## Pocono Mountains Chamber of Commerce Stroudsburg, PA

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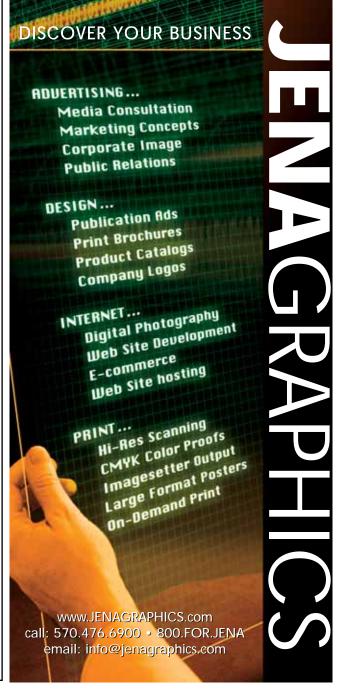
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November 2004 VOL. 33, NO. 11

# **Chamber's Government Affairs Committee Hosts Candidate's Forum**

The Government Affairs Committee of the Pocono Mountains Chamber of Commerce hosted a candidate's forum for the 176th State House District on October 14, 2004. The forum was held at the Best Western Pocono Inn in Stroudsburg, and was televised live by Blue Ridge Cable TV, Channel 13. Moderator for the event was George Roberts of Channel 13.

Questions from the three panelists covered a wide range of topics from tort reform and real estate fraud, to jobs, commuter rail, growth, and property tax relief. Questions from the audience were also presented to the candidates. The audience packed the ballroom of the Best Western Pocono Inn. This one hour forum was standing-room only due to the large turnout. Co-sponsors for this forum were the Pocono Record, Blue Ridge Cable TV, and the Best Western Pocono Inn.

The 176th State House District represents approximately 60,000 residents of Stroudsburg, East Stroudsburg, and the Mount Pocono boroughs of Jackson, Pocono, Paradise, and Coolbaugh Townships. It also represents Districts 2,3, and 4 of Stroud Township.

Since 2001 the Government Affairs Committee of the Chamber has hosted five live televised candidate's forums for state and county legislative races. The Chamber is has made a commitment to continue hosting political forums in the future as a public service for the voters of the Pocono Mountains region.



From left, Incumbent State Representative Mario Scavello, Bob Hay, panelist; Chamber president/ceo Robert Phillips, IOM, panelist, independent candidate Theresa Merli, Paula Heeschen, panelist, and Democratic candidate Joe Metzgar.

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## From the Chairman of the Board



This past June, Bob Phillips, Peter Alasty, and I had the opportunity to participate in a meeting hosted by the Murray family at the Hillside Inn in Marshalls Creek. The purpose of the meeting was for us to talk to minority business owners about the benefits of joining the Chamber. We experienced a very warm reception by these individuals and we hope that as a result of that meeting and subsequent follow-up by the Chamber staff, we can now count on these businesses to actively participate as members of our Chamber.

Recently, I participated in a gathering with a number of Monroe County leaders to discuss diversity and its impact on our county. Our discussion focused on the community and how we are responding to the growing cultural changes of Monroe County's communities. During this gathering, we recognized that there are a lot of good things going on in our school districts, but that we also realized that there is still a lot of work for us (defined as Monroe County) to do. Our premise is that a welcoming community that celebrates and embraces diversity is a healthy, thriving community. We engage in open and honest discourse about the challenges facing our communities and then work together to find and implement solutions that benefit all of us.

You may ask, why is this included in a Chamber of Commerce publication? What does this have to do with the mission and purpose of the Chamber? I truly believe that a healthy understanding of where our neighbors came from and what they contribute to our community can only strengthen the quality of our community and make Monroe County a better place to live and to do business in. With this in mind I am asking all of our members for their support and assistance in continuing this open dialogue and in helping us to identify opportunities which will enhance these discussions and lead to fruitful action that benefits all of our community members.

I am interested in your thoughts and comments about the above topic or anything related to the Chamber. Please contact me at 570-688-2466 or by e-mail at mconnell@northampton.edu.

