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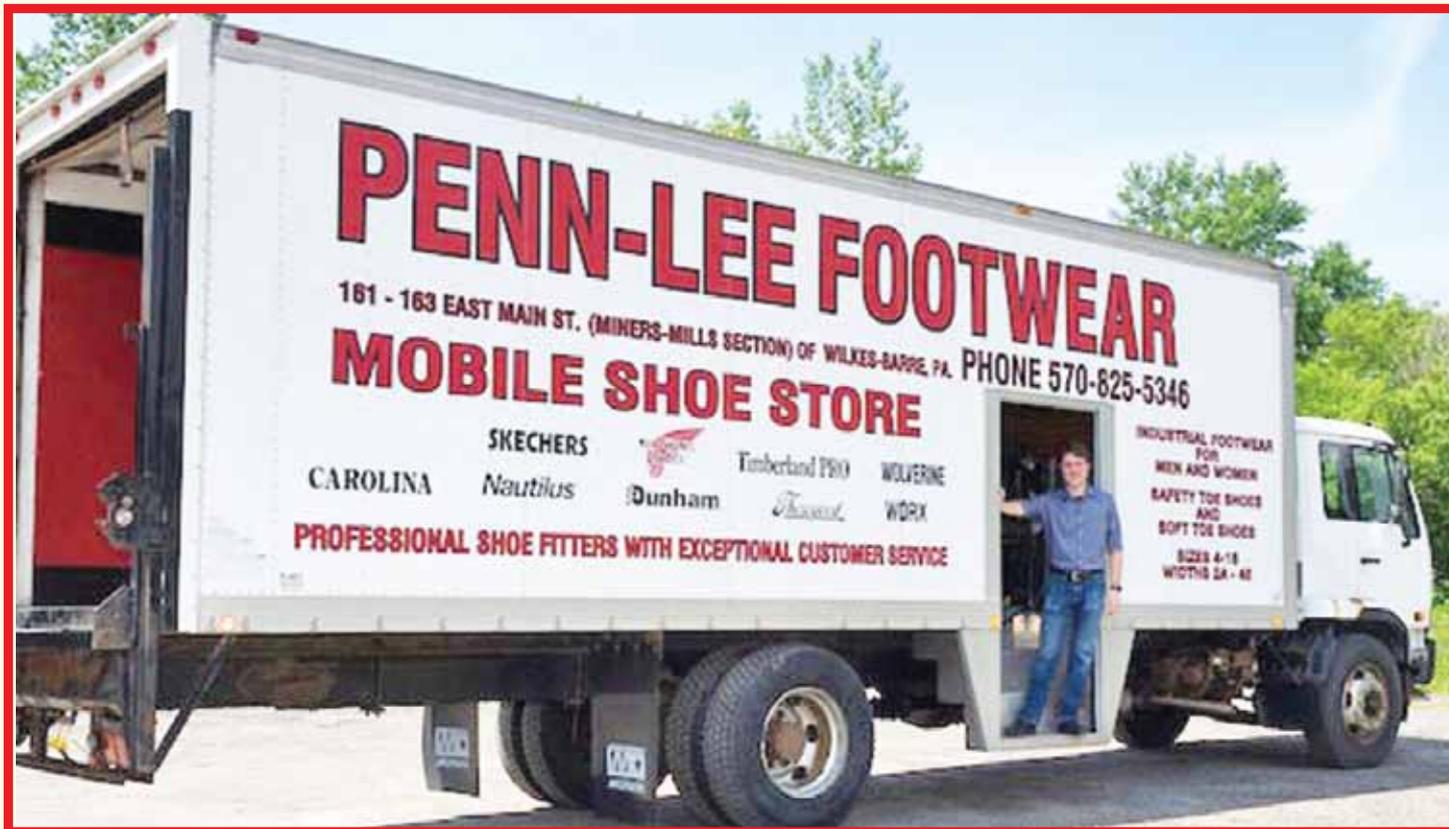
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GREATER PITTSTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

99 years of community service

PITTSTON — On a sunny June afternoon, three major cogs turning the wheels of the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce's successes reflected on the first 99 years of the organization's existence.



Thom Tracy
 Guest Columnist

Former Executive Vice President Rosemary Dessoie and erstwhile project engineer Walter Poplawski, of A + E Group, Inc., traded tales from the past, while current Executive Vice President Michelle Mikitish shared her vision of the future.

The Greater Pittston Chamber was incorporated on June 20, 1920, and next summer marks a huge milestone for the organization. Many of the chamber's wins stemmed from the creation of the region's four prominent business parks — Barnum, Grimes, O'Hara and Quackenbush — and one residential development.

As the next century of growth and development kicks off, Mikitish presented the Chamber's four-fold plan aimed at mirroring the progress of the past 100 years.

Past Productivity

Both Dessoie and Poplawski firmly agreed that it would be impos-

sible to define the chamber's past victories without highlighting the efforts of the late John "Jack" Grimes. Grimes served as the chamber's EVP for about two decades beginning in the 1980s, and his colorful approach to deal-making helped lure many employers — both large and small — to the Greater Pittston area.

Dessoie said a major factor in convincing companies to set up shop locally was Grimes' ability to quickly slice through red tape. She recalled a time in 1969 when Grimes initially pitched a German executive on an undeveloped site in Duryea.

For the following five decades, that tract of land has been home to the current Schott glass manufacturing plant — the first of five more to follow in the United States. That day, Grimes shared a post-meeting handshake with the company's liaison. The next day, excavation for the new production facility began — a feat unimaginable in 2019.

Poplawski, recruited by Grimes, added that in the 1980s, Pittston Township's Eastern Distribution Center and

the adjacent Vogelbacher Industrial Park caused some logistical confusion among suppliers and delivery personnel. When the decision to consolidate the parks came down, renaming the new entity after Grimes — whose unconventional prospecting efforts created more than 5,000 local jobs — was a no-brainer.

The Grimes Industrial Park now stands as one of the four mainstays of the Greater Pittston Chamber's economic development endeavors. The following snapshots profile that park, a housing development and two other industrial zones within the Greater Pittston confines.

