

# CHAMBER CONNECTION

TO PRESERVE, PROTECT AND DEFEND THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM OF LYCOMING COUNTY

**Berger's Greenhouse:  
21 years of caring**

**Signature Cookin' nears end  
of first year**

**Chamber endorses legislation**

**Free clinic on E-Commerce**



## IT'S ABOUT MEAT AT ECONOMY LOCKER



# The Chamber View

Vincent J. Matteo, President/CEO



Spring certainly has finally come to stay. How do I know – my lawnmower has been out and running. I should say, while it is not my favorite thing to do, I would much rather be mowing the lawn than removing snow from the driveway and walkways. I am also certain it is spring because I get to watch my Yankees as well as my favorite second baseman/outfielder in all of baseball at any level – Christopher “CJ” Terrano.

Last month you may recall I wrote about the concerns people have with brick and mortar stores closing – particularly at the Lycoming Mall. I admit it was not the most uplifting column of the year, but one I thought needed to be written. I will say I was surprised at the number of positive comments I got about it. Positive in the sense that those who commented agreed with my conclusions.

This month I want to take a different approach, but I do want to talk about what I see as one of the many positive aspects of our community. All too often we get caught up in the day to day activities and we forget to be pleased and proud of all the good we have here in Lycoming County.

You are probably aware that the Chamber operates a Leadership Development program and has done so for over 30 years. Lead-

ership Lycoming exists because the Chamber believes strongly that it is the responsibility of the current group of business and community leaders to make certain a new group of leaders are ready, willing and able to “accept the torch” when it is passed. To date, over 600 participants have gone through the program and it is difficult to find a volunteer Board of Directors or volunteer driven program that does not have at least one Leadership Lycoming graduate on it or participating in it.

On Friday evening, April 21st, the Chamber’s Leadership Lycoming program and Hope Enterprises teamed up to put on an unbelievable evening of fun and fundraising at the Genetti Hotel to support the great work at Hope. The event “Dance The Night Away With Hope” was based on the hit television show “Dancing with the Stars.”

Each year participants in the Leadership program are allowed to choose from a variety of approved community projects to team together and assist a local nonprofit in making their event or project a success. This was the second time that a Leadership Lycoming class joined Hope Enterprises in a fun and entertaining fundraiser. And, it certainly was fun and entertaining.

The 2017 Leadership participants who helped put the program together were Dan Warner, Jared Kowalchick, Austin White, Jaime

Kuntz, Eric Gaetano, Katie Coffey, Justin Ross and Regan Yoder. The Project Advisors were Tanya Weber and Marc Schefsky, both Leadership graduates themselves.

The concept was that current community leaders were paired with Hope clients and those couples “competed” in a dance contest. The first group of dancers did a Fox Trot and the couples were Commissioner Tony Mussare and Cheridan Bump, Dr. Ralph Kaiser and Jen Dincher, Dr. James Campbell and Lillian Sims and Keith Kuzio danced with Mary Brennan. The second group of dancers included Dr. Carolyn Strickland and Roger Turner, Leslie Whitehill and Donald Wise, Donna Bastian and Pedie McDonald and Peachie O’Connor “cut the rug” with Reggie Smith. They all did a magnificent job and there were plenty of smiles to go around.

The couples were “judged” by four local celebrities as well. Senator Gene Yaw, Diana DiCenso, local legend Dancing Doris and Tony Thomke (who also served as the dance instructor leading up to the evening). And, the two hosts for the evening were Marc Schefsky of the Genetti Hotel and Kristina Papa of WNep-TV.

Leadership comes in many forms. Sometimes, like the volunteers from Leadership Lycoming who put on this event, it is giving your time and energy and sometimes it

is giving your resources as the evening’s sponsors so generously did. The evenings VIP Sponsors were Dr. Patrick Carey Sports Medicine, Genetti Hotel & Suites, Peachy McDonald, Baker Tilly, DATMAN Productions, Kohl’s, Keystone Advertising Specialties, Penn College, The Hartman Group and Nevill’s Flowers. Space does not allow me to list all of the Featured Sponsors and General Sponsorships (all of whom were recognized that evening and listed on page 11), but we thank them for their leadership and support as well.

This event is what community leadership is all about; people helping people. Coming together for a great cause and just plain getting the job done while actually having fun doing it. I know everyone I talked to that evening had a grand time and I know all hope it

becomes an annual event. Attendance, by the way, was over 200 guests. That is quite a turnout.

The Leadership participants who assisted in this event obviously get what community leadership is about. The other members of the Leadership class of 2017 are working on projects as well and deserve credit for their efforts. We have plenty of community-minded individuals who give of themselves to make our home better. Many of them volunteer at the Chamber and many volunteer at other worthwhile programs throughout Lycoming County. That is truly the meaning of servant leadership. We at the Chamber are proud of them, proud of our Leadership Lycoming program and proud of all those who give of their time to this great community. And That’s the Chamber View.

## Get Connected With Your Chamber!

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# Chamber endorses key legislation at State and Federal Level

On the unanimous recommendation of its Legislative Action Committee, the Chamber Board of Directors endorsed a call to suspend or repeal the Health Care Tax (HIT) currently scheduled to go into effect on January 1, 2018. This tax had been suspended for 2017 and the Chamber is calling upon the Congress to suspend it again.

