

Celebrating 2008



Volume 5 | Issue 3 | March 2009

Chamber Dinner

See page 7 for a wrap-up of this premiere chamber event

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VENANGOCHAMBER.BLOGSPOT.COM



**Welcome New
Members!**

Eric Foy

888 Tarr Road

Titusville, PA 16354

Phone: (814) 827-2241

josie185@verizon.net

Supporting Member (Non-Commerce)

Independent Beachbody Coach

Laura Kelly-Pifer

1020 Grandview Road

Oil City, PA 16301

Phone: (814) 758-1963

laura@exercise2day.com

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**Chamber Goes Green:
GreenPrint Software**

While researching "green tips" this month, I found a blog with excellent reviews of GreenPrint 1.2.9 software. The software reduces your print voracity by putting the maximum amount of text on a page while maintaining readability. This new font "Evergreen" can reduce your paper footprint by 15-20% compared to Times New Roman and Arial.

The really cool thing...it eliminates annoying side bar and banner advertisements from your printed documents. Which, for larger companies, can save 4,000 trees each year!

This product is "free-to-try" and \$29 to buy and is available on www.download.com

A member also told us about "ecofont" which is completely free and was created by omitting small dots from all letters. Visit www.ecofont.com for the download.

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4 Your Car Connection, Inc.

Staff

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swilliams@venangochamber.org

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR ASHLEY MCCAULEY
ashleym@venangochamber.org

OFFICE ASSISTANT TABITHA VECERO
tvecero@venangochamber.org

News You Can Use - Chamber Signs Name Against Card Check Bill

The Venango Area Chamber joined other Pennsylvania chambers in opposition to the pending federal Employee Free Choice Act, also dubbed Card Check. The legislation is designed to make labor organizing easier.

Under the bill, employees looking to unionize would confidentially sign cards until more than 50 percent of a company's employee base signs on for unionization. When that happens, the National Labor Relations Board would decide whether to certify the union. And if it should, an employer has to start negotiating with the union within 10 days.

As it stands, employees hold secret elections at workplaces to decide whether they want to form unions. But to set up an election, workers must submit cards signed by at least 30 percent of the company's workforce. And, the names on those cards are not kept secret. Many union backers have said employers use the time before elections to dissuade and intimidate employees into voting against unionizing.

The chamber fears there would be a lack of balance in the Card Check process, tipping the process in favor of unions. The Card Check legislation could adversely affect small business, too, as it could lead small business employees to easily set up a union without checks and balances, he said.

The Venango Chamber's board of directors at its February board meeting unanimously voted to add our name to a letter to legislators in opposition to the bill.

The commonwealth is a battleground state for the pending legislation and Republican Sen. Arlen Specter could cast the defining vote, according to the chamber.

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Member to Member: Small Business Dev. Center



Amy Keth, Small Business Development Center Consultant

Amy Keth, a business consultant with the Clarion University Small Business Development Center (SBDC), now provides consulting services for Venango, Clarion and Forest Counties.

Amy has worked with clients in several different industries and has assisted numerous clients with preparing a comprehensive business plan that includes detailed financial forecasts for SBDC clients. She also provides research, marketing and general management assistance to small businesses.

Prior to joining the SBDC in July 2004, Amy worked in the banking industry as a credit analyst and commercial lender. She also has

experience as a tax-preparer. She is a Clarion University graduate, earning a bachelor's degree in finance and is currently enrolled in the MBA program at Clarion University.

Member to Member: Longaberger Baskets

Connie Shull, the local Longaberger Basket consultant and chamber member will be coordinating a carpool to attend the Longaberger Basket Spring Fling Shopping Extravaganza during March 27-28 and April 3 & 4 at the factory store.

The shopping trip includes extra discounts for attendees and basket swaps.

More details are included in this month's newsletter as an insert.

For more information, contact Connie Shull at (814) 676-5128 or (814) 758-2219.

Sandy K. Hovis, LUTCF

Agent

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Dave Klapec

Member to Member: U.S. Congressmen Thompson

Newly elected Congressman Glenn 'GT' Thompson, will be holding office hours at the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce Office on Friday, March 20th, between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.

