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November Calendar *of* Events

- November 5:** Mixer - Farmers National Bank, Cranberry Office; 5-7PM
- November 16:** FLEX Meeting @ Chamber Office @ 5pm
- November 18:** Brown Bag Luncheon @ 12pm
- November 19:** Board of Directors Meeting @ 8am

COMMUNITY CALENDAR OF EVENTS AVAILABLE AT
WWW.VENANGOCHAMBER.ORG/CALENDAR

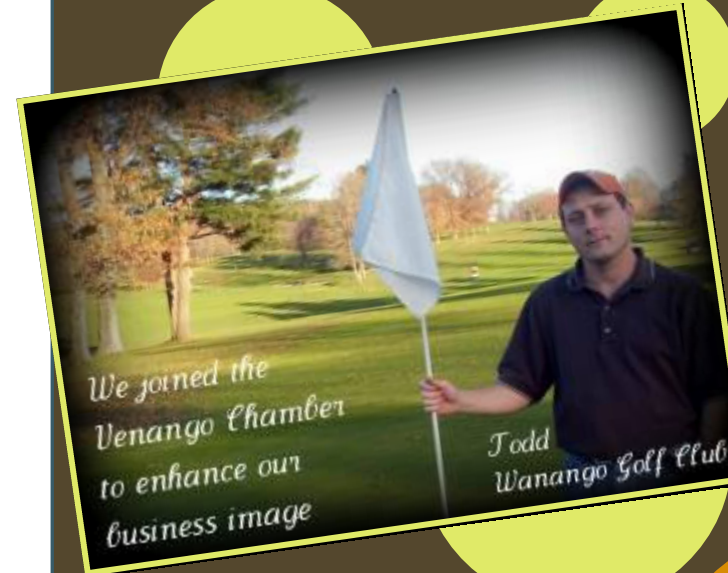
December Calendar *of* Events

- December 2:** Mixer - Cross Creek Resort, Titusville; 5-7PM
- December 16:** Brown Bag Luncheon @ 12pm
- December 17:** Board of Directors Meeting @ 8am
- December 21:** FLEX Meeting @ Chamber Office @ 5pm
- December 25:** Christmas - Chamber office closed
- December 26:** Chamber office closed

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Your Chamber Serves Business



Special Edition | November 2009

Join the Chamber
 See additional information inside this special edition newsletter



This symbol indicates more information can be found on our website. Look for it in each newsletter!



Your Business Name Here

Address

Phone

Email

Website

Published Category

This is where we welcome all new members who join the Chamber by displaying their contact information. This is great promotion of your business and your services/products that you may offer.

Why are you receiving this complimentary issue of our newsletter?

We are proud of the benefits that our chamber can offer our members. One of these benefits is the opportunity to promote your business through our high-quality monthly newsletter.

While some chambers choose to publish quarterly, semi-annual, or even annual newsletters due to cutting costs; we understand the benefit of publishing a *monthly* newsletter to keep our membership informed.

The Business Connector was ranked as the #1 communication tool our membership valued. For that reason, we have decided to mail complimentary issues to area businesses.

Our hope is that by reading this newsletter, you will gain an understanding of our chamber - our values - our goals to grow business - and most importantly our desire to serve you.

Venango Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

- PRESIDENT** PAM NIEDERRITER
UPMC NW
- V.P.** HOLLY BERLIN
CS Technologies Plus
- SECRETARY** BOB RICHARDS
Venango Real Estate
- TREASURER** NICOLE RUSSELL
Nicole's Bridal Boutique/Barr's Insurance
- ROD ADAMS**
Changing Times Telephone Service
- LINDA ANDERSON**
Electralloy
- GAIL BECK**
bloominGail's
- DR. JOE CARRICO**
Oil City Area School District
- EMILY GILL**
Moxie Media
- LISA GRONER**
CS Technologies Plus
- DR. RAY FEROZ**
Clarion University
- MARK HEIM**
WKQW 96.3 FM - 1120AM
- DR. RYAN JACKSON**
Gonstead Family Chiropractic
- BILL KAPP**
Action Auto Service, Inc.
- PATRICK PELLETIER**
Williams Insurance
- DAN PERTZ**
D & R Glass
- SCOTT SNOW**
4 Your Car Connection, Inc.



Venango Area Chamber of Commerce Staff

L-R: Tabitha Vecero, Office Assistant
Susan Williams, Executive Director
Ashley McCauley, Office Administrator

Get Listed • Get Noticed

A look at the chamber's membership directory reveals that the real value of the chamber is in it's members. Membership entitles a business to be listed in both the annually printed membership directory and on the Chamber's dynamic online directory. The printed directory, distributed to all members, is designed to be your primary source of business contact information. Both directories are organized alphabetically by company name and by business category, as invaluable tools for purchasing and company information including key contact name, phone and fax numbers and e-mail/web site addresses. The online directory includes searchable business description and keywords, adding further value to promoting your business.