This is the largest tax in the ACA/Obamacare law and estimates are it will cost employees up to \$500 per employee in added health care costs on an annual basis. This tax will hurt small businesses and middle class employees and their families.

The Health Insurance Tax could lead to force American employers to make some difficult choices about their businesses including slowing additional hiring, delay investments in future growth, equipment and make it more difficult to budget since the HIT is expected to rise each year.

The legislation was introduced in January as H.R. 246, the Jobs and Premium Protection Act that would repeal the Affordable Care Act's Health Insurance Tax and has been endorsed by the "Stop The HIT Coalition", an organization comprised of many national and local business organizations and small businesses across America. We urge everyone to let their Congressman know the HIT should be suspended or repealed.

At the state level, the Chamber Board upon the unanimous recommenda-

tion of its Legislative Action Committee has endorsed a package of five bills collectively called the Pennsylvania Open Workforce Initiative. This legislation would protect individual workers' rights by ending the practice of compulsory unionism.

House Bill 50 – the Freedom of Employment Act, would make all employment no longer conditional upon union membership or paying dues to a union.

House Bill 1050 - the Freedom of Employment Amendment, would constitutionally make all Pennsylvania employment no longer conditional upon union membership or paying dues to a union.

House Bill 51 would prohibit labor unions from collecting compulsory union dues from non-union public school employees.

House Bill 52 would prohibit labor organizations from collecting compulsory union dues from non-union state employees.

House Bill 53 would prohibit labor organizations from collecting compulsory union dues from non-union local government employees.

House Bill 54 would prohibit private-sector employment from being conditional upon membership or non-membership in a labor organization. Compulsory dues would be prohibited for non-union members.

House Bill 55 would give public employees the freedom to opt out of their union membership at any time during their contract.

Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce

## Morning Member Connection

Thursday May 18, 2017—7:30AM - 9:00AM

Featured Speaker: Steve Johnson, President/CEO UPMC Susquehanna

Topic: UPMC Susquehanna Expanded Healthcare Services, Advanced Quality Care and New Insurance Product in the Region

Williamsport Country Club—800 Country Club Drive, Williamsport



Susquehanna Health announced in October 2016 that it was officially becoming a part of UPMC. UPMC committed to advance Susquehanna's goals to expand healthcare services, maintain its patient-focused mission, invest in information technology, and introduce more choice for health insurance for the region. UPMC also committed at the time to making a \$500 million investment in the newly named UPMC Susquehanna as an early demonstration of its commitment to expand services for the people of northcentral Pennsylvania.

**UPMC Susquehanna**

Since the announcement, the first area of focus for UPMC Susquehanna was to expand emergency, heart and vascular, and cancer services. Other future strategic priorities include establishing a neurosciences center of excellence, improving access to care with an urgent care network, and replacing an inpatient rehabilitation facility built in the 1960s. With the addition of these and other specialty services, UPMC Susquehanna will be adding jobs to the region as the services grow.

Another key area of focus directly impacting the business community is the introduction of UPMC Health Plan to the market. Affordable group plan options for all sizes of business will be made available from UPMC Health Plan. Beginning with small employer group plans in January 2018 and for all businesses later in 2018, UPMC Health Plan will be a competitive health insurance option for employers to consider for their employees. Healthy employees make healthy businesses. They're also more productive, happier, and have fewer sick days. And no one engages your employees to live the healthiest lives they can like UPMC Health Plan.

Hear more about challenges facing healthcare providers along with what is coming in the near future for the greater Lycoming County region associated through the UPMC Susquehanna merger.

\$15 Member Registration: Call 570-326-1971/go to [www.williamsport.org](http://www.williamsport.org)

**Program Sponsors**



## Mark Your Calendar

The Leadership Lycoming Operating Committee invites you to attend a graduation honoring the

**Leadership Lycoming Class of 2017**  
Friday, June 23, 2017  
Williamsport Country Club  
800 Country Club Drive, Williamsport

Registration -11:30 am  
Luncheon - Noon - 1:30pm

Reservations are required by June 20, 2017  
570-326-1971 or [www.williamsport.org](http://www.williamsport.org)

\$25 per person

Current law only allows employees to terminate their union membership 15 days prior to the expiration of the contract.

Locally, State Representative Garth Everett is the key sponsor of HB 1050 and the Chamber agrees with his statement that "This package of bills addressing compulsory payment of union dues are not anti-union – they are pro-worker and pro-jobs."

The Chamber urges passage of this package of right to work legislation that would grant workers the right to choose whether or not they wish to join or not join or financially support a union.

