaces that support economic development, helping municipalities, businesses, and organizations plan for a prosperous future. On June 27, we had the privilege of hosting a Business After Hours event in collaboration with the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce and *Route 422 Business Advisor*— and it was an evening to remember.

Held at Hidden River Brewing Co., the event welcomed more than 50 professionals from across the region for an evening of connection, conversation, and community spirit. The picturesque setting paired perfectly with exceptional food from Bause Catering, creating the ideal atmosphere to build relationships with business leaders, municipal officials, and professionals in the construction and development sectors.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to Patti Siegel and the team at *Route 422 Business Advisor*. Patti's energy and coordination were pivotal in making the evening such a success. As a trusted voice for regional business news, *Route 422 Business Advisor* plays a key role in highlighting the projects and partnerships that drive growth throughout the Route 422 corridor and beyond.

Our thanks also go to the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce for bringing together such a dynamic mix of profes-

sionals. Their commitment to fostering meaningful connections reflects our own mission: creating spaces that help communities and businesses thrive.

For Muhlenberg Greene Architects, the event was more than a chance to network — it was an opportunity to share our vision for how thoughtful design supports economic vitality. We're passionate about collaborating with construction firms and developers to bring transformative projects to life. Whether it's reimagining a historic structure for modern use, designing municipal facilities that meet evolving needs, or planning mixed-use developments that energize downtowns, we know architecture can be a catalyst for growth.

The conversations we shared that evening reaffirmed a shared commitment to strengthening our region. As architects, we understand that strong designs emerge from collaboration. As business leaders, we know that robust economies are built when partners—like developers and construction professionals — come together with a shared vision for the future.

To everyone who joined us: thank you for bringing your energy and insights. And to Patti Siegel, *Route 422 Business Advisor*, and the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce — your partnership made this evening memorable.

Here's to building stronger relationships—and shaping a brighter future for the region — together.



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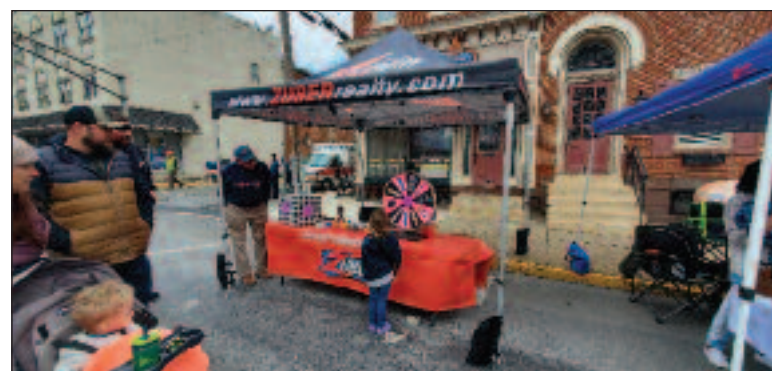
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During Building a Better Boyertown's "Coming Out of Hibernation" festival, Rich invites youngsters to spin for prizes.

ZUBER REALTY IN THE COMMUNITY — SPRING/EARLY SUMMER 2025

"We work for YOU!" is the motto of Richard A. Zuber Realty. The organization regularly participates in community events to celebrate and honor community members. Spring and early summer are especially busy times for the organization's community outreach efforts.

Coming Out of Hibernation

Community members enjoyed spinning the wheel to earn prizes during Building a Better Boyertown's (BBB) festival that attracts thousands of visitors. "The bear-themed stress ball that agent and associate broker Connie (Dolansky) discovered this year was a hit with the children and their

families as they spun the wheel to earn one of their own. There were plenty of bubble wands, squishy toys, or stuffed farm animals as alternate prizes. Everyone won something!" owner Richard Zuber offered.

Mother's Day Flowers

In May, agents and staff handed out flowers to mothers to celebrate Mother's Day. "Our agency's motto 'We Work for You!' is evidenced every day in *all* the things that mothers do and *all* the love they provide their families," notes Zuber. "Mother's Day is a day to demonstrate our gratitude, and we love to do it with flowers!"

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"Sips & Dips" Wine Walk

Participating in Berks-Mont Business Association's (BMBA) "Sips & Dips" Wine Walk is a fun time for Zuber staff to enjoy getting to know members of the community. "Zuber Realty is known to serve the best snacks during Wine Walks," confided Zuber. "We need to thank agent Vanessa Deskie for her culinary creativity; she earns these compliments. And agent Lee Heffner provides a nice assortment of wines for participants. We can count on him to make sure things are 'good to go' for these events."

BMBA's Philadelphia Ave. Street Fair

The Philadelphia Ave. Street Fair held June 7 is always fun for Zuber Realty's agents and staff. Folks look to add to their wardrobe during the event with the year's annual Zuber T shirt giveaway.

(Continued on page 16)



Zuber Realty's reputation for offering the best snacks during Berks-Mont Business Association's Wine Walks has agents Vanessa Deskie and Lee Heffner to thank.










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FOR LEASE - 623 Manatawny Road



Large 7,540 sq ft building divided into one 5,360 sq ft area that has four 10'Hx12'W overhead drive in doors and three 14'Hx20'W. Another 1,820 sq. ft area with one 7'Hx8'W overhead drive in door and one 6'H x 9'W overhead drive in door. There is another 360 sq ft area which contains a Powder Room, Heated (electric) and air conditioned office, a lunchroom and a power room. Previous use was a lumber yard. The property has 3 phase electric.

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Approximately 61 acres with road frontage on Rt 100, Limekiln Road, and Passmore Road.
Print available in office.

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Whether you are managing a modest estate or a large property with numerous assets, Geyer Auction Companies can complete the process in as little as one to three months, offering speed, efficiency, and peace of mind.





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Their client list spans a wide range of industries, including universities, gyms, restaurants, hotels, racetracks, and construction firms — proof of their adaptability and track record of success. The focus remains clear: helping clients disperse assets quickly, economically, and with maximum return.

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LIFE INSURANCE — WHAT'S THE RIGHT KIND FOR ME?



By Peter Cisick, CLU, Cisick Planning

The truth is there is no right kind or good kind or bad kind. Unfortunately, many agents recommend life insurance that may not

be appropriate for their clients' financial circumstances or station in life.

With that said, there are basically two types of life insurance: term or permanent. **Term**

Insurance comes in several variations, usually categorized by the period of time for which the premiums are guaranteed, i.e., 10, 15 or 20-year term. There usually is no cash build-up commonly known as cash value. Some more recently issued plans do have a refund of premium rider that returns premiums paid at a predetermined future period of time. In addition, some plans also have a long-term care rider to help with nursing home costs. Term insurance, as a rule of thumb, is

generally inexpensive and similar to "renting" the coverage.

Permanent Insurance is far more complicated and often has a bad reputation for all the wrong reasons, meaning that agents sometimes mis-sell these programs. Permanent insurance's most famous family member is whole life.

