

## Connections Continue through Covid-19 Pandemic

Keeping members connected throughout the pandemic has remained a priority for the board of directors and chamber staff. Despite the lack of personal interaction, The Chamber has continued to offer a full calendar of virtual networking and educational programming.

Challenges often lead to creativity, so when posed with the inability to host in-person programming

member committees were consulted and new technology platforms explored. *Fast-Five* networking was created to offer a virtual speed networking that was very well received by members. Using the same platform, *In my experience* was developed providing a peer-to-peer learning experience with members in the marketing and social media space.

The annual Power Your Potential Montgomery County Women's Conference, was forced to go virtual as it celebrated it's 5th year providing networking and professional development to over 300 professional women in the region. Ten sessions were presented virtually along with breakout sessions and an interactive Match Game to add entertainment to the day. All sessions were recorded, and in lieu of the scheduled lunch and social hour, each participant received a gift card and a bottle of wine.

Together we Thrive, a virtual celebration of members that were able to pivot during the pandemic fill a need that marked a quick and distinct departure from their usual business initiatives was held as a substitute for the an-

nual awards gala.

All five Business Partnership Network (BPN) groups continued to meet either virtually or in a hybrid format allowing for referrals to continue to be shared.

January saw the launch of the new *Members Connect* series, a monthly program to introduce new members of The Chamber and present an informative program. The January program presented an overview of the new covid-19 vaccines, legal issues for employers to consider

and an update on the rollout by the county, which was



the first of its kind offered in the region. The series continued with programs covering the status and future of tourism and hospitality in Montgomery County and most recently the attendees received an update on when autonomous vehicles may be ready for consumers.

Virtual programming will continue, however as safety permits, the anticipation is to start returning to in-person events in May beginning with the 66th annual Golf Outing on May 13th.

2020 was a tough year and the expectation is for many that it will continue to be challenging for the remainder of 2021. The Chamber will continue to offer opportunities for connections, business resources and services to support members and the business community.

## IN THIS ISSUE

President's  
Message ..... 2

Board News.....3

Events  
Happenings.....5

New Members..... 6

Renewals..... 7

Member News.....8,9

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Kirk Walters, *The Walters Group*

## PROSPECTOR

Published quarterly by **The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Montgomery County**

217 Church Road, Suite C, North Wales, PA 19454

Phone: (215) 362-9200 | Fax: (267) 613-8865

#### Chamber Satellite Office

676 DeKalb Pike, Suite #208, Blue Bell, PA 19422

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



The Chamber marked its 108th anniversary last month with no more than a mention on Facebook as was the same for the past seven years. The pandemic eliminated any consideration for a big celebration this year, but non-milestone anniversaries in general just do not seem to draw much attention. The key milestone years however have been cause for year-long events, including promotional offers and even a special logo to mark the occasion.

What makes them any more deserving of recognition and celebration?

This past year has shown us that challenges, and unfortunately for some insurmountable ones, can hit unexpectedly. I would like to propose to celebrate the anniversary of the founding of your business every year. Issue a press release, thank your staff and customers and take time to celebrate all of that has been accomplished in the past year.

A business or organization is not successful by itself and this past year has reminded us that we need to support each other to ensure the success of our community. Every year in business deserves recognition.

Best,  
Pam

## CHAMBER STAFF

Wendy Custer, Vice President, Member Services

Carol Schultz, Events Assistant

### Wendy Custer receives promotion to VP

Wendy Custer has been promoted to Vice President, Member Services at The Chamber. In her new role, Wendy will be responsible for sponsorship and advertising sales, managing and growing Business Partnership Network (BPN), and working with members to maximize their membership benefits. In addition to her work at The Chamber, she also serves on the Partnership TMA board of directors. Wendy has been with The Chamber since 2016, previously as Member Relations Manager.



