



VenangoWorks!

News for members by members.

Volume 15 | Issue 2 | February 2019

***Matric Group Named
Business of the Year,
Barrow-Civic Theatre
Named Partner***

See pages 8 & 9



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

Welcome New Members



Aseracare Hospice

Contact: Lisa Winger
12664 Route 19 South
Waterford, PA 16441
lisa.winger@aseracare.com
www.aseracare.com

Aseracare Hospice provides medical, emotional, and spiritual support to individuals with terminal illnesses and their families. Hospice care can be delivered in the person's home, nursing home, or assisted living facility. Their team utilizes the latest practices and techniques to create the best quality of care during the last months of life.

FLEX Accepting Nominations for Young Professional of the Year

FLEX Presents is an annual event that celebrates the achievements of local young professionals who contribute to their community through civic engagement, and selects one of them as the Young Professional of the Year.

Since 2011, FLEX has recognized future leaders in our area who understand the value of giving back to their community and make a difference in the lives of others.

If you know someone who is an up and coming leader or is making significant contributions to their industry and the community, nominate them for Young Professional of the Year.

The form is available online at bit.ly/FLEXNomination Young Professional of the Year nominations will be accepted through February 22.

FLEX Presents will be on Friday, April 5, at the Barrow-Civic Theatre, and is open to all professionals.



Fifty Cups of Coffee

A new year brings new goals and among mine is the wish to expand my network over 50 cups of coffee. In the spring of 2016, I had the good fortune to hear Bobby Audley's TEDxPSUErie talk "The 50 Cups of Coffee Challenge." You can view it here: bit.ly/50CupsTEDx.

So, here goes. If we have not had the chance to meet, I'd like to invite you to "grab coffee" with me this year. Just a quick cup before or after work—I'll buy! I'd like to make 50 new connections, so if we're old friends, introduce me to someone new.

I'm keeping track and need your help to reach my goal.

Call (814) 676-8521, text (814) 758-2753 or email swilliams@venangochamber.org with the best day/time for you. And I hope you'll share your goals with me when we meet.

Thanks in advance,

Susan R Williams



Leadership Venango—Leading a Healthy Community

On January 9, the class of Leadership Venango met at UPMC Northwest for an enlightening session about achieving a healthy community. Joyce Morgan, Director of Patient and Community Relations and Diabetes Center, and Cheri Siverling, Director of the Family Birthing Center, shared some of the struggles Venango County faces from a healthcare standpoint. UPMC Northwest conducts a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) every three years. The hospital identifies three areas of significant health needs of our community. Resources and programs then center around these areas. Currently, the areas of focus are diabetes, respiratory diseases, and maternal infant health.

Joyce highlighted the Better Breathing Clinic and Smoking Cessation classes that UPMC offers, as well as the opportunity for individual instruction with a Diabetes Educator. Cheri discussed the high occurrence of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) in Venango County. NAS is a group of problems associated with withdrawal that occurs when a baby has been exposed to certain drugs in the mother's womb. Sadly, Venango



County is the 3rd highest county for infants diagnosed with NAS, according to the PA Healthcare Cost Containment Council Bulletin in December 2018. Many services are available to help these families through Human Services and Community Services.

Following Joyce and Cheri, Aaron Rosen, Senior HR Consultant for UPMC, shared insight on creating a healthy work community. Aaron shared UPMC's five core values they expect each employee to uphold. They build the culture of UPMC Northwest around these values and they are what they look for when hiring a new employee or evaluating current employees. Aaron stated: "You must create an environment that employees want to work in; when you have happy employees they inherently give better care to the patients."

The class then took a quick tour of the new Hillman Cancer Center, TeleMed unit, and Stroke unit and got to hear about the successes of each. Though UPMC Northwest is located in a smaller community,

they offer many state-of-the-art services to their patients and are on the cutting edge of new technology.

Brian Durniok, President of UPMC Northwest, spent some time with the class following lunch. He discussed his management style, the importance of delegating, and how he empowers his employees to make quick decisions. The class was able to spend some time in a dynamic discussion on current affairs of the hospital and healthcare in general with Brian.

The class ended the day with Joe Croskey, who is a Mindfulness Coach and Assistant Professor at Clarion University. Joe led the class in meditation and breathing exercises and talked about how to be a mindful listener. He spoke on the importance of self-awareness and emotional intelligence, and reminded the class to be intentional with themselves and others.

The 2019 class of Leadership Venango will meet again on February 13 at Venango College. For more information, visit leadershipvenango.org

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Caldwell Signage Completes Out of State Job

Caldwell Printing & Signage Solutions recently completed a signage job in Virginia. The Oil City-based company started as a printing business in 1996 and has grown significantly since, adding a vinyl and signage division to their offerings in 2011. Caldwell then partnered with ThinkSIGN in 2012 to further expand their territory.



Free Vision Screenings

The Venango County Association for the Blind will now offer free vision screenings for individuals age 2 through adulthood. Starting February 28 at their office in Seneca, participants may call ahead or drop in during screening hours.



Open screenings will be held on the last Thursday of every month from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Screenings will be provided by trained staff using the Spot Screener. The Spot Screener is not only an early detection tool for eye problems, but also identifies other ocular issues which may impede proper eye health and development hindering the learning capabilities of children. With any referral, they will provide printed results that may be taken to an eye care professional.

The Venango County Association for the Blind is located at 3035 State Route 257 in Seneca. Call (814) 676-1876 for more information.

Zion Hosts Coffee Break Thursday Mornings

Zion Lutheran Church hosts a free Coffee Break every Thursday morning from 9:30 to 10:30. Relax with a donut and coffee (or hot cocoa) and chat with your neighbors in a warm and friendly atmosphere. The program is sponsored by the Community Ministry Committee of the Good Hope/Zion Lutheran Ministry of Oil City.



Zion is located at 207 State Street in Oil City. Call (814) 676-9115 for more information.