# Welcome New Chamber Members!

**Antiques & Moore/Starving  
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Pamela Kock  
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John Garncarz  
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Williamsport, PA 17701  
570-279-4074  
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**Penn Strategies**  
Jason Fitzgerald  
601 Liberty Street  
Watsonstown, PA 17777  
570-447-0271  
www.pennstrategiespa.com  
*Business Services/Consulting*

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www.upmchealthplan.com  
*Health Care Plans*

Interested in joining the Chamber?  
Call Carroll Pawlikowski at  
570- 326-1971  
or apply online at:  
www.williamsport.org

## Chamber Members, Join Us... Williamsport Crosscutters PM Exchange

Thursday, May 11, 2017  
5:00-7:00pm

1700 West Fourth Street, Williamsport

Enjoy food and drink while being one of the first to sample the view and comfort of BB&T Ballpark's new Premium Deck! Learn more about the Williamsport Crosscutters, an affiliate of the Philadelphia Phillies and Historic Bowman Field, the 2nd oldest Minor League stadium operating in the United States. Take a historic stadium tour, learn more about hospitality options at Cutters games and don't forget to bring your business card for great prize drawings. GO CUTTERS!



## The Meadows, a Park Home Personal Care Community PM Exchange

Tuesday, May 16, 2017  
5:00-7:00pm

2160 Warrensville Road, Montoursville

Experience a great way of life and breathtaking views that our residents enjoy each day. Stroll along our walking path or enjoy one of our cozy gathering spaces.



## Herman & Luther's PM Exchange

Thursday, May 25, 2017  
5:00-7:00pm

787 State Route 87, Montoursville

Start off your Memorial Day holiday with us at Herman & Luther's. Enjoy a spring evening at the Barn, sampling some of our mouth-watering cuisine. Enjoy a beverage as you watch the flames soar in our huge iron fire pit. We're always up to something exciting! Come see what's new!



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For a complete list of upcoming Chamber events, visit [www.williamsport.org](http://www.williamsport.org).

# April Ribbon Cuttings/Open Houses/PM Exchanges

## First Community Foundation Partnership of PA Hosts PM Exchange



*Congratulations to the First Community Foundation Partnership of PA for hosting a PM Exchange. Attendees were able to visit the recent renovations on all three floors. Guests also cheered on several executive directors of non-profits during the NonProfit Ninja Warriors Game. Presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to Jennifer Wilson is Barb Wascher, Membership Development & Retention Committee. Thank you for a wonderful evening!*

## Central Pennsylvania Food Bank Hosts PM Exchange



*Thank you to the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank for hosting a PM Exchange. Attendees were given a tour of the newly transformed food hub and learned more about how they help to fight hunger. Presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to Jamie Caputo, the staff and board members is Eric Winters, Membership Development & Retention Committee. Thank you for a wonderful and educational evening!*

## Weichert Realtors-Premier Hosts PM Exchange



*Congratulations to Weichert Realtors - Premier for hosting a PM Exchange. Attendees were able to visit the office and talk to realtors. Presenting a Certificate of Appreciation is Victor Borgess (c), Membership Development & Retention Committee to (l to r) Jessica Washington, Prime Lending; Marcy Benson & Chris Pardee, Weichert Premier; Kellen Moore, State Farm Insurance, and Dan Fuller, Artisan Kitchen and Bath Design. Thank you for a wonderful evening!*

### Chamber Members...

Do you have a new business, location or special occasion for your company?

Are you interested in a ribbon cutting or open house?

Contact Carroll Pawlikowski for more information at 570-326-1971.

# LEGACY MEMBER

## Students achieve in Jersey Shore district

By **MIKE REUTHER**  
mreuther@sungazette.com

**J**ersey Shore Area School District is producing high achieving students who stretch their talents in academics and extra-curricular activities.

District Superintendent Jill Wenrich said it's an exciting time in Lycoming County's second largest school district which has an enrollment of more than 2,400 students.

While the students certainly deserve praise for their achievements, credit must also go out to the school board, teachers and administration, and the community — all working together to support their efforts.

"I am feeling very confident in the abilities of everyone in the district," she said.

Wenrich was eager to list some of the sterling student accomplishments of this year.

Sixty-nine students qualified for the Future Business Leaders of America State Conference, including 22 who received awards. Eleven students went on to national competition.

"That is unprecedented for this district," Wenrich said.

She attributed the success to the school's past achievements in the organization and some of the teachers involved with the group — Dolly Oden, Rock Griswold, Sarah Smith, Janet Wasson, and Jeff Miller.

Matt Ferguson, a freshman, is vice president of the state FBLA

Another 32 students qualified for the Technology Student Association State Leadership Conference.

Two Vex Robotics teams from the district qualified for the Western Pennsylvania State Championship. One of the teams placed first in the state and moves on to the world championship.

"What is really wonderful about all these things is they correlate with academic programs," Wenrich said.

The marching band was the 1-A champion of Region 4. She noted that was a particularly noteworthy achievement for the band which has had problems in the past with attracting students to the activity.

In athletics, various teams and individuals shined.

The varsity football team captured a District 4 title, while the girls basketball team qualified for



MIKE REUTHER/  
Sun-Gazette

**Jersey Area School District Superintendent Jill Wenrich pauses from work at her office. Wenrich leads a district of more than 2,400 students, many of whom are doing well in the classroom and in extra-curricular activities.**

states.

The boys soccer team also qualified for state competition.

The swim team had 14 individuals compete in districts and seven in states.

The cross country team had three district qualifiers and two state qualifiers.

