Donations to library get showcase on Spring Street

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Klara Sotonova will soon be loading bigger batches of her gourmet cookies into a much larger oven at the company's new production facility across town in Lee.

Cookie capacity rising with new production facility

BY JOHN TOWNES

The cookie economy of Berkshire County is expanding.

More specifically, Klara Sotonova and Jefferson Diller, owners of Klara's Gourmet Cookies LLC in Lee, have purchased a 3,300-squarefoot commercial building at 195 Water St. to provide a larger space for production and related operations.

Klara's Gourmet Cookies are sold at retail outlets throughout the Northeast and in some locations further afield, including New Mexico and Virginia. They also sell cookies online at their website (klarasgourmet.com). The business currently generates about \$700,000 annually in gross sales.

Since 2009, Klara's Gourmet Cookies (413-243-3370) has oper-

ated out of a 1,400-square-foot space on the first floor of a commercial building at 18 Railroad St., just off of Main Street in Lee's downtown. The couple live on the building's second floor with their young daughter.

The new Water Street facility, which is located near the Lee Premium Outlets retail complex on the town's east side, was previously a commercial kitchen that was leased for short-term use by individual food producers.

They purchased the building from Rodney Clark for \$255,000 on July 31, and have spent the ensuing months remodeling the facilities and installing new equipment to meet their needs.

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PHOENIX RISING

Beacon's buyer outlines vision for downtown movie theater

BY JOHN TOWNES

Cory Jacobson, who is slated to become the new owner of the Beacon Cinema in downtown Pittsfield, said he had his first taste of the movie business as a young teenager popping popcorn in a theater in Racine, Wisconsin.

"When I was 13 a friend and I went out looking for a job," he recalled. "We applied at a movie but they didn't hire of years later I went

"Turning around great theaters and achieving theater. He got a job, their potential me because I was too is what I enjoy young. But a couple doing most."

back and got a job making popcorn. I've been in the movie business ever since."

Jacobson subsequently advanced through the ranks as an usher, assistant manager and then general manager of a theater, and after that a district manager for a theater chain.

"Finally, in 2000, I decided to go out on my own and started my own theater business," he said.

Jacobson is now owner and CEO of Insight Management Consulting, a private company which is based in Farmington, Mich., near Detroit. Under its brand of Phoenix Theatres (www.phoenixmovies.net), they currently operate four movie theaters in Monroe, Wayne and Livonia, Mich., and Dubuque, Iowa.

They include one six-screen, one fourscreen and two 10-screen theaters. The six-screen Beacon Cinema will become Phoenix's fifth movie theater.

Jacobson said his company's specialty has been to acquire and revitalize movie theaters that have experienced difficulties. "Turning around great theaters and achieving their

continued on page 14

Vegan eatery opening in Pittsfield

Owner hoping Thrive will do just that in former Adrien's Diner site

BY BRAD JOHNSON

Those among us adhering to a vegan diet can find dining out to be a dicey venture with most restaurants in this region offering at best a spattering of options that are free from animal products of any kind.

Given the growing number of people identifying as either vegan or vegetarian, Shari Peltier has seized upon this omission from the local dining scene as an opportunity for a new Pittsfield eatery that offers a full menu of flavorful vegan fare.

And, while there have been a few vegan restaurants locally that have come and gone in recent years, Peltier believes the success of her new venture, aptly named Thrive, will stem from its ability to appeal to diners of all stripes.

"We want to offer food that everyone can enjoy," said Peltier. "You have to appeal to the entire family.'

One way she plans to do that is by offering vegan versions of dishes that are familiar to most people. "That's where other vegan restaurants have had trouble," she said. "What we are serving here will help people [who are not vegans] put aside their misconceptions about what vegan dining is about."

Her choice of venue for Thrive will also influence the style of cuisine offered there. The restaurant has taken shape in the small building at 145 Wahconah St. that for many years housed the popular Adrien's Diner.

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FRONT pages

Donations to library get showcase on Spring Street

BY JOHN TOWNES

Friends of the David and Joyce Milne Public Library Inc. has opened a new chapter to replace the annual two-day book sale the organization has held for three decades.

As a result, Williamstown's central business district has a new full-time used book store, Chapter Two Books, at 37 Spring St. It had a soft opening on Nov. 3, with an official ribbon-cutting and grand opening on Nov. 29 just before the annual Williamstown Holiday Walk.

Friends of the David and Joyce Milne Public Library is a volunteer-based 501c3 organization that raises funds and provides other support for Williamstown's library, which is located at 1095 Main St.

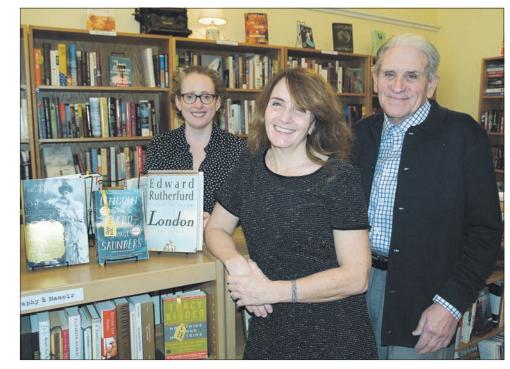
"The annual book sale has been successful, but we'd been thinking that there must be a better way to sell all of the books that are donated for it," said Ginny Sheldon, a member of the organization's board and the management team of Chapter Two Books.

Sheldon explained that the annual sale has been a major undertaking every year, including collecting and organizing an average of 25,000 books donated by the community for the sale. "Each year we'd have to organize and set up all those books at Williamstown Elementary School and then sell as many as we could over two days," she said.

Sheldon added that they could not keep most of the unsold books because the space allocated for storage inside the library was not large enough. "So, after the sale was over, we'd have to find other places to take the books that were left over," she said.

That problem found a solution with the new Spring Street bookstore, which has 780 square feet of retail space and about 80 square feet of additional workspace.

Sheldon said they expect to carry an inventory of between 4,000 and 6,000 used books



Friends of the David and Joyce Milne Public Library Inc. board members Andrea Malone, Marisa Daley and board president Michael Sussman gather for a photo among the shelves and inventory prior to the Nov. 29 grand opening of Chapter Two Books, a new volunteer-operated shop at 37 Spring St. in Williamstown that provides a year-round venue for the sale of books and related items donated to the library.

in the store. Among these are softcover and hardcover books on a range of subjects (based on donations), including adult and children's books, local authors, and some vintage books. It also sells media, including CDs and DVDs.

Chapter Two Books (413-884-6322 or www.chaptertwobookstore.org) is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

History of support

Friends of the David and Joyce Milne Public Library was formed by a committee of library supporters in 1989 to raise additional private funds to help the library by conducting an annual membership campaign and a weekend book sale. Funds it raises are used to supplement town, state, and trustee funding of materials, programs, equipment, and staff development at the library.

For example, in 2016 the organization raised \$26,000 from book sales and other contributions. These funds were used for two public-access computers; an Ancestry. com subscription; a storage cabinet for the Children's Room; children's and youngadult programs and supplies; professional development for the staff, and the purchase of books, CDs and DVDs.

The Friends' overall mission also includes raising public awareness of library resources and needs, and promoting a public commitment to literacy and library engagement.

Sheldon said the organization had been thinking of alternatives to the book sale for several years. "The bookstore came about through a combination of circumstances," she said.

The specific impetus was when a storefront on Spring Street became available earlier this year, after Ruby Sparks, a clothing boutique, closed.

"The space was affordable, and it was an opportunity to sell books right on the town's central commercial street," she said. "We also saw it as a way to add something in the town. Williamstown has many readers and has needed a good used bookstore. We also saw it as more than a bookstore. It is also a community gathering space where people can run across their neighbors while browsing for books."

Sheldon said they did extensive research before moving forward with the bookstore plan. "We visited and consulted with libraryfriends groups in other places to look at alternatives," she said. "We've modeled this after a similar bookstore in Schenectady, New York, called the Whitney Book Corner."

Low overhead

Through their research and other planning, they determined that the operation would be financially viable. They are renting the space, but otherwise their expenses are minimal.

"All of the merchandise is donated by the community, as are the furnishings," Sheldon said. "Also, it is staffed and managed by volunteers. So, it does not require a large budget, and it's an opportunity to generate continuous revenue by selling books on a year-round basis."

She noted that they receive a steady stream of donations throughout the year. "People are very generous about donating, and we get a wealth of beautiful books," she said. "For example, every book in the store when it opened had been collected between Sept. 4 and Nov. 4."

She added that the Friends and the Milne Library's director, staff and trustees collaborated closely to make Chapter Two Books a reality in a very short period.

Sheldon said about 75 volunteers from the community have signed up to operate the store. This includes a management committee, and others who will work in the store as cashiers and do other tasks. The store's general manager, Susan Pike, is also a volunteer.

A section of the Milne Library is being used to store and sort inventory, which will then be taken to Chapter Two. Donations of books for the store will be accepted primarily at The Friends Book Donation Center in the library.

"Because of limited space in the store, we'll be asking that all donations be made at the library," said Sheldon.

Sheldon noted that they are also looking at supplementing the revenue from the brickand-mortar store with online sales. "Once we have established the store and worked everything out, we may add that," she said.

The Friends (milnelibraryfriends.org) will also continue other fund-raising activities, including its annual membership campaign. They will also likely add other events, such as pop-up sales in the library and other locations, and silent auctions of especially valuable or notable books.◆



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because we're looking for the

place where we are going to

put down roots."

B&B Micro Manufacturing explores expansion options

BY JOHN TOWNES

For B&B Micro Manufacturing in North Adams, the business of building "tiny houses" is growing rapidly, which also is leading to an expansion of products.

The company, which is based in the Windsor Mill complex on Union Street, recently was awarded the winning bid from the city to purchase a three-acre site that was a former city salt shed property on Ashland Street for \$75,000.

B&B plans to use the property to augment its current operations as a storage site, and perhaps as a facility to manufacture trailers that are used to transport tiny houses. It also is a potential site for a new headquarters.

"We don't have an exact final plan, but the Ashland Street property will accommodate an immediate need for more space," said Jason Koperniak, one of the company's three founding partners and owners. "It could potentially become a new headquarters and primary manufacturing facility, but that is just one of the options we're considering."

B&B was established in 2016 by Koperniak, Chris St. Cyr and Mitchell Bresett, who all grew up in Adams. It is named after B&B Precision Builders, a building company that was owned by Bresett's late father, Michael Bresett, and which the three men had worked for when they were younger.

The company's specialty is building small structures, especially the category of residence known as tiny houses (*October* 2017 BT&C).

Its original initial business mainstay was a contract to build tiny houses as guest cabins for a company that develops rustic vacation retreats in the Northeast.

It subsequently expanded to build tiny houses for other customers including individual or multi-unit primary or vacation homes, and other purposes.

B&B also has expanded its line of products by receiving a state license to become builder of modular homes and business structures.

Koperniak explained that this enables them to construct larger pre-assembled modular homes in their manufacturing facility, while maintaining their focus on small structures.

"The ability to become a modular home specialist is a big deal for us," said Koperniak. "It opens up new markets and many additional classes of buyers."

He explained that the category of tiny houses are generally considered to be residences of 250 square feet or less. According to their website (bbtinyhouses.com), the price for pre-designed tiny houses ranges between \$39,000 and \$89,000.

Small modular homes, on the other hand, are generally between 400 and 1,200 square feet. The difference in size offers another option for customers, and greater flexibility in location and other factors.

"We've had potential buyers who are interested in the concept behind tiny houses," Koperniak explained. "However, when they see them, they decide they prefer something with somewhat more space. This enables us to serve those people who want to downsize or be more minimalist in their living space but want something larger than a tiny house."

In addition, tiny houses are often in a category of mobile recreational vehicles, while small modular houses are installed as permanent structures.

"This makes a difference in terms of zoning and other building regulations," Koperniak said. "Every municipality is different, but in general many have requirements for minimum square footage. They also allow permanent stationary structures but not mobile ones. So, small affixed houses have more flexibility in terms of where they can be located."

He noted that all of their home products offer a choice of pre-designed structures, or varying degrees of personalization, including custom designs.

Koperniak noted that, while they are now offering and marketing modular products, the majority of their business continues to be tiny houses. He said they are in the process of transitioning to more diverse product lines.

"We're busy with both aspects of the busi-

news & notes from the region

ness, but for now with the constraints of our present space, our primary focus is on tiny houses," he said.

Weighing options

In terms of finding their own permanent home, Koperniak said they are weighing a number of alternatives.

He explained that their agreement to lease space in the city-owned Windsor Mill extends until April 2020. However, the city has also

been negotiating a contract for the sale of the Windsor Mill to a potential developer. If and when such a sale is completed, B&B may find it necessary to move if the new owner decides the operation is not compatible with their vision for the complex.

"So we have at least 18 months before we would have to move," Koperniak said. "It's a decision we'll have to make in the near future, but we still have time. We're looking at everything, and not ruling anything out."

He said several factors are involved, including the amount of space their business will

require for their long-term plans, and the most appropriate type of location. "We also have to look at what makes the most sense financially," he said. "Is it better to build something new, or move into a building that's ready to go, or adapt a building to our purposes?"

He added that the Ashland Street property

has adequate space for a structure large enough for B&B's needs, but they have to investigate its suitability as a site for a permanent home base.

He also emphasized that their goal is to remain in North Adams. However, if an existing adaptable structure meets their criteria in another Berkshire community such as Adams or Pittsfield, they might consider relocating.

"It's also possible that we might not have to move at all, if a new owner of the Windsor Mill decides we can fit into their plans and works with us to expand in our present location," he said. "There are many possibilities at this point. We're being very careful because we're looking for the place where we are going to put down roots."



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FRONT pages

Fiddleheads transplanted to former Route 7 Grill

BY JOHN TOWNES

Fiddleheads Grille has migrated south from its original location in the clubhouse at the Greenock Country Club in Lee to the former site of the Route 7 Grill in Great Barrington.

David Pullaro and Cindi Joyner had operated Fiddlehead Grille in a leased space at the country club since 2004.

The new incarnation of their restaurant opened on Nov. 2 at 999 South Main St. (Route 7), near the Sheffield town line.

'When our contract at the country club expired at the end of last year, we started to look for a new location," explained Pullaro. "Over time we had been moving away from serving golf course food and more towards the restaurant side. People were coming specifically for lunches and dinner. So we decided to open a restaurant of our own."

In March, the couple looked at the former site of the Route 7 Grill, which closed in 2014 and had been vacant since then. They purchased it in July for \$255,000 from Pittsfield Cooperative Bank (which the previous owner had turned it over to).

They financed the purchase through Adams Community Bank.

Joyner and Pullaro spent the time between the sale and the November opening extensively renovating the 4,450-square-foot

"We had to do a lot of work on it," said Pullaro. "Structurally the building was fairly sound, but it had been vacant for four years and, as we progressed, we kept finding new things that had to be done."

They repainted the exterior, redecorated the interior and refinished the floors. They also did extensive work on the kitchen, installing new fryers, ovens, steam tables and a walk-in cooler. They also rebuilt an existing smoker.

The interior, which Pullaro described as "casual rustic," has a seating capacity of 96, and includes a lounge area with a horseshoe-shaped bar. It also has a doublesided fireplace.

In the warmer months, an outdoor deck will provide an additional 25 seats.

"There's also a nice pavilion that we can use for outdoor events," noted Pullaro.

He said that while they expect to attract



Sporting a fresh coat of paint outside and extensive renovations inside, the new home of Fiddleheads Grille has been drawing a steady stream of customers since opening in early November.

how many people have been

a lot of local people from the

tourists and second-home owners, their primary market will be local residents. "We want it to be a nice, casual place where people can gather with family and friends," he said.

The menu builds on the fare they served in Lee. "We kept the popular items from there and added a lot to it," said Pullaro, who is the restaurant's chef.

When asked to describe the culinary orientation at Fiddleheads, Pullaro noted is elusive.

"I always have trou-Great Barrington area." ble when people ask that," he said. "I suppose you could call it continental cuisine, with a little bit of everything. The common element is that we try to make everything good and fresh and use local ingredients whenever possible. We also have great homemade soups."

Fiddleheads Grille (413-644-2999 or www. fiddleheadsgrille.com) is currently open seven days a week from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. for lunch and for dinner from 5 p.m. to closing. The restaurant has a full liquor license.

Its menu includes appetizers ranging from \$6 to \$12, with a selection that includes homemade potato chips, Thai mussels, Rhode Island style calamari, and chicken wings, among others. It also features salads (\$7 to \$14).

Lunch offerings (\$9 to \$14) include a selection of burgers, wraps and sandwiches such as Thanksgiving turkey, fried chicken and pulled pork, as well as fish and chips

Fiddleheads Grille offers an extensive variety of dinner entrees (\$12 to \$29) including linguine and clams, chicken Alfredo, smokey meatloaf, vegetable enchilada, New York strip steak and house-smoked barbecue items, among others.

Both Joyner and Pullaro, who are Berkshire natives, have extensive "We've been overwhelmed at

backgrounds in the hospitality business. coming. We're seeing regulars Joyner formerly

worked at the front that a simple answer from our former location, and desk at the Red Lion Inn and at Oak 'n Spruce resort. "I've been in the

> restaurant business all my life," said Pullaro. "My parents owned the old Log Cabin restaurant in Lenox for a while, and I started working there as a kid."

> He later went on to other restaurants including the former Perigee in South Lee and the Roseborough Grill (now Firefly) in Lenox.

> Pullaro said they have been very surprised at the initial response to their new location.

> "In this region, you never expect to do a lot of business with a new restaurant at this time of year," he said. "But we've been overwhelmed at how many people have been coming. We're seeing regulars from our former location, and a lot of local people from the Great Barrington area.'

> Fiddleheads Grille has an initial staff of 12. "That's what we've started with, but we keep needing to add more people," Pullaro said. "I expect the staff will be triple that number in the peak seasons."◆

Lever challenges heating up as winter takes hold

BY BRAD JOHNSON

Following the completion of its inaugural North Adams Arts Enterprise Challenge last August, Lever Inc. is now underway with its next two startup competitions.

In November, the North Adams-based incubator and entrepreneurial support organization announced the finalists for its Berkshire Manufacturing Innovation Challenge, in which four regional life sciences startups will compete for \$25,000 in seed funding.

Lever has also issued a call for applicants for its next competition, the Berkshire Health Technology Challenge, in which \$25,000 will be awarded to a startup that presents the most scalable business model with health applications.

We are aware of several entrepreneurs who are working on new concepts to improve health care in our region," said Brent Filson, Lever's director of programming and operations. "We are excited to be able to support these folks with our resources and expertise."

These competitions are part of a series of challenges that are being funded through a \$450,000 package of grants that Lever was awarded in August by an assortment of state and local sources.

Key among them was \$225,000 that was awarded by the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, an economic development investment agency supporting the growth and development of the life sciences in Massachusetts. Another \$75,000 came from the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, a public agency working to enhance economic growth, accelerate technology use and adoption, and harness the value of research. The MassTech grant was matched by \$75,000 grants from Berkshire Bank and Williams College.

