

# VenangoWorks!

News for members by members.

Volume 14 | Issue 10 | October 2018



## Murals: More Than a Pretty Wall

*See page 3*



The Venango Area Chamber of Commerce builds, serves and promotes regional business.

# Welcome New Members



**Core Goods**  
Contact: Ashley Cowles  
219 Seneca Street  
Oil City, PA 16301  
coregoodsoc@gmail.com  
www.core-goods.com

Core Goods is a new store with a goal to provide products and education around food and wellness, to help their customers live healthfully, in mind, body, and spirit. They will sell a variety of items, including bulk foods, local produce, and grab & go meals.



**Matric Group**  
Contact: Richard Turner  
2099 Hill City Road  
Seneca, PA 16346  
(814) 677-0716  
sales@matric.com  
www.matric.com

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**Crawford Area Transportation Authority**  
Contact: Laura King  
214 Pine Street  
Meadville, PA 16335  
(814) 336-5600  
lking@catabus.org  
www.catabus.org

Incorporated as a municipal transit authority, CATA offers a variety of services to ALL of Crawford and Venango Counties. Their services include fixed route bus service in the city of Meadville, Titusville, Saegertown, Franklin, Oil City and Seneca and door to door transportation throughout the two counties.

## OCTOBER IS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MONTH

Governor Tom Wolf has officially declared October 2018 as "Local Chamber of Commerce Month" in Pennsylvania.

Official Proclamation Available at

[www.venangochamber.org/2018/09/october-is-chamber-of-commerce-month](http://www.venangochamber.org/2018/09/october-is-chamber-of-commerce-month)



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## The Positive Impact of Public Artwork

Artists have been hard at work, adding to the many reasons people should be visiting the region's downtown business districts. At the least, murals provide an attractive way to spruce up a building. Done well, public artwork is educational and often engages a community in its creation. In Franklin, two of the most recent projects do exactly that. Rotary Way, an alley off of Liberty Street, has long sat as a white canvas. Recently, the Rotary Club solicited the services of local artist Stephen Leccia to complete a mural. After sharing concepts, Stephen and the Club settled on a montage which included the Venango County Courthouse and images representing the various service projects that the Rotary Club supports. Much of the mural is done, but additional art is likely to be added. An unveiling and "meet the artist" will be held on October 17<sup>th</sup>.



Zach Covington, President of the Franklin Rotary and Director of the Barrow Theatre remarks "The trend for public art is to engage people, creating a connection between the art and the community. It may involve community members actually creating the art or it can be that they interact with the art, as in those who take their picture with the butterfly wings on the side of Buffalo Street Lanes." Ronnie Beith, Franklin Events Coordinator agrees "Murals are a fantastic addition to our downtown, educational and historic, for residents and visitors."



*(Cover photo credit: Leah Gesing)*

The Oil City Main Street Program is building on its downtown murals initiative. Three new original murals will appear in the North Side Business District in the weeks ahead, with a Mural Walk in late October to celebrate their completion.

All three of the new murals are original works of art created by professional muralists. Two of the artists have local ties, including Deac Mong of Rocky Grove; and Berry Breene, an Oil City native who now lives in the Pittsburgh area. Bernie Wilke, a Pittsburgh artist who also created a downtown Oil City mural in 2016, is the lead artist in the third project. The location of the new murals includes 50 Seneca Street (Mong), 275 Seneca Street (Breene) and the underpass of Veterans Memorial Bridge (Wilke). The murals, funded by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the National Park Service via ORA as the Oil Region National Heritage Area, and the Elizabeth S. Black Charitable Trust via PNC Charitable Trusts and Penn Soil RC&D Council, carry various themes that include elements of oil history & heritage, transportation, wildlife, and music.

Schools are also getting in on the benefits of incorporating art. Students are now being encouraged to paint ceiling tiles, parking spaces and contribute to other art projects around the Oil City High School. Principal Scott Stahl suggests that this all contributes to a more positive school climate, one where students share ownership of the facilities.



Studies suggest that this improved climate has a significant impact on academic performance.

In addition to the new downtown murals, original works of art, the aging oil & gas signs on a mural created by Oil City High School art students in 1998, on the side of Williams Travel, will be updated by Sign Designery of Titusville and Caldwell Signage Solutions of Oil City.

The Oil City Main Street Mural Walk will be held on Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup> beginning at 10:00 am. Details are still in the works and will be posted on [www.oilcitymainstreet.org](http://www.oilcitymainstreet.org) and Facebook [@oilcitymainstreetprogram](https://www.facebook.com/oilcitymainstreetprogram) and [@artsoilcity](https://www.facebook.com/artsoilcity) once finalized.

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## Fall Festival at Baytree Farm



Pumpkins, gourds, corn shocks, and more! Support Chamber member Baytree Farm this season by purchasing your fall décor locally. Their Fall Festival is October 13 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the farm in Emlenton with various vendors, and they are open daily until dark through Halloween.

## Northwest Commission's Government Contracting Program Serves Region for Over 30 Years

The Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning & Development Commission serves as a Local Development District for eight counties in Northwest PA. Among the many programs offered by the Commission is the free government contracting assistance office known as a Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC).

PTACs are non-profit organizations located throughout the U.S. which provide contracting and subcontracting assistance to companies pursuing work with Federal, State and Local agencies. The Northwest Commission's PTAC office has assisted hundreds of companies, bringing more than a billion dollars' worth of contracts to the region.

How does PTAC help businesses?

The PTAC assists businesses large and small in understanding and navigating government contracting to become more competitive and successful in this market. PTAC does this by providing one-on-one confidential counseling, bid opportunities and networking & training events.

What does this service cost?

The PTAC Program is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA); they also receive funding from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This means they are able to offer government contracting assistance **FREE OF CHARGE** to businesses located in their 8-county region.

How do I find out more?

Learn more about the Northwest Commission PTAC by visiting <http://www.northwestpa.org/government-contracting/>.

On this site, you'll find program staff contact information, client testimonials, and links to PTAC events, newsletter & Request for Counseling form.



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## Sheetz in Cranberry Now Open!

The newly remodeled Sheetz in Cranberry opened its doors on Thursday, September 27. Make sure to stop by and check it out (located at 7119 US 322).