Barnum Industrial Park - Blueberry Hill Development

In 1896, the Barnum & Bailey Circus toured the country featuring a "horseless carriage" known as the Duryea motor wagon, one of the first gasoline-powered automobiles produced in the United States.

Any perceived connection between "the greatest show on Earth" and the Barnum parcel that became Duryea Borough's Blueberry Hill development is purely coincidental, however. The residential development sits on the former



Submitted photo

Members of the 2019 Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

site of the Barnum anthracite coal mine and colliery that operated from 1879 until 1964 and adjacent to the Barnum Industrial Park.

The borough itself was named after a former Civil War general who owned land along the shores of the Lackawanna and Susquehanna rivers in the late 1800s.

After Hurricane Agnes wreaked havoc on Northeastern Pennsylvania in 1972, the Barnum site became a temporary home for HUD trailers earmarked for residents displaced by the flooding. For about 20 years,

a vast stretch of the land remained vacant and had little utility, save for the occasional impromptu teenage gathering.

In the late 1990s, Pople Construction purchased the approximate 124-acre parcel and what began as a proposed modular home project blossomed into an expanse of single-family detached dwellings.

Grimes Industrial Park

In 2004, the TJ Maxx distribution center in the Grimes Industrial Park, at 1 million square feet in area, was estimated to be the fifth-largest tilt-up

construction project in the world. In short, this type of construction requires the concrete walls of the facility to be formed on the ground, cured and then lifted in place or "tilted up" with cranes to erect the building's exterior. Other tenants in the park include FedEx, USHydrations, Cascades Tissue Group, and Stephenson Equipment.

Naturally, the namesake of the complex had an instrumental role in convincing company execs to conduct business in the Greater

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Chamber

From page X#

Pittston area. Poplawski said Grimes had a casual approach to negotiating with the many C-level execs he encountered. With a revolving door of prospects, names sometimes escaped him. So, Grimes would frequently refer to his counterparts as “cuz” — a colloquial term often used by Greater Pittstonians to convey respect and admiration.

O'Hara Industrial Park

Scott Linde, president of Linde Corporation, has seen his business expand from 8 employees in 1970 to more than 300 in 2019. The company began operations in 1965 with some outmoded construction equipment Linde picked up from his grandfather. Like many other local construction businesses, Linde's growth phase took flight in the aftermath of Agnes when the company helped restore normalcy to the infrastructure of the local river valleys.

In the past decade, forays into the Marcellus shale gas boom have kept the revenue flowing and Linde recently finished construction on its corporate headquarters in the O'Hara Industrial Park. The park is named after Vincent O'Hara, former Pittston Chamber board president and also secretary of the Pittston City Merchants Bureau in the mid to late 50's. Once spread over three counties, Linde has simplified operations by set-

ting into its new home between the CenterPoint Park to the east and the Grimes Park to the west.

Quackenbush Industrial Park

Back in 1978,inghamton-based Cook Brothers sensed an opportunity south of its base of operations in New York's southern tier. The 100-year-old heavy truck-parts business chose a site along Oak Street in Pittston Township to serve the markets of the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton area. That move helped establish the Quackenbush Industrial Park as a viable business location, drawing neighboring businesses such as RLS Logistics, TJ Cannon and Praxair Welding.

Like many wholesale businesses and distribution centers before and after it, Cook Brothers benefits from a location situated minutes from major highways such as Interstate 81 and 84 as well as the Pennsylvania Turnpike. The logistical cake is iced by Greater Pittston's proximity to the ports of New York and the major metro hub of Philadelphia, each locale only about a two-hour drive from NEPA.

Expanding Horizons

The next century of possibilities for the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce beckons. And while land development may not sit at the top of the agenda, the organization is marketing a land parcel to develop a Key-

stone Opportunity Zone property in Duryea near McAlpine Street.

The Greater Pittston Chamber now sets sights on educating, training and employing the local workforce, especially with regard to skills training. New technology and an exodus of skilled employees will create a labor crunch, of more than 9,300 unfilled positions expected by 2023, according to a 2018 Talent Report prepared by The Institute of Public Policy & Economic Development at Wilkes University.

Mikitish hopes Greater Pittston can help plug that gap by readying prospective employees, attracting new commerce and bolstering the bottom lines of retail, service, and manufacturing businesses that already call the region home.

Future Fanfare

Primarily, the chamber plans to further engage the current membership by offering more value-added benefits. The existing membership package already includes a variety of networking opportunities, free marketing and publicity campaigns, along with discounts from insurance carriers and energy suppliers.

Adding to the mix, Mikitish says the team plans to aggressively promote “member-to-member” discounts and public “hot deals” — discounted member products and services readily available to the public on the Chamber's website.

Since the U.S. Small Business Administration

counted 30.4 million companies that employ 500 people or less in 2015, Mikitish intends to foster improved awareness of small business. The Chamber will pursue increased educational opportunities for owners and employees, as well as create initiatives for greater advocacy in the segment.

No regional Chamber boasts as large a Women's Network as Greater Pittston. Hoping to capitalize on that strength, Mikitish expects heightened community service activity to result from increased interactions with the region's professional women.

Lastly, the Chamber will focus on job-creation and placement opportunities for local residents. Promoting career exploration events at regional high schools and leveraging the benefits of the statewide apprenticeship programs will continue as goals of the organization.

About the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce

The Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce engages about 425 members and serves the Greater Pittston Area which includes 13 different municipalities and two school districts, Pittston Area and Wyoming Area. These municipalities cover approximately 64 square miles and have a combined population of just under 50,000 people.

Thom Tracy is a content developer, competitive researcher and market strategist for a large-cap Silicon Valley software purveyor.

Chamber's Women's Network membership at 500-plus

By Brandi Bartush

Administrator/Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce

PITTSTON — They say the secret to success is to never take yourself too seriously.

In the early 1990s, a small group of women executives, sitting around a table sharing experiences, soon came to understand that many professional women face the same challenges at work and in life.

From there, the Women's Executive Committee was created.

After a few years of hosting luncheon meetings and educational forums, membership was still growing slowly. So, in 1998, the group decided they were taking themselves a bit too seriously. They nominated Lori Nocito as chairwoman of the committee and the Women's Network, as we know it today, was born.