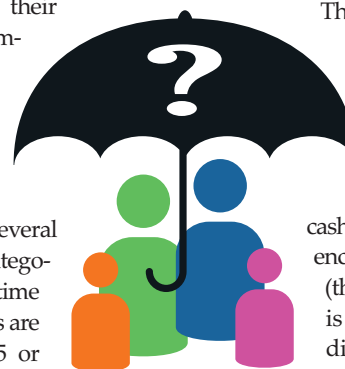
There is a brother named universal life and a sister

named variable universal life. All of these plans offer potential lifetime coverage, level premiums and

cash value. The main difference is how your cash value (the savings) part of the plan is invested. Whole life is dividend-based. Universal life is interest-rate based and

variable life, for the most part, is stock market-based. In comparison to term insurance, permanent insurance is more like "owning" the coverage, instead of "renting" the coverage.

For additional information, please call 610.247.6842 or email petercisick@petercisick.com.



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SIX TIPS FOR CONSISTENT SOCIAL MEDIA POSTING IN 2025



SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

By Theresa Mintzer

Staying connected with your customers is more important than ever—and social media is still one of the easiest and

most affordable ways to do it. In 2025, most social platforms continue to reward businesses that post consistently and respond quickly. Keeping your content fresh and your information accurate builds trust and helps people choose you again and again.

Facebook, Instagram, and your Google Business Profile are especially important for sharing timely updates. For example, if your hours change, posting about them can prevent unhappy surprises for customers.

Here are six practical tips to help you stay consistent:

- Take time once a month to plan what you want people to know, like new hours, seasonal promotions, or fun behind-the-scenes moments.

- Batch your content to save time. Use ChatGPT for post ideas and Canva for eye-catching, branded graphics that look professional.

- Use scheduling tools to plan posts weekly or monthly. Apps like Meta Business Suite or other trusted schedulers can automate this step for you.

- Once a month, check that your business details are correct on all platforms. Make sure your hours, address, and contact info are up to date.

- Turn on notifications for messages and comments so you can respond quickly. Customers love fast replies, it shows you care and builds loyalty.

- Encourage customers to leave reviews and always thank them for taking the time. Reviews are powerful social proof and can help new customers trust you faster.

Need help building a plan that works for your business? I offer Social Media Coaching to help you stay consistent and stress-free. Visit www.mintzersolutions.com to learn more and book a session.



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HEAVY EQUIPMENT, TRAILERS, AUTOMOTIVE TOOLS ONLINE AUCTION - WILLIAMSPORT, PA

Location: 1737 Lycoming Creek Rd Williamsport, PA 17705

Online bidding begins to close Wednesday August 13th at 6:00pm



NEW MINI EXCAVATORS, ATTACHMENTS & SEA CONTAINER AUCTION - BECHTELSTVILLE, PA

Location: 724 Route 100 N Bechtelsville, PA 19505

Online bidding begins to close on Thursday, August 14th at 6:00pm

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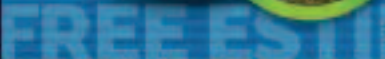
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THE MID-YEAR MARKETING RESET

What's Working (And What's Not) in 2025



MARKETING TIPS

By Julie Huff, Copywriter, beMarketing

Here we are, more than halfway through 2025. How's your marketing strategy holding

up? Still running smoothly, or starting to feel a bit... stuck?

Chances are, what worked last year isn't hitting quite the same, and a mid-year reset might be just what you need. So, let's dive in.

AI & Automation

AI? Still big. Automation? Even bigger. When used together, correctly, they can speed up your process and sharpen your strategy. Platforms like Google and Meta can now build ad components for you, but don't lose the human oversight.

The balance matters. Use AI to streamline, but keep refining and checking performance. Don't hand over the wheel completely.

Brand Voice > Generic Voice

Does your voice sound like everyone else? Blame FOMO and the AI content boom. It's crowding out real brand personality, and audiences are noticing.

But when everyone blends in, it's easier to stand out. 2025 is about authenticity. If your marketing sounds like a human and feels aligned with your brand, you're ahead of the curve.

Content is Still King

AI Overviews are drastically changing the way people search, and that's great news if you're providing content that's actually helpful. Instead of taking one solid piece that answers a question, Google is now taking snippets from many different places... and that means you need to focus on quality, not quantity.

Social = Search

Search isn't just Google. People are now turning to Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to find what they need — especially through UGC (user-generated content).

That means it's time to treat your social like SEO:

- Add searchable captions
- Use simple, keyword-rich language
- Tag smartly and strategically

Short-Form Storytelling

Mobile-first isn't new, but mobile storytelling is. Think interactive posts, branded mini-series, AR filters, and snackable content that fits the way people scroll.

The goal? Make content people want to tap on, not just scroll past.

Time for a Reset?

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SUSTAINABILITY, COMMUNITY IMPACT CONCERNS SHADE DATA CENTER INVESTMENT

By Lauren Jessop,
The Center Square Contributor

Pennsylvania's growing data center development offers economic opportunities but also raises tough questions about sustainability and community impact.

As electricity demand surges, and older generation sources are retiring faster than new ones come online, officials are grappling with how to manage grid reliability, infrastructure needs, and local and environmental concerns — while exploring policies that strike a balance between supporting smart growth and protecting consumers.

The issue has industry experts divided with some voicing concerns about family sustaining jobs and environmental impact, and others believing an affordable, safe, and reliable energy future is attainable.

There are 88 data centers across the commonwealth, according to Data Center Maps, and their database does not include private, government, or institutional facilities. Of those listed, 35 are located near Pittsburgh and 31 near Philadelphia.

A growing trend is co-locating data centers with onsite energy generation, thereby producing their own electricity

and potentially sending surplus power back to the grid. The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, or PUC, is considering making this a requirement, along with covering the cost of infrastructure upgrades, as it develops a model tariff.

Currently, nuclear-powered Amazon Susquehanna campus is the only operational example of this in Pennsylvania, while two others — Homer City Energy Campus — (natural gas) and Beaver Valley (nuclear) — are under development.

Co-located generation is nothing new, says Lehigh Valley engineer and IEEE Standards Association member James Daley.

Daley told The Center Square that the demands of large data centers are comparable to major industrial complexes the grid has historically served — like Bethlehem Steel, for example.

Built in the late 1800s, Bethlehem Steel's furnaces were primarily powered by steam engines fueled by coal. By the 1910s, they began drawing electricity from local utilities, but as demand increased, dedicated substations and new grid connections were added — costs that the company helped cover.

(Continued on page 24)



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DATA CENTER INVESTMENT

(Continued from page 23)

To further reduce demand on the public grid, they eventually built on-site power plants.

Co-located generation is one way to resolve energy demand issues while protecting existing ratepayers, Daley said. Other options include serving the facilities from transmission or sub transmission stations, and the use of nuclear power.

Installing on-site Combined Heat and Power, or CHP systems, or combined cycle power plants can also help offset the energy needed for equipment cooling.

“Diligence and oversight of proposed projects require multiple input sources — not the least of which is the PUC,” said Daley.