Five Jersey Shore wrestlers qualified for districts and two for states.

The girls tennis teams produced four district qualifiers.

In academics, there were numerous achievements.

Jersey Shore students scored high overall on College Board Advanced Placement tests, including Calculus, European History, Spanish Language and Culture and U.S. History. Wenrich noted that the Jersey Shore AP score of 93 percent in English Literature and Composition was particularly commendable.

In addition, 84 percent of students met or exceeded Advanced or Competent benchmarks with the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute. Another 65 percent of students received the Pennsylvania Skills Certificate Award for scoring on both the written theory component and the perform-

ance component.

Elementary school students were not without distinction.

Jersey Shore Elementary School was named a Title 1 Distinguished School of High Progress while Avis Elementary School was a Title 1 Distinguished School of High Achievement.

Wenrich is excited about the Rosie Ready Partnership program, which helps pre-kindergarten children in the district prepare for school. The program includes a family engagement app that parents can use with their children.

In November, Pennsylvania Education Secretary Pedro Rivera toured the district.

"He got to go into the classrooms," she said. "We were really thrilled that he came."

Wenrich proudly noted that Gov. Tom Wolf referenced Jersey Shore's Learning Pathways Program in his state budget address.

The Jersey Shore Education Foundation is helping the district move forward with financial resources to support education.

"I would like to see an alumni association in the district," she said. "A lot of great things have happened in this district."

## Ribbon Cutting & Open House

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# April Ribbon Cutting/Open House

## FUN Academy Child Care cuts the ribbon on new facility



*Congratulations to the Families United Network for cutting the ribbon and opening their doors to their new FUN Academy Child Care Center in Muncy. Cutting the ribbon on their new, child care center are day care enrollees Alyssa Kepner and Samuel Fuller accompanied by (l-r) Jason Dohl, Dohl Construction; Vince Matteo, Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce, Vickie Johnson, Thomas Neuhard, and James Ross, Families United Network.*

## Member Renewals

Received between March 28th and April 21st

Thank you to our renewing members. We do appreciate your membership and involvement in the Chamber!

### Members 20-35 Years

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Larson Design Group  
New Way Drilling, Inc.  
Palcon, LLC  
Purity Candy Company

### Members 10-20 Years

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Paris Companies  
Susquehanna Computer Innovations, Inc.

### Members Under 10 Years

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Big Bob's Flooring Outlet of Central PA  
Blooming Grove Historical Society  
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NorthCentralPA.com  
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Smith's Jewelers/PA Gem Lab  
Vector Security, Inc.  
West Branch School  
Wyrope Williamsport Federal Credit Union



# FEATURE MEMBER

## It's about meat at Economy Locker

By **MIKE REUTHER**  
mreuther@sungazette.com

The meat in the homes of many Lycoming County residents can be traced to a small business operation tucked away behind the village of Pennsdale.

Some 30 people employed at the Economy Storage Locker, 324 Worthington Lane, help turn out the fresh pork and sausage, bologna, hot dogs, bacon, snack sticks, and scrapple at the 15,000-square-foot facility.

"We manufacture under the County Store brand," said Chet Ruth, co-owner of the business with Jeff Scott.

Ruth said it's a busy operation that includes preparing, packing and distributing the products to market.

The nearby Country Store is just one of many Economy Storage customers, he noted.

Thompson's Packing Co., Jersey Shore is yet another customer.

"They distribute a lot of products for us," he said.

Ruth said that not too many small, independently-run businesses of his type can be found these days.

"People don't know this place exists," he said.

Some of the more popular products from the Economy Locker include the snack sticks and Country Store bologna.

In fact, more pounds of the snack sticks are turned out than anything else.

Ruth estimated the weekly output of all meat products amounts to about 25,000 to 30,000 pounds.

In one room, he points to rows of bins filled with ground-up meat.

"Each one of these is 300 pounds," he said.

Nearby, huge slabs of bacon hang from racks.

The facility includes a smokehouse and a packaging area, where the products are wrapped and



MIKE REUTHER/Sun-Gazette

**Chet Ruth, co-owner of Economy Storage Locker, Pennsdale, is shown with a snack stick. The snack sticks are among the most popular meat products put out by the company.**

labeled prior to distribution.

"We distribute in our own trucks," he said. "Our drivers go within a 100-mile radius."

Various distributors transport products out of state. Ruth said the packaging room is probably the

(See IT'S,  
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**G:M**

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# FEATURE MEMBER

## It's about meat at Economy Locker

(From Page 8)  
busiest aspect of the  
entire operation.

No butchering is done  
at the Economy Storage

Locker.

He found it difficult  
to pinpoint any aspect of  
the business that poses  
the most challenges.

Many of his employ-  
ees have been with  
Economy Storage  
Locker for a long time.  
Ruth noted that at



Racks of bologna await packaging at the Economy Storage Locker.

MIKE REUTHER/Sun-Gazette



MIKE REUTHER/Sun-Gazette

Meat products are packaged and ready for distribution from the Economy Storage Locker.

least one person from  
U.S. Department of  
Agriculture is on site  
every day monitoring the  
operations.