## THANK YOU TO OUR ANNUAL SPONSORS



### New board chair takes office

Mary Griffith Alfarano Commercial Relationship Manager, Vice President, Fulton Bank has been elected to serve as the 2021 Board Chair. Mary has been a member of The Chamber for almost 20 years and a director for the past three, most recently serving as the Board's Secretary. She has served on the Women's Network Committee and in leadership as its chair. In addition, she was part of the founding committee that created the Power Your Potential Montgomery County Women's Conference, one of The Chamber's most successful annual events. She worked on the recent Strategic Planning Committee that led to the strongest growth and program development in recent years.



Mary comes to this position with experience and knowledge of Montgomery County small businesses through her banking and community relationships. She is a member of the Laurel House Board of Directors having recently completed four years as its Co-President. She also serves on the Finance Committee for Montgomery Township and Montgomery Township Business Development Partnership.

### Daniel J. Reavy, elected Board Chair Emeritus



Dan Reavy, McMahon Associates has been elected by the Board of Directors to the status of Board Chair Emeritus. Dan has dedicated his career to making the North Penn region the best place to live, work and raise a family. The Chamber has been a fortunate recipient of his over 25 years of involvement, from being a founding sponsor of Community Reading Day, establishing the Government Affairs committee and as Board Chair overseeing the establishment of some of our most successful programs. Dan has been one of The Chambers biggest cheerleaders and with the election to Board Chair Emeritus, he will continue to be an invaluable advisor.



### Board of Directors elects new members



Bob Cherry, Merck; Suzanne Ryan, PECO; and Neal Shah, Mathnasium - Montgomeryville have been elected to serve a three year term as members of The Chamber's Board of Directors. The new directors fill vacancies left by Dan Reavy, McMahon Associates, David Magagna, Remax, the Magagna Home Team, and Nancy Bednarik, Merck, whose terms were completed in December, 2020.

New directors are recommended each year by the Nomination Committee. Consideration is given to business size, location, industry served and diversity. For more information regarding opportunities to serve on the Board of Directors, please contact Pam Kelly, [pam@chambergmc.org](mailto:pam@chambergmc.org).

# LET'S COUNT ON EACH OTHER.

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## Looking for Referrals?

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## Welcome LGBA as a returning Chapter Member

The largest chamber in Montgomery County got a little bigger with the additional of the Lower Gwynedd Business Association as a Chapter member.

The Chapter relationship was developed to allow business associations to continue to build a strong local presence while receiving marketing support from The Chamber. Through this relationship, both organizations will have access to a greater number of networking and professional development events.

We look forward to working with Katie Interrante, Station Partners, LGBA chair, the board and members.



The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Montgomery County offers members access to My Benefit Advisor as a solution for employee benefits and health insurance.

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### Chamber Distributes Over 2000 Free PPE Kits to Nearly 800 Local Businesses

The Chamber joined a regional chamber alliance last fall and contributed heavily to the distribution of thousands of PPE kits during the height of the pandemic. The kits, provided by the Montgomery County Commerce Department, each contained a supply of sanitizing wipes, face masks and shields, a thermometer, hand sanitizer, and “Mask Up Montco” signage. The Chamber team enlisted the help of member JDog Junk Removal and Hauling to pick up and deliver the supplies to the Chamber offices in North Wales, and then encouraged local businesses to come to the office to pick up their complimentary kits. Nearly 800 local businesses picked up between one and seven boxes of supplies between October, 2020 and January, 2021.



*I picked up some PPE kits for my small, non-profit this morning and they are AMAZING!! My business serves mentally ill adults in Montgomery County and PPE is expensive and in short supply. THANK YOU SO MUCH for generously offering these kits to our community. We are very grateful!*

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**Contact The Chamber to register your business as a Visionary Member!**

The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Montgomery County | 215-362-9200 | [www.chambergmc.org](http://www.chambergmc.org)



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

### **Bergman Engineering, LLC\***

Keith Bergman

[www.bergmanengineering.net](http://www.bergmanengineering.net)

### **Caesar Rivise P.C.\***

Melissa Keough

[www.caesar.law](http://www.caesar.law)

