

Starfleet prospers from solid family values

When John and Loretta Bohn started Starfleet Productions more than forty years ago, they had a simple formula for making the business work. “We’ve always enjoyed working together on common goals and not being afraid to try new things,” John disclosed. “Our main key was trust and respect for each other. It worked well.”

One person who had the benefit of seeing that formula executed each day was the Bohn’s son Jason, who worked in the business from the time he was a teenager. It was a good thing that he paid close attention. Today, Jason and his wife Maryann are at the helm of Starfleet and the company hasn’t missed a beat.

Starfleet is a full-service video production company that produces high quality videos for television, social

Working Together

media, YouTube, corporate training and internal business use. It also does corporate and product photography.

“People are often surprised to know that in addition to extensive video and audio production equipment, we have a full studio,” Jason pointed out. “There are two editing bays and a video suite that includes a 22-foot white cyclorama wall and a 19-foot green screen cyclorama wall. We have productions that air on local TV stations, cable TV, social media, digital streams as well as photos on billboards around Blair County.”

With such a high volume of work – Starfleet has only four employees but

often hires additional workers for larger projects – it’s more important than ever that Jason and Maryann have their act together. That’s sometimes easier said than done.

“We work with some of the same principle values that my parents did but we’ve found that we each have our own areas of expertise,” Jason acknowledged. “If we stick with that, the days flow smoothly. When we are at work or out in the field, we are business partners and unless you know us personally, you may not even realize we are married.”

Like many couples who work together, one of the more significant challenges is how to leave work at work at the end of each day. The Bohn’s are no different.

“Maryann is very big on this subject and much better than I am at leaving work at the office,” Jason



Jason and Maryann Bohn of Starfleet Productions have followed the company’s founders, John and Loretta Bohn, in balancing work life and family life. Starfleet has been in business for more than two decades.

explained. “When we took over ownership of Starfleet and moved to our current location (on Cayuga Avenue in Altoona), we de-

cided to make an effort to keep things separate. However, when you are self-employed, work tends to follow you. We try our

best to leave it where it belongs.”
(Starfleet has been a Blair County Chamber member since 1994.)

Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Week (PFEW) anticipating return after one-year hiatus

One of the nation’s best programs for educating high school students on the intricacies of business is making preparations to return in 2021. Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Week (PFEW), which has graduated more than 65,000 sophomores and juniors during the past 42-years, was cancelled last summer due to Covid-19.

“It was an extremely difficult decision for us,” acknowledged PFEW President/CEO Karen Musante. “But our primary concern was the health and safety of our students and volunteers. We were also concerned about the juniors who were registered and might lose the opportunity to participate in 2021. Our board, however, extended an invitation to all juniors who were registered for 2020 to sign up for PFEW 2021, even though they will have graduated from high school.”

PFEW is a microcosm of the real business world. Students from throughout the commonwealth work together toward a common goal – the profitability of their company – during a week at Lycoming College or at Penn College in Williamsport. They learn about all aspects of modern business, discover hidden



Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Week has helped students from throughout the Commonwealth to gain a better understanding of what it takes to operate a business. The program is held each summer in Williamsport, PA.

talents and strengths and explore the many varied careers available in the business world.

“Many students from Blair County schools have participated in PFEW through the years and many local businesses have underwritten the costs associated with that participation,” explained Denny Doll of Reliance Bank, who serves on the PFEW Board of Direc-

tors. “The program is an incredible way for young people with an interest in business to get off to a head start.”

A significant challenge that PFEW is looking to address is student recruitment. Most students learn about the program through visits to their schools from Michelle Warofka, the program’s VP of Educational Relations. With few schools

allowing on-site visits, PFEW is prepared to do Zoom presentations.

“Schools interested in scheduling in-person or virtual visits should contact Amber Goss at (814) 833-9576, extension 103 or amber@pfew.org,” reported Musante. “We have a series of recruiting videos that we can share with any school. We’re very excited about what 2021 will offer.”

SETTING THE PACE

John Myers Workplace Wellness Committee

- 1. Title and place of work:** Certified Pedorthist/Manager at Shoe Fly Altoona and the new Appalachian Running Company.
- 2. Years with current position:** 15 years.
- 3. Positions held in the Chamber:** A member of the Workplace Wellness Committee.
- 4. Family:** Wife Lisa.
- 5. Community organizations:** Blair County Chamber Workplace Wellness Committee, Let’s Move Blair County Member, CBRC Golf Classic Committee Member.
- 6. Hobbies/leisure:** Exercise and golf.
- 7. Education:** Tyrone Area High School; Temple School of Podiatry.
- 8. First job:** Summer job at the Tyrone School District.
- 9. I would like to be known for:** My enthusiasm in everything I try to do, and for the way I am with my customers, greeting them with a smile and treating them with respect.
- 10. Business role model:** The Shoe Fly ownership team for the business they



John Myers

have built while still treating employees like part of the family.

11. Your thoughts about the Chamber: I feel the Blair County Chamber is a great partner for your business. Whether you are an owner or an employee, there are many programs that you may take advantage of to help your business succeed.

12. Your thoughts about Blair County: As a lifelong resident, I love it here (even though I am not a winter fan). I wish more businesses could see how great the people and the resources are here so they can consider bringing their business here.

To join the Chamber’s Workplace Wellness Committee, contact Joe Hurd at 943-8151 or email jhurd@blairchamber.com.

Membership is a high Chamber priority

The Blair County Chamber understands the importance of working on behalf of its members. To emphasize that even further, the Chamber has formed a Membership Committee that will look at the ongoing needs and expectations of current members while also hoping to recruit new ones.

“The strength of our organization is the willingness of the businesses in

our region to invest in what we do,” explained Richard Fiore, Jr., the Chamber’s new board chair. “Even without a pandemic, businesses face many challenges. The more businesses – large and small – that work together, the better the outcomes.”

Fiore has been particularly impressed by the number of Chamber members who have made membership renewal a priority,

even amid difficult economic times.

“They seem to recognize how important it is for us to be able to advocate on their behalf,” he pointed out. “This is such a critical time and so much of what we do benefits the entire business community.”

He’d like to see more businesses become members.

“It’s not expensive and it shows a commitment to be part of something with a

considerable upside. I think a lot of people aren’t aware of how much they gain, simply through education, promotion and networking.”

The Membership Committee will meet later this month to explore ways to create even greater value for Chamber members. Anyone interested in participating should contact Joe Hurd at (814) 943-8151.



Networking events like “Business After Hours” is a reason that many businesses join the Chamber.

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