From the \$450,000 package, \$150,000 will go toward \$25,000 seed grants to the winners of the six challenge programs that Lever is conducting over the next three years, with the basic goal of attracting and developing high-growth-potential companies.

First among these is the Berkshire Manufacturing Innovation Challenge. The four selected finalists are currently being coached by Lever staff and expert mentors in preparation for the Jan. 24 competition, where a panel of judges will select one venture to receive \$25,000 and be incubated at Lever for four months at no cost. The finalists are:

- Surfsix, which is developing an innovative new motion-capture system for researchers studying the biomechanical process of human and animal systems;
- TransPharm, which seeks to build a vending system to dispense over-the-counter medicines in underserved regions of the world that may not have reliable sources of electricity;
- United Aircraft Technologies Inc., which has developed a robust Interconnecting Clamp (ICC) for aerospace wire harness management with a more ergonomic and lighter design than existing equipment; and
- Alston Posture, which has created a wearable training tool to assist individuals in finding and maintaining a neutral spine position while performing manual labor tasks in the workplace.

According to Filson, these ventures were selected based on their application in the life sciences, high growth potential, ability to attract investment capital, and potential for job creation in the region.

Similar criteria will be used to select finalists for the Berkshire Health Technology Challenge, which is now accepting applications from regional health technology startups. Another requirement for this and other Lever competitions is that the ventures must leverage one or more pre-existing assets within the Berkshires.

Applications will be accepted through Jan. 2, with four finalists to be announced Jan. 16. As with prior challenges, these finalists will be coached on their business models over the coming months. A pitch-day competition before judges is slated for May 9.

Startup ventures interested in participating in the Berkshire Health Technology Challenge can contact Filson at bfilson@lever.org or visit leverinc.org for more information.◆

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news & notes from the region



In celebration of the holiday season, the **City of Pittsfield** has added more free parking days to its existing holiday parking schedule. The additions include "Free Parking Fridays" on Dec. 7, 14, 21 and 28. There will also be a week of free parking Dec. 17-21, and free parking on Christmas Eve and Christmas. As always, parking in the city is free in the evenings and weekends.

MCLA Gallery 51 is holding its Made By Hand Holiday Art Show (formerly the 99 Cents Affordable Art Show) through Dec. 29. The show celebrates the artwork of local and regional artists and includes sculpture, ceramics, watercolors, jewelry, paintings, cards, collages, fiber, book arts, photography and printmaking. All art will be priced between \$1 and \$100, and can be taken to go to be given as gifts. "This exhibition is the perfect place to look for the perfect present and usually come away with a little something for yourself," said Arthur DeBow, MCLA Gallery 51 curator. Participating artists include: Carolyn Albert, Casev Albert, Derick Belford, Stephanie Boyd, Misa Chappel, Kathline Carr, Galen Cheney, Arthur De Bow, Zoe Doucette, Richard Harrington, Megan Hart, Sarah Haze, Jennifer Huberdeau, Wendy James, Ellen Joffe-Halpren, Zan Klain, David Lachman, Amrita Lash, Tammara Leminen, JD Logan, Linda O'Brien, Opie O'Brien, Alvin Ouellet, Petrea Mannello, Jonas McCaffery, Melanie Mowinski, Dawn Nelson, Hidevo Okamura, Sara Farrell Okamura, Sarah Pike, Amanda Romanelli, Wilma Rifkin, Ann Scott, Ann M. Scott, Jackie Sedlock, Gail Sellers, Phil Sellers, Sarah Sutro, Jessica Sweeney, Victoria van der Laan, Betty Vera, Patricia Welch, Mary Weissbrodt and Samantha White. MCLAGallery 51 is a program of MCLA's Berkshire Cultural Resource Center. The gallery is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. For more information, call 413-662-5320 or go to www.mcla.edu/gallery51.

The Northern Berkshire Neighbors program of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition (nbCC) is seeking community-minded individuals to take part in a free Community Outreach and Civic Engagement training program. Ideal participants must be committed to strengthening the northern Berkshires by exploring how they can get involved, make a positive impact and learn how to assist residents in accessing available services. The training will take place over a six-month period beginning Feb. 14 and meeting every Thursday from 5:30 to 8 p.m. As part of the training, participants will learn about the many health and human service providers and community organizations in the northern Berkshire region. For those interested in participating, or to learn more about the training, visit nbccoalition. org for an application and FAQ sheet. Application submissions are being accepted through Jan. 18. For more information, call Glenda Matos-Carter at 413-663-7588 or email gmcarter@nbccoalition.org.

NBT Bank has been named "Best Bank in New England" by *MONEY Magazine*. The Norwich, N.Y.-based company, which has a presence in four New England states including five offices in Berkshire County, was cited for its "free online checking account that pays a bit of interest and an out-of-network ATM fee that's well below average in the region." The magazine's ratings for New England and other regions can be found at http://time.com/money/5435090/best-banks-region-2018/.

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For the ninth year, all Big Y Supermarkets are working to help feed the hungry within their local communities through Care To Share Sack Hunger, a large reusable grocery bag filled with staple nonperishable food items for local food banks. Customers purchase a Sack Hunger bag of groceries for \$10, and Big Y distributes the food to that region's local food bank. In turn, the food banks distribute the filled sacks to area soup kitchens, food pantries, senior food programs, daycare centers and other member agencies. All of the donated sacks are distributed within the supermarket's marketing area, so every donation stays within the local community. Since the program's inception nine years ago, over 133,000 bags of food have been donated to area needy. This year's Sack Hunger campaign runs through Dec. 26. As an additional option, customers may choose to purchase and donate a \$10 "Virtual Bag" at the register that will be used by the agencies to purchase needed food items. Online donations will also be accepted. Go to www.bigy.com/rs/ GiftCards for more information.

Salisbury Bank is again holding its "We Believe" toy drive to make this a special time of year for area children who might otherwise not experience the joy of the holiday season. Donations of new, unwrapped gifts can be dropped off at any Salisbury Bank office through Dec. 17. Gift ideas include but are not limited to: sports equipment and balls, books, board games, handheld electronic games, backpacks, building sets, craft kits, purses and cosmetics. Additionally, gift cards to local retailers are welcome. "As we kick off our 31st annual toy drive, we encourage the community to join us in experiencing the joy of giving this holiday season," said Rick Cantele, the bank's president and CEO. "Making a difference in our community is important to us, and working together we can provide a magical holiday season for some very special children."

Berkshire Family & Individual Resources Inc. (BFAIR) has announced a successful review and continued licensing by the Office of Quality Enhancement of the Commonwealth's Department of Developmental Services. Through a selfassessment process and a target review, BFAIR earned positive licensing outcomes, resulting in a two-year licensing and certification for BFAIR's residential, individual home support, and day and employment services. "BFAIR's outcomes on reviews and assessments like these are indicative of the work that we do," said Theresa Gelinas, director of program operations for day services. "Receiving positive accolades and continued licensing speaks to our commitment to consistency in quality services."

The Leapfrog Group, an organization aiming to improve healthcare quality and safety for consumers and purchasers, has announced the Fall 2018 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grades and awarded Berkshire Medical Center the designation of "A" for its continued achievement in patient safety. BMC is one of only 42 "Straight A" hospitals in the United States which have been awarded this top grade in every cycle since 2012. "Only a very select group of hospitals nationally continue to earn an A Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade year after year," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of the Leapfrog Group. "It shows an unbroken commitment to protecting patients from preventable errors and accidents that harm and even kill too many people in our country every day." The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade uses 27 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to assign A, B, C, D and F grades to approximately 2,500 U.S. hospitals twice per year. It is peer reviewed, fully transparent and free to the public. "This consistent recognition for patient safety is reflective of the dedication our care team has to providing nothing but the best and safest care possible," said David Phelps, president and CEO of Berkshire Health Systems. "I congratulate and thank our physicians, nurses and all support staff who have and continue to contribute to this commitment to excellence, which places BMC among an elite group of hospitals nationwide for patient safety."



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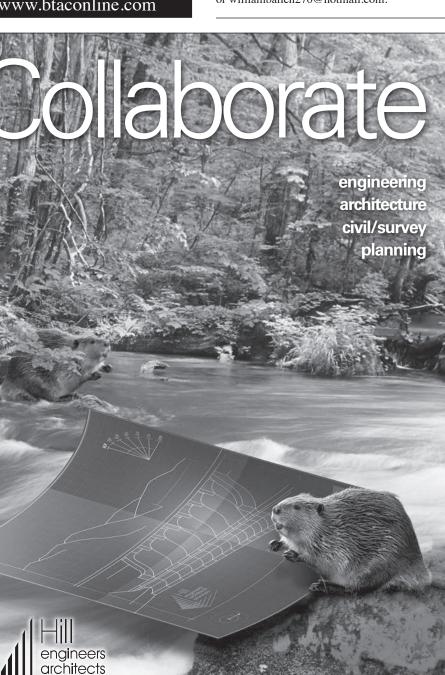
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FRONT pages



The Berkshire County Superintendents Roundtable is partnering with the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to implement the ADL's A World of Difference Institute Peer Training Program for Berkshire County school districts. The program, which has operated in New England since 1999, provides middle and high school students with anti-bias education and training to lead developmentally appropriate activities and discussions with their peers on explicit and implicit bias pertaining to race, religion, ethnicity, culture and other aspects of human diversity. Participants also develop safe and practical prevention and response strategies to address prejudicial behaviors, including ways in which young people can become allies for peers who are targeted. The year-long program, which also includes workshops for parents and teachers, is being implemented in 12 middle and high schools in Berkshire County. Participants include: Mount Greylock Regional School District (Mount Greylock Regional School); North Adams Public Schools (Drury High School); Central Berkshire Regional School District (Wahconah Regional High School and Nessacus Regional Middle School); Pittsfield Public Schools (Taconic and Pittsfield High Schools, Reid and Herberg Middle Schools); Lenox Public Schools (Lenox Memorial Middle & High School) Berkshire Hills Regional School District (Monument Mountain Regional High School and Monument Valley Regional Middle School); and Southern Berkshire Regional School District (Mount Everett Regional School). The program's launch in Berkshire County schools was made possible through a grant from the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, with additional support provided by the ADL New England Regional Office and some local school districts. The program, which began in September with preliminary training for teachers and students, is being rolled out to participating schools in the coming months. For more information, contact William Ballen, executive secretary of the Berkshire County Superintendents' Roundtable, at 413-446-1196 or williamballen270@hotmail.com.



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–Qual $oldsymbol{P}$ rint joining forces with $oldsymbol{S}$ amp $oldsymbol{c}$ o in merger-

QualPrint, a leading commercial printing company in western Massachusetts, has announced its merger with Sampco Companies, a prominent marketing materials group serving the building material industry. The combination of the two companies – both headquartered in Pittsfield – is expected to bring expanded capabilities to both, allowing each to better serve their current customers, as well as the needs of a variety of new customers.

QualPrint is a third-generation family owned and operated printing company. Formerly known as Quality Printing Company, it was founded by the DiSantis family in 1963. Since then it has successfully developed a niche business serving the unique, high-quality printing needs of local and international customers. The company currently has 45 employees.

Sampco Companies, founded in 1986, has six regional operations across the country with a combined 350 employees. The company specializes in designing and manufacturing product samples for residential and commercial building materials manufacturers in a variety of industries including flooring, roofing, siding, windows and doors. Brilliant Graphics, a Sampco Company, specializes in large format digital printing including dye sublimated fabric printing.

According to Michael Ryan, founder and CEO of Sampco Companies, all of this work requires printing, much of it exactly the same kind of work that QualPrint offers its clients.

"This merger isn't about changing QualPrint or how it does business," said Ryan. "QualPrint is already a leader in commercial offset printing with a loyal, world-class customer base. They are the experts with a family of long-standing loyal employees who are the key to its success." He noted that the merger is about protecting and growing QualPrint's business while at the same time diversifying their portfolio into the building material sector.

John DiSantis, QualPrint's president and CEO (and the son of QualPrint's founders), will retain his leadership role at QualPrint. "As a family-run company, one that considers our employees and customers like family, I would only consider a merger that protected the future of our 55-year legacy," DiSantis said. "Sampco's commitment is backed by their recent launch of a \$1 million capital investment campaign to highly automate our capabilities. Both of our companies share the same ethics, values and a strong commitment to exceeding our customer's needs. We're both long-time residents and supporters of the Pittsfield community. Together, our customers will reap the rewards of our combined strengths and technologies." He noted that his son, Nick DiSantis, will continue to lead at the company.

Berkshire Merchant Services, which is owned and operated by Don Raiche of Lenox, is now part of Paysafe, a leading global payments provider. "Paysafe recently purchased Card Payment Solutions, and we are now part of a larger company with different underwriting criteria thanks to additional sponsor banks and expanded credit policies," said Raiche. He noted that Paysafe has over 20 years of online payment experience, a combined transactional volume of \$56 billion in 2017 and over 2,600 staff in 12 global locations. "With this extra support and resources, I am looking forward to servicing local businesses and saving everyone money on their processing fees," said Raiche.

SHINE Wire Products Inc., an electronic contract manufacturer specializing in cable assemblies, wire harnessing and electromechanical assemblies, has been named a Massachusetts Manufacturer of The Year by the Commonwealth's Manufacturing Caucus. The Adams-based company was nominated by state Rep. John Barrett, D-North Adams, to receive the award, which was presented at the third annual Manufacturing Awards Ceremony, held Oct. 30 at the Massachusetts State House in Boston. "Thirty-five years ago, SHINE set out with a mission to instill hope and offer opportunity to a community that was on the verge of losing many jobs," said company CEO Greg Shine. "Today, the foundation of our business that was built on love and service to others remains strong. I dedicate this award to all of our employees, both past and present, who have embraced the values of our humble beginnings." Based in the Adams Corporate Park, SHINE Wire Products provides engineering support and finished products that are used in the test and instrumentation, medical, aerospace, military, industrial, and Homeland Security sectors.

The City of Pittsfield has announced that funding applications for human services initiatives in the city are now available for the program year July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. Each year the city undertakes a process through its Human Services Advisory Council, an 11-member volunteer committee, which reviews the proposals and submits its recommendations to the mayor. Last year's recommendations resulted in 24 human service programs receiving a total of \$223,500 from the city's general fund and from the federal Community Development Block Grant program. Applications can be obtained at the city's Department of Community Development at City Hall or by email request to jdodds@cityofpittsfield.org. The application deadline is Jan. 4. In addition to submitting a written proposal, applicants will be invited to make a presentation before the Human Services Advisory Council in February that will be televised locally. For further information, contact Community Development at 413-499-9358.

The administration of Gov. Charlie Baker has announced a \$25,000 grant to support Hoosic River Revival (HRR) and its mission to reestablish the Hoosic River as the heart of North Adams' economy and community. The funds are part of a broader \$188,600 state grant for river and wetland restoration projects across the state. According to HRR Executive Director Jason LaForest, the organization's proposed upgrades to the failing 1940s-era concrete flood control chutes and the re-naturalization of segments of the Hoosic River are intended to provide North Adams residents with a safer, more accessible river with economic and ecological benefits that will last for generations. The grant provided by the Baker administration allows HRR to advance design work on its Phase I project along the Noel Field athletic complex in downtown North Adams. LaForest noted that this project paves the way for a return of the Hoosic River to its original course, upgrades flood control using 21st century technology and permits much needed upgrades to the complex.

Lee Audio 'N Security Inc. has received the Honeywell/Notifier Million Dollar award for its work as a Premier Notifier Distributor. Headquartered in Lee and with an office in Clifton Park, N.Y., the firm serves clients in western Massachusetts and the capital district of New York, providing engineering, installation and maintenance on all Honeywell/Notifier systems. In addition to Notifier, the company also distributes, installs and services security alarms, CCTV, and access systems, which it monitors from its own Central Alarm Monitoring Station in Pittsfield. Founded in 1970 by Richard and Barbara Gore, the firm has 20 employees, including second- and thirdgeneration members of the Gore family.

Berkshire Bank has been named a winner of PR Daily's 2018 Corporate Social Responsibility Awards, presented by Ragan Communications. The bank was chosen to receive first prize in the Employee Volunteer Program category for the ingenuity and impact of its XTEAM volunteer program, which provides employees with paid time off to volunteer during regular business hours. Last year, the bank's employees donated 40,000 hours of service to benefit community organizations. Berkshire Bank also closes down its offices each June for its Xtraordinary Day of Service, providing all employees with an opportunity to go out in the community and volunteer as a team. "We're honored to receive this recognition, but more importantly, we are proud of all of the Berkshire Bank employees who share their time and expertise as part of our XTEAM," said Gary Levante, vice president of corporate social responsibility at Berkshire Bank. "This honor is a testament to their hard work, dedication and commitment to making our communities thrive.'



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news & notes from the region

Community Health Programs Great Barrington Health Center has been recognized by Massachusetts Health Quality Partners (MHQP) for excellence in the primary care patient experience, based on patient surveys. The MHQPPatient Experience Awards is a new program introduced in 2018 by MHQP, a nonprofit measurement and reporting organization that brings together providers, health plans and patients to improve the quality of patient care experiences in Massachusetts. MHQP conducts the only statewide survey of patient experience in primary care, with feedback from over 65,000 commercially insured patients across the state. Awards were given to the practices that ranked highest in each of 11 performance categories, as well as an overall performance category determined by the practices with the best-in-class results across multiple categories. CHP Great Barrington Health Center received recognition for distinction in Empowering Patient Self Care. "CHP approaches primary care as a partnership between patient and doctor, or patient and nurse practitioner," said Lia Spiliotes, CHP's chief executive officer. "This award affirms that our patients are motivated members of their healthcare team at CHP Great Barrington Health Center."

After two years of operation, ROOTS Northern Berkshire Teen Center can now provide drop-in visitors with computer and printer access thanks to a recent donation from the North Adams Elks Lodge. The two new desktop computers and printer, purchased using donated funds from the Elks Lodge in September, are available for homework, job applications and other activities. "Having [this equipment] in the space is going to be able to expand the services that we provide to young people coming into ROOTS, especially to encourage them to apply to jobs, write papers and make resumes," said Christina Briggs, president of the Youth Board. "There's also always someone there to help them in the process." ROOTS Teen Center, at 43 Eagle St., is a place where young people ages 14-22 are heard, encouraged and empowered. ROOTS is open Wednesday through Friday from 2:30 to 8 p.m. For more information visit rootsteencenter.com.

Two area banks were recognized among top SBA lending intermediaries throughout Massachusetts in the 2018 Lender Awards held by the Massachusetts District of the U.S. Small Business Administration on Nov. 9. Berkshire Bank was named Western Massachusetts 7(a) Lender of the Year in Dollars and Volume, and Massachusetts Lender of the Year to Rural Areas. Lee Bank was named Western Massachusetts 3rd Party Lender by Dollars and Volume. In announcing the awards, Massachusetts District Director Robert Nelson noted that "177 active SBA lenders in our Massachusetts network are supporting job creation and economic growth in our local communities every day," collectively accounting for 8,058 jobs that were created and 9,047 jobs that were retained in-state over the prior fiscal year.