Thompson's staff will be available to answer questions and to assist Venango County residents and business owners with a wide array of issues including, but not limited to, economic and workforce development opportunities, social security, Medicare, and veterans benefits.

If you are not able to attend and need assistance or have a question, please feel free to contact Congressman Thompson's Titusville Office at 814-827-3985 or visit his website at <http://thompson.house.gov>.

You can follow Congressman Thompson on Twitter at www.twitter.com/CongressmanGT

Member to Member: Big Brothers Big Sisters

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Venango & Forest Counties, a program of Family Service & Children's Aid Society, invites you to support their 13th Annual Bowl For Kids' Sake event to be held Saturday, April 4, 2009 at the Seneca Lanes Bowling Alley.

This event is the major fundraiser for the local Big Brothers Big Sisters program. The organization matches at-risk children from single parent and/or families with a caring adult mentor. By providing guidance and direction, volunteers help the children realize their self-worth and potential as an adult. Higher grades, lower chances of substance abuse, and an increase in self-esteem are some of the rewards of this meaningful program.

Some of the ways that individuals and businesses may participate include sponsors to make a monetary, food, or door prize donation. In addition, they are seeking those interested in forming a bowling team of 4 – 6 people.

For more information, please contact Big Brothers Big Sisters of Venango & Forest Counties at 676-9940 ext. 28 or 677-4005 or email bowl4kidssake@usachoice.net.



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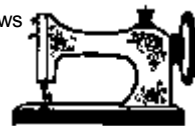
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Spotlight on New Member: Art Glass Restoration



Joe Gerzina is pictured with some of his students through the PA Partners in the Arts Program

Art Glass Restoration, owned by Joe Gerzina makes its home in the Transit Studios, located in the National Transit Building Annex on Seneca Street in Oil City. Joe began working with glass 30 years ago as a hobby, learning the art during a 4 evening workshop. He continued to study on his own, building a collection of tools and supplies that allowed him to work on a variety of types of glass, including leaded, stained glass and crystal.

Five years ago Joe restored the windows in an 1871 synagogue in Titusville, which is now home to Blue Gill Graphics. He has honed his skills in glass reproduction and restoration work to enable him to repair unique and valuable items that are brought to him.

Joe is now teaching students as an Artist in Residence through the PA Partners in the Arts Program. All 90 students at Venango Catholic High School have had the opportunity to work with him

and 6 students were selected to come to his studio to complete individual projects and a restoration of a window in the school chapel.

Joe, his wife Debbie and daughter Michaela reside in Oil City. Joe works full time as an Education Consultant for the IU6.

Joe invites anyone to stop by his studio on open studio days to see his work or to contact him at agroc@verizon.net if you have a project to discuss with him. You can also reach him by phone at (814) 758-0412. For the schedule of open studio days visit www.ocartscouncil.com and click on the Transit Studio Artist marker.

Member to Member: Tropical Tanning Salon



Inside the Stylish Hair and Wig Boutique by Tropical Tanning.

Tropical Tanning Salon is proud to announce the opening of the Stylish Hair and Wig Boutique. Thus, expanding their services even further by including hair styling, wigs and waxing. They also carry a full line of styling products from Redken and Kenra for all your hair care needs.

Tropical Tanning is always searching for the ways to best serve our customers and the community. We have a wide variety of services to offer – the only completely private UV free spray tanning system, UV stand up booth, 18 UV tanning beds, intense tanning in our mega bed and in 2007 they added the Hydration Station, the only skin care conditioning system in the area. In addition, there is nothing like a refreshing fruit or java smoothie from The Island Hut to complete your visit to the tropics.

Don't hesitate to stop in today for all your tanning, relaxation, and hair salon needs located in one convenient area at the top of Seneca Hill.

Annual Dinner Recap & Volunteer of the Year - Amanda Williams

The Annual Dinner was held on Wednesday, February 18th at Cross Creek Resort in Titusville.

The dinner honored Robert M. Pilewski, M.D. as the 2008 Citizen of the Year, as well as, Amanda Williams as the 2008 Volunteer of the Year.