-Matthew Connell

## November 2004 Calendar of Events

**November 2....** Women in Business Steering Committee

12:00 noon - PMCC

**November 3....** New Member Breakfast

8:00 a.m. - PMCC

**November 5...** *Legislative Committee* 

8:00 a.m. - Best Western Pocono Inn

**November 8...** Education Committee

12:00 noon – Monroe Career & Technical Institute

November 9.... Women in Business Luncheon

12:00 noon - Kirkridge Retreat & Study Center

Culinary Committee

4:00 p.m. - PMCC

November 10... Transportation Committee

8:00 a.m. - PMCC

November 11...Pocono Plateau Committee

8:00 a.m. – Mt. Pocono Borough Hall

November 15...Expo Committee

12:00 noon – PMCC

Education Committee

12:00 noon – PMCC

November 16...Small Business Development Committee

8:00 a.m. - PMCC

**November 17**... Executive Committee

12:00 noon – PMCC

**November 18...***New Members Committee* 

8:30 a.m. - PMCC

November 19...Monthly Breakfast

7:30 a.m. – Best Western Pocono Inn

8:00 a.m. - PMCC

**November 22...** West End Committee

8:00 a.m. - Western Pocono Community Library

After Hours Networking

5:00 p.m. – The Edge Bar & Grill - Reeders

**November 23**...Board of Directors

11:00 a.m. – Best Western Pocono Inn

TBA.....HR Committee

Quality of Life Committee

## **Members in the News**

Backbone Security's staff recently received industry certification in security assessment. Located in Stroudsburg, company President/CEO Glenn Watt and his staff recently became certified in the National Security Agency's INFOSEC Assessment Methodology (IAM) and INFOSEC Evaluation Methodology (IEM). The training provided participants with the NSA's current methods in protecting key assets (such as data and other information). Backbone Security recently hired former State Trooper, Chris McBrairty as a Senior Computer Forensic Specialist. McBrairty is working to identify contain, and prevent cybersecurity issues for Backbone's clients. For more information, visit them online at: www.backbonesecurity.com or call, 570.422.7935.

John J. Riley. Inc. Shareholder, Gary A. Hazen, CPA, and Jeffrey D. Gogolski, Senior Accountant recently presented a seminar on self-employment tax and accounting issues for all self-employed realtors for WEICHERT REALTORS Acclaim. The seminar, attended by more than 20 Realtors covered particular tax issues including travel and auto deductions, income reporting, establishing proper bookkeeping records, and many other special situations unique to realtors. With offices in Stroudsburg and Mt. Pocono, the firm offers full service accounting and computer services. Anyone interested in having one of their professional staff members present a business, individual, or computer-related seminar for your firm, please call 570.424.0667 or 570.839.7183.

**Solid Cactus Inc.**, a Web site design and Internet applications development firm, moved its offices from Wilkes-Barre Township to the Jewelcor Center in downtown Wilkes-Barre in an effort to keep up with its growing clientbase. The company, who employed just four employees two years ago, today employs 18 professionals, and has plans for continued expansion. For more information, please visit their Web site: www.solidcactus.com or call: 570.270.4200.

Muhlenberg College's liberal arts program began its second year in the new Wescoe School on October 25. Classes range from Micro and Macroeconomics and Marketing Research to Human Evolution, Innovation & Creative Destruction, and American Ethnic Diversity. The Wescoe School provides quality education for area adults. The programs are designed to be responsive to the challenges of today's business environment while providing critical and creative thinking skills, analytical skills, and leadership skills. For more information, visit their Web site: www.muhlenberg.edu/wescoe or call: 484.664.3912 or 3235.

**Century 21 Select Group** is proud to announce that Craig Rosenberger has joined its firm as a sales associate. He will specialize in residential sales in the Western Poconos and Indian Mountain Lakes. Rosenberger previously worked in sales and marketing for 11 years. Prior to his sales and marketing career, he served in the Gulf War as a proud member of the Armed Forces. Century 21 Select Group recently raised \$8,724 with their Easter Seals Fundraiser. They can be reached at: 570.643.2100.

**ETS Builders** and its President, Larry Simon, recently announced the winners of their annual educational scholarships. This year's total of \$7,650 is the largest in the six-year history of the merit-based awards. The scholarships are awarded to LTS employees' children, and are given in memory of longtime LTS employee and youth programs volunteer, Frank Sidlosky. LTS Builders is Northeast Pennsylvania's leading custom home builder. They can be reached by calling 570.424.8867.

Fergus & Clark Academy for the Performing Arts, opened for business this past January Expanding at a rapid pace, the Academy already employs a staff and faculty of 16 professionals who teach approximately 270 students. The school specializes in preparing students who are interested in pursuing music as a career, boasting a number of faculty members with national or international performing credits or advanced degrees in music. They offer private lessons in voice, piano, guitar, strings, percussion, woodwinds, brass, and acting as well as classes in foreign language diction for singers, church organ for pianists, improvisation, and music theory Fergus & Clark also offers a full-service bookstore. They may be reached at 570.420.8060.