A recent national study reveals that membership in a local chamber of commerce can significantly boost a business's image among consumers, as well as among other businesses. In the scientific survey of 2000 U.S. adults, The Schapiro Group, an Atlanta-based strategic consulting firm, found positive perceptions of chamber members in a number of areas, including overall favorability, consumer awareness and reputation, and likelihood of future patronage.

"We discovered that informing someone about a company's chamber membership opens the door to substantial increases positive perceptions of that business," said Alex Trouteaud, Ph.D., senior strategist for The Schapiro Group.

"There clearly is a feeling by our respondents that chamber membership is synonymous with quality and desirability."



YOUR AD COULD GO HERE!

Discount advertising opportunities only available to Venango Chamber Members

Keep dollars local this holiday season



Give Venango Chamber Gift Cards as an alternative to cash or checks

In continuing our efforts to urge locals to "Invest Venango", the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce encourages members to participate in the **Venango Chamber's Gift Card Program**. Any business that offers products or services can accept the gift cards for payment towards purchases.

Gift cards are great for the upcoming holidays, but are available year around. They make great customer and employee incentives, birthday gifts, and offer the recipient a convenient way to support our member businesses.

The card can be loaded in any denomination between 10 and 500 dollars and is good at more than 30 Venango Area Businesses. Gift Cards offer a great alternative to carrying cash or credit cards during the busy shopping season. Unlike many gift cards, the Venango Chamber gift cards do not expire.

The Chamber invites businesses throughout the Venango Area that are interested in accepting the local gift cards to contact us for more information at 814.676.8521, or visit our website www.venangochamber.org.

Networking then / Networking now

Many chamber members list networking as their most valued member benefit. Business After-Hours mixers have been a long standing tradition of the Venango Chamber as well as most chambers of commerce. Mixers along with other member events provide great opportunities for business and community members to meet, socialize and often exchange business cards face to face.

While there is no plan to change these monthly get togethers, the Venango Chamber is now helping members participate in online or social networking.

The Venango Area Chamber of Commerce was among the first chambers in the nation to create social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook and You Tube. Chamber staff now use these tools to help keep members informed and connected with one another.



Additionally the chamber has been offering FREE monthly Brown Bag lunches, where members meet to share their online successes and challenges.



www.twitter.com/venangochamber
www.facebook.com/venango.chamber
www.youtube.com/venangochamber

New supply of “Invest Venango” decals



The Venango Chamber has recently received a new shipment of “Invest Venango” removable window and bumper stickers.

What is Invest Venango?

Each year, businesses and local governments in the Venango area spend thousands of dollars for goods and services from out-of-area suppliers. That’s thousands spent annually for out of market purchases that could play a significant role in the growth and development of Venango area businesses.

The Invest Venango campaign was launched to encourage Venango area businesses and individuals to shift just five percent of their current out-of-area spending back into the local economy. It's not about spending MORE money - it's about keeping the dollars you already spend local. For information about the campaign visit www.venangochamber.org

Show your commitment by displaying a removable decal on your vehicle, store window or other prominent location.

Stop by or call us at 814.676.8521 to obtain additional stickers!

Calendar of Events set for 2010



February 17:
Annual
Chamber
Dinner

April 23:
Venango
Works!
Trade
Show &
Business
of the Year Ceremony



June 10:
Annual
Chamber Golf
Outing

**July
22-25:**
Annual
Oil
Heritage
Festival



August 19:
Annual
Chamber
Steak Fry

September 18:
Annual
Cranberry
Festival



Venango Chamber Stimulus Plan

As we approach year end, many businesses and organizations are in the planning stage, reviewing the past year and readying for 2010. This is a great time to consider whether you can use a chamber membership to benefit your company. If, like many businesses, you've committed to holding the line, please consider these items included in our membership:

- Membership listings in the printed and online directories, so your customers can find you easily! **FREE**
- Submit a brief description of your business to accompany your online listing. Include interesting information about your products or services, or perhaps your hours of operation. **FREE**
- Submit a “Spotlight on New Member” article in the Business Connector **FREE**
- Submit news items for publishing in the Business Connector and now for the Chamber's website newsfeed. **FREE**
- Provide Chamber staff with a supply of your business cards to be displayed in the Chamber lobby. **FREE**
- Attend a Chamber Mixer or committee meeting, to meet your potential customers. **FREE**
- Join our online networks on Facebook and Twitter, where we connect members every day. **FREE**

If you're interested in taking it up a notch try these ideas (modestly priced):

- Add additional categories to your business listing in the printed and on-line directories (\$15)
- Submit an advertising insert for inclusion in a future Business Connector (\$40-\$60)
- Place a banner ad on the Chamber website homepage (\$100)
- Advertise in any of the many Chamber publications offered throughout the year (\$50-\$450).
- Host a Chamber mixer (the cost of refreshments).