The ceremonies began with Susan Williams, Executive Director, presenting a PowerPoint of the Venango Chamber's Year-in-Review.

The 2008 Oil Heritage & Cranberry Festival Queens, Cassie Groner and Alex Cardy, took the stage to award the 2008 Volunteer of the Year award to



Left to Right: Cassie Groner, Amanda Williams and Alex Cardy

Amanda Williams, Manager of State Street Furniture. Susan further commented on Amanda's assistance around the chamber office including aiding staff on extremely busy days in a moment's notice.

Dr. Pilewski's accomplishments were chronicled on the big screen with a video tribute produced by Venango Video.

Joseph Pilewski, M.D., son of Dr. Pilewski presented a heartfelt presentation of his father's service to the community, both as a physician and citizen.

Dr. Pilewski's acceptance remarks were both poignant and a challenge for others to contribute to their communities saying, "volunteering is the pinnacle of self satisfying activities for any of us and for all of us."

Citations were presented to Dr. Pilewski by Congressman Glenn "GT" Thompson, Senator Mary Jo White, and Representative Scott Hutchinson. A proclamation, naming February 18, 2009, Dr. Pilewski Day, was read by Mayor Sonja Hawkins.

Chambers & ORA Host Quarterly Breakfast Forum



Quarterly Breakfast Forum - Lowering Energy Costs

7:30 a.m. Friday,
March 27
Arlington Hotel,
Fifth Floor

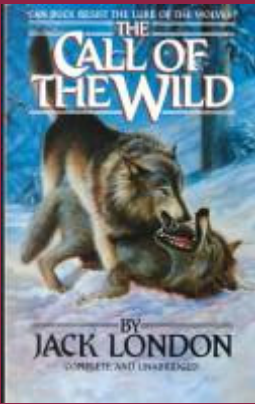
Presented by:

- **Geoff Bristow**, Manager of the DEP's NW Office of Energy and Technology Deployment (OETD), will discuss the Small Business Energy Efficiency Program, which provides 25% reimbursement grants, up to \$25,000 for PA businesses with no more than 100 employees, to acquire certain equipment or adopt certain processes that promote energy efficiency. The grants can be used for such energy reducing practices as purchasing heat pumps or energy efficient lighting to help decrease your energy costs by reducing energy consumption.
- **Gary Svetz**, President/CEO of Svetz consulting Services, LLC, will detail the wholesale energy markets and purchasing options and present an overview of current alternative energy applications.

Quarterly Breakfast Forums are coordinated by the Franklin, Titusville and Venango area chambers of commerce and the Oil Region Alliance.

The cost is \$15 (includes breakfast.) Call (814) 676-8521 to RSVP by Friday, March 20.

Member to Member: Franklin & Oil City Public Libraries



The classic novel by Jack London, *The Call of the Wild*,

The Franklin Public Library, in partnership with the Cooperstown Public Library and the Oil City Library is hosting The Big Read in Venango County during April 2008, and encourages everyone to read Jack London's classic tale of Buck the dog in The Call of the Wild. At their session on February 2, 2009, Franklin City Council declared April as Big Read Month in Franklin.

The Friends of the Oil City Library are hosting a kickoff event on Thursday, April 2, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Oil City Library as a joint mixer for the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce and the Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce. Door prizes will include copies of the book.

Activities are planned for April, including an art show at the National Transit Art Gallery in Oil City, book discussions, showing of films related to the book, and more. Copies of the book will be available at each of the libraries and at events throughout the month. The libraries also have reader's guides, teachers guides, and audio CDs to introduce the book and provide background information. Contact the library for a full

list of events and locations.

The Big Read is a project funded by the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and in cooperation with Arts Midwest.

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Member to Member: Classy Catering

The Chamber would like to congratulate Kathy Exley of Classy Catering for placing third at the "Franklin on Ice" Chili Cook-off on February 7th.

Having a special winter event? Contact Kathy today at 814/758-2116 and make her famous chili part of your menu.