Southern Vermont College (SVC) has expanded its Good Neighbor Scholarship to include qualified students at the Berkshire Arts and Technology (BART) Charter Public School in Adams and Hoosac Valley High School in Cheshire. BART and Hoosac Valley join high schools in Bennington and Windham counties in Vermont, along with several schools in northern Berkshire County and select Rensselaer County schools in New York. For more information about the Good Neighbor Scholarship, visit svc.edu, call 802-447-6300, or email admissions@svc.edu.

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts has been awarded a \$4,500 Campuses for Environmental Stewardship (CES) grant from the Campus Compact of Southern New England (CCSNE) to develop a community-based learning theme across a variety of courses in collaboration with a common community partner. The CES program aims to engage teams of faculty from various disciplines in collaborative efforts to integrate service learning into the curriculum. For this project, MCLA is partnering with Jennifer Munoz from the Growing Healthy Garden Program to address issues related to food security. Students will design projects to advance Growing Healthy Garden's mission, and will provide information and resources of value to the northern Berkshire community.

Participants sought for O+ North Adams Festival-

An innovative new festival will be coming to the Berkshires next spring, and organizers are reaching out now to line up participants of various types and on several levels.

Applications and submissions from visual and performing artists are being accepted until Jan. 5. for the inaugural O+ North Adams Festival of Art, Music and Wellness, which will take place May 10-11 in the city's downtown.

The O+ (pronounced "O-Positive") festival is a public event that combines art, music events and a wellness exposition. The general public will experience all the art offerings and concerts, and have the opportunity to explore classes in yoga, dance, meditation, a health "EXPO+" of locally available services, and other programming. Admission will be with a "pay-what-you-can"

Accepted musicians will play concerts at existing and pop-up venues along the Main Street corridor, and visual artists will create murals, installations, performance art and/or lead workshops. They will receive health and wellness care in an Artists' Clinic at MASS MoCA staffed by providers from Berkshire Health Systems and other volunteer practitioners. (Some stipends will be also available for travel or other related expenses.)

One of the purposes of the festival is to enable creative professionals to access health services, and connect them with local providers," said Jessica Sweeney, the O+ North Adams Festival director. "Often people in the performing and visual arts either don't have coverage or, if they do, they have a difficult time working appointments into their schedule. That is especially for those who

The North Adams event is modeled after the original O+ Festival, which was founded in 2010 in Kingston, N.Y., by a group of artists, musicians and medical practitioners. It is designed to empower communities to take control of their collective wellbeing through art, music and wellness. O+ festivals have taken place in Kingston and Poughkeepsie, N.Y., as well as San Francisco, Chicago, and a few other locations.

The North Adams festival will be the second to be held in Massachusetts and is intended to be the first of what will be an annual event.

Berkshire Health Systems is the lead sponsor of O+ North Adams. Festival partners also include MASS MoCA, the City of North Adams, Common Folk, the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, and Golden Paintworks. Organizers are seeking additional businesses and organizations as partners and sponsors. They are also recruiting general volunteers to assist with the festival.

To contact the organizers for application forms and for information on the festival, visit opositivefestival.org/north-adams.



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Hillcrest Educational Centers (HEC) received a \$15,183 donation from the Lindsey "Hurdles" 5k Fun Run/Walk, which was held on Nov. 24 in honor of Lindsey Degon (twin sister of one of the event's hosts, Corey Degon), who passed away in 2017 in a car accident. With 160 people registered for the race, organizers exceeded their original goal of raising \$10,000. Corey Degon and his co-hosts chose HEC as recipient of race proceeds because their mission is directly in line with Lindsey's passion for helping others. This donation will help HEC continue to provide therapeutic treatment and special education to its residential and day students.

A new report from the University of Southern California's Race and Equity Center has identified Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) as one of the top public institutions in the nation for serving black students well. MCLA, along with Kentucky's University of Louisville and the University of California-San Diego, achieved the top score of 3.5. MCLA President James Birge said he is encouraged by the report as it indicates that the college's focus on enhancing its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is having positive results for students. He credited the college's faculty and staff, who have made an intentional commitment to creating a more inclusive environment on campus.◆



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people on the move



The Clark Art Institute has announced the appointment of Anne Leonard as the Manton Curator of Prints, Drawings, and Photographs. Slated to join the Clark staff in January 2019, Leonard will be responsible for the care and growth of the Clark's collection of works on paper. She will

also oversee the ongoing exhibition program in the Eugene V. Thaw Gallery for Works on Paper, supervise the Manton Study Center for Works on Paper, and contribute to other curatorial and academic initiatives. Leonard currently serves as senior curator of European art and director of publications and research at the Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago, and as a lecturer in the history of art on the University of Chicago's faculty.

Berkshire Health Systems has announced the appointment of Nisar Ahmad, MD, a board certified and fellowship trained hematologist oncologist, to the Berkshire Medical Center medical staff and the physician staff of Berkshire Hematology Oncology of BMC.



Ahmad

Ahmad is accepting new patients in need of hematology oncology services at the Berkshire Hematology Oncology of BMC offices in Pittsfield and at the North Adams Campus of BMC. Ahmad received his medical degree from King Edward Medical College, Pakistan, and completed his residency in internal medicine at the Mt. Sinai/Bronx VA Residency Program. He was fellowship trained in hematology oncology at the University of Cincinnati.



Berkowitz

CHP Berkshire Pediatrics has added Jamie Berkowitz, physician assistant, to its pediatric primary care team. Berkowitz holds a master's degree in physician assistant studies from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, and a second master's degree in neuroscience

and behavior from UMass-Amherst. She has previously worked as a primary care/urgent care practitioner at 510 Medical Walk-In in Pittsfield, and earlier for the practice of Pittsfield pediatrician Dr. Michael Fabrizio. She holds state and national certification as a physician assistant and is a fellow member of the American Academy of Physician Assistants and the Massachusetts Association of Physician Assistants.

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Edward Jones MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Angela Lomanto, a development professional with more than 30 years of fund-raising and consulting experience, has joined the senior staff at Volunteers in Medicine Berkshires (VIM). Lomanto began working for not-for-profits in the early 1980s to help run fundraising programs and



launch capital campaigns. She has been involved in grant writing, event management, public relations and strategic planning. She held positions of director of development for the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, Camphill Village USA, and Fulton-Montgomery Community College. She also has served as a consultant to many nonprofits.

Southwestern Vermont Medical Center welcomes Jaclyn Dy Lozier, MD, to SVMC Pediatrics and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Putnam Physicians. Lozier's work experience includes serving as a clinical research assistant at Brown University-Roger Williams Medical Center and Center for Alcohol and Addiction Studies in Providence, R.I., and as senior clinical research coordinator and rater at AccelRX Research in and at the New England Center for Clinical Research, both in Fall River.

Community Health Programs has named Nurse Practitioner **Alison Flynn** to the primary care team at the CHP Neighborhood Health Center practice in Pittsfield. An adult nurse practitioner, Flynn most recently practiced primary care at Family Practice Associates in Pittsfield. She com-



pleted her nurse practitioner clinical internships at Berkshire Nurse Practitioners and at 510 Medical Walk-In in Pittsfield, Flynn previously worked as a registered nurse at Berkshire Medical Center and at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

Julie Nichols at Greylock Insurance Agency has been certified as a Construction Risk and Insurance Specialist (CRIS). This insurance designation, which recognizes specialized expertise in construction insurance, demonstrates Nichols' commitment to continuing education as a way to bet-



Nichols

ter meet the needs of the agency's business clients. The CRIS program is a specialized curriculum consisting of five courses attended by experts from across the construction sector including law firms, construction managers and other specialties supporting the industry. Nichols, who has worked with Greylock Insurance Agency for 12 years, is based at the agency's office at 150 West St. in Pittsfield.

The Austen Riggs Center's board of trustees has announced the appointment of Eric Plakun, MD, as medical director and CEO. In addition to his long professional career at the Austen Riggs Center, where he oversaw development of the continuum of care and served most recently as associate medical director, Plakun is also a leader in organized psychiatry and psychoanalysis, author of more than 50 publications, a member of several journal editorial boards, and a past member of the Harvard clinical faculty.

Dr. Ronald Maitland, clinical director of the dental residency program at CHP Neighborhood Dental, has been honored by New York University for his contributions to dental education over more than five decades with his induction as a fellow of the NYU College of Dentistry Academy of Distinguished Educators. A dental educator since the 1960s, Maitland has been a professor of dental medicine at NYU and Tufts University dental medicine schools. He joined CHP in 2017 to lead the clinical program at CHP Neighborhood Dental, which is the practice site for the Berkshire Medical Center's dental residency program.



Hathaway

Nancy Needham Hathaway of Millbrook, N.Y., Suzette Brooks Masters of Canaan. N.Y., and Jodi Rathbun-Briggs of Great Barrington have joined the board of directors of Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation. Hathaway was the head of school at Dutchess Day



Rathbun-Briggs

School in Millbrook for seven years before retiring in 2017. She is currently the treasurer of the board of directors of Dutchess Land Conservancy. Masters is an expert on immigrant and refugee integration policy who currently provides strategic advice on the topic to foundations, nonprofits and corporations. She previously oversaw immigration-related grantmaking at the J.M. Kaplan Fund, a New York-based family foundation, for nearly a decade. Rathbun-Briggs has two decades of experience in the banking sector, specializing in the fields of internal audits, risk management and commercial lending. She joined the team at Greylock Federal Credit Union in 2010 and was promoted to the position of senior vice president and chief lending officer in 2015.

Nicholas Pinchuk, chairman and CEO of Snapon Incorporated, has been named to the board of trustees at Southern Vermont College (SVC). Pinchuk joined Snap-on in 2002 as senior vice president and president of its Worldwide Commercial and Industrial Group. He has served in his current capacity since April 2009. As an outspoken leader on workforce development and careers. Pinchuk was named National Business Leader of the Year in 2011 for his role in the formation of our nation's technical education agenda. In 2015, he was recognized for his professional contributions by the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association.

Nutritionist Christina Garner has joined the CHP Neighborhood Health Center medical practice. Garner is a clinical nutritionist and wellness educator with expertise in medical nutrition counseling, fitness and health education. She places emphasis on inte-

grative nutrition, program



design and practical methods for implementing dietary changes. In her new position with CHP, she will also provide nutrition services to patients of CHP Berkshire Pediatrics in Pittsfield. Garner has worked for 13 years at Canyon Ranch Lenox as well as in private practice and other capacities. She has also worked as an adjunct professor of nutrition at MCLA and Berkshire Community College.



Fvnan

Berkshire Health Systems has announced the appointment of Thomas Fynan, MD, to the medical staff of Berkshire Medical Center and the physician staff of Hematology Oncology Services of BMC, where he is accepting new patients in need of medical oncology services. Fynan is

board certified in internal medicine and medical oncology, and was fellowship trained in medical oncology at Yale University School of Medicine. He comes to the Berkshires after serving as the chair of medical oncology and hematology at the Hospital of St. Raphael, New Haven, Conn.

The Berkshire Museum has hired **Stacy Parsons** as education program manager and Roshni Bhambhwani as activation manager. In her new position, Parsons will be responsible for developing, implementing and promoting educational programs and school-directed educational services for



students and teachers that interpret the museum's natural science and arts collection. Parsons comes to the Berkshire Museum from Berkshire County Head Start, where she was responsible for program administration for 20 preschool classrooms at seven different sites serving at-risk and high-risk families throughout Berkshire County. As activation manager, Bhambh-



Bhambhwani

wani will be responsible for the development and presentation of public programs, including adult and family programs, classes, presentations, gallery programs, museum tours and camps. Programming also includes educatorled programs, outreach, after-school programs,

and assisting with teacher professional development workshops. Bhambhwani has been working in the museum field for the nearly 10 years, with positions in programming, education and marketing. Her most recent appointments include multiple positions at miSci in Schenectady, N.Y.

Berkshire Community College has announced a number of changes in personnel at the college. **Toni Buckley** has accepted the role of director of alumni relations. Previously, she coordinated the Roads Scholar program for BCC and worked with faculty on a Mass Humanities grant. Buckley also owns a photography business and teaches a photography course at BCC. Shela Hidalgo has been named director of development at BCC. Hidalgo previously was the community engagement officer with Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and has extensive nonprofit experience. She currently serves on the boards of Hillcrest Education Center and the Junior League of Berkshire County. Melissa Loiodice has been named special assistant to the president and will serve as the Title IX liaison, working on diversity and inclusion in BCC's recruitment efforts and with professional development programming. Loiodice, a practicing attorney, has worked on Title IX issues, and served as a panel attorney at the UMass Amherst Student Legal Services Office. Cara Borelli has joined the college as a graphic designer. Borelli, who previously worked at the Williams College Museum of Art as a communications and design coordinator, will be responsible for overseeing all creative direction of BCC's branding elements. Jay Miller has been hired as graphic design and marketing specialist. Coming from his previous position as graphic designer for the Moscow Ballet, he brings extensive skills in the fields of design, illustration and video. He earlier was a senior graphic designer for Feld Entertainment, working with clients such as Disney and Marvel. Eric Nystrom has stepped into the role of interim director of recreational services. Nystrom has been with the college for several years as the fitness center coordinator and teaches Exercise Science courses. He has extensive experience in athletic facilities, and will play a role in the college's continued process of bringing the Gene Dellea Turf Field online. Jeff Moulton has accepted a temporary position as special project coordinatorfitness center to fill in for Nystrom while he acts as the interim director. Moulton, a graduate of BCC's Health Science program, previously was manager and personal trainer at Fitness Together in Boston. Michael King has joined the college as the interim director of safety and security. King's background includes a 21-year career in the U.S. Army, two tours of duty in Iraq, and service as the assistant police chief at a base in Virginia. BCC has also welcomed Kelan O'Brien, a recent Elms College graduate, to serve as an interim TRIO advisor, and Carolyn King, who serves as an administrative aide with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI).◆

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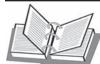
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news & notes from the region



the month in business

Dec. 7-9: Making Spirits Bright holiday festival in Lenox that includes Tree Lighting, Santa Pub Crawl, Lenox Holiday Stroll, Lenox Holiday Tour, and Holiday Concert, among other activities. For schedule and other information, go to Lenox.org/ making-spirits-bright/.

Dec. 8: Holiday Shop, Sip & Stroll, seasonal event presented by the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce from 4 to 7 p.m. in and around downtown Great Barrington.

Dec. 8: BCC Boutique Bazaar, community-wide tag sale hosted by the Berkshire Community College Disaster Relief Fundraising Committee from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the main campus cafeteria, 1350 West St., Pittsfield. Proceeds will go to the BCC's Disaster Relief Fund and will be distributed to community colleges in areas around the country that are still recovering from devastation caused by hurricanes and floods.

Dec. 8, 9: 12th Annual Holiday Shindy, craft fair with over 50 artisan vendors, food from local farms, and more within the festive Shire City Sanctuary, 40 Melville St., in Pittsfield's Upstreet Cultural District. Dec. 8 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Dec. 9 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission \$3 (children under 12 free). For more information, go to www.holidayshindy.com.

Dec. 9 to Jan. 6: Berkshiresx4: Contemporary Art by Dai Ban, Charles Schweigert, Rosemary Starace, and Elmer Orobio, exhibition hosted by Kimball Farms Life Care, 235 Walker St., Lenox, with opening reception Dec. 9 from 3 to 5 p.m. For more information, visit www.kimballfarms.org.

Dec. 11, Jan. 8: Lean Lab, monthly meetup group designed for entrepreneurs who want to grow their businesses using lean startup methodology. Hosted by Lever Inc. from 6 to 8 p.m. at location TBA. For information, email Brent Filson at bfilson@lever.org.

Dec. 11: Entrepreneurial Meetup, networking event hosted by 1Berkshire from 3 to 5 p.m. at TOURISTS, 915 State Rd., North Adams. For information or to RSVP, call 413-499-1600 or email info@1berkshire.com.

Dec. 13: **Holiday Open House** hosted by state Sen. Adam Hinds (D-Pittsfield) at his Pittsfield office, 100 North St., Suite 410, from 4 to 7 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. This holiday season Sen. Hinds is partnering with Western Massachusetts Toys for Tots, and his district office is a drop site for donations of unwrapped toys. Those unable to attend the open house who wish to make a donation can do so during normal business hours through Dec. 14.

Dec. 14: Re-Imagining How We Support Children in Our Community, topic of the monthly forum of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, from 10 a.m. to noon at the First Congregational Church, 906 Main St., Williamstown. For more information, contact Amber Besaw at 413-663-7588 ext. 13 or abesaw@nbccoalition.org.

Dec. 15: Berkshire Immigrant Center (BIC) will offer free private consultations with experienced immigration attorneys to answer questions about staying in the U.S., TPS/DACA expiration, family reunification, citizenship, employment-based cases, and other immigration concerns. Workshop held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at BIC's offices at St. Stephen's Church, 67 East St., Pittsfield. Consultations offered by appointment only, pre-registration required. Spanish-speaking interpreters will be available. To register, call 413-445-4881 or email info@ berkshireic.com.

Dec. 15, 16 & Jan. 19: Berkshire Grown Holiday Farmers Market featuring locally grown and produced foods and gifts. Dec. 15 and Jan. 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Monument Valley Middle School, 313 Monument Valley Rd., Great Barrington. Dec. 16 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the red barn at Sweetwood of $Williams town, 1611\,Cold\,\dot{S}pring\,Rd., Williams town. Admission is free.\,For information, go to berkshire grown.org.$

Dec. 15: Cocoa & Cookies with Santa, free event for area children hosted by North Adams Commons Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, 175 Franklin St., from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. RSVPs not required but may be made to Jessica at 413-441-7392 by Dec. 14.

Dec. 16: 6th Annual Yule for Fuel, co-hosted by the Berkshire Concert Choir and Zion Lutheran Church, 3 p.m. in the Common Room at Zion Lutheran Church, 74 First St., Pittsfield. No cover charge (free-will offering will be collected to support the Pittsfield Area Council of Congregations Emergency Fuel Fund). Information at www.zionlutheranpittsfield.org.

Dec. 18, Jan. 15: Pittsfield Green Drinks, informal gather ing of people interested in conservation and environmental issues on third Tuesday of each month. 5:15 p.m. at J. Allen's Clubhouse Grille. Sponsored by the Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT). For more information, contact Elizabeth Orenstein at 413-717-1255 or elizabeth@thebeatnews.org

Dec. 19: **6th Annual Beer & Carols**, 7 p.m. in the Common Room at Zion Lutheran Church, 74 First St., Pittsfield. No cover charge (free-will offerings accepted to support the church's Common Care Fund). Light food and non-alcoholic beverages served; beer and wine available for purchase. Information at www.zionlutheranpittsfield.org.

Jan. 2: Application deadline for startup ventures interested in participating in the Berkshire Health Technology Challenge organized by Lever Inc. (see story on page 4). Contact Brent Filson at bfilson@lever.org or visit leverinc.org for more information.

