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Entrepreneurs *of Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow*

Moving the economy forward in Bedford County and across the nation By Harry Zimbler

There can be no question that one of the most talked-about topics in all of economic development is the value of entrepreneurship to the American economy.

It is certainly true that small businesses are the heart of economic progress. But who is driving the creation of these small businesses?

Very often it's the entrepreneurs! Men and women who are consumed by the passion of creating something that never existed before. They are the risk takers, those willing to put everything they own on the line to succeed with a new service, technology or product that will eventually find a home in the marketplace.

- Continued on [Page 3](#)



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BCDA Staff: Terri Brumbaugh, Bette Slayton, Melanie Miller

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BCDA's Board meets monthly to develop and implement economic development policies that positively affect Bedford County and the state. Visit our website: www.bcd.org

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Meet the 2016 BCDA Board



—Photos submitted

Above, members of the Bedford County Development Association board of directors are, front, from left, Assistant Secretary David DiPasquale, Bedford County Technical Center; Treasurer Bob Octavio; Vice Chairman Doug Gerber, Rex Heat Treat; Chairman Sean Bardell, Howard Hanna Bardell Realty; Assistant Treasurer Jenny DeLong, Bun Air Corp.; Secretary JP Tambourine, FirstEnergy Corp.; and back: Office Manager Melanie Miller, BCDA; Linda Bullington, Bullington Financial Services LLC; Trudy Mitchell, Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development; Greg Krug, Lampire Biological Laboratories; Josh Lang, Bedford County Commissioner; James Gonsman, FNB; James Wistar, Everite Door Company; Brett Schoenfield, Omni Bedford Springs Resort & Spa; Greg Lang, Recreational Equipment Inc.; Mark Bollman, Tussey Mountain School District; Paul Crooks, Bedford County Commissioner; Barry Dallara, Bedford County Commissioner; Charles Swartzwelder, East Providence Township; Vice President Terri Brumbaugh, BCDA; Sara Letzo, 10/09 Kitchen; and President Bette Slayton, BCDA. Missing from the picture are: Immediate Past Chairman Bo Pratt, Rockland Manufacturing Co., and Alan Frederick, Frederick Farms.

At left, new members serving on the Bedford County Development Association are, front, from left, Josh Lang, Bedford County Commissioner; Charles Swartzwelder, East Providence Township; and back: Mark Bollman, Tussey Mountain School District; Greg Lang, Recreational Equipment Inc.; James Gonsman, First National Bank.



ID Graphics get the word out for business

Husband and wife team embody ‘entrepreneurial spirit’

By Harry Zimble

Can a husband and wife team of graphic artists run a successful graphic design business while raising a family at the same time? Corey and Monica Meckes can.

ID Graphics, celebrating 10 years in business, is located in downtown Everett. It serves the design needs of companies and organizations throughout Bedford County and the United States.

After graduating from college, Corey and Monica initially worked for other companies. This experience gave them the insight needed to start their new business in 2006. They were “all in.”

“We closed our eyes and took a leap of faith,” said Monica Meckes. They counted on the local business community to provide networking opportunities. The Everett Area Better Business Association and the Bedford County Chamber of Commerce have been very helpful.

Funding the new company was strictly a personal affair.

“The only money we borrowed was in the form of a home equity loan we

used to purchase our first printer,” said Corey Meckes. “We would never finance a piece of equipment that way again, though.”

The launch of ID Graphics required money, of course, but it also demanded a willingness to work long hours and never stopping work until a job was done, as promised.

“Would we do it again and start our own business? Yes, of course we would,” Monica said.

Despite great success in their colorful new facility, Corey and Monica realize that there will always be challenges to running a business.

“It’s a do-it-yourself world we are living in,” Monica explained. “And because of this we find ourselves having to con-

vince people and businesses of the need for — and value of — a professional graphic designer.”

With 38 years of combined experience in the field of graphic design, Monica and Corey see great opportunities for future growth.

“The greatest opportunity is the large number of potential clients we could have locally if given the chance to show them the benefits of using a professional design studio,” said Corey.

“We have learned over time from watching others and from our own mistakes,” said Monica. “We are still learning. When you are a small business it is important to take gradual, calculated steps to form a firm foundation on which to build.”

“When you are a small business it is important to take gradual, calculated steps to form a firm foundation on which to build.”

—Monica Meckes, ID Graphics



—Photo submitted

Husband and wife, Corey and Monica Meckes, stand at ID Graphics, their graphic design business in Everett, which is celebrating 10 years in business this year.

Entrepreneurs . . .

—Continued from Page 1

This year, the Bedford County Development Association will explore how entrepreneurs, past, present and future, have built the local economy, and how they will continue to do so as we move through the 21st century.

When you drive past the Wal-Mart Distribution Center, a facility that employs hundreds of Bedford County workers, do you think about the one man who started it all? Sam Walton had a dream that he could one day create a company to rival the largest retailers in the nation. Through hard work, perseverance and vision, he did that just that.

Bedford County is filled with businesses that have become important employers after an entrepreneur took the risk to start it and make sure it would grow and prosper.

Today’s global and fast-paced economy is going to demand a highly skilled workforce as well as an entrepreneurial spirit that can be applied in any business or industry, no matter how large or small.

As Bedford County moves into the future, it will be the entrepreneurs that will drive innovation and create the kind of jobs that sustain families.

With this year’s Progress and Industry, BCDA celebrates the great vision of past entrepreneurs as well as the generations that will create the future.

Bedford County Development Association is dedicated to working hard to increase the available capital investments that new and existing businesses need. Finally, BCDA will seek every way possible to help empower the entrepreneurs of tomorrow.



CorePA hopes to promote synergy

CorePA Global

Working together with CorePA, Bedford County recently hosted a group of international journalists to enhance synergies with local businesses. From left are Peter Darling, UK - Tradelink Publications Ltd.; Arun Kr. Singhal, India - DEW Journal; John Swatkoski, Vacuum Processes Inc.; and Terri Brumbaugh, BCDA.



Gazette Photos/Erin Thompson

At left, Melinda Feaster and John Black, co-owners of Coldwell Banker SKS Realty on South Juliana Street, pose for a photo on June 16. Feaster and Black moved up the ranks at Coldwell Banker in 2007.

Above, Sean Bardell, owner of the Bedford branch of Howard Hanna Bardell Realty, poses in this June photo. Bardell purchased Howard Hanna, known as the largest family-owned real estate company in the nation, in August.

Bedford County realty gives a personal touch to buying property

**By Erin Thompson
Gazette Staff Writer**
Good customer service and word of mouth will take you further in business than advertising, says Linda Bullington, owner of Bullington Financial LLC, who has spent the last 18 years making a name for herself in downtown Bedford.

Prior to March 2014, Bullington's company operated under CrossCountry Mortgage until she decided to go into business for herself after growing "tired of working for corporate America."

"I wanted to be able to give answers to someone instead of calling a CEO to get a project completed," she said.

She began her professional career teaching music for 16 years in Pennsylvania and Texas until a 1994

move to Lewisburg, when she switched gears and decided to get her real estate license.

In 1995, Bullington and her family moved back to the Bedford area so her husband could take a job working at JLG Industries.

In 1998, Bullington opened her first mortgage office as a branch manager for Allied Home Mortgage in a leased space. She was operating the business solely by herself. Just four months after opening an office with Allied as a branch manager, Bullington said she convinced her husband to quit his job to help develop the company, where her whole family is now employed.

Bullington purchased a building on East Pitt Street, where she had the mortgage company and was a branch manager and

Pennsylvania state manager with Allied.

In 2004, Bullington purchased the North Richard Street, where the business is currently housed.

The business expanded in 2004 to offer real estate with Central PA Real Estate Services LLC and title services with Central PA Settlement Services LLC.

Bullington Financial also offers loan products for FHA, VA, USDA and Conventional Mortgages. "It's a one-stop-shop," she said.

When carving your own way in business, Bullington said it is important to look at where you are located and make sure your services fit the needs of the people.

"In Bedford, they don't want to call an 800 number to get help," she said, adding that above all, her

business is "very customer service-oriented."

Bullington said she can't count the number of customers who turn to her after being frustrated with calling different agencies and speaking to a different person each time.

It's the one-on-one consultation, she said, that earns her business referrals.

Bullington says she doesn't believe in "pushy" sales tactics or telemarketing schemes to make sales and takes her time to make sure customers get the house they want.

She relies on building strong relationship with clients, even inviting them to call or text with questions in the middle of the night.

"I want them to be comfortable and if we have questions we can work it out," she said.

For Melinda Feaster and John Black, co-owners of Coldwell Banker SKS Realty on South Juliana Street, hard work is the key to moving up in the ranks and being successful in business.