## Matric to Hold Career Fair on October 25th

Matric Limited will be hosting a Career Fair at its facility on October 25, 2018. The event will have two sessions - 9AM and 3PM - where job-seekers can meet with their teams and discover the benefits of working at Matric. As an electronics manufacturer, it's been a busy year. That's why Matric is looking to expand, with open positions ranging from engineer to technician to entry-level opportunities like assembler.

Matric is located at 2099 Hill City Road in Seneca, PA. Contact Tyler Vasbinder at [tyler.vasbinder@matric.com](mailto:tyler.vasbinder@matric.com) for more information.



## Agway Offers UPS Pickup

The Oil City Agway will soon be a drop off spot for UPS. At 550 North Seneca St, Agway offers a convenient location for those sending out packages.

Doug Eberle anticipates services being available the first week of October and says he will likely have some shipping materials available for purchase.

Agway is open Monday through Friday 8 AM—5 PM and Saturday 8 AM - 2 PM.



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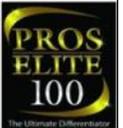
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## Venango County Economic Development Authority

*Fostering Economic Growth in Venango County*

They may not be a typical “business,” but the Venango County Economic Development Authority (VCEDA) focuses its efforts on helping our economy thrive each day.

The VCEDA is the lead economic development agency in Venango County. Created by the Board of County Commissioners in January of 2018, the VCEDA's mission is to foster a diverse county economy and quality of life through strengthening the regional infrastructure and working with partner organizations.

Through a holistic approach to economic development, the VCEDA aims to enhance the workforce and recreational and cultural amenities, to create a compelling climate for the growth of new and existing businesses. The VCEDA staff is fueled by “a sense of civic duty, community pride, and coffee.”

“I enjoy playing a role in improving the community I was raised in and a place that has helped shape the person I am,” said Emily Lewis, executive director of the VCEDA. “Working in service of my home town is a unique experience and I feel I am able to objectively view the

challenges our community faces, while never losing site of the people and places that make our area so unique.”

The VCEDA has a seven-member board with representation from various organizations in Venango County engaged in economic development efforts, including the Cranberry Economic Development Committee, Franklin Industrial & Commercial Development Authority (FIDCA), Oil Region Alliance (ORA), Oil City Redevelopment Authority, and the three county commissioners. The Chair of the Board of County Commissioners is also the Chair of the Economic Development Authority.

“I like working for a board that collectively brings varying perspectives and opinions to the table, but shares a common goal of advancing Venango County,” Emily said. “When everyone is working in tandem with good intentions, great things can happen”

The VCEDA is working every day to make sure Venango County is the kind of place businesses and people alike can grow and prosper.



### **ABOUT**

The VCEDA is the lead economic development agency in Venango County and aims to enhance the workforce and recreational and cultural amenities, to create a compelling climate for the growth of new and existing businesses.

### **FAST FACTS**

- Created in January of 2018 by the Board of County Commissioners
- Executive director was born and raised in Venango County
- Has a seven-member board of directors with representation from various organizations

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**Website:**

[www.vceda.com](http://www.vceda.com)

**Email:**

[elewis@co.venango.pa.us](mailto:elewis@co.venango.pa.us)

**Phone:**

(814) 432-9681

**Address:**

1168 Liberty Street  
P.O. Box 831  
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**Hours of Business:**

Monday-Friday  
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



**Goodwill Industries of North Central Pennsylvania**  
*Meeting life challenges through opportunity,  
 education, training, and work*

Goodwill Industries of North Central Pennsylvania (NCPA) continues to expand and meet the needs of the communities they serve, including Venango County.

Currently, there is a Goodwill store in Cranberry and an attended donation center in Seneca, and they recently opened the new Oil City store on September 29, located at 400 East Second Street.

Goodwill is more than a store; they earn revenue from donations of textiles, household items, and electronics by selling them in the stores to fund their programs. The stores make it possible for them to provide on-the-job training and create jobs for people facing barriers to employment.

“Our ideal customer is someone who wants to make a difference in their community. By donating or shopping in our stores, everyone

can help change a life,” said \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ at Goodwill NCPA.

Goodwill NCPA opened its doors in 1966 in DuBois and is governed by a volunteer board of directors.

They serve communities in 14 Pennsylvania counties: Cameron, Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, Lycoming, McKean, Potter, Tioga, Venango, and Warren. Goodwill NCPA is one of over 170 independently operated Goodwill’s in the country.

Goodwill is a non-profit and 90 cents of every dollar they make in their stores goes back into their mission. In the future, they expect more programs will be offered and new stores will be opened throughout the North Central Pennsylvania territory.

Stop by the new Oil City store and join us at the official Ribbon Cutting on Friday, October 19!



**ABOUT**

Goodwill turns donations of textiles, household items and electronics into training and employment opportunities for people facing barriers to employment.

**FAST FACTS**

- 90 cents of every dollar goes back into their mission
- Serves communities in 14 counties in PA
- Oil City store opened on September 29, with ribbon cutting on October 19

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**Oil City Store**  
 400 East Second Street  
 Oil City, PA 16301

**Cranberry Store**  
 17 Kimberly Lane, Suite 3A  
 Cranberry, PA 16319  
 Tel: 814-678-8645

**Seneca Donation Center**  
 3052 PA-257 Suite B  
 Seneca, PA 16346

**Website:** [goodwillncpa.com](http://goodwillncpa.com)

**Facebook, Twitter, Instagram & YouTube:**  
 @GoodwillNCPA

**Attended Donation Center**  
**Hours:** 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

**Store Hours:**  
 Mon-Sat 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
 Sun 12 - 5 p.m.



# Cranberry Festival

Thank you those who sponsored, volunteered, attended, and supported the 2018 Cranberry Festival! It was a beautiful day and another successful year!



***Save the Date!***  
**The 18th Annual  
 Cranberry Festival  
 will be Saturday,  
 September 21st 2019**

## Leadership Venango Holds Inaugural Retreat

The 2019 Class of Leadership Venango got off to a great start on Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup> with a full-day retreat held at Whitehall Camp and Conference Center in Emlenton. The class of 13, representing all areas of the county with a diverse mix of men and women in different fields and various positions of leadership, took part in team-building, personality testing, visioning exercises, and more.

Lance Hummer, executive director of the Keystone Community Education Council, started the day with personality testing that allowed the participants to both see themselves more clearly and to better understand each other. Team-building exercises, led by Whitehall staff, helped the participants to break down their walls and communicate with one another in a dynamic way.

