

CHAMBER CHATTER

The Newsletter of the Waynesburg Area Chamber of Commerce
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 www.waynesburgchamber.com

To provide services and programs that will increase the success of member businesses and organizations and enhance the economy and quality of life in the Waynesburg Area. To remain a politically unbiased and enthusiastic resource to our members and the community at large.

We've Moved!

Please update your mailing records with our new address:
 143 East High Street.



Christmas Parade

Thank you to Chesapeake Energy for sponsoring the 2008 Downtown Christmas Parade. Congratulations to the following entries who took home trophies.

"Grand Marshalls - Miss Rain Day Elissa McCracken, Ivan and Adelaide Guesman"



"First Place Float - Greene Arc"

"Here comes Santa Claus"



"Thank you to the National Guard Armory"



– Parade Winners –

- Judges Choice - TNT Auto Body & Towing
- Marching Bands
- 1st - WCHS
- 2nd - MBM
- 3rd CAHS
- Best Dance School - Moschetta's
- Performing Arts

- Best Animal Unit - Candy Walters & Friends
- Best Antique - Waynesburg Lions Club
- Best Marching Unit - PA 140th Volunteers



Important Employer Tax Updates

Provided by
Padgett Business Services

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EMAIL: WKARNSUSA@AOL.COM

Just a few changes to be aware of for 2009:

Mileage rate for business miles:

2009 - 55 cents/ mile

2008 - 50.5 cents/ mile

(Jan 1 – June 30)

58.5 cents/ mile

(July 1 – Dec 31)

Mileage rate for medical/moving expenses:

2009 - 24 cents/ mile

2008 - 19 cents/ mile

(Jan 1 – June 30)

27 cents/ mile

(July 1 – Dec 31)

Mileage rate for charitable contributions:

2009 - 14 cents/ mile

2008 - 14 cents/ mile

Social Security Cap:

2009 - \$106,800 2008 - \$102,000

PA Unemployment – Employee
Contribution:

2009 - .06% 2008 - .06%

IRA Contribution (Traditional or Roth):

\$5,000 2008 Tax Year - under age 50

\$4,000 2007 Tax Year - under age 50

\$6,000 2008 Tax Year - age 50 & over

\$5,000 2007 Tax Year - age 50 & over

Minimum wage increase!

Rates are effective as of dates listed below:

- \$7.15 per hour currently

- \$7.25 per hour effective July 24, 2009

Training wage for employees under 20 years old:

- No longer allowed after July 23, 2009

- Currently \$6.55 per hour for the first 60 calendar days of employment

- After 60 days, the regular Pennsylvania minimum wage must be paid

- Employees must be notified of this 60 day training wage at time of hire

- On and after an employees 20th birthday, the minimum wage rate must be paid, even if the 60 days has not expired

Tipped employees:

- An employer may pay a minimum of \$2.83 per hour to an employee who makes \$30.00 per month in tips

- The employer must make up the difference if the tips and \$2.83 do not meet the regular Pennsylvania minimum wage

For all other exceptions to the minimum wage increase, please see www.dli.state.pa.us

Have a happy, healthy and prosperous new year!

Welcome New Officers



Four new board officers were elected recently at the December Re-Organizational Board Luncheon. They are Cassie Bryan – Treasurer, Lucy Northrop – President, Cory Grandel – Vice-President, Kippie Whitlatch – Secretary.

2009 Membership Directory

Enclosed in this newsletter is an advertising form for the 2009 Membership Directory. Don't miss this excellent members-only advertising opportunity. The directory will be distributed to over 300 members and another 100 will be included in relocation packages, visitors guides and new member packets throughout 2009.

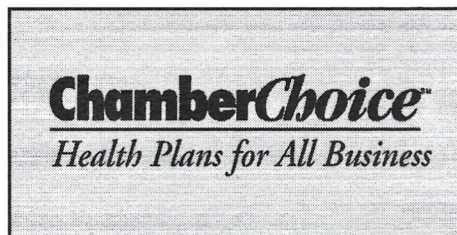
Member-To-Member Discounts

2009 Member-To-Member discounts are currently being solicited. If you would like to offer a discount on products or services to chamber members and their employees, please use the form enclosed in this newsletter to sign up. If you have already been contacted to confirm an offer from 2008, there is no need to complete the form. The 2009 Membership Cards will have the discounts printed on them and they will also be available on the chamber website. If you have any questions, please contact the office. All discounts must be confirmed by the printing deadline of January 30th.