"You definitely need to work hard," said Feaster, who added that in realty, it is also important to make yourself available for clients.

Feaster and Black took over as part owners in 2007, then bought out the company in 2013.

"You also really have to like what you do or you're just going to dread going to work," Feaster said.

The co-owners started out at Coldwell Banker as real estate agents as a second job.

Feaster said when she started with the company in 1998, most agents were working part time. Now that there are more homes being sold, she said more people are looking to real estate as a full-time career.

Feaster's entrepreneurship started before she began with Coldwell Banker. She said she owned her own hair salon and has since then transitioned.

"It's a lot of hard work, a lot of time and a lot of hours being able to be personable with people," she said. "I think that seems to help you be more successful and give back to the community."

Before getting into real estate, Black said he worked as a teacher and athletic director for both Chestnut Ridge and Bedford school districts. In his last seven years of teaching, he said he became involved in real estate. The transition, for him, was a natural one.

"As a teacher, I always enjoyed being around people," he said.

Black was an agent for about 10 years before buying a piece of the company.

Black advised those looking to start their own business that "if you think you have a good idea and are confident in yourself, don't hesitate to try. A lot of people look back and say 'I wish I would've,'" he said. "If you have the chance you



Photo submitted

Linda Bullington, owner of Bullington Financial LLC, poses for a photo. Bullington's company operated under CrossCountry Mortgage until she decided to go into business for herself in 2014.

"I wanted to be able to give answers to someone instead of calling a CEO to get a project completed,"

—Linda Bullington, Bullington Financial LLC

should go for it, but you have to believe in yourself."

The company itself, Feaster said, has grown over the years, from having just three agents to as many as 21 at one time.

Coldwell Banker, she said, has become known as the number one realtor in Bedford County, which she partially credits to the office's location.

Feaster also said Coldwell Banker stands out in the Bedford community because her agents are so personable.

"We stress to our agents to treat people the way they want to be treated and give a little extra effort," she said.

Another area entrepreneur recently took over the Bedford branch of a company that is now known as the largest family-owned real estate company in the nation.

Sean Bardell, owner of Howard Hanna Bardell Realty, purchased the Bedford branch from Richard Johnston, who had owned the company since 1984.

The Howard Hanna real estate company was established in 1957 and has 200 offices nationwide. Bardell said it has become known as the fourth largest real estate company in the United States and the largest in Pennsylvania.

Additionally, Bardell said Howard Hanna is the only real estate company in the nation with a 100 percent money back guarantee.

"That's the difference maker for a lot of people," he said.

The key to Bardell's success at Howard Hanna has been simply hard work, he said.

"I think if you work hard and really concentrate in the field that you're working in, you can basically do anything you want, but it takes a lot of hard work," he said.

Bardell said he has also

had to keep some unusual hours to maintain success at his branch.

"Everyone thinks real estate is a part-time or 9-to-5 job, but it's pretty much seven days a week and you work a lot of hours," he said.

Since taking over the company in August, Bardell said the transition has been a smooth one.

"The market has been really good and things have been going really well," he said.

Bardell had been working under Johnston, selling real estate for 15 years prior to buying the Bedford branch.

"I always wanted to own the business if the owner ever wanted to sell or retire and I just got that opportunity last year," he said.

Born and raised in Bedford, Bardell said when he completed his service in the military, he "went straight into selling real estate."

"I didn't know what I wanted to do, and Richard Johnston was looking for someone to train to become an appraiser," he said.

Since then, Bardell said he has "loves" what he does.

"I enjoy meeting all different people and I enjoy seeing all the different properties," he said. "It's just very enjoyable."

In the future, he strives to grow the Bedford branch and continue carrying out the Howard Hanna business model, which is pushing for a strong online presence.

"Our website gets over a million views in a month, so we're trying to position ourselves on the web," said Bardell, adding that he is pushing for his agents to be trained on how the industry is changing.

Contact Erin Thompson at ethompson@bedfordgazette.com; 623-1151, ext. 150. Follow on Twitter @ethompsonbedgaz.

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A TOP 10 MAIN STREET IN THE USA!

A perfect example of entrepreneurship in action

BC Stone went from working in a garage to thriving

By Harry Zimblar
Many of the legends of business started as wild-eyed entrepreneurs, often working out of a basement or garage until a more appropriate space could be found and afforded. That, in many respects, is the story of BC Stone, a fabricator of natural and manmade stone pieces for residential and commercial customers and one of Everett and Bedford County's premiere employers.

It all started when partners Rodney Bair and Travis Collins were driving back from a job in Washington, D.C. "Rodney and I were riding home one evening and I asked him if he wanted to start our own company. He said yes and the rest is history," said Collins. What led to the decision to create a "start up," one of the riskiest things one can do in business and life? "I wanted to be in control of my own future," Collins explained. "I always knew I would be limited by the company I worked for. I felt I would be able to have a better income and way of life. The stars aligned when we started BC Stone." The decision to start the business was soon followed by a move into — you guessed it — a garage. "Rodney's mother-in-law allowed us to use her garage, electricity and water for a few months, to get started," Collins noted.



A local businessman owner-financed our first building. He took a chance on us and wanted to give us a shot. We purchased another rental property from him, and his father owner-financed one for us." Creating a company is risky business. Often, it means little income for the owners for a long time. The fear of failure and personal loss is often present when entrepreneurs go out on their own. "Fear is either paralyzing or a motivator," Collins began. "Confidence in yourself and your abilities are the best way to overcome the fear. Determine what you are fearful of and avoid it at all cost. That means, be willing to do whatever it takes to succeed. Honestly, we didn't fear the initial leap into our own company. We were extremely confident in our abilities to provide service and a quality product." To get started, Collins invested \$1,000 of his own savings. The partners set low salaries and invested everything else back into the business for several years. To grow, financing was needed. "We have a great relationship with several banks. We had virtually zero debt —except for buildings — for the first seven or eight years.

"Fear is either paralyzing or a motivator. Confidence in yourself and your abilities are the best way to overcome the fear."
—Travis Collins, BC Stone

Both Bair and Collins feel fortunate that their partnership has been a real strength for the company. "Partners can make or break a company. We have been very fortunate. We work well together. We have our set responsibilities but both will cover for the other," Collins said. Make no mistake, despite the challenges, the partners would do it again. "Of course a lot of personal sacrifices were made," said Collins. To stay successful BC



—Photo Submitted
At left, Rodney Bair and Travis Collins, co-owners, stand in front of the BC Stone building, Everett. The two started the natural and manmade stone fabrication firm in a garage. Travis Collins, Rodney Bair and Gary Laidig stand in front of the aforementioned garage, above. Stone's leaders must anticipate market trends and deal with many regulations. "Our greatest opportunity is the new technology that is coming. Our next investment will be a robot arm that will replace three of our waterjet saws." Collins said it takes more than a great idea to start and run a business. "You need perfect timing, nerves of steel and luck. Business acumen is 80 percent common sense. See what others do wrong and don't do the same thing. And treat customers and employees the way you want to be treated."

REI climbed the mountain of industry, literally and figuratively

By Harry Zimblar
Just off Interstate 99, the REI Distribution Center sits majestically atop a small hill. These days, it's easy to take the building — and the many great jobs inside — for granted. It is easy to forget that this building was created by a mountain climber who saw a need and worked diligently to fill it. In other words, he was an entrepreneur. REI was founded by Lloyd and Mary Anderson. Lloyd, an electrical engineer and amateur mountain climber, began climbing early in the 20th century. As his skill and interest in climbing grew, so did his frustration with the limited stock, poor quality, and high prices of mountain climbing equipment sold in the United States. Together with his wife, Mary Anderson, he began ordering high-quality European outdoor equipment and re-selling it to friends, mountain climbers, backpackers and hikers in Washington state. In 1938, the Andersons formed the Recreational Equipment Cooperative to share quality outdoor gear with their fellow climbing buddies. They set up a shop in a garage, created a warehouse in the attic and an office in the family kitchen. When asked why he didn't make REI a full-fledged business and reap all the

profits for himself, Anderson replied, "REI is a co-op and it ought to stay that way. I never thought a man should make money off his friends." Anderson became REI's president but continued working as an electrical engineer for Seattle's transit system.

Currently, REI Co-op members pay a \$20 lifetime membership fee and receive a 10 percent rebate on their purchases in a given year. In 2007, with the help of the entire Bedford County economic community, REI opened the 525,000 square foot distribution center.

The company needed to better serve its customers on the east coast. Thus, one of the nation's best places to work is now calling Bedford County home. This great success story — born in the mind of Lloyd Anderson and started in the Andersons' garage — has grown and

evolved into an important Bedford County employer

and valued community partner.

