



The *Strong* Connection

Your Business Partner

January/February, 2017

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
ALLE KISKI STRONG CHAMBER

Busy Beaver HomExpo *sponsored by Thermo-Twin Industries, Inc.*

Get Inspired! The 16th annual HomExpo is February 17, 18 & 19, 2017 at the Pittsburgh Mills Mall during all mall hours.

With over 30,000 visitors during the three-day expo, The Busy Beaver HomExpo has become the largest "free to the public" home show in the tri-state area!

Get in out of the cold at the largest "free admission" home expo in the region. Enjoy a wide variety of vendors and entertainers. The hours on Friday are 10 am to 9 pm, Saturday 10 am to 9 pm and Sunday 11 am to 6 pm. Lots of great entertainment is planned for the weekend. The stage is located in Neighborhood 3. Many local authors will be on hand in Neighborhood 1. Meet the authors and have your purchased books autographed! What a great gift idea for your friends and family....or you!

The three-day expo will feature over 100 vendors and crafters! Everything you need for your home, garden and lifestyle. From windows to doors, kitchens to basements, wine-tasting, homemade candy and baked goods and much more.

Busy Beaver will have a satellite store located in the mall and new this year Thermo-Twin Industries will have a full sunroom displayed inside as well.

The Alle Kiski Strong Chamber is proud to invite you to be a part of the Busy Beaver HomExpo at the Pittsburgh Mills Mall. To maximize your opportunities for success you can be a vendor or sponsor. There are sponsor levels to fit any budget from \$10,000 to \$50. Busy Beaver, Thermo-Twin Industries, Inc., Wayne Homes, 2 Krew Security & Surveillance, Trib Total Media, Betterliving Patio & Sunrooms of Pittsburgh and Style-Rite Kitchens have made the commitment to be a sponsor and so can you!

For more information please contact Lynda at 724-224-3400 or Lynda@akstrong.com

Visit our website at www.allekiskistrong.com



Alle Kiski Strong Chamber

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"The Strong Connection" newsletter is published by the Alle Kiski Strong Chamber. Advertising and news articles from members are accepted with all material subject to approval.

ADVERTISING RATES:

Business card: \$50 * Inserts: \$100
Sponsorship Ad: 1/2 page back cover: \$200

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Tarentum, PA 15084

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Fax: 724-224-3442
E-mail: Lynda@akstrong.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Coffee & Connections Johnny Carpet

February 7, 2017
8:30 am to 10:00 am
233 Fifth Street, Freeport, Pa 16229
FREE for Chamber Members
Where Members Meet to Network

Busy Beaver HomExpo

sponsored by Thermo-Twin Industries, Inc.
February 17, 18 & 19, 2017
Pittsburgh Mills Mall
During all mall hours

Vendor booth space (10x10)
\$650 (chamber members)
\$850 (non-chamber members)

Crafter Area space
\$300 (no pipe & drape — 8 ft table provided)

Reserve your space before it is too late!
724-224-3400 or lynda@akstrong.com

Meet-N-Move with Butler County Chamber

March 7, 2017
Concordia Lutheran Ministries
11:30 am — 1:00 pm

Lunch & Progressive Networking with two Area Chambers! An Excellent networking opportunity!
\$25.00 (chamber or prospective members)
\$30.00 (non-chamber members)

Get Noticed! Be a Sponsor! \$100
(A table will be provided for your promotional items)

Make your reservations today:
724-224-3400 or lynda@akstrong.com

Coffee & Connections Heritage Hospice

March 22, 2017
8:30 am to 10:00 am
2400 Leechburg Road, New Kensington, PA 15068
FREE for Chamber Members
Where Members Meet to Network

CHAMBER NEWS



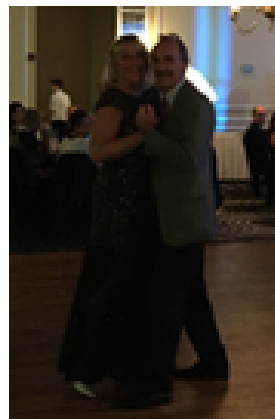
Holiday Gala *Masquerade Ball* Quality Inn— December 2, 2016

An enchanted evening was had by all!