Rest assured, he added, locating and powering an IT Center poses no different challenge than large-scale projects successfully handled over the past century. “The PUC makes sure rate payers are not unfairly charged for grid alterations that do not benefit them directly.”

The mix of energy sources is crucial to grid reliability, which Daley says needs to be 24/7, “and you can’t do that with renewables.”

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, or EIA, in

2023, 60 percent of electricity generated was from fossil fuels — natural gas, coal, and petroleum. Additionally, 19 percent came from nuclear, and renewable energy sources accounted for approximately 21 percent.

He noted the lower capacity ratings of renewable energy sources compared to those of fossil fuels, citing figures from the U.S. Department of Energy.

The capacity rating for nuclear is 92.3 percent, followed by geothermal (65 percent), natural gas combined cycle (59.9 percent), and coal (42.6 percent). Hydro and wind are rated at around 34 percent, while solar and natural gas simple cycle are 23.4 percent and 17.2 percent respectively.

Daley’s comments are supported by a 2024 report by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, or NERC, warning that the substitution of intermittent renewable energy for baseload 24/7 power has made the nation’s electric grids less resilient, less secure, and less reliable.

“These centers,” he said, “are a good industry for any town that wants to host them, because they’re excellent tax revenue sources with minimum impact on the community, and can be excellent corporate neighbors.”

KEYSTONE RESEARCH CENTER RELEASES NEW ANALYSIS OF FEDERAL CLEAN ENERGY INVESTMENTS ACROSS PENNSYLVANIA

The Keystone Research Center recently released two comprehensive fact sheets analyzing the impact of federal investments from recent legislation — investments now at risk because of the impending reconciliation bill being considered in the U.S. Senate. The analyses demonstrate how these investments are generating jobs and fostering economic growth, both statewide and specifically in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

The statewide analysis reveals that more than 6,800 construction and operations jobs are projected through investments in clean energy and manufacturing. The Department of Treasury reports that over 158,000 Pennsylvanians claimed more than \$267 million in home energy credits in 2023, resulting in significant annual utility bill savings for families.

In Southeast Pennsylvania, the analysis identifies 151 unique clean energy and environmental projects across Congressional Districts 1 through 6. These include 27 schools approved for the Solar for Schools grant program, totaling over \$8.3 million in funding. The region has attracted nearly \$53 million in private investment through three major projects tracked by the Blue Green Alliance.

"These federal investments are delivering real results for Pennsylvania communities," said Keystone Research Center Executive Director Stephen Herzenberg. "From creating family-

sustaining jobs to supporting clean energy initiatives, these programs are building a foundation for long-term prosperity across our state. And they are all now at risk, as Congressional Republicans seek to offset massive tax cuts for the richest Americans."

The analyses examine investments from the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)*, *Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)*, and *CHIPS and Science Act*. Notable success stories include Cleveland-Cliffs Steel Corporation's furnace upgrade, Voith Hydro's manufacturing expansion, and Eos Energy Enterprises' growth of its battery facility, as well as significant investments in electric vehicle infrastructure in Philadelphia and workforce development programs at Bucks County Community College.

Both analyses warn of potential risks if certain programs face cuts, particularly the impact on tax credits that benefit local governments, schools, and nonprofit organizations. According to the research, repealing just two tax credits would result in an eight percent increase in electricity prices for Pennsylvania households and businesses by 2026.

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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Pottstown Regional Community Foundation (PRCF) is the region's trusted hub for local philanthropy. Formerly Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation, the Foundation has **invested over \$57.6 million** since 2003 to improve quality of life across the greater Pottstown area by supporting schools, nonprofits, municipalities, and groups working to strengthen and connect communities.

In 2023, the Foundation transitioned from a private foundation to a public community foundation, a milestone that created opportunities for broader community participation and deeper impact. Backed by individuals, families, and businesses, PRCF now serves as a central place where people can contribute to local progress and see their generosity at work.



Investing in Regional Resilience

Through its focus on Education Innovation, Health Intervention, and Economic Opportunity, PRCF helps communities address complex challenges with coordinated solutions that deliver measurable results. This approach ensures that investments today build stronger and more equitable communities for the future.

Signature initiatives put this commitment into practice.

- **Pottstown Play Streets** creates temporary street closures in the Summer so children and families have safe outdoor spaces for play and connection.
- **Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds Institute** provides professional development that helps schools and youth organizations build wellness cultures integrating nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and academic success.
- **Regional Home Garden Contest** encourages environmental stewardship by empowering residents to get outdoors and grow home or community gardens, fostering neighborhood pride and beautification.
- **Thriving Communities Program** supports regional planning to improve infrastructure, transportation, and equitable access to opportunity. The program advances transit-oriented development and long-term strategies that connect residents to jobs, education, healthcare, and community resources.

Giving Back, Staying Local

PRCF believes that when you give local, your impact should stay local. **Every contribution supports programs** that improve daily life by creating safe public spaces, expanding behavioral health services, strengthening the local economy, and helping students learn and grow. Whether you are a business leader, a family honoring a legacy, or a resident invested in your neighborhood, PRCF offers a trusted way to make a difference.



Jeffrey Sprague, PRCF Board Vice Chair handing out Kazous to residents at the Pottstown GoFourth Parade.



Libby & Natalie, speaking at the New Haven Dek Hockey rink Grand Opening showcasing leaders everywhere



Grantlee - David Charles, Founder of The Strive Initiative, playing pickleball at the annual Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds Conference

Foundation staff and board members joined by grantee organizations to celebrate and unveil the Foundation's new name at the Pottstown Go-Fourth Parade from Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation



The Power of Giving

Giving through PRCF fuels progress across the region. Contributions support early childhood education, food security, public health, the arts, and much more. Pooled donations grow over time to sustain programs for generations. Each gift is managed with professionalism and transparency, with clear reports showing the impact. Pooled resources help advance initiatives that no single donor could achieve alone. Local solutions take shape through community partnerships that target the most pressing needs. Businesses can also align their giving with community goals to build a culture of purpose. These gifts, no matter the size, from individuals, families, and organizations create a ripple effect that benefits everyone.

Grantmaking That Moves the Needle

PRCF is committed to grantmaking that drives progress. Guided by the **Results Framework**, the Foundation uses a clear and structured process to ensure each grant delivers measurable outcomes. Applications are reviewed carefully for alignment with priorities and potential impact. PRCF sees grantmaking as a partnership. Staff work with grantees to provide guidance and resources so projects continue to succeed after funding ends.

Supported by the Community. Committed to the Community.

PRCF is more than a grantmaker. It is a partner that unites nonprofits, local governments, schools, health systems, and community advocates to deliver meaningful results across **western Montgomery, northern Chester, and eastern Berks Counties**. Contributions support programs that improve daily life and strengthen the local economy. The Foundation offers the expertise and accountability needed to steward gifts of any size. Together, we are shaping a healthier and more resilient future for the greater Pottstown region.