Oakwood Heights Welcomes New Admission Coordinator

Oakwood Heights, located in Oil City and part of the Presbyterian SeniorCare Network, recently welcomed a new Admission Coordinator to their team. Kari Shoup, who has worked for the company for 20 years, has taken the place of Lynn Cole, who retired at the end of 2018 after 38 years.



Kari will be handling all admission inquiries and referrals for Oakwood Heights and will be doing external outreach and events. She has been training in the Admissions Office and begins full time on February 4. Welcome, Kari!

Get On the Trail Contest



The Get on the Trail Business Plan Contest is back! The goal is to provide services to the region's outdoor recreation trails by offering rewards to new and expanding

businesses. The applicants must submit solid business plans to provide vital goods and services to users of the bike trails, mountain bike trails, hiking trails, water trails, skiing trails, ATV trails, etc. in the area reaching from Hydetown to Parker.

The contest kicks off on February 26 at 6:30 p.m. at Trails to Ales Brewery, winner of the 2017 contest.

Dates & Deadlines are as follows:

Concept papers due: April 4, by 4:30 p.m.

Semi-finalists announced: April

Business plans dues: July 24, by 4:30 p.m.

Presentations: September 10

Finalists selected: October 1

Winners announced: October 12 (at O.C.ToberFest)

For contest forms and more information, visit oragot.com.



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CDC Celebrating 50 Years of Service

Child Development Centers, Inc. (CDC) marked its 50-year anniversary last month and plans to commemorate the milestone throughout 2019 while continuing to excel at preparing the community's children for kindergarten and beyond.

The non-profit organization, which was then known as Day Care Services, Inc., got its start on Jan. 26, 1969 when a group of citizens in Franklin decided to provide a safe place for children so mothers in Venango County could work outside their homes. In 1997, the name was changed to Child Development Centers, Inc. to reflect its increasing focus on early childhood education

and children's physical, social and emotional growth.

CDC expanded to the Meadville area in the early 2000s before firmly planting itself there in 2016 when it was awarded the federal Head Start grant for Venango and Crawford counties.

CDC currently operates a total of 10 centers, with the newest location being Willow Child Development Center, which fully opened in March of 2018. The 15,500 square-foot building is located just north of Meadville and was purchased from the Meadville Elks.

The facility houses nine total classrooms, with two each for infants, toddlers and preschoolers, and three for Head Start/preschool. Two other centers are located in the Meadville area, in addition to three in Franklin, three in Oil City and one in Cranberry.

CDC has several initiatives planned to honor its recently-achieved milestone. First, CDC has created a 50-year crest to be featured on many of its promotional materials.



The child care organization will also host several family engagement events and publish a community newsletter that covers its history and accomplishments.

In keeping with CDC's educational mission, Executive Director Rina Irwin has made a public commitment to improve student achievement and school readiness for their young learners, beginning this school year. Irwin's goal is to have each child develop to the color band above their age on assessment tool Teaching Strategies Gold by the end of the school year.

"I am confident that we can achieve this lofty objective if we commit ourselves to excellence in early development and learning," Irwin said.



2019 Member Directory

Work has begun on the 2019 Member Directory. If you have any changes for your listing, now is the time to contact us with your updates.

To see the information for your business that we currently have on file, visit www.venangoworks.org.

Any changes can be directed to the Chamber at chamber@venangochamber.org or (814) 676-8521. If you are interested in advertising in the directory, contact us for rates.



Congressman Glenn Thompson Opens New Office in Oil City

U.S. Representative Glenn ‘GT’ Thompson was sworn in as United States Representative for Pennsylvania’s 15th Congressional District for the 116th Congress on January 3. Representative Thompson, a life-long resident of Howard, Centre County, is the co-chairman of the Bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus and the German-American Caucus.

With the start of the 116th Congress, Representative Thompson opened a new regional office in Oil City, and also moved his office in Washington, D.C. The new Oil City office is located at 217 Elm Street, Suite B.



Youth Alternatives’ Valentine’s Dance

Youth Alternatives’ annual Valentine’s Day Dance will be held Saturday, February 9, at the Oil City VFW Post No. 464. The doors will be open at 7 p.m. and the dance will have live music by Chuck Justice & The Junkyard Lawyers starting at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and non-refundable. They are being sold at both Youth

Alternatives’ locations, the Oil City VFW and at the Venango Chamber. You must be 21 years or older to attend.

The event benefits Youth Alternatives’ children’s



camping program. Each summer, 150 youth, multiple volunteers, and Youth Alternatives staff travel by bus to Rock Creek, OH, where they spend a week at Camp Beaumont.

The camp is free to youth in the Venango County area. Youth Alternatives is able to give youth this experience through contributions from local donors.

The Valentine’s Dance is one of the agency’s largest camp fundraisers of the year. More information is available by calling Youth Alternatives at (814) 676-5785 (Oil City location) or (814) 346-0188 (Franklin location).

Social Media Tip: Communicating with Your Customers

A common mistake of business owners is to expect customers to know what is going on with your business, whether it’s new items you have, sales happening, or special hours. It’s easy, though, for people to get busy with their own lives and not realize what you are up to; that’s why it’s essential to communicate as much as possible!

Social media is a great platform to start with—be sure to follow some of our previous tips, like using consistent branding, posting at a time your audience is most active, and being sure to proofread before hitting publish. We suggest coming up with a plan to communicate in other ways, too. The more you share the same information in different places, the better chance your customers will see it.

For example, if you’re closed for a holiday, like Presidents’ Day, start by sending out a social media post (you can even “pin” it to the top of your Facebook page),

then you could also put a sign on your door, send an email out, add a banner on your website, and have a sign to display inside during your open hours leading up to the holiday.

By communicating often, both online and offline, you can prevent people from getting frustrated, leading to happy customers who continue to support you.



2018 Business of the Year



Matric Group

Electronics And *People* you can count on.

Our 2018 Business of the Year, Matric Group, is an electronics manufacturer based in Seneca that has reliably and affordably provided original equipment manufacturers with safe, effective electronics for 47 years.