The building itself  
was erected in 1971 and  
over the years has slowly  
undergone renovations  
and additions.

Keeping all the equip-  
ment in good repair  
needed to run the opera-  
tion is part of the busi-  
ness.

"We are always  
updating our refrigera-  
tion," he said.

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# Leadership Lycoming Learns About History and the Arts

The Leadership Lycoming Class of 2017 had a lot to do and see this day. The class met Jessica Williamson at the Community Theatre League. Jessica showed them the CAST area, the sound booth, the stage area, the green room and all the behind the scenes which tempted a few class members to dress up and have a little fun. Next, the class traveled to the Muncy Historical Society where Bill Poulton showed a video of many of the projects they have done over the years and gave the class a tour of the museum. Then on to the World of Little League where the class toured the museum and the stadium and the grounds. After lunch, the class got a behind-the-scenes look at the Community Arts Center and learned about Millionaires' Row with tour guide Susan Kelly. After touring the Rowley House and the Thomas T. Taber Museum, the class boarded the Trolley one last time and headed home.

Thank you to our sponsors, the Leadership Lycoming Class of 2015, M&T Bank, The Muncy Bank & Trust Company, TownePlace Suites, and Chris Wallace, Realtor, RE/MAX West Branch.

Thank you Jim Hicklin, Lycoming Clinton Joinder Board and Eric Gaetano, The Hartman Group as class reporters.

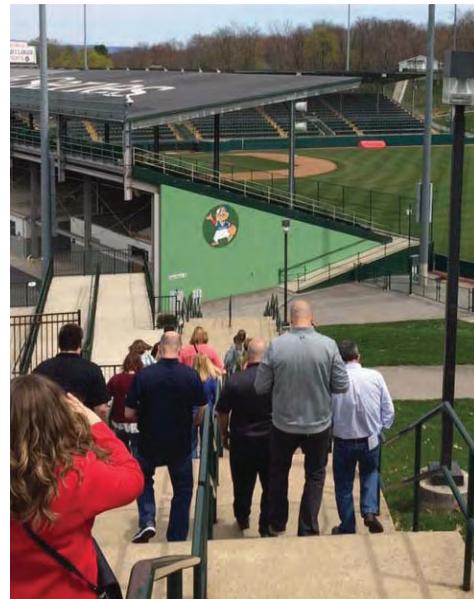
***Thank you to our program day sponsors***  
*Leadership Lycoming Class of 2015, M&T Bank, The Muncy Bank & Trust Company, TownePlace Suites, and Chris Wallace, Realtor, RE/MAX West Branch*



*I think we have some future actors from this class! Katie Coffey, Stephanie Tempesco, Dana Naughton and Justin Wenner are having fun at the Community Theatre League!*



Follow Leadership Lycoming on Facebook!

*The Leadership Lycoming class toured the Little League Complex, which included a tour of the Little League Museum as well as touring Lamade and Volunteer Stadiums.*



*The class listens intently as Bill Poulton talks about the History of Muncy and the many projects they have done over the years to save the historical markers of Muncy.*

# Leadership holds events for their community projects

## The Learning Center

On March 30th the Leadership community project team for The Learning Center at the James V. Brown Library, which consists of Dana Naughton, Wascher Chiropractic Center; Thomas Robins, McNerney, Page, Vanderlin & Hall; Justin Wenner, Larson Design Group and Jim Hicklin, Lycoming/Clinton Joinder Board, met at Franco's to help out serving breakfast from 7:30 until 9:00am. The menu included two types of breakfast sandwiches. Jim did dishes, Dana, Justin and Thomas served food and coffee to the tables. Proceeds were split 50/50 with The Learning Center. The team earned about \$200.00 for The Learning Center. They will put the breakfast on again in June and October. Watch for announcements. The team also secured an electronic bulletin board from Lamar Advertising for four weeks to advertise The Learning Center's need

for volunteers and money. They are also putting the finishing touches on a radio and newspaper campaign for volunteers, and working on a grant through the Rotary.

For more information on The Learning Center, contact Linda Herr, 570-326-9536.

## Hope Enterprises

The Leadership Lycoming members, Katie Coffey, North Central Sight Services; Jaime Kuntz, Baker Tilly; Dan Warner, Pennsylvania College of Technology; Justin Ross, Williamsport Area School District; Austin White, McCormick Law Firm; Eric Gaetano, The Hartman Group; Regan Yoder, Keystone Advertising and Jared

Kowalchick, Lonza, worked with Hope Enterprises to put on the *Dance the Night Away with Hope* event on the evening of April 21st at the Genetti Hotel. Dancing teams of local leaders and Hope individuals learned the Fox Trot, the Waltz and the Swing and competed in front of a crowd of over 200. After their dance, the 4 judges critiqued them and gave them each a score. Kristina Papa, WNEP-TV and Marc Schefsky, Genetti Hotel, were hosts and interviewed each couple. Every couple had a great time dancing and all the attendees enjoyed the evening. Congratulations to all the couples. They each walked away a winner and were presented with a dancing award. Thank you to all the

sponsors (see ad) and everyone who made his evening a success. The Leadership project team worked hard to help Hope Enterprises net over \$5,000 and still counting! For more information, contact Tanya Weber, 570-322-5973.