FLEX - Social Networking Brown Bag Lunch

Once again the February Brown Bag Lunch invited great conversation between chamber members. Social Media is all the rage! If you haven't heard of LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, it won't be long before you do. We'll continue along the same lines in March. The format for the lunch discussion is very spontaneous, but based on last month's interest we'll try to spend some time learning about web video and RSS feed. Remember, this is very new to all of us, so come along and learn with us. There is no charge, just pick up lunch on your way and join us at noon at the chamber, Wednesday, February 18th.



Member to Member: Social Media

Even when you can't join us for events, you can still connect with chamber members, Chamber staff on the business community online. Here's how:

Join the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce group on LinkedIn.

www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1505497



The Venango Area Chamber's updates on Twitter are available for everyone to see.

Follow us!

www.twitter.com/VenangoChamber



Visit the Venango Chamber Blog at venangochamber.blogspot.com

Member to Member: The Learning Center



*Carol Smith,
Training Manager for
The Learning Center*

Carol Smith, The Learning Center Training Manager, has achieved two prestigious Microsoft Corporation certifications. The first is that of Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT). To earn this certification, Carol first had to become certified in a Microsoft technical product, such as Windows Server 2008. Then she was required to prove her teaching competency skills through a combination of tests and classroom demonstrations. There are only 15,000 MCTs worldwide, scattered among 150 countries.

The second is that of a Microsoft Certified Application Specialist Instructor (MCASI). To earn this certification an individual must take and pass the following Microsoft Office Suite certification exams: Using Microsoft Office Word 2007, Using Microsoft Office Excel 2007, Using Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2007, Using Microsoft Office Outlook 2007 and Microsoft Windows Vista for the Business Worker. Candidates must then apply for the program, prove they have teaching skills that incorporate the use of multiple methodologies, and be approved by Microsoft.

The instructor credentials confirm that she is able to instruct others in a broad range of Microsoft products using Microsoft official curriculum. Carol has been an employee of Computer Showcase, CSOnline, The Learning Center and CSOnline Security in Seneca for the past 11 years.

Spotlight on New Members: St. Elizabeth of Hungary Center



Tim Wren pictured at the entrance of the St. Elizabeth Center.

St. Elizabeth of Hungary Center is located 311 Emerald Street in Oil City. The Center began as an outreach of St. Joseph Church to the parish and then to the neighborhood. When the community need was evident the Food Pantry was opened, under the guidelines of Second Harvest. Deacon Tim Wren provides oversight of the operation which also includes a Thrift Store. Deacon Wren explains that the Food Pantry provides much needed food and grocery items to over 400 recipients, all who meet set guidelines. Those in need visit the pantry on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Volunteers assist in preparing the items for distribution.

Along with Second Harvest, community members, including many businesses contribute to the pantry through "Fill the Cupboard" food drives and through monetary contributions. The center is also heavily supported by and a part of Catholic Charities. The Thrift Shop provides additional revenue. It is open to the public for shopping and welcomes donations of clothing and small household items. Items are priced to make them very affordably. Donated items in disrepair are forwarded on to Global Partnering, an outreach that makes certain that no items go unused.

Those interested in volunteering or donating to the Center can contact Deacon Wren at (814) 677-0203 or by email to saintelizabethcenter@verizon.net.

Spotlight on New Members: Pre-Paid Legal Services



Al Rickerson of Pre-Paid Legal Services

The Chamber welcomes new member Al Rickerson of Pre-Paid Legal Services, Inc. Pre-Paid Legal takes the proactive approach to handling your future legal needs by having a team available to you when you need it for a variety of services. Plans are available for business and family that allow you to manage your budget; while knowing you have the security of knowing that a legal consultant is available should you need them.

Services available to business clients include legal consultation, debt collection, legal correspondence, contract and business document review. Identity Shield is an additional service that provides continuous credit monitoring to ensure that your identity and good credit are protected at all times.

Al, his wife and three children reside in Titusville, having relocated here nearly 20 years ago. Al would enjoy the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the benefits that Pre-Paid Legal can offer you. You can contact him by phone at (814) 827-2408 or email aricker2@aol.com. For additional information about Pre-Paid Legal visit them on the web at www.prepaidlegal.com.