Dave Kraybill, President of PRCF speaks with DCNR and Borough Leadership at Memorial Park Bridge Opening



Community Program: Pottstown Play Streets closes a section of street to allow children and families to play and connect with local resources

Stay Connected



Ready to make a lasting impact in the greater Pottstown region? Join us in building a stronger community. Explore Ways to Give, understand our Grantmaking process, review Programs & Initiatives, find out What We Do, and stay updated with News and Publications.

Discover the new PottstownFoundation.org.

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Donna Manley

POTTSTOWN, PA MANAGING DIRECTOR

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Joseph Scott McArdle, C.C.I.M.

The Route 422 Business Advisor (ISSN 1524-1254) is published monthly, twelve times per year by MACnificent Pages, P.O. Box 334, Pottstown, PA 19464-0334, and is mailed free to qualified business owners and operators throughout the Route 422 and Route 100 Business Corridors in Pennsylvania, USA, and is available in digital format at www.422business.com. Copyright © 2025 by MACnificent Pages. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any form is forbidden without written permission of the publisher. Views expressed in articles published in the Route 422 Business Advisor are the views of authors and individual contributors and are not to be attributed to the Route 422 Business Advisor, its editorial advisors, or its advertisers, unless expressly stated. The Route 422 Business Advisor does not verify the accuracy of claims made in advertisements, and publication of an ad does not imply endorsement by the magazine or MACnificent Pages. All ads are non-cancellable. ERRORS — It is the Route 422 Business Advisor's policy to review all ads set in-house with the advertiser regarding content, spelling, prices, and contact information PRIOR to publication. In ALL cases, including camera-ready ads, the advertiser assumes complete responsibility for the accuracy of information presented in ads. In any case where an error is clearly the fault of the Route 422 Business Advisor, and which would prevent a reader from contacting an advertiser or in which incorrect pricing is involved, Route 422 Business Advisor's liability will be limited to granting a FREE ad run to the advertiser or a correction announcement, whichever the advertiser prefers, provided the Route 422 Business Advisor is notified PRIOR to the next edition's deadline. Placing an advertisement in the Route 422 Business Advisor constitutes acknowledgment and acceptance of these terms.

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Coffee & Convo:

Make AI Work for You – Aug. 5

7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.

Location: Center for Business Excellence
49 Commerce Dr., Wyomissing
FREE for GRCA members
Register: Greaterreading.org/AI

Intermediate Excel – Starts Aug. 5

8 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Location: Shearer Technical Computer Consultants
727 Penn Ave., West Reading
\$400/person-GRCA members
\$495/person-Future GRCA members
Register: Greaterreading.org/interexcel

Member Refresher Webinar – Aug. 12

Noon – 1 p.m.

Location: Zoom
FREE admission
Register: Greaterreading.org/refresh

Intro to Excel – Starts Aug. 14

8 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Location: Shearer Technical Computer Consultants
727 Penn Ave., West Reading
\$400/person-GRCA members
\$495/person-Future GRCA members
Register: Greaterreading.org/introexcel

Spark Sessions: Strengthening Nonprofits Through Shared Insight – Aug. 14

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

Location: United Way of Berks County
25 N 2nd St., Suite 101, Reading
FREE for nonprofit organizations
Register: Greaterreading.org/spark

Sales Methods & Mastery Training Program – Starts Aug. 14

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Location: Center for Business Excellence
49 Commerce Dr., Wyomissing
\$795/person-GRCA members
\$995/person-Future GRCA members
Register: Greaterreading.org/salesmastery

Annual Picnic – Aug. 19

(Rain date: Aug. 20)

4:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Location: FirstEnergy Stadium
1900 Centre Ave., Reading
\$55/person-GRCA members
\$65/person-Future GRCA members
Register: Greaterreading.org/picnic25

Practical Project Management Workshop – Aug. 20

8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location: Center for Business Excellence
49 Commerce Dr., Wyomissing
\$250/person-GRCA members
\$300/person-Future GRCA members
Register: Greaterreading.org/projectworkshop

Berks Women2Women – Lean In Circle Information Session – Aug. 26

5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Location: Center for Business Excellence
49 Commerce Dr., Wyomissing
FREE admission
Register: Greaterreading.org/leanin

Networking@Night: New Castle Lawn & Landscape – Aug. 28

5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Location: New Castle Lawn & Landscape
3 E Pointe Dr., Birdsboro
FREE to GRCA members
Register: Greaterreading.org/newcastle



FROM GREAT TO Greater

**ACCELERATE YOUR BUSINESS GROWTH
WITH A GRCA MEMBERSHIP**

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**

UPCOMING EVENT

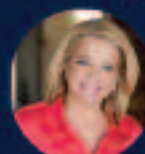
WOMEN'S FALL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

HOSTED BY THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2025 8:30 AM – 1 PM

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON CENTER AT MILL GROVE
1201 PAWLINGS ROAD, NORRISTOWN, PA

FEATURING DYNAMIC WOMEN LEADERS



Tracy Davidson

NBC10 Anchor



Dr. Michelle Burroughs

WSFS Bank
DEI Trailblazer



Colleen Watson

Sandler



Rachel Riley

Valley Forge
Tourism &
Convention Board



Valerie Smilansky

Agile Mom
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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

Building Our Future Workforce

– How the Tricounty Chamber is Connecting Talent with Opportunity

By Harrison Santangelo, President
The TriCounty Chamber of Commerce

As President of the Tricounty Area Chamber of Commerce, one of the most frequent conversations I have with our member businesses revolves around workforce development. From manufacturers to service providers, the challenge of finding and retaining skilled talent is a consistent theme. It's clear that to ensure a successful future for our community, we need to proactively cultivate the next generation of our local workforce.

That's why your Chamber is stepping up, taking a leading role in bridging the gap between education and industry right here in the Tricounty area.

We are incredibly excited to announce the development of a comprehensive intern placement program designed to connect high school students directly with meaningful career opportunities among our Chamber members. Starting this fall semester, we plan to launch the program in partnership with one local school district and look to offer the same placement for students for 10+ school districts in our service area.

The enthusiasm for this program has been overwhelming, from both the schools

and our member businesses. For too long, there hasn't been a straightforward way for students to gain hands-on experience in potential career fields, or for businesses to tap into the emerging talent pool right in their backyard. This program aims to change that.



Our vision is simple: provide students with real-world, hands-on experience that not only develops their skills but also ignites their passion for a career right here in TriCounty. Imagine a high school student learning the ropes in a local manufacturing plant, assisting in a healthcare setting, or contributing to a marketing firm, all before they even graduate. These experi-

ences are invaluable.

A significant challenge many businesses face, particularly in vital sectors like the skilled trades, is the aging workforce. As experienced professionals near retirement, there's a pressing need to ensure the younger generation is ready to step into those essential roles as soon as they're needed. Our intern program directly addresses this by giving students early exposure and practical experience in these critical fields.

But our efforts extend beyond just placements. The Chamber is uniquely

positioned to act as a crucial liaison between our biggest employers and local colleges and high schools. We're actively working to foster collaborations that will help develop curricula specifically tailored to the in-demand fields needed in our area. This means working with educators to ensure that what's being taught in the classroom aligns with the skills and knowledge local businesses are seeking.

