EVERYDAY HEROES

Baking Cookies for the Community

See page 3
Titusville Area School District
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Save the Date • American Red Cross Ready Rating Training
Is your organization prepared for disasters and emergencies? Join us on March 25 at 11:30 a.m. for a training on the Ready Rating Program by American Red Cross.

This event will take place via Zoom. More details to follow.

The Venango Chamber hosted a virtual discussion with Grow PA in January (see page 4 for details) & will hold additional discussions in February and March, including Exploring the Data, Funding for Broadband & Provider Roundtable.

Events will be listed on the Chamber’s events calendar once dates are confirmed.

Find Chamber event information at: venangochamber.org/events

NEW MEMBERS

Oakwood Heights
UPMC Northwest

Find Chamber event information at: venangochamber.org/events

www.venangochamber.org
Everyday Heroes
Baking Cookies for the Community

What is a hero to you? You may think of someone who saves lives or donates thousands of dollars to charity, but heroes also do things like volunteer at the local food pantry, pick up litter, or, like Sister Tina, Sister Marian, and Joyce Frenz, bake and collect cookies for community members.

In January, the Chamber announced the Citizen of the Year, Lisa Winger, and will continue to share more about Lisa and her work in the community over the next two months. Rather than naming a Business and Partner of the Year, the Chamber is recognizing Venango Heroes—individuals, organizations, and businesses throughout the community who perform deeds large and small, improving the lives of others.

Pictured here are three of those nominated as Venango Heroes. Sister Tina and Sister Marian of Catholic Rural Ministries were among the first Venango Hero nominees. They share a simple yet profound ministry—to bring "Hope and God’s Compassionate Presence" to everyone they encounter. Among their most recent efforts is gathering cookies for community meals that are served every other Tuesday at Zion Lutheran Church in Oil City.

Pictured with them is Joyce Frenz, Director of Community Ministry Mission and Outreach at Good Hope - Zion Lutheran Ministries. The community meals serve on average 300 people each week.

When Sister Tina and Sister Marian learned that donations of cookies were needed, they sent out the invitation for donations to be dropped off on their porch, with no idea how far reaching this cookie brigade would expand.

They now have people making deliveries from neighboring counties and have come to realize that these donations are as important to those baking and delivering the cookies as they are to those eating them. The sisters humbly describe their efforts as simply “being connectors.”

They also understood that many people, especially senior citizens, were quickly becoming isolated during the pandemic. They began convening book studies, using the Chamber’s Zoom account, to bring people together to learn about one another and to have important discussions about things going on in our world. Among the books that they have been reading are those dealing with aging and racial inequity.

In their work at Catholic Rural Ministries, Sister Tina reminds us that simple conversations foster connection. We must listen carefully to each other to understand wants, needs, and information that should be shared. Something as simple as baking cookies or as important as understanding that children need to be in safe, warm, and dry homes, become heroic acts in the life of hurting individuals, once people move to action.

Each and every one of the Venango Hero nominees are making a difference in the lives of individuals in our community.

We know that there are many others who deserve to be recognized and we urge you to visit our website at VenangoHeroes.org and share with us those who you observe making a difference each day.

Find some of our hero nominees on page 8 of this newsletter.
Statewide Strategies to Get Connected

The Venango Chamber partnered with Grow PA on January 14 to host a gathering focused on “Statewide Strategies to Get Connected” to discuss regional and statewide strategies for expanding broadband access.

There was little need to state the obvious: Pennsylvania continues to have large areas with little or no access to broadband. Rural counties without access often have many homes that, even if served by a provider, do not have acceptable speeds of transmission. There also appears to be pricing disparity between communities.

Grow PA brings leaders from across the state together to discuss regional and statewide strategies for expanding broadband access. The virtual gathering in January, moderated by Chamber President Susan Williams, included an economic overview by Dana Kubiak, Vice President and Senior Portfolio Advisor at F.N.B. Wealth Management; an update of regional broadband efforts by Jill Foy, Executive Director at Northwest Commission and Venango Co. Commissioner Chip Abramovic; and legislative updates by State Rep. Donna Oberlander.

Each speaker demonstrated that there are tremendous resources of time, attention, and funding tapped for broadband expansion. But is it enough? The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the most underserved communities and the need to speed up the pace developing robust networks and connecting every home and business.