Jan. 3: Great Barrington Green Drinks, informal gathering of people interested in conservation and environmental issues on first Thursday of each month. 5:30 p.m. at the Prairie Whale, 178 Main St. For more information, contact Natalie Narotzky at nnarotzky@gmail.com Jan. 4: First Fridays Artswalk featuring the work of over a dozen

accomplished regional artists in Pittsfield's Upstreet Cultural District from 5 to 8 p.m. Free guided walking tour begins at 5 p.m. at the Intermodal Center at BRTA, 1 Columbus Ave. For more information and to view a listing and map of participating artists and locations, visit www.FirstFridaysArtswalk.com.

Jan. 5: Deadline for submissions for the inaugural O+ North Adams festival of art, music and wellness, which will take place May 10-11 (see story on page 7). For submission guidelines and for information about becoming a sponsor or partner for the festival, contact Jessica Sweeney at sweens@opositivefestival.org.

Jan. 15: Application deadline for the 2019 Business BootCamp, six-week program that covers essential elements involved in successfully starting and growing a business venture. Presented by 1Berkshire and Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, the program begins March 13 and continues for six weeks, with required sessions every Tuesday and Thursday. For more details and information about registration, go to 1berkshire.com/ programs/berkshire-starts/business-bootcamp/.

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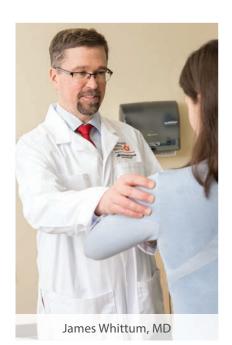
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LODGING & dining

Vegan fare at Thrive continued from page 1

"Because it is a diner, it will feature dinerstyle food," she said. "That also means we're keeping our price points competitive with other [similar] options.'

The menu at Thrive (www.thrivediner. com) features soups, salads and sides, along with several burger and sandwich options priced between \$4 and \$12. Entrees include such dishes as avocado pesto noodle, southern barbeque tofu and marinara & mockballs, with prices from \$9 to \$12. Also offered are Buddha Bowls (\$10), hearty dishes that allow diners to select from a range of grains, veggies and toppings.

With these and other menu items, Peltier said she wants to show that choosing vegan food does not mean skimping on flavor, and that vegan versions of familiar "comfort foods" can satisfy meat eaters and vegans

"This is going to be my opportunity to see if I can set myself apart from others who have failed," she said.

Plan put in motion

The path that led Peltier to open a vegan restaurant had little to do with her own personal dietary preferences. "I am not a vegan or a vegetarian," she noted.

She explained, however, that her 21-yearold daughter, Trenna, has been a vegetarian since the age of 11. "I had to learn to cook meatless meals at home," she said, adding that her daughter's preferences also made her more aware of the limited options that vegetarians have when dining out.

By comparison, dining options for vegetarians far outstrip those for vegans, who choose not to consume items made with animal products of any kind. That includes not just meat and fish but also eggs, all dairy products, and even honey.



The Wahconah Street building and property where the former Adrien's Diner operated for many years presented some complicated challenges in terms of building code compliance and accessibility before being brought back into use, which delayed the opening of Thrive by several months. "I was hoping to open back in May," says owner Shari Peltier. "But this has given me an opportunity to make this place amazing."

These limitations call for added creativity in the kitchen - whether cooking for oneself at home or for others in a restaurant - to come up with appealing dishes without the use of such staples as butter, eggs or cheese.

Peltier said the seeds for Thrive were planted about two years ago in a social media context. "I was looking for the next thing to do after the kids got out of high school," she recalled. "Some friends on Facebook were talking about when someone would open a vegan restaurant in the area."

That discussion inspired Peltier to become the "someone" who would do just that. "I love creating new ideas and following through with them," she said.

This same trait had earlier led her to establish her own online clothing sales business back in the late 1990s. "I got involved with that in the early days of e-commerce," she

said, noting that she was assisted in the process by enrolling in the Berkshire Enterprises entrepreneurial training program.

Peltier's prior work experience had been of a more conventional nature, beginning with her first job as a dishwasher at age 15 and continuing in various positions in restaurants and bars for the next 15 years or so.

"Then I go out of that business and decided it was time to go to college at 30 years old," she said. That path

eventually led to an "The way I see it is that offer- tion (which included MBA degree.

Peltier noted that the online clothing venture was something she could do while at home

raising her kids. But, as they moved through and out of high school, she began thinking about trying something new. "I said a few years ago that I need to come up with a new plan," she recalled.

In that context, the idea for Thrive took shape. She wrote up a business plan and then worked with Nancy Shulman at the Berkshire office of the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center. "I wanted to bounce it off an expert and refine it," she said, noting that Shulman's guidance led to a more solid plan.

Affordable option

Peltier's original intent was to open her vegan restaurant in Lenox, a location that she felt would best allow her to tap a receptive customer base.

She soon discovered that the town's trendiness came at a price - in the form of significantly higher rents than she was willing to pay. "We would have been working just to pay the rent," she said. "And to me that just didn't make any sense."

Her search for other more affordable options eventually led her to the former Adrien's Diner site just on the outer edge of downtown Pittsfield, which was being offered for sale.

"At that time it had been vacant for threeand-a-half years," she said. "Nobody wanted to deal with all the issues that came with it."

Among these, she said, were a variety of building code violations, including three illegal egresses, as well as "a whole snowball of other problems that needed to be fixed."

While the prospects for correcting these problems caused other potential buyers to shy away, Peltier saw them as a challenge that she was ready to take on. She explained that her confidence on this stemmed from extensive hands-on experience she had gained over the years working with her father to buy and renovate apartment buildings.

"When I saw [Adrien's], I thought, 'It's not that bad. I can do a lot myself," she said.

Peltier also saw the prospect of owning her own restaurant instead of leasing space as a clear advantage. "I'm a smart business-woman," she said. "This means I can put money into my own place instead of paying sky-high rents to someone else."

She made an offer on the diner in March and completed the purchase of the property for \$30,000 on April 27. From there she began the process of planning the renovations that she would handle and lining up contractors who were needed for other aspects that she could not legally do herself.

"I sifted through dozens of contractors to find ones who would do this on my budget," she said. Among those she credited for their willingness to work with her are Mickle Electric and Weider Mechanical, who respectively upgraded the diner's electrical and plumbing systems; and Pittsfield Pipers, who installed a new exhaust hood that she had gotten "at a great price."

Another more complex issue involved the building's noncompliance with handicap accessibility regulations. Peltier explained that the physical limitations of not just the building itself but the property it sits on meant that there was no practical way to install an exterior ramp that would provide access to the restaurant.

To resolve this situation, Peltier applied for a waiver of ADA access through the state's Architectural Access Board in

 Boston. Her applicaing a vegan option for dining plans for a wheelchair roll-up window for takeout orders and for curbside delivery) was ultimately approved by

the board in late summer.

out is our contribution to the

best interests of the world."

The process of clearing these and other hurdles has pushed the opening of Thrive several months beyond Peltier's initial target. "I was hoping to open back in May," she said, acknowledging now how unrealistic that goal was. "But this has given me an opportunity to make this place amazing."

Along with her daughter Trenna, who is joining her in the venture, Peltier has been developing Thrive's menu, planning for its operation, and creating what she describes as a "whimsical decor" featuring "lots of little lights and paintings and unusual colors."

The restaurant (413-344-9343 and www. thrivediner.com) has seating for about 40 at booths and counter stools. With an opening slated for early January, Thrive will serve lunch and dinner from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., with later hours on weekends. It will be closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

Peltier said her daughter will be running the diner's front end, while she will work "behind the scenes." Additional staff are being hired for the kitchen and wait service.

While emphasizing Thrive's appeal to a broad customer base, Peltier believes her biggest fans will ultimately be those whose dietary preferences align most closely with the fare served there.

"The real vegans who come to this community are going to come to my diner," she said. "Vegans and vegetarians will like that they can have every option on the menu."

She also believes that awareness of the health and environmental benefits of skipping meat and animal product in at least some meals is going to continue to grow among the general population.

"The way I see it is that offering a vegan option for dining out is our contribution to the best interests of the world," she said.

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HEALTH & fitness

CANDACE WALL, LMHC

Counselor's new practice targets needs of people assisting others

BY JOHN TOWNES

Professionals whose jobs involve continually helping others also need to pay attention to themselves to prevent burnout and other personal impacts of excessive stress.

Candace Wall, a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC), said she learned that lesson firsthand in her own career as a counselor in very stressful, high-risk environments. She also saw the same issues with other mental health professionals she has worked with.

That prompted her to establish a practice to help individuals, businesses and organizations recognize – and learn solutions to – professional interpersonal overload.

As a counselor and trainer, her emphasis is on providing counseling and workshops to help professionals handle job-related stresses and their effects.

"My main passion is helping people who work with people," said Wall, whose office is in the Norad Mill at 60 Roberts Dr. in North Adams. "If you are assisting others constantly in your workday, you can become preoccupied with them and forget yourself. Unless you notice it and take care of yourself, it can lead to anxiety, depression and other serious emotional problems. It can also have impacts on your personal life and health."

Wall said that during her own career she has gone through periods of anxiety and overload, and has had to figure out how to manage stress and be able to work effec-



Licensed Mental Health Counselor Candace Wall has drawn on her own personal experience in dealing with high-stress work environments as a basis for establishing a private practice where she helps individuals, businesses and organizations recognize – and learn solutions to – professional interpersonal overload.

tively. She learned methods to cope with and balance the pressures of work with self-help techniques.

"The fact that I've been through this myself and come out on the other side is one reason I'm so interested in this," she said. "It's an advantage I can offer as a clinician and trainer."

In addition, she said, in her professional administrative roles and in personal interactions with colleagues, she found that many of her peers experienced similar problems.

"I found it very satisfying to help other professionals who were dealing with their own struggles," she said. "I realized that was what I wanted to focus on as a professional."

Wall emphasized that she works with people in many different occupations in her practice.

"This can affect counselors, medical doctors, salespeople, lawyers, customer service representatives and anyone else who is continually interacting with people," she said.

Wall said she works with clients one-onone. She helps them to sort out and evaluate their specific situation, determine their goals, and help them develop techniques to handle their jobs more effectively, alleviate stress and its effects, and reconnect with their personal relationships.

While her primary emphasis is on jobrelated issues, she also works with individuals who are seeking counseling for personal or family issues.

In addition, she offers single- or multisession work groups and quarterly training programs for businesses and other employers, focusing on a specific topic such as self-care, risk and safety in community mental health settings, self-esteem, mindfulness and other topics.

She also offers consultation services to businesses and organizations to identify workplace issues, screen candidates and assist with other aspects of employee relations.

Wall grew up in Adams and currently lives in Stamford, Vt. with her husband and daughter.

She received her bachelor's degree in psychology at the College of Saint Rose in Albany, and a master's degree in forensic psychology from the Chicago School of Psychology.

She returned to the Berkshires and initially did an internship at the Berkshire County House of Correction.

She then joined the Brien Center, where she worked for six years. She started as a clinical crisis counselor and subsequently became program director and clinical lead of a state contract for Community Based Flexible Support, which provides counseling and other services to help integrate clients into the community and be self-supporting.

For a period, she also worked at the House of Correction as a staff clinical professional.

Risks of rewarding work

While many people find it very rewarding and satisfying to help others solve problems, those in helping professions can experience burn out or compassion fatigue without knowing it, according to Wall.

They can become anxious, depressed and/or disconnected, but often overlook these issues.

"People enjoy helping people," she said.

"But they can try to do too much. When it starts to affect you in a negative way, and you take the pressures and stress home with you, it's important to ask, 'Am I neglecting myself?'"

Wall said that people who deal with mental health, social services or other intense situations are especially susceptible to that.

"You can vicariously experience trauma or witness it firsthand, if you spend your days helping people deal with sexual abuse, homelessness and other critical issues," she said. "You're taking it all in and you have to put it somewhere."

She noted that this also presents a dilemma for people who are trained to understand and help others find solutions to emotional and psychological problems such as anxiety and depression.

"People in those fields know the necessary skills to handle these issues, may find it difficult to practice what they preach when it comes to themselves," she said.

However, it is not only people who work in those occupations who experience problems with interpersonal overload. It can occur in other professions and businesses involving customer or client services and other interactions.

For example, someone working in real estate sales is helping people with the process of purchasing or selling a home, which involves major life decisions and situations involving complex negotiations as well as financial and legal matters that do not always proceed smoothly.

It can also affect people who work service positions that may not be critical or lifealtering but are important to the customer

"I was talking with a hairdresser who experienced similar stress as a result of working with many customers every day," Wall said.

Professionals also have to continually shift attention between the needs of multiple clients or customers. A specific situation is of utmost importance to the individual involved, but for the service provider it is one of numerous cases they are working on during a day.

In her practice, Wall said, her role is to provide professionals with an opportunity to discuss these issues, analyze their own situation and behavior in an objective way, develop strategies to help them handle the stress more effectively, and make related changes and decisions.

Sources of support

In a general sense, she said, there are several basic suggestions that anyone can follow.

"The most important thing is finding someone you can talk to about what you're experiencing on an ongoing basis," she said. "It might be a supervisor or other colleague or



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a friend or loved one. It should be someone you can be open with and who is willing to listen and be supportive."

She added that employers should have people designated to provide this type of support and assistance - whether it is a supervisor, administrator, other staff person or an outside expert such "I found it very satisfying to

were dealing with their own

People also should help other professionals who prevent taking on too much, both to prevent burnout and to keep it struggles," Wall said. "I realfrom getting worse.

as herself.

"It's also important focus on as a professional." to know when to turn down additional assignments or duties," she said. "You're not superman or superwoman. Overextending themselves is one of the rea-

sons that people experience excessive stress." Wall also stressed the importance of people giving sufficient attention to their own needs and recognize when ordinary workplace pressures are having a negative impact on their own well-being and overall quality of life.

"You have to take care of yourself," she said. "You can't do your job well if you're neglecting your own feelings and needs."

Related to that is the necessity to balance work with personal life, including involvement and relationships with friends and family. "You also want to engage in community and recreational activities," she said.

Feeling burnout and its related effects can be the result of many factors. Understanding what is causing it is an important step to finding solutions that are based on a realistic assessment of the situation and reasons.

One crucial step for anyone who is experiencing excessive job-related stress is to understand the specific causes and determine if it is a signal that larger changes are needed.

That includes analyzing whether burnout is due to specifics that can be adjusted, or whether it is time to change jobs or professions. "Helping people to figure out that puzzle is one of the aspects of my own work that I find most satisfying," Wall said. "Burnout can mean many different things, and it's important to know why it is happening to you.'

She added that engaging in this process is also a way to avoid making rash decisions, such as hastily quitting a job.

"Do you need to do something else entirely," she said, "or do you just need a vacation? Are you feeling excessive stress because you're doing too much? Can you improve it by making adjustments in your workload or learning personal coping skills? Or is your job not right for you?"

Wall said employers also can learn to recognize what factors in the workplace might be contributing to stress and burnout among ized that was what I wanted to their employees, and take action to reduce its likelihood.

She noted that, in addition to her professional services, she also is offering free workshops and other events in collaboration with other professionals and organizations on a periodic basis.

"One of the reasons I returned to the Berkshires is that I wanted to serve the community," she said. "Offering several free programs annually is one of the ways I can do that."

One such activity she recently sponsored was "Woman's Night Out - No-Pressure Networking," a free open gathering held on Nov. 29.

Wall can be contacted at 413-353-2515 or on candacewall.com or Facebook page candacewalltherapy.◆

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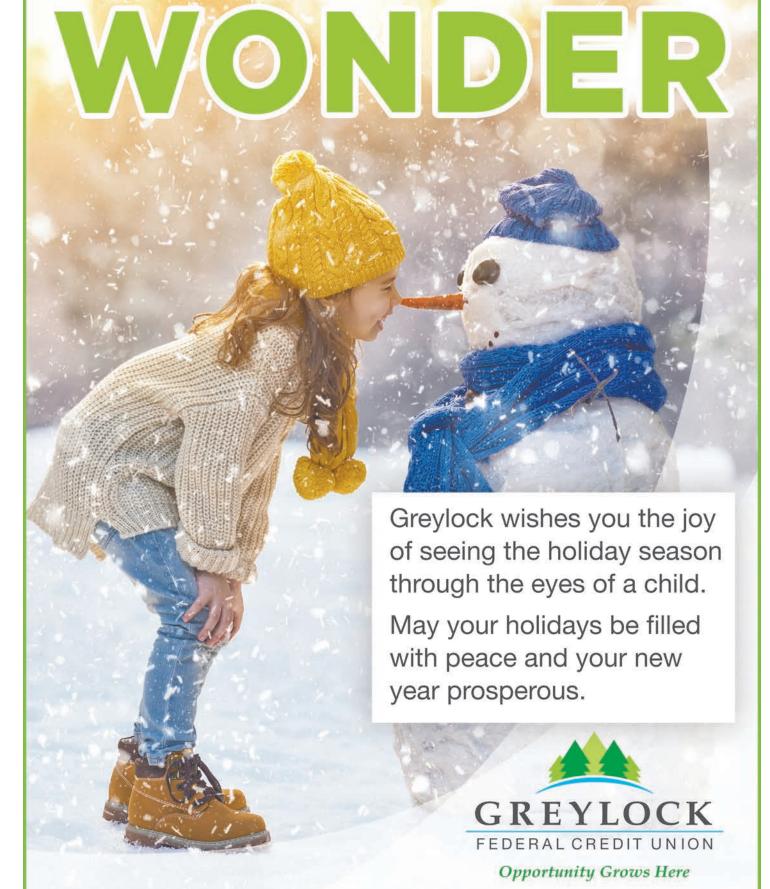
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ARTS & culture

Beacon Cinema continued from page 1

potential is what I enjoy doing most," he said in a Nov. 30 phone interview. "Our name is based on the Phoenix, the mythological bird that rises from the ashes."

His company is purchasing the Kinnell-Kresge Building at 57 North St. and the movie-theater business from Richard Stanley, who developed the original project to restore the historic building and create and operate the Beacon there.

Jacobson said he hopes to close the sale by early to mid December, so they can enter the peak holiday season with the transition completed.

The deal has taken shape against a backdrop on troubled finances for the building. In September, a consortium of local banks and lenders that had provided \$4.6 million in financing for Stanley's original project announced plans to initiate foreclosure on the property due to arrears on the \$3.7 million still owed.

To prevent that scenario and the resulting shuttering of an important downtown attraction, the banks agreed to write off all but \$750,000 if the building were sold.

Phoenix will pay \$644,000 for the Beacon's assets and the building, which will be applied to that settlement. Stanley will pay the balance of the settlement to the banks himself. Phoenix will also separately pay a lease fee to Stanley for the lounge seats that he installed last year and owns (January 2018 BT&C).

The sale was also contingent on allowing Jacobson's company to start with a clean slate, without the burden of the larger debt that had been incurred through the building's redevelopment.