The Chamber's unique value in this endeavor comes from the deep relationships we share with both the school systems and the business community. We can bring all parties to the table, facilitating conversations that lead to meaningful change and tangible results.

Ultimately, our overarching goal is to keep our developing workforce right here in the Tricounty area. By providing clear pathways to rewarding careers and ensuring that local education aligns with local industry needs, we hope to stem the tide of young talent seeking opportunities elsewhere. We want our students to see that they can build successful, fulfilling careers without having to leave the community they grew up in.

This isn't just about filling jobs; it's about building a stronger, more resilient TriCounty economy and ensuring a prosperous future for all who live and work here.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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

Corporate Petals

(570) 394-0109

Office Equipment / Furniture / Supplies

Jim McAndrew Photography

(267) 474-6224

Photographers / Photography Studios
<http://www.jimmcandrewphotography.com/>

Beem Light Sauna Collegeville

(302) 545-4883

Health & Wellness

<https://www.beemlightsauna.com/location/collegeville>

MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

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

47+ years

AAA East Central

Graham Management
t/a McDonald's

35 years

Borough of Boyertown

Richard A. Zuber Realty

29 years

Pottstown Area
Police Athletic League

Occupational Health -
Pottstown Hospital Tower Health

Avante Apartments

11 years

Pottstown Dance Theatre

Berks Career and Technology Center

4 years

Total Detailing, LLC

Cornerstone Advisors
Asset Management



REGIONAL CHAMBER ROUNDUP



UPCOMING EVENTS.

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
18

Monday, 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Young Professionals: Pickleball

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
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
16

Tuesday, 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Business After Hours

You're invited to TCACC's next Networking Event — The Diamond Paw-ty: Where Business Barks. Hosted by Diamond Credit Union in Gilbertsville and the Berks Animal Rescue League, this fun, pet-themed evening is "where local businesses connect — fueled by paws and partnerships." Enjoy networking opportunities that can boost your visibility, spark new collaborations, and help you build lasting professional relationships. Everyone who attends will be entered into a business card drawing, and while we kindly ask that you leave your furry friends at home, pet-friendly goodies will be available to take with you!

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

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

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

SEPTEMBER 09, 2025
95 Nutt Rd, Phoenixville, PA 19460

THIS MONTH'S EVENT
POWERED BY:

HOSTED BY:

DSG

NONPROFIT PARTNER:

SOLO BAL
hawaiian fried chicken & beer

Presented by:

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!

Building Bridges with Hope

Restoring Lives Affected by Homelessness, Addiction, and Mental Illness

Hope Fox Danoff (610) 316-0171

www.buildingbridgeswithhope.org

Providence Self Storage

Business, personal and recreational storage solutions

Kristina Gracia (610) 933-0401

www.providenceselfstorage.com

The Better Limerick Diner, LLC

The Limerick Diner & The Flying Pig Tavern & Tap

Sean Anderson 610-489-3500

www.thelimerickdiner.com

Red Top Pizza by Penny's

Making Red Top Pizzas & more since 1970

Jennifer Boehmer 610-489-3636

www.redtoppizza.net

EVENTS

Monthly events include Business Roundtable Luncheons, PV Men's HH and Young Professionals events. Join us for bi-monthly Membership Orientation, quarterly PV WIN events, and quarterly Non-Profit Meet & Greets... just to name a few!



August 20 @ 8:30am Membership Orientation – FREE EVENT

Whether you're a business owner considering membership or a current member looking to get more involved, this event is perfect for you! RSVP now for this FREE event.

August 21 @ 11:45am – 1pm

Moderator-led roundtable discussion and networking luncheon. PV Chamber members only. \$30 includes lunch.

September 26 4th Annual Sporting Clays Tournament & Luncheon Lehigh Valley Sporting Clays

Experience the thrill of sporting clays—it's like golf, but with guns! Your registration fee covers everything: targets, cart, loaner gun, ammo, expert instruction, and a delicious lunch at Grumpy's BBQ. No experience needed and open to all! Exciting sponsorship opportunities are available for members. Don't miss out—call or visit our website for details.

PVNEXT-GEN Empowering Young Professionals NEW PROGRAM!

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.

Get Ready for the PV Summit

Registration opens in August for the **Annual PV Summit – the premier B2B Conference & Networking Event** of the year! This high-energy day includes an exhibitor showcase, engaging breakout sessions, speed networking, municipal updates, a full luncheon, and more.

Whether you're looking to grow your network, gain valuable insight, or spotlight your business, the PV Summit is the place to be.

The official event date will be announced in August—stay tuned!

Connect. Engage. Empower.

**SAVE THE DATE – Annual Holiday Party – December 9th
at RiverCrest Golf Club & Preserve**

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:

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– 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

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- Vendor Rate: \$150 | Non-Profit Rate: \$50 | Food Truck Rate: \$150
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Let's make this year's Community Day the best one yet!

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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:

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

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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



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.

• August 20, 2025 - Chamber Wine Tasting Event at Piazza Presto
453 W Ridge Pike, Royersford (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.

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- Breakfast Referral Club – August 8th @ B2 Bistro
- SBRA Mingle – August 27th at Legacy Cigar Lounge

DECODING THE HELP INDUSTRY: COACHING, THERAPY, MENTORSHIP, AND BEYOND



By Rick Fisher,
Rick Fisher Coaching

In today's fast-paced world, professionals often find themselves stuck—not because they lack intelligence or ambition, but because they're unsure what kind of help they actually need. Should they hire a coach? Talk to a therapist? Find a mentor? The landscape of "helping modalities" can feel like an overstuffed toolbox: all useful, but which one fits the job?

Here's a down-to-earth breakdown of the major modalities—what they are, how they work, and how the skills you gain can transfer across other areas of life.

1. Therapy

Therapists are licensed professionals trained to work with emotional, psychological, or trauma-related issues. They often dig into your past to help you heal in the present. Therapy can be transformative for mental health, but the skills learned — like emotional regulation, boundary-setting, and increased self-awareness — are also highly transferable to leadership, communication, and personal relationships.

2. Counseling

Think of counseling as therapy's more solution-focused cousin. It's often shorter-term and geared toward specific challenges—grief, addiction, career changes. While it still touches emotions, it's often more present-focused. Skills like stress management and decision-making easily carry over into work and life.

3. Mentorship

Mentors are usually more experienced individuals in your field who offer guidance, share lessons, and help you navigate industry challenges. Unlike therapy or coaching, mentorship is less

structured and more relational. While it's great for professional development, its transferability depends on the mentor's breadth of wisdom and your ability to apply it broadly.

4. Consulting

Consultants diagnose problems and tell you what to do—often in business, marketing, or operations. They're the "fixers." You're hiring expertise, not personal growth. Transferable skills? Some—like strategic thinking or process improvement—but the focus is more on outcomes than transformation.

5. Life Coaching

Life coaching is future-focused and driven by self-discovery. Coaches don't tell you what to do—they help you uncover your own answers. It's like having a thinking partner with powerful questions. The real gold of coaching is in its transferability: the mindset shifts, self-awareness, confidence, and ownership you develop can ripple into career, relationships, health, and beyond.