Also included in the gathering was Sascha Meinrath, Palmer Chair in Telecommunications at Penn State. Sascha offered suggestions for improving PA’s broadband infrastructure, including using data that he and others have been collecting about gaps in services. He also stressed the importance of collaboration across communities and regions, sharing that internet providers do not stop and start at county borders. Sascha remarked that conversations like this Grow PA gathering are a great step forward.

Early feedback from many of the over 100 attendees suggested there is a real interest from legislators, educators, and chambers of commerce in continuing the conversation and developing partnership towards broadband advancement.

View the recording of “Statewide Strategies to Get Connected,” and find resources at: venangochamber.org/grow-pa.
Eckert Chiropractic Celebrates 10 Years

At a time where social distancing is the norm, Eckert Chiropractic has found new ways to stay close to patients.

Dr. Kate Eckert, who established her business in 2011, says that the pandemic has created challenges and opportunities for care providers and patients. “Patient care can be much more customized and flexible to meet the needs of the patient,” Kate said.

Eckert launched her own specialized video series on social media to educate people on how their body moves and how they can apply preventative movement and exercise at home as part of both a pre-habilitative and rehabilitative approach.

Eckert Chiropractic also has a dedicated team of wellness practitioners on-site to work with patients. Dr. Joe Aylesworth joined Eckert Chiropractic full-time in 2019 and has regular office hours along with Eckert. The addition of another chiropractor in the office has allowed patients more flexibility in their scheduling of appointments as well as provided patients with consistent care as both chiropractors practice similarly.

Mikayla Markle, the practice’s Chiropractic Assistant, oversees patient work in the therapy room, which includes traction table work, stretching, and various dynamic stabilization exercises as well as instruction on the use of myofascial release tools such as foam rollers and trigger point balls.

Also on the Eckert Chiropractic team is Chris Zagar, and they also work with neighboring massage therapists Kammi Stiller and Ann Mathews.

Eckert Chiropractic is located at 1047 Allegheny Avenue in Oil City with office hours Tuesday through Thursday 8AM-7PM. Appointments can be made by contacting the office at (814) 670-0568 or online at chirodrkate.com/appointments.
Oil City Eye Associates—A Practice with Purpose

For many years and multiple generations, 9 East First Street has been “work home” to members of the Kennedy family, who faithfully offered quality vision care products and personalized optometric services to Oil City and the surrounding areas.

Dr. Jenny Tran joined Dr. Scott Kennedy’s Oil City and Titusville offices in 2017, immediately becoming a loved and trusted addition to his practice.

A year later, Dr. Kennedy’s practice was purchased by Dr. Christopher Adsit of Vision Source Meadville LLC and given a beautiful facelift and a new name—Oil City Eye Associates.

Dr. Kennedy continued to serve alongside Dr. Adsit until his retirement in November of 2020. His legacy of knowledgeable treatment of eye conditions and disease, quality care, and family atmosphere are carried on by Dr. Adsit and his associates.

Oil City Eye Associates wants to provide you with the best eye care possible, but they believe that life is so much more than business. They deeply desire to reach into the community and our world for the purpose of aiding those in need.

Oil City Eye Associates specializes in professional eyecare and beautiful eyewear customized to meet your vision needs.

It is their “pleasure and passion” to set apart a percentage of business profits to reach out to people in need and help them have safer, more fulfilling lives.

“We are an ever-growing family who dreams of partnering with patients, team members, and like-minded organizations to impact our community and world in every way we can, as many ways as we can, for as long as God gives us the time and ability to do so,” they told us.

Learn more about Oil City Eye Associates on their website at oilcityeye.com or at Facebook at facebook.com/oilcityeye, & meet Dr. Jenny Tran below.

MEET DR. JENNY TRAN

Dr. Jenny Tran was born and raised in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. While in high school, she worked at an optometrist’s office and it was there that she decided to pursue optometry as a career. Her “aha” moment came as she fitted glasses for a little boy who was wearing lenses for the first time. The child’s reaction to being able to see clearly was so astounding that she knew she wanted to be a part of helping people with their vision.

Described by her staff and patients as professional, kind, humble, personable, approachable, a terrific educator, a talented eyewear stylist, and team player, Dr. Tran is the doctor to meet your vision care needs. It will quickly become your joy to return to her again and again.
Earlier in my career, while serving in the House of Representatives, those of us in Western Pennsylvania faced a threat to our pocketbooks and bottom lines in the form of a toll on Interstate 80. Residents and business owners quickly realized how devastating this new tax would be to those who regularly use the freeway for travel or commerce and successfully fought the plan.