## Roads to Freedom

The Leadership team of Erin Blackwell, Hope Enterprises; Michele Boyles, Computer Science Resources; Tara Day-Ulrich, YWCA; Paula Yeckley, Community Services Group and Keith Boyer, UPMC Susquehanna all partici-

pated in their project event, wheelchair basketball, on March 25th at the Lycoming College gym. There were 10 teams that participated this year, one of them being the Leadership Lycoming team members. New this year, the event added craft vendors. It was also noted that the event's income was almost doubled from last year. And speaking of doubling, the event doubled the total raised! For more information, contact Misty Dion, 570-327-9070.



Dance The Night Away With Hope



Breakfast at Franco's with The Learning Center



Roads to Freedom Wheelchair Basketball

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# Berger's Greenhouse: 21 years of caring

By CARA MORNINGSTAR  
cmorningstar@sungazette.com

**ELIMSPORT** — Berger's Greenhouse, 1221 Petersburg Road, has been serving the area with beautiful, unique plants and flowers every season.

From April to July, they are open seven days a week. Monday through Friday, they are open 3:30-8 p.m.; Sundays, noon-4 p.m.; and Saturdays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

"We do all the vegetable things that you need for your gardens ... and all the herbs," said Joan Berger, owner.

She and her husband, Ben Berger, have run the business together for 21 years.

"We just decided in 1996 that we were going to do this," she said. "We're juggling everything all the time, so it keeps us really busy."

Joan Berger said she grows most of the items by seed herself.

She takes care of most of the plant choices while her husband helps maintain the greenhouse.

"I take care of the buildings, electrical, plumbing, things like that," Ben Berger said.

That way, the two split the tasks together.

"I mostly plant everything myself," Joan Berger said.

Her favorite thing to grow are coleus plants.

"I've gotten known for coleuses," she said. "We do a wide variety of colors of coleus, and I do a lot of those from seed if I can. I do a lot of the down under pots with them."

A "down under" pot is a hanging pot in which the plant grows out from the bottom rather than the top as might be typical. She said she grows them by letting the plant take right side up, and then when they are settled, she lets the plant hang upside down to continue growing out from the bottom.

"People are always looking for something a little different," Joan Berger said. "I do try to do different planters that other people aren't doing. You probably won't see these at Wal-Mart."

She said it was important to offer items that are unique but also affordable.

With options of annuals, perennials, hanging baskets, glass globe planters and even down under pots, they have regular favorites as well as new items every year. This year, a whole section of hydroponic plants was added.

They have the option of doing over 2,500 lettuce plants hydroponically and may expand to sell to local restaurants.



Joan Berger, left, and Ben Berger, right, sort through plants at Berger's Greenhouse, 1221 Petersburg Road, Elimspport.

CARA MORNINGSTAR/Sun-Gazette

"We do try to add something new every year, whether it be a different colored petunia or any kind of variety of flower that the regular greenhouses aren't carrying," she said. "I can be different because of growing by seed. A lot of these growers aren't

messing with that."

They can also be found at the Williamsport Outdoor Growers Market on Saturdays.

Gift certificates are available to use for the greenhouse.

For more information on Berger's Greenhouse, call 570-547-6102.

The Williamsport Sun-Gazette is printed on newsprint which contains recycled material



# NEW MEMBER

## Jewel's Signature Cookin' nears end of first year

By CARA MORNINGSTAR  
cmorningstar@sungazette.com

Jewel's Signature Cookin', 247 Campbell St., will celebrate its first full year in business on July 9.

The restaurant is open from noon-8 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays. Reservations are accepted, walk ins are welcome and the restaurant is BYOB.

Jewel Johnson, owner, said that cooking runs in her family.

"All my life, I've enjoyed cooking. I love to cook with a passion. My father had a business, my mother had a business, my uncle had a business, so I come from a business oriented family," she said. "My mother had a hoagie and grocery shop ... My father had a restaurant."

She had grown up cooking for her brothers and sisters.

"It's just in my blood," she said.

Her mother is from down south and inspires some of her dishes.

She's been living in Williamsport for almost a decade, but her restaurant offers an escape to Southern charms with soul food and comfort food choices.

"It's comfort food with an attitude," she said. "There's magic in my cornbread ... There's just something about that cornbread; it's magic."



CARA MORNINGSTAR/Sun-Gazette

The windows at Jewel's Signature Cookin', 247 Campbell St., let in a lot of light to allow for a nice atmosphere at the restaurant in Williamsport.

She said that the highest quality products are important to use in cooking.

"I get the best product for everything that I use," she said. "Nothing less than the best."

From organic salad options, to home cooked catfish, to magical cornbread, to fried chicken, to gluten free options, she aims to use the best ingredients available. She makes sure presentation is excellent as well.

"Presentation is vital. What do you taste with first? You taste with your eyes," she said.

She wants to make

sure that people leave Jewel's Signature Cookin' feeling like they had the greatest experience.

"Food is my favorite thing to make, period. I specialize in everything," she said. "I take what I do very seriously. I want people to have the best dining experience here."