These are but a few ways that members can leverage membership. If you're ready to maximize your member opportunities, contact us and we'll help you identify the best of these and other member benefits to market and promote your business.

Contact the Chamber by email at chamber@venangochamber.org or call us at 814.676.8521 or visit our office.

Chamber's Young Professional Group (FLEX) doing great things in Venango County



FLEX represents the needs and interests of young professionals by positioning ourselves as leaders, entrepreneurs and advocates for the sustainability and continued development of the Venango Area through civic engagement, leadership development, and networking.

FLEX members volunteer in their communities, are active and engaged civically, and strive to always give their personal and professional best.

Members of FLEX do *not* have to be members of the Chamber, but should have a passion for the Venango Area! *Learn more by visiting www.venangochamber.org*



Community/Business Hub/Visitor Center

The staff of the Venango Chamber takes great pride in their role as ambassadors for the region. Each day the office receives calls from visitors, as well as business and community members that are seeking information. The chamber's visible and convenient location makes it a frequent stop for tourists and those who are new to the area. Businesses new and old find that the chamber is a source for connecting to information, other businesses and the community. The Venango chamber also has a small gift and souvenir shop as a service to the community.

Legislative/Business Advocate

The Venango Area Chamber of Commerce serves as a legislative advocate for member businesses and organizations. The Chamber is always seeking out opportunities to host forums that educate our members on what legislative issues are on the table that could possibly impact their business. Most recently the chamber joined with business members and other chambers in opposition to the proposed tolling of Interstate 80.

We will guarantee our benefits!

With over 475 business and professional members of the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce, we are so confident you will be pleased with your membership that we'll guarantee it. It's simple - if you join the Chamber and for any reason are dissatisfied or feel you're not getting your money's worth, we'll refund your entire investment at the end of 90 days.

All we require is that you attend three of following events during that 90 day period:

- *New Member Orientation*
- *A Committee Meeting*
- *A Breakfast or Luncheon*
- *A Business After-Hours Mixer*
- *A Chamber Special Event*

During that 90 day period, you'll receive all the other benefits of Chamber membership. Those include a Chamber membership directory, email updates, monthly issues of The Business Connector, and unlimited opportunities to meet and make business with other contacts with the other professionals in our area.

Submit FREE member-to-member news to promote your business

Now, more than ever, it's important to use opportunities that are FREE for your business. As a member of the Chamber, you can submit member-to-member news articles for publication in our monthly newsletter, mailed to more than 600 member contacts and posted on the Chamber's website.

Here's What's New...

New Location? New Hours? Special Awards? Special Anniversaries, i.e. 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, 25th, etc? Promotions? Special Events? Expansions? New Product Line? Renovation?

And It's for FREE!! Briefly tell us who, what, when, where and why. Give us the name and phone number of someone we can contact for more information, if necessary. (We reserve the right to edit)



New chamber website adds Community Calendar

The new Chamber website includes a dynamic events calendar that should be your "go to" place to find out what's going on in the community and at the Chamber. You can also easily submit events.

Please share this FREE opportunity with others including any organizations you may participate in.

This calendar is **not** reserved for members only.

Chamber events are posted by our staff but all other events should be posted by the group or organization hosting the event.

The calendar is visible from every page of the website. Click on "View full calendar" to see the entire month. To view the details of an event, just click on that event.



To add your events to the calendar just click "SUBMIT YOUR EVENT TO THE COMMUNITY CALENDAR" and fill in the detail. The chamber will be notified via email that your event has been submitted. We will review and approve in less than 24 hours (usually within a couple of hours).



Chamber Blog



Networking-Are You A Bit Rusty?

Networking! Seems all the buzz these days, but is it all they say? For most Chamber members, the first thing that comes to mind when you say network is mixers. For many, these get togethers provide a great opportunity to meet up with community members and peers, but for others they are a dreaded obligation. If it's the later, likely there's a convenient excuse to beg out...

To read more of Susan's blog, please visit: www.venangochamber.org

Better Together

I was fortunate this morning to once again be able to meet with representatives from across the region to discuss how to work together to promote our area's assets. This was the 6th meeting specific to how to market the rich concentration on Arts related businesses that exist across the Venango Area and Oil Region. There continue to be a wealth of ideas flowing, punctuated by the obvious challenges faced by all. Do we have the time, the resources, the finances? ...

To read more of Susan's blog, please visit: www.venangochamber.org

"I Just Don't Have Time... NOT TO!"

I attended a Social Networking workshop this morning, coordinated by the Small Business Development Center and the Northwest Commission. There were about 25 attendees and their experience ranged from beginner to very experienced. OK, I admit that I count myself the latter. Even at that the amount of information exchanges was overwhelming. I left the workshop with two pages of notes and a list of new contacts to follow up with...

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