During a discussion about what our ideal community would look like, the class had an energetic exchange that led them to choosing a topic for projects they will work on throughout the program.



The class will spend the next 9 months meeting once a month in locations all over the county, focusing on themes like honorable leadership, business and economic development, and maximizing clean communications. Each session will feature members of the community as both speakers and facilitators, allowing the class the opportunity to make valuable connections that will be an asset to them in future endeavors.

To learn more about Leadership Venango visit [leadershipvenango.org](http://leadershipvenango.org)



## Vo-Tech to Host Annual Open House

The Venango Technology Center (Vo-Tech) will once again hold it's Open House, this year on Tuesday, October 23, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

"The Open House is a time for current students and their families to learn about careers and happenings in the community, meet with instructors, and have some fun," said Sarah Campbell, school counselor at Vo-Tech. "It's also a great opportunity for prospective students to see what all we have to offer here."

During the event, attendees can get a tour of the school and meet instructors of the various classes offered. Information tables will be set up in the commons area, with representatives from local employers, postsecondary institutions, and community organizations.

"Our hope is that students and parents will be presented with a wide range of resources in order to make informed decisions for their futures," Sarah said.

As part of the event, the Student Senate will have a pumpkin carving competition, in which attendees can

vote on their favorite with money, and all donations will be given to a local charity.

The Chamber will at the Open House with information about Be Here and FLEX, and Vo-Tech is welcoming any additional businesses and organizations to consider setting up a table at the event. If interested, please contact Sarah Campbell at [scampbell@vtc1.org](mailto:scampbell@vtc1.org) or (814) 676-3097 by October 17.



## Blight - Impact is Far Reaching

Blight seems to be a frequently talked about subject these days. Common in our rural communities, economic blight is the visible and physical decline of a property, neighborhood, or city due to a combination of economic downturns, residents and businesses leaving the area, secular declines in real incomes, and the cost of maintaining the quality of older structures.

Most would agree that a blighted house will impact a neighborhood, beyond the obvious unattractiveness and potential lowering of property values of proximate homes, by taking away the motivation of others to maintain their properties or make improvements. Blight in Venango County was propelled in the 1980's when the out-migration of many businesses led to consistent population decline, which has continued for nearly four decades. A 2009 housing study revealed that Venango County has a significant overage of homes, with twice as many as needed to support median income families.

Addressing this overage is challenging and expensive, but without a doubt necessary. The burden typically falls on the local municipality, once a property has declined to the extent that rehabilitation is unrealistic. The sad alternative is that properties fall into the hands of absentee owners, slumlords, or those who use the building for illegal activities. The cost of demolishing a home is often more than \$15,000.

Maintaining the housing stock of a community is good for business! With the surge in local hiring, there is a renewed interest in attracting people to relocate to Venango County. Those looking to work here place high priority on living in clean, attractive, and, most importantly, safe neighborhoods. While home rehabilitation may not obviously seem like economic development, communities that can provide good housing stock are most likely to attract workers.



Recognizing this reality, the Venango County Planning Commission turned its attention to getting ahead of potential blight by securing a HOME grant in 2012. Specific to the communities of Rouseville and Clapp Farm (in Cornplanter Township) nearly \$500,000 was directed to the rehabilitation of owner-occupied homes. Work was completed by 2016. Projects that qualified for funding were prioritized by "life safety," such as roof, electric, heating, and necessary structural repair.



One of the acquisitions of the Land Bank that was purchased and demolished by the adjoining property owner.

In 2014, the County formed a Land Bank, which empowers this authority with first option to purchase homes sold at tax sale, done typically at the recommendation of the local municipality. Once owned by the Land Bank, the property can be torn down or, in some cases, identified for rehabilitation, with oversight to ensure responsible use of the building. To date 23 properties have been secured by the land bank, preventing them from further decay.

This year, the Planning Commission hired Josh Sterling as a Community Development Planner—a new position. Josh will focus his attention on Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program funds, which can be directed to activities related to blight. The Planning Commission is responsible for administering the CDBG funds received by Cranberry Township, Sugarcreek Borough and Venango County. Additionally, the Commission has applied for a \$300,000 HOME grant in partnership with the City of Franklin.

Understanding the impact of good neighborhoods and adequate housing for employees is good for business, especially those looking to attract long-term employees. There are opportunities for businesses to benefit from supporting initiatives to improve homes and we'll share specific strategies in future articles. If your business is interested in learning more now, contact Josh Sterling at (814)432-9547.

## County Website—Content Development & Notifications

Last month, we shared that the County of Venango has launched a new website at [www.co.venango.pa.us](http://www.co.venango.pa.us). This month, we sat down with Bill Kresinski, MIS Director and the employee at the heart of the project. Bill manages the County's IT services, which includes website management.

After consideration of several vendors, Civic Plus was chosen, noted for their specialization on municipal websites. Work on the site started in the Fall of 2017 and proceeded on schedule. A total content management system, the new website brings central control to the MIS department, which insures brand consistency, accuracy of content, and security of control.

Bill shares that Civic Plus offers customers a multitude of modules, many that are already being utilized and others that will be as content is added.

Content development is perhaps the biggest challenge of any new website and it is no different with the County's new site, as departments are charged with adding and updates information. The advantage is that across departments, knowledge of various services is vast.

There will be continued opportunities to make more information available and more accessible. The new site is mobile device friendly and includes a future mobile app, that will offer quick links to most popular features.

While not yet used, Bill anticipates a valuable feature will be "alerts" that will notify residents of urgent information. Users can subscribe to specific notifications, including these alert or updated postings and files added, such as departments adding meeting minutes, newsletters, job postings, and vendor opportunities.

We will continue to share information about the website and benefits to those who use it. If you see information that needs updated or have feedback to provide, you can contact Bill Kresinski at [bkresinski@co.venango.pa.us](mailto:bkresinski@co.venango.pa.us).



**Venango County**  
Pennsylvania

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## Social Media Tip: A Consistent Brand Online and Offline

If someone looked at your social media page, then went to your business in person, would anything surprise them? And vice versa—if they visited your business, then checked out your social media pages, would they find anything unexpected?

Ideally, your online and offline brand should be as consistent as possible. By looking at your posts online, customers should sense the same personality, customer service, and uniqueness of your business as if they were physically there.