6. Spiritual Direction

This is about exploring your beliefs, values, and sense of meaning. It's not always religious but often taps into deep questions. While not every leader seeks spiritual guidance, those who do often develop clarity, purpose, and empathy—qualities that elevate leadership and life.

So Which One's Right for You?

It depends on where you are and what you need. Are you wounded? Seek therapy. Are you stuck on a decision? A coach may help. Need direction in your industry? Find a mentor. Looking for answers? Try spiritual direction.

Each modality brings value. The key is matching the tool to the task—and knowing that whatever you learn, you're building a skill set that can serve you across the board.

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Joseph Scott McArdle and Terese Brittingham

Forty Successful Years in Real Estate and Still Racking up Awards

According to Terese Brittingham, Broker of Keller Williams Realty Group in Collegeville, "Joseph Scott McArdle is a true leader with forty successful years in our industry! I am pleased to present this year's 2025 "Cap" award to him. This represents one of the highest awards Keller Williams bestows. His earning of this award multiple times in his last ten years just goes to affirm his success in our office, and the real estate industry. Besides being truly dedicated, McArdle cares about his clients and the community. His hard work shows in numerous ways throughout what he has done with Phoenixville's revitalization over the last few decades. People credit him as being a true leader in his community and helping start the renaissance there."

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.

Phoenixville's renaissance traces back to the "campout" for new townhomes on the northside at French Creek Townhomes on March 20, 2004. That development was one of the original parts of the former

Phoenix Steel site to be redeveloped, located in the center of the now booming borough. The townhomes brought in new residents with their new disposable incomes that changed the makeup of the town. This created more demand that refueled the need for commercial establishment in the Central Business District, which is within walking distance of the then new townhomes. New shops, bars and restaurants that have opened up since that the original campout for homes, with new residents, supporting local business with the influx of their new disposable incomes, and their new attitudes that have shaped the renaissance."

"The Live, Work, Play lifestyle that embodies the new residents, mostly first-time buyers, are not only hip but cool all in one, fueled the booming center of the downtown. The positive aspects that such plans contribute to the ongoing renaissance with the expansion of restaurants, new residences, and new offices in the center of town, making it the perfect place for first time buyers," according to Joseph Scott McArdle. Phoenixville's Mayor at the time Leo Scoda, acknowledged "One of the amazing events that began to draw attention to the changing face of Phoenixville happened at the 'Camp Out' when dozens of people waited overnight to the first to buy a home in the still unbuilt French Creek Townhomes. The event caught the attention of both residents and non-residents alike and was a leading force in the Renaissance that was to take place in the Borough of Phoenixville."



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POTTSTOWN LAW FIRM RECEIVES RECOGNITION

Attorneys named to SuperLawyers for Pennsylvania list

Wolf, Baldwin & Associates, P.C. in Pottstown recently announced that two of their attorneys have again been named to the list of top attorneys in Pennsylvania for 2025 as published by *Super Lawyers* magazine. Levi S. Wolf and Daniel E. McCabe were named in the practice area of Workers' Compensation.

In 2013, Mr. Wolf and Mr. McCabe became two of the first attorneys in the state to be certified as specialists in the practice of workers' compensation law by the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Section on Workers' Compensation Law as authorized by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

Super Lawyers magazine uses a patented selection process of multiple phases to create their list of top attorneys in the state. The process starts with nominations by peers. These nominations are validated by third-party research across 12 categories. Candidates are then grouped into categories based on practice area and reviewed by those attorneys who received the highest totals from each category. In the final selection, five percent of the state's attorneys are named to the Super Lawyers list, and 2.5 percent are selected to the Rising Stars list.

Mr. Wolf was previously named as a "Rising Star" in the *Super Lawyer* magazine in 2011 and 2012, and to the SuperLawyers list each year since 2014. Mr.



Levi S. Wolf



Daniel E. McCabe

McCabe has been on the SuperLawyer list since 2021.

"I have been nominated as a Pennsylvania Super Lawyer every year since 2014," said Mr. Wolf. "It is humbling, and I am honored to be included in this list of top attorneys in the Commonwealth. I hope that I can continue to achieve excellent results for my clients and continue to earn recognition on this list."

"A very sincere thank you for being nominated to the SuperLawyer list yet again," Mr. McCabe added. "I'm

grateful to have been able to help so many injured workers and hope to continue to do so for years to come."

Wolf, Baldwin & Associates, P.C. has offices in Pottstown, Pennsburg, Reading, and West Chester. The firm was founded in 1973 by Jack F. Wolf. Bruce Baldwin joined the firm in 1987. The firm currently employs 19 people.



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I GOT HURT AT WORK, I'M GETTING BENEFITS, WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD I NEED A LAWYER?



LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

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

So, you are a carpenter, a good one, and during your lunch break, you recently stepped down out of a new construction house with temporary stairs. The stairs gave way, and you tore your ACL, MCL, meniscus, and your Achilles tendon on your right leg. Your company does the right thing, and you begin to receive Workers' Comp Benefits at about 2/3 of your pay for the last month. You are getting paid. You are pretty sure the insurance company paid for the surgery you needed on your knee and your ankle. The recovery is going really slowly, but you are starting to see progress.

A few weeks after your surgery, you get a notification, via email, from your pharmacy, that your pain medications are not being refilled because your claim is still being investigated? "Wait a minute" you think, they are already paying me, and they paid for my surgery and all the other treatment I needed? Your pain medication is about to run out and now suddenly an insurance company is telling you that they are not going to pay for the medication that your surgeon recommended? Frustrated, you bill your regular health insurance instead of workers' comp for the pain medication, and pay the co-pay. "I don't know how much the copay will be, but I am not waiting around any longer, in pain!" you think. The next email tells you that the surgery on your knee and

Achilles has now been deemed not related to your work injury. You think, "I just fell down some steps that were supposed to be secure, and my employer's workers' comp carrier just decided that my surgery was not related to the work injury?"

The hospital has already billed your health insurance for the surgery, and you now receive a co-pay notification that you owe around \$12,000 for the surgery you just had. Two days later you get a letter in the mail from the workers' comp insurance carrier. The letter inside looks like it is from Harrisburg. The top reads "Notice of Denial," and you think, what the hell does that mean? My incredibly obvious injury has been denied?

(Continued on page 40)

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ABOUT ME

Breanna Angstadt is a Certified Integrative Nutrition Health Coach, Life Coach, NLP Master Practitioner & Personal Trainer.

Breanna spent most of her life overweight, dieting, battling eating disorders. After many years of trial & error, seeking help & transforming her mindset, she not only surpassed her health & fitness goals, but then went on to inspire others to transform their own lives. After founding the successful Just & Whole - Body & Wellness Coaching, Breanna has used her experience, education & intuition to coach women around the world transform their mindset as well as their physique.