### **Crazy Balloon Delivery, LLC**

Laura Swart

[www.crazy-balloon-delivery.com](http://www.crazy-balloon-delivery.com)

### **Crystal's Mary Kay Cosmetics**

Crystal Lear

[www.marykay.com/crystallear](http://www.marykay.com/crystallear)

### **Elemeno Productions LLC**

Logan McCurry

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

### **Elysium Marketing Group**

Elyse Lupin

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

### **Ethos Cannabis\***

Jennifer Gible

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

### **Gordon Orthodontics**

Colleen Gordon

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

### **Green Terra Disposal, Inc.\***

Beata Daly

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

### **Grim, Biehn & Thatcher, P.C.**

David Caro

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

### **ILOVEKICKBOXING MONTGOMERYVILLE**

Penny Toren

[www.lovekickboxing.com/montgomeryville](http://www.lovekickboxing.com/montgomeryville)

### **Innovative Development LLC**

Cody Mortimer

[www.id-llc.com](http://www.id-llc.com)

### **Kastle Homes**

Kerry Kastle

[www.kerrykastle.kw.com](http://www.kerrykastle.kw.com)

### **Keystone Professional Cleaners**

Keith Andrews

### **MAC Consulting LLC**

Melissa Chadwick

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

### **MaGerk's Pub & Grill**

Erin Tate

[www.magerks.com/fort-washington](http://www.magerks.com/fort-washington)

### **Mahoney Event Center, LLC\***

Michele Brooker-Lee

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

### **Mattie N. Dixon Community Cupboard**

Cindy Wedholm

[www.community-cupboard.org](http://www.community-cupboard.org)

### **Northeast Virtual Media**

Matt Leatherbury

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

### **North Penn Boxing & Kickboxing**

Sherry Connor

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

### **NovaCare Rehabilitation - Harleysville\***

Karen Bergman

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

### **Paul Davis Restoration**

David Hassis

[www.montgomeryberks.pauldavis.com](http://www.montgomeryberks.pauldavis.com)

### **Payroll Vault—Main Line**

Edward Carroll

[www.payrollvault.com/164](http://www.payrollvault.com/164)

### **Premier Barber Institute**

Dan Gormley

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

### **ProVen Pharmaceuticals, LLC**

Scott Wise

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

### **Pumpnick's Deli-Restaurant**

Jeff Klein

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

### **Riverbank Creative**

Ryan Canney

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

### **Royal Billiard & Recreation**

Audra DelConte

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

### **Sales Evolution - Sales Training and Coaching**

Tony Kanak

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

### **Thames Education LLC**

Claas Wiley-Ritzmann

### **The Physical Therapy and Wellness**

Institute - Blue Bell

Stephen Linton

[www.ptwinstitute.com/blue-bell](http://www.ptwinstitute.com/blue-bell)

### **The Pizza Time Saloon**

Joe Kuhn

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

### **Tigers Family Restaurant**

Carla Klufetos

[www.facebook.com/tigersfamilyrestaurant](http://www.facebook.com/tigersfamilyrestaurant)

### **Twinkle Photo Booth**

Sean Rose

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

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 Meadowood Senior Living  
 Merck & Co., Inc.\*  
 Metal Edge International, Inc.\*  
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The Kids-N-Hope Foundation celebrates its 25th Anniversary by kicking off its 25 Miles in My Shoes walk, which starts April 11, 2021 and ends on April 17, 2021. The Kids-N-Hope Foundation was organized by [American Heritage Credit Union](#) in 1996.



[Clemens Food Group](#), which owns Hatfield Quality Meats, will build a new \$228 million facility in Hatfield as part of their growing smoked meats and cooked sausage production. A total of 87 new jobs will be added by the move, which was facilitated by state grants.

Effective February 1, 2021, the partners and team members of [St. Clair CPAs, P.C.](#) joined EisnerAmper LLP, one of the world's leading accounting, tax and business advisory firms. Although their name changed, their commitment to clients, employees and communities will remain as strong as ever.