How can you accomplish this? Some tips include:

**Keep a consistent personality:** Talk about the same topics and use the same wording both online and in your business. Is your brand more funny, professional, informative, or artsy? Include this in your writing style and images online.

**Include photos of your business online:** People will become more familiar with the feel of your business if you share photos online. These can include photos of your product, employees, and storefront.

**Use the same colors, fonts, and images:** Your branding should be consistent online and in person. Use the same style on your website, social media graphics,

signage, business cards, and anywhere else your branding is shown.

**Communicate with employees:** Keep your employees updated with what happens online. Whether it's a contest, informative article, or conversation, your workers should know what your business is doing online, so they can continue the conversation offline with customers.

4 Your Car Connection is a great example of this brand consistency. You see their yellow branding and enthusiastic attitude on their Facebook page, signage, and advertising; their mannequin Gina is in front of their building, attending events, and even has her own Facebook page; and they are constantly engaging their community, both online and offline.



Having a consistent brand for your business can engage, attract, and retain customers. The goal is for someone to get to know your business before they even step foot in the door, and to then deepen that relationship through continued interaction both online and in person.

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Family Recovery Program	Venango Fatherhood Initiative
Home & Community Services	Youth Connection (formerly BBBS)

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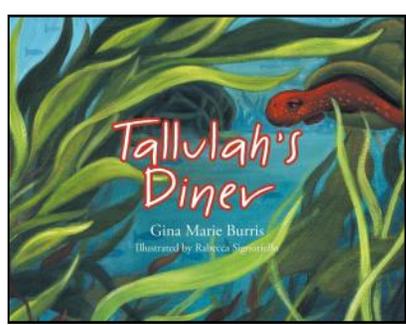
**Local Author to Hold Book Signing at YWCA**

Inspired by her childhood spent along the Allegheny River, Gina Burris has completed her most recent book, a children's book titled "Tallulah's Diner". Published by Fulton Books, Burris's story welcomes the reader to the underwater river world of Tallulah; a turtle who works tirelessly to run an aquatic diner and raise her family.



She shares, "When my son was young, my love of all things river dominated the fantasy stories I would make up and share with him. Now that my son is grown, I am taking a leap of faith and sharing the Turtle Family adventure I first told more than fifteen years ago."

The Oil City YWCA will host a book signing for Burris on Saturday, October 13th from 11 AM to 1 PM, where books will be available to purchase. She will be joined by illustrator of the book, Rabecca Signoriello. If you are unable to make it but still want to add the local author's story to your library, it is available for purchase at bookstores everywhere, or online at the Apple iTunes store, Amazon, Google Play or Barnes and Noble.



**Project-Based Learning Program**

Join ASSET STEM Education and Intermediate Unit 6 for Project-based Learning through Teacher Externships - a professional development program that aims to empower teachers to prepare students for a career in STEM.

This program pairs educators with a local industry professional and guides teachers in introducing real-world problem solving skills to the classroom to prepare their students to succeed in the 21st century workforce. This program is funded by PA Career Link and the PA Department of Labor and Industry.

The program will take place October 11-12 and January 29 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Riverview IU6 in Clarion. To register, visit [www.bit.ly/IU6ASSET](http://www.bit.ly/IU6ASSET)

**PROJECT-BASED LEARNING**  
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## Vo-Tech Potato Project

In partnership with the Venango Area Community Gardens, students in the Natural Resources Class at the Venango Technology Center (Vo-Tech) planted potatoes earlier in the year, and recently dug them up. Rather than keeping the potatoes for themselves, they donated them to the Cranberry Food Pantry. What a great project for these young people!



## O.C.toberFest Brings a New Fall Festival to Oil City

A new Fall festival is coming! Celebrate the season over the weekend of October 12th through 14th in downtown Oil City. The fun begins Friday evening and continues through Sunday afternoon.



Among the family-friendly events of the weekend will be a pumpkin decorating contest, face painting, karaoke, and even the largest gathering of redheads ever in Oil City! Topsy Chef will be hosting a Paint-and-Sip event, there will be an Art Walk at the Transit Building, and Earthworks Pottery Studio will host their Pumpkins & Pots event featuring a Harry "Potter" party.

These are just a few of the many events planned. See the full schedule and all event updates by visiting [www.oilcitymainstreet.org](http://www.oilcitymainstreet.org) and on Facebook at [@oilcitymainstreetprogram](https://www.facebook.com/oilcitymainstreetprogram) and [@artsoilcity](https://www.facebook.com/artsoilcity).

## Attention All Seamstresses

Venango VNA Foundation is looking for volunteers who are interested in making Memorial Bears for the Visiting Nurses Association Hospice Program. Memorial Bears are teddy bears handcrafted from a favorite cotton, flannel, or sweatshirt-type article of clothing from a patient's wardrobe.



If you are interested in volunteering your time, please call Jen Horn, Volunteer Coordinator at 814-437-0341.

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## Reminder - Shredder Event

Representative R. Lee James' annual shredder event will be held Saturday, October 20th from 12 to 2 PM at his office located at 3220 State Route 257, Seneca.

Destroying documents with personal information can help protect you against identity theft. You can bring documents that contain sensitive information, such as Social Security numbers, medical information or bank account numbers, to be thoroughly shredded.

In an effort to accommodate as many people as possible, limits may be placed on the amount of documents each individual may have shredded during busy periods.



Contact Kim Scott for more information at (814) 677-6413.



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## Vantage Launches Retail Website

Vantage now has a retail website allowing you to view products they carry and have the items shipped directly to your home. Visit [www.vantageHME.com](http://www.vantageHME.com) to view hundreds of lift chairs, walking aids, wheelchairs, bath items, scooters, CPAP, oxygen management and much more!

You can also learn about other services Vantage has to offer like their health monitoring system, Electronic Caregiver, and home sleep service. Don't want to purchase online? Visit any of Vantage's 4 retail locations in Erie, Franklin, Hermitage and Meadville and mention the website to receive 20% off your purchase on items not covered by your health insurance.

Contact Ken Johnston at 814-547-3295 or visit the "Contact Us" page on [www.vantageHME.com](http://www.vantageHME.com) for more information.



## SHARE YOUR STORY



Dan Flaherty grew up in Venango County and is pleased with his decision to build his life here.