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LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

(Continued from page 39)

You turn the form over and see box 1 checked off — at the bottom of that paragraph there is a sentence. “Knee and ankle strain injury denied because of pre-existing injury.” However, you never hurt your knee or ankle before. You have never even had any knee or ankle pain before. You have never seen a doctor for your knee or ankle. What could this insurance carrier possibly be talking about?

You have never been through a worker’s comp case. You have never been injured at work. You have never been sitting at home wondering how you are going to pay your mortgage, but after you receive the denial the checks that you were receiving stop. The workers’ comp carrier has refused to pay for any of your medical bills.

Your employer just cancelled your health benefits because you have been out of work for over 30 days, and that’s their policy. So, you now have a denied workers’ comp claim and no health insurance, and you are sitting in a recliner in a cast and boot. Oh, and let’s not forget, your pain medication has run out so, odds are, you will not be sleeping tonight.

You think, “how can an insurance company do this?” Why is my claim being denied? So, you call your employer. You

ask for the manager of the plant and are told he is busy and will call you back. You wait a few days and no call back. So, you call again, and again, and again. No call backs and no explanation. Finally, you ask a now “former” co-worker, hey what did you hear about my injury? Do you know why my claim was denied? “We heard that you crashed your motorcycle a few days before your so-called work accident!” “Who told you that?” you say. Then your co-worker gets nervous and tells you he can’t talk about it.

A few days later you are notified by your employer that your position is no longer available. “Wait, I’m fired? Can they do that?”

So, you have *not* crashed your motorcycle. It’s in mint condition in your garage. You couldn’t possibly ride it because you still can barely walk. Where did this story about my crash come from? Can an insurance company just hear a story and deny a claim? Don’t I have rights? I can barely walk, and I don’t even know my options. Do I have short term disability benefits through work? Did those benefits stop when my employer cancelled my health insurance?

(Continued on page 42)



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LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

(Continued from page 40)

If they didn't, is it a good idea for me to receive short term disability benefits when I know the injury was work related?

The questions continue to pop up. You received workers' comp benefits for four weeks and then they were shut off. Did the insurance company admit liability when they started paying me and paying for my medical treatment? It wasn't my fault that I fell on the steps, so shouldn't I be able to sue my employer and its workers' comp carrier for pain and suffering? And by the way, who built the steps that caused my fall — wasn't it that other company? Did the insurance company deny my claim because they felt the accident was my fault? Does it matter if it was my fault or the employer's fault?

Is there a way that I can rectify all these things?

Well, the clear answer is "yes." The workers' comp system is a strange part of the law and there are very specific attorneys that can guide you through this process. The questions above just scratch the surface compared to the number of questions that can be relevant to a workers' compensation case. The above example of what *might* happen after a work injury *has* happened in my practice. You might have started to get checks, and

a few appointments might have paid for, but inside of the first 90 days, your benefits could stop without any Judge's order. "What is the relevance of 90 days?" you ask. "Do I still have to see their doctors now that my claim has been denied?"

Every person's case is different, but I could write a book filled just with all of the questions that I have heard during my 24 years of practice in the workers' comp system. I would encourage any injured worker out there to consult with an attorney who has been certified as a specialist in workers' compensation law by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court before trying to navigate the workers' comp system on your own. Get expert help today.

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



STEVE LADNER PHOTOGRAPHY

Published in GQ, Harpers Bazaar, French Vogue,
I live and work in the Chester Springs area.

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UNLOCKING HOUSING POTENTIAL: ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS IN BERKS COUNTY



By Jim Sarro, AIA, Principal Architect,
Muhlenberg Greene Architects

As housing needs evolve, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) have emerged as a versatile solution for homeowners and builders in Berks County. These secondary housing units, often referred to as in-law suites, granny flats, or carriage houses, offer a unique opportunity to maximize property use while addressing the housing shortage.

What Are ADUs?

ADUs are self-contained residential units located on the same lot as a primary dwelling. They can be:

- **Detached:** Separate structures like converted garages or standalone buildings.
- **Attached:** Additions to the main home, such as basement or attic conversions.
- **Interior:** Portions of the existing home modified to function independently.

Typically ranging from 400 to 800 square feet, ADUs include essential

amenities like a kitchen, bathroom, and living space, ensuring autonomy for occupants.

Benefits of ADUs

- **Multigenerational Living:** Accommodate aging parents or returning adult children while maintaining privacy.
- **Rental Income:** Generate additional revenue by renting out the unit.
- **Property Value:** Enhance property appeal and marketability.
- **Efficient Land Use:** Optimize existing land use without the need for extensive development.



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Navigating Berks County Ordinances

In Pennsylvania, zoning regulations are predominantly determined at the municipal level, leading to variations across Berks County. It's crucial for homeowners and builders to consult local ordinances before initiating an ADU project.

For instance, municipalities like Douglass Township have specific supplementary regulations that may impact ADU development. While other townships may have unique provisions or restrictions.

Given the diversity in local regulations, it's advisable to:

1. Consult Local Authorities: Engage with municipal planning or zoning offices to understand specific requirements.

2. Review Zoning Codes: Examine local zoning ordinances for provisions related to ADUs.

3. Seek Professional Guidance: Collaborate with architects or planners familiar with local regulations to ensure compliance.

Jim Sarro, AIA is a Principal Architect at Muhlenberg Greene Architects with a deep understanding of local regulations and a commitment to sustainable design. Jim assists clients in creating attractive, functional, and code compliant spaces.

Design Considerations

When planning an ADU, consider:

- **Integration:** Ensure the design complements the existing property's aesthetics.

- **Accessibility:** Incorporate features that accommodate occupants of all ages and abilities.

- **Sustainability:** Utilize energy-efficient materials and systems to reduce environmental impact.

- **Privacy:** Design layouts that provide privacy for both primary and secondary units.

Conclusion

ADUs present a compelling opportunity for homeowners in Berks County to enhance their property's functionality and value. By understanding local zoning ordinances and thoughtfully planning the design, these units can serve as a practical solution to evolving housing needs.

For personalized guidance on ADU development, feel free to reach out to us at Muhlenberg Greene Architects. We're here to help you navigate the process and bring your vision to life.

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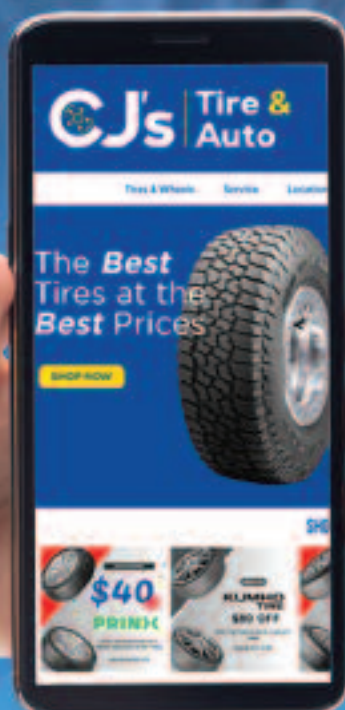
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How to Keep Your Progress Going

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2. Start Thinking About Fall Goals: Use August to plan for what's next — whether it's increasing strength, running a 5K, or focusing on mobility. Having a trainer to guide you can help set clear, achievable milestones.