Unfortunately, it seems we may be facing a renewed backdoor effort to tax the use of freeways in the form of so-called “user fees” on interstate bridges. With minimal public notice and practically zero stakeholder outreach, a seven-member board, chaired by the Secretary of Transportation, voted to approve an initiative that could begin tolling interstate bridges throughout PA, including on I-80 and I-79.

If implemented, this would increase the cost of living in Northwest PA where periodic interstate travel is a necessity for many residents, and it would increase shipping costs for businesses and consumers. Northwest PA’s economy is on tenuous footing already, especially as we recover from the impacts of COVID-19. Yet another cost of doing business is the last thing we need.

Of course, I recognize the importance of safe roads and bridges. Ensuring that our transportation infrastructure is maintained and meets demand is, in my view, a core function of government. Unfortunately, as I have seen time and time again, tax revenues that are supposedly intended for transportation projects often get diverted to pet road projects or even other non-transportation uses.

I have asked the Secretary of Transportation and the Public Private Partnership Board to revisit its bridge tolling decision and actively solicit feedback from the public and stakeholder groups like the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association.

Additionally, Senator Brooks and I have introduced a resolution to rescind the current proposal. The plan should be fully and publicly vetted, so we have a clear understanding of what is coming down the pike, instead of the current murky plan that is fully understood only by government bureaucrats. And finally, we must insist that all revenue be used specifically for its intended purposes.

Showing Appreciation

Can you recall a time recently when you showed appreciation to an employee or co-worker?

“Appreciation can create an organizational culture in which appreciation and positive energy are the norms rather than the exceptions, a culture in which people feel valued for their work and help those around to do the same,” said Ari Weinzweig, Co-Founder of Zingerman’s.

You may think because you pay your people and give them benefits, they feel appreciated, but appreciation is much more than that. Ways to show appreciation can include:

- **Appreciations at Meetings:** Spend a few minutes at the end of each meeting for everyone to share ways they appreciate others. They can be about anything or anyone; in the room or not in the room; work-related or not; past, present or future. This leaves staff with a positive attitude as they return to work.

- **4 to 1 Rule:** When giving feedback, frame it as four parts praise for one part constructive criticism. Praise shows you notice when things go well, constructive criticism teaches how they can be more effective.

- **Going the Extra Mile:** Do something unexpected—leave a positive note on their computer screen, buy them a coffee, mail them a card, etc.

- **“3 and Out” Rule:** If you’re having a rough day, positive appreciation is the easiest way to turn things around. Find at least three people that you haven’t fully appreciated as you should have, and then quickly let them know that you do. This leaves both of you feeling good.

There are MANY other ways you can show appreciation to others in your workplace. Find more ideas at: [zingtrain.com/article/a-culture-of-positive-appreciation](zingtrain.com/article/a-culture-of-positive-appreciation).
Many nominations have already been submitted for community heroes!

From social workers and nuns, to yoga studios and transportation companies, there are so many people and organizations making a difference in Venango County.

See some of our nominated heroes below:

NOMINATED HEROES:

LISA WINGER
AseraCare Hospice & Citizen of the Year

DAN FLAHERTY
Oil Region Library Association

LAURA BLAKE
Venango Regional Catholic Schools

JUDY ETZEL
Derrick Publishing

JESSICA BABBITT
Social Worker

REBEKAH DEAL
Community Volunteer

SR. TINA & MARIAN
Catholic Rural Ministry

OIL CITY ROTARY
Community Supporter

TRAILASANA
Yoga Studio

CATA
Regional Transportation

JUDY ETZEL
Derrick Publishing

KAT THOMPSON
CareerLink & FLEX

JOYCE FRENZ
Good Hope - Zion Lutheran Ministries

ASHLEY SMITH
Community Volunteer

BRIAN DURNIOK
UPMC Northwest

OIL CITY YWCA
Community Supporter

NOMINATE YOUR COMMUNITY HERO & LEARN MORE ABOUT NOMINEES AT:

VENANGOHEROES.ORG
ZingTrain Virtual Workshop—March 11

ZingTrain is coming back to Venango County—virtually! Be Here held a training with ZingTrain in November 2019 and we’re excited to bring them back.

For this virtual workshop on Thursday, March 11, from 9-11:30AM, the topic is “Positive Leadership in Your Workplace & Community.” The cost is $25 and anyone may attend. Participants will receive a mailed package of baked goods from Zingerman’s and a PDF workbook.

See the insert in this newsletter for details or visit venangochamber.org/events.