Members of the Fergus & Clark Academy's Young Artist Program perform a scene at their monthly cabaret. Left to right: Catherine Dempsey, Gabrielle Dempsey, Katherine Dodel, Ariel Hudak, Cristina Rago, and Eric Dwyer. (Photo by Whisper Dempsey, used by permission.)

# RINEHART RENTALS

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# October Women in Business Luncheon

The October Women in Business luncheon was held at Kirkridge Retreat & Conference Center in Bangor. Carol Sitroon of Casal Communications gave a presentation titled "Lessons from the Wizard of Oz."

Uli Klein of Weekenders USA won the 50/50 drawing. She donated her winnings to the Women in Business Scholarship Fund.

The November luncheon will again be held at Kirkridge Retreat & Conference Center. Debi Cope of Debi Cope Associates will do a presentation called "Be Even Better."

For more information on this or future WIB luncheons, please contact Miriam Conway at 570.421.4433.



Carol Sitroon (left) and Michelle Bisbing (right) are shown above with Amanda Maisto (Debi Cope's daughter). In keeping with the Wizard of Oz theme, Amanda is wearing red shoes.

# October Business Card Exchange

The October 4th Business Card Exchange was held at the Lake Naomi Club in Pocono Pines. Approximately 90 people enjoyed the delicious food along with the beautiful view of the lake and fall foliage.



# **Ribbon Cuttings**



# **Black Bears Lodge**

Black Bears Lodge is one of the newest restaurant/taverns in the Pocono region. A superb menu offering All-American fare is served in both indoor and outdoor dining rooms (weather permitting). The restaurant boasts a rustic ambiance where you will dine surrounded by beautiful mountains in front of the warm glow of an awe-inspiring stone fireplace. For more information, please call, 570.629.9598.



## The Pocono Insider Magazine

The Pocono Insider has unique in-room and concierge distribution that was designed to maximize advertising results. The magazines are distributed monthly in the guest rooms of resorts, hotels, and bed and breakfasts in the Pocono Mountains and surrounding areas. They target tourists who spend \$1.1 billion per year in the area. The Pocono Insider offers special advertising rates to Chamber Members. For more information, call 570.421.1989.



## **RE/MAX of the Poconos**

RE/MAX of the Poconos is happy to celebrate its newest location on Route 209 in Brodheadsville. RE/MAX is proud to be able to expand its quality of service throughout the Pocono Area. For more information, call: 570.992.2700.

# **New Member Breakfast**

### **American Red Cross of Monroe County**

ARC is a non-profit organization. Its mission is to prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergency situations. This is accomplished through its Blood Services, Health & Safety Services, and Emergency Services which include Disaster Services and Armed Forces Emergency Services. For information call: 570.476.3800.

### **eVisions**

eVisions designs, hosts, maintains, and markets both informational and e-commerce Web sites. Cutting edge technologies make your Web presence both a visual and efficient experience for users. eVisions are the proud winners of the 2003-2004 Golden Web Awards. Visit eVisions on the web at: www.evisionsofpa.com or call them at 570.689.2482/342.1440.

### Schnaitman's Flooring America

Schnaitman's Flooring America provides sales and installation of floorcoverings including carpet, vinyl, ceramic, stone, hardwood, and laminates. They also sell and install custom window coverings. Schnaitman's Flooring America specializes in contract/commercial, builder, shop-at-home service, insurance claims, and retail. For more information call them at their Main Street, Stroudsburg store: 570.420.1123.

# Whispering Pines Restaurant – Country Club of the Poconos

Situated on a premier 18-hole golf course, Whispering Pines Restaurant is part of a full-service, semi-private country club located in Marshall's Creek. This fine restaurant offers full lunch, dinner, and buffet menus, and banquet facilities for gatherings of all sizes. For more information please call 570.223.1200 ext. 13.



New Members Shown Above with Peter Alasty and Robert Phillips, IOM.

# **Leadership Pocono Introduces Its Class of 2005**

The twenty newest members of the Leadership Pocono Class of 2005 recently held their teambuilding retreat at East Stroudsburg University's Stony Acres facility in Marshalls Creek.