Today, the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce Women's Network boasts a membership of more than 500 women from all over Northeastern Pennsylvania. Members enjoy invitations to two annual signature events — the Holiday Party and Marketplace and the St Patrick's Day Distinctive Woman of the Year Award Dinner.

The annual Holiday Party and Marketplace brings members, with

their friends and family, together with close to 50 small business vendors for a special night of fun, food and shopping.

The annual St Patrick's Day Distinctive Woman of the Year Award Dinner honors a Greater Pittston Woman who lived her life, often quietly, but made a significant impact on her community.

Other themed events are held throughout the year for members to network, experience new business offerings, support a local non-profit or just take a moment to enjoy a night out with a colleague.

All members are encouraged, at every event, to re-introduce themselves to the group and share details of their latest venture. Members of the Women's Network also have the benefit of being part of the Chamber Network and are welcome to attend Chamber events too.

New members are always welcome and women of all ages and professions are encouraged to join.

A Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce Women's Network Application can be downloaded at: <https://chambermaster.blob.core.windows.net/userfiles/UserFiles/chambers/2791/CMS/Women's-Network-Application.pdf>

Chamber to celebrate 100th anniversary in 2020

By **Michelle Mikitish**

Executive VP/Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce

PITTSTON — In June of 2020, the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce will celebrate 100 years of service to the Greater Pittston Business Community.

Incorporated on June 26, 1920, the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce was created by a group of gentlemen who understood the importance of businesses working together to strengthen a community.

To celebrate this exciting milestone, an event committee is planning a Roaring 20's themed party to be held Saturday, June 27, 2020, at the airplane hangar owned and operated by Aviation Technologies at the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport.

Save the date for an exciting evening of great food — prepared by several of our favorite Greater Pittston restaurants — live music and entertainment, plus you can take home a souvenir memory book filled with the history of the Chamber and its members.

If you would like to be a part of planning this exciting event, or would like to have your business included in the memory book, please contact us at 570-655-1424, or info@pittstonchamber.org. Information regarding sponsorship opportunities, ticket



Mikitish

prices and more event details will be released shortly. Follow us on Facebook for updates.

Who is the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce? Why should my business be a member of the Chamber?

The early years

The gentlemen who created the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce stated as part of its original purpose, the desire for businesses to work together to advance the financial, industrial and professional interests of the City of Pittston and surrounding communities, by promoting integrity and good faith; just and equitable principles; and to discover and correct abuses.

In essence, if we work together, treat each other well, and hold each other accountable, we can all succeed. With the passing of 100 years, as we look forward to 100 more, we can all agree these gentlemen were on to something.

More recently

As time passed and the organization grew, the Chamber played a critical role in the industrial development of Greater Pittston.

Initiated by Board President Vincent T.

O'Hara — for which O'Hara Industrial Park in Pittston Township is named — then sparked by the dynamic energy of John "Jack" Grimes, Executive Vice President, the Chamber built the infrastructure for Grimes, Quackenbush, O'Hara and Duryea industrial parks.

The culmination of this investment not only put Greater Pittston on the map, but also helped position us to be the highly desirable destination for business entities that we are today.

The next century plan

As the Next Century of Service approaches, the Chamber will focus on Member Services, Small Business, Workforce Development and our Women's Network.

Expect to see more, tangible member benefits, like education and advocacy events, member discounts, and a greater focus on member-to-member referrals.

Join us for our Small Business Spotlights and Women's Network Events to experience first-hand the inviting business culture

Workforce Development continues to be a topic of conversation for all businesses; new and old; big and small alike. We will continue to encourage dialog between employers and the workforce, supporting educational programming and developing



GREATER PITTSTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PAST PRESIDENTS

1920-1922 Frank L. Coursen
 1922-1923 Charles F. Donnelly
 1923-1927 B. A. Chilson
 1927-1928 William F. Gilroy
 1928-1929 John A. Weiser
 1929-1930 James Langan
 1930-1932 Atty. William Hall
 1932-1933 James Moffatt
 1933-1934 Charles Berry
 1934-1939 Atty. William H. Gillespie
 1939-1941 R. Nelson Myers
 1941-1945 Peter A. Garrity
 1945-1948 Ben M. Hyman
 1948-1949 John G. Huntley
 1949-1951 William P. Bonser
 1951-1953 Vincent T. O'Hara
 1953-1954 Richard B. Shideler
 1954-1956 Dr. Michael Murphy
 1956-1958 Glenn Stauffer
 1958-1960 William F. Medico
 1960-1962 Joseph Schiffman
 1962-1964 Donald Allan
 1964-1966 Fred A. Ramage
 1966-1968 Atty. Thomas Burke
 1968-1970 Willard M. Hunter

1970-1972 Paul E. Cadden
 1972-1974 Floyd Evans
 1974-1976 Joseph A. Quinn
 1976-1978 Frank J. Barbera
 1978-1980 Paul E. Cadden
 1980-1982 Atty. Thomas F. Burke Jr.
 1982-1984 Harry G. Schmaltz
 1984-1986 Albert B. Melone Jr.
 1986-1988 Thomas J. Reilly
 1988-1990 Leonard Insalaco
 1990-1992 Paul A. Clapps
 1992-1994 Stephen P. Krenitsky
 1994-1996 Michael Kaminski
 1996-1998 Patrick Judge
 1998-2000 Thomas P. Cooney
 2000-2002 Peter Danchak
 2002-2004 Thomas Amico
 2004-2006 Thomas J. Melone, CPA
 2006-2008 Maureen Mangan Mills
 2008-2010 Joseph S. Durkin, P.E.
 2010-2012 Charles A. Adonizio III
 2012-2014 Joseph D. Burke, Esq.
 2014-2016 Jerry A. Champi
 2016-2018 Patricia F. Stella
 2018-2020 Richard Kazmerick

training programs for both our current and future employees.

The Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce engages about 425 members and serves the Greater Pittston Area which includes 13 dif-

ferent municipalities and two school districts, Pittston Area and Wyoming Area.

These municipalities cover approximately 64 square miles and have a combined population of just under 50,000 people.