In 2018, Matric saw healthy revenue growth, increasing 30 percent over 2017, which increased 21 percent from 2016. With all this success, Matric had the need to expand, adding more than 100 new employees in 2018, with a total workforce now at 330.

This growth led to record-breaking numbers on the production floor. Matric placed 19.6 million parts last year, beating its previous high of 17.9 million set in 2014. This effort was fueled by production on the company's new high speed SMT line,

which placed 41 percent of the parts.

For the third time in four years, Matric was presented the Komatsu "Premiere Supplier" award in July. This honor requires recipients to demonstrate an exceptional level of quality—less than 3,000 defects-per-million or 95 percent on-time delivery—in addition to hitting a minimum sales threshold. The two companies have a partnership extending back nearly 50 years.

The company was also selected as a recipient of the 2018 Governor's Award for Safety Excellence for a second time (the first was in 2015). A deciding factor in Matric's nomination was a record-breaking medical-claim free streak lasting 753 days from March 2016 to April 2018. Although the streak has ended, Matric associates continue to

prioritize safety and continue to work hard towards building another impressive run.

Away from the facility, business development efforts took place across the country at various trade shows. Matric and its sister company Dynamic Manufacturing exhibited shows in Cleveland, OH, New York, NY, San Francisco, CA, Las Vegas, and Nashville, TN.

Outside of business, Matric and its associates strived to make a difference in the community in which we live and work. This year, Matric associates raised \$16,004 for the United Way of Oil City, a total matched by the company.

In December, the "Fill Up the Matric Van" initiative invited associates to provide food and supplies in assistance of Family Services and Children's Aid in Oil City. Originally founded as a benefit for a disabled Matric associate in 1993, the tradition has come a long way, with nearly 18 boxes of goods collected this year.

As we move into 2019, the focus at Matric is the same as it's been since President Rick Turner bought the company in 1993: "As with the last 25 years, we are committed to slow, profitable growth with continued reinvestment in our business."



2018 Partner in Business of the Year

The 2018 Partner in Business Award goes to the Barrow-Civic Theatre (BCT), owned and operated by the Franklin Civic Operetta Association (FCOA). The FCOA's mission is to be a leader in the cultural growth, diversity, and vitality of the region, with a vision to provide opportunities for quality programming and entertainment by tapping the resources of all age groups and encouraging the pursuit of artistic talents.

The FCOA celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2018 and had a full schedule of events, presenting award-winning literature from a diverse array of genre.

With a commitment to improving processes, staff made major updates to production guidelines by streamlining the process. Multi-member production teams developed into a new standard, ushering in several non-board members as FCOA show producers and members of the Programming Committee.

BCT's Little Theatre maintained a lively schedule of events. The Off-Barrow Committee completed an internal review over the summer and created a Committee Overview document for the Board

Development Committee. A production of the play *Wait Until Dark* was a great hit in November, selling out several shows, and proving the Little Theatre is a special and unique downtown venue for smaller plays and events.

The first phase of building improvements began in the Little Theatre over the holidays. A new technical booth featuring an audio snake, light board, and new stage are part of the improvements.

The Youth Theatre program produces annual shows and workshops that allow our area's youth to develop skills in all aspects of theater. The program encourages parent participation, and the staff continue to work as a team to empower each young participant.

The Barrow Theatre Institute (BTI), a series of after school, evening, and weekend classes and workshops taught by local instructors is gaining momentum and hopes to recognize continual growth in registrants and classes offered.

Another educational event included an Artist In Residence, in collaboration with Erie Arts & Culture (EAC) and Pennsylvania Partner for the Arts (PPA). Two Teaching Artists spent several weeks working with local youth to install a mosaic tile installation for the entrance to The Little Theatre (see left). The finished product tells the stories the participating youth gathered to answer the question "Why Franklin?" This is a much-needed, vibrant and colorful update to the facade of the Little Theatre.



2018 was an active and productive year for the FCOA Board Development committee. A Board Retreat was held in September, focused on values and Board roles.

The theatre presented over 100 ticket vouchers to area non-profits for fundraisers. The theatre was represented at downtown events and FCOA cast members attended festivals and concerts in the park to promote shows, and the theatre opened its doors for concessions and rest room facilities.

Many building improvements were made or begun in 2018, including the replacement of pumps and one of the boiler units. Staff members painted the outside alley wall, a much-needed improvement to the cosmetics of the building. Additional improvements included the replacement of two damaged doors, as well as carpet throughout the building.

"The opening of the Barrow-Civic Theatre 25 years ago was a dream come true. Today, this organization is still making dreams come true for performers and the community," said Zach Covington, Executive Director.



Titusville Chamber Welcomes New Executive Director

Please join the Venango Chamber in extending a sincere welcome to Karen Carey, recently appointed as the Titusville Area Chamber of Commerce executive director.

"Carey was an attractive candidate because of the skill set she brings," said Tammy Carr, vice president of the chamber board. "The board has every confidence that she will support efforts to revitalize the business district and increase the influence and effectiveness of the chamber's role within the community as well as market Titusville effectively as a destination and place for work and living."

"I will be on an aggressive mission to "Meet the Market" and talk to business owners and community members to collaborate with them on how the chamber can make them more successful, not only for their own

businesses, but for the community at large," Carey added. "I believe that personal relationships are of utmost importance, even in this digital age we are living in."

Carey moved from the Bay Area of Northern California in 2006 and lives in Franklin with her partner, Mark, and their four children, two grandchildren and two dogs.

Karen Carey can be reached at the Titusville Chamber at (814) 827-2941 or karen@titusvillechamber.com.



WORK HERE

Is your business currently hiring? Let the Venango Chamber help you through our Be Here initiative! You can post your job posting to our website, which attracts up to 4,000 visitors a month. Simply complete the form at beherevenango.org/hiring and your listing will be added.

We are currently working on updates for the Be Here site, which will make it even more user-friendly.

Does Your Business or Organization Host Job Shadow Students?

A small team from Leadership Venango, the Chamber's new Leadership program, is looking to define connections and develop a process to make the job shadowing experience more meaningful to students and hosts.