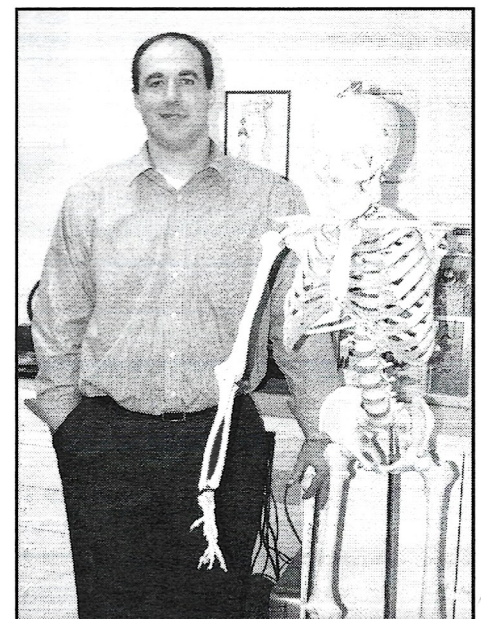
New Representatives

Krystle Mulnix – Enterprise Rent A Car

Kim Delaney – Fashion Bug



PA Chiropractic December Business After Hours



Welcome New Members

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Mrs. Beverly Weimer,
District Representative
30 Sigrid Drive
Carnegie Pa 15106
724-469-2160

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www.jawesternpa.org
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724-324-2468 fax
pastorh2o@windstream.net
www.mmgt.org

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Director-Community Relations
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Fax 724-222-9907
gs@thecaringmission.com
www.thecaringmission.com

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Fax 724-499-5086
forevergreenehouse@yahoo.com
Hydroponic Greenhouse

Thank You

A huge thank you goes out to Ketchem Construction, CNX Gas and Consol Energy for sponsoring the 2009 Membership Cards and Membership Plaques.



Adopted Bears Donated to the Auxiliary of Southwest Regional Medical Center

Cheryl Owens, Avon independent sales representative, recently designated the Auxiliary of Southwest Regional Medical Center as the recipient of 13 Bentley bears. Each Bentley the Bear was adopted through the "Avon Operation Hugs" program for \$19.99. Owens, and other independent Avon representatives then choose the organizations to receive the bears.

Owens chose to donate the adopted Bentley the Bears to the Auxiliary of Southwest Regional Medical Center after learning that they provided bears to pediatric patients and other patients in need. In 2008 the Auxiliary of Southwest Regional Medical Center gave over 200 bears to Southwest Regional Medical Center patients. "When a patient receives a bear it makes them feel more secure." explained Mary Zollars, Vice President of the Auxiliary of Southwest Regional Medical Center. "It is just one way that we can make a patient's hospital stay better."

Anyone interested in adopting a bear to benefit the Auxiliary of Southwest Regional Medical Center's program can contact Cheryl Owens at 724-415-9118 or your local Avon representative.



Pictured from left: Mary Zollars, Vice President, Auxiliary of Southwest Regional Medical Center and Jennifer McCracken, Director of Acute Care Services accept the donated bears from Cheryl Owens, Avon independent sales representative.

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Members in the Spotlight

MT. MORRIS GOSPEL TABERNACLE

80 years ago in a small town on the Mason-Dixon line was begun a church. That church would grow, minister to its community and Greene County, and even draw members from parts of West Virginia. The town is called Mt. Morris, Pennsylvania, and the church is Mt. Morris Gospel Tabernacle of the Assemblies of God. We are thankful for the heritage of the church and the foundation that was laid by its first pastor and members. Gospel Tabernacle stands for faith in God, a hope for eternal life, and a love for God and all mankind. At Gospel Tabernacle Assembly of God, the emphasis is on unconditional love and acceptance for members of the congregation and for members of the community. Visit us and discover boundless opportunities for personal and spiritual growth along with meaningful ways to make a real difference

(Continued on Next Page)

We've Moved - Thanks for Your Help

We are now located next door to the Greene Saver in a first floor, street front, handicapped accessible space. Please stop by and visit us and see our beautiful new space.

We would like to thank the following members who helped with the move by donating services, products or lending their muscle to physically help.

- * Humble Carpet & Decorating Center
- * Patterson Realty - Duck Patterson
- * Waynesburg Electric
- * Mark IV Office Supply - Dave Stoneking and Kevin Staub
- * DK Electric - Doug Kerr
- * Waynesburg Borough Street Department
- * Ketchem Construction
- * Rhodes & Hammers Printing - Jay Hammers
- * PC Squared
- * Ford Business Machines
- * Sherwin Williams
- * Wayne Lumber - Mark Headlee
- * Waynesburg Borough Zoning Officer Nelson Miller
- * National City Bank - Kim Grimes
- * Arrington Oil & Gas
- * 2008 & 2009 Board of Directors
- * Bradley Nicholson
- * Shane Gottschalk

Engaging Employees

How workplace engagement can keep your staff happy and motivated

When a business owner thinks about losses in productivity and/or revenue, the usual suspects always come up — security breaches, changing market conditions, the economy, etc.

One thing owners may not consider, however, is a disengaged work force. But, according to Jessica Galardini, the president and COO of JRG Advisors, the management company for ChamberChoice, a disengaged work force can be a company's death knell if not properly handled.