Member to Member: Reinsel Funeral Home



New signage at the Reinsel Funeral Home & Crematory

As you can see by reading the new sign at the Reinsel Funeral Home, Joe Reinsel has expanded his business to add a crematorium. Joe Reinsel states, "We are excited to have added a new dimension to our business in 2009." Joe further mentions that the addition of an onsite Crematory lets them become more personally involved in this process. And, at the same time they can pass on savings to their clients by cutting transportation costs.

Over the years the Reinsel Funeral Home has remodeled and expanded their business and parking to keep up with the needs of the community.

They presently offer at need and pre-need services. Today, more and more individuals are pre-planning their services. They welcome the opportunity to review your pre-arrangement at no cost or obligation to you.

Joe comments on the misinformation circulating regarding pre-planning services. "Everyone should contact their local funeral director before purchasing any funeral merchandise such as graves, vaults, markers, and caskets."

"We want everyone to be fully informed before they make such important decisions."

Member to Member: The Movies

The Movies at Cranberry is almost finished with their latest renovation. Ask yourself, what could they do to attract more excitement to the movies? Well, they have installed a state of the art internet gaming room. Complete with surround sound, theater seating and whole wall projection.

You can play the latest in gaming: Wii, Playstation 3, and the X Box360. The games available to play will include the best on the market and will change to the current best sellers as they are released. We will offer special extras such as Dance Dance Revolution, Guitar Hero III, Mario Kart, and Halo 3.

The room will rent at an hourly rate, and accommodate up to 4 players at a time. For birthday parties and small groups, the room also has the capability of showing blue-ray movies. So if you can't afford your own home theater, now you can rent one from us!

We are very excited about the grand opening of our gaming room and will feature contests with assistance from our neighbors at The Game Stop. For further details keep an eye on our website www.themoviesat.com.

Chamber Blog

Social Networking—Just Fun and Relevant for Business...

"Anyone who has spent more than a few minutes with me recently is well aware that Social Networking is a hot topic for me. And those who have known me for long know that if I can find a way to use technology, well...I'm all over that!"

...to read more, visit www.venangochamber.blogspot.com

Trade Show Success! It Can Be Yours...

"On Saturday I took a field trip to Meadville to visit Charlie and the gang at the Meadville Chamber's First Annual Trade Show and got far more than I bargained for."

...to read more, visit www.venangochamber.blogspot.com

Whats So Great About the Annual Dinner?...

Everything! The Chamber's Annual Dinner, like all of the other events each year, is preceded by months of planning.

...to read more, visit www.venangochamber.blogspot.com

Member to Member: Sherwin-Williams

Sherwin-Williams will be holding their 50th anniversary celebration at the store on Saturday, March 28, 2008 from 8 am until 5 pm. Come for great discounts, along with refreshments, door prizes, and radio remote broadcast. Come in to register to win a free gas grill. See you there!

THE BUSINESS CONNECTOR

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March Calendar of Events

- March 11: Chamber Website Launch Event - The Arlington Hotel Drake Room 5-7pm
- March 18: Brown Bag Lunch - Social Networking @ 12pm @ chamber conference room
- March 19: Board of Directors Meeting @ 8am
- March 20: Congressman Glenn Thompson's Office Hours at the Chamber Conference Room

April Calendar of Events

- April 2: Mixer - Oil City Library @5-7pm
The Oil City Library will host a mixer celebrating county-wide Big Read celebration of Jack London's classic novel *The Call of the Wild*.

- April 16: Board of Directors Meeting @ 8am
- April 22: Working Women's Luncheon @ 12pm
- April 24: Venango Works! Trade Show
- April 29: Mixer - Edward Jones Investments @ 5-7pm
Donna Rapp hosts this annual mixer, which is always a favorite. Join us in the former Lewis Hardware, which has been beautifully restored into the Oil City Edward Jones Investments Office.

May Calendar of Events

- May 14: Mixer - Gates & Burns Real Estate@ 5-7pm
Gates & Burns Real Estate will host a mixer to celebrate their 120th anniversary at the Oil City office.
- May 21: Mixer - Identity Studio & Design @ 5-7pm
New Chamber Members, Aaron Weeter and Lucas Salusky, will host a mixer at their new picturesque location.



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