Collins House Provides Home for End of Life Journey

It’s never easy when a loved one is nearing the end of their life, but at The Collins House, those last moments can be spent in a comfortable, homey atmosphere.

“It’s their home and we provide a space where they can experience empathy and safety,” said Kim Slater Heil RN/BSN, The Collins House Manager. “It’s an open, light-filled home and offers a calm atmosphere where they can finish their life journey in an enjoyable way.”

The Collins House in Franklin was opened by the Venango VNA Foundation in April 2019, and is a three-bedroom home staffed 24/7 with hospice care. Residents have private rooms with a bathroom, along with shared spaces, such as a living area, kitchen, porch, and back patio.

“It took four years to get the house up and running, and our dream has really become a reality,” said Kim. “It is incredibly rewarding. Loss of life is sad, but if we can make their end of life journey as comfortable as possible, then we have done our jobs.”

Family members can visit at any time and residents can also have pets visit. Kim’s dog Charley is a popular visitor and therapy dogs have come in as well. Often, there is a “real sense of extended family” among residents throughout the house, Kim told us.

Flexibility is offered for residents, in which they can have meals and do activities at preferred times. “It’s so flexible that we’ve even cooked dippy eggs for a resident at 2 a.m.,” said Kim.

Each bedroom has a bird feeder outside the window, and deer also visit the feeders often. Family members have been generous and donated items such as bird seed, rocking chairs, a gas grill, and a keyboard.

There are two criteria to become a resident—they must be hospice eligible and also be a patient of the Venango VNA Hospice team.

“This has been a collaborative effort by our Foundation board and staff at VNA. Our hospice interdisciplinary team of nurses, social worker, pastor, aides and volunteers work well with our staff at the house to ensure that people have the best possible care. It’s a team effort for sure,” said Kim.

To learn more about The Collins House or schedule a tour, call (814) 432-6555 or visit thecollinshouse.org.

Photos above: A volunteer prepares food for residents (left), the dining room of The Collins House (center), Hospice House Caregiver Jamie Stack and The Collins House Manager Kim Slater Heil RN/BSN (right)
Leadership Venango Holds Honorable Leadership Session

The third class of the Chamber’s Leadership program has had to shift to an entirely virtual set-up due to COVID-19.

Though the switch to virtual sessions makes it harder to connect with presenters and each other, the class has been extremely flexible.

In January, participants met with County Commissioners and President Judge, as well as a panel of local leaders. They spent the afternoon learning about serving on a board of directors and did a session with a trainer from Michigan-based company ZingTrain.

The afternoon session, focused on “How to Lead When You’re Not the Leader”, gave practical tools for managing energy, giving and receiving feedback, and conflict resolution. Participants seemed eager to test out some of the tips and adapt them in to their daily routines.

Learn more about the Leadership Venango program at leadershipvenango.org.

Tech Tip: The Importance of Links (Part 1)

Including links in your online content has numerous benefits. A link allows your audience to jump to a new location when they click or tap it. See some tips below for including links in various places and ways:

WHERE TO INCLUDE LINKS?
- Throughout your website and blog posts
- Social media posts
- Emails
- Press releases

WHAT TO LINK TO?
- Your own website or blog
- An article or website that supports your information
- Your contact page or email address

WHY USE LINKS?
- Sends people to your website or other content, where they may explore more about your business
- Provides readers with more information about a topic you mention
- Allows your reader to save time when reading something; They can select which detail they want to understand better or read more about, without distracting them with information that isn’t useful

HOW TO INCLUDE LINKS?
- Link the URL itself (ex: www.venangochamber.org)
- Link a specific word or sentence
- Link an image
- Link a button

A common theme throughout the day was getting involved—through serving on a board, volunteering, or speaking up when your voice isn’t being heard.

Examples of Links:
- In a blog post, link the name of a business you mention to their website (ex: Chamber member Rossbacher Insurance welcomes Eric Thompson).
- In an email, link a button that says “SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK” to a survey to be completed.
- In a social media post, link to your blog post where readers can learn more. Ex: Learn more about the Oil Region Library Association’s curbside pickup at: venangochamber.org/orla-returns-to-curbside.
- In a press release, link to your email address so the media contacts you.
- On your website home page, link a graphic that says “SHOP NOW” to your online shopping page.

When posting anything online, ask yourself: “Can I include any links here?” We’ll have more tips for creating and sharing links in our March newsletter!

You can contact us at asheffer@venangochamber.org with questions about including links in your content.
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: VITALANT

With Kristen Lane, Communications Manager

What is the story behind Vitalant?
Founded in 1943, Vitalant is a network of about 120 donation centers across the U.S., each with its own rich history and legacy. Vitalant’s mission is to inspire and encourage people to realize their life-transforming potential by donating blood to those who might not survive without it. When you give blood, you help hospital patients right here in your community. However, we can also leverage our nationwide network of blood donation centers, so when unforeseen tragedies occur, we can quickly deliver blood where it’s needed most.

What is done with the blood collected by Vitalant?
We provide blood to both the Allegheny Health Network and UPMC, so when you donate at one of our blood donation centers or blood drives, you can feel proud that your blood will stay in your community. UPMC and AHN treat thousands of patients and require about 600 units of blood and blood products every day.

How would you describe an ideal blood donor?
An ideal donor is healthy person and possesses a spirit of generosity and desire to help others. However, less than 40% of people in the U.S. are eligible to donate, so we rely on those folks to serve as ambassadors; spreading the world and encouraging others to donate.

What would surprise people?
One thing that many people don’t know about blood donation is that it’s the blood that’s already at the hospital that saves patients’ lives. People that donate after a tragedy are performing a generous and life-saving act, however, their blood will not help victims who need blood that day, because newly donated blood needs to be tested, processed, and shipped to hospital. It is critical that hospitals have enough blood at all times for current patients as well as any emergencies.

How does someone host a blood drive?
You must have a minimum of 30 people and an inside location that meets specific requirements for staff and equipment or an outside location suitable for a bloodmobile. You will need to raise awareness of the blood drive, educate donors about the constant need for blood, and be passionate, persistent and dedicated. We are hoping to identify more convenient opportunities and partnerships in Venango County for blood donation.

How can someone find an upcoming drive?
Visit our website at Vitalant.org and click the “donate blood” button to find a blood drive near you. You can also call 877-258-VITAL (877-258-4825) to sign up for a nearby drive.
Eric Thompson Joins Rossbacher Team

Rossbacher Insurance Group is pleased to announce the addition of Eric Thompson as an Insurance Agent at its new Williams Agency location in Oil City. Eric comes to Rossbacher with a unique and meaningful background in Customer Service with his many years’ experience as a PGA Golf Professional and Club Manager.

In his former role, Eric worked hard to build relationships with the local patrons and the business community in Venango County. Eric is excited about the opportunity to help guide his friends, family, and future clients with their personal, life, and commercial insurance needs. He is a member of and FLEX and looks forward to getting more involved in the community and growing new relationships.

Eric is an Oil City resident and attended Edinboro University where he met his wife, Deb. They live on the “South Side” with their two children, Carter and Peyton.

Rossbacher Insurance Group, also with offices in Corry and Cranberry, has been helping businesses and families with their insurance needs since 1928.

#VenangoTakeout

Are you continuing to order takeout from local restaurants? Be sure to post a photo on social media and include the hashtag #VenangoTakeout.

Restaurants have faced many challenges in the past year, including mandated closures and restrictions. Let’s inspire each other to support them by sharing photos of our takeout orders!
Charlie and Aimee Cotherman grew up in Knox, moved away for awhile, then relocated to Oil City in 2016, where they continue to live with their four children. They wanted to be close to family and friends, saw opportunities in the Venango Area, and felt a calling to be here.

That calling led them to launch the Oil City Vineyard (OCV) church in 2016. OCV started out small, with meetings in Charlie and Aimee’s house, and now has hundreds of members and meets at the Oil City YWCA and virtually.

Learn more about the Cothermans by visiting the Be Here testimonials page at: beherevenango.org/testimonials.

Singleton Welcomes Dr. Hunter

Singleton Family Chiropractic is excited to announce the addition of Dr. Jeff Hunter to their office.

Dr. Hunter earned a bachelor's degree in Sports Medicine from the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, and a doctorate from the New York Chiropractic College.

Dr. Hunter is certified in Whole Foods Nutrition and Sports Science and Human Performance. He also received the Distinguished Service Award for being an involved community member as well as the Outstanding Clinician Award in recognition of his excellence in the areas of patient evaluation and adjustment procedures.

Dr. Hunter, who grew up in Emlenton, is thrilled to be back in the area. He and his wife Tiffany married last July and reside in Seneca. Dr. Hunter loves the outdoors and is an avid hunter, like Dr. Singleton. He and his wife are also active in their local church.

Welcome back to the area, Dr. Hunter! Singleton Family Chiropractic is currently accepting new patients. Call (814) 677-9233 for more information.
Hand In Hand: Shifting to a New Brand

Darla Dodds, owner of Hand in Hand Christian Counseling, describes the growth of her business much like the growth of a puppy. When it’s your own and you’re spending every day with it, you don’t always notice the changes, but then someone comes along and remarks about the astounding growth and transformation.

Darla launched her private counseling practice in 2001. By 2009, she had developed strategies moving her into the realm of psychiatric rehabilitation and the launch of the Challenge Center Program.

She describes this as a shift from working with individuals to make them well, to helping them live a life including meaningful work, resulting in their recovery.

By 2019, it was clear to her and staff that counseling was no longer at the center of their business and that the name of the business was causing confusion of services offered. With this realization, Darla planned for a complete rebranding of her business. By July of 2020 she was ready to begin the process.

She started by forming a leadership team and a Public Image Team, known as the PIT Crew. The leadership team examined and reworked the business, its mission, and vision. With each step, they engaged the PIT Crew to develop the plan to share the changes beyond Hand in Hand’s staff of 48 employees.

The process included surveys and input from stakeholders. With the consideration of a new name and image, a logo contest was held (pictured left: logo contest winner Erin Ducharme).

In January, the name was settled on the shorter version of the original Hand in Hand Christian Counseling—simply “Hand in Hand.”

Hand in Hand has four basic goals:

- Improve public image
- Have consistent messaging
- Have consistent branding
- Improve public knowledge of services offered

This was a very thorough and somewhat costly process as it involved every aspect of the business. Darla was careful to work through the legalities of a name change, securing her new domain name for the updated website and social media platforms. She has ordered new signage, employee clothing, and promotional materials. With the launch of the website to begin soon, the last step will be an evaluation, inviting feedback from staff, clients and the community.

Darla has been especially encouraged by the ownership taken by her staff, as this process has strengthened their understanding of the businesses mission and values.

Central Electric Launches New Website

Central Electric Cooperative (CEC) is thrilled to announce the launch of their new website at www.central.coop; created to enhance all members’ online experience with the cooperative.

Featuring enhanced mobile capabilities, online service requests, an upgraded outage center and more - CEC’s goal with the new website is to provide members an easier, more convenient way to meet all their electric needs.

Visit www.central.coop to see all of the features and improvements.

Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. is a Touchstone Energy Cooperative serving approx. 25,000 members with over 3,000 miles of distribution line in portions of Allegheny, Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Forest, Mercer, and Venango counties.
COMMMUNITY EVENTS

Are you planning an upcoming event, either virtual or in-person? Don’t forget to share it to the Be Here Calendar of Events!

Find the calendar & complete the form at: beherevenango.org/events

Member Decals Coming Soon

You’ve seen them all over the region—The Venango Chamber proud member window cling, adorning the entry doors on over 400 businesses and organizations in our community.

By displaying this cling, you tell customers that you play an integral role in the success of the Venango Area through your membership in the Chamber. 2021 “Proud Member” decals will be distributed soon.

Check Your Online Listing

We are continually sending people to our online directory, so it is imperative to have correct information. Help us help you by checking your online listing to confirm that no mistakes have been made.

View your listing at members.venangochamber.org/list. Your listing will be printed in the Venango Chamber Membership Directory, to be published in the next few months.
While we haven’t been gathering in person, there continues to be ways for members to engage with the Chamber. Here are some ideas:

- Review your listing in the online membership directory (members.venangochamber.org/list)
- Contact us to create an account to update your own listing (chamber@venangochamber.org)
- Nominate an individual or organization as a Community Hero (venangoheroes.org)
- Add your job opening to the Be Here Job Board (beherevenango.org/jobs)
- Add your event to the Be Here Calendar (beherevenango.org/events)

Have questions? Contact us at (814) 676-8521 or chamber@venangochamber.org
Little Things, Big Impact

One of the lessons 2020 taught us was how impactful little gestures can be. Whether it was a neighbor who raked your leaves or a friend who picked up your groceries when you were quarantined, we’ve all had a few of these exchanges that left us feeling hopeful.

We asked some FLEX members to share a small gesture they have seen or done in the last year. Jen Feehan shared: “My co-worker and friend Rebecca Beach leaves fun gummy candies on my desk after she learned about my obsession with gummy bears. She has even found some really great ones like gummy taco kits and gummy mice. Her thoughtfulness has left me feeling grateful and encouraged to do fun things for others.”

Hailee Crimbchin wanted to keep her co-workers spirits up after the holidays, so she’s been baking cookies to share in the office. She said they loved the cookies and it has helped her get to know everyone.

Want to make an impact of your own? Here are some easy ways you can bring joy to those around you:

Send a Note
Everyone loves to open their mailbox and find a note from a friend. Sending a handwritten letter or card can really brighten someone’s day.

Pay It Forward (or Backward?)
Next time you’re in the drive-thru, ask to pay for the order of the person behind you. This will definitely leave them feeling inspired.

Give a Compliment
You’re standing behind someone in line at the coffee shop and notice her adorable jacket? Tell her! Your co-worker got a haircut that really suits them? Let them know!

Tip Graciously
Restaurant workers have had quite a year. Next time you order from your favorite local spot, give an extra tip to your waitress, delivery driver, or barista.

We encourage you to try to do something small, but impactful, whenever you can.

Do you know of someone who makes a difference in the community, whether big or small? Nominate them as a Venango Hero!

FLEX Members Kat Thompson, Ashley Smith, and Bobbie Jones (Trailasana Yoga Studio) have already been nominated. Learn more and submit a nomination at venangoheroes.org.
Professional Development Tip: Finding Work-Life Balance
By Syd Herdle

As we approach a year of enduring the COVID-19 pandemic, reports of folks hitting the “pandemic wall” have circulated the news in recent days. The weight of working from home/on the front lines, the varying economy and a lack of social interaction has really started taking a toll on folks if it had not been already.

Unsurprisingly, these factors and more have made it hard for many of us to retain a healthy work-life balance. Those of us who work from home may find it difficult to turn off work mode since we almost never leave home, and those of us who work out and about may be too stressed out and tired by the end of the day to do much else.

To curb that, here are some ways to help re-attain a healthy work-life balance in these troubling times:

Revive an old hobby (or pick up a new one)

No thanks to the pandemic, a lot of the fun events, festivals and activities we would normally enjoy outside of work have been cancelled or postponed indefinitely. The one upside to such a situation, though, is we can now make time for hobbies we may not have had time for before.

Finding new hobbies to enjoy is also awesome. My sister recently took up crocheting, and now she spends a lot of her time crocheting various small, stuffed animals (a Japanese art called amigurumi) when she needs a break from her schoolwork. They are so cute!

Invest in some self-care

The beautiful thing about self-care is it offers a variety of ways that can help relieve stress, boost your mood and maintain a healthy lifestyle. It can range from exercising and eating a balanced diet to mediating, getting enough rest and taking a mental break when needed.

The physical activity I encounter in my job ranges from sitting at my desk all day to carrying heavy loads of photography equipment for hours on end, so I incorporate strength training and running in my routine to keep my strength and endurance up. Eating a balanced diet and getting enough sleep in turn gives me the fuel and rest I need to get through a workout routine and the rest of my work day.

When that is not enough though, taking a mental health day to relax, unwind and enjoy whatever you enjoy without having to worry about work or school can be beneficial to the soul. Use that PTO, people!

Find time for your community and relationships

This one is easier said than done since we rarely see each other in-person anymore but doing little things such as holding a Zoom happy hour with your best friends every so often or participating in a volunteer opportunity when it pops up can be great ways to engage your friendships and lend a helping hand to your community.

Of course, you can also keep your eye out for fun virtual events and social distance-friendly volunteer opportunities hosted by FLEX to do so.
Ashlee Goodman is a Financial Advisor for Raymond James - First Street Financial in Oil City. She was born in Erie, but raised in Oil City. Ashlee went to Oil City High School, then graduated from Clarion University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and a degree in Accounting.

Her career achievements include passing the Series 7, Series 66, and PA Life, Health, and Accident Insurance exams.

Ashlee’s future professional goals include helping community members, especially young professionals, get a grasp on their finances early to achieve their goals now and through retirement. Her future personal goals include spending more time with family and painting, decorating, and remodeling her house.

Hunting, being outdoors, and baking are some of Ashlee’s hobbies and interests.

While living in Venango County, Ashlee has always loved the sense of community, and she enjoys working in Venango County because it allows her to truly know her clients.

Welcome to FLEX, Ashlee!

SAVE THE DATE - FLEX Presents 2021

FLEX Presents will take place on Friday, May 7, this year. FLEX Presents is an annual event recognizing the accomplishments of young professionals in Venango County.