It is easy to forget that this building was created by a mountain climber who saw a need and worked diligently to fill it.
—Lloyd and Mary Anderson and REI's Bedford Distribution Center



Lloyd and Mary Anderson are pictured modeling the very latest in mountain wear for a 1946 newspaper photo. The caption read: "The Smart Set." Lloyd was The Mountaineers president at the time, and the cooperative they founded in 1938 (later known as Recreational Equipment Inc. - REI) was one of the best sources of mountaineering gear in the country.



—Photos Submitted
REI's distribution center in Bedford is shown in Bedford township, just off Interstate 99. REI opened the 525,00 square-foot facility in 2007.

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Making Bedford IT services a one-stop shop

Aerial Communications services local computing needs

By Erin Thompson
Gazette Staff Writer
Kevin Diehl, owner of Aerial Communications, was attending college to become a Maryland state trooper when he started working in information technology.

Then, he said, IT was just something he enjoyed doing, but through working in the field, he found there was a greater need in the community than what local companies were offering.

“One of the things I saw in the county was there were a lot of small companies doing computer repair, but that people needed a lot more services. My goal was to grow the company to establish a one-stop shop for customers that needed the services that we offer,” he said. “I didn’t feel customers’ needs were being met at the company I was working for so I decided to go on my own.”

With the help of his father, Larry, Kevin became a third generation self-employed Diehl. Ten years later, Aerial Communications has grown to offer a variety of services including anything from general repair for personal computers to managing servers for corporations to video surveillance. Kevin is now a leading IT company in the Bedford area.

“My dad was the driving



Gazette Photo/Erin Thompson

Kevin Diehl, owner of Aerial Communications, in Bedford, poses at his desk. Diehl is a third generation self-employed Diehl and says he decided to start his company when he saw a need for more IT services in Bedford County.

force behind the support and helping me grow and learn to make the company what it is today,” said Kevin.

His father, Larry, has been the owner of Diehl

Equipment Company for more than 40 years. Larry took over the business when he was 21, shortly after his father, Kevin’s grandfather, Bernard, passed away.

Kevin said Bernard start-

ed Diehl Equipment Company in 1960 by offering milking parlors and free stall barns. Larry then expanded the business to include warehousing and commercial buildings.

“We want to create a job base here so they don’t have to look at moving to a big city to get a job in the IT world.”

—Kevin Diehl, Aerial Communications

Before he became involved in IT, Kevin said he was attending school at Allegany College of Maryland and studying criminal justice to follow in his mom’s footsteps.

However, he said, IT seemed to come naturally to him. “It wasn’t hard to get up and get to work each day,” he said. “I really enjoyed it.”

Diehl launched his business in 2006, at age 18. When he started, he said he offered basic services, but had “full intention of growing.” Now in its 10th year, Aerial Communications is in the planning stages of a large expansion project, he said.

The company recently purchased ground near Battery Warehouse on Mile Level to build a 13,000 square-foot facility, where he hopes to continue to expand the business. He said a new facility is slated to open on Mile Level in 2017.

“We are going to grow and add more staff,” said Kevin, who added that he is always “keeping an eye out” for youth looking to enter the IT field. “We

want to create a job base here so they don’t have to look at moving to a big city to get a job in the IT world.”

Kevin said his goals for the company are to offer the best possible computer service to everyone, whether it be a person needing basic help with their computer to large corporation.

“We are who we are because of our county and the people in it,” Kevin said. “Our local people are who made us. We always try to make sure we have the same service across the board.”

To be successful in starting your own business, Kevin said it is important to evaluate the industry you are looking to enter. “You have to make sure it is viable. You also have to make sure your heart and soul is in it and that you have the support and encouragement you need to get through the tough times.”

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Dr. Anderson, an early Bedford County entrepreneur

Bedford Springs arises from the musings of a doctor



—Photo Submitted

Guests enjoy the Mineral Springs pavilion, circa 1890s. In 1798, John Anderson purchased the land and began welcoming customers to the springs, which were found to be medicinal.

By Harry Zimble
The Omni Bedford Springs Resort and Spa has become a centerpiece of tourism, business meetings and events in Bedford County. Since its re-opening in 2007, the Bedford Springs has laid claim to being one of America’s grandest historical hotels.

This grand dame is the result of the vision of John Anderson, an entrepreneur and medical doctor.

A historical marker at the resort states, “The medicinal values of the springs were discovered about 1796. It soon became a leading resort visited by numerous notables. President James

Buchanan used Bedford Springs as the summer White House.”

It was John Anderson who had the vision for the property when Native Americans introduced him to the curative powers of the springs.

A native of Bedford, Anderson was curious if the springs could provide treatments for his patients. He clearly saw in the springs what others missed — a golden opportunity. By successfully treating patients from a multiple-state radius, he soon realized that there was demand for a new hotel.

In 1798, Anderson purchased the land and began welcoming customers to the springs. In 1803 a Pittsburgh newspaper reported that the “extraordinary cures of the springs are beginning to excite very gen-

eral attention.”

The Stone Inn, the first of the hotel’s buildings, was built in 1806.

Eventually Anderson got involved in local businesses, acting as president of the Allegheny Bank of Pennsylvania and President of the Chambersburg and Bedford Turnpike Road Company. When he died in Bedford in 1839, he had amassed considerable wealth.

In 1895, Bedford Springs opened the first golf course in America and in 1905 an indoor pool was added.

In 2007, owing to a deter-

mined developer and the passion of the political and economic development communities, the hotel underwent a \$120 million restoration.

With more than 200 years of historic significance, including visits by 13 presidents, the Omni Bedford Springs Resort and Spa looks to the future with great optimism and a bright future.

The entrepreneurial spirit that inspired Dr. John Anderson in 1796 continues to be alive and well in Bedford County today.

This grand dame is the result of the vision of John Anderson, an entrepreneur and medical doctor.

—Bedford Springs Resort, today part of the Omni Hotels and Resorts family

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‘Naturally compelled’ to operate a business

By Harry Zimblar
You might say that Jeff Crist was destined to own and operate his own business.

“It wasn't that I didn't want to work for someone else. I simply found myself naturally compelled to push towards owning and operating a business,” he said. “I viewed it as a challenge and as a path to implement my own ideas.”

Crist and his wife discussed business opportunities and started working on a business plan together, over time.

Crist, a professional engineer, is president of Gatter & Diehl, a firm that specializes in professional construction related design, engineering, management and commissioning services.

Now a successful business leader, Crist had a detailed plan to deal with the anxiety of taking the risks necessary to run a company.

“You must totally understand your industry and how to market relevant ideas,” he explained. “Make yourself acutely aware of the upside and the down-

side. Plan well to position yourself against what could go wrong. Start with a business plan and strategy, including options. If option A doesn't work, move to option B.”

Crist noted that it is important to reach out to prospective clients/customers to test their willingness to do business with your company. “If you are looking for a 'no failure scenario' you will never get off the ground,” said Crist, “Accepting some level of risk is what all businesses do.”

To finance his enterprise, Crist said he went to several banks and reviewed his business plan with them. “I confidently explained how my plan would work. From there, I obtained the initial financing to allow me to proceed. Be prepared to go to several banks. Some will reject right away. Others will consider and one or two will be excited to assist you.”

Crist explained that he had to use his personal assets as collateral to secure a business loan. This is usually the case with new businesses. “Remember, banks

are in the business of minimizing risk also.”

When considering the many challenges that confront any new business, Crist noted that the core business is the easiest part. “The non-technical portion is certainly the most challenging. There is no single greatest challenge. It is a combination of clear communication, accepting industry change, contracting, collections, employee benefits, cost controls, and controlling liabilities are some of the challenges we face.”

One thing that every startup business leader will hear is this piece of advice: Having a great idea is not enough. You must also build the infrastructure that will support and sustain the business.

“Surround yourself with quality, positive thinking people,” Crist advised. “Strive to build relationships with decision makers. Ignore and separate yourself from the negative thinkers. Adopt a 'can do' attitude and expect that you are going to work harder and longer than anyone else in the company.”



—Photo Submitted
Jeff Crist, shown here in a submitted photo, president of Gatter & Diehl, said he started the business to implement his own ideas and reach his own goals.



Gazette Photo/Lucille Kentner
Stanley Ferguson, one of the three owners of the 50 year-old Guy's Hardware business, stands behind the counter on June 4, ready to greet customers, answer questions and make suggestions. Guy's Hardware is located at 6231 Allegheny Road/Rt. 96, Manns Choice.