The final hurdle was cleared on Nov. 27, when the Pittsfield City Council voted 8-2 to forgive \$2.55 million in loans to the Beacon Cinema by the city, a measure that was controversial and drew opposition from many residents (see related story on page 17).

Jacobson acknowledged that the complexity and controversy surrounding the Beacon's financing and development was a situation his company had not encountered before. He found that his company was walking into a situation with a long and difficult history in which strong emotions were involved.

"It was difficult because we came into this late in the game," he said. "With our other



Cory Jacobson, CEO of Michigan-based Insight Management Consulting, believes that the Beacon Cinema in downtown Pittsfield will be good addition to the small family of independent movie houses his company operates under Phoenix Theatres. "Our hope is that we can restore faith in the fact that a theater can be successful there," he says. (Photo courtesy of Phoenix Theatres)

theaters, it was more a straightforward matter of acquiring and running a theater. They were not controversial and did not involve a complicated project of that scale."

At the same time, he added, they consider it worth the effort because the Beacon and the local market have the basic qualities that his company looks for. "So, it's more challenging," he said, "but I love a challenge."

While some have characterized the problems with the Beacon as representing Pittsfield's contentious nature and history of backing failed projects, Jacobson dismissed that and said he was not concerned about doing business here.

"I don't think that's unique to Pittsfield," he said. "I can see similar things happening in any city or town in the country."

He added that he has empathy for the people who have been opposed to the terms of the sale.

"I certainly understand how people might feel that way," he said. "I'm a taxpayer where I live, too. I'd be frustrated and angry if I felt my local government was doing something this significant that I believed was wrong." Jacobson said he hopes those opposed to the debt forgiveness will come to recognize the ultimate benefits to the community.

"Our deal might not be the best possible deal in the world, but the alternative would have been worse," he said. "If you look at the cards that were dealt, it would have been a disaster if the Beacon went into foreclosure. The city would not have recovered a penny."

There also would be no guarantee that a new owner who purchased it in foreclosure would keep the theater, he continued.

"Even if they did, it would be much more difficult to restart a theater if the furnishings and equipment were removed and it went dark for a period," he said.

Jacobson added that the terms of the sale will allow the Beacon to remain in operation with a smooth transition of ownership, and will bring improvements to the site and enhance its overall benefits to downtown.

"With this deal, the city is able to retain the theater and guarantee that we will operate it for at least 10 years," he said (referring to one aspect of the debt forgiveness). "Actually, we are in this for the longer term. We don't go

into a theater unless we are confident that it will be viable for at least 20 years. Our hope is that we can restore faith in the fact that a theater can be successful there."

While noting that he plans to do things differently at the Beacon, Jacobson said Stanley and the city deserve credit for undertaking the project in the first place.

"It's a very impressive project that has added a lot to the city," he said. "From my perspective, I can see that a lot of passion and hard work has gone into it. I respect Mr. Stanley for having the vision and commitment to achieve this. It would likely have never come to fruition without him."

Close-knit operation

Insight Management/Phoenix Theatres currently has a total of about 230 employees in its theaters, and a staff of seven in its management office.

"One of the best things about our company is that most of the management team has been together for along time, including people who came with me when I started it," Jacobson said. "Some left, but came back when we started making a little money because it's a nice company to work for. It's very personal and isn't 'Corporate America.' We all like each other and are basically best friends."

In addition to operating its own movie theaters, the company offers management and consulting services to other theater operators. It also has an equipment installation service.

"That came about when the industry was making the conversion from film to digital projection equipment," Jacobson said. "We were early adopters of that. We sent a couple of employees for special training in the installation of new digital theater technology for our own theaters. Then we started offering services to help other theaters do that and it became a business."

Among those they helped make the transition was Images Cinema in Williamstown, he noted.

Jacobson said his company is always looking for growth opportunities, but they are very methodical. They use data-driven analysis and due diligence, combined with subjective factors and instinct.

He added that they pursue steady growth on a manageable basis that is in keeping with the company's scale and strategy. "Basically, our corporate goal is to do things we enjoy doing in places where we see interesting opportunities," he said. "Finding theaters that are good candidates and meet our requirements is difficult, and we have to be very selective."

When asked if the company has specific growth targets, Jacobson replied: "Well, currently, I'd like for us to operate around 50 screens. The Beacon is the second theater we will have added this year, so that is a good step towards that."

Jacobson said they became aware of the Beacon around 2015 when they were contacted by Stanley and the banks to do a management study on ways to revitalize the business.

They conducted a survey of Pittsfield and the local movie market, and examined the operations of the Beacon. They then provided a list of recommendations. Among their suggestions was the installation of lounge seating and a reduction of ticket prices. Stanley implemented those last year, and attendance did improve.

Jacobson said his company continued to follow the situation. When the foreclosure scenario arose, they agreed to buy the theater business and the building.

Jacobson said his own confidence is based on his company's strategy and proven track record, as well as the characteristics of the Beacon, the city and the Berkshires.

Emphasis on enjoyment

He said they have a very specific approach that works for the types of theaters they acquire. They also provide an alternative venue to compete successfully with large mall cinemas and other chain multiplexes.

"Because of our smaller size and our philosophy, we can be more of a boutique operation than a large chain, and we have the flexibility to focus on the specific needs of a market," he said.

continued on page 16

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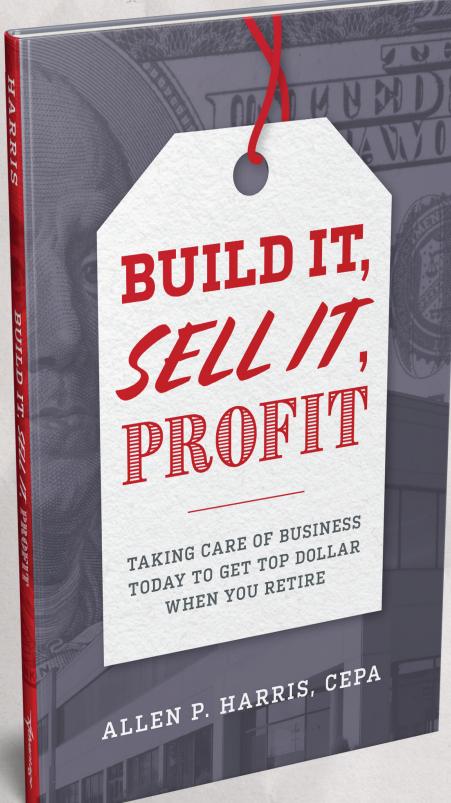
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"Basically, our corporate

goal is to do things we enjoy

interesting opportunities,"

ARTS & culture

continued from page 14

Jacobson said they emphasize providing movie experiences that are more accessible and enjoyable, by applying a combination of traditional best practices, and restoring some of the qualities that have been lost as theater chains have become more dominant.

"Our secret sauce is to provide comfortable seating and the best possible technology to present a high-quality image and sound," he said. "What we also do differently is that we manage to provide that while keeping our prices at an affordable, family-friendly level."

He said the success of Phoenix Theatres has shown that this works well as a business model.

"We don't want prices to be so high that people see going to the movies as something they can only afford to do as a special occasion," he said. "We want them to come more often and buy more tickets over time – either as something they do casually on the spur of the moment, or as a family night out, or a special date.'

Jacobson noted that he regularly attends his own theaters - and those of their competitors – to keep a close eye on everything that affects the customer experience.

"Price isn't everything," he said. "I stand in line like everyone else and pay attention to what it feels like to go to a movie. If it's not pleasant, and if I don't feel like I'm getting value for my money, I get upset. We do everything possible to make it a worthwhile experience.'

His company's original recommendations to the Beacon as a consultant were based on that premise, and they were an important step in that direction, he noted. He said Phoenix will build on that with other improvements, both in the near term and over time.

Among other changes, they will extend the Beacon's operating hours to include more showings throughout the day and into the evening. This will both increase the number of tickets sold and will offer more options for customers. It may also help to reduce lines at showings during peak hours.

They also will make it more convenient for patrons to buy popcorn, candy and beverages, with a redesign of the concession stand.

For movie theaters, concession sales are often more important than ticket sales to the bottom line.

Jacobson noted, however, that his company will not look to significantly expand the Beacon's food and beverage offerings or set up the lobby as a cafe.

'We're not interested in becoming restaurant operators," he said. "We're here to

support other downtown businesses, not compete with them. For example, I was talking to the operators of The Marketplace (a next-door cafe that is another anchor tenant in the building). I told them, 'You know how to make great coffees and sandwiches and soups. I'm going to stick with what I know, which is showing movies and selling popcorn and candy."

(The Beacon also has a license to sell beer and wine. At the city council meeting, Jacobson was asked if they planned to continue that. Jacobson replied that his other theaters don't rely on alcoholic beverage sales, but since the patrons of the Beacon are used to purchasing them there, he would prefer to keep the license.)

To handle the expanded operations, they

are currently hiring additional staff for the Beacon. Jacobson said the goal is have at least 30 full- and part-time employees in place by the holidays. "I'd tell

anyone interested in a job to go to our website and apply now," he noted.

Jacobson said there will be physical improvements, but the theater will retain its existing basic look and characteristics. Part of the original project included historic preservation requirements that retained the original features of the facade and other elements of the former department store. The theater will also retain its name.

"The Beacon should continue to be the Beacon," he said. "It is a unique property. I love the fact that it is a theater behind a former department store. We're going to keep that as its identity, rather than trying to impose our brand as Phoenix Theatres.'

However, Jacobson said he is making one immediate addition to the lobby that will have a noticeable impact. "I just bought a Yamaha grand piano that will be placed in the lobby," he said. "It's an automated player-piano that is tied into the Internet and can play many types of music. That makes a big difference in the mood in a lobby."

One facet of the Beacon that is new to Jacobson's company is the additional commercial space in the building, including offices above the theater and a corridor of other commercial space in the rear extension to McKay Street.

"We're not commercial developers or landlords," he said. "But I have been a tenant, so I at least understand it from that standpoint. Some of it is primarily asking tenants what they want, and providing it. Sometimes their requests are simple basics, like having clear

directional signs and making sure elevators are operating.'

He said they will work on some deferred maintenance projects in the building. "I also plan to employ someone who is an expert in commercial rentals and knows the local market to handle that aspect of it," he said.

Pittsfield perception

Since first becoming involved in the Beacon, Jacobson said he and his staff have been visiting and studying Pittsfield and the Berkshires regularly. While aware of the challenges the city and region face, he believes the overall trends are positive.

"In addition to demographic studies, you can tell a lot just by looking around and talking to people and businesses," he said.

"We've spent a lot of time having meals in places like District (a restaurant around the doing in places where we see corner from the Beacon). The mood seems upbeat, and people and

business owners seem happy with what's happening here, which is always a good sign."

He added that downtown Pittsfield has also retained positive physical characteristics that have been lost in many communities. "The architecture downtown is really unique and beautiful," he said. "A lot of millennials look at these glorious buildings and recognize their value compared to what is common today. No one is going to build ornate structures like [the Kinnell-Kresge Building anymore."

He added that the region also has the type of diversity that can support a theater like the Beacon. "It's obvious that the city and Berkshire County have an element of deep creativity. That means there are many people who appreciate the benefits of a Beacon, and the types of theaters we operate."

He said his company is adept at identifying and booking films that reflect the tastes and desires of their communities.

Since the Beacon first opened, some people have expressed a desire for the theater to include more independent, foreign and other "art house" films along with the mainstream commercial fare.

"We try to present the best of both worlds, with a mix of the big popular movies and smaller independent films," Jacobson said. "In part, the selection will depend on the time of year. During the summer and holidays a lot of big commercial films are released, and that will be the emphasis then. At other times of year we can also include more specialized films."

Jacobson chuckled when asked to comment on the frequent observation that movie theaters have become less viable as businesses because of the emergence of streaming services, the popularity of mobile viewing and the increased quality of home entertainment equipment,

"I've been hearing that as long as I've been in this industry," he said. "When I started in management in the '70s, it was said that VCRs and Blockbuster would be the end of movie theaters. Before that it was television. And before that it was probably said about radio."

In reality, he said, movie theaters have weathered all of these challenges. "If you look at the record of theaters over the last 70 years, the business has been remarkably stable," he said.

"Like any industry, the movie business has ups and downs," he added. "Last year there was a downturn, and there were predictions that the sky was falling. But this year there has been a 10-percent increase."

Jacobson noted that it often depends on the quality of films in any given year. "We're not selling widgets," he said. "We're selling art. Sometimes that art is very good, and sometimes it's really bad. The fluctuations in business reflect that."

Nevertheless, he added, theaters must be nimble and offer reasons to go out to see a movie, including the quality of presentation. "There isn't a theater in the U.S. that is not better than it was five or 10 years ago in those terms," he said.

This also requires keeping up with advances in presentation technology, he said, adding that part of their plan for Beacon Cinema is to upgrade its projection and audio equipment over time.

"I'm very involved in the technology side and the quality of images and sound, he said. "Right now the next generation of projectors is about to be released. This will include new chips and file storage that will allow for higher frame rates. That will dramatically increase the visual quality of images on the screen."

Jacobson noted that he is acquainted with Douglas Trumbull, the special-effects pioneer who lives in Berkshire County and had a large role in bringing film production to the Berkshires in the 1990s.

"We visited him at his studio on one of our trips here," he said. "He is working on some amazing technologies that are far ahead of what is available today. The quality is unbelievable and demonstrates what is still possible. I left his studio feeling very excited, like I was 17 again."◆



NEWS ANALYSIS

Project's complex financing adds to misperceptions on debt forgiveness

BY JOHN TOWNES

After much soul searching and expressions of mixed emotions, the Pittsfield City Council voted 8-2 to forgive \$2.55 million in debt for owners of the Beacon Cinema in order to keep the downtown movie theater and commercial building that houses it open.

That was a key to a plan to enable the upcoming sale of the theater business and building by the Beacon's developer/owner Richard Stanley to Insight Management Consulting, a Michigan-based firm that operates four other theaters as Phoenix Theatres (see related story on page 1).

In September, a consortium of local banks and lenders that had provided \$4.6 million in financing for the original redevelopment project announced plans to initiate foreclosure on the property, for which \$3.7 million was still owed.

The banks subsequently agreed to write off all but \$750,000 if it were sold to Insight Management/Phoenix Theatres. That company will pay \$644,000 for the Beacon's building and assets, which will be applied to that settlement. Stanley will pay the balance himself.

The sale was contingent on the city's forgiveness of an additional \$2.55 million contributed to the project. The original request by Phoenix was for the city to forgive the entire amount immediately.

Mayor Linda Tyer made a counter proposal to forgive \$1.05 million now. To give the city some leverage, the remaining \$1.5 million will be forgiven in increments over 10 years, as long as the theater remains in business. If the theater closes, Phoenix will be responsible for repaying the balance.

The council's vote to approve the plan at its Nov. 27 meeting cleared a final hurdle to the sale. However, the proposal has been contentious and divisive, being seen by some as a Hobson's Choice between two problematic options.

During the Nov. 27 meeting, several councilors said they have been receiving more comments and strong opinions from their constituents about the debt forgiveness than any other issue in recent memory, with much of this feedback in opposition to the plan.

Councilor Kevin Morandi, who voted against the plan, was blunt in stating his reasons. He criticized the entire history of the Beacon project. "This was a failure from the beginning, and it should not have happened," he said.

Morandi added that he also had to vote no to accurately reflect the interests and expressed desires of his constituents.

Even those members who supported the proposal said it was an extremely difficult vote. Councilor Donna Todd Rivers, who ultimately voted for the proposal, summarized the dilemma during the long discussion period.

She said there seemed to be a consensus that Phoenix Theatres is well qualified to take over the Beacon, and their strategy and approach is a good fit for Pittsfield.

"I'm really struggling with this," she said. "I think two separate conversations are going on. One is a conversation about the plans of the new owners and their qualifications. But



As the anchor tenant of the redeveloped Kinnell-Kresge Building, the Beacon Cinema has been an important component of downtown Pittsfield's revitalization efforts since its opening in 2009. However, the debt load associated with the historic building's restoration has weighed the project down over the years, along with difficulty filling other commercial space there. (Photo by Cody Johnson)

"No matter how successful

it might be as a business, an

independent theater or other

carry that level of debt."

the other conversation is about how we got here. Many of my constituents don't want us to do this. I've been hearing from people constantly who are concerned about this."

She added that the complexities of the city's stake in the project and the difficulty of understanding the relationships between the many grants, loans and other financial and legal factors involved have intensified the situation.

As a public-private initiative, the Beacon was financed by a complex combination of private investment by **business of that size could not** as an important step in Stanley, including \$4.6 million in financing

from a consortium of local banks and lenders, and public support through the sale of Federal New Market Tax Credits, state and federal historic preservation tax credits, and other grants and quasi-public financing.

During its development and construction, the cost had grown from the originally anticipated \$8 million to over \$22 million, which subsequently required additional loans and grants and financial adjustments.

Dianna Ruffer, the city's director of community development, said in an interview that the Beacon had achieved its goals for downtown Pittsfield, in terms of adding a center of activity and stimulating the business climate. However, it would have been difficult for any business of such modest scale to also manage the expenses and financing costs that the construction and redevelopment project had ultimately required.

"No matter how successful it might be as a business, an independent theater or other business of that size could not carry that level of debt," she said. "What the current plan is doing is 'right-sizing' the debt and making it possible for the new owner to succeed without that burden."

Auspicious debut

The somber mood of the Nov. 27 City Council meeting contrasted with the upbeat optimism when the Beacon opened in November 2009 after more than a decade of planning and construction.

A downtown theater had been one of the key goals in overall strategies established in the 1990s to revitalize downtown Pittsfield.

Stanley, a commercial real estate developer who also owns the Triplex Cinema in Great Barrington, had been encouraged by the city to develop a theater in Pittsfield. After initial reluctance, he agreed in 2002 and began the long planning and construction process. He purchased the Kinnell-Kresge Building and undertook extensive renovations of the existing structure, plus new construction to

enlarge portions the original building.

When the Beacon Cinema finally opened, it was widely touted downtown revitalization. The new theater

was christened with an evening outdoor ceremony attended by a large crowd of politicians, civic leaders and residents, with speeches hailing it as a new era for downtown. A colorful spotlight display was followed by its initial screening of a film in the highly popular Twilight series.

Over time, however, Stanley was unable to keep up with the project's large debts, in part due to difficulty filling much of the other office and commercial space in the North Street building.

Proponents of the city's debt forgiveness describe it as the best alternative to solve a difficult situation.

However, opposition expressed by others has been based both practical and philosophical grounds.

In communications to officials, posts in social media and other venues, many residents said the city should not continue to support a failed project at a time when its resources were already being stretched thin, and it was having to take on other projects including a new water treatment plant.

Critics also see a double standard in the city forgiving the Beacon's debt, even though other individuals and businesses do not receive such generous treatment when they fall behind in their taxes or other payments to the city. Some contended the city should not be supporting one business, while others that are struggling do not receive such a bailout. Others argued that said the city should let the foreclosure take place and allow the private-sector market determine the property's future.

One reason the councilors gave for voting for the proposal was that the debt forgiveness was not actually affecting the city's operating budget.