A directory will provide students with information about what types of jobs are prevalent in the Venango area and a list of contacts for companies that are willing to host job shadows for the different career categories.

Processes will be laid out for managing expectations to both the students and the hosts. This will help students prepare for the day and know what to expect. Similarly,

a process for the hosts will ensure that necessary information is communicated and the students receive a meaningful experience of the career they are interested in.

If your business or organization is interested in being included, please contact Tessa at tbyham@venangochamber.org.



Why Business After Hours Mixers Remain Relevant

“It’s our human-to-human links that make the most meaningful moments of our lives,” suggests Joshua Cooper Ramo, author of *The Seventh Sense* and *The Age of the Unthinkable*.

While in many ways it seems we are more connected than ever, our busy schedules and screen time are keeping us from meeting face to face with businesses in our communities. It is in meeting that we can most effectively collaborate, celebrate, and even commiserate. But let’s get serious—who really wants to go to another meeting?

We are encouraged to “grow our network,” understanding there is a lot to be said for who you know when trying to get things done.



The chamber mixer model has long provided an efficient template for bringing people together, specifically within the business community. We believe there is great value in meeting, especially when it provides the chance to meet new people and businesses, or reacquaint ourselves with someone we haven’t talked to in a while.

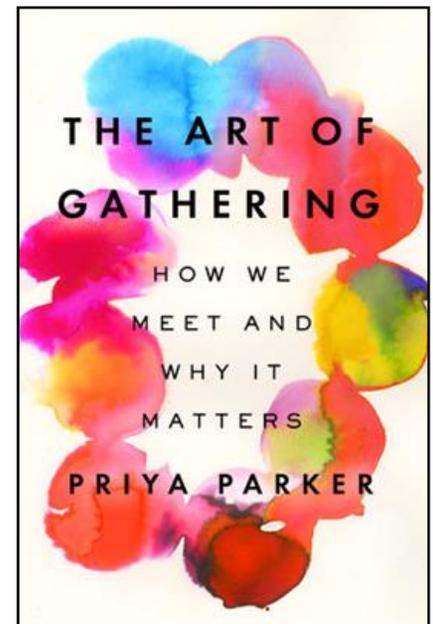
So, what makes for the perfect chamber business after hours mixer? The same thing that works for any great get together, an enthusiastic host and an invitation. Still not convinced? Check out Priya Parker’s *The Art of Gathering*. Parker offers a decoder ring for the secret forces at work when we gather for

business, crises, or celebration.

And remember, “many of the best things in life happen when people gather,” said Chris Anderson, owner and curator of TED.

To schedule a mixer, contact the Chamber at (814) 676-8521 or chamber@venangochamber.org.

Stay tuned next month for an article with tips on how to host a successful mixer.



Eckert Chiropractic Welcomes New Staff

Eckert Chiropractic is pleased to welcome Dr. Joe Aylesworth as the newest member of their team. Dr. Aylesworth recently graduated from New York Chiropractic College and is excited to start helping patients feel and move their best. You may recognize him, as he is an Oil City native and completed his externship at their office this past fall. He is adept in a trigger point technique called NIMMO and has also taken the Rock Blades course. He is now



seeing patients, so stop by to meet him!

Also recently joining the team is Mikayla Markle from Emlenton. Mikayla started at Eckert Chiropractic this past November and does dynamic neuromuscular stabilization exercises with patients, teaches them to use different myofascial tools, and puts patients on and off traction.

Eckert Chiropractic also recently remodeled many area of their office. The business offers a range of treatments including: prenatal, postnatal, pediatric, traction, rock blades, flexion/distraction, kinesio tape and more. The office is located at 1047 Allegheny Avenue in Oil City. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (814) 657-1854 or visit www.chiordrkate.com.

Committee Looking to Complete WWI Memorial

In 2013, the Venango County Historical Society formed a committee, spearheaded by Mr. Robert Billingsley, to create a memorial for Venango County residents who served during World War I. The memorial would consist of two components—a doughboy, representing all of those who fought during the war, and a trench, which

bears the names of those who served from Venango County.

It took two years to complete the doughboy, which was placed in 2014. Volunteers then spent two years researching soldiers from 1917 through the end of the war. It was decided that those who enlisted out of Venango County qualified. Even with the specification, the total

was 4,182 names. Once the names were gathered, the committee met with Franklin Granite Works to finalize the list. While the stencil was made and the names engraved, the chosen site in front of the court house was prepared. All of the work was done by local companies who were honored to help.



Mr. Billingsley has spent countless hours raising funds for this project, and has funded all of the project, except for the engraving, with the support of the community. The committee is once again asking for the community's help to complete this project. Any size donation will help and any funds raised above and beyond the cost of completing the project will be used to maintain the memorial and its site.

To make a donation, visit venangocountyhistory.com or call (814) 432-8260.

Photo above by Richard Sayer, photographer at The Derrick & The News-Herald.

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McCullough Releases New Editions of Trilogy



Cranberry High School graduate Corey McCullough's books are now available to readers everywhere.

McCullough spends most of his time as a freelance writer, copy editor, and proofreader; but he

also writes books in the genres of fantasy and science fiction, and occasionally speaks to local students about fiction writing, creativity, and turning a passion into a career.

McCullough's debut novel, *The Fallen Odyssey*, is the story of a teenager from Venango County who storms out of the house after an argument with his father and accidentally steps into a parallel universe of swords, shields, magic, and monsters. It is the first book of a trilogy but can be enjoyed as a stand-alone novel.

His books are available on Amazon or at www.thefallenodyssey.com/products (all paperbacks ordered through thefallenodyssey.com come signed by the author). In the hopes of getting more kids to read, he also offers e-book copies of *The Fallen Odyssey* to young adult readers for free.

Celebrate Valentine's Day with Divani Chocolatier & Core Goods

Two of our members—Divani Chocolatier in Foxburg and Core Goods in Oil City—are working together this Valentine's Day. On Sunday, February 10, from 12 to 3 p.m. at Core Goods, you can enjoy samples of chocolate covered strawberries from Divani, and place an order for strawberries that will be made fresh and delivered on February 14.