More than just a ‘guy’ to help *Guy's Hardware celebrates 50 years*

**By Lucille Kentner
Gazette Staff Writer**
MANNS CHOICE — No matter the need for home improvement projects, it is always nice to say, “I have a guy to do that.”

For Bedford County residents, however, they have more than just “a guy” to help — they have Guy's Hardware.

The business, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, is best described as a neighborhood hardware store with the inventory to rival the biggest home improvement chain. It is located at 6231 Allegheny Road, Manns Choice, and sells a wide range of items for many different needs.

Some of the things Guy's Hardware sells are quality discount building materials and hardware, automotive needs and lawn and garden items. In addition, they are a Husqvarna dealer, do small engine repair and they employ six technicians that do plumbing, heating and air conditioning repairs.

Stanley Ferguson, one of the business' three owners, says his staff is friendly and extremely knowledgeable, especially for the do-it-yourself enthusiasts.

“We have many do-it-yourselfers come in here, but we

“We have many do-it-yourselfers come in here, but we are always happy to help out.”

—Stanley Ferguson, Guy's Hardware

are always happy to help out,” Ferguson said.

Guy's staff welcomes approximately 500 customers per week, a significant number considering its rural location.

When setting foot into Guy's Hardware, it is easy to see why so many locals choose this as their premier home and business construc-

tion project site. The shelves are densely lined with in-stock products and the workers greet each person as they walk through the door.

The inventory and know-how rivals the “big box” stores many miles away.

The store's motto is, quite aptly, “If Guy's doesn't have it, you don't need it!”

Jesse Topper

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78th Legislative District

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Gazette Photo/Lucille Kentner

Co-owner of LiFeSTYLE, Stefano Ferrari, shows a variety of imported Italian products sold in his eatery, located on West Pitt St., Bedford, June 18. Ferrari sells authentic, "high quality" Italian products that match the quality of the delicious meals he and co-owner, Luca Fanni, serve to their guests.

Bringing authentic Italian food to Bedford

By Lucille Kentner
For the Gazette

In the middle of downtown Bedford, there is a small piece of Milan, brought to you by Italian natives, Stefano Ferrari and Luca Fanni, co-owners of LiFeSTYLE, a high-end store that sells artisan products from Italy and serves up delicious five-course meals at its trattoria on Friday and Saturday evenings.

The name of this gastronomic establishment, itself, and the "odd" capitalization therein, gives a hint at the experience patrons share: Living Italian Food e (and) STYLE, and has been located at 108 East Pitt Street for the past nine years, and has been dishing up all the best in quality cuisine.

Ferrari and Fanni describe food as their "passion."

"We learned to cook from our mothers and our grandmothers, mostly," Ferrari said. "Our concept

was to open with only the best products from Italy. So many 'Italian' things sold in America are not true Italian. We import everything directly from Italy."

An example of items patrons may see on the shelves include dry pastas, coffee, vinegars, oils and sauces, directly from the finest regions of the Mediterranean nation.

Much like in an Italian household, the meals served at LiFeSTYLE are reminiscent of Nonna's Sunday table: Family style.

"We have one table that can seat up to 32 people," Ferrari said. "At first, people are quiet and shy, but when the food and wine come out, people warm up and start talking," he continued.

Patrons of LiFeSTYLE should make reservations prior to their gastronomic experience. They are served a five-course prix fixe menu, which Ferrari and Fanni create at "last minute to keep everything

as fresh as possible."

An example of a typical menu will include the following:

— Appetizers, usually crostini, prosciutto or sopressata;

— A pasta or risotto dish (the only choice given);

— Meat course (chicken, pork, lamb or fresh seafood);

— Cheese;

— Dessert, usually tiramisu, homemade gelato or fresh fruit.

"We will call our customers a few days before their reservations to tell them what's on the menu so they know what to expect. We also give them wine suggestions," Ferrari said. "We make it a point to get to know all our customers so we can accommodate their dietary needs in advance," he continued.

Price per person is \$55, and it is BYOB. Reservations may be made by calling 623-2703 or by visiting the website at www.italian-foodandstyle.com.

Familiar location to be base for classes, crafts

By Elizabeth Coyle
Gazette Managing Editor

Mari-Pat Beene took the leap to open her own business in downtown Bedford as a venture that, for her, didn't have a lot of risk.

In fact, buying the building that formerly housed Lambert's Custom Framing on Juliana Street with plans to reopen a framing business and adding studio and classroom space for established or burgeoning artists, was a low-risk venture for basic reasons, she believes.

"It was a risk but it was a safe risk," Beene said from inside her yet-to-be renovated building that will house her Pigeon Hill Studios.

The front of the building will house Backstage Alpaca Shop which will move from its current location at 148 E. Pitt St. to 115 Juliana St. once the front of the building is renovated. Beene expects that to be in early August.

Beene originally thought about putting up a new building but the fees and costs didn't seem any more reasonable than buying the structure that is as familiar as most buildings in town.

"We've got the prettiest building, I think, in town and it's right in the prime shopping district of Bedford," she said.

Beene thinks she will fill several needs with her own space, which will have an entrance at 115 Juliana St.

She will continue to offer custom framing. She is also renovating to create studio space that will provide opportunities for artists to paint, draw and work in ceramics and other media. She also said workshops and classes may be held at her studios.

Beene, who has her thumbprint as a graphic designer around Bedford County, said she's been asked if she would teach classes, but she didn't really have space. The new location now fulfills that need.

She also has plans to rent out space for those who want to create art but don't have their own facilities.

"Say you have pottery experience but you don't have any supplies or equipment. Or, if you want to paint but you don't have the space in your own home," she said. Customers will be able to rent the space and not only take advantage of the facilities "but also get critiques and some constructive criticisms," she said.

Another plan is to offer workshops that cater to



Gazette Photo/Elizabeth Coyle

Bedford artist Mari-Pat Beene stands in front of the building on Juliana Street, Bedford, which will house her Pigeon Hill Studios as well as Backstage Alpaca Shop, which will soon relocate from East Pitt Street.

"We've got the prettiest building, I think, in town and it's right in the prime shopping district of Bedford."

—Mari-Pat Beene, Pigeon Hill Studios

children, namely the youngsters of those visiting the Omni Bedford Springs Resort.

"They can bring kids in to keep them occupied while they shop around town," she said.

Beene has been a graphic designer, obtaining a degree from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and then, in the mid-1980s, heading out to California right after graduation. She landed a job with a consulting firm, working for 5 1/2 years there before taking a position as senior graphic designer from 1993 to 1995 in a studio, designing packaging for the toy and gaming industry and some giants in the business — Sega and Nintendo, to name a couple.

Since she's lived in the Bedford area the past 11 years, her work is in black and white and metal. She designed the giant quarter that is part of the Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor's Roadside Giants project in the front of Down River Golf Course, Everett, and assisted with three sculptures outside Bedford Elementary. She

also designed the Bedford Heritage Trust's logo and most of the design work for Downtown Bedford Inc., for whom she serves in several volunteer roles.

Beene said she's had help from other artists as she goes through the renovation process. It's how the artistic community works, she said.

"Artists help each other because we love crafting things. We do it for the love of it, not money." Although, she is hoping for success financially.

Beene hopes to open the framing shop in late September and have the studio spaces ready for mid-winter. The website is due to be up soon at www.pigeonhillstudios.com

The building, its location and the downtown area helped Beene to say yes to a new project. She thinks it will also be an asset to the economy.

"I think it will benefit the downtown as a retail space," she said.

Contact Elizabeth Coyle at ecoyle@bedfordgazette.com; 623-1151, ext. 105.

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Gazette Photos/Andrew Carr
Above, Tammy Wiley, and son Adam, are show behind the counters of some of the confections offered at Bedford Candies. At right, the storefront of Bedford Candies is shown.



Oh, how sweet it is *Bedford Candies continues expansion*

By Andrew Carr
Gazette Associate Editor

Bedford Candies, founded in 1929 by George B. Sotiropoulos in the heart of historic Bedford, continues to thrive after nearly 87 years in the community, while opening a second location in the Altoona area and looking to expand with a manufacturing facility in the future.

The store was owned and operated by three generations of the Sotiropoulos

family, before it was purchased by long-time employee Tammy Wiley in 2010.

After moving to a new location in 2011, the site of the old Fisher's Pharmacy building at 106 E. Pitt St., Bedford, the business added a gourmet popcorn line, which was the brainchild of Wiley's son, Adam, who created it as a senior project. The new product line debuted in July 2013, and has continued to become incredibly popular,

according to Wiley.