The debt did not involve funds that could have been used to offset taxes or fees for residents or other purposes. Rather, it was in the form of grants that were designated as loans, in order to qualify Stanley's project for some of the federal tax credits that made up another portion of the project's

Of the \$2.55 million total debt, the source of \$1.05 million had been covered by a \$1 million state Cultural Facilities Grant, and a \$50,000 federal Community Development Block Grant.

The other \$1.5 million came from the GE Economic Development Fund, a pool of money that was created by General Electric in a 2000 settlement agreement to compensate for environmental damage caused by PCBs the company had used in its manufacturing operations in Pittsfield. GE provided \$1 million a year to the fund over 10 years.

Most expenditures from the GE fund over the years have been in the form of outright grants to businesses or organizations as contributions to economic development activities. However, the funds to the Beacon were set up as forgivable deferred-payment loans instead, to qualify the overall financing package for tax credits.

In negotiating the recent settlement, Tyer designated the GE funds as the amount to be forgiven over 10 years, to provide the city with a "clawback" provision and some control over the site in the future.

Another bone of contention for critics is a city tax increment financing (TIF) package that was originally granted in the early stage of the project and was extended in 2016 for another five years. Under a TIF, a business owner who upgrades a property is eligible for a partial deferment on taxes related to any increased value due to the improvements. The higher taxes are phased in over a designated period.

Ruffer, however, said the TIF is not a part of the debt-forgiveness package. "The TIF has no bearing on that," she said. "The debt forgiveness is a totally separate matter. There is no new TIF. The existing agreement will simply remain in place until it expires."

She pointed out that the Beacon has paid – and will continue to pay – taxes in a larger sense. "Between personal and business property taxes, it has been paying [annually] in excess of \$63,000," she said. "It will continue to pay taxes if his deal goes through."◆



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from a tax perspective may

be the one made before

reviewing all the options and

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'TAX CUTS & JOBS ACT' TAKES ITS TOLL

Challenges aplenty with this year's filing season

BY JAMES R. ROSE, EA CFP

After nearly a full year of projection and conjecture, it is time to calculate and realize the full impact of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA). Together with smaller follow-up pieces of legislation, the ink is drying on new forms and regulations - requiring new tax obligations and allowing new tax opportunities.

No one is immune. The road map to a completed tax return has changed for everyone, regardless of outcome. Many will be pleasantly surprised with the end-result. Some will be disappointed, and not a few may be angry. The suggestion to "start early and read carefully" is being taken seriously by taxpayer and tax professional alike.

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A review of all changes arising from this sweeping tax-code revision is not possible here, and what is offered is meant to create an awareness of some of those items most likely to be encountered during this year's tax-filing season. For a more detailed review, the IRS has issued the 14-page Publication 5307 - Tax Reform Basics for Individuals

and Families as a preliminary guide, and has been updating charts, worksheets, regulations and forms on a daily basis.

While still in draft form at the time of this writing, Form 1040 is receiving a makeover, allowing a "postcard" summary for those used to filing Forms 1040EZ and 1040A. For those whose tax reporting

situations are more complicated, business, rental and investment schedules - along with their various attachments - will still be required.

Deductions deconstructed

The new legislation seeks to simplify tax reporting for a larger majority of taxpayers by increasing basic standard deductions, while eliminating exemption allowances and limiting "itemized" deductions. To that end, it may be helpful to know what not to look for any longer – and to understand what has been lost as well as gained.

Personal and dependent exemption deductions are eliminated, having been "absorbed" into the new, larger, standard deduction

couple with two child dependents would have qualified for a married-filing-joint (MFJ) standard deduction and four exemption deductions, one for each person listed on the tax return. Under prior law, in 2017, the standard deduction for MFJ was \$12,700. Each of the four exemption deductions was worth \$4,050 - qualifying this family

for a total \$28,900 in combined standard and exemption deductions.

The MFJ standard deduction is now raised to \$24,000 (from the previous \$12,700), and exemption deductions are zeroed out - leaving this particular family with less overall deductions in 2018, and higher potential taxable income. The trade-off is a lower tax rate on

that higher income, as well as higher tax credits for those dependent children listed on the return.

The "standard deduction" is the benchmark by which we determine whether to "itemize" tax deductions - most taxpayers may deduct the larger of the two. With the new larger standard deduction, it is expected that millions more taxpayers will now forego itemizing. (While some 30 percent of taxpayers traditionally itemize, the new law is projected to bring that level to 10 percent or less.)

The new law further assists that process by eliminating and/or limiting what actually qualifies as an "itemized" deduction. Deductions subject to the 2-percent AGI limitation have been suspended - effectively eliminating miscellaneous deductions for employee business, hobby, tax and investment expenses. Casualty and theft losses are now only allowed for those which occur in federal declared disaster areas. New allowances and limits are in place for personal residence mortgage interest deductions, as well as state and local taxes (SALT) on income, sales and real estate.

These aggregate SALT deductions are now capped at \$10,000 – a change which originally drew a chorus of concern, led by the representatives and governments of high-tax states (such as those here in the Northeast). Subsequent exploration of creative ways to redefine these expenses, so as to bypass this limitation, prompted the IRS to issue Notice 2018-54, a two-page review cautioning that "taxpayers should be mindful that federal law controls the proper characterization of payments for federal income tax purposes." The chorus has since been quieted to muffled mumbles and grumbles.

Preliminary calculations project that mid-to-high-income taxpayers will see a net positive effect, with the expected benefits of lower tax rates and credits trumping lost deductions.

James R. Rose, EA, CFP, is with Dollars & Sense Tax & Financial **Planning Services in** Pittsfield. He can be reached at 448-9015.



As part of that "lower tax rate" benefit, two key tax levies have been addressed. Exemption and phase-out limits for the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) are increased, targeted to help eliminate that higher tax regime for many mid-to-high-income families. And, while lower capital gains rates have not changed, income brackets have been stretched – allowing more taxpayers access to the lower 15-percent rate on capital gain/ qualified dividend investment income (versus the 20-percent rate). To that end, many taxpayers are selling long-term equity holdings before year-end, paying tax at these lower rates while they can.

Business income

A major part (some say "The" major part) of the TCJA lowers the tax rate of so-called "C" corporations - those businesses taxed at their own entity level. To allow non-C corporate businesses to more closely realize these new lower corporate tax rates for themselves, new Code Section 199A allows a new "qualified business income deduction." Businesses of all forms - from sole proprietors to partners to S-corporations, and all LLCs being taxed as such – must pass through a gauntlet of definitions, restrictions, eliminations and exceptions to qualify. The tax savings stand to be significant, allowing a deduction of upwards of 20 percent of this "qualified business net income."

Before addressing their new 199A deductions, however, businesses have other details to attend. New limits on qualified business meal expense, coupled with the elimination of deductions for entertainment expenses, will serve to increase business net income (and, thereby, potentially increase the 20-percent business net income deduction). New expansion of depreciation expense allowances may serve to lower business net income (and thereby, potentially lower the 20-percent business net income deduction).

What one deduction may allow, another may take away. What one deduction may take away, another may allow. The implication is that the only "wrong" decision from a tax perspective may be the one made before reviewing all the options and permutations

The above are just some of the broader impacts of the TCJA. Health insurance, moving costs and reimbursements, alimony payments, student loan debt discharge, business automobile trade-ins, use of Section-529 plans for pre-college costs - all these and more have also been affected by the new legislation.

Take nothing for granted this tax season. Review in detail, seek assistance when necessary, and proceed accordingly.◆



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Price: \$236,000

Date: 10/26/18

1 Orchard Ave.

Price: \$85,000 Mortgage: \$50,000 Lender: Greylock FCU

Date: 10/19/18

14 Park Dr.

Buyer: James Betit

Seller: Deborah Laureyns

Buyer: Natalia Renzi +

Mortgage: \$150,000 Lender: Pittsfield Coop

Buyer: JP Morgan Chase Bk

Seller: John Ostellino 2nd +

LEE

160 Chanterwood Rd.

Seller: William Welch +

Lender: Greylock FCII

186 Chanterwood Rd.

Seller: David Rynes

Price: \$725 000

Date: 10/31/18

215 Devon Rd. Buyer: Robert Ginsberg Seller: Michael Vanzandt

Price: \$520,000

Date: 10/29/18

123 E Center St

Price: \$255,000

Date: 10/1/18

590 East St.

Price: \$156,000

Date: 10/10/18

425 Fairview St.

Price: \$195,000

Date: 10/12/18

85 Franklin St

Price: \$282,500

Date: 10/10/18

Price: \$295,000

Buver: Luz Millan +

Mortgage: \$50,000

Seller: Kevin Bartini Sr

Lender: Pittsfield Coop

Buver: Samantha Backhaus +

Seller: Mary Swift +

Mortgage: \$277,382

Lender: Evolve B&T

135 Leisure Lee Rd.

Buyer: Robert Schwartz

Seller: Nancy Cavender LT +

Buyer: Ross Jolly

Mortgage: \$104,000

Lender: Grevlock FCU

Seller: Mary Baccoli RET +

Buver: Cheshire Green LLC

Seller: James Harte +

Mortgage: \$416,000

Lender: First Choice

Buver: Ramona Persaud

Buver: Meredith Rov

Price: \$340,000 Mortgage: \$272,000

Date: 10/1/18

Seller: Joseph Renzi

Price: \$220,000

Date: 10/2/18

20 Swamp Rd.

Price: \$144,000

Date: 10/9/18

Buver: Kimberly Clayton +

Lender: Adams Community

LANESBORO

Buyer: Giovanna Demers

Seller: Foley Adrian Est +

Mortgage: \$121,250 Lender: Adams Community

Buyer: Noel Banzon +

Seller: Benjamin Truskowski +

Mortgage: \$228,920 Lender: Adams Community

REAL estate

The following real Estate transactions are provided by Banker & Tradesman Real Estate Data Publishing Only properties valued at \$75,000 or higher are included

ADAMS

11 Anthony St. Buver: Julie Fairchild Seller: Steven Bechard + Price: \$152,000 Mortgage: \$152,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/309/18

77 Bellevue Ave. Buyer: Marci Levesque Seller: Patrick Filiault + Price: \$117,500 Mortgage: \$105,632 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/9/18

Buyer: New England Seller: Mark Ziemba + Price: \$225,000 Date: 10/2/18

49 Glenn St. Buyer: Christopher Perin Sr + Seller: 49 Glenn Street NT + Price: \$163,000 Mortgage: \$160.047 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/1/18

16-18 Grove St. Buyer: Marcus Leake Seller: George Robinson Jr + Price: \$165,000 Mortgage: \$148,335 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/1/18

39 Harding Ave. Buyer: Timothy Martel + Seller: Timothy Carpenter + Price: \$260,000 Date: 10/12/18

58-60 Lime St. Buyer: Adams Community Seller: Daryl Kurley Price: \$77 367 Date: 10/12/18

167 N Summer St. Buver: Marsha Clark + Seller: Ruth Robert Price: \$156,500 Mortgage: \$153,664 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/26/18

12 Orchard St. Buyer: William Barton Seller: David Bissaillon + Price: \$105,000 Mortgage: \$105,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/22/18

11 Pearl St. Buyer: Arielle Poirot Seller: Diane Koczela + Price: \$166,400 Mortgage: \$163,386 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/5/18

55 Richmond Ln Buyer: Megan Miller Seller: Daniel Kingsley + Price: \$129,900 Mortgage: \$103,920 Lender: Grevlock FCU Date: 10/12/18

15 Sayles St. Buver: Mitchell Lee-Despain + Seller: Wayne Arnold Price: \$125,000 Mortgage: \$121,250 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/18/18

431 West Rd. Buyer: James Boland + Seller: Cheryl Horn Price: \$189,000 Mortgage: \$191,919 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/26/18

ALFORD

Old Village Rd. Buyer: Hillel Bachrach + Seller: Janos Keseru Price: \$85,000 Date: 10/1/18

BECKET

325 Bonny Rigg Hill Rd. Buver: David Moss + Seller: Frank Gelbwasser -Price: \$335,000 Mortgage: \$251,250

ender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/5/18

235 Fred Snow Rd. Buyer: Corey Sparks + Seller: Geoffrey Lamoreaux Date: 10/30/18

186 Old Albany Ln. W Buyer: Karen Brodie Seller: Pamela Delanev Price: \$199,500 Mortgage: \$152,400 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/19/18

81 Peterson Rd. Buyer: Christian Brenner-Sedlak Seller: Linda Jackson Price: \$142,000 Mortgage: \$137,740 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/29/18

153 Sir Walter Rd. Buver: Robin Mathiesen Seller: Debora Latvaitis Price: \$142,000

572 YMCA Rd. Buyer: Joseph Gruber + Seller: Candice Cahalan Price: \$299,000 Date: 10/30/18

CHESHIRE

Brough Rd. Buyer: Andrew Walak + Seller: Eileen Whitney + Date: 10/22/18

127 Maple Dr. Buyer: Adam Mazzantini Seller: Feustel Curt Est + Price: \$240,000 Mortgage: \$192,000 Lender: MountainOne Date: 10/17/18

99 Meadowview Dr. Buyer: Michele Purcell Seller: Citibank NA Tr Mortgage: \$151,200 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/4/18

N State Rd. Buyer: State Road Cheshire NT + Seller: David Krutiak Price: \$125,000 Date: 10/19/18

Richmond Hill Lot 2 Buver: Michael Henault + Seller: Robert Jarvis + Price: \$75,000 Mortgage: \$284,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/12/18

1792 Windsor Rd. Buyer: Bridget Aniello + Seller: Bruce Gaspardi Jr Price: \$189,900 Mortgage: \$186,459 Lender: Village Mtg Date: 10/18/18

CLARKSBURG

131 East Rd. Buyer: Nathan Cariddi + Seller: Arthur Lemaire Jr + Price: \$200,000 Mortgage: \$160,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/12/18

830 East Rd Buyer: Allan Smith Jr + Seller: Charles Swabey + Price: \$375,900 Mortgage: \$364,623 Lender: Movement Mtg Date: 10/31/18

740 Walker St. Buyer: Aron Cimonetti + Seller: Cimonetti NT + Price: \$133,750 Mortgage: \$107,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/9/18

525 West Rd. Buyer: Stephen Simon Seller: Dolle Theresa Est + Price: \$165,000 Date: 10/1/18

DALTON

46 Burr Dr. Buver: Patrick Meunier Seller: Gary Dinicola + Price: \$172,000 Mortgage: \$137,600

Lender: Pittsfield Coop Date: 10/29/18

45 Chivers Dr Buyer: Robert Farrell + Seller: Richard Solis Price: \$285,000 Date: 10/15/18

2-8 Depot St. Buyer: Grace Enterprises LLC Seller: Dalton Center Price: \$470,000 Mortgage: \$385,600 Lender: Grevlock FCU Date: 10/12/18

24 Depot St. Buyer: GCC Real Estate Seller: WTW Realty LLC Price: \$100,000

37 Field St. Ext Buyer: Daniel Almeida + Seller: Jon Anton Macht RET + Price: \$161,000 Mortgage: \$151,000 Lender: Jon Macht Date: 10/25/18

261 High St. Buver: Jeffrey Warren + Seller: James Chadbourne Price: \$185,000 Mortgage: \$186,868 Lender: Village Mtg Date: 10/1/18

30 Mountain View Ter. Buver: Tina Partridge Seller: Melissa Rennie Price: \$150,000 Mortgage: \$147,283 Lender: Quicken Loan

387 North St. Buyer: Nationstar REO Seller: Nancy Carr + Price: \$143,272 Date: 10/16/18

139 Pleasant St. Buyer: John Crockwell + Seller: Steven Clayton + Price: \$390,000 Mortgage: \$351,000 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/10/18

1119 South St Buyer: Mark Libby + Seller: Michael Mcneil Date: 10/26/18

5 Westview Rd. Buyer: Sean Day + Seller: Robert Gabriel + Price: \$383,500 Mortgage: \$396,155 Lender: USAA Fed SB Date: 10/26/18

EGREMONT

Buyer: Emily Benson Seller: Kenneth Stouffer + Price: \$225,000 Mortgage: \$179,000 Lender: USAA Fed SB Date: 10/15/18

3 Baldwin Hill Rd. Buver: William Nibur Seller: Juliette Haas Price: \$440,000

51 Creamery Rd. Buver: Bonnie Daniels Seller: 51 Creamery Road LLC Price: \$680,000 Mortgage: \$646,000 Lender: Lee Bank Date: 10/10/18

56 Lakeside Dr Buver: Kenneth Habarta + Seller: Meyer Ronald Est + Price: \$330,000 Mortgage: \$220,000 Lender: Grevlock FCU Date: 10/29/18

78 Undermountain Rd. Buver: 78 Undermountain Road LLC Seller: Penington Pitts + Price: \$360,000 Mortgage: \$270,000 Lender: Pittsfield Coop Date: 10/25/18

FLORIDA

23 Blackstone Rd. Buyer: Douglas Decoigne + Seller: Hill N Dale NT + Price: \$90,000

GREAT

1 Abbey Hill Dr. Buver: Marie Lanier Seller: Lester Meyers + Price: \$385,000 Mortgage: \$200,000 Date: 10/17/18

72 Castle St. Price: \$530,000 Mortgage: \$390,000 Lender: GMH Mtg Date: 10/1/18

Buver: Lulu NT + Price: \$150,000

24 Lake Ave. Buyer: Bradley Danyluk + Seller: Kevin Moran Price: \$287,500 Mortgage: \$230,000 Lender: Lee Bank Date: 10/26/18

Price: \$675,000 Mortgage: \$540,000 Lender: Leader Bank Date: 10/19/18

Buyer: Timothy Martin Price: \$150,000 Mortgage: \$150,000 Lender: Seller Date: 10/31/18

Buver: Jake Fink + Seller: Dale Finkle + Price: \$140,000 Mortgage: \$135,000 Lender: James Guzzi Date: 10/5/18

Buver: Christopher Daniello Seller: Daniello FT + Price: \$200,000 Mortgage: \$160,000 Lender: Lee Bank Date: 10/30/18

318 Park St. N Buver: Marisa Burntitus Price: \$236,100 Mortgage: \$224,295 Lender: Village Mtg Date: 10/31/18

Buver: 82 Railroad St LLC Seller: James Yonkouski Price: \$505,000

8 Silver St. Buyer: Inky Fingers LLP Seller: Anna Piontek Price: \$225,000 Mortgage: \$225,000 Lender: Lee Bank Date: 10/22/18

Burning Tree Rd. U:18 Buyer: David K&S L Cohen RET +

165 Maple Ave U:D Price: \$359,900

HANCOCK

2965 Hancock Rd. Seller: Eugene Gover + Price: \$223,000 Date: 10/19/18

Buyer: James Penny -Date: 10/3/18

HINSDALE

230 Robinson Rd. Buyer: Patricia Roy + Price: \$100,000 Mortgage: \$100,000 Date: 10/30/18

BARRINGTON

Lender: JPMorgan Chase

Buyer: Gregory Lipper + Seller: Brand FT +

Seller: Suzanne Sylvester +

Date: 10/18/18

Buver: Anne Murphy RET + Seller: Judith Waldman RET + Date: 10/3/18

Seller: Donald Adams + Lender: Donald Adams

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Buyer: Douglas Kutney + Seller: Beverly Kaplan