"Having the opportunity to provide a positive impact in our area makes me ecstatic to come to work each day," he said. "I have a sense of responsibility for my own community, in which I'm able to help those in need, fill gaps in community

services, provide resources equally for anyone, advance the local community, and meet so many varying needs. "

You can read Dan's full story on our Be Here testimonials page, as well as multiple other stories of people who live and work in the Venango Area.

We want to share YOUR story too. Just visit the website at [www.beherevenango.org/testimonials](http://www.beherevenango.org/testimonials) and click the "share your story" button at the bottom of the page.

## A Global Manager's Thoughts on Networking

by Kurtis Bell, Service Master by bell

Many of us focus on networking at after hour events, happy hours, or expos; but one place we may be overlooking is within our own organizations. In a recent conversation with Chamber Board member Alan McBride, we discussed this very topic. While networking locally can be very helpful in connection you with like minded people and organizations, networking within your organization can open up a variety of opportunities you might not ever consider.



Locally, networking might open you up to contributing to an organization via membership or even a role in leadership. Non-profits rely on dedicated groups of

volunteers to make things happen. Your involvement in such a group could even help increase your visibility and build depth and breadth in your network. I have experienced this first hand and can attest to the quality

and quantity of great connections I have made through volunteering with non-profits.

One venue for networking that many do not often consider is networking within your own organization or company. Within your organization, networking can provide a great opportunity to connect with others in similar situations who could help you or be helped by you. This connection is often mutually beneficial and can lead to future cooperative efforts as well.

In talking with Alan, he summed this all up very well. I'll close this month with his thoughts on networking.

*"Networking opportunities can include ways to develop both on a personal and professional basis. By connecting with someone else, you can gain a better understanding of how that person can help you grow, develop and learn new skillsets. Networking within your own company and locally can not only help support your own development, but you can help others develop to an event greater extent as well."*

## Clarion University SBDC Training and Events

Looking to brush up on your business know-how? The SBDC offers educational programs geared towards entrepreneurs. Training resources include First Step Seminars, Business Workshops, and Online Training.

### Upcoming Seminars in our region:

- QuickBooks 2017 Level I: October 2 + 4 in Clarion
- QuickBooks 2017 Level II: October 9 + 11 in Clarion
- Human Resources for Non-HR Professionals: October 11 in Oil City
- First Step Seminar: October 13 in Clarion
- Understanding the Numbers: Accounting and Financial Analysis for Your Business: October 17 in Clarion
- Bridging the Gap: Helping Managers Understand Their Employees: Wednesday, October 24 in Clarion
- QuickBooks Online: Tuesday, October 30 in Clarion

Find a full list of SBDC events with times and details by visiting their website at [clarion.edu/sbdc](http://clarion.edu/sbdc).



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*Komatsu*  
*UPMC Northwest*  
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**Tessa Byham**  
**Ashley Cowles**

*President / CEO*  
*Executive Assistant*  
*Program Manager*

### Chamber Events Calendar

**OCTOBER**

- 11 Chamber Board Meeting, 8 a.m.
- 17-19 Pennsylvania Assoc. of Chamber Professionals Leadership Conference
- 25 Venango County Democratic Party Mixer, 5-7 p.m.
- 26 FLEX Annual Meeting, 5 p.m.

**NOVEMBER**

- 02 FLEX Events Committee meeting, 9 a.m.
- 15 Chamber Executive Board Meeting, 8 a.m.
- 15 FLEX Monthly Meeting, 12 p.m.
- 15 FLEX Happy Hour, 5 p.m.
- 22 Thanksgiving Day—Chamber Closed
- 23 Chamber Closed



COMMUNITY CALENDAR OF EVENTS AVAILABLE AT  
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# FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

## FYI

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Volume 6 | Issue 10 | October 2018

### Annual Meeting Scheduled for October 26

It's that time of year for the FLEX Annual Meeting, an event where we gather together to celebrate our successes over the past year and discuss our plans for the future.

This year's event will be on Friday, October 26, at 5:30 p.m. at Karma Coffee Company in Oil City. Similar to last year, attendees can expect a fun evening of networking, with hors d'oeuvres and drinks.

A presentation will be given by FLEX leadership, covering a review of 2018, plans for the upcoming year, election of new committee chairs and officers, and the FLEX Highlight

# 2018 ANNUAL MEETING

Awards. After the presentation, we will have trivia, with a variety of fun questions and prizes for winners.

Attendees also have the opportunity to get a free professional headshot taken by FLEX member and photographer Chett DeLong.

"This past year has gone very well for us. The committees have accomplished several goals, such as increasing paid membership, diversifying/expanding our events, and strengthening our social media presence," said Rachel Stiller, FLEX president. "This well-anticipated meeting is unique in that we still take care of organizational business,

but the focus of the meeting is for our members to network with one another. It's an appropriate time for reflection on what we've spent our effort on the past year and it's an exciting event to usher in our new leadership."

We'd like to thank Penelec for once again sponsoring this event, and Karma Coffee Company for supplying delicious food and a great venue.

Any young professionals are invited to attend! Please RSVP to Ashley Cowles at (814) 676-8521 or [acowles@venangochamber.org](mailto:acowles@venangochamber.org) by Friday, October 19.



### FLEX Member Survey

We are asking all FLEX members to complete a survey and provide feedback to us, so we can continue to grow and improve our organization.

The survey is online and takes about 5-10 minutes. You can find it by visiting [surveymonkey.com/r/FLEXMemberSurvey](http://surveymonkey.com/r/FLEXMemberSurvey) and the deadline to complete it is **Friday, October 12.**

**FLEX MEMBER SURVEY 2018**

EVENTS

1. What events have you enjoyed this year? (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Coffee Chats	<input type="checkbox"/> Peak's Peak Social
<input type="checkbox"/> Happy Hours	<input type="checkbox"/> FLEX Presentations
<input type="checkbox"/> Networking Social	<input type="checkbox"/> Schenck's Spring Beer Tasting
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Meeting (With Trivia)	<input type="checkbox"/> Summer Kick Off
<input type="checkbox"/> Pottery & Sip Social	<input type="checkbox"/> OHF 5K/10K Race
<input type="checkbox"/> Dinner & Show Social	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Appreciation Lunch
<input type="checkbox"/> Silent Donating Social	<input type="checkbox"/> Historical Walking Tour
<input type="checkbox"/> Holly Christmas Sweater Party	<input type="checkbox"/> I did not attend any of these events.