In the fall of 2015, the business added a kiosk to the Logan Valley Mall, before opening up a temporary storefront in the mall from February to May 2016. Wiley said a second location was opened on June 27, at the Pleasant Valley Shopping Center, offering opportunities for regional customers, as far as State College, "bridging the gap" between the original storefront and those cus-

"We felt that Altoona customers were regulars coming to downtown Bedford. We tried it out at the mall to see reception, and people were really thrilled to have us coming to town."

—Tammy Wiley, Bedford Candies

tomers.

"We felt that Altoona customers were regulars coming to downtown Bedford," she said. "We tried it out at the mall to see

reception, and people were really thrilled to have us coming to town."

She said the business has begun searching for a manufacturing facility and

warehouse in the Bedford area, with the hopes to have those facilities open by the summer of 2017.

Although a lot has changed for Bedford Candies, including the new location and the addition of gourmet popcorn, the classic family recipes and great chocolates are still handmade daily on-site.

Contact Andrew Carr at acarr@bedfordgazette.com; 623-1151, ext. 130. Follow on Twitter @acarrbedgaz.

Walton's vision succeeds beyond his dream

By Harry Zimble

One of Bedford County's top employers is the Wal-Mart Distribution Center. Year after year it is an award-winning facility that ranks among the best in the Wal-Mart system. It reaches many excellent milestones due to its excellent workforce, a hallmark of Bedford County and the surrounding region.

Wal-Mart and Sam's Club are now ranked among the top retailers in the world. It all started in the mind of Sam Walton.

Walton didn't invent the chain department store. As he once stated, "In business it is wise to take the best ideas from someone else."

Woolworth opened its first "Five and Dime" store in 1878. Sears and Roebuck transitioned from a mail order platform to store sales in 1926 when Walton was only 8 years old and living on a farm in Oklahoma.

Walton's vision was simple: bring Big City discounting to small-town America.

To launch his first store, Walton mortgaged his home and borrowed money. The year was 1962 and the first store opened in Rogers, Arkansas. The store offered rural customers products priced to meet their budgets. As a result, Wal-Mart was able to compete against the leading department store chains in America.

Sam Walton, like many entrepreneurs, thrived on his belief that he could do it better than the other stores. "If I had to single out one element in my life that has made a difference for me, it would be a passion to compete," he once stated.

In 2015, Wal-Mart earned nearly \$132 billion in profits, having supplanted much — if not all — the competition. By 1994, for example, Woolworth had sold most of its Canadian stores to Wal-Mart and closed its remaining American stores three years later. Sears has lost \$7.1 billion over the last four fiscal years and was recently forced to borrow \$750 million to keep its floundering business afloat.

"You can make a lot of mistakes and still recover if you run an efficient operation," Walton said. "You can be brilliant and still go out of business if you are too inefficient."



"If I had to single out one element in my life that has made a difference for me, it would be a passion to compete."

—Sam Walton, Wal-Mart founder

Much of Wal-Mart's success can be attributed to its efficient supply chain and strategically located distribution centers. And that's where Bedford County fits in.

The local workforce is committed to continuous improvement and consistently meets or exceeds

company goals. This DC has enabled Wal-Mart to supply the company's continued expansion in the Mid-Atlantic Region.

By combining Sam Walton's entrepreneurial vision and Bedford County's dedicated workforce, hundreds of jobs in Bedford County have been created.



—Photos submitted
Pictured, above, is Wal-Mart Distribution Center 6047, located in Bedford. The award-winning Wal-Mart Distribution Center is one of Bedford County's top employers. At left, pictured is Sam Walton, the founder of Wal-Mart. Walton grew Wal-Mart from a small business in Rogers, Arkansas to a business that earned nearly \$132 billion in profits in 2015.

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Clark Contractors looking to the future

Paving the way for green construction

**By Andrew Carr
Gazette Associate Editor**

One local construction business is paving the way for green construction and resource management in the local community, using their resources to construct “green buildings” and electric car chargers.

Clark Contractors Inc., which is located at 145 Clark Building Road, Bedford, has been moving into the future, according to Clifton Clark, current owner and operator.

Since 1951 Clark Contractors has performed commercial and industrial work for a wide range of clients throughout the central/western Pennsylvania and northern Maryland area, according to the company's website.

Clark said the business is moving into new territories of green construction and electric car charger installation, while still focusing on their existing commercial and industrial projects.

“We are continuing with our existing customers, which are government agencies, commercial and industrial, and we are looking to do more work in the field of green building, energy savings and new technologies,” he said.

Clark said under a Department of Environmental Protection program, the company has installed six electric car chargers to date, five on the Pennsylvania Turnpike

and one at the Harrisburg Airport. These are electric car charging stations, using two different types of chargers, which can charge an electric vehicle anywhere from within an hour to eight hours, he said.

Clark said the company plans to install four or five more of these chargers at other state properties as well.

He said the company has also been doing a lot of LED retrofits for existing facilities, which is replacing all the old light fixtures with new high-performing, energy-saving LED lights, and has completed two “green building” facilities, which are designed to cut energy savings and help manage resources.

“It's the future because of sustainability,” Clark said. “The green building has every aspect in it. We do recycling, we do energy savings, and it all improves the environment through the reuse of resources and cutting the energy cost in use in a building by over 50 percent in some cases.”

Locally, Clark said the company recently completed an expansion for the Holiday Inn Express in Breezewood as well as are in the process of a 35,000 square foot expansion for Central Hydraulics.

Clark said the company follows the entire process from the initial excavation to the final install of HVAC and plumbing components.



—Photo Submitted

Shown is the construction process of one of the “green buildings” built by Clark Contractors at the Carbon Township Waste Water Treatment Plant.

From high-efficiency fixtures that save money on monthly utility bills and specialized plumbing and HVAC for supermarkets, car washes or other businesses to integrated communications systems that improve workflow, Clark Contractors has the innovative solutions to enhance bottom-lines, according to the company's website.

Clark said the business was started by his grandfather, Paul Clark, with his first major project

in 1952, being the Howard Johnson in Breezewood. Clark said his father then took over the business in 1982 and developed the headquarters at the Clark Building where the business currently operates.

Clark said in 1998 he took over office operations, and the business has continued to grow. As a third-generation in a family business, Clark said it is important to continue the family tradition and keep the business growing.

“My motivation is to be able to expand the company into the future and continue the growth of the company that occurred in the past 45 years before my arrival.”

—Clifton Clark,
Clark Contractors, Inc.

“My motivation is to be able to expand the company into the future and continue the growth of the company that occurred in the past 45 years before my arrival,” he said.

The business currently has 65 full time employees and is licensed in 10 states, reaching as far north as Maine and as far south as South Carolina.

Clark said customers range from state government agencies to the federal government, the U.S. Postal Service and many commercial and industrial businesses throughout the region.

For more information on the company, visit their website at www.clarkcontractorinc.com.

Contact Andrew Carr at acarr@bedfordgazette.com; 623-1151, ext. 130. Follow on Twitter @acarrbedgaz.

Miller's Quality Recycling: From the road to recyclables

**By Andrew Carr
Gazette Associate Editor**

Steve Miller started out in recycling after he wanted a career change from the trucking industry, to get off the road and spend more time with his family.

Miller's Quality Recycling, located in Bedford, started more than 30 years ago and has since grown into a family venture, which includes his wife Kim, daughter Crystal Predix and son-in-law Jason, daughter Tiffany Tice and son-in-law Garrett and his grandchildren. Specializing in metals

and waste paper recycling, Miller said the business buys all grades of metal, plastics and paper, which are processed by the company.

Miller said he had a conversation with a friend, who told him about a recycling opportunity from a local business and he began picking up bales of cardboard from Giant Eagle in the early 1980s.

“We just started growing from there,” Miller said. “Back in the early '80s that wasn't a big thing like it is now, and we have grown with it ever since.”

The Millers then partnered with a Maryland hauler in another recycling venture, Penn Mar Recycling in Cumberland, Maryland, before becoming sole owners of the facility, he said. Miller said the company handles all the recycling needs of Allegany County, Maryland, and the majority of the baling and processing now occurs at their Cumberland facility.

Today, the business also offers roll off services, bale pickups, installs balers and other recycling needs, offers compartmentalized boxes and recycles used pallets.

“We try to be creative and find new ways to recycle things,” Miller said. “We are pretty versatile with what we do.”

He said the Penn Mar facility has grown from a 10,000 square-foot facility to a 150,000 square-foot facility.

He said the company employs nine individuals in Bedford and 14 individuals in Cumberland. Miller said he prides himself with helping other businesses “go green.”

“We kind of pride ourselves on being a one-stop service. We like going into businesses and consulting them and teaching them how to recycle,” he said.