The Class of 2005 is the seventh class to participate in the Leadership Pocono program. This region-wide program is designed to strengthen the community by identifying potential leaders, developing their leadership skills, and motivating them for ongoing community involvement. The class will meet monthly through June for weekday seminars. Topics include team building skills, leadership and communication skills, government, human services, quality of life, economic development, education, media, and business. The class will also do a group project that will benefit the community.

Members of the class of 2005 include: Jennifer Bell, Northampton Community College; Kevin Chau, Patterson-Kelley Company; Joan Davidge, Monroe County Transportation Authority; Duncan Dearie, Adams Outdoor Advertising; Tricia Hannig, Pocono Health Systems; Deborah Harrison, Monroe County Career Link; Christine Himler, Herbert, Rowland and Grubic, Inc.; Brenda Hobson, East Stroudsburg University; Cheryl Ann Houseman, Office of State Representative Mario Scavello; Barbara Kaelin, Sylvan Learning Center; Paul Krempasky, East Stroudsburg University; Patricia Moyer, Monroe Career and Technical Institute; Denise Murray, PNC Bank; Susan Nichols, Shawnee Academy; Randy Polinski, Pocono Mountain School District; Linda Rarick, Chiropractic Health Partners; Craig Stevens, Adams Outdoor Advertising; Leigh Ann Stratakos, 3 Moons Yoga; Jane Stuart, Pocono Health Systems; and Sonia Wolbert, Guaranty Residential Lending.

For further information about the Leadership Pocono Program, please call the Pocono Mountains Chamber of Commerce at 570.421.4433.



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# From the President

The Pocono Mountains Chamber of Commerce owes much of its past and future success to the many members who volunteer to help promote a favorable business climate. These members work with other groups and organizations to take action on community issues and provide business leadership for the local economy, political environment, and quality of life.

After 94 years of service, the PMCC has had many visions for the region. Today, your Chamber's vision is to be the leading advocate for business and to be a powerful voice for our members on legislative issues. Additionally, your Chamber is a vital part of a comprehensive resource for the members and the main place for contacts and information. Our Business Development plan is to provide services for employment growth, create a positive economic environment, support new business development, and demonstrate leadership in targeting and meeting the needs of diverse businesses in the region.

The Chamber's vision also includes assisting existing businesses with counseling and the development of programs that foster growth and expansion. Ultimately, this will promote additional member involvement that will provide effective networking and discounted products to other members. The Chamber continually seeks to incorporate value-added programs and projects that meet business needs for future development.

The Pocono Mountains Chamber of Commerce consists of both volunteers and staff who are professionals and are highly representative of the Pocono Mountains region. Our commitment is to work for you, our members to provide leadership for business and industry. The PMCC, the leading advocate for business and a supportive community partner.

-Robert Phillips, IOM

# M&T Bank hosts September Breakfast

M&T Bank hosted the monthly breakfast on September 17 at the Best Western Pocono Inn.

Guest speaker, Mr. Mark Mizzer of M&T Bank's Investment Group discussed the tax advantages related to education expenses. He also spoke about the benefits of a variety of different accounts, including the most popular plans as well as the traditional ones. He emphasized the tax benefits that each of the different accounts offer.

The Special Program was sponsored by the Stroudsburg-based Pocono/Slate Belt Youth for Christ, which has been serving the region for fifty-four years. Speaker, Mr. David Dowling gave a PowerPoint presentation about the statistics of where our youths stand today on a variety of prevalent issues. The organization, which works with teenagers, has been lead by Chair, Michael Frailey, who was introduced by Mr. Dowling. Dowling has served for 24 years, beginning his involvement as a volunteer.



from L to R: Robert Phillips, Lori Carlson, Elisa Rosario, Mark Mizzer.



from L to R: Robert Phillips, David Dowling, Debbie Schlager, Michael Frailey

## **Members in the News**

Skills USA would like to thank Caesars Brookdale on the Lake in Scotrun for again hosting their Ambassador Training. The SkillsUSA Council's career and technical students spent this overnight training learning communication, social etiquette, and networking skills to prepare them to represent the organization and their schools throughout the year. The mission of the Council is to create a world-class workforce by developing partnerships among the business community and our schools.

# **Check Presentations from the proceeds of the Quality of Life Golf Tournament**

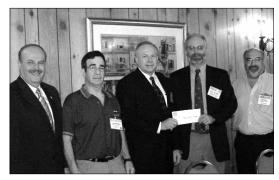
The following checks were presented at the September Board of Directors meeting.