Brendan J. McGill, President and CEO of [Harleysville Bank](#) announced the recent appointment of Jen Witter to Assistant Vice President and Branch Manager of the Bank's Lansdale office. Ms. Witter joined the bank's team in May 2017, and brings over 10 years of banking knowledge to her new position as Branch Manager.

In January, 2021, [Higher Information Group](#) (HIG) announced it had completed its acquisition of Office Equipment Source (OES), a family-owned technology company based in Elmira, N.Y. HIG will retain all existing OES sales, service, and support staff.

[Indian Valley Appraisal Company](#) is celebrating 35 years of real estate appraisal services to the Indian Valley area and beyond. The company has provided all aspects of real estate appraisal to the Indian Valley and the Greater Philadelphia and Lehigh Valley areas.

[Kreischer Miller](#) has been named a "Firm to Watch" for 2021 by Accounting Today. The Firms to Watch list is part of Accounting Today's annual ranking of the top accounting firms in the U.S. Kreischer Miller is the highest-ranked firm in Pennsylvania – and the only firm headquartered in the Greater Philadelphia area – on the list.

Beginning April 1, 2021, [Laurel House](#) will officially offer a new, confidential Textline to victims of domestic violence and their loved ones across the county. This Textline will be available from Monday through Friday from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. and will be monitored by certified domestic violence advocates. On April 1st, the Textline can be accessed by texting HOPE to 85511 in order to immediately begin texting with a trauma-informed and confidential advocate.

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**Member News can be submitted online:**

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## MEMBER NEWS

[Merck Sharp & Dohme Federal Credit Union](#) presented Raymond O. Hoffman Memorial Awards of \$5,000 to Yvonne Burke (Central Bucks High School South, Warrington, PA), Anjali Kejariwal (Spring-Ford High School, Royersford, PA), Aidan Lombardi (Cardinal Newman High School, Santa Rosa, CA), Casey Yin (North Penn High School, Lansdale, PA) and Peter Zucca (Souderton Area High School, Souderton, PA). Recipients were awarded \$5,000 each.



Yvonne Burke



Anjali Kejariwal



Aidan Lombardi



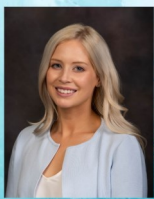
Casey Yin



Peter Zucca

[The Methacton Education Foundation](#) announced the commitment of \$220,000 for two transformative STEM Innovation Labs at Methacton High School. The new Hydroponic Farm and Forensics Labs will supplement Methacton High School's core science curriculum and allow for advanced application of content in ways not typically provided to high school students.

[Nappen & Associates](#) has two new team members. Tracy Flissar, Vice President of Leasing, will lead the leasing team, market Nappen's availabilities for lease and grow its tenant base. Jillian Gude, Leasing Assistant and Property Manager, is a recent graduate from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.



[The North Penn School District](#) recently received a grant in the amount of \$23,500 from the Pennsylvania Department of Education Office of Safe Schools. These funds will be used to purchase equipment to enhance the safety of outdoor events occurring at North Penn High School.

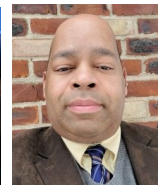


Ambler-based [Station Partners](#) has purchased three properties stretching nearly a block at Main Street and Butler Pike in Ambler, with plans to raze the existing structures to make way for mixed-use development.

Jenkintown-based [TerraVida Holistic Centers](#), a women-owned and operated medical cannabis company, has been acquired by Chicago-based Verano Holdings in a deal valued at \$135 million. Chris Visco, the chain's founder and president, will remain with the company as an executive overseeing retail operations.



[The VNA Foundation of Greater North Penn](#) is proud to announce the election of two members to its Board of Directors. Robin Chambers Dixon is Principal of Chambers Consulting, LLC. Anthony H. Johnson is Deputy Director of the Partnership Transportation Management Association of Montgomery County.