For more information or



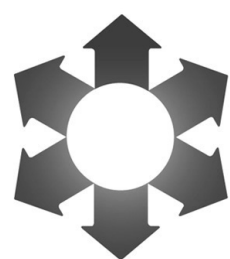
Gazette photo/Andrew Carr

Steve Miller, owner and operator of Miller's Quality Recycling, is shown in front of several cardboard bales the company handles.

for estimates, call 623-2100.

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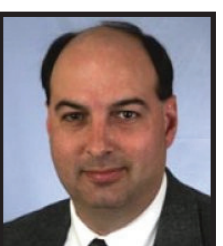
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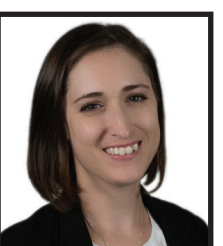
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Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission

SAP&DC's Loan Program helps businesses maintain and increase their markets and create new jobs. The loan program is available to eligible businesses in various industry sectors for land/building costs, machinery/equipment, and working capital limited to inventory and new personnel costs. Special programs are also available for businesses engaged in international trade.

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The Progress Fund provides loans to tourism-related businesses.

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From trash to treasure, making a family business grow with hard work

By Andrew Carr
Gazette Associate Editor

They say one man's trash is another man's treasure, and for a local family, hauling either away has allowed them to continue to expand their business into the surrounding counties.

Weaver's Sanitation Service Inc. has been a local, family-owned business for more than 50 years. Robbie Weaver, current co-owner and operator, said the business began in 1965, with his grandfather, William Weaver.

Robbie's father, Robert Weaver Sr., also known as "Bob," took over the business in 1969. He went door to door handing out cards to grow the customer base, Weaver said. It began with only one truck and Bob and his wife, Shirley, as employees. After Robert Sr. was killed in a traffic accident in 2000, Robbie continued the family tradition, running the business alongside his mother.

"Eventually we continued to grow in customer base in Bedford and Fulton counties," Weaver said.

The business started into the commercial dumpster service and in 1990 began roll-off service. Today, Weaver's employs 30 people, runs 19 trucks and services more than 5,000 customers with residential, commercial dumpsters and roll-off service in Bedford, Fulton and parts of Blair and Franklin counties as well as Somerset, Cambria and Huntingdon counties and in Maryland and West Virginia.

"We travel quite a bit with the roll-off side of our business," Weaver said.

In March 2012, the business opened a new facility, the Breezewood Transfer Station, where individuals, contractors and other garbage haulers can bring in loads of trash in pickups or cars, trailers and garbage trucks to unload and it is then transported by tractor-trailer to landfills. The station also



Gazette Photos/Andrew Carr
Above, Robbie Weaver, right, stands with his son Brice, left, and mother Shirley, middle, in front of one of the many trucks they use to haul trash for the local community.

At right, trucks from Weaver's Sanitation stand ready to pickup refuse from the local community.

"We are just continuing to try to serve our customers well in the communities that we have and looking forward to continuing to grow as we can."

—Robbie Weaver, Weaver Sanitation Service Inc.

accepts co-mingled recycling for plastic bottles, aluminum cans, glass bottles, newspapers, cardboard and other recyclable materials.

Weaver said the business plans to stay in the family in the next generation as well, with his son planning to take the business over after obtaining a business degree from Penn State.

"We are just continuing to try to serve our customers well in the communities that we have and looking forward to continuing to grow as we can," he said.

Contact Andrew Carr at acarr@bedfordgazette.com; 623-1151, ext. 130. Follow on Twitter @acarrbedgaz.



County campground blossoms from dream to reality

By Harry Zimblar

It took several summers for Dick and Sandi Wright to come to the decision that their retirement would include the creation of a new campground in Bedford County. Several trips east, and armed with the knowledge of what makes a Bed and Breakfast facility a success, the Wrights decided to purchase property on Raystown Lake. The Heritage Cove Resort was born.

"Our plan was to deliver the same service we knew we wanted to receive," said Sandi Wright.

Though neither of them had experience in the hospitality industry, they were determined to take the necessary risks to create a new company.

As the details for the new resort moved forward, they received help in writing a business plan from the Small Business Development Center. They secured a loan from the Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission

(SAP&DC) that they could leverage for bank loans.

Unfortunately, a loan from a small local bank languished in a financial netherworld due to the acquisition of the small bank by a larger bank. As a result, the viability of the Heritage Cove project was called into question.

"At stake was not only the business, but all of our personal assets," said Sandi Wright.

As with the formation of any new enterprise, the Wrights knew they were in for many challenges.

"Although we were aware of the risks, we never experienced fear during the development of the business," Sandi said "Our passion for the project was so strong, and we felt we were well-prepared to take on the challenges, many of which we could never have anticipated."

The Wrights are happy with the progress they have made up to now. "We feel we are beginning to see suc-

cess," Sandi Wright noted. "And the positive feedback from our guests is reassuring. It has been an adventure, and we are happy we took the risk. If we did it again, we would be more conscious of the role that local authorities play in the success or the lack of success of a business."

The greatest challenge facing Heritage Cove is access to its idyllic location among the verdant rolling hills at the southern end of Raystown Lake.

Life before Heritage Cove included experiences that the Wrights were able to incorporate into their new business. "There were lessons learned along the way. But other campground owners in the region have shared their experiences and for that we are extremely appreciative. We were often able to learn from their mistakes."

Building on a vision is what being an entrepreneur and creating Heritage Cove Resort is all about.



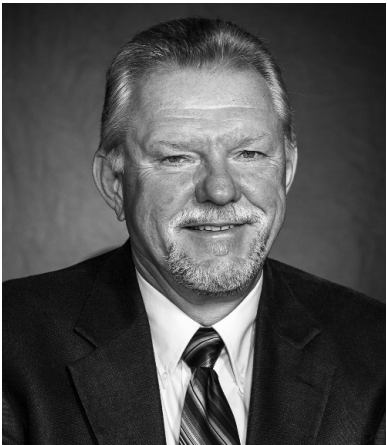
—Photo submitted

Pictured are Dick and Sandi Wright, owners of the Heritage Cove Resort. The resort, located on Raystown Lake, was started with the desire to provide hospitality for campers in Bedford County. "Our plan was to deliver the same service we knew we wanted to receive," said Sandi Wright.

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Locally grown, locally served, locally eaten

Horn O Plenty takes farm fresh to a new level

By Erin Thompson
Gazette Staff Writer

For Mandi Horn, what started as a plot of farmland in Manns Choice within a few years developed into a farm-to-table restaurant, Horn O Plenty in Wolfsburg, where about 70 percent of the food is grown on site, while the rest is purchased from local farmers.

Just 10 years ago, Mandi and her husband, Jeff, were living in Altoona, which she refers to as the “rat race,” and coming to Bedford every weekend to tend to her husband’s family farm.

“At the time, I was buying a lot of expensive organic produce to try to feed myself,” which is when she decided to start farming for herself.

Meanwhile, the couple wanted to live closer to family and to help keep up her husband’s family farm.

“The farm needed work, so we decided to quit our jobs in Altoona to become full-time farmers,” she said. “Before long, I

noticed I was making way too much stuff, so I started selling it.”

Soon after, Mandi said she started receiving notes from buyers saying how much they enjoyed her offerings. Then, in 2006, she began her community supported agriculture program, through which she offered a subscription service to provide produce to people in the community.

“I just surrendered myself to doing it because no one else (in the area) really was,” said Mandi, who said she had previously taken on numerous odd jobs ranging from selling cars to court reporting. “They were boring jobs to me. I didn’t want a desk job and didn’t want to stare at a computer screen. Farming was great because I was outdoors. I really could connect and felt really alive.”

At one time, Mandi said she had about 50 families that subscribed to her CSA, some of whom she said needed some tips on how to prepare the vegetables she pro-

vided.

“That’s when I decided there need(ed) to be a way people could see what they can do with the food,” she said.

At that time, she had been considering opening up a bakery on the farm to subsidize income, but said when the building became available on Wolfsburg Road, she envisioned customers eating there and decided to switch gears.

To do the cooking, Mandi built a wood-fire concrete and brick oven, which was inspired from a trip to Germany.

The restaurant now offers a variety of unique dishes on an ever-changing menu that is determined by what produce is in season at the time.

“Life’s way too short to eat the same thing over and over. You want to take the time to eat something that’s tasty,” she said.

Contact Erin Thompson at ethompson@bedfordgazette.com; 623-1151, ext. 150. Follow on Twitter @ethompsoinbedgaz.



Gazette Photo/Erin Thompson

Mandi Horn, owner of Horn O Plenty, a farm-to-table restaurant, poses with freshly-baked loaves of bread in the kitchen of Horn O Plenty restaurant on June 21. Horn started her restaurant in 2012 following the success of her community supported agriculture program.