Decisions about whether the event will be held virtually or in-person will be made closer to the date and will depend on COVID restrictions in place at that time. Keep an eye out for more details and nomination information.

FLEX had another great Virtual Trivia Night on January 21! Thank you to those who joined and to Casey McVay and Matt Beightol for hosting, and congrats to winners:

Ian Best
Sydney Herdle
Valerie Perry

Our Events & Fundraising Committee is working on plans for some future events and socials. More details coming soon.
Do you get the FLEX Bi-Weekly emails? We’ve been sharing some #MotivationalMonday quotes in each, to help inspire you as you begin the week. See some of the quotes we’ve shared below and sign up for our email list at: venangoflex.org.

**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 Meeting:** Mon., Feb. 15 • 12-1 p.m.

**Marketing/Community Partnerships Meeting:** Tues., Feb. 23 • 12-1 p.m.

Interested in joining either of these committees? Contact us for the meeting zoom links at flex@venangochamber.org.

**FLEX MEMBERSHIP**

FLEX membership is a one-time $15 fee. Interested in joining? Learn more at venangoflex.org or email FLEX Membership Chair Laura at laura.ordaz@mining.komatsu.
Join us for a virtual workshop about:

POSITIVE LEADERSHIP
IN YOUR WORKPLACE
& COMMUNITY

with ZingTrain

THURSDAY, MARCH 11 • 9 - 11:30AM

WHAT YOU’LL LEARN:
• Responsibilities of a Servant Leader
• Tips for incorporating effective leadership in your daily work
• Tools for feedback
• More about your like-minded peers across Venango County

WHAT’S INCLUDED:
• 2.5 hour training with a world-class trainer ($150 value)
• Mailed package of delicious baked goods from Zingerman's
• PDF workbook to print & complete during the training

ABOUT ZINGTRAIN:
With “a new approach to better business,” ZingTrain has been helping organizations around the world for 25 years. ZingTrain is part of a community of 10 unique businesses in Ann Arbor, Michigan, nationally recognized for their products, customer service & unique business model.

Our trainers will be Elnian Gilbert and Timo Anderson (pictured left). Learn more about them: zingtrain.com/about-us.

COST: $25  |  REGISTER AT: VENANGOCHAMBER.ORG/EVENTS

This training is brought to you by Be Here, an initiative of the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce.
YOUTH CONNECTION

$500 Door Prize
Sponsored by:
Edward Jones®
Donna Rapp, Chris Rakow,
Lori Sibble, Mike Watson

Each bowler must have a minimum donation of $50 turned in the day of Bowl-A-Palooza. Receive one entry for every $50 collected.

One Winner! Drawing at 4:00 p.m.
on May 1, 2021 at the Bowl-A-Palooza at Lin Van Lanes in Titusville, PA

Do not need to be present to win.

25th Annual!
BOWL-A-PALOOZA

Saturday, April 10, 2021
at Seneca Lanes in Seneca, PA

Bowl time 12:30 pm

Call 676-9940 ext. 1228 for sponsorship opportunities or to form a team.

FSCAS Family Service & Children’s Aid Society of Venango County

A member agency of United Way
Dinner, Dancing, and You!

Venango Region Catholic School
1505 West First Street, Oil City, PA 16301
814.677.3098

Make your family part of our family!

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Dinner and Auction Gala

Save the Date

Saturday, June 12, 2021
At Venango Catholic Jr./Sr. High School

Partner with Venango Region Catholic School for our 5th Annual Heritage Gala, and help protect our 125 year legacy of Catholic education in our region.

We'd love the opportunity to welcome your business to the VRCS family as a sponsor of this year's festivities! Consider becoming an event sponsor or placing an advertisement in this year's program, and have your business seen by over 150 guests.

Interested in knowing more? Contact Nicole Powell, Director of Advancement at 814.677.3098 or by email at nicole.powell@venangocatholic.org
VC FISH FRY
FUNDRAISER

Take out only
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TO YOUR VEHICLE

Fridays
5:00-7:00 p.m.
FEBRUARY 19, 26
MARCH 5, 12, 19, 26

Come and get it!
VENANGO CATHOLIC
JR./SR. HIGH
1505 W 1ST ST
OIL CITY

$11/MEAL
$10/SENIORS (65+)

Menu
Baked or Fried Fish
Homemade and hand-battered in-house

SIDES
Baked potato or Fries
Coleslaw
Roll

DESSERT
Cookies

WWW.VENANGOCATHOLIC.ORG