To join the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce, visit <http://www.pittstonchamber.org/member/newmemberapp/> to complete the online application or call the office at (570)655-1424.

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Luzerne/Schuylkill WIB, PA CareerLink 'gearing up for your future'

By **Christine Jensen**

Administrator/PA CareerLink
 Luzerne County

PITTSBURGH —
 Luzerne and Schuylkill counties have a world-class competitive workforce.

This is due, in part, to the services available to Job Seekers, Businesses and our Youth through the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board, Inc. and the PA CareerLink®. Their mission is to ensure a demand-driven, world-class workforce system aligned with economic development and education.

Due to ongoing technological innovations and the retirement of the baby boomer generation, America's workforce is changing and is very different than it was a decade or two ago. Signs indicate that the labor force is not equipped with the skills for the present-day workplace.

With this in mind, the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board (L/S WIB) is working diligently to help local businesses meet workforce needs by supporting programs aimed at providing career awareness and occupational training to job seekers and students.

Through partnerships with local employers, Chambers of Commerce, and the Manufacturers and Employers Association, the L/S WIB actively promotes apprenticeship



Jensen

programs, internships, work experiences, and on-the-job training opportunities. By working closely with career and technical centers, and institutions of higher learning, the L/S WIB provides assistance in developing continuing education programs that are responsive to the needs of today's businesses.

Since our most valuable asset is our young adults, the L/S WIB, through the PA CareerLink®, promotes career awareness to local school district students. These students have the opportunity to learn about local businesses, the economic outlook for the future,

and how self-sustaining wages and a career pathway can be achieved in the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Area.

A priority of the L/S WIB is addressing the "skills gap" by supporting programs that encourage employers to invest in the talent pipeline and by educating job seekers and students about the skills needed for today's workplace.

Are you an employer seeking skilled workers?

The PA CareerLink® is a resource for employers as well as job seekers. If you're seeking employees, the PA CareerLink® can help you make the perfect match through its website available at www.pacareerlink.pa.gov. Through PA CareerLink®, employers can post jobs, view résumés of thousands of job

candidates, pre-screen employees and research labor market data.

In addition, the PA CareerLink® will accept and review applications for your positions and even screen them with your qualification needs. If you choose, you can conduct interviews at the PA CareerLink® offices in Luzerne and Schuylkill counties and the Business Services team can arrange and manage appointments for your interviews. At any one time, there are hundreds of job seekers who are using the PA CareerLink® services and programs. Your next employee may already be registered with the PA CareerLink®.

If your business needs training for current or future employees, the PA CareerLink® can assist

with that as well. They provide access to many skills-based training programs in addition to assistance with training funds. Also, the PA CareerLink® can connect you with a variety of development programs that will maximize your employees' potential, including Incumbent Worker Training.

The PA CareerLink Team can also provide information on state and federally funded training and other cost saving programs like Rapid Response/Layoff aversion assistance, On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program and Industry/Sector Partnerships.

All our services are focused on providing skilled, qualified workers. Workforce services are delivered by the PA CareerLink® in Luzerne

and Schuylkill counties through the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Investment Board. Many of our services are provided at no cost to you. Our highly trained, professional staff members will assist you in developing an employment and training program that is the right fit for your organization.

To learn more about all our money saving Business Services programs or for assistance with registering your company and posting your job openings on Pennsylvania's internet-based website, please contact your local PA CareerLink® office.

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How to Get STARTED...

Do you need to learn new skills to get ahead in the job market? The PA CareerLink® can help. Visit one of our offices to learn about education and training programs offered by area community colleges, universities, trade and training schools. Funding may be available to assist eligible Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth obtain employment in high demand occupations.

<p>PA CareerLink® Luzerne County at Hazleton 75 North Laurel Street Hazleton, PA 18201-5950 Phone: (570) 459-3854 FAX: (570) 459-3930 TDD/TTY: (570) 459-3934 Website: www.careerlinkluzerne.org Email: rpisko@pa.gov</p>	<p>PA CareerLink® Schuylkill County at Pottsville 201-203 East Arch Street Pottsville, PA 17901-3512 Phone: (570) 622-5253 FAX: (570) 622-6072 TDD/TTY: (570) 622-5241 Website: www.careerlinkpottsville.org Email: sharona@careerlinkpottsville.org</p>	<p>PA CareerLink® Luzerne County at Wilkes-Barre 32 East Union Street Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701-0651 Phone: (570) 822-1101 FAX: (570) 826-2443 TDD/TTY: (570) 826-2438 Website: www.careerlinkluzerne.org Email: christinejensen@lswib.org</p>
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Careerlink

From page 8

job search activities, get job recommendations, and sign up for free events on www.pacareerlink.pa.gov. After registering on the website, job seekers can get access to the Big Interview, Virtual Job Shadow, and cTorg (helps you identify your transferable skills). Veterans can match military skills and experience to civilian occupations.

Career Services are customized to meet your needs so you can accomplish your goals and include individual case management, aptitude and interest assessments, in-depth resume preparation, GED testing and classes, KeyTrain assessment/remediation, WorkKeys® National Career Readiness

Certificate, Individual Training Accounts (ITA) for qualifying job seekers, On-the-Job Training (OJT) and customized training programs, information on career pathways, work experience, Your Employability Skills (Y.E.S.) workshops, ServSafe Credential, and on site job fairs.

The PA CareerLink® also offers free workshops throughout the month including: How to Navigate PA CareerLink® online, PA CareerLink® Orientation, Writing an Effective Resume, Interviewing with Confidence, How to Land a Government Job, Career Exploration, and Financial Aid Workshops.

Visit the Career Resource Center to use computers with internet access for your job search needs. Get assistance with PA CareerLink® online registration, employment applications on PA CareerLink® online or

other job search websites. Staff can even make copies or fax your resume or application.

Courtesy Unemployment Compensation phones and computers are available at every PA CareerLink® location. Staff can assist you with submitting information to Unemployment Compensation. Accommodations for individuals with disabilities, bilingual services, language translation, and TDD/TTY are also available at the PA CareerLink® offices.

PA CareerLink® offers Priority of Services for Veterans and Eligible Dependents through trained, qualified staff who provide individualized services including, but not limited to, referral to various veterans' affairs agencies and programs, access to DD214 records, resume development, and job search and referral activities.