3. Keep Fitness Fun! Make the most of warm days by taking workouts outside or joining a fitness challenge. GYMGUYZ trainers keep workouts fresh and engaging, so you never hit a plateau.

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DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT By Barry Cassidy

I'm currently on a the United States to explore vacancies and various types of businesses in American downtowns today. My 70-city journey has already taken me through Memphis, many cities in Texas, and up along the California coast.

Most signs of the 2021 lockdown protests have now disappeared, indicating a return to normal. Many cities have made significant progress in filling some of the vacancies. While some cities have filled vacancies, some previously occupied stores are now vacant. Overall, things have evened out a bit across these cities.

I'm currently in Butte, Montana, and out of all the towns so far, Butte was the most run-down. In many cases, especially in Portland, the vacant spaces were quite large. Seattle also had many large vacant spaces. Butte is a bit different. There are numerous individual storefronts along the streets. Some are doubles, but many are single-storefront locations.

While I am here, they are also attending the Montana Music Festival. Many people are on the streets. It's different from previous

years when no one was outside. They had a large food store called Hennessy Foods. That store went out of business, leaving a big hole in downtown. It looks like they are trying to turn the upper floors into lofts. And they have one or two retail spaces filled on the first floor. Still, there are five or six empty retail units on that street.

On some of Butte's main cross streets, there are nine to ten vacancies grouped together, and that's spread across more than a few blocks. It feels as if downtown has declined. The wood doesn't seem to weather as well as it should. When they painted the wood, they painted over the street numbers. Many of the windows are boarded up, and some have plastic on the inside, so you can't see in.

This was common in many older downtown areas. People placed plants, plates, and light poles outside the store window to create the impression that something was happening inside. I walk up to the window and look in to verify that the store is actually open.

The Hennessy building has 14,000 square feet available per floor. Once the heart of the town, with 30-minute parking signs on the street, it is now abandoned and vacant. When an institutional anchor like Hennessy leaves downtown, it has a lasting and significant impact.

(Continued on page 50)



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DOWNTOWN MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT

(Continued from page 49)

I traveled through Texas and didn't see many migrants, if any at all. Many homeless people have found shelter somewhere. Roads were clear, and many towns seemed to be recovering. Do you hear any of them talking about politics? I thought El Paso was doing pretty well. Last time, I made an inventory of the historic district. This time, I inspected the downtown commercial district. It was vibrant — very third world.

The price of gas in California was close to six dollars a gallon. I stayed away from Los Angeles because I did not think it was safe. This is the third time I've taken the trip, and on none of the previous occasions have I surveyed in Los Angeles.

I did get to Palm Beach, though. And for the most part, the downtown in Palm Beach is doing well. At the northern end of town, a significant mixed-use development has been constructed. Much of the retail space remains unrented. Vast expansions on the edge city sometimes struggle to get started.

There has been a significant expansion of retail space in Redding, California, in 2021. They have made some progress in filling the storefronts, but 22,000 sq ft of retail space remains unrented. A town just north of Redding called Dunsmuir

was hit hard by vacancies. The last time I was there, they had many empty stores, but there was an area called Arts Alley by the river near the Amtrak station. When I visited last year, the area was lively, with people sitting outside on the patio, drinking coffee and espresso, laughing, and having a good time. However, this time, all the stores were vacant. Last year, on the main street in Dunsmuir, there was an announcement about a significant improvement planned for a key building in the center of town. When I visited this year, there were no signs of any such announcements, and all the hype had been taken down.

The COVID-19 lockdown significantly changed the cities. Although some seek rebirth, others are left to wither on the vine. It is difficult to watch some of these changes in the cities. You kind of wonder who's in charge. I was talking to a merchant in Seattle, and he said they formed an organization that has dealt with the homeless issue pretty effectively. He told me all the merchants there know each other and are like family. He said they've been through a lot.

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

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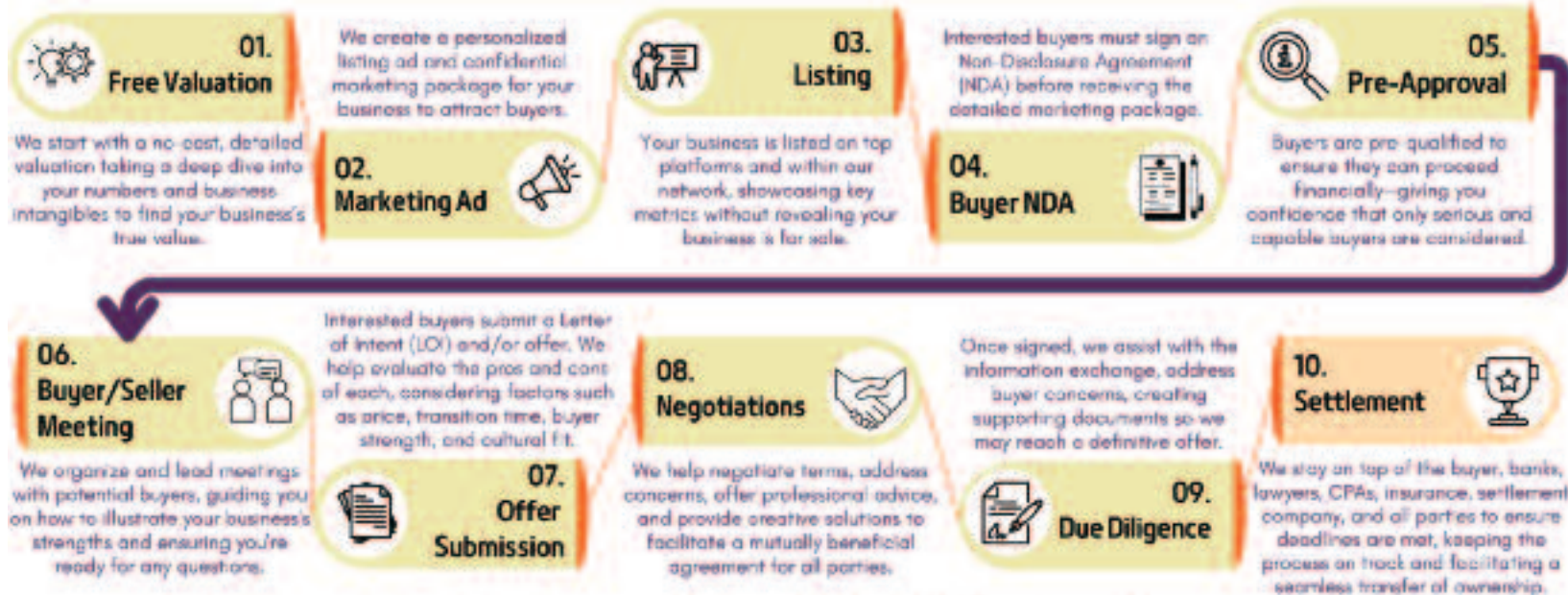
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