*"The Future of Venango Area Business!"*

## Making Connections & Getting Involved

“The mission of all nonprofits boils down to trying to change the world for good,” said Trenton Moulin, executive director of Bridge Builders Community Foundations (BBCF). Trenton spoke at the FLEX Speaker Series in September about running a nonprofit, networking, and serving on a board.

Trenton is one of the young professionals who helped form FLEX in 2007 and has gained much experience in the 11 years since. As executive director of BBCF, the community foundation serving Clarion, Forest, Jefferson, and Venango Counties, Trenton knows the ins and outs of running a nonprofit and spends much of his time building relationships and serving our community.

While Trenton reports to not just one Board of Trustees, but also four affiliate boards of directors, he knows the importance of having engaged community members at the board table. He shared advice for reporting to a board of directors, as well as tips for building connections and finding your own fit on a board at a local organization.

“The hardest part of starting a relationship is striking up a conversation,” he said. “Most people want to talk, but don’t know where to start, so you need to break down those barriers.”

When it comes to building connections and networking, some benefits include raising your profile, helping

others, increasing confidence, and even gaining lifelong friends. These connections can lead to opportunities in your professional life, something Trenton referred to as “leadership through connection.”

When ready to further the connections you built and join a board of directors, Trenton recommends finding one that is a right fit for you by making sure the organization is something you care about, understanding what you’re getting into, and asking questions about their mission and values.

“You learn a lot along the way, but don’t be afraid to get out there and start making connections and getting involved in our community,” said Trenton.

We appreciate Trenton taking time to provide us with such great advice. We plan to have an event for the FLEX Speaker Series every few months—stay tuned for details on our next one!



## Podcast Recommendation: Serial

By Marissa Dechant

While we typically share more professional-focused content, we changed it up this month for Halloween! If you’ve heard of at least one podcast, it’s likely Serial, the podcast to rule all podcasts and catalyst for every investigative copycat to follow.

For those new to the game, Serial, hosted by Sarah Koenig, originally aired in 2014, and covered the 1999 murder of a Baltimore teen and the controversial conviction of her ex-boyfriend.

Four years later, Koenig is back for season three. Premiering last month (September), this season covers a year inside the Cuyahoga County court system located in Cleveland. A different case is explained week by week, as Koenig follows judges, attorneys, and defendants through the justice system.



This is investigative storytelling at its best, as Koenig sheds light on people’s darkest moments. Do yourself a favor and download season three of Serial today.

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If you attended the FLEX Historical Walking Tour of Franklin, you will recognize our guide **Marlie Manning**, who is executive director of the Venango County Historical Society.

Marlie earned her bachelor's degree in history from Mansfield University of Pennsylvania, as well as her master's degree in museum studies from Appalachian State

University. As executive director of the Historical Society, her goals are to expand membership, get younger generations involved, and continue to preserve Venango County's history.

Although she's originally from Meadville, Marlie's family has ties to Venango County dating back to the late 1700s, and she has enjoyed calling our area home. "I enjoy the support the community gives. If you have a problem or need, the community is there to help," she said.

Some of the things Marlie likes to do in her free time include kayaking French Creek and the Allegheny River; biking, hiking, hunting, and fishing around the area, especially at Oil Creek State Park; enjoying entertainment in Downtown Franklin; dining at Trails to Ales Brewery; reading; and spending time with friends and family.

Another passion of hers is traveling. She hopes to someday visit all 50 states and, so far, she has checked New York, Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, Colorado, Maryland, Delaware, and Louisiana (in November) off her list.

Marlie encourages young professionals to consider getting involved in the Venango County Historical Society, whether as board members, advisors to the board, volunteers, members, or event participants. To learn more about the Historical Society, visit their website at [www.venangocountyhistory.org](http://www.venangocountyhistory.org).

## FLEX Member Highlight: Ashley Cowles

FLEX has big news! Our very own Ashley Cowles has opened her first business: **Core Goods**

Our mission within FLEX is to promote and support our local leaders and entrepreneurs, so you can imagine how thrilled we are at not only having a new business in the area, but having one of our own members at the helm.

As of September 29, Core Goods (located at 219 Seneca Street in Oil City) will be opened Thursdays-Saturdays 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sundays 12 to 3 p.m.

This is not just any type of store, Core Goods will be offering bulk foods, local produce, grab and go meals, kombucha on tap, and other related items.



The focus of her business is sustainable shopping, so customers are encouraged to bring reusable containers for bulk foods. The business is working with local farms to provide its shoppers with produce, honey, and other products from the Venango region.

Make sure to stop by the Grand Opening on Saturday, September 29, to check it out and congratulate Ashley!



**We will be highlighting accomplishments and news of FLEX members each month.**

**Have something you'd like to share? Email [acowles@venangochamber.org](mailto:acowles@venangochamber.org).**



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*"The Future of Venango Area Business!"*

We enjoyed walking around Franklin and learning about the past of our region at the Historical Walking Tour! Thank you Marlie Manning with the Venango County Historical Society for leading our tour.



## OUR MISSION

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

### Upcoming Events & Meetings:

- **Events & Fundraising Committee Call:** Friday, October 5, 9 a.m. | Call Number: +1-712-832-8330, Access Code: 742 9689
- **Coffee Chat:** Friday, October 12, 7:30 a.m., Komatsu Mining Corp., Franklin | Coffee and donuts provided
- **FLEX Annual Meeting:** Friday, October 26, 5:30 p.m., Karma Coffee Company, Oil City | Hors d'oeuvres and drinks provided | RSVP by 10/19 to [acowles@venangochamber.org](mailto:acowles@venangochamber.org)
- **Marketing Committee Meeting:** Tuesday, October 16, 7 a.m., Karma Coffee Co., Oil City

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Please join us in welcoming our newest FLEX members:

*Ashley Smith  
Mallory Spence*

Interested in becoming a member? Ask for a form at the next event or meeting, or join online at [bit.ly/flexmembership](https://bit.ly/flexmembership).