Seller: 81 Division St LLC

329 Long Pond Rd.

333 Long Pond Rd.

418 Monterey Rd.

80 N Plain Rd.

Date: 10/22/18

Seller: Ctg at Barrington Brk NT + Price: \$580,000

Buyer: Alexander Waldron 3rd

Beaver Pond Mdws U:1032 Seller: Mary Roller RET +

Date: 10/12/18

25 Margerie St. Buver: US Bank NA Tr Seller: David Reynolds + Price: \$200,000 Date: 10/23/18

35 Mountain View Ter. Buver: Bonnie Leflore Seller: Kristopher Mcdonough + Price: \$260,000 Mortgage: \$180,000 Lender: LoanDepot.com Date: 10/26/18

21 Saint James Ave. Buver: Jason Gitlin + Seller: Clover Bell-Delaney + Price: \$250,000 Mortgage: \$170,000 Lender: JPMorgan Chase Date:10/19/18

290 Summer St. Buyer: Charles VanAusdall Seller: Matthew Burgess Price: \$195,000 Mortgage: \$155,000 Lender: Lee Bank Date: 10/5/18

39 W Center St. Buyer: Mill Renaissance LLC Seller: Darlene Baisley Price: \$265,000 Mortgage: \$140,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/12/18

51 W Center St. Buyer: Mill Renaissance LLC Seller: Richard Cernik Price: \$400,000 Mortgage: \$285,000 Lender: Seller Date: 10/30/18

57 W Center St. Buyer: Mill Renaissance LLC Seller: Richard Cernik Price: \$400,000 Mortgage: \$285,000 Lender: Seller Date: 10/30/18

LENOX

624 East St. Buyer: Giancarlo Cantella + Seller: Martha Peskin Price: \$336,700 Mortgage: \$75,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/31/18

921 East St. Buyer: Timothy Irwin + Seller: Steven Seltzer Price: \$316,500 Mortgage: \$284,850 Lender: HarborOne Date: 10/26/18

23 Edgewood Dr. Buyer: Barbara Debarbieri Seller: Lawrence Fox RET + Price: \$320,750 Date: 10/10/18

82 Golden Hill Rd. Buyer: Clifford Flynn + Seller: Ross Jolly Price: \$274,400 Mortgage: \$219,400 Lender: Berkshire Bank Date: 10/1/18

21 Holmes Rd. Buyer: Lana Hearst Seller: Gary Liston Price: \$137,500 Date: 10/19/18

165 Housatonic St. Buyer: Mark Dichter + Seller: FNMA Price: \$140,000 Date: 10/22/18

51 Kemble St. Buyer: Kavin Bui + Seller: Charles Allen + Price: \$298,000 Mortgage: \$208,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/31/18

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232 Kemble St. Buver: Gwendolyn Adam + Seller: Arne Youngerman + Price: \$610,000 Mortgage: \$863,040 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/11/18

Berkshire County real estate transfers

8 Kneeland Ave. Buver: Rosenstein FT + Seller: Sarah Hancock RET + Price: \$315,000 Date: 10/12/18

165 Kemble St. U:3 Buyer: John Roche RET + Seller: John Roche RET + Price: \$1,295,000 Date: 10/1/18

165 Kemble St. U:4 Buver: Barbara Zuckerberg Seller: CR Lenox Residences LLC Date: 10/15/18

3 Morgan Manor U:8 Buyer: Bruce Deloyle + Seller: Margaret Stone Price: \$123,000 Date: 10/1/18

6 Morgan Manor U:11 Buyer: Claudia Pepper Seller: William Flaherty

Price: \$143,000 Date: 10/1/18 260 Pittsfield Rd. U:E11

Seller: Hassaram Bakhru RET+ Price: \$90,000 Mortgage: \$72,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/23/18

MONTEREY

116 Hupi Rd. Buyer: Gregory Glassman + Seller: William Schillinger Price: \$406,000 Mortgage: \$348,374 Lender: Village Mtg Date: 10/5/18

NEW MARLBORO

111 Cagney Hill Rd. Buver: Elizabeth Dehaas Seller: Ryan Dehaas + Price: \$573,750 Date: 10/12/18

Cagney Rd. Buyer: David Joffe + Seller: Elizabeth Dehaas + Price: \$677,750 Date: 10/12/18

787 Canaan Southfield Rd Buyer: Kathryn Mesirow 2017 T + Seller: Gregory Klee + Price: \$310,000

Date: 10/5/18 continued on next page

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AUTO SERVICE/INSPECTION \$205,000

 $Established\,Pitts field\,garage\,with\,4\,bays, large$ overhead doors, approx. 3,700 SF indoor space. Concrete/block construction, oil-fired hot air heat (2-3 year old), high visibility location on .5239 acre. Mostly fenced, with good parking in front and rear. MLS 224928. Ask for Barb. (4090B)

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REAL estate

tinued from page 19 119 Church Rd. Buyer: Benjamin Soto Seller: Testamentary T + Price: \$305,000 Date: 10/24/18

1976 Clayton Mill River Rd. Seller: Flora Winterbottom + Date: 10/25/18

829-833 Mill River Buyer: Robert Hartt + Seller: FNMA Price: \$159,000 Date: 10/24/18

312 Norfolk Rd. Buver: James Hanson Price: \$499 000 Mortgage: \$399,000 Lender: Pittsfield Coop

NORTH ADAMS

39 Beech St. Buyer: Eileen Atwell Seller: Michael Torchia + Mortgage: \$126,100 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/19/18

768 Church St. Buyer: David Baumbach Seller: Wavne Rarick Mortgage: \$115,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/12/18

6 Citation Ave. Buyer: Christine Gamari Seller: Kimberly Rice Mortgage: \$104,900 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/31/18

130 Harding Ave. Buyer: Christina King Seller: Patrick Banks + Mortgage: \$162,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/25/18

186 Hawthorne Ave. Buyer: Christopher Chiodo + Seller: Malinda Hayden Mortgage: \$136,000 Lender: First Choice Date: 10/25/18

55 Natural Bridge Rd. Buyer: Christina Gregory Seller: Martin Koscielniak + Mortgage: \$148,900 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/17/18

Notch Rd. Buyer: Timothy Caffrey + Seller: Donna Garner Date: 10/31/18

175 Notch Rd. Buyer: Jessica Labombard + Seller: James Williams + Price: \$139,900 Mortgage: \$134,830 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/15/18

37 South St. Buyer: Christopher Dupont Seller: Karen Beland Mortgage: \$65,000

Date: 10/31/18

585-A&B Buyer: Shaun Kelleher-Nagorski Seller: DSM Properties LLC Price: \$96 500 Mortgage: \$72,375 Lender: Lee Bank

55-59 Union St. Buyer: Very Good Properties LLC Seller: David York Price: \$99,000 Mortgage: \$102,000 Lender: Orion Howard Date: 10/17/18

52 Veazie St. Buyer: Amanda Jones Seller: Victoria Guntlow Price: \$85,000 Date: 10/30/18

121 Versailles Ave. Buyer: John N Daub Seller: John E Daub Price: \$100,000 Mortgage: \$90,000 Date: 10/5/18

352-354 W Main St. Buyer: Karen Blondin Seller: Lewis Ralph Jr Est + Price: \$120,000 Date: 10/12/18

41 Windom Ter. Buyer: Jacqueline Moran Seller: Parsonage Manor LLC Date: 10/15/18

OTIS

9 Big Island Buyer: RL FT + Seller: John Sampson Price: \$150,000

177 Clubhouse Dr Buver: Michael Berkowitz + Price: \$285,000 Date: 10/9/18

517 Dimmock Rd Buver: Kai Kuo + Price: \$268 000 Mortgage: \$214,400 Lender: Northern B&T Date: 10/15/18

76 Louden Bethlehem Rd. Buver: Richard Bliven + Price: \$253,500 Mortgage: \$202,800 Lender: Lee Bank Date: 10/12/18

72 Mallard Rd. Buyer: James Warring + Price: \$471,000 Mortgage: \$376,800 Lender: HarborOne Date: 10/23/18

1514 Monterey Rd. Buyer: Casey Carl + Seller: Donna Seymour + Price: \$222,000 Mortgage: \$199,800 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/31/18

77 N Gate Island Rd. Buver: Adnan Dahdul Price: \$555,000

Free workshops on brokerage relationships slated for North Adams, Pittsfield

BY JOHN TOWNES The options for brokerage relationships are the subject of a series

of free workshops being offered in January by the Berkshire Real Estate School.

The programs, to be held in North Adams and Pittsfield, will be led by Paul Harsch, owner and designated broker for Harsch Associates Real Estate in Williamstown. He also operates the Berkshire Real Estate School, which offers professional development courses

The upcoming presentations will include two two-hour classes each. Participants can receive four free continuing education professional development credits.

The North Adams sessions will be held on Jan. 5 and 12 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the office of Greylock Federal Credit Union at 131 Ashland St. In Pittsfield both classes will be held on Jan. 23 at the Country Club of Pittsfield from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The Pittsfield session is sponsored by Adams Community Bank and the classes in North Adams are sponsored by Greylock Federal Credit Union.

One class is an overview of brokerage relationships, including the history and background of agency, and the variations of agency relationships, including dual agency, designated and single agency, plus a category known as Facilitator/Transaction Brokerage (FTB). It also touches on the legal obligations agents must adhere to under

The other class focuses more closely on the FTB category, to clarify the distinctions between agency and non-agency relationships.

Harsch noted that participants can either attend both classes or only one. He said the two upcoming sessions are designed to accommodate differing work schedules. The Pittsfield session includes both classes on a single weekday, with lunch included. The North Adams sessions include one class on two successive Saturday mornings for people who cannot take time off during the week.

Harsch, who is a Realtor Emeritus and a licensed real estate instructor, began his real estate career in 1975 and founded Harsch Associates in 1979.

He said he is offering the courses for several reasons. "I began as a schoolteacher, and I really enjoy teaching and have a natural inclination to that," he said. "I also wanted to offer these free classes as a way to give back to the profession that has treated me so well."

He said he also wanted the classes to instruct real estate professionals in the different categories of client relationships, and to explain the role of a transactional brokerage.

"I had a central role in introducing into law the designation of transactional brokerage in Massachusetts," he said. "I believe that has many advantages, but it's not being taught, and is not fully understood. The concept of agency is the best known."

Harsch emphasized that, while he personally favors transactional brokerages, the classes are designed to explain and compare all of the options in an objective sense.

"I teach the benefits and pitfalls of all of the relationships, including agency and transactional, to allow people to make informed decisions about what to choose," he said.

He explained that in a traditional agency relationship, the broker represents one party, either the buyer or seller. In an FTB relationship, a broker is retained by a party to a sale but their role is to seek out the best outcome for both parties in a transaction.

Harsch said that this gives the broker greater flexibility in giving advice to a client and working with both sides of a sale to achieve mutually satisfactory terms and price.

"An FTB is more of a mediator, than an advocate," he said. "This makes it easier to achieve a win-win situation, rather than a competition with a winner and a loser."

He said that this can also simplify the relationships, because agents in reality often serve a similar role.

"It's common practice for real estate practitioners to find themselves working on both sides of the ledger, even though they are only supposed to represent their client," he said. "The category of transactional representation more accurately reflects that fact.'

He added that it also frees the client from legal liability for mistakes or improper actions by a broker. "The transactional broker is accountable for their own actions, but a client is not liable," he said.

Harsch previously presented these classes in Great Barrington and Williamstown, and said they were well received.

While the classes are free, preregistration is required. He added that the number of openings are more limited in North Adams because of the size of the space, while the classes in Pittsfield are in a large facility that can accommodate more people.

To register for the upcoming classes or for more information about Berkshire Real Estate School, go to harschrealestate.com.◆

Date: 10/12/18

PERU

10 W Main Rd. Buyer: Kristy Burris Seller: Rvan Lamb + Price: \$117,500 Mortgage: \$115,371 Lender: Berkshire Bank Date: 10/22/18

PITTSFIELD

Buver: CR Rental LLC Price: \$85,000 Mortgage: \$100,000 Lender: Raymond Parrott Jr Date: 10/26/18

Buver: US Bank NA Tr Seller: Marcell Comwell + Price: \$276,498 Date: 10/10/18

170 2nd St. Buver: Destiny Lechner Price: \$92,000

Mortgage: \$77,600 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/19/18

53 Abbott St. Buver: Nicole Maffuccio Price: \$115,000 Mortgage: \$103,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/15/18

53 Adelaide Ave Buver: Daniel Woods + Seller: William Papas 2013 RET+ Price: \$266,000 Mortgage: \$226,000 Lender: Greylock FCU

10 Alcove St Buyer: Wells Fargo Bank Seller: Nana Damuah + Date: 10/23/18

Date: 10/26/18

66 Alcove St. Buyer: Megan Tardibuono Seller: Michael Merriam + Price: \$88,000 Mortgage: \$102,355 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/2/18

Buver: Steven Havner Seller: Matheau Schiff + Price: \$220,000 Date: 10/15/18

11 Arch St. Buyer: Louis Chamberlain + Seller: Tosetti Mary Est + Price: \$80,000 Mortgage: \$95,676 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/24/18

14 Argyle Rd. Buyer: Kendra Cookis Seller: Mary Daury Price: \$162,500 Mortgage: \$132,500 Lender: Grevlock FCU Date: 10/5/18

57 Asci Dr. Buver: Richard Loftus Seller: Loftus Lois Est + Price: \$190,000 Mortgage: \$194,085 Lender: Mtg Research Date: 10/2/18

Buver: Mark Oclair Seller: Jason Labelle Price: \$212,000 Mortgage: \$210,810 Lender: USAA Fed SB Date: 10/9/18

4 Beaumont Dr. Buyer: Kristen Negrini Seller: Linda Obrien NT + Price: \$130,950 Mortgage: \$`127,000 Lender: Greylock FCU

98 Benedict Rd. Buyer: Oanh Nguyen

Seller: Raanan Hartman + Price: \$138,500 Mortgage: \$135,990 Lender: Movement Mtg Date: 10/3/18

112 Blythewood Dr. Buyer: Eric Berkowitz + Seller: Marian Dufresne NT + Price: \$679,000 Mortgage: \$454,000 Lender: Wells Fargo Date: 10/2/18

165 Brighton Ave. Buyer: Carole Castonguay Seller: Wayne Curley + Price: \$147,500 Mortgage: \$143,075 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/17/18

136 Brown St Buyer: Joseph Reed + Seller: Joan Dafarra Price: \$143,000 Mortgage: \$140,409 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/2/18

Buyer: Pittsfield Forests LLC Seller: Westbrook Farm NT + Price: \$800,000 Date: 10/2/18

70 Central Berkshire Blvd. Buyer: Glenn Armstrong Seller: Edward Weeden + Price: \$256,500 Mortgage: \$228,285 Lender: Pittsfield Coop Date: 10/16/18

Buyer: Leo Hanley Jr + Seller: James Lortsher + Price: \$400,000

Mortgage: \$250,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/17/18

157 Cheshire Rd. Buyer: David Edwards + Seller: Joshua Arico Price: \$141,950 Mortgage: \$109,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/31/18



14 Chickering St. Buyer: April Nunes Seller: Marlena Willis Price: \$145,000 Mortgage: \$137,750 Lender: NBT Bank Date: 10/12/18

53 Chickering St. Buyer: Ruby Realty LLC Seller: Beverly Dufur + Price: \$80,000 Mortgage: \$100,000 Lender: Lawrence Tiberio Date: 10/15/18

650 Churchill St. Buyer: Delarn LLC Price: \$980,000 Date: 10/12/18

Buyer: 45 Circular LLC Seller: Leydet Properties LLC Price: \$130,000

Date: 10/4/18

152 Cole Ave. Buyer: Katrina Litano Seller: Marco Adorno Price: \$130,000 Mortgage: \$124,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/19/18

329 Columbus Ave. Buyer: Frantz Norbrun Seller: Mae Properties LLC Price: \$163,000 Mortgage: \$122,250 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/5/18

128 Crane Ave. Buyer: Michael Eagan Seller: Eagan FT + Price: \$132,000 Mortgage: \$50,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/18/18

6 Daralyn Ct Buyer: Michael Coelho Seller: Luis Coelho + Price: \$77,000 Date: 10/1/18

146 Draper Ave. Buyer: Jennifer Mercier Seller: Anne Dascanio Price: \$135,000 Mortgage: \$105,000 Lender: Lee Bank

53 E New Lenox Rd. Buyer: Bruno Quinson Seller: Court Hill Farm 2 LLC Price: \$278,500 Date: 10/26/18

745 East St. Buyer: Yoshi Corp



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Berkshire County real estate transfers



Seller: East Street NT + Price: \$290,000 Date: 10/25/18

84 Elizabeth St. Buyer: Ricki Sambuco Seller: David Ferry + Price: \$175,500 Mortgage: \$170,235 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/26/18

461 Elm St. Buyer: Matthew Marquis + Seller: Carla Marquis Price: \$112,000 Mortgage: \$112,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/15/18

593 Elm St. Buyer: William Botto Jr + Seller: Brian Belknap + Price: \$155,000 Mortgage: \$124,000 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/31/18

36 Gale Ave. Buyer: Luis Soasti + Seller: Dylan Anthony LLC Price: \$223,000 Mortgage: \$218,960 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/25/18

97 Gamwell Ave. Buyer: David Toomey Seller: Joshua Tierney + Price: \$160,000 Mortgage: \$125,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/5/18

15 High St. Buyer: US Bank NA Tr Seller: Elmer Johnson + Price: \$109,029 Date: 10/5/18

218 Highland Ave. Buyer: Michael Popowich + Seller: William Lander + Price: \$110,000 Date: 10/10/18

67 Howard St. Buyer: William Winslow + Seller: Wayne Hunt Price: \$117,000 Mortgage: \$105,300 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/18/18

101 Imperial Ave. Buyer: Shane Ortega Seller: Walker Barbara Est + Price: \$176,500 Mortgage: \$171,205 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/11/18

24 Juliana Dr. Buyer: Zachery Roberson Seller: Vincent Viscuso + Price: \$330,000 Mortgage: \$310,337 Lender: USAA Fed SB Date: 10/23/18

60 Kenwood St. Buyer: Matthew St George Seller: Stephen Couchman Price: \$169,000 Mortgage: \$160,550 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/17/18

18 Lake St. Buyer: Princewell Abanulo Seller: Gary Greene + Price: \$140,000 Mortgage: \$112,000 Lender: Luso FCU

9 Lanark Rd. Buyer: Anthony Lizotte Seller: Katie Sutton Price: \$180,000 Mortgage: \$165,000 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/5/18

321 Lebanon Ave. Buyer: Colin Adams Seller: Tallage Lincoln LLC Price: \$99,000 Mortgage: \$120,280 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/29/18