\$500 to Eastburg Community Alliance; from L to R: Robert Phillips, Tracey Rowe, Dr. Matthew Connell



\$500 to United Way of Monroe County; from L to R: Robert Phillips, Tim Kelly, Dr. Matthew Connell



\$1,000 to Pocono Health System; L to R: Robert Phillips, Paul Schuchman, Gene Leblond, Dr. Matthew Connell, John Casella



\$2,000 to the Blue Ribbon Task Force to "Keep the Best" at Tobyhanna Army Depot; L to R: Robert Phillips, Paul Schuchman, Paul Canevari, Dr. Matthew Connell, John Casella



S2,000 to Leadership Pocono Scholarship Fund- left to right: Robert Phillips, Paul Schuchman, Ann Pilcher, Denise Manhart, Dr. Matthew Connell. John Casella

# **Membership Anniversaries**

## 25 Years

Lea Katz Fine Antiques

## 20 Years

S&W Starter & Alternator VI.P Studios, Inc.

## 15 Years

Rajesh G. Bhagat, M.D.

## 10 Years

Memorytown Monroe County Master Builders Patterson-Kelley Company

## 5 Years

Chiropractic Healing Center Clinical Laboratories, Inc. Pat & Red's Tire - Pocono Tire RK Environmental Services Sheeley Insurance Agency

## Congratulations!

Pocono Mountains Chamber of Commerce IMPACT November 2004

## **Welcome New Members**

The following new members are not listed in the 2004 Membership Directory & Buyer's Guide. Please be sure to add this page to your copy of the Directory.

#### **American Health Care Solutions**

Diane Reilly-Robles
14 Sleepy Hollow Estates
E. Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-223-7927
570-223-7817
karema@ptd.net
www.mybenefitsplus.com/dreilly-robles
INSURANCE

### **American Red Cross of Monroe County**

Martha LaBar
322 Park Avenue
Stroudsburg PA 18360
570-476-3800
570-476-3803
labarm@c1mail.com
www.arcofmonroecounty.com
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

## Independent Unfranchise Group

Don Martin
17 Tanglewood Drive
Langhorne, PA 19047
215-852-1302
215-702-1608
dream2reality@unfranchise.com
www.dream2reality.unfranchise.com
ON-LINE MARKETING

## Solid Cactus, Inc.

295 Johnson Street
Wilkes Barre, PA 18702
888-361-9814
570-270-6078
joepesolidcactus.com
www.solidcactus.com
WEB SITES – GRAPHIC DESIGN

### Jesse Harris Project, The

Jesse Harris
85 North First Street
Stroudsburg, PA 18360
570-424-1075
jesseharris@verizon.net
BOXING - CONDITIONING

### **Whispering Pines Restaurant**

Katrina Weithman PO Box 1373 Marshalls Creek, PA 18355 570-223-1200 ext. 13 570-223-2984 RESTAURANTS

#### **eVISIONS**

Michael T. Monahan PO Box 262 Hamlin, PA 18427 570-689-2482 mmonahan@evisionsofpa.com www.youneedevisions.com WEB SITES – GRAPHIC DESIGN

#### **Goldco Consulting**

Rhonda Cohen 16 Lakefield Terrace Stroudsburg, PA 18360 570-620-1297 570-620-0898 cohen55@ptd.net MARKETING

### **Grapevine Settlement Services, Inc.**

Nancy Ceglia PO Box 637 Shawnee-on-Delaware, PA 18356-0637 570-476-1983 570-476-0227 mtbethel@earthlink.net TITLE COMPANIES

### **Regal Medical Billing Services**

Rosalyn McRae PO Box 328 Scotrun, PA 18355 570-619-7997 570-619-6905 regal@ptd.net MEDICAL BILLING

### Ren-Kay

Walter A. Robles
14 Sleepy Hollow Estates
E. Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-223-7927
570-223-7817
karema@ptd.net
CONSTRUCTION

### **Schnaitman's Flooring America**

John J. Schnaitman 825 Main Street Stroudsburg, PA 18360 570-420-1123 570-421-4467 jjsnite@hotmail.com www.flooringamerica.com CARPETING - FLOOR COVERING

### **Wild Pines Restaurant**

Kim Kleinle
PO Box 1099
Pocono Summit, PA 18346
570-646-4444
wildpinesgc@epix.net
GOLF COURSES - COUNTRY CLUBS

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