

Labor Day Carries Great Significance to a Chamber!

Of all the national holidays observed in our country, none is more significant to a chamber of commerce than Labor Day. Our business community has been blessed with so many outstanding businesses that can attribute much of their success to dedicated, hard-working employees. We salute those employees and hope that we never take their efforts for granted. The Blair County Chamber Office will be closed on Monday to allow our outstanding employees a day of rest. The Office will re-open Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.



Double Your Pleasure: "Business Insight" Launches Monday

If you enjoy reading NETWORKS Digital News each Monday, you'll be interested to know that you're only getting half of what the Chamber is putting-out in terms of great business information. Beginning Labor Day and continuing each Monday, the Chamber will be publishing a special feature called "Business Insight." This full page of business information will be similar to the Blair Business Mirror which the Chamber and the Altoona Mirror did in partnership for more than two decades. But instead of a monthly tabloid publication, Business Insight will be weekly. Will we still continue the email newsletter? Of course. That publication is more directed to Chamber members. Business Insight will be more commu-

Business Insight

nity focused and will hopefully appeal to non-members who will see the many advantages of Chamber membership. One additional opportunity for Chamber members to gain greater exposure and brand recognition is the fact that each issue of Business Insight will also have a sponsorship ad at the bottom of the page. That ad is inexpensive and the sponsorship helps the Chamber to offset the cost of publication. Call the Chamber if you're interested in sponsoring!

Sleep-In! Breakfast Club Starts at Noon on Wednesday

If you're totally down with attending events that make history, then this Wednesday's "Breakfast Club" is the event for you. For the first time in the Chamber's 121-year existence, Breakfast Club will feature a noontime start. Why would we do such a thing? So that we are able to have the new General Manager of the Pittsburgh Pirates as our keynote speaker. Ben Cherington, who was most recently the Executive Vice-President of the Boston Red Sox, is now in the position of overseeing the growth of the Bucs. He'll be making his first trip to Altoona and is looking forward to meeting our local community and gaining insight from our many Pirates fans. The cost to attend this unusual Breakfast Club, which will feature grilled chicken salads instead of bacon and eggs, is \$20 for all attendees. Social distancing will be in effect. To register, call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 or [register online](#). Sponsor of the September Breakfast Club is Center City Church.

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"A Day at the Park" the Perfect Way to End a Stressful Week

If Covid-19 has got you down and you're looking for a sure-fire way to drop your stress level, look no further than "A Day at the Park." This Friday, September 11th, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., the Chamber and Lakemont Park will partner on an outdoor trade show and community stress-free event, guaranteed to start everyone's weekend on a high note. There will be food trucks, local vendors and park rides. For a small fee, businesses can still reserve vendor space. It's also an opportunity for people to stop-by on their way



home from work, have dinner, and just distance themselves from pandemics and politics. No cost to attend. For more information, call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 or visit the [Chamber Website](#).

Young Professionals Will Ask "Why Blair County?" This Thursday

Why should young professionals in Blair County commit to living and working in the county for the long haul? That will be the basis of a panel discussion hosted by the Young Professionals of Blair County this Thursday, September 10th beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Blair County Convention Center. The panel discussion is expected to last 45-60 minutes and will be followed by a networking reception featuring light hors d'oeuvres. The panel consists of Ann

Benzel of Benzel's Bretzel Bakery, Andrea Cohen of Blair Companies, Jim Kilmartin of Pinnacle Cleaning and Center City Church, and Matt Stuckey of Stuckey Automotive. Moderating the panel discussion will be Steve McKnight, President/CEO of Altoona-Blair County Development Corporation. The cost to attend is \$15/person. To make reservations call the Chamber at 943-8151 or [register online](#). Corporate sponsor of the event is CNB Bank.

Ribbon Cutting



Stuckey Automotive Collision Center

The Chamber held a ribbon-cutting ceremony in celebration of the new Stuckey Automotive Collision Center located at 899 Plank Road, Duncansville. For more information go to [www.stuckeyautomotive.com](#). Pictured at the ribbon, from left: Sherri Stayer, Chamber Ambassador; Alex Seltzer, Chamber Board of Directors; Richard Lasek, ABCD Corporation; Tiffany Stuckey; Matt Stuckey, President, Stuckey Automotive; Mike Schnarrs, Collision Center Manager; State Representative Lou Schmitt; Bob Albarano, Albarano Construction; Tim Evans, Colours; Sean Burke, McQuaide Blasko Attorneys; Senator Judy Ward; Bruce Erb, Blair County Commissioner; Amy Mearkle, Chamber Board of Directors; Nancy McClelland, Chamber Ambassador.

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Public Policy Committee Hears Covid Liability Speaker

The U. S. Chamber of Commerce Institute for Legal Reform wrote draft legislation designed to shield companies from liability related to the pandemic. One of the authors of that legislation spoke by conference call to the Blair County Chamber's Public Policy Committee last Thursday. Matthew Webb, Senior Vice-President for Legal Reform Policy, explained to the committee how the U.S. Chamber is approaching the liability issue and how local chambers can assist in making sure that their business members avoid acting recklessly where compliance is concerned. For more information on the Public Policy Committee, contact Joe Hurd at (814) 943-8151 or email him.