Congratulations to our Non-Profit of the Year:
Freeport Area Kiwanis

Thank you

Buster Maxwell, Singing Impressionist
Laura Jacko, Harpist
Bill Hall, Photography
Gerry Smith, Auctioneer



Thank you Sponsors:

Event:

Allegheny Valley Hospital
Concordia Lutheran Ministries

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Gold:

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UPMC St. Margaret

Silver:

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Platinum Ridge Center for Rehabilitation & Healing

Friend of Event:

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WESTARM Physical Therapy & Homecare

Thank you program advertisers:

Community Library of Allegheny County, General Press Corp., Lenape Technical School, Quality Life Services, RE/MAX Dynamic REALTORS & Tarentum Area Lions

Thank you Silent Auction donations: #1 Cochran, Altamira Instruments, Amber Woods, Belmont Complex, Central Electric Coop., Citizens Family Health Clinic, Concordia, Freeport Kiwanis, Heritage Hospice, JV Manufacturing Co., Leadership Alle-Kiski Valley, Lenape Technical School, Northwest Savings Bank, Penn State New Kensington, Paul & Pat Hollinger, Saxony Health Center, Seita Diamond Jewelers, Sodini & Company, The Rivers Edge Canoe & Kayak, Thomas Tours and Travel, McCutcheon Enterprises, Orphans of the Storm, NexTier & W. PA Music & Arts Academy.

A special thank you to the volunteers who assisted during the evening of the event: Debbi Askin, Kelly Montgomery, Debra Jardine & Cindy Ripper.

Thank you Gala Committee: Debbi Askin, John Mango, Kelly Montgomery & Stephen Rusek.

Sincere appreciation to Chad McCutcheon for his tenure as the Alle Kiski Strong Chamber Board Chair



CHAMBER NEWS



Senator Randy Vulakovich Luncheon

Zone 28 — December 14, 2016

Thank you Sponsors:

Ark Basement Services, UPMC St. Margaret
Quality Life Services

WELCOME

NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Ronald J. Scanlon, CPA **McCall Scanlon & Tice, LLC.**

Ron is a founding partner of McCall Scanlon & Tice, LLC. With over 30 years of experience, Ron has a diversified business background including significant experience in audit, review, business advisory and tax

services. Ron works with a variety of types of companies including commercial and industrial, construction, oil and gas, coal, retail, real estate, not-for-profit entities and local governments. Ron is partner-in-charge of the firm's Kittanning, Pennsylvania, office. He is in charge of the firm's accounting and auditing quality control and in that capacity, developed the Quality Control Policy document. A 1982 graduate of Clarion University of Pennsylvania, Ron is also a member of the Pennsylvania Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Ron is a member of the Alle Kiski Strong Chamber, the Rotary Club of Hampton Township and serves on the Advisory Board of Clarion University of Pennsylvania.

rscanlon@mscpas.com

BJ Schaltenbrand, CTSP

BeaverJack Tree Service, LLC

Over the past eight years, the company has grown to employing twelve fulltime employees, two bucket trucks, one chip truck, three dump trucks, four chippers, one skid loader, two backhoes, snowplowing equipment for four trucks, lawn care equipment and many other assets. Our service area has grown to provide complete tree service needs to Allegheny, Armstrong, Westmoreland, Beaver, Indiana and Butler counties. BeaverJack is FirstEnergy's chosen contractor in the area, steadily and repetitively services over twenty property management companies, HOA's, numerous corporate contracts all while servicing our wonderful residential customers.