# VENANGO COUNTY DEMOCRATS

Helping to shape a strong state and nation where  
every citizen has the opportunity to succeed



## BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

WITH THE VENANGO COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

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Thursday, October 25th

5 PM to 7 PM

206 Seneca Street (Lower Level Center Street Entrance)

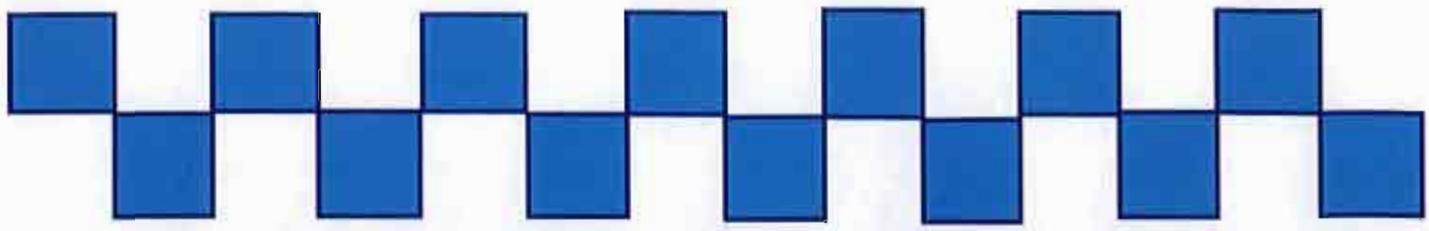
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*Please RSVP by calling the Venango Chamber at (814) 676-8521 or emailing Tessa at [tbyham@venangochamber.org](mailto:tbyham@venangochamber.org)*



# 6th Annual Benefit Dinner

**Saturday,  
October 27<sup>th</sup>  
4:00 - 7:00 PM**



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### - NEW DINING HOURS -

(Effective October 1, 2018)

Dinner: Thurs. - Sat. 5pm to 8pm

Brunch: Sundays 11am to 1pm

**Spooky Halloween Brunch - October 28th**

Dining Room Closes October 28th.

We are open for private functions and parties November - March

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# CASA of Venango County

## Here's what we've been up to!

Our painting is complete, and our offices are looking gorgeous! We hired D & S Painting and could not have been more pleased with their professionalism and their work. They were personable, friendly, and helpful. These guys are so talented; they can paint a straight line without tape! Check them out for your next painting project!

Barbara Pierce of C. J. Hurley Century Arts used her talents as an artist and decorator to help us choose the beautiful colors that are now in our offices. She will be helping us to hang our artwork in the most attractive ways possible in the very near future and then we will be all done!

Judy Slater has framed a few pieces of wall art – they really look amazing now! Thanks, Judy!

Our neighbors at the Keystone Education Council are also getting a makeover. They are coming along and will hopefully be done soon!



## OPEN HOUSE

IN HONOR OF OUR WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS AND TO SHOW OFF OUR REFRESHED DIGS, CASA OF VENANGO COUNTY AND THE KEYSTONE EDUCATION COUNCIL WILL BE CO-HOSTING AN OPEN HOUSE ON NOVEMBER 1 FROM 4 – 7 PM. PLEASE WATCH THE MAIL FOR YOUR INVITATION TO OUR LITTLE SOIRÉE!

CASA's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Superhero 5K Fun Run/Walk has been postponed until the tentative date of April 6, 2019! Mark your calendars now! More information to come!



Your donations will help train and support volunteer advocates in Venango County. To donate to CASA, please visit [www.casaofvenangocounty.org](http://www.casaofvenangocounty.org).

**BE A PART OF THE CASA MOVEMENT!**

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7 - 10 PM

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Tickets go on sale October 8 at the CASA office & Liberty St. Ale House  
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- ♥ NEW "Boozy Basket" Raffle! \$5 per ticket. About 13 different kinds of enjoyment!  
Must be 21 or older to participate in this raffle
- ♥ About a dozen vendors will have cash & carry and book parties!
- ♥ Please visit [www.casaofvenangocounty.org](http://www.casaofvenangocounty.org) or call 670-0550 for more info!

---

## UPCOMING EVENTS . . .

IN SESSION! - NEW VOLUNTEER CLASS

11/01 - CASA & KEYSTONE COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL OPEN HOUSE (BY INVITATION)

11/03 - LADIES' NIGHT/BINGO/SHOP A LITTLE (SEE REVERSE OF THIS PAGE)

11/29 - SWEARING IN FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS @ VENANGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE

02/22 - 02/24 - OIL COUNTRY BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

MARCH - NEW VOLUNTEER CLASS (DATES TBD)

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# Newsletter

We are hard at work on our annual newsletter and it will be going out the week of October 15<sup>th</sup>. If you have never received a copy of CASA's newsletter and would like to, please email us at [venangocasa@gmail.com](mailto:venangocasa@gmail.com) and send us your name and mailing address. We will add you to our list! Thank you!

## Free Smoking Cessation Class



A free resource for those wishing to quit smoking or chewing tobacco.

**Starting October 9 through November 13, 2018**

Tuesday, October 23, is quit day.

Tuesday, November 13, is celebration day.

5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Cost: Free

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- Bladder screening
- Vision screening
- Many educational tables
- And much more!

*\*Three hour fast is recommended*

**Wednesday,  
October 17**

4 to 7 p.m.

**Cranberry Mall**  
6945 US 322  
Cranberry

Registration is required  
by Oct. 8

To register or for  
more information,  
call **814-677-1463**  
or **1-800-422-8888**.

**UPMC | NORTHWEST**

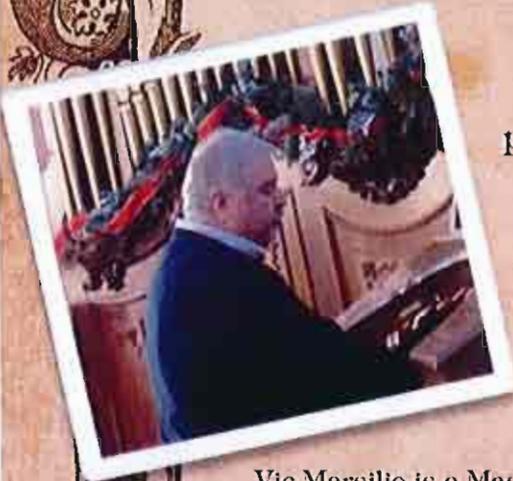
# Organ "Informance"

October 28th at 12:30pm

Join us as we welcome guest organist, speaker, and performer Victor Marsillo.