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The Blair County Chamber of Commerce



We are in this together.

**We are proud to serve our neighbors in Blair County -
“Together we’ll find a way.” It’s more than just a slogan...
it’s a heartfelt expression of the
promise we make to all we serve.**



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WE-LEaD to Hold Empowerment Conference for Women

The Blair County Chamber's WE-LEaD program is holding a half-day Empowerment Conference for Women that will deal with two separate topics featuring one dynamic presenter. The event will take place on September 15th from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. at The Casino at Lakemont Park. Dr. Sherry Cain, Ph.D. will present Session One, entitled "From Burnt Out to On Fire" which will help women to take charge and make the changes that can immediately have positive effects. Dr. Cain will then present, "Don't Feed the Fears" which focuses attention on the essential elements of living a fearless life. The overall event sponsor for the confer-



ence is Benzel's Bretzel Bakery. Session sponsors are Seltzer Financial Strategies and Blair Companies. Cost to attend the conference is \$55 for Chamber members and \$65 for non-members. A breakfast buffet is included. To register, [click here](#).

Non-Profit Best Practices Forum Set for September 18th

Among the groups hit hardest by Covid-19 is Blair County's non-profit community. Many non-profits were unable to continue operating and the resources to fund them practically dried-up. To discuss ways that these essential businesses can get back on their feet, the Chamber's Committee of Non-Profits is holding a Best Practices Forum on September 18th from 8:15 to 9:45 a.m. at the Devorris Center for Business Development. Chamber President Joe Hurd



COMMITTEE OF
Non-Profit
Businesses
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will facilitate the discussion. There is no cost to attend but registration is required since no more than twenty-five can attend. To register, contact the Chamber at 943-8151 or [register online](#).

Informational Webinar Set For "Bourbon, Bridles & Bluegrass" Trip

As the Chamber optimistically prepares its travel program for 2021, it will begin the year with an exciting trip to several destinations within the United States. On April 23-30, the trip will be "Bourbon, Bridles and Bluegrass," which begins with a flight to Louisville, Kentucky; includes visits to Lexington; Asheville, North Carolina and Chattanooga, Tennessee; and finishes-up in Nashville prior to flying home. That trip will be done with a partnership between the Chamber, Ketrow KURTZ Travel and



Globus. There will be an informational webinar on September 17th from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. To register for the webinar, [click here](#).



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Digital Marketing Virtual Seminars to Begin September 17th

Digital marketing has become a necessity for businesses – large and small – that want to gain a step-up on the competition. Unfortunately, few businesses really do it well or at least to the extent where it impacts the bottom line. For that reason, the Blair County Chamber created a Digital Marketing Roundtable comprised of providers who understand the concept and are willing to share that knowledge to positively impact the business community. Beginning in September, the Roundtable will offer twice-monthly sessions of approximately one-hour each dealing with a particular topic under the Digital Marketing umbrella. The format will be primarily Q&A, will be on Zoom, and will feature providers well-versed on the subject. The first session will be on September 17th at 10:00 a.m. and will focus on "Boosting Website Conversions." There is no cost to Chamber members to participate and non-members can take part for \$15/session. To register and access the Zoom link, [click here](#).



A Special Thanks to Our Outstanding Volunteers!

As is usually the case, the success of the Highmark/Chamber Golf Classic is highly dependent on the many business people who unselfishly serve as volunteers. Among the volunteers that made this year's Classic a great event

were the Sheetz Fellows. These Penn State Altoona students assisted in all aspects of the Classic and supplied youth and vigor, never a bad thing at a gathering of more "seasoned" participants.



First "Chamber Chat" Will Focus on Stir-Crazy Employers

The first of seven "Chamber Chats" will take place on September 25th from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. on Zoom. The "chat" concept was initiated by the Chamber's Workplace Wellness Committee to help employers to gain insight on ways to create and maintain a healthy work environment, especially during challenging times. The Chats are just 30 minutes long and there is no charge to participate. The first Chat will be "Re-Energizing the Stir-Crazy Employer" and will create an opportunity for employers to dialogue about strategies they've used to stay motivated and focused during the past several months. Todd Lewis of Shoe Fly Stores and Sharon Jones of



Blair Regional YMCA will lead the discussion. The dates of the Chamber Chats are: September 25th, October 9th and 23rd, November 6th and 20th and December 4th and 18th. To register to attend, [click here](#).

BENefact

ship directory receives thousands of hits each day from individuals searching for a business to meet their particular needs. Our office also fields calls throughout the day, however, only active Chamber Members are referred.

Business Referrals:

Perhaps one of the biggest benefits of being a Chamber member is Business Referrals! The Chamber online member-

Committee Meetings

Workplace Wellness
September 1, 1:30 p.m.
Devorris Center

Young Professionals of
Blair County
September 2, 8:00 a.m.
Devorris Center

Public Policy Committee
September 3, 8:00 a.m.
Devorris Center

BASICS Early Childhood
Subcommittee
September 3, 10:00 a.m.
Devorris Center

Congratulations...