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Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce



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2nd annual NEPA Real Estate Summit held in Scranton

By Rachel Antosh Hawk

Marketing Director/Penn's Northeast

SCRANTON — Penn's Northeast President/CEO John Augustine opened the 2nd annual Northeastern Pennsylvania Real Estate Summit by saying the region is currently seeing the largest industrial boom it's ever experienced.

"We have over 9 million square feet of buildings under construction, we have announced more than 5,000 jobs since last year and have over \$1 billion worth of capital invested right now in NEPA," Augustine continued. "So, certainly, from a market standpoint, we are exploding with growth."

On Wednesday, April 24, Penn's Northeast hosted its second annual Northeastern Pennsylvania Real Estate Summit at the Hilton Scranton & Conference Center in downtown Scranton.

The event was attended by more than 225 business and community leaders to learn more about the local, regional and international real estate market.

Augustine welcomed the crowd and served as moderator for the panelists. Panelists included local and national leaders in the commercial real estate world, including:

- Jeff Algatt, Senior Vice President at Colliers International Group;



Rachel Antosh Hawk | Marketing Director, Penn's Northeast.

Penn's Northeast President/CEO John Augustine speaks at the recent Northeastern Pennsylvania Real Estate Summit held in Scranton.



Antosh Hawk

- John T. Cognetti, Owner and SIOR, CCIM of Hinerfeld Commercial Real Estate;

- Jim Cummings, Vice President of Marketing at Mericle Commercial Real Estate;

- Ronda Beemer, Business Development Director at Quandel Construction Group;

- Brian Knowles, Principal with Lee & Associates of Eastern Pennsylvania.

Another panel dis-

cussed the significance and opportunities within the new federal QOZs or Qualified Opportunity Zones. Kevin Rogers, Senior Vice President with PNC Bank and Evan Weiss, Director of Pennsylvania Economy League, explained how investments made by individuals through funds in these zones can defer or eliminate federal taxes on capital gains. There are numerous parcels in Northeastern Pennsylvania that qualify.

Knowles identified about 90 million square feet worth of projects across the eastern part

of the state that haven't started yet.

"Being close to major interstates 80 and 81, we are only a day's drive from one-third of the U.S. population and half of the Canadian population," Augustine said. "We are also seeing an increase in manufacturing due to our utility infrastructure with affordable natural gas reliability, electric, water and power systems."

Augustine attributes the growth that the region has had to location and an increase in manufacturing.

"I think that it's a good

time to be doing business in NEPA," he said. "All the presentations today showed that our region is growing."

Penn's Northeast is a membership-based organization, whose mission is to enhance the region's economy through new investments, job creation and increasing the amount of potential business opportunities for regional businesses through targeted business recruitment and unique lead generation activities.

This is done in part by promoting the region's assets to regional, national and interna-

"We have over 9 million square feet of buildings under construction, we have announced more than 5,000 jobs since last year and have over \$1 billion worth of capital invested right now in NEPA. So, certainly, from a market standpoint, we are exploding with growth."

John Augustine

Northeast President/CEO

tional businesses. Focus is placed on the counties of Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill and Wayne, as well the greater Berwick area.

Penn's Northeast was created through a joint effort of private business leaders, local utility companies, governments, economic development organizations, and chambers of commerce to market the collective assets of Northeastern Pennsylvania and to facilitate the creation and retention of quality jobs.

This is accomplished by providing site selection, labor and incentive financing assistance to businesses, real estate brokers, developers and site selection consultants.

For more information, please visit www.penns-northeast.com.

Greater Pittston Chamber eager to sell land in Duryea

DURYEA — A 44-acre, tax-free, rail-served industrial parcel of land in Duryea Borough — destined to become the Duryea Industrial Park — is the last piece of land owned by the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce.

“After decades of building industrial parks like Grimes, Quack-enbush and Ohara, we are one land sale away from being out of the real estate business,” says Michelle Mikitish, Executive Vice President of the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce.

“Getting out of the real estate business will allow us to focus our energies and our finances on member services, workforce development, small business needs and our ever-growing women’s network.”

The land is accessible via Boylan Drive in Duryea, which intersects with McAlpine St just behind Marie’s Diner. The Chamber purchased the land in February of 1966 from the Pennsylvania Coal Company and completed infrastructure improvements in the early 2000’s. This was

the Pittston Chamber’s last land development project. The parcel can accommodate up to a 400,000 square foot building, has rail service and all of the necessary utilities in place.

Duryea Industrial Park

This business park would be a great site for manufacturing, distribution, or other industrial operation. Just two hours from New York City and Philadelphia, it is a perfect location for any business looking to expand into northeastern Pennsylvania. This parcel

is also a designated Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) granting eligible companies significant tax savings until December of 2025.

This tax-free, rail-served, industrial site on the I-81 corridor features:

- Keystone Opportunity Zone Status. (Virtually all state and local taxes abated until 12/31/2025)
- 2 miles from I-81; 2.5 miles from Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Int’l. Airport; 3 miles from I-476
- Great labor draw area — more than

466,000 people live within 20 miles

• Rail service from two short line railroads with connections to Class I railroads Norfolk Southern Railway Company and Canadian Pacific Railway

- Power provided by PPL Electric Utilities
- Natural gas provided by UGI Penn Natural Gas
- Water provided by Pennsylvania American Water Company
- Sanitary Sewer provided by Duryea Borough Sewer Authority

For more information on this land parcel, visit

<http://mericlereadytogo.com/DuryeaKOZ/property-overview/>

Keystone Opportunity Zone benefits available to eligible companies:

The following are abated 100 percent until 12/31/2025:

- Local real property taxes (county, borough, school district)
- PA Corporate Net Income Tax
- PA’s Capital Stock & Foreign Franchise Tax
- PA Sales Tax on telephone, gas and electric service used by a busi-

See DURYEA | 12

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Duryea

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ness in the zone

- PA Sales Tax on the purchase of taxable property or services (excluding motor vehicles) that are used and consumed by a business in the zone

- PA Sales Tax on “building machinery and equipment” purchased by a contractor in conjunction with a construction contract

A business moving from outside Pennsylvania into a KOZ is program-eligible provided it owns or leases property in the KOZ from which it actively

The land is accessible via Boylan Drive in Duryea, which intersects with McAlpine St just behind Marie’s Diner.

conducts a trade, profession or business and obtains annual certification from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development.