Marsillo will give a short presentation on pipe organs, especially the intricacies of the Good Hope Lutheran historic Aeolian-Skinner instrument.

Following the presentation will be a short concert featuring musical selections from Sacred to Broadway.



Vic Marsillo is a Master Pipe Organ Builder and has been an organist for the past 48 years and holds degrees in Philosophy and Electrical Engineering. He also has served as Organist for the Hartford (Ct) Whalers Hockey Team at the Hartford Civic Center, House Organist at Louisville Gardens (Kentucky) and Calliapist on the Belle of Louisville Riverboat on the Ohio River as well as for the Kosair-Circus Clowns in the Kentucky Derby Parade.

Victor Organ, LLC is located in the Historic Fire Station #1 in Anstintown, Ohio and serves over 300 clients in 6 states and specializes in restoration, relocation, service, tuning, new instruments as well as tonal additions solid-state control systems. Visitors, by appointment, are always welcome!

*Free for all to attend*

Good Hope Lutheran Church  
800 Moran Street - Oil City, PA



# Low Back Pain

Physical Therapy is a proven and cost effective way to treat low back pain

At UPMC Centers for Rehab Services (CRS), our Physical Therapists help patients relieve pain, promote healing, and restore function and movement.

**CRS Physical Therapists Provide:**

- Comprehensive examinations
- Personalized treatment plans
- Evidence-based treatments
- Manual therapy
- Core stabilization
- Strengthening and conditioning
- Spinal traction
- Encouragement for patients to maintain active lifestyles
- Promotion of wellness throughout episodes of care
- Individualized home exercise programs

CRS Physical Therapists are trained in the use of hands-on manual therapy. In appropriate patients, manual therapy to the lumbosacral region can yield a 92% success rate within the first week of treatment.

CRS has partnered with UPMC Health Plan to develop and implement the Low Back Initiative. Physical therapists are educated and trained on the Treatment Based Classification System with evidence-based evaluation and management of patients presenting with lumbar spine related disorders.

CRS physical therapy averages 8 therapy visits for the treatment of low back disorders.

For more information, contact UPMC Centers for Rehab Services.

CRS Emlenton: 724-867-1600

CRS Franklin: 814-432-9405

CRS Seneca: 814-678-4656



# CATA

Congratulations to the CATA team on winning the FTA Administrator's Award for Outstanding Public Service

for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time!

2014 & 2018



Partners in Transit because **EVERY** trip matters

# LET'S TALK TRASH

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**Advanced Disposal**

**(800) 338-8971**

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- **ROLL-OFF OPEN-TOP CONTAINERS**

We offer 20, 30 and 40 cubic yard size containers. (Other sizes may be available in select markets.)

- **COMPACTORS**

Our compactors are fully enclosed and engineered to meet your businesses' specific needs.

Available in varying sizes from 2 to 40 cubic yards.

### • SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT FROM ED YAHNER •

We are pleased to announce that Cortney Ortiz has accepted the position of Outside Sales Representative. Her attention to detail, ability to juggle multiple tasks, commitment to open and frequent communication, and overall positive attitude are vital assets to our team.

Cortney joined Advanced Disposal in June 2017. Prior to her new role here, she was the Director of Residential Sales and Development for WRC Senior Services. She has over 15 years of sales experience, and has already embraced her new role and tackled her extensive list of responsibilities with passion. Her experience includes development, planning and implementation of marketing efforts, and establishing relationships with representatives of local community groups and companies.

Cortney has a bachelor's degree in communication from Clarion University. She has served on the United Way of Clarion County's board of directors for nine years, and has volunteered with the Clarion Chamber of Business and Industry events. Cortney is also a yoga instructor at the Redbank Valley Community Center.

Cortney can be reached at 814-297-6084 or [cortney.ortz@advanceddisposal.com](mailto:cortney.ortz@advanceddisposal.com)



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# Coming Up at the Barrow-Civic Theatre

October 2018



APPLEFEST SHOW

## *The Producers*

September 28, 29, October 4, 5, 6 at 7:30pm    September 30 at 2:00pm

PG13

Winner of a record-breaking 12 Tony Awards - more than any other show in history! This hilarious Mel Brooks masterpiece follows the exploits of two money-hungry producers who scheme to trick investors into supporting a theatrical flop... while pocketing all the cash. Tickets \$14-\$20.

Sept. 29: All-inclusive Dinner & Show deal with gourmet dining at Suzannie's Restaurant before the show. Call for reservations.



## *Auditions: A Christmas Story: The Musical*

September 29 at 2:00pm    October 1 at 6:00pm

PG

Be a part of Franklin Civic Operetta Association's production of the American holiday classic turned Broadway hit! Visit [barrowtheatre.com/auditions](http://barrowtheatre.com/auditions) for more info and to download the audition packet. Performances December 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, and 16.



## Keeping It Real Cabaret Lounge: Youth Open Mic Night!

October 12 from 8:00-11:00pm

All ages welcome. Sing, play an instrument, or read poetry! Contact the Box Office to sign up. For larger group reservations, please call ahead. Cover \$2



## FCOA Youth Theatre: *Treasure Island*

October 26 at 7:30pm    October 27 at 2:00pm

FCOA Youth Theatre presents Robert Louis Stevenson's classic tale. Join us and young Jim Hawkins in this musical adventure filled with pirates, pigaloots, and buried treasure! Tickets \$12-\$14.



## *Wait Until Dark*

November 1, 2, 3 at 7:30pm    November 4 at 2:00pm

MA

In total darkness, every move counts. Unknowingly in possession of a drug-filled doll, a young blind woman finds herself caught in a life-threatening game with three criminals who will stop at nothing to find it. The 1967 film starring Audrey Hepburn is often ranked as one of the scariest films of all time, and this production reclaims it for the stage. Tickets \$12.



## 1776: BCT 25th Anniversary Reception & Concert

November 10    Reception: 5:30pm at DeBence    Concert: 8:00pm at the Barrow

In 1993, the FCCOA opened the BCT with the musical 1776. In celebration of our 25th Anniversary, join us for a special reception and concert adaptation of the first performance at the Barrow. The reception will be held at 5:30pm at DeBence Antique Music World, followed by the concert at 8:00pm at the Barrow. Reception Only \$25/Concert Only \$25/Both \$45.