The main goals that BJ strives for in which has helped in building a successful professional company are:

- Providing a safe and aesthetic environment for all that believe in such an elusive contractor
- Pride in work and customer satisfaction staffing a 24 hour emergency service
- Build a strong and trustworthy relationship with any customer base
- Safety for customers as well as staff

Safety and education is a huge part of this business. In November 2016, BJ has earned the CTSP certification (Certified Treecare Safety Professional) through the TCIA Organization. This highly respected industry's only safety credentialing program in the industry, this program is designed to address several of the safety that tree care companies face such as:

- Leadership
- Hazard control and prevention
- Incident control and prevention
- Adult Learning

In December 2016, a second storefront opened directly across the current location at: 2418 Freeport Rd, Natrona Heights, PA 15065. This location is open to the public Monday-Saturday for customer relations and retail sales as well as used for safety meetings and staff meetings.

Also in 2016, a second company, BeaverJack Landscape was formed providing snow and ice removal services, lawn care, hardscaping, landscaping as well as mulch, gravel, salt, tree and plant sales.

BJ is currently on track to making BeaverJack Tree Service, LLC an accredited company and is undergoing a comprehensive on-site audit of professional and business practices which is so exciting for the company and crew members.

BeaverJack Tree Service, LLC is a member of the BBB, Angie's List, HomeAdvisor, FirstEnergy contractor and the TCIA (Tree Care Industry Association). Our online presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and website www.beaverjacktreeservice.com

BJ currently resides in Fawn Township with his wife Allison, two sons Dane and Easton, and their dog Neiko (who is our official greeter) stop into our office and meet the crew and Neiko.

BJ may be contacted through the company website www.beaverjacktreeservice.com

CHAMBER MEMBER NEWS

Quality Life Services

Second Annual "Laugh For Love"

Tired of hibernating? Want to get out and enjoy an evening of entertainment while supporting a great non-profit? Then join Don't Stop Dreamin' as we host our second annual "Laugh For Love" event on February 18, 2017. It will be held at Conley Resort from 7 to 11 p.m. This year's event will feature Western PA's comedian Matt Wolfarth, local DJ Marc DeHart, delicious hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar and a Chinese Auction. Auction items have been donated by the Pittsburgh Steelers and Pirates along with many other items from supporters of Don't Stop Dreamin'. Tickets are \$40 per person and can be obtained by calling 724-431-0770 ext. 2159.

Don't Stop Dreamin' is a local non-profit that grants DREAMS to the residents in the Quality Life Services Family of nursing and personal care homes. Your generosity will help to make DREAMS come true and create everlasting memories in 2017.

The American Cancer Society Relay for Life

The American Cancer Society Relay for Life is a life-changing experience that give everyone in communities across the globe a chance to celebrate the lives of people who have battled cancer, Remember loved ones lost and Fight back against the disease. Each year, more than 4 million people in over 20 countries take part in this global phenomenon and raise much-needed funds and awareness to save lives from cancer.

The Relay for Life of highlands, PA is an annual, all-day event that is held each June at the highlands RAMS Stadium. The 2017 Relay for life of highlands will be held on June 17th from 10am-Midnight. There are vendors, food, games, live entertainment, and much more!! Most importantly, we host a ceremony & dinner for our cancer Survivors, those currently battling Cancer, & their loved ones. If you would like more information, please visit www.relayforlife.org/pahighlands or contact Emma craven at 412-919-1052/emma.craven@caner.org.

We would love to have you as part of our Relay! Join us today to celebrate, & Fight Back.

WESTARM Physical Therapy & Homecare Community Lecture Series

Over the past 5 years WESTARM Physical Therapy & Homecare has provided a free "Community Lecture Series" to residents of the Alle-Kiski Valley. These lectures are on healthcare topics that range from Total Joint Replacements, Back Injuries, Women's Health Issues, Concussion Management, Arthritis Pain, and using Physical Therapy to treat Dizziness/Vertigo. Guest speakers include Orthopedic Surgeons from local practices within this community and licensed physical and occupational therapists. Various locations provide convenient access including WESTARM outpatient facilities, the Penn State New Kensington conference center, and the Allegheny-Kiski Health Foundation office in Natrona Heights. The first lecture of 2017 will be presented for the seniors of the Plum Community Center on Center New Texas Road. The topic is "Are you considering a Total Joint Replacement of your Hip or Knee?" will start at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 18. If you would like to register please call Maria Schafer in Plum at [412-795-2330](tel:412-795-2330) x 4707.

