

## Business Hall of Fame returns Thursday

The Blair County Chamber of Commerce is 135-years-old. Suffice it to say that the organization has built some interesting traditions during that time. The Blair County Business Hall of Fame is one of those.

The Hall of Fame officially began inducting members in 1990. A maximum of five businesses – one of those in the Heritage category – were inducted each year until 2019 when the Hall of Fame Committee proposed a one-year hiatus and Covid-19 decided to extend that hiatus by an additional two years.

Now the Hall of Fame is back, not as a black-tie dinner but as a less formal luncheon. That luncheon will take place this Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at The Casino at Lake-mont Park. Instead of five, there will be just two busi-nesses inducted into the



Hall. There will be five other “Awards of Distinc-tion.”

“We’ve had quite a few positive comments about the revised concept,” ad-mitted Chamber President Joe Hurd. “We’ll be better able to evaluate it after we get through it the first time. The bottom line is that we are intent in resuming the practice of honoring de-serving businesses while maintaining the element of prestige.”

It would stand to reason that the history of the Hall of Fame would make it un-likely that those early hon-orees would be as relevant

now as they were then. A lot can happen in 32 years. Yet the five original Hall of Fame members included two that are still among the region’s leaders – McLana-han Corporation and Sheetz – and two more that are flourishing under new names (Mid-State Bank is now M&T Bank, The Penn-sylvania Railroad has be-come Norfolk Southern Corporation.) Only Wissinger’s Marketplace is no longer in existence.

The 2022 Hall of Fame Class consists of Altoona Beauty School and Boyer Refrigeration. Awards of Distinction will be pre-sented to: Blair Mill Outlet – Excellence in Small Busi-ness, Alto Markets – Young Emerging Business, Sweat For Vets – Non-Profit of the Year, Mill Hill Farm – Sustainability and Leonard S. Fiore, Inc. – Safety. There were no businesses chosen in the Technology



Mike McLanahan of McLanahan Corporation poses with the Hall of Fame Award that his company received in 1990, the first year of the recognition.

and Workplace Wellness categories.

“We were very impressed with the number of busi-nesses that were nominated in all categories this year,”

acknowledged Lisa Michelone, who chairs the Business Hall of Fame Committee. “It’s clear that our business community has high regard for their

counterparts and even their competitors.”

To register to attend the Hall of Fame event, call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151.

## Workforce issues dominate Chamber Day

Business in Pennsylva-nia continues to look for more and better ways to deal with a host of challenges, most with some connection to workforce. The annual “Chamber Day at the Capitol,” held last Tuesday in Harrisburg brought together more than 50 chambers from through-out the Commonwealth, in-cluding the Blair County Chamber.

“It’s a significant event be-cause it provides information and insight on issues that our member-businesses face and it’s helpful to hear what other chambers are doing to address those issues,” ac-knowledged Chamber Presi-dent Joe Hurd, who attended Chamber Day with Chris Michelone of McQuaide Blasko and Blair County Planning Director David McFarland. Michelone and McFarland are members of the Chamber’s Public Policy Committee.

“Chris and David take time out of their own sched-ules to represent our com-mittee and to keep the committee updated on strategies that will benefit our business community,” Hurd noted. “They play a key role.”



David McFarland (center) greets State Senator Judy Ward at Chamber Day in Harrisburg. Looking on is Chamber President Joe Hurd.

Chamber Day opened with welcoming remarks from Speaker of the House Bryan Cutler and House Democratic Leader Joanna McClinton. There was a Transportation Policy and Funding discussion, a Budget and Tax Policy dis-cussion, a briefing on Poli-tics and the 2022 Election.

There was also a lengthy discussion on Workforce with Sheila Ireland, Labor &

Industry Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development, Brigadier General Maureen Weigl, Deputy Adjutant for Veteran Affairs and Dorenda Hamarlund, Workforce Special-ist for the Department of Corrections.

Workforce has been a topic of high priority for the Blair County Chamber, long before Covid-19. At least three Chamber committees – Public Policy, BASICS and

the Committee of Non-profit Businesses – have spent considerable time on devel-oping game plans to heighten awareness of the need for enhanced career exploration efforts.

“It’s been on our radar and will continue to be for a long time,” Hurd pointed out. “Every chamber in Pennsylv-ania is having similar prob-lems. It impacts our abilities to move confidently forward.”

## WE-LEaD committee offers “Intro to Golf”



Stacy Krepps of Labor Specialties (left) gets golfing instruction from Jackie Lantzy at the WE-LEaD event.

Like it or not, a whole lot of business gets done on the golf course. For that reason, more and more business women are taking up the game.

The Blair County Cham-ber’s WE-LEaD Commit-tee held an “Intro to Golf” event on June 1st at Park Hills Golf Club. Twenty aspiring golfers partici-pated. WE-LEaD is an acronym for “Women Encouraging: Leadership, Education and Develop-ment.”

Jackie Lantzy of CNB Bank, a member of the committee and a partici-pant at a number of golf tournaments, was the speaker at Intro to Golf.

“I like golf and play it week,” she pointed out. “As a female, it’s incum-bent to know enough about golf to not have to sit in the office while everyone else is having fun. It’s be-come a networking neces-sity.”

Lantzy’s presentation focused on the basics. She explained what each club is used for, how to dress appropriately for the course and proper golf etiquette.

“It’s important that those women just starting out feel comfortable,” she ex-plaind. “It’s not a sport that comes naturally to too many people.”

The reasons for attending Intro to Golf varied.

“I want to learn the right way to play,” admitted Ted-die Kreitz of Keller Engi-neers. “I’m preparing for retirement.”

“It’s hard to get started,” stated Lisa Seltzer of Man-power. “My biggest fear about being on the course is holding people up. It was great to learn about the different clubs. I’m happy I came.”

“Learning how to play golf is something I’ve wanted to do for a long time,” acknowledged Dawn Drexler of ARC Federal Credit Union. “I’m kind of competitive at mini-golf and would like to feel that I’m ready for the next step.”

“My husband plays and he’s pretty good,” noted Anne Macklin of Calvary Cemetery Association. “I’d like to be able to play with him. Learning about the clubs was a good first step for me.”

## Chamber adds excursion to Egypt for 2023

The Blair County Cham-ber is headed to Egypt in 2023.

The “Treasures of Egypt” tour will leave from the Chamber office in Altoona on March 2nd and will re-turn there on March 13th. It begins with an overnight flight to Cairo and includes the Grand Egyptian Mu-seum, Luxor, Temple of Karnak, Valley of the Kings, a Deluxe 4-Night Nile River Cruise, Queen Hatshepsut Temple, Kom Ombo, Aswan, Philae Tem-ple Sound & Light Show, Khan el Khalili Bazaar, Giza, Pyramids, Sphinx as well as several optional ex-cursions.

The Chamber is partner-ing with Epic Journeys to offer the tour. An informa-tional session on Treasures of Egypt will be held on June 22nd at 6:00 p.m. at the Devorris Center for Business Development at 3900 Industrial Park Drive. Call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 if you plan to at-tend or register online at [www.blairchamber.com](http://www.blairchamber.com). There is no cost or obliga-tion.

Other Chamber trips during 2023 will include Australia/ New Zealand and a “Magical Rhine and Moselle Rivers” cruise. Two additional trips will be announced later this year. Stay tuned!



The pyramids of Egypt are just some of the iconic sights included in an exciting itinerary planned for the tour.



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