55 Lexington Pkwy. Buyer: Joshua Tierney + Seller: Michael Duffy + Price: \$245,700 Mortgage: \$209,700 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/5/18

84 Lillian St. Buyer: James Lebovitz + Seller: Rosemary Carey IRT + Price: \$199,900 Mortgage: \$159,920 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/15/18

15 Loumar Dr. Buyer: Patrick Finamore Seller: Nancy Connor Price: \$245,535 Mortgage: \$238,168 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/31/18

44 Marcella Ave. Buyer: 122 Longview Terrace NT + Seller: Kenneth Turner + Price: \$79,000 Date: 10/1/18

2 Marco Dr. Buyer: Anthony Witherell Seller: Valerie Poripski Price: \$179,900 Mortgage: \$170,950 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/19/18

20 Marshall Ave. Buyer: Alexis Sprague Seller: Elizabeth Kirk + Price: \$242,000 Mortgage: \$234,740 Lender: Quicken Loan Date: 10/26/18

361 Onota St. Buyer: Darlene Baisley Seller: Horomanski Jenette Est + Price: \$127,500 Date: 10/12/18

17 Pinehurst Ave. Buyer: Michael Buono + Seller: Ethan Oberwager + Price: \$184,900 Mortgage: \$175,655 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/4/18

142 Pomeroy Ave. Buyer: Scott Osleeb + Seller: Francis Spina Price: \$233,000 Mortgage: \$221,350 Lender: Village Mtg Date: 10/31/18

231 Pomeroy Ave. Buyer: US Bank NA Tr Seller: Robert Conner + Price: \$75,000 Date: 10/18/18

108 Richard Dr. Buyer: Michael Kalmbach Seller: John Anthony RET 2018 + Price: \$212,500 Mortgage: \$170,000 Lender: Fairway Mtg Date: 10/11/18

29 Richmond Ave. Buyer: Kyle Taylor Seller: Bayview Loan Servicing Price: \$79,900 Mortgage: \$77,115 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/29/18

110 Ridgeway Ave. Buyer: Erin Latimer Seller: Debra Arasimowicz Price: \$160,000 Mortgage: \$144,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/4/18

30 Rockland Dr. Buyer: Robert Galvagni Sr + Seller: Christine Smith + Price: \$265,000 Mortgage: \$251,750 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/29/18

31 Roselyn Dr. Buyer: Mark Pettus + Seller: Lori Reamer Price: \$251,000 Mortgage: \$200,800 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/24/18

560 S Mountain Rd. Buyer: Ryan Naylor Seller: James Giacoletto Price: \$280,000 Mortgage: \$200,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/15/18

194 S Mountain Rd. Buyer: Luke Conroe + Seller: Obrien FT + Price: \$273,000 Mortgage: \$245,700 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/31/18

94 Sadler Ave. Buyer: Brian Calebaugh + Seller: Ryann Kennedy Price: \$140,000 Mortgage: \$140,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/26/18

215 Springside Ave. Buyer: Manuel Naula Seller: Shirley Bruno Price: \$122,000 Date: 10/16/18

41 Unkamet Park Dr. Buyer: Cornelius Mcmahon + Seller: Natalia Renzi + Price: \$202,000 Date: 10/1/18

37 Valentine Rd. Buyer: Michael Valenti Seller: Steven Perry + Price: \$315,000 Mortgage: \$257,505 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/12/18

63 Velma Ave. Buyer: William Cranson Jr + Seller: Mary Bolduc Price: \$160,000 Mortgage: \$163,440 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/25/18

578 W Housatonic St. Buyer: Justine Dus Seller: Jeffrey Gardner Price: \$113,500 Mortgage: \$107,825 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/31/18

651 West St. Buyer: Paula Mckinley Seller: David Ostaski Price: \$135,000 Mortgage: \$108,000 Lender: Pittsfield Coop Date: 10/11/18

1425 West St. Buyer: Wesley Frewin + Seller: Van Shields + Price: \$438,000 Mortgage: \$350,000 Lender: First Bank Date: 10/23/18

70 Westchester Ave. Buyer: Heather Gancarz Seller: Myla Blum + Price: \$133,000 Mortgage: \$129,010 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/5/18

11 Westover St. Buyer: Casey Peirano + Seller: Kristie Gentile Price: \$186,000 Mortgage: \$192,060 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/15/18

30 Willard Pl. Buyer: Andrea Farmer Seller: Joshua North Price: \$100,000 Mortgage: \$100,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/29/18

331 Williams St. Buyer: Robert Dougherty + Seller: Dougherty Thomas Est + Price: \$150,000 Mortgage: \$85,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/12/18

399 Williams St. Buyer: Alina Buimestru Seller: William Mackinnon Sr T + Price: \$193,000 Mortgage: \$154,400 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/24/18

82 Wilson St. Buyer: Skyler Karns + Seller: Melissa Dimanche Price: \$86,000 Mortgage: \$68,600 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/4/18

124 Windsor Ave. Buyer: Michael Mcneil Seller: Khalil Yacteen + Price: \$150,000 Date: 10/4/18

60 Wood Ave. Buyer: Bryan Cota Seller: Christian Cardillo + Price: \$105,000 Mortgage: \$100,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/31/18

Churchill Crst. U:33 Buyer: Kristen Vadnais Seller: Mary Schreiber Price: \$158,000 Mortgage: \$148,260 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/15/18

433 North St. U:204 Buyer: 433 North RE LLC Seller: John Perry Price: \$135,000 Date: 10/29/18

1450 North St. U:204 Buyer: Timothy Ewart Seller: Donna Dastoli-Garey + Price: \$147,000 Date: 10/1/18

Sunrise C U:10 Buyer: Kathleen Catelotti + Seller: Thomas Kelley 2015 FT+ Price: \$432,500 Mortgage: \$200,000 Lender: Lee Bank Date: 10/24/18

RICHMOND

10 Baker Street Ext. Buyer: Edward Loring + Seller: Sandra Kimple Price: \$90,000

58 Baker Street Ext. Buyer: Edward Loring + Seller: Rabouin Properties LP Price: \$310,000 Mortgage: \$300,700 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/10/18

91 Deer Hill Rd. Buyer: Darren Orbach + Seller: Susan Phillips Price: \$725,000 Mortgage: \$480,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/17/18

140 Lenox Branch Rd. Buyer: Henry Frankowski Seller: Gregg Day Price: \$465,000 Mortgage: \$372,000 Lender: Village Mtg Date: 10/30/18

22 Summit Rd. Buyer: Brynne Kennedy Seller: Emerson Contractors Price: \$475,000 Mortgage: \$300,000 Lender: Lee Bank Date: 10/26/18

SANDISFIELD

63 Roberts Rd. Buyer: Bear Meadow LLC Seller: Steve Peperis Price: \$93,000 Date: 10/4/18

10 Tannery Rd. Buyer: Ayesha Mayadas Seller: Iwan Baan Price: \$270,000 Mortgage: \$189,000 Lender: Greenfield Sygs Date: 10/1/18

SAVOY

262 Loop Rd. Buyer: Kristie Shook Seller: Daniel Pascarelli Price: \$269,900 Mortgage: \$2165,920 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/15/18 Main Rd. Lot 4 Buyer: Victoria West Seller: Kenneth Monty Price: \$77,500 Mortgage: \$35,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/9/18

SHEFFIELD

1114 Ashley Falls Rd. Buyer: Nicholas Greene + Seller: Bennett Blanche Est + Price: \$270,000 Mortgage: \$242,300 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/19/18

1494 Ashley Falls Rd. Buyer: Alixandra Borgert Seller: Richard Swiatek + Price: \$285,000 Mortgage: \$276,450 Lender: Village Mtg Date: 10/12/18

1257 Bow Wow Rd. Buyer: Regina Schwarz Seller: Linda Wayne 2015 IRT + Price: \$415,000

Hickey Hill Rd. Buyer: Julie Vayer + Seller: Hickey Hill Partners LLC Price: \$125,000 Date: 10/5/18 199 Hickey Hill Rd. Buyer: Julie Vayer + Seller: David Galpem QPRT + Price: \$625,000 Mortgage: \$340,000 Lender: Salisbury B&T Date: 10/5/18

176 Maple Ave. Buyer: Joseph Crawford-Kelly + Seller: Julie Vayer + Price: \$454,000 Mortgage: \$272,400 Lender: Lee Bank Date: 10/5/18

400 S Undermountain Rd. Buyer: Susan Jenks-Feuer Seller: Nadine Hawver Price: \$374,000 Mortgage: \$299,200 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/3/18

21 Sheffield Business Park Buyer: Robert Blouch Jr + Seller: CMR LLC Price: \$574,750 Date: 10/17/18

STOCKBRIDGE

25 Beechwood Dr. Buyer: Ronald Schneider Seller: Phyllis Schneider Price: \$266,000 Date: 10/11/18 Castle Hill Rd. Buyer: John Morris + Seller: Cherry Hill RET + Price: \$1,110,00 Mortgage: \$800,000 Lender: Cherry Hill RT

77 E Main St. Buyer: Alan Clark Seller: Francis Steinert Price: \$240,000 Date: 10/23/18

Buyer: Wells Fargo Bank Seller: James Wheeler + Price: \$180,000 Date: 10/3/18

140 Lenox Branch Rd. Buyer: Henry Frankowski Seller: Gregg Day Price: \$465,000 Date: 10/301/8

7 Rattlesnake Mountain Buyer: William Loutrel + Seller: Rattlesnake 5 RT + Price: \$674,100 Mortgage: \$150,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/51/8

41 Main St. U:9 Buyer: Douglas Wilkins + Seller: David Mccarthy Price: \$127,000 Date: 10/5/18

TYRINGHAM

49 Main Rd. Buyer: Charles Gonnello + Seller: Ronald Goldberg + Price: \$250,000 Mortgage: \$237,500 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/26/18

14 Stonebridge Way Buyer: Caitlin Bartholomew Seller: Alex Kolben + Price: \$290,000 Mortgage: \$280,000 Lender: Lee Bank Date: 10/17/18

WASHINGTON

1303 Lovers Lane Rd. Buyer: FNMA Seller: Keith Bigelow + Price: \$186,533 Date: 10/5/18

489 S Washington State Rd. Buyer: Danielle Fisher Seller: Jean Perrea Price: \$184,000 Mortgage: \$185,858 Lender: Academy Mtg Date: 10/3/18 continued on page 23



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Klara's Gourmet Cookies continued from page 1

"This was really a perfect fit for our business," said Diller, noting that its prior use as a commercial kitchen provided some of the basic infrastructure needed for cookie production.

When combined with warehouse space they lease in the Berkshire Corporate Center at 480 Pleasant St. in Lee, the new facility gives the business a total of 6,000 square

Sotonova and Diller said that the move will both increase their potential output of cookies and add to the overall efficiency of the business, with a larger oven and other equipment for baking, packaging and shipping.

They noted that the business had outgrown its current space several years ago.

"In 2009, we bought this building on Railroad Street as a live-work space," said Diller. "It was well-suited to our situation then because we could live on the second floor and operate the business on the first floor. But as the business grew, we've been crowded out. Right now I'm in my office at a desk surrounded by cookies. There's hardly room to move in here."

While the new location will provide muchneeded space for their growing business, Sotonova noted that the increased efficiency of the operations there will also have an important personal benefit.

"We work very long hours," she said. "This morning I was up at 1 a.m. to start baking. This afternoon I had to do some bookkeeping that may go into the evening. As we become more efficient and can bake more cookies faster, that will also give us some free time, including getting back our weekends to do other things as a family."

They are making the cross-town transition in stages, with the goal of completing the move by January.



Jefferson Diller stands by the newly installed oven at the Water Street site that can handle 40 trays of cookies at a time, four times that of their existing oven. Along with the increased baking capacity, the new facility will also feature other equipment and systems that will improve the overall efficiency of their operations.

They will continue to operate in their present site, while renovating and setting up the new facility. Then they will shift the baking, packaging and other operations there, while retaining the office on Railroad Street.

"When people ask when we'll complete the move, my answer is 'soonish,'" said

Sotonova added that they are also juggling that process with the demands of the holiday season. "December is one of our busiest months, with purchases of gift baskets," she said. "So we're working around that."

They will also continue to live in the

Railroad Street building. "We'll stay there and have a little more breathing room,"

Diller said they are investing about \$40,000 for new equipment and about \$140,000 for physical work on the Water Street building.

The expansion is being financed by Adams Community Bank, through an SBA 504 loan package in which the bank provides 50 percent, a certified development finance company provides another 40 percent, and the borrower provides 10 percent.

Diller noted that Keith Girouard of the Berkshire County office of the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center provided vital assistance.

"He has been a tremendous help," said Diller. "We started talking with him about this several years ago, and he provided important advice and assistance all the way. Without him, this probably would not have happened."

Czech roots

The origins of Klara's Gourmet Cookies extend back to Chrast, a town in the Czech Republic where Sotonova grew up.

She developed her baking skills at a young age, learning from her mother and grandmother, using traditional recipes that had been in her family for generations.

Sotonova emigrated to the United States about 20 years ago at age 19 in search of opportunities she did not believe existed in the Czech Republic. She initially came to the

Berkshires for a job in the kitchen at Eisner Camp in Great Barrington, which is affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism.

She earned a degree in hospitality management from Berkshire Community College and then worked in a restaurant in nearby Hillsdale, N.Y., where she met Diller, who was a chef.

"We started spending more and more time together," recalled Diller, who grew up in southern Berkshire County. "One day she made some of her cookies for me, and I realized two things: A) she loved me, and B) she really knew how to bake. The cookies were great."

He suggested they start a business baking and selling her cookies, which led to the formation of Klara's Gourmet Cookies in 2006.

At first it was a very small operation in her apartment in Great Barrington.

"We started out in direct sales in places like the Lenox Farmers' Market and a market in Boston," said Diller. "Then we got distributors and gradually started adding wholesale accounts, and the business took off. It became too large for the apartment, and we moved to our present live-work space in Lee in 2009."

They presently sell a line of about 12 varieties of cookies, including Ginger Shortbread, Double Chocolate Sea Salt and Coconut Macaroons, among others. They also sell gift baskets that include thematic selections of cookies plus a few additional items such





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25 Pittsfield Rd. Lenox, Ma. 01240 (413) 442-3001 www.morrisonshomeimprovement.com as coffee from Barrington Coffee Roasting Company.

"We have a basic specialty of high-quality everyday cookies," said Sotonova.

Diller said the wholesale network accounts for the great majority of their sales. Stores that sell Klara's Gourmet Cookies in the Berkshires include area Big Y supermarkets, Nejaime's Wines in Lenox and Stockbridge, the Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge, and Guido's Fresh Marketplace in Pittsfield and Great Barrington, among others.

He said using distributors has enabled them to get into larger supermarkets. In addition, noted Diller, their largest sources of customers are TJ Maxx, Home Goods and Marshall's. "That may seem counter-intuitive, because we think of them as clothing, home furnishing and gift stores," he said. "But they do sell food items."

They also gain exposure for their products by participating in industry events such as the Fancy Food international trade show in New York City.

Cookie capacity

Their success in getting Klara's Gourmet Cookies on the shelves of these and other retail outlets has pushed the limits of their current cookie-making capacity and driven the expansion project.

The larger oven that has been installed in the new Water Street facility has the capacity to bake 40 trays of cookies at a time, which Diller said is quadruple the output of their present oven.

When operations begin there, the cookie trays will be loaded onto carts which roll into the oven for baking and then roll out to designated areas for cooling and packaging.

Sotonova and Diller estimate that the additional capacity and efficiency enhancements will enable the business to comfortably handle twice its current sales volume.

However, they don't plan any major push to grow rapidly. Instead they expect to continue their current pace of sales growth.

"We have maintained a steady growth rate over five years, and this year we are up 20 percent," Diller said. "We're projecting about 10 percent growth next year."

He said they hope to continue on that trajectory and to keep Klara's growth on a manageable basis.

They currently have three full-time and one part-time employees. "With the new facility, we plan to add at least one additional full-time person, and then see what the volume dictates in the future," said Diller.

Real estate transfers

continued from page 21

WEST STOCKBRIDGE

64 Lenox Rd. Buyer: Wanda Beckwith RET + Seller: Arthur Luger + Price: \$267,500 Mortgage: \$203,000 Lender: Pittsfield Coop Date: 10/12/18

3 Quiet Knoll Rd. Buyer: Misha Forrester Seller: Busse Day Linda Est + Price: \$385,000 Date: 10/2/18

WILLIAMSTOWN

72 Arnold St. Buyer: Weaver House LLC Seller: Berkshire Ventures LLC Price: \$100,000 Date: 10/15/18

206 Bee Hill Rd. Buyer: Hagen Yang Seller: Claire Bernard Price: \$610,000 Mortgage: \$488,000 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/4/18

608 Henderson Rd. Buyer: Paul Lovegreen + Seller: Sharon Lavin Price: \$354,000 Mortgage: \$283,200 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/1/18

234 Ide Rd. Buyer: Arthur Salvadore + Seller: Rudolph Dorothy Est + Price: \$575,000 Date: 10/22/18

204 Longview Ter.

Sotonova noted that she also plans to maintain the company's current product line, rather than rapidly diversifying it. She said it is important to retain both the quality and consistency of their products.

"Our offerings will be the same for at least a year," she said. "We have to figure out the new systems. Then I might add some new items gradually, but we'll keep our basic focus on high-quality cookies."

When Sotonova was asked how she feels about the success of Klara's Gourmet Cookies, her answer reflected pride in her adopted country.

"It's pretty amazing when I remember how we started in a small Great Barrington apartment with an old Kenmore stove," she said. "It's taken a lot of hard work and dedication. But it also proves that here in America people have the opportunity to accomplish anything."



Originally a small commercial kitchen, the Water Street building came with some of the basic infrastructure needed for cookie production. "This was really a perfect fit for our business," says Jefferson Diller.



Buyer: Henry Henderson + Seller: Paul Poulin +

287 Luce Rd. Buyer: David Rice + Seller: John Stomberg + Price: \$390,000 Mortgage: \$312,000 Lender: Greylock FCU Date: 10/2/18

Price: \$472.500

Date: 10/26/18

87 Maple St. Buyer: Trevor Jewett Seller: Eloise Finlinson Price: \$137,900 Date: 10/16/18

1148 N Hoosac Rd. Buyer: Jo Harrison Seller: Sandra Steuer Price: \$198,000 Date: 10/1/18

495 Pine Cobble Rd. Buyer: Williams College Seller: Thomas Mahar + Price: \$388,500 Date: 10/1/18

738 Simonds Rd. Buyer: Matthew Howard + Seller: Sam Amoroso + Price: \$275,000 Date: 10/19/18

1020 Simonds Rd. Buyer: Ashley Benson + Seller: Laura Moore Price: \$384,000 Mortgage: \$345,216 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/5/18

S Hemlock Ln. U:128 Buyer: Wathoo Siwapornchai Seller: Paul Solomon Price: \$215,000 Mortgage: \$193,285 Lender: Adams Community Date: 10/2/18 ◆

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