Post-Election Tax Update

By: Ronald J Scanlon, CPA
McCall Scanlon & Tice, LLC
Certified Public Accountants

Any change in Presidential Administration brings the possibility of tax law changes. The election of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States is no exception. During the campaign, President-elect Trump outlined a number of tax proposals for individuals and businesses. This article is intended to provide a snapshot of some of the President-elect's tax proposals.

Campaign proposals

During the campaign, President-elect Trump called for lowering the individual income tax rates for most taxpayers, lowering the corporate tax rate, creating new tax incentives, and repealing the Affordable Care Act. Several goals of tax reform were highlighted including:

- Tax relief for middle class Americans
- Simplify the Tax Code
- Grow the American economy
- Do not add to the debt or deficit

President-elect Trump identified a number of tax-related proposals that he intends to pursue during his first 100 days in office:

- **The Middle Class Tax Relief and Simplification Act:** Provide middle class families with two children a 35 percent tax cut and lower the business tax rate from 35 percent to 15 percent.
- **Affordable Childcare and Eldercare Act:** Allow individuals to deduct childcare and elder care from their taxes, incentivize employers to provide on-site childcare and create tax-free savings accounts for children and elderly dependents.
- **Repeal and Replace Obama care Act:** A proposal to fully repeal the ACA.
- **American Energy & Infrastructure Act:** Leverage public-private partnerships and private investments through tax incentives to spur \$1 trillion in infrastructure investment over 10 years.

Individual income taxes

The last change to the individual income tax rates was in the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (ATRA), which raised the top individual income tax rate. Under ATRA, the current individual income tax rates are 10, 15, 25, 28, 33, 35, and 39.6 percent. President-elect Trump proposed a new rate structure of 12, 25 and 33 percent:

- Current rates of 10% and 15% = 12% under new rate structure.
- Current rates of 25% and 28% = 25% under new rate structure.
- Current rates of 33%, 35% and 39.6% = 33% under new rate structure.

Generally estimated for joint returns a 12% rate on income up to \$75,000; a 25% rate for income between \$75,000 and \$225,000; and 33% on income more than \$225,000 (brackets for single filers will be half those dollar amounts) and "low-income Americans" would have a 0% rate.

AMT and more

President-elect Trump proposed to repeal the alternative minimum tax (AMT). The last time that Congress visited the AMT, lawmakers voted to retain the tax but to provide for inflation-adjusted exemption amounts.

Trump proposed to repeal the federal estate and gift tax. The unified federal estate and gift tax currently starts for estates valued at \$5.49 million for 2017 (essentially double at \$10.98 million for married individuals). Also proposed was a "carryover basis" rule for inherited stock and other assets from estates of more than \$10 million.

Other proposals would limit itemized deductions, eliminate the head-of-household filing status and eliminate all personal exemptions. President-elect Trump also has called for increasing the standard deduction. Under this plan, the standard deduction would increase to \$15,000 for single individuals and to \$30,000 for married couples filing jointly. In contrast, the 2017 standard deduction amounts under current law are \$6,350 and \$12,700, respectively, as adjusted for inflation.

Health care

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) created a number of new taxes that impact individuals and businesses. These taxes range from an excise tax on medical devices to taxes on high-dollar health insurance plans. The ACA created the net investment income (NII) tax and the Additional Medicare Tax, both of which generally impact higher income taxpayers. The ACA also made significant changes to the medical expense deduction and other rules that affect individuals. For individuals and employers, new mandates were created to carry or offer insurance, or otherwise pay a penalty. The President-elect said he would call a special session of Congress to repeal the ACA.