For people unable to attend on the 10th, Core Goods will have forms available leading up to the event, so chocolate covered strawberries can still be ordered.

In December, Core Goods started selling "Bliss Bites" from Divani, which are dark chocolate bites filled with organic nuts.



Summer Intern Assistance Available

Now is the time to begin considering if your business would benefit from employing a summer intern. Interns offer an affordable way to add staff, bring in fresh ideas and talents, and expose young people to opportunities in our community and your business.

If interested in hiring an intern, the first step is to develop a job description for the position. Next, let family, friends, and the Chamber know that you are seeking an intern. Finally, once a candidate for the position has been found, consider looking into their PHEAA State Work-Study Program eligibility. You are welcome to contact the Chamber regarding how to utilize PHEAA or about finding an intern that fits your business well.



If you know of a college student seeking an internship, we would be happy to help with that, too. Please have the student send their resume to chamber@venangochamber.org with "Summer Internship Opportunities" in the subject line, with information in the body of the email about the student's area of interest and whether or not he/she is eligible for the Work-Study Program.



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Oil City

OCHS Career Fair Set For March 7

Oil City High School is excited to invite local businesses to attend the annual Career & College Fair on March 7, 2019. This event helps students gain a better understanding of career and job opportunities in and around the Venango region.

Educators organizing the fair suggest that students would benefit most from meeting a diverse representation of businesses and organizations, who can share information about how to be prepared for employment in their field.



Set-up time will begin at 7:15 a.m. and students will start arriving for the event at 7:50 a.m., with the event concluding at 11:15 a.m.

Register at bit.ly/2019OCHSFair



Early Intervention Provider And Pediatric Outpatient Clinic

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Seneca, PA 16346
Phone (814) 677-1390
Fax (814) 677-1393

118 South Kerr Street
Titusville, PA 16354
(814) 827-0800



SHARE YOUR STORY



Tracy Cowles is a Cranberry High School graduate who earned a master's degree at Clarion University for speech language pathology. She lived in Morgantown, WV, and Pittsburgh, but decided to move back to Venango County, where she eventually opened her business—Next Step Therapy—in 2006.

"I have been blessed with success in Venango County. Some will say it's luck, but in reality, I picked the right place at the right time, and Venango County still has amazing opportunities for those who can see them," she said.

You can read Tracy'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 and click the "share your story" button at the bottom of the page.

Bridge Builders Scholarship Applications Now Accepted



Thanks to their generous donors, Bridge Builders Community Foundations is able to provide scholarships and the opportunity for students to further their educations as just one of their components of service.

Last year Bridge Builders Community Foundations granted more than \$250,000 in scholarships to students in our area.

Applications for the scholarships that the Community Foundation administers are online now. This safe and

secure online application will be available until **April 5** for all students wishing to apply.

If you are a student or know a student in the Venango, Forest, Clarion County or Punxsutawney areas (especially graduating seniors) please follow this link to apply: bbcfc.org

Click on the blue "Apply Here" button to create a login account and follow the instructions. The student will have to create a login and then fill out one application (with a few exceptions) to be considered for all the scholarships that he or she is eligible for.

If you have any concerns or questions please email: scholarships@bbcfc.org or call (814) 677-8687.

James Sworn in for 4th Term

R. Lee James was sworn in as our State Representative on January 1. He is starting his fourth term as representative of the 64th District of Pennsylvania.



Representative James' office is located at 3220 State Route 257 in Seneca.

Victorian City Making Changes in Honor of 25th Year

Victorian City Art and Frame is gearing up to celebrate 25 years of business in 2019 by redesigning the gallery over the next few months. They plan to work with local businesses through this transformation. Some have already helped them to redesign the logo (pictured right) and print new signage.

They will hold a clearance event February 8 and 9 during Franklin on Ice to clear out old stock and make room for new art. Victorian City Art and Frame is located at 1273 Liberty Street in Franklin.



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| Ashley Cowles | <i>Program Manager</i> |

Chamber Events Calendar

FEBRUARY

- 13 FLEX Monthly Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- 21 Chamber Board Retreat, 8 a.m.
- 27 Chamber Annual Dinner, Cross Creek Resort, 5 p.m.

MARCH

- 07 Business After Hours Mixer, Rep. R Lee James, 5-7
- 21 Chamber Executive Board Meeting, 8 a.m.
- 27 Be Here Quarterly, 5 p.m.

APRIL

- 05 FLEX Presents, Barrow-Civic Theatre, 6 p.m.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR OF EVENTS AVAILABLE AT
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FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

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Volume 7 | Issue 2 | February 2019

Introducing the FLEX Leadership Development Resources Drive

We are pleased to announce the launch of the **FLEX Leadership Development Resources (LDR) Drive!**

The personal and professional development of young professionals (YP) is crucial to making a positive impact in the Venango area. The FLEX Leadership Development Resources Drive offers FLEX members access to videos, podcast recommendations, professional documents, books, and personal YP stories, and members can upload their favorite resources as

well. As we embark on our YP journeys in 2019, it's important we continue to learn, network, and grow from our experiences together—the FLEX LDR Drive is a great way to connect on one shared drive.

Please see the link below to access the drive and bookmark it in your browser. Let us know your thoughts!

bit.ly/FLEXLDR



BOOKS



PODCASTS



VIDEOS



STORIES

Young Professional of the Year Nominations Due February 22

We invite you to nominate a young professional for our Young Professional of the Year award! Nominees will be recognized at our annual FLEX Presents event on Friday, April 5, at the Barrow-Civic Theatre in Franklin.



This event is held to celebrate achievements of young professionals who contribute to our region through civic

engagement. Last year, we had 11 nominees and the winner was Charlie Cotherman, pastor at Oil City Vineyard Church.

If you know someone who is an up and coming leader or making significant contributions to their industry and the community, nominate them for Young Professional of the Year. The form is available online at bit.ly/FLEXNomination. Young Professional of the Year nominations will be accepted through February 22.