... to the four members of the Blair County Chamber who were recently included in PA Business Central's "Signature Leaders Under 30." They are: Crystal Cosgrove of Blair Image Elements, Jade Giantini of Lakemont Park, Leonard Fiore, III of Perry Wellington Realty, and Jesse Ickes of Beck Financial & Wealth Management.

... to Abigail Barroner, owner of WillowBranch Boutique, who was recently featured as the cover story in the August/September edition of Mirror Moms magazine. Abigail, who is a freshman at IUP, successfully started WillowBranch Boutique just a few months ago and is already seeing positive results. Her business is also a trial member of our Chamber.

blairchamber.com

For business
resources and
the latest news.



Saluting Our Renewals!

The Chamber would like to thank those members that have continued to invest with the organization by renewing their membership in the month of August.

Celebrating 103 Years

M & T Bank
Penstan Supply/Division of Hajoca Corp.

Celebrating 99 Years

Lamar Advertising, Inc.

Celebrating 94 Years

Young, Oakes, Brown & Company, P.C.

Celebrating 89 Years

AAA East Central

Celebrating 77-80 Years

Altoona First Savings Bank
Kranich's, Inc.
Peterman's Flower Shop
Ward Transport and Logistics Corp.

Celebrating 60-69 Years

Culligan Water Conditioning Sales & Service
The EADS Group
Fiore Furniture
Furrer Beverage Company
The Hite Company Division of Mayer Electric
Penelec - A FirstEnergy Company
Reliance Bank
Stevens Mortuary, Inc.
Tri-State Industrial Solutions, Inc.

Celebrating 54-58 Years

Blair Candy Company
J. V. Meadows & Sons, Inc.
Lytle's Transfer & Storage Company
Pittsburgh Glass Works

Celebrating 47 Years

Manpower Inc., of Altoona

Celebrating 30-35 Years

FOREVER Media
Jaffa Shrine Center
McCartney's Business Products
Smithmyer's Electronics, Inc.
Your Building Centers, Inc.

Celebrating 20-29 Years

Altoona Symphony Orchestra
Atlantic Broadband
Benton Insurance Center, Inc.
Blair County Conservation District
Cumming Motors, Inc.
East Side Concrete Supply Co., Inc.
Econo Lodge
Edmiston Signs
Hess & Marino, CPA

Labor Specialties
PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
Penn Mont Academy
Presbyterian Village at Hollidaysburg

Celebrating 10-19 Years

611 MRI Altoona
Allegheny Pain Management, P.C.
Altoona Lung Specialists
Always A Party Rentals
J.R. Brown Construction, Inc.
Buccinese Society
Comfort Suites
Courtyard By Marriott
Firestone Complete Auto Care
Hollidaysburg Area Public Library
Intermunicipal Relations Committee COG
Investment Savings Bank
Mihalko's General Contracting
Gerald L. Pastva,
Professional Land Surveyor
Seltzer Financial Strategies, LLC

Celebrating 5-9 Years

Bellwood-Antis Public Library
Bihary Family Dental
Bloom Yoga & Wellness, LLC
John J. Castle General Contractor, Inc.
Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown
Healthy Blair County Coalition
Hollidaysburg Veterans Home
LR Assist, LLC
Mama Randazzo's, Inc.
Messner Plumbing & Heating
The Tax Shelter
The UPS Store #6512
Williamsburg Public Library

Celebrating 1-4 Years

A B Federal Credit Union
Alliance For Nonprofit Resources
Alto Markets
Brooklyn Deli
Evolution Counseling Services, LLC
Global Power Line Academy, Inc.
The Health Insurance Place
KEDPLASMA USA
KIZ Resources, LLC
Milanak Family Vision Center
Dave Moses Technology Services, Inc.
NFP\Benefits Network, Inc.
QuatriniRafferty, Attorneys at Law
Shaffer's Full Steam Ahead Hobby Shop
The Studio on 5th
Talixa Software & Service, LLC
W. S. Lee & Sons



Restaurants and Bars Still Need Help. Buy Gift Cards!

The Chamber's effort to help local bars and restaurants stay financially afloat during a difficult time is more important than ever. We encourage businesses that recognize the need to assist one another to participate in the "Eat. Drink. Help." Initiative. As an offshoot of Buy Here. Thrive Here., this program incentivizes businesses to purchase gift cards from bars and restaurants in exchange for ad space in the Chamber's weekly newsletter. The purchasing businesses must be Chamber members but the bars and restaurants are not required to be. For more information on how to participate in Eat. Drink. Help., visit the [Chamber Website](#) and click on the Buy Here. Thrive Here logo.



Sept. 12 through Nov. 7

Sign up by Friday, Sept. 11

Let's Move Blair County and the Chamber's Workplace Wellness Committee are introducing a fun, new two-month challenge to help build a healthy Blair County. For more information and to sign up, go to <https://forms.gle/zhi1S63xzb6XT4v7>.