

Spring House offers something for everyone

Among the Chamber's more popular features in the Business Insight are "Fork and Spoon" and "Working Together." Spring House Grille on Route 36 in Roaring Spring effectively combines them both.

The mother-daughter team of Nancy Brumbaugh and Amy Ritchey bought the restaurant in 2007, made a slight name change from Spring House Family Restaurant to Spring House Grille and have been serving great food in a cozy and casual atmosphere ever since.

"We're business partners who have acquired a sense of the food preferences of the area," Amy pointed out. "We have a great location in the middle of town on the second busiest road in Blair County. People often comment that they were on their way to the store or to some other business but stopped in to have a nice homemade meal instead of fast food."

Nancy's sense of the history of the location is more than just speculation. She

and her husband Ron purchased the restaurant from the Ritchey family in the 1970's. The original name had been Dog'N'Suds. They changed it to Brumbaugh Drive-In. In the 1980's, they sold it to the Satterfield family.

"It's gone through a number of changes," Nancy explained. "We were happy to have the opportunity to get it back. Working with Amy really makes it special."

The menu at Spring House Grille is one of the area's most extensive.

"We market ourselves as having something for everyone," Amy acknowledged. "We have breakfast, lunch and dinner items all day every day. We make many items other places don't such as liver-and-onions, ham pot pie, fried chicken and fresh cut fries."

Customers will verify that they have difficulty narrowing their choices to just one on each visit. Among the most requested is the prime rib, which is slow-roasted in-house, turkey and waffles and the unbeatable seafood



trio of haddock, shrimp and homemade crab cakes.

"Our soups are also popular," Amy reported, "as are our desserts which feature great pies by our longtime baker, Lisa Becker."

Like most restaurants that were impacted by Covid-19, Spring House Grill needed to get creative to survive.

"During the pandemic we really concentrated on our takeout and delivery business as well as our online ordering and payment process," Amy disclosed. "We even purchased a merchandising cooler for our homemade items that customers could pick up at their convenience and heat at home."

"Delivery is very popular, especially at Nason Hospi-



Amy Ritchey (standing right) serves lunch to customers at Spring House Grille. Looking on is her mother and business partner Nancy Brumbaugh.

tal and other local businesses. We will continue with offering online ordering, takeout and delivery and even continue curbside pickup for those who would like us to deliver to their car. The pandemic has changed the way that restaurants need to operate.

We see some upside in that."

The future of Spring House Grille, according to Amy, is likely to involve more of the same strategies as the present.

"For us, it's all about continued improvement and meeting the needs of cus-

tomers and what they enjoy eating," she noted. "We always want our customers to feel welcome and appreciated. They've supported us well."

(Spring House Grille has been a member of the Blair County Chamber since 2021.)

Planning continues for county academy to assist candidates



Chris Michelone (right), chair of the Chamber's Public Policy Committee, discusses the PS Academy with Sarah Seymour, Blair County's Director of Elections.

The Public Service Academy, a project of the Blair County Chamber's Public Policy Committee, is on-track to launch in the fall. The Academy is designed to encourage and educate people on ways to become part of the political process, either as an elected official or as a volunteer on boards, commissions or agencies.

The Academy will feature an educational program that is six hours in duration. A certificate will be awarded to everyone who completes it. The first three-hour session is on September 13th from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. The second session is at that same time on September 27th. Both sessions will be held at the Devorris Center for Business Development, 3900 Industrial Park Drive in Altoona.

Instructors will be Sarah Seymour, Blair County's Director of Elections and Voter Registration and Academy co-chairs John Eichelberger and Donna Gorty.

"Sarah Seymour is an excellent resource and someone who can prepare prospective candidates to feel confident in working through the process," Gorty pointed out. "Sometimes people pick up the petition packets and get intimidated by the number of things that are required. Sarah effectively relieves the stress associated with running a campaign."

Eichelberger agreed. "It's not difficult," he acknowledged. "Most people will have others help them. They'll find that it's relatively easy. Look at some of the current people in office. They got through it."

The cost to participate is just \$25/person and includes pizza and beverages prior to the start of each session. Space is limited so register as soon as possible. Participants must complete both sessions to earn the certificate. To register, contact the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 or register online at www.blair-chamber.com.

Prough's Masonry taking new paths to success



The Prough's Masonry team, which started the business in 2003, consists of (from left): Dustin, Patrick and Travis.

Blair County business with a track record for expertise in one aspect of the construction industry is having success filling other niches as well.

Prough's Masonry, located at 5737 Clover Creek Road in Williamsburg, was founded in 2003 by Patrick, Travis and Dustin Prough. The company currently has 22 employees.

"We specialize in the general construction industry in both residential and commercial settings," explained Mandi Prough, the company's office manager. "Although masonry is in our name, we specialize in all phases of construction, from excavating to finished carpentry."

Part of that shift in priorities is due to a change in masonry, she pointed out.

"Many aspects of masonry work are becoming obsolete. People are not building houses any more with block foundations. They are using superior walls and poured walls for their foundations. We were forced to find new avenues and paths to continue to grow our company."

On the residential side of the business, Prough's primarily does a lot of flat cement concrete work – sidewalks, patios and garage floors. They even do stamped concrete. While concrete is one of the main specialties, they also construct new home builds as well.

The commercial side of Prough's business is considerably different. Most of that business has stemmed from a strong affiliation with Walmart and Sam's Club.

The company does facilities maintenance repairs for most Sam's Clubs in the Northeast. It also works on special projects for Walmart all over the United States, primarily up-and-down the East Coast and in a few places in the Midwest.

"We've traveled as far as Alaska to do a job for Walmart," Prough disclosed. "I think people in this county would be surprised to know that."

Like most construction companies, Prough's was impacted by the pandemic.

"Unfortunately, we took a hit because of Covid-19," Mandi Prough acknowledged. "Construction was deemed as non-essential in our state and we were not allowed to operate. Fortunately for us, after a short period of time, we were per-

mitted to continue our work for Walmart since they were considered an essential business. It was not a lot of income but fortunately it was enough to keep us going as a business."

The aftermath of the pandemic is that businesses like Prough's are in demand for new job opportunities but can't find enough employees to offset that demand.

"The second part of our hiring challenge is finding people willing to travel," Prough stated. "Understandably, people want to be home with their families. We try to keep a schedule that allows people who work out of town to be home from Friday through Sunday."

(Prough's Masonry has been a member of the Blair County Chamber since 2013.)

**Business
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