She said her customers are like friends and family, and this community is her home.

"I try to give back to the community. Everybody don't have a lot of money all the time, and those are the

people I'm trying to reach, too," she said. "My customers mean so much to me because without my customers, I wouldn't have a business."

While cooking is her first passion, she just might be even more passionate about her customers.

"I'm passionate about anyone who comes to Jewel's Signature Cookin'," she said. "I want my customers to have the best. I want them to have that 'wow' factor."

She said that coming to her restaurant is an

entire atmosphere and experience best felt in person.

"It makes me so happy when people enjoy their food," she said. "It's the kind of place where if I get you here one time, you're coming back."

Running a restaurant has been her dream, and she said God has blessed her to let her live it every day. She originally started by running catering jobs here and there, but she has been able to

expand into a restaurant. She still has catering options available for events, and she said she is looking forward to expanding the business by hiring more staff.

"I'm just so happy God answered prayers. I've been praying for my own business, and my dream has come true," she said.

For more information on Jewel's Signature Cookin' or to make a reservation, call 570-220-8003.



CARA MORNINGSTAR/Sun-Gazette

Jewel Johnson, the owner of Jewel's Signature Cookin', 247 Campbell St., displays her Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce membership at the restaurant in Williamsport.

# Free Clinic on e-Commerce at May 4 Luncheon

In a free business clinic on May 4 titled "Turn Your Website into a Sales Machine," experts in burgeoning e-Commerce will show area merchants how to sell 24 hours a day in an Internet store.

The free instructional clinic will be held from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Cloud 9 Airport Restaurant, 700 Airport Road in Montoursville.

The event is being produced by Art Lieberman of MCPS of Central PA under the auspices of both the Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Susquehanna Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Registration by phone is (570) 966-0080, extension 4; by email, [mcpsofcentralpa@yahoo.com](mailto:mcpsofcentralpa@yahoo.com); or on the website [www.pabusinessstraining.com](http://www.pabusinessstraining.com).

Lieberman, a widely experienced businessman who is a new member of the Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce, produced a previous free program on business websites and e-Commerce in on January. He has told businesses, "You can really profit by being with us for these three hours. We'll answer these questions about e-Commerce websites: Why should I do it? How do I do it? What will it cost to do it? And what can I expect from it? You'll come out knowing how to improve your website situation right away!"

As more merchants are becoming aware, businesses whose websites actually let customers buy online are outperforming traditional brick-and-mortar retail stores in sales volumes. Over the past Christmas holiday season, for instance,

Walmart found that its internet sales outpaced sales in its stores by 53 percent to 47 percent. Rural businesses also are finding they can perform well if they properly use the new opportunities available to them by creating e-Commerce web stores.

Lieberman points out that creating an e-Commerce website is like creating an entirely new store that can be open 24/7/365 days a year and reach far beyond any single location. These new business websites sell across the entire United States, or, for that matter, to the entire world. Merchants need to recognize that a new Internet store requires a webmaster at the home of the business to control inventory, to run sales, and to notify web viewers when products are temporarily out of stock or discontinued. They probably will require financing to expand beyond their traditional brick-and-mortar store.

To show business owners and managers how to design 24-hour e-Commerce websites, the program will present experts experienced in the field. John Yogodzinski of The Graphic Hive in Williamsport also owns Converge Gallery and has created artistic and functional websites for many local businesses. He is a graduate of the Pennsylvania College of Technology and serves on the Lycoming Arts Council.

Also demonstrating at the program will be Shawn Felty, President and Creative Director of Sire Advertising, in Selinsgrove. Shawn's agency

designs business websites and is expert in promotion and advertising.

To show participants where they can find the resources to expand their businesses into e-Commerce, the Chamber partners with the Industrial Properties Corporation and the City of Williamsport to help small businesses with their economic development. The Revolving Loan Program is meant to provide businesses with the capital they need to increase their economic prosperity. Nancy J. Eischeid, Vice President/CFO, Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce, will describe and explain that opportunity to merchants at the program.

The program also will show attendees how their e-Commerce stores can accept credit card payments. Lieberman's business, MCPS of Central PA, has been working with local merchants and with RV campgrounds to handle web-based transactions for nearly 17 years. He is nationally recognized as a credit card expert and has spoken to many Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs and other business organizations to explain the reasons for the changeover to the new chip credit cards.

"With this free program," he says, "people here in Williamsport will get a start on e-Commerce."

**Break the Connection.**



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## Revolving Loan Fund

The Industrial Properties Corporation, Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce and the City of Williamsport are committed to assisting small businesses with their economic development projects. From building renovations, expansion/working capital to equipment purchases, the Revolving Loan Program can provide the finances you need to increase business and ensure economic prosperity.