More information about FLEX Presents can be found at venangochamber.org/flex-presents.

"The Future of Venango Area Business!"



We're excited to introduce **Kat Thompson**, this year's FLEX Vice President/Secretary and the Talent Engagement Facilitator at CareerLink.

Kat grew up in Hydetown, just outside of Titusville, and moved to Oil City while in high school. From kindergarten through 12th grade, she attended Christian Life Academy (CLA), then went

on to Spring Arbor University in Michigan where she earned a bachelor's degree in business administration with a minor in global economic development. She also received her Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) certification through Oxford Seminars.

For three years, Kat lived in China teaching Oral English and Reading Comprehension at Sias International University. While in China, one of her fond memories is performing, usually choreographed dances. They would sometimes give performances in front of thousands of students and once on TV for a basketball tournament.

Kat has traveled and lived all over the world (she's been to 30 countries and over 40 states) and loves meeting new people and learning about different cultures, but she is happy to call our area home. "It's where my family is and I'm proud of way the community is growing here," she said.

As the new VP/Secretary of FLEX, Kat is looking forward to helping others get more involved in the organization and the community.

In her free time, she enjoys relaxing on her patio with her cat, Ellie, while bird watching. She also participates in outdoor recreation, like hiking, biking, and kayaking throughout the region. She loves watching wildlife, including deer, foxes, a bear, racoons, a porcupine, and a lot of birds just around her house. One of her favorite stops in our area is Core Goods, a new store in Oil City.

"I truly appreciate the sense of community in Venango County," she told us. "There is a strong network between businesses, economic development, and community organizations. There are so many people working towards improving the quality of life in this area and I'm happy to be a part of that." We're happy to have her a part of it, too, especially as a new officer of FLEX!

Your Body Language May Shape Who You Are

This month's recommended TED Talk is by Amy Cuddy, a social psychologist. Cuddy suffered a severe head injury from a car accident at the beginning of her college career. Doctors told her she may never again reach her full mental capacity and finishing her undergraduate degree was not likely. She decided to prove them wrong and today, Cuddy is a professor and researcher at Harvard. She studies social psychology, specifically how nonverbal behavior affects our judgement.

Cuddy suggests that body language affects not only how others see us, but also how we see ourselves. Her research shows that we can change the perceptions of others by simply changing our body positioning. The talk is just over 20 minutes long.

Find it here: bit.ly/CuddyTalkTED



Save the Date!
July 20, 2019



Dr. Kate Eckert
drkeckert@gmail.com
www.chirodrkate.com

1047 Allegheny Avenue
Oil City, PA 16301
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Leah Walentosky is one of our newest FLEX members. Born and raised in Oil City, Leah has fond memories of going to the YMCA, getting ice cream at Butler's Candies, and biking to the Marina with her brother.

Leah graduated from Oil City High School in 2009 and attended Clarion University, where she earned a

bachelor's degree in library science and education. She currently works for both the Allegheny National Forest, and as a substitute teacher.

Leah enjoys reading and photography, she said she never leaves the house without a book or a camera. She also enjoys staying active by doing yoga once a week and hiking every day in the summer. In the colder months, she spends time at the YMCA and takes Taekwondo classes.

Among her favorite things to do in Venango County, Leah loves to visit galleries and enjoy the work of local artists. She tries to shop local as often as possible, and often grabs a bite to eat at the Taco Shack.

She is proud of her work with the forest service and was recognized by winning a Safety Award and Peer Recognition Award. Leah also completed the PA Hike 50 Challenge in 2018, which involved hiking at least 12.5 different miles in each of the four PA chapters of the North Country Trail Association.

As far as the future, Leah stated, "I am prepared for whatever life has." She hopes to land a full-time job with the government and earn her master's degree in archival science. Personally, she'd like to spend more time gardening and traveling, and eventually buy a house of her own.

Leah loves the arts community and rural landscapes of Venango County, and is proud to call it home. We are so excited to have Leah join FLEX and bring her fun-loving spirit and positive attitude to our organization.

Join a FLEX Committee

FLEX has three committees to get involved with, each led by a chair and holding different responsibilities. Joining a committee is a great way for FLEX members to get more engaged. Each committee holds their own monthly or quarterly meetings, which are always listed on the last page of the FYI. To join a committee, email the committee chair and they will add you to their mailing list. Find more information about each committee below:

Events & Fundraising

Chair: *Hannah McCarthy* (hannahbananam@hotmail.com)

Responsible for planning and executing events and fundraising activities (Events include: FLEX Presents, Annual Meeting, Socials, Summer Kick-Off, and more).

Membership

Chair: *Laura Ordaz* (Laura.Ordaz@mining.komatsu)

Responsible for growing the organization through outreach, collecting membership applications, and maintaining a list of the general membership.

Marketing & Community Partnerships

Chair: *Tessa Byham* (tbyham@venangochamber.org)

Responsible for seeking ways to promote FLEX through formal promotion and community involvement (Maintain social media, create FYI newsletter, organize volunteer efforts, and more).



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"The Future of Venango Area Business!"

Featured Article: *The Winter Project Blog*

The following is an excerpt of the blog post, "How Rituals Create Joy" by local freelance writer Hannah Kennedy. In this post, Kennedy looks at our cultural idea of the winter season, exploring how forming new rituals and traditions around winter can go a long way in increasing joy throughout the winter months. Kennedy, along with her friend and colleague Jenny Rice, coauthors the blog *The Winter Project*, which encourages winter weather positivity by building a community around finding the joy and coziness in the cold.

"Wintry weather in December is very nostalgic for us; it's connected to traditions like building snowmen, drinking cocoa, wrapping presents, and listening to Christmas carols. So it makes sense that once the new year hits, we have nothing to look forward to, except... President's Day? Soon, without events to anticipate or any seasonal traditions to observe, winter becomes a big blank space



which seems to drag on and on. The overwhelming hype of holiday joy gives us a joy hangover. We're too tired to be happy! excited! celebratory! Add some bitter cold and black ice, and winter becomes the scapegoat for it all.