Business tax proposals

On the business front, President-elect Trump highlighted the corporate tax rate and some international proposals, along with simplification and the reduction of taxes for small business.

Particularly for small businesses, Trump has proposed a doubling of the Code Sec. 179 small business expensing election to \$1 million. He also proposed the immediate deduction of all new investments in a business, which has also been endorsed by Congressional tax reform/simplification advocates.

The current corporate tax rate is 35 percent. President-elect Trump called for a reduction in the corporate tax rate to 15 percent. He also proposed sharing that rate with owners of "pass through" entities (sole proprietorships, partnerships and S corporations), but only for profits that are put back into the business. Based on campaign materials, a one-time reduced rate would also be available to encourage companies to repatriate earnings of foreign subsidiaries that are held offshore.

The information generally available now about President-elect Trump's tax proposals is based largely on statements by him during the campaign and campaign materials. President-elect Trump will take office January 20, 2017. Between now and then, more details about his tax proposals may be available. Please contact our office at 724-543-1135 or info@mstcpas.com if you have any questions.

Effectively using social media to market your business in 2017

The most important thing you can learn about communicating effectively on social media, is that social media is not about posting, "Here's how to buy my product or service." Instead, social media should be about offering solutions, answers, strategies, templates, tools and ideas to your followers - not sales messages.

We're living in the age of voluntary attention where you must first earn attention by becoming a sought after resource for information and ideas. Here are some quick tips that you can use when developing your social media strategy:

1. **Be authentic.** Your target audience wants to be reassured that the brands they choose to interact with are being honest, caring, and meaningful. This can be one of the most difficult feelings to portray, however, you can do this by using videos and customer testimonials to illustrate the emotion and enthusiasm you feel for what you are doing as a brand.
2. **Deliver expertise.** The more helpful information that you share with your audience, the more likely they will turn to you when they need your goods or services. How-to articles and videos, quick tips, templates, and tools are great ways that you can deliver expertise to your followers.
3. **Actively listen and respond.** Followers want to do business with companies that pay attention to and respond to comments and feedback, whether the reason is positive or negative, by simply responding you are showing that you care about your customers.
4. **Be consistent.** Keep your content, visuals and tone consistent on all forms of social media to establish and maintain a professional brand identity. It's also important to post on a consistent basis in order to keep your messages in front of your followers and maintain top-of-mind awareness.

Be passionate and positive. Your excitement and enthusiasm can pump-up your audience (and you) and inspire them to action. With an abundance of negative content on many social media platforms, you can stand out with positive messages.

Tyler Hopper

Hopper Innovative Solutions

Street N Trail Magazine

Everlasting Productions, LLC



So-called Property Tax Reform an Early Goal for Some Lawmakers This Session

January 06, 2017

An *Associated Press* story last week shares that property tax reform — a contentious and widely debated issue for decades — will make an early comeback in the 2017 session.

Supporters in the Senate believe that November elections have provided enough support for S. B. 76 (which has not yet been introduced this session), a proposal to significantly increase and expand sales and personal income taxes in order to eventually eliminate school taxes. According to the AP story, Sen. David Argall, R-Schuylkill, will introduce the leading proposal, which would increase the income tax rate by 60 percent and hike the state sales tax rate by 17 percent while applying it to a wider range of goods and services, such as groceries, clothing, basic TV, and funeral services.

The PA Chamber is opposed to S. B. 76 and other such tax-shifting measures, as they create an unstable system for funding public schools that rely on fluctuating, unpredictable tax streams to replace steadier sources of revenue, among other reasons. This effort would have a negative financial impact on the many small business owners, including those who rent—instead of own—their properties, and who therefore would only see a sharp increase in their tax liability with very little or no tax relief.