### APPLICATION CRITERIA

The Revolving Loan Fund is available to:

- Individuals, corporations, limited liability companies and non-profit organizations
- Gross sales less than \$1,000,000 annually or employ less than 50 individuals
- Place of business or significant amount of business in Lycoming County
- Start up enterprises, expansion of existing business or relocation of business to Lycoming County

For more information please contact:

Nancy J. Eischeid, CPA, Vice President & Chief Financial Officer

Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce

Phone: (570) 320-4206

Email: [neischeid@williamsport.org](mailto:neischeid@williamsport.org)

# Tour Planners tour Lycoming County

The Lycoming County Visitors Bureau recently hosted motorcoach tour planners from Ontario, Ohio and Pennsylvania on a tour of Lycoming County. The "fam tour" (short for familiarization tour) is designed to educate the tour planners on attractions, dining and lodging options

available for groups traveling to Williamsport and Lycoming County.

The tour planners arrived Sunday evening for a welcome reception at the Lycoming County Visitors Information Center. Monday, April 24th started the first of two full days of tours. The day began with

a guided tour of the Historic District including a Millionaires' Row tour aboard the Trolley with visits to the Thomas T. Taber Museum and the Peter Herdic Transportation Museum. After a busy morning in the Historic District, the group traveled to the World of Little League for lunch,

a tour of the museum and Little League complex. The afternoon included tours of the Rowley House Museum, Susquehanna State Park, downtown Williamsport and the Hiawatha. The group spent the evening as artists at Williamsport Wine & Design painting a Williamsport themed piece of art.

On Tuesday, April 25th, the group started with a visit to the Muncy Historical Society where they learned about the history of Muncy, the Eight Square School and the Muncy Heritage Park. Afterwards, the tour traveled to BB&T Ballpark at Historic Bowman Field for a behind-the-scenes look at all of the renovations taking place. A meeting with snakes, alligators and parakeets was next for the group with a visit to Clyde Peeling's Reptiland. After another busy day of seeing the sights in Lycoming County, the group enjoyed a relaxing stop at Bastress Mountain Winery.

The Lycoming County Visitors Bureau would like to thank the following for

participating in another successful tour of Lycoming County: Ms. Katie Tinney (River Valley Transit); Mr. Oscar Knade (Preservation Williamsport); Mr. Gary Parks (Thomas T. Taber Museum); Mr. Lance Van Auken, Ms. Jan Ogurcak, Mr. Adam Thompson (World of Little League); Mr. Bill Poulton (Muncy Historical Society); Mr. Gabe Sinicropi, (Williamsport Crosscutters); Mr. Clyde Peeling and Ms. Kalin Driscoll (Reptiland); Mr. Toby Zimmerman (Bastress Mountain Winery); Ms. Rene McKibben (Residence Inn); Ms. Jeanette Kirkpatrick (Hampton Inn & Suites); Ms. Shelby Engel (Hampton Inn); Ms. Leah Shaheen, Mr. Marc Schefsky (Genetti Hotel); Ms. Jere Croll (Holiday Inn & Holiday Inn Express); Ms. Susan Kelly (Tour Guide); and Ms. Jodi Rakoski (Williamsport Wine & Design). Transportation for the two-day tour was provided by River Valley Transit aboard the Carl Stotz Trolley.

## May Chamber Business Spotlight



There are 900 member businesses in the Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce. In May, June & July we are featuring members in the **Healthcare sector**. We encourage you to choose these Chamber members in our community when seeking healthcare services.

Look for additional members in Healthcare in June and July.

### Chiropractic Care

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[www.twinhillshealth.com](http://www.twinhillshealth.com)

**Wascher's Chiropractic Center \*\***  
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<http://wascherchiropracticcenter.com>

### Dental Care

**Aspen Dental \*\***  
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[www.aspendental.com](http://www.aspendental.com)

**David DiGiallorenzo, DMD \*\***  
(570) 322-4741  
[www.perioimplants.us](http://www.perioimplants.us)

**Dental Care Associates \*\***  
(570) 323-4819  
[www.dcadental.com](http://www.dcadental.com)

**Richard A. Beatty, DMD**  
(570) 398-4266  
[www.drbeattydmd.com](http://www.drbeattydmd.com)

**Robert H. Fredrickson, DDS, MAGD**  
(570) 326-6170

**Susquehanna Oral & Facial Surgery & Dental Implant Center \*\***  
(570) 323-1900  
[www.williamsportoms.com](http://www.williamsportoms.com)

**River Valley Health & Dental Center \*\***  
(570) 567-5400  
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### Counseling

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**White Deer Run - Williamsport \*\***  
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### Eye Care

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\*\* Find us on 

Shopping local isn't just about convenience. Much of the money you spend at a local business will remain in the community, ensuring the vibrancy and sustainability of our quality of life.



**The Maynard Street grade crossing of the Lycoming Valley Railroad in Williamsport will be closed for reconstruction from June 8-13 with a signed detour.**

# 13th Annual *Grand Slam* PARADE Wednesday August 16

Planning to be in this year's Grand Slam Parade? If so, the parade application deadline of **June 1** is rapidly approaching.

Download the application at [www.grandslamparade.com](http://www.grandslamparade.com)

Businesses looking to be affiliated with the parade can download sponsorship and advertising information at the website. This year's parade will be broadcast live on **WBRE TV-28**. Get your name out to the local and regional community across the television airwaves.

Thank you to the below that have already committed to the 2017 parade.



The Grand Slam Parade is produced by the Lycoming County Visitors Bureau, a program of the Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce.