Our culture doesn't really have major, centralized traditions. I think we tend to forget how important physical acts are to the health of our souls. But my opinion is that we need traditions (events, rituals, etc.) to mark our days, to realign ourselves with who we are and want to be. So this winter, I want to work on creating winter traditions that help me really take joy in the season.

And maybe, I also allow winter to be what it is: a quiet season, a cozy season. Maybe I dig in and treat winter like a retreat, a time where I don't do as much, where I spend time reading and writing and thinking. We all need seasons that are quieter, less rushed, more peaceful. And it seems as if one is ready-made for all that."

Visit winterprojectblog.com for more of Hannah's work.

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:

- **FLEX Presents Planning Meeting:** Monday, February 4, 5 p.m., Venango Chamber, Oil City
- **Events & Fundraising Committee Meeting:** Monday, February 11, 5 p.m., Bossa Nova Café, Franklin
- **Marketing & Community Partnerships Committee Meeting:** Tuesday, February 12, 5 p.m., Venango Chamber
- **Bike 'n Brew Meeting:** Tuesday, February 12, 6 p.m., Venango Chamber (after Marketing meeting)
- **Membership Committee Meeting:** Wednesday, February 13, 5 p.m., Bossa Nova
- **Monthly Meeting:** Tuesday, February 19, 5:30 p.m., Venango Chamber
- **Events & Fundraising Committee Call:** Tuesday, February 19, 10 a.m. Call Number: +1 712-832-8330; Access Code: 742 9689

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Please join us in welcoming our newest FLEX members:

Sarah MacBeth
Leah Walentosky

Interested in becoming a member? Ask for a form at the next event or meeting, or join online at bit.ly/flexmembership.

Connect with us:



Business After Hours Mixer

THURSDAY, MARCH 7TH 2019
5 PM - 7 PM

Join us at the office of State
Representative R. Lee James for his
legislative update for small businesses.

Located at
3220 State Route 257, Suite 8
Seneca, PA



Please RSVP to the
Venango Area Chamber at
814-676-8521
or the
Franklin Area Chamber at
814-432-5823
by March 1st

LIVE2>>LEAD

Helping You Make the Right Shift in Your Leadership

Live2Lead is a half-day, leader development experience designed to equip attendees with new perspectives, practical tools and key takeaways. You will learn from world-class leadership experts, be prepared to implement a new action plan, and start leading when you return to the office with renewed passion and commitment. Facilitated by Scott Schoenberger of *The John Maxwell Team*, this on-site video seminar will include presentations by John C. Maxwell, Carly Fiorina, Daniel Pink, Debra Searle, and Tyler Perry. This is what you can expect to gain from this event:

- Recognizing the opportunity for a shift
- Knowing the right time to make a shift
- Choosing to make a shift
- The hard work that goes into making a shift
- What kind of shift every leader needs to make



DR. JOHN C. MAXWELL



CARLY FIORINA



DANIEL PINK



DEBRA SEARLE



TYLER PERRY

When: Friday, February 22, 2019

Time: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm (lunch is included)

Cost: \$69 (\$10 discount per attendee when two or more employees register)

Location: Zion Baptist Church [Directions](#)
 114 Zion Road
 Clarion PA 16214-3873

(Registration Required)

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HEART HEALTHY HEALTH FAIR

In recognition of
American Heart Month,
UPMC Northwest is
pleased to offer a free
community health fair.

Friday, Feb. 22, 2019
8 a.m. to noon

UPMC Northwest

Courtyard Conference Room
100 Fairfield Drive
Seneca, PA 16346

Registration is required by Friday, Feb. 8.

First come, first served.

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

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www.CallowayFundraising.com



2019 SEASON



Alice In Wonderland

March 15, 16, 22, 23 at 7:30pm | March 24 at 2:00pm

G

Follow Alice down the rabbit hole and into Lewis Carroll's classic tale of utter illusion - with a mad hatter, a cold-hearted queen, a hookah-smoking caterpillar, and a curious Cheshire cat. Whether you're big or small, whether you're old or not old at all... you'll find that logic is no match for madness in the bizarre world of Wonderland.

CRAZY for YOU

May 2, 3 at 7:30pm | May 4 at 6:00pm | May 5 at 2:00pm

G

The ultimate feel-good Gershwin musical charts the troubled love story of two people whose meeting centers on a dilapidated theater. Sent to shut down and repossess the failing business, Bobby meets the theater proprietor's daughter, Polly, and must decide if he will follow his family's orders or follow his heart.

GREASE

June 21, 22, 27, 28 at 7:30pm | June 23, 29 at 2:00pm

PG13

Take a trip back to the 1950's with Danny and Sandy, the Pink Ladies, and the Burger Palace Boys! Packed with explosive energy, hopeless romance, bad-boy charm, and an unforgettable rock n' roll soundtrack, it's the musical phenomenon that defined a generation. *Grease* is the word!

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S THE MOUSETRAP

August 16, 17, 23, 24 at 7:30pm | August 25 at 2:00pm

PG

The longest-running play in the world, Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap* has captured audiences for over 60 years. When a snow storm traps a group of strangers together in a boarding house, they soon discover that there is an unknown killer among them. One by one, sordid pasts, accusations, and murderous motives are revealed.

THE MUSIC MAN

Sept. 27, 28, Oct. 3, 4, 5 at 7:30pm | Sept. 29 at 2:00pm

G

Funny, wicked, romantic, and touching, *The Music Man* is family entertainment at its best. A traveling salesman cons the people of a small town into buying instruments and uniforms for a boys' band that he vows to organize. His plans to skip town with the cash are foiled when he meets a beautiful librarian who sees the good in him, despite the ways of his past.