Senate Bill 76 was brought up in the senate last session and fell two votes short of passage, narrowly being defeated by a 25 — 24 vote (with Lt. gov. Mike Stack casting the tie-breaker). Several Senators have since left the Senate and it's not certain how their successors will vote if the legislation again comes to the senate floor. It also remains to be seen if enough support exists in the House, which took up similar legislation in 2013 and defeated it 59 — 138.

###

Founded in 1916, the Pennsylvania Chamber of business and Industry is the state's largest broad-based business association, with its membership comprising businesses of all sizes across all industry sectors. The PA Chamber is The Statewide Voice of Business.



PA ChamberTM

of Business and Industry

new year, new century, new look.

Animal Protectors

What are your New Year's resolutions for 2017?

Now that the holidays are over, it's time to start thinking about what you'd like to accomplish in the upcoming year. If you'd like to become more involved in your community, make new friends (both two-legged and four-legged) and truly make a difference, come join us at Animal Protectors as a volunteer!

We could use your help in all areas of our shelter operations – there's something for everyone, no matter what your interests are. For example...

Are you a "people person"? Community outreach could use your help with talking to people in our community and promoting Animal Protectors.

Do you know your way around a toolbox? You can help us maintain our current facilities.

Are you an event planner extraordinaire? Fundraising may be your forte.

Are you interested in having a direct impact on the lives of animals in need? Consider fostering a dog or cat.

Do you have a busy schedule? Animal transport might work for you.

Are you known for having a way with the written word? Public relations or communications might be your cup of tea.

Are you a financial wizard? We need your help!

Do you have top-notch management skills? We've got a spot for you, too!

Research shows that being active and interacting with people improves physical, mental and emotional health, and volunteering with Animal Protectors is an enjoyable, meaningful way to do this. Make 2017 the year you decide to make a difference!

To find out more about all of the volunteer opportunities at Animal Protectors, email us at volunteer@animalprotectors.net.

Crane's Landing

Residential Development

Build a Home that is uniquely Yours with lasting beauty & structural integrity in our quiet secluded Residential Development, "CRANE'S LANDING". It's located just one minute from the Tt. 28 & Rt. 422 exchange in Kittanning, which is just 40 minutes north of Pittsburgh. We're the exclusive Builder & have an excellent reputation for our expert workmanship & customer satisfaction.

You can also contact us for any of your building needs from Residential to commercial. Joe Krukar has been in the building industry for over 30 years & he values the trust that customers place in him to build a custom home or commercial Project that everyone can be proud of!

J. Krukar Construction Co., Inc.

110 Woodland Drive, Kittanning, Pa 16201

724-545-9665

joe_jkrukarconstruction@comcast.net

www.jkrukarconstruction.com

PA002935

Bradigan's Incorporated

KardGard Refueling Club

Bradigan's Incorporated is proud to announce the opening of its 6th KardGard Refueling Club location in the spring of 2017. It will be located at 770 Hayden Blvd. on Route 51 in Elizabeth PA and will offer Regular Gasoline, On & Off Road Diesel fuel and either Premium or Non-Ethanol Gasoline.

Adjacent to Greenwald Auto Repair the new KardGard location will have easy on & off access for all sized vehicles including tractor trailers, and accept Voyager, Wright Express, Fleet One, Fuelman and Bradigan's fuel cards.

Bradigan's has been a supplier of motor fuels for over 60 years. KardGard exclusively offers high-quality 24/SEVEN Advanced motor fuels. "Fuels of the Future You Can Buy Today."

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CHAMBER COMMITTEES

WE NEED YOU!

Start the NEW year off by JOINING
a Chamber Committee!

Government Relations:

The mission of this committee is to assist in fulfilling the Chamber's mission by providing a strong voice, engaging in the conversation, identifying legislative priorities and organizing legislative events.

Special Events:

Bring your ideas to the table to assist in planning events throughout the year.

Workforce Development:

Identify ways to engage with school students in guiding professions and determine potential training needs for small business.

Assist in planning some of the Chamber's larger events: HomeExpo, Golf Outing & Gala



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