Pennsylvania companies must meet certain job creation and/or capital investment requirements in order to be eligible.

For more information about Pennsylvania’s Department of Community and Economic Development’s KOZ

program, visit <https://dced.pa.gov/programs/keystone-opportunity-zones-kozs/>

For more information on this listing, contact:

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— bbesecker@mericle.com
www.mericle.com

- Atlas Realty
Charles A. Adonizio, III

Phone: 570-829-6200
— caatlas@aol.com



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100,000 SF - Building 3

183 Passan Drive, Laflin, PA 18702

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- 13 Truck Dock Doors | 8 Rail Doors | 1 Drive-in Door
- 23’ to 28’ Ceiling Height/25’ x 50’ Column Spacing
- Fully Sprinklered
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For More Information:
Kyle Dickinson
Director of Sales
kdickinson@valleydist.com
570-655-9632

80931769

Pride Mobility Products makes world's leading mobility devices

By Denise Truesdale

VP Human Resources/Pride
 Mobility Products

DURYEA — The Pride Mobility Products story began in 1986 from humble beginnings when the Kretchik and Meuser families started out with a small building on Main Street in Pittston.

The lift chair business would soon grow to be the world's leading designer and manufacturer of mobility products, including the iconic Jazzy® Power Chair, Go-Go® Travel Mobility Products, Pride® Scooters and Pride® Power Lift Recliners.

Pride also founded a complex rehab division called Quantum Rehab, which serves people who have complex physical rehabilitation needs.

"The success of our company is attributed to our friendly, humble and hard-working employees," said Scott Meuser, Chairman and CEO of Pride Mobility Products. "They are passionate about making a difference in people's lives by providing innovative, market-leading products, and friendly service with operational efficiency."

Pride Mobility has two Luzerne County facilities — one in Duryea and the other in Exeter — that offer a variety of career paths which include, but are not limited to:

- Mechanical and Electrical Engineering
- Assembly
- Quality Assurance



Pride manufactures superior, diverse products for individuals from a wide variety of demographics. Our diversification extends beyond our customers and products into the exciting opportunity to attract and employ an equally diverse workforce.

- Project Management
- Sales
- Technical Service
- Fabrication
- Marketing

These opportunities are coupled with outstanding benefits, such as affordable medical coverage with a low deductible, 24/7 telemedicine services, 401K with an employer match, employee assistance program, tuition reimbursement, life insurance, paid time off, and much more.

As the company grows, so must its facilities. The Pride Mobility Team is very excited about their brand-new 100,000 square foot distribution center that is currently



Annual Pride/Quantum Rehab Family Summer Picnic at Knoebels Amusement Resort.

being built on the Duryea facility property, which just crosses the

Luzerne County line into Old Forge, Lackawanna County.

feel like they are part of family and having fun is essential. There is a continuous flow of company-sponsored events such as family picnics, cookouts, on-site and off-site holiday parties, birthday and years-of-service anniversary parties, and golf outings. And let's not forget the frequent giveaways of sporting events tickets and gift cards throughout the year and a Christmas in July week-long celebration.

To round out Pride Mobility's objective of providing an exceptional employee experience, there's community service both locally and nationally. The list is long, but just to name a few, Pride makes donations and participates in events for organizations such as the ALS Association, Muscular Dystrophy Association, American Red Cross, Boy & Girls Club of NEPA, Northeastern Pennsylvania Council Boy Scouts of America, WVIA, Ryan's Run, Blue Chip Farm Animal Refuge, and the local YMCAs.

"Pride is entering its fourth decade and our future has never been brighter," Meuser said. "We will continue to strive to be a friendly, fair place to work and to ask our employees to always try to be friendly to everyone we do business with. We want our employees to enjoy the years we spend working together."

While the majority of the company's workforce is in Pennsylvania, as the world's leading designer and manufacturer of mobility products, they also have operations in Las Vegas, Mississippi, Florida, Canada, Australia, China, France, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

"With over one thousand employees dedicated to making us the long term 'Olympic Gold Medalist' in our target markets, we always want our employees to know they are appreciated," Meuser said.

Pride Mobility is proud that their employees

SCHOTT

50 years of progress – 50 years of innovation

By David Schimmel
 SCHOTT North America Inc.

DURYEA — Fifty years ago, SCHOTT established a foothold on the North American continent in Duryea.

The firm had a long reputation as a manufacturer of precision optical glass used in the world's finest optics, and the U.S. military had often expressed interest in a domestic source for high quality glasses required for defense purposes.

The summer of 1969 was notable for several significant events, including the moon landing and the Woodstock Festival of Peace and Music; Sesame Street debuted, and Richard Nixon was sworn in as president. Amid these historic happenings, SCHOTT North America opened its factory in Duryea.

The firm has grown in size and stature from 55,000 square feet to more than 200,000 square feet today and from less than \$2 million to more than \$50 million in sales over that time span. July 1, 1969 marked the first optical glass melt at the new factory. Since then, many developments have fostered growth and stature within the local and optical communities. Three keys led to the establishment and subsequent growth of the firm:

- The foresight of



Photo courtesy of SCHOTT

Since opening in July 1969, SCHOTT has expanded its footprint from the original 55,000 square feet to more than 200,000 square feet today.

SCHOTT's management in Germany to act on the obvious demand for a US presence at the urging of the United States military.

- The support of the local business community, especially the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce, in securing and preparing the Duryea site for construction of the factory.

- The availability of a skilled and willing local workforce.

SCHOTT had long enjoyed a reputation for manufacturing precision optical glass used in the world's finest optics, and the U.S. Air Force was interested in securing domestic production of this key material. The realization of this came together with the Incorporation of Schott Optical Glass Inc. in 1967.

Construction of the factory commenced in 1968 and continued through summer 1969. The original factory was a miniature version of the firm's parent company in Mainz, Germany and was outfitted to produce the highest quality optical glass.