A SEUSSIFIED CHRISTMAS CAROL

December 12, 13, 14 at 7:30pm | December 14, 15 at 2:00pm

G

What would happen if Charles Dickens and Dr. Seuss collaborated on a play? A *Seussified Christmas Carol*, of course! From zoot-fruited juices to binka-bird-geese, from stockings and presents to a feast of roast beast... This whimsical reinvention of a beloved classic will fill the whole family with holiday cheer!

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Senior/Military
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Student/Child
\$56 | \$67.20

Adult Couple
\$150 | \$180

Senior Couple
\$135 | \$162

2019 SEASON SUBSCRIPTIONS

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Benefits include FCOA ticket vouchers, first access to Season Subscriptions, Season Program recognition, 10% discount on concessions, and more. Call us or visit barrowtheatre.com/members.



Upcoming Events

February 2019

Liberty Rocks the Cabaret

Liberty Rocks the Cabaret

January 25, 26, February 1, 2 at 7:30pm

A late-night live variety show, written and directed by local talent. Off-Barrow's Liberty Rocks the Cabaret's cast and full live band who bring you a foot-stomping, hard-rocking night of comedy and music! Rated MA for some adult language and themes. Tickets \$15.



BTI: Set Painting Workshop Series

Thursdays, January 31 - March 7 from 7:00-9:30pm

Learn how to build and paint set props and backgrounds in this workshop for ages 12+. No experience necessary! In conjunction with *Alice in Wonderland*, projects include set floor design, several scene props, and more. Students are also welcome to continue participation during "tech week" of *Alice in Wonderland*, March 9-13. Rate \$10 per class. Call us or visit barrowtheatre.com/bti to learn more.



Celebration of Talent

February 9 at 7:30pm

Over \$1,000 in cash and prizes will be won in this variety talent competition! Twelve contestants perform in the first round. Only five will move on to the final round. Winners will be decided by audience vote and announced at the end of the show. Come and vote for your favorite singer, dancer, musician, or magician! Tickets \$15. Meet the contestants at barrowtheatre.com/celebrationoftalent.



FCOA Youth Theatre: *The Little Mermaid*

February 15 at 7:30pm, February 16 at 2:00pm

FCOA Youth Theatre presents *The Little Mermaid*, based on the story by Hans Christian Anderson. Anemone, an adventurous little mermaid, leaves her undersea realm for a sixteenth birthday excursion, hoping to find the prince of her dreams. But, a jealous sea-witch and her shark cohorts terrorize all. Will love and friendship triumph over evil? Tickets \$12-\$14.



Oil Region Ballet: *The Princess and the Terrible Time Troll*

February 22 at 7:30pm, February 23 at 2:00pm & 7:30pm

When a young Princess and her sleep-over friends stay up past curfew, they trigger a local curse and release a terrible troll upon the kingdom. Can their dreadful mistake be fixed? This fun-filled ballet metes out hilarious exploits with audience participation! Tickets \$10-\$14.

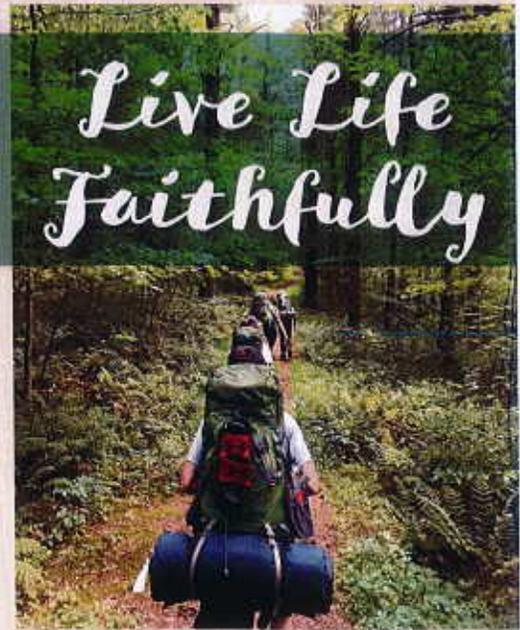


5th Annual B&B Dinner Theatre: *B&B Sings Gershwin*

March 1 | dinner at 6:00pm, performance at 7:30pm

The Barrow-Civic Theatre and Belles Lettres Club come together for a complete evening of dining and entertainment. Features the music of George and Ira Gershwin, performed by Ben Bodamer, Crystal Curran, Tim Gilbert, Lisa Gilbert, Nicholas Hess, Nathaniel Licht, Lauren Skelley, Bret Sloan, Janelle Chambers-Sloan, Nancy Smith, and Kelsey Wilson. Tickets \$25, presale only. Table reservations made at time of purchase. Call us or visit our Box Office.

2019 SUMMER CAMP



Camp With Me (Ages 5-8) \$260*

**price includes one child and one adult*

June 16-21
June 30 -July 2
July 2-4
Aug 4-9

Primary (Ages 6-8) \$130

June 16-21
June 30 -July 2
July 2-4
Aug 4-9

Junior (Ages 9-11) \$350

June 16-21
July 21-26
Aug 4-9

Junior High (Ages 12-14) \$365

June 23-28
July 14-19
July 28-Aug 2

Senior High (Ages 15-18) \$385

July 7-12

EDGE Wilderness Camps utilize the outdoor and adventure environment to teach participants how to know and serve others and God and how to live wisely in our world.

Camp Out with Me (Ages 6-8) \$260* June 30 - July 2

**price includes one child and one adult.*

Explore (Ages 9-11) \$145 July 2-4

Scout (Ages 9-11) \$360 July 22-27 July 29-Aug 3

Equip (Ages 11-14) \$375 July 14-19 July 28 - Aug 2

Encounter (Ages 13-18) \$390 July 7-12

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Seneca Hills Bible Camp
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Seneca Hills

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Seneca Hills Bible Camp

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Contact Paul C Harman III @ 814-676-5755 pcm@vtdc.org with any questions

LET'S TALK TRASH

COMMERCIAL WASTE AND RECYCLING



- **COMMERCIAL WASTE AND RECYCLING CONTAINERS**

We offer 2, 4, 6 and 8 cubic yard size front-load containers. (Other sizes may be available in select markets.)

- **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.



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