As part of its ninth annual Caring for Community Giveaway on January 6, Souderton-based [Univest Financial](#) has awarded \$5,000 to Temple University's chapter of A Moment of Magic, the nonprofit that brings fairytale magic to children in hospitals. The organization will use the grant money to improve its virtual programming.

[Wisler Pearlstine, LLP](#) is pleased to announce that attorneys Benjamin A. Andersen and Joseph M. Blackburn have been elected to partnership. Benjamin A. Andersen focuses his practice on business litigation and Joseph M. Blackburn handles a broad range of real estate, zoning, and land use matters on behalf of corporate and individual clients.

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## POWER

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Power Your Potential is now available as a subscription with expanded programming and opportunities to connect with professional women throughout the region.



- April 28: TED Talk — *Unleash the Power of the P*, featuring Secily Wilson (plus live discussion with speaker)
- June 8: TED Talk — *How to Gain Control of your Free Time*, featuring Laura Vanderkam, (+ live discussion with speaker)
- September 15: TED Talk — *Your Body Language May Shape Who You Are*, featuring Amy Cuddy
- October 29: 6th Annual Power Your Potential Women's Conference  
Normandy Farm Hotel & Conference Center, Blue Bell



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## Nonprofit Organization Recognition



The Center *for* Loss and Bereavement



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## CHAMBER COMMITTEES

There are several opportunities for members to get involved and make new connections while assisting with the development and planning of programs and services. For more information on available committees, contact chamber staff at [info@chambergmc.org](mailto:info@chambergmc.org).

### Golf Committee

Duncan Reed, Edward Jones Investments, Chair

Bob Cherry, Merck; Dina Corrado, SERVPro; April Donahue, QNB Bank; Dave Freeman, QNB Bank; David Heins, Mortgage Network; Ray Keough, My Benefit Advisor; Lisa Martin, Costco Wholesale; Tom McKee, Edward Jones Investments; Jeremy Meade, Ardent Credit Union; David Onorato, Hladik, Onorato & Federman; Neal Shah, Mathnasium

### Government Affairs Committee

David Onorato, Hladik, Onorato & Federman, Chair

Larry Burns, Horsham Township; Heather Cevasco, Doylestown Health; John Ernst, Lansdale Borough; Dan Reavy, McMahon Associates; Duncan Reed, Edward Jones Investments; Suzanne Ryan, PECO

### Leadership Development Committee

Sheri Strouse, Harleysville Bank; Kirk Walters, The Walters Group, Co-chairs.

Stan Braverman, Braverman Associates; Chris Hayden, Hayden, Nelson & Yoder; Tom McKee, Edward Jones Investments; Chris Schalleur, ChristofT

### Membership/Marketing Committee

Mary Griffith-Alfarano, Fulton Bank; Stan Braverman, Braverman Associates; Penny Brodie, SignPrinters; Mike Mostochuk, Eisner Amper; Marsha Braverman, Braverman Associates; Kevin Connor, Modern Strategic Branding; Najah Edmondson, TASA; Kristin Kane Ford, Kane Partners Social Media; Justine Garbarino, Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board; Gaetan Giannini, DeSales University; Johanna James, Allstate Insurance; Lisa Martin, Costco Wholesale; Logan McCurry, Elemeno Productions; Michael O'Neill, Photographer; Geoff Slick, Keller Williams; Jackie Thomas, QNB Bank.

### Power Your Potential Committee

Mary Griffith Alfarano, Fulton Bank; Nancy Bednarik, Merck; Gina Bifulco, Merck; Nanette Carney, The Carney Group; Najah Edmondson, TASA; Katie Galaska, Kreischer Miller; Allyson Gilmore, Doylestown Health; Pat Kreidler, Merck Sharp and Dohme FCU; Susan Gillespie, Truist Wealth Management, Kristin Kane Ford, Kane Partners Social Media



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