Then, in 1970, SCHOTT acquired the business that would become its Ophthalmic Division from PPG Industries and instantly became one of the world's leading manufacturers of glass for spectacle lenses. This led to a number of innovations in the Duryea R&D laboratory, including lightweight glasses for thin eyeglass lenses and colored glasses for popular sunglass brands.

Research and development has always been a

core ingredient for the site's growth. In fact, Industrial Research Magazine has recognized the company for its developments in the fields of fiber optics, ophthalmic glass, and laser glass. These early successes formed the impetus to build a state-of-the-art research and development wing in 1982. Today, in addition to supporting the SCHOTT Advanced Optics Business Unit, this laboratory also serves all SCHOTT's North American facilities.

Initial production consisted of both continuous and discontinuous melting operations. Recently, glass melting has been restricted to discontinuous, individual batch melting processes, while glass processing has been expanded to

include precision finishing and coating operations.

The markets for laser glass and infrared transmitting glass are primarily located in the United States, hence SCHOTT has selected the Duryea site as the location for manufacturing these unique products. Both product lines form an integral part in the continuing growth plans for SCHOTT's Advanced Optics Business Unit.

Laser glass, in particular, has a long history of fostering innovation within the international optical community. SCHOTT has supplied glasses for the major research lasers in the United States and worldwide. The first laser glasses were developed in the early 1960s for powerful lasers being developed by the U.S. government. With names like Shiva, Novette and Nova, the programs invoked mythical names. They culminated in the construction of the National Ignition Facility, which is simultaneously the world's largest laser and precision optical instrument. The goal of all of these programs was to achieve nuclear fusion by using laser beams to confine reactions within the target chamber. The ultimate aim is to produce power, the by-product of which

is ordinary water.

The firm has also developed laser glasses for other applications, such as range finders and medical lasers used in ophthalmic and cosmetic fields. The primary active "ingredients" for these products are the rare earths, neodymium and erbium.

Compared to laser glasses, which have a long history at SCHOTT Duryea, infrared transmitting glasses are a relatively recent addition to the site's product offering. These glasses, primarily from a glass family called "chalcogenide" glasses, are remarkable for excellent light transmission in the infrared region of the optical spectrum. Such light rays are invisible to the human eye. However, this invisible "light" is important in the fields of sensors and photography.

Early glass fabrication was limited to rudimentary cutting, grinding, and polishing, primarily for inspection purposes. Today, the facility possesses ultra-modern equipment capable of producing precision polished and coated surfaces. This is achieved using various cutting, grinding, drilling, CNC machining, polishing and coating equipment.

The company manu-

USHydrations has become an industry leader

PITSTON — Grab any beverage from the cooler in any store in America, and there's a near 100 percent chance that the first ingredient listed will be water.

It's more than a building block of life — it's the keystone of a trillion-dollar global industry.

And yet, there's a common misconception that each individual brand bottles its own products, from pumping the water to printing the labels.

Headquartered in the Grimes Industrial Park in Pittston, USHydrations' facilities cover a combined 500,000 square feet of operating space. By all accounts, the company's operations are the envy of an industry — sleek, stylish and wildly efficient. Inside, bottling lines churn out upwards of 2,200 bottles a minute, or 2.5 million per day.

Encompassing everything from mineral and flavor injections to



Shitut

custom packaging and labeling, the premier beverage contract manufacturer's clientele includes many of the most prominent global and national brands regularly found on store shelves.

"We don't operate in a commodity market; we produce premium products for global brands, which is one of the things that sets us apart," says Prashant Shitut, the firm's President and CEO. "Quality and service — in our business, these things matter."

But when Shitut first arrived in 2014, he encountered a company brimming with untapped potential. And not just the water, either.

"When I joined the company, all of us had

one goal in mind — to make USHydrations as successful as some other companies that have been built over the years, and that's not an easy task" says Shitut.

The overhaul started at the highest ranks, where Shitut spent the next 1½ years reshaping the management team.

In 2018, the company unveiled their latest high-speed PET production line which utilizes matrix PET bottle blowers that will rapidly produce and fill bottles of nearly any shape or size.

"Manufacturing requires constant capital investments, whether you're addressing efficiency, quality control or both," Shitut said. "We needed to be top notch in everything we do."

The company offers a vast range of career opportunities across the administrative, manufacturing, quality, logistics and engineering functions — not to mention

competitive compensation packages, benefits and incentive programs.

"Our employees are the heartbeat of our organization," said Jennifer Verry, Human Resources Manager. "There is a true sense of pride in the work they perform, and their expertise and dedication have been a significant contributing factor to our continued growth."

Through it all, Shitut says the company's major stockholder and Chairman Sandy Insalaco Sr. went to great lengths to

bolster management's efforts, helping fast-track decisions that other, publicly owned companies would've taken months to implement.

"We believe that with every passing year, we are coming closer to Sandy's standards," Shitut says.

Insalaco credits the employees for the company's success.

"Frankly, they do all the work. I'm proud of them," Insalaco said.

"We invest in the latest technology to be competitive and to get the best

product out there. That's what we have to do to deliver a real good product. I always dreamed to have what I call my 'Dream Team,' my 'Super Bowl team,' and I've got it here today."

"When you combine engaged ownership with a strong culture, it's much easier to make the changes necessary for long-term success," Shitut says. "We have a lot of things in the works, but it's the credibility we've established that I think really sets us apart

Schott

From page 14

factures and processes pieces of glass that weigh anywhere from a pound or two to mammoth pieces weighing several tons and requiring specialized lifting and transporting equipment, such as overhead cranes and high capacity lifts.

At various times dur-

ing its 50-year history, SCHOTT Site Duryea has focused on many areas of activity. Despite technological advances and maturing of markets, classical optics — glass for lenses, prisms and windows — remains an important part of the product portfolio. The company has endured some bumps in the road, most notably a devastating fire that destroyed a

significant portion of the plant in 2015. However, the few setbacks have served as incentives for positive developments of leading edge products and investments in personnel and equipment.

With 50 years of growth and success under its belt, the firm is poised for propulsion into the next fifty years of expansion and progress.