Expanding an already popular business

Juli’s Wearable Art keeps a familiar location

By Elizabeth Coyle
Gazette Managing Editor

Jim Gonsman has spent much of his career assessing business and industry representatives looking to start or expand a business.

As vice president in commercial banking for First National Bank, he’s looked at business plans, gone through the projections and gauged whether to lend the money and give that business a chance at a new start or an expansion.

But, Gonsman, who has been a banker for 21 years, was on the opposite side of the desk in recent months, pitching his new venture with fiancée Juli Dull: Juli’s Wearable Art.

He and Dull went through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for financing, which Gonsman said is a highly com-

petitive process.

“Going through the approval process was an eye-opening experience,” he said. First they had to pitch the business proposal to Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission which gives its recommendation to the state. They gave the business plan and other information to Southern Alleghenies, which fortunately, gave its approval.

Having been on the other side of the lending process has given Gonsman new insight to business, particularly, smaller businesses.

“I think it’s going to make me a better lender,” he said.

He and Dull had little doubt that their business had a solid foundation. They purchased the business from Elaine Housel, who sold Elaine’s Wearable Art, including the mailing

list and other proprietary information that is invaluable.

Another asset that is both measurable and immeasurable is the location of the store — at the corner of Juliana and Pitt streets. It’s arguably the busiest, most recognizable intersection in the county — maybe the middle of Breezewood is busier and more familiar to travelers — and the building itself has been a popular stop in downtown for shoppers for decades.

Dull first bought the Deepwood Gallery store in 1994, from Housel after having worked in the store as a teen and then a college student at Elaine’s. Dull, a 1993 business administration and management major at the University of Pittsburgh, had the store from 1995 to 2005.

After Dull sold Deepwood,

it traded spaces with Elaine’s Wearable Art.

In 2004, Dull obtained her realtor’s license. In 2008, she took on the added position of Main Street manager after the first, Sharon Turkovich, left the position.

After leaving DBI, Dull became a personal and commercial account executive for Reed, Wertz and Roadman.

But there was something about operating the small business that drew her back. For starters, she returned to work for Elaine’s in October of 2015.

“Juli was selling insurance at Reed, Wertz and Roadman, and although they were great to her, that wasn’t really her passion,” Gonsman said.

Housel was contemplating retirement and went to Gonsman to talk about her next step.

“I knew he dealt with a lot of different clients and did a lot of commercial loans. I said I would love to find the right person to take over the business,” Housel said.

She didn’t want the business to close after she

retired. She and Dull had not only worked as employer-employee when Dull was in high school and college, then side-by-side as downtown merchants and then, as catalysts for the formation of Downtown Bedford Inc. They had a real appreciation for each other and a relationship that Dull compared to as mother-daughter.

“Juli has always been good at retail,” Housel said. “Juli came back to work in the store and she went with me on some buying trips. Juli just has an eye for it.”

Dull had to get approval from fashion companies such as Vera Bradley and Brighton, which Elaine’s had sold, before the new business could put it on the shelves. Brighton made Dull go through a customer training program before they would approve her as a vendor.

Gonsman said as a new business owner he’s had to learn QuickBooks and pay the many taxes for which an employer and business owner is responsible.

“There’s so many taxes. I didn’t realize how many taxes you have to pay,” Gons-

man said, smiling.

And, he got to go on one of the buying trips Housel talked about. He joked about how quickly the cost of the products adds up. Dull said that’s the business.

From here, the couple is hoping to continue to develop the online site, <http://juliswearableart.com>, and expanding to an online catalog from which customers can order. They have changed the look of the shop outside and inside, upgraded to a computerized inventory system and, with Gonsman’s influence, added a men’s section. Juli’s has seven employees, some of whom were with Elaine’s.

The couple hope to keep things interesting and fresh.

Gonsman, who is still a full-time lender at First National Bank, said he’s working long hours after work and on weekends at the shop.

He has no complaints. “I love it,” he said. “I think you have to love it to own a small business.”

Contact Elizabeth Coyle at ecoyle@bedfordgazette.com; 623-1151, ext. 105.



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“I love it. I think you have to love it to own a small business.”

—Jim Gonsman,
co-owner,
Juli’s Wearable Art

—Photo Submitted

At right, Juli Dull and fiancé Jim Gonsman stand outside Juli’s Wearable Art, which the two purchased this year. Gonsman, a vice president of commercial banking for First National Bank, said the experience has given him a new perspective on banking.

Gazette Photo/Elizabeth Coyle
Below, Juli Dull and fiancé Jim Gonsman stand inside the store, Juli’s Wearable Art, that the two purchased this year. Formerly Elaine’s Wearable Art, the store has undergone some changes inside and out, including adding a men’s section.





Gazette photo/Andrew Carr
Tod and Jean Manspeaker stand in front of the racks of wine bottles at the tasting room of the Briar Valley Winery, 107 E. Pitt. St., Bedford.

Briar Valley Winery sells locally made vintages

**By Andrew Carr
Gazette Associate Editor**

For one local couple, making wine is a very hands-on experience.

Tod and Jean Manspeaker, owners and operators of Briar Valley Winery, 107 E. Pitt St., Bedford, have taken their passion for wine and translated it into a locally-sourced business, where the grapes are grown locally, the product is made locally and then sold locally.

Tod Manspeaker said the winery began in 2006 with the planting of their first vineyard in Dutch Corner, with 2,300 vines, “to kind of learn how to not plant a vineyard I always jokingly say.”

“We learned what worked and what didn’t,” he said.

The couple then opened a tasting room in 2007, before moving to their Pitt Street location in 2010.

Manspeaker said the charm of the historic building where the tasting room, as well as its central location in the heart of downtown Bedford, is nice for both locals and visitors to the area.

He said several private functions are held at the location every year, including fundraisers, private parties, bridal showers and other events. The tasting room also features live music the first Friday of the month, and the Bedford County Arts Council has a rotating art exhibit featured at the location, which is changed every quarter.

In 2011, the couple then planted a second vineyard in Everett, which features 10,000 vines. He said the property was purchased in the 1950s by his parents, where they raised quarter horses before the property was repurposed for the vineyard.

Manspeaker said he and Jean fell in love with vineyards after vacationing in the Finger Lakes, and decided to make a go of running their own winery. He said Jean’s grandfather had grape vines and sold grapes while he was raised on a dairy farm.

“So we both kind of had the feeling for agriculture,” he said.

Manspeaker said Jean is the winemaker for the business, which is unusual, as “there is only a handful of women winemakers in Pennsylvania.”

The couple and their workers do much of the work by hand, from the planting to the pruning to the harvesting, which “makes a very nice approachable wine.”

Manspeaker said pruning the vineyard begins in February, when workers prune the vines seven days a week until the middle of July.

“The vines need constant attention, pruning, tweaking, cutting and fine tuning,” he said. “We cut the grape clusters by hand. There are ways to automate and speed things up, but the more you do by hand, the better quality of the wine. And from day one, our vision and our mission statement for the winery is its about the wine. Whatever is best for the wine is what we do.”

He said there is a lot of



Gazette photo/Andrew Carr
Tod Manspeaker, who owns and runs Briar Valley Winery with his wife Jean, inspects the leaves of a grape vine in the company's Everett vineyard. Manspeaker said 10,000 vines were planted, with several varieties of French-style grapes, which will eventually ripen and be turned into wine.

“ There are ways to automate and speed things up, but the more you do by hand, the better quality of the wine. And from day one, our vision and our mission statement for the winery is its about the wine.”
—Tod Manspeaker, Briar Valley Winery

science and tradition that goes into making the wines they feature, including chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Riesling, Lemberger, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Malbec grapes.

The grapes start to ripen and then are picked from August to October. From there, they are crushed, processed and fermented, before the couple bottles them to feature at the tasting room.

“We do all the bottling ourselves. We apply the label, the cork, the capsule,” he said.

The red wines are aged in French oak barrels and the whites in stainless steel containers for 18 to 24 months before being bottled. Then the wines age for another eight to 10 weeks before being released.

“You could easily have a Merlot grape that is growing right now, not released

for two, 2 1/2 years,” Manspeaker said.

The winery is a labor of love for the couple, who pride themselves on the hand-made products that they feature.

For more information on the products they offer, visit their website at www.briarvalleywinery.com

Contact Andrew Carr at acarr@bedfordgazette.com; 623-1151, ext. 130. Follow on Twitter @acarrbedgaz.



Hometown Bank plans on opening third branch

**By Lucille Kentner
For the Gazette**

Hometown Bank is preparing to open its third branch, about nine years after it launched its first one in Everett.

The bank has purchased land at 13174 Dunnings Highway, Claysburg, in response to the success they’ve experienced at their Everett and Bedford locations, bank officials said recently

Elaine Barfield, senior vice president and chief technology officer, said she hoped the branch could open in late 2016.

In the spring of 2006, several local professionals, including Don DeArment of Friends Cove Mutual Insurance; Barry Ressler of Ressler Inc.; Todd Roadman of Reed, Wertz & Roadman; Merle Helsel, professor at Allegany College of Maryland and former president of First American National Bank; Ted Chwatek, former president of First American Bank of Pennsylvania; Darrell Dodson of Dodson Brothers; Bob Appleby of Everett Foodliner and John Corle of Corle Construction formed the organizational group and set about obtaining regulatory approval and launched a campaign to raise capital through the sale of stock.

“We founded the bank because of the belief that the residents of Bedford County and other areas of rural America are special. They are special because they treat others with consideration and expect to be treated with consideration. They are people, not numbers,” Helsel, chairman of the board of directors, said.

The first branch was opened at 306 West Main Street, Everett, and the Bedford branch, which became the bank’s headquarters, was opened three months later at 638 East Pitt Street, July, 2007.

In the years immediately following the opening, financial institutions across the country went bankrupt and some, out of business, in the financial meltdown of 2007-08.

Hometown was able to weather the storm, Barfield said.

“Our lending decisions were more carefully considered than some of the larger banks that failed. We have a more conservative approach to our banking,” she said.

Through “sound manage-



—Gazette File Photo
Above, Hometown Bank's Bedford office is shown along East Pitt Street. The bank, with a branch in Everett, is planning to expand to Claysburg, in the near future.

Gazete Photo/Elizabeth Coyle
Below, Hometown's first bank branch in Everett is located along Main Street. The bank started as the vision of area entrepreneurs to bring local control to lending and deposits



ment and prudent decisions, Hometown Bank gained profitability and began paying its shareholders a dividend,” Helsel said.

When it came time to expand, Claysburg was seen as “an opportunity to us, in that it is very similar to Everett and Bedford,” Chwatek said. “We are in the process of finalizing our drawings and getting our approval and we hope to break ground soon.”

Barfield compared the residents of Claysburg to those of Everett and Bedford.

“All of these communities have the same small-town atmosphere with the same type of customers with simi-

lar work ethics,” Barfield said.

“We’ve actually been training and hiring additional staff at our existing locations for the past couple of months. Once the Claysburg branch is opened, they will be able to jump right in and take care of our customers,” Chwatek said.

The bank has 29 fulltime workers and one part-time.

Additional information about the services offered for personal, commercial and mortgage options by Hometown Bank may be found on www.hometownbankpa.com. The Everett branch may be contacted at 652-6093. The Bedford office can be reached at 623-6093.

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University looks to invest in business minds

'Invent Penn State' encourages entrepreneurs

By Harry Zimble
Why would one of the nation's greatest research universities get into the business of creating entrepreneurs? Perhaps because it will accomplish several main goals for Penn State: First, it will increase and maximize the transfer of Penn State research and technology from academic to industry. And second, it will help fight the "brain drain" that has plagued the State of Pennsylvania for years.

By encouraging students to explore entrepreneurial avenues, new companies and jobs will be created. Many of them will stay here in Central Pennsylvania.

In order to get the ball rolling, Penn State President Eric Barron outlined — and funded — a new program titled "Invent Penn State." This, he noted, would include the creation of a new culture across the entire campus, including the staff and faculty of the University. In addition to specific programs, including funding competitions, the entire curriculum will be retooled to encourage and incorporate entrepreneurship.

Clearly, the idea of entrepreneurship, of creating startups, has become a major initiative for Penn State. The emphasis on capturing and licensing technology and intellectual property will surely have an impact on the surrounding region, including Bedford County.

Taking a fresh look at Penn State's curriculum is Robert Beaury, interim director of the Engineering Entrepreneurship Minor. He noted that great progress has already been made.

"There is an incredible difference between what Penn State did five years ago and what it is doing today," Beaury said. "It's night and day. Then, there was little support for faculty and students who wanted to start a business. Now, there is real, concrete change taking place. The movement to promote and foster those who are entrepreneurial is getting stronger every day."

One example of the progress that is being made can be found in the entrepreneurship classes being offered by the College of Engineering.

At one time, entrepreneurship classes and experiences only touched the lives of a small group of students. Now, instead of 40 students, the program is assisting 175 students. "The program was restructured to support many more students," Beaury said.

To expedite the creation of new businesses and entrepreneurial activity, Penn State has established clusters of entrepreneurship. There are seven such clusters each with a different business focus. These include: tech-based entrepreneurship in the College of Engineering; the social-based cluster in the College of Engineering; New Ventures cluster in the Smeal College of Business; The Hotel and Hospitality Management cluster in the College of Health and Human Development; The Digital Innovation cluster in the College of Information Science and Technology; the Food and Bio-Innovation cluster in the College of Agricultural Sciences; and the New Media cluster in the College of Communications.



—Photo Submitted

Across the campus, including students, staff and faculty, entrepreneurialism is a high priority at PSU.

More clusters will be created as the university moves further into the implementation of the Invent Penn State program.

In addition to the revisions being made to the undergraduate curriculum,

University administrators are providing guidance for people working in large organizations. They can help their companies succeed by applying an entrepreneurial attitude to their positions within the company.

A master's level program in leadership and entrepreneurship has been introduced. "This provides employees in large organizations a new way to act as an entrepreneur within those organizations," Beaury said.

Hearing better, only a doctor's appointment away

By Lucille Kentner
Gazette Staff Writer
According to the Better Hearing Institute, there are various signs of hearing loss. If someone requires frequent repetition, keeps the television turned up to a high volume, appears to have difficulty in noisy situations or answers inappropriately in conversations, it may be time to consider a consultation with a board certified doctor of audiology.

Susan Parr, a doctor of audiology, with an office near UPMC Bedford Memorial Hospital, has more than 25 years of clinical diagnostic experience

and served on the board of directors for the Academy of Doctors of Audiology and on the State Leaders Committee for the American Academy of Audiology.

Parr was previously the owner of a multi-office practice in Huntingdon/Lewistown, but has brought her state-of-the-art diagnostic testing and hearing aid fitting equipment to Bedford County.

Parr's Pro Hearing is located at 202 Memorial Drive, Suite 3, Everett, and offers a diagnostic exam and selection of hearing aids which are best suited to an individual's hearing

loss, lifestyle and personal situation.

Currently, Dr. Parr offers hearing aids in sizes that will produce better amplification and a custom fit for minimal visibility, including IIC (Invisible-In-The-Canal); ITE (In-The-Ear); RIC (Receiver-In-Canal); ITC (In-The-Canal); CIC (Completely-In-Canal); and BTE (Behind-The-Ear) options.

In addition to the examination and expert fitting of a hearing device, Dr. Parr offers professional services for all ages from infants to adults. The services include video otoscopy examination of the ear



canal and eardrum, outer hair cells analysis, dizziness and balance testing and therapy, tinnitus evaluation treatment and coun-

Audiologist Susan Parr, Au.D., with an office near UPMC Bedford Memorial Hospital, has more than 25 years of clinical diagnostic experience.

—Photo Submitted

In addition to the examination and expert fitting of a hearing device, Dr. Parr offers professional services for all ages from infants to adults.

—Susan Parr, audiologist, is located in Everett

selling, as well as custom hearing protection for musicians, shooters and swimmers.

Further information about Parr's Pro Hearing may be found at www.ParrsProHearing.com,

or by calling 814-623-5007. For appointment convenience, there is also another location in Fulton County at the Fulton County Medical Center, 214 Peach Orchard Road, McConnellsburg.

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Entrepreneurship can start here



—Photo Submitted

The Hess Business Center (HBC) is a Keystone Innovation Zone center (KIZ) with space available to foster innovation and create entrepreneurial opportunities. KIZ is an incentive program that provides tax credits to companies less than eight years old operating within specific targeted industries. For more information, see Page 14 or contact info@bcda.org or (814) 623-4816

Marketing for business park is underway

Bedford County Development Association recently started marketing its fully permitted 80-acre pad in Bedford Township.

The association said its tract in Business Park II is fully permitted by local and state agencies and engineering, design, permitting and earthwork are complete. "We moved forward with this project knowing that it will eliminate months in site preparation for future buyers," noted

Bo Pratt, BCDA chair. "This is a tremendous opportunity given that the site is pad-ready, permitted and designed as a Keystone Opportunity Zone. Available utilities are in place including an abundant and reliable electric supply."

This project is funded by the Business In Our Sites loan program (BIOS) administered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development.

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