"The investment we make to attract, retain and develop talented employees is significant and only promises to remain as a top expense," Galardini says. "When we recognize and prioritize this cost as an opportunity and we access resources for outside-the-box benefits thinking, we can advance our employees and objectives rapidly."

If workplace engagement is not a part of the benefits your company makes available to employees, then it should be. According to findings from the annual Towers Perrin Global Workforce Study, which surveyed approximately 90,000 individuals, it is a model to absolutely include in the strategic planning process for your employee benefits package. Without it, your company could be plagued with unhappy and unmotivated employees.

Smart Business spoke with Galardini about workplace engagement, how to implement it and why doing so is so important.

What is workplace engagement?

Workplace engagement begins with an employer who genuinely has care and concern for his or her employees. It is simply not enough to just say you care or to know independently that you do. Employees need to actually see your concern for them demonstrated, and they need to feel it constantly. An employer who truly cares will want their employees to benefit from the company.

How does an employer demonstrate care and concern?

The best place to begin is by listening and asking questions. The employer working toward achieving an engaged work force must have open and nonthreatening communication channels that apply to everyone in all positions. It is equally as important to show gratitude, exercise flexibility and provide meaningful experiences for every individual to do something that is special and contributory to the objectives. A professional survey

to gain valuable employee feedback is a great tool and starting point.

Why is it important to pay attention to this concept?

Workplace engagement inspires employees to go above and beyond.

Inspired employees who are engaged deliver results in key areas of retention, growth and profitability. The consequences that result from disengaged employees can be detrimental to a company. No one strives to provide mediocre work, so it is important to acknowledge your employees' potential and provide a work environment that promotes employee engagement.

What is the best way to begin the process?

First, make the commitment to be engaged yourself. Engagement from the top is imperative. Next, recognize this is not a one-person process. You need to form a team that includes your senior management and supervisors, the elite performers among your work force who demonstrate good citizenship and who you see as already engaged, and a professional consultant who can guide the team and objectively measure expectations and results.

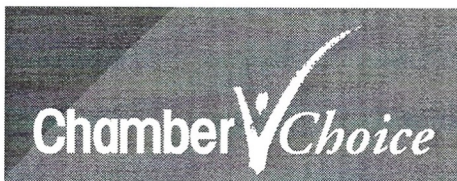
What are some of the behaviors of an engaged employee?

Engaged employees invariably speak positively about the company to co-workers, potential employees and clients, and they are genuinely proud of the company and its accomplishments and values.

What are the risks of not having an engaged work force?

Without engagement, a workplace can quickly suffer through high employee turnover, decreased productivity, lost training dollars and diminished morale. Smart leaders who develop and nurture workplace engagement will achieve an unrivaled work force of inspired employees who deliver exceptional work and who value constructive feedback, mentoring and accountability.

JESSICA GALARDINI is the president and COO of JRG Advisors, the management company for ChamberChoice. Reach her at 412-456-7231 or jessica.galardini@jrgadvisors.net.



Members in the Spotlight (continued)

in your community. You'll be greeted with genuine warmth and embraced by a supportive extended family. We endeavor to minister to the whole family, with worship that appeals to all ages, and educational classes from nursery to adult. We are located at the corner of Big Shannon Run Road and School Road in Mt. Morris. Everyone is welcome to worship with us.



Westmoreland County Community College
Greene County Education Center

WCCC Education Foundation New Executive Director

Starting this January, Debra D. Woods of Indiana will head the Westmoreland County Community College Education Foundation as executive director, following the approval of the WCCC board of trustees at its December 10, 2008 meeting. Since 2001, Woods has served as the executive director of the Indiana Healthcare Foundation for the Indiana Regional Medical Center where she previously held a variety of management positions in human resources and patient registration. During her nearly 20-year tenure with Indiana Regional Medical Center, she has been involved in several fund development initiatives. She facilitated a successful \$10 million capital campaign for the foundation where she was also responsible for managing grants, corporate relations, planned giving, major gifts and annual giving programs. Additionally, she formed the Herbert L. Hanna Oncology Advisory Board to improve medical center programs. These advisory board members have chaired committees for fundraising events, including the Love of Life Gala, which have raised more than \$100,000 for women's health programs.

Within her community, she was recently elected to serve as the president of the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board which oversees the local PA CareerLink, Career Track, youth programs and seven regional and local industry partnerships in Indiana, Butler and Kittanning. She also serves as an officer for Aging Services, as a board member for Junior Achievement, as chairperson of the Indiana County Technology Center Perkins Advisory Board and member of its Alliance for Business and Education Leadership committee, and is a member of several other community organizations. Woods holds a master's degree in organizational leadership from Geneva College and a bachelor's degree in business management from Seton Hill University.

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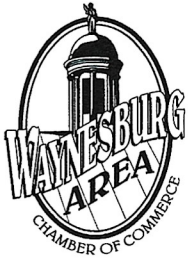
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