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Prime Inc. dispatches 1,000 trucks out of Pittston terminal

By Bill O'Boyle

boboyle@timesleader.com

PITSTON — Prime Inc., an international company, is a full truck-load carrier with more than 1,000 trucks dispatched out of its Pittston terminal on Armstrong Road.

More than 220 in-house associates work at the Pittston location, said Richard Yarborough, Pittston terminal manager.

"We deliver to the lower 48 states, Canada and Mexico," Yarborough said. "The Pittston terminal is a full service location for our drivers and fleet, with truck and trailer repair and maintenance, a body and paint shop, plus we provide fuel, tires and inspections."

Yarborough said Prime has a training program for new drivers and they sell used equipment from the Pittston location. He said a sales team and fleet operations staff are also on site.

The terminal complex houses a spa, cafeteria, fitness center for drivers, in-house personnel and family members.

• The following information was found on the Prime Inc. website:

Prime history

Robert E. Low started Prime in Urbana, Missouri, in 1970 with one dump truck. Robert's vision of providing the ultimate in customer



Trucks are lined up in the garage at the Pittston Prime Inc. terminal.

Submitted photo

PRIME INC. FACTS

• Terminal Locations:

Springfield, MO
 Salt Lake City, UT
 Denver, CO
 Pittston, PA
 Miami & Pierson, FL
 Oxnard, CA
 Wilsonville, OR
 Decatur, IN
 Savannah, GA

• Fleet Size:

Trucks

Refrigerated Division – 6,100
 Flatbed Division – 800
 Tanker Division – 320
 Total: 7,220

Trailers

Refrigerated Division – 10,600
 Flatbed Division – 1,600
 Tanker Division – 590
 Intermodal Division – 1,600
 Total: 14,390

• Equipment:

Freightliner (2016-19),
 Peterbilt (2016-19),
 Internationals (2016-19)
 Wabash & Utility Trailers – 53'

Reitnouer 48' & 53' "Big Bubba" flatbed & Drop Deck trailers
 Walker 6,800-gallon, 44' Stainless Steel tanker trailers

• Drivers:

7,500 drivers
 20% team drivers

• Operations:

Contiguous 48 U.S. states, Canada & Mexico
 Staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
 On site and available for immediate responses to any customer service inquiries

• Revenue:

2010 - \$958 million
 2011 - \$1.04 billion
 2012 - \$1.18 billion
 2013 - \$1.32 billion
 2014 - \$1.56 billion
 2015 - \$1.64 billion
 2016 - \$1.68 billion
 2017 - \$1.87 billion
 2018 - \$2.10 billion

satisfaction enabled Prime to expand rapidly to become a \$50 million operation by 1980, when the company relocated corporate headquarters to Springfield, Missouri. The early 80's ushered in an era of deregulation, a national economic slowdown, and an unprecedented purge in the trucking industry.

Prime, though they downsized operations considerably, remained resolute and diligent in their efforts. As a result, the company focused primarily on those areas of expertise which had proven to be most profitable. Emphasis was placed initially on refrigerated business and later expanded to include flatbed and brokerage services. Cost controls, customer service enhancements, and an aggressive effort to recruit the most qualified personnel in the industry enabled Prime to continue to prosper while providing superior and reliable transportation services.

Since 1986, Prime has experienced a steady growth in revenue every year. Prime's personnel, equipment, and technology remains on the cutting edge of the transportation industry, and the company's growth remains steady and well-managed. Prime continues to position itself to serve customers well into the new millennium.

Prime Inc. Driver Minimum Hiring Qualifications

- Must be at least 21 years old with a valid license from your state of permanent residence including a tanker endorsement.
- Be able to obtain United States Passport, TWIC Card, and Hazmat Endorsement.
- Have a verifiable work history and references.
- Have an acceptable motor vehicle record.
- Must be able to pass a physical compliant to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Standards.
- If any failed or refused drug or alcohol related test, must provide proof of completed Substance Abuse Counseling to consider.

Documents

- Must present one or more of the following: US Passport, State Certified Copy of Birth Certificate, or INS paperwork that shows US Citizenship or that permanent residence has been established and is current.

Criminal History

- An affirmative answer to the questions regarding criminal record will not automatically result in the denial of employment. An applicant's criminal record will be evaluated based on the job for which the applicant has applied.

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Major project key improvement for Grimes Industrial Park

PITTSTON TWP. —A long-established Pittston Township business park is being viewed in a new light thanks to a major infrastructure project.

Grimes Industrial Park — developed by Pittston Area Industrial Development (PAID) decades ago — has welcomed several new tenants since the extension of Navy Way Road from Interstate 81 at the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport to Commerce Road inside the park.

PAID is an affiliate of the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce.

The \$43 million I-81/ Navy Way Road project combined two access points on I-81's northbound and southbound lanes into one, installed three multi-lane roundabouts, reconstructed 1.5 miles of I-81, and built a new one-mile Navy Way Road to connect the interstate to the airport and Grimes Industrial Park.

The improved road access has paid dividends for the business park. In 2014, when the infrastructure project was underway, A. Duie Pyle, one of the Northeastern United States' top truckload, less than truckload and warehousing and distribution companies, constructed a two-building industrial complex along Sathers Drive.

The complex consists of an expandable 32,795-square-foot termi-



An aerial view of the new Stephenson Equipment Co. (left) and A. Duie Pyle distribution center/maintenance facility in the Grimes Industrial Park on Sathers Drive in Pittston Township. Also shown at left are Mericle-owned ReadytoGo sites. Submitted photo



Cummings

nal with an attached office and an 8,505 square foot maintenance building. The 12.95-acre site located on Sathers Drive had been fully prepared by Mericle Commercial Real Estate Services through the developer's ReadyToGo Program.

In 2016, FedEx Ground constructed a 310,000-square-foot distribution center in the park its largest such facility in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

At the time, FedEx

spokesman David Westrick said the company chose the site along Freeport Road "because of its ease of access to major highways, proximity to customers' distribution centers and a strong local community workforce for recruiting employees."

In 2018, Mericle completed construction on a 16,500-square-foot industrial building on a ReadyToGo! Site on Sathers Drive for Stephenson Equipment Inc.

Stephenson Equipment Inