

FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

FYI

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Get Involved—FLEX Summer Happenings

As we officially welcome summer, we are in the middle of planning a variety of fun community events, and we invite you to get involved!

First up is the Oil Heritage Festival **Bike 'n Brew**, taking place on Saturday, July 16.

This year's event features a Biking Scavenger Hunt from 2 to 4 p.m., where participants will ride their bicycles to up to 10 stops along the trail in Oil City and take a photo at each spot. Bikers will get entered to win prizes for each place they stop.

Then, from 4 to 7 p.m., we'll have the beer portion of the event.

There are two ways to participate:

- Curbside Pickup (\$40): Pick up a package full of at least 8 craft beers from local breweries in a cooler tote bag, along with fun swag from brewers and sponsors.
- VIP Ticket (\$50): Includes the package listed above PLUS a tasting of several different craft beers with Scierka's Tavern.

Ticket prices will increase by \$5 after July 8. The beer activities take place in the courtyard of the Venango Chamber. Bike 'n Brew attendees can only bike or only brew, or bike AND brew! It will be a fun day of activities, local beer, prizes, and more.



The next week, we're hosting the **Ice Cream Social**, as part of Oil Heritage Festival. Scheduled for Thursday, July 21, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., this takes place in Central Ave Plaza, next to the Oil City Library. We'll serve ice cream and drinks to the community during other events in the plaza.

For both of these events, you can get involved in a few ways—attend, spread the work, and/or volunteer!

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Fill out our form at: bit.ly/FLEXVolunteer2022 or scan the QR code here

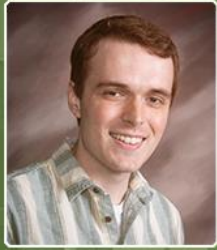


THANK YOU BIKE 'N BREW SPONSORS



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"The Future of Venango Area Business!"



FLEX Feature: Venango Museum with Brandon Books

When is the last time you visited the Venango Museum? For many, it has been since going on a field trip in elementary school. We encourage you to stop in soon, and we're excited to share about what's happening there from Executive Director Brandon Books.

Tell us about the Venango Museum.

We are located on Oil City's North Side in a Beaux-Arts architectural-styled building—originally a post office in 1905 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. We collect, preserve, and exhibit artifacts and related materials relevant to the interests of Venango County residents and visitors. We currently have two exhibits. Our permanent exhibit called *Oil: Black Gold or Black Magic?* details how oil has made fortunes and transformed our everyday lives, global economics, politics, and the environment. We also have an exhibit area that is changed at least once a year. The current exhibit is called *Our Pennzoil Story* and details history of the Pennzoil Company's roots in Venango County.

What is your role there?

I manage all aspects of the Museum. I oversee daily operations including administration duties, fundraising, and more. I work with the public on a daily basis, giving tours of exhibits and recommending other local spots for visitors to stop. I plan and host community events such as concerts, children's programming, workshops, and tours of other historic sites. I oversee and grow our

collection, which consists of items and materials related to Venango County as well as the early oil industry. I also oversee the development of the temporary exhibits.

What is your favorite part about working for the Museum?

The storytelling aspect has always been my favorite part. I enjoy hearing the many stories that make up the history of our region and shape who we are today. I also never know who is going to come through our doors and the stories they'll tell. Whether it be a tourist, a visitor wanting to donate or loan items to our collection, or a resident reminiscing—they all have a story to tell.

What would surprise people about the Venango Museum?

Our collection contains strange and unexpected items that contribute to the story of our history. Kept in an off-site location is a letter from Abraham Lincoln, thanking a resident for her donation to Philadelphia Hospitals to aid in caring for sick and wounded Union soldiers in 1865. Currently on display is a recast of President Grant's death mask, a likeness of his face made by taking a mold of his corpse to be used for creation of portraits. Grant visited the Oil Region during his presidency to learn the potential impact of the oil boom on the United States.

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

The Museum has existed in Venango County for 61 years. We are entirely supported by our community—residents bringing families and friends to visit, or people supporting our events and programs—and all of it is vital and helps to keep the Museum alive.

Also, we are environmentally conscious. We use an electric furnace, the greenest form of energy to melt steel. Most other mills use natural gas, coal coke to power their furnaces. Our lab also tests the water quality once a week to make sure any runoff to the river is safe for the local wildlife.

Learn more about the Museum at venangomuseum.org.

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Member Profile: Morgan Pifer



Morgan is an intern this summer for the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce, where she is working on projects for FLEX and Be Here. She's originally from Oil City and went to Mercyhurst University, where she received a bachelor's degree in General Studies with a specialization in both Political Science and Marketing.

In high school and college, Morgan was involved in several organizations. She was the president of the Entrepreneurship Club and president of Teens Against Drugs and Alcohol (TADA) at Oil City High School, and worked as a front-of-house manager for the Mercyhurst Institute for Arts & Culture.

Morgan is excited to be home for the summer and has been enjoying the region, especially the outdoors. "The air, trees, water, and trails make me feel at home and at

peace," she told us. She finds it easy to find activities to do, including hiking, kayaking, canoeing, horseback riding, or simply sitting by the campfire.

In her free time, Morgan also enjoys sitting on her deck and soaking up the sun and painting, and she makes homemade birthday cards with recycled paper materials for family and friends.

Looking towards the future, Morgan has goals to become more independent personally and professionally, "I would love to discover more about myself and my ambitions in life through travel, and learning a new language is always a bonus," she said "I have dreams of owning my own business in 10 years and becoming skilled in the art of glass blowing."

Morgan has worked all over Venango County since she was in high school and has enjoyed becoming familiar with the area and community, and we're excited to have her helping with FLEX these few months!

Member Highlight: Hannah Gamble

Looking for a great place to grab a cup of coffee or tea? FLEX member Hannah Gamble recently opened Iron Furnace Coffee, located on Liberty Street in Franklin!

At Iron Furnace, Hannah is roasting her own coffee beans, has a limited food menu that features local ingredients, and offers a variety of quality drinks made with both coffee and tea.

Hannah and her husband Josh moved back to the area in 2020 from Pittsburgh, where Hannah worked at a coffee company. She worked at Core Goods in Oil City for almost two years, before opening Iron Furnace this May.

"It was always my dream to have my own coffee shop and opening Iron Furnace has been challenging, but incredibly rewarding," said Hannah. "Franklin and the entire community have been so welcoming and supportive and I look forward to the many years of running this business."

Congratulations, Hannah, and thank you for investing in our region by opening a business!



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Event Photos: Summer Kick-Off & First Friday Lunch



July Events & Meetings:

Bike 'n Brew Committee: Friday, July 8 • 12 p.m. • Zoom

Oil Heritage Bike 'n Brew: Saturday, July 16 • 2 - 7 p.m. • Oil City • Biking scavenger hunt, craft beer, and more • *FLEX volunteers needed!*

Events & Fundraising Committee: Tuesday, July 19 • 12 p.m. • Zoom

Oil Heritage Ice Cream Social: Thursday, July 21 • 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. • Central Avenue Plaza, Oil City • *FLEX volunteers needed!*

FLEX Monthly Meeting: Monday, July 25 • 12 p.m. • Zoom

Marketing Committee: Thursday, July 28 • 4:15 p.m. • Zoom

Contact us for meeting zoom links at flex@venangochamber.org, or find links in our Weekly Update email.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Amanda Barber
Brandon Boocks
Elizabeth Schmude
Christian Snyder
Megan Sternagel
Kate Whitling

Interested in joining?
Email the FLEX Membership Committee Chair Joslyn Dechant at joslyn.dechant@gmail.com or join online: VenangoFLEX.org.

FLEX 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.

CONNECT WITH US: VenangoFLEX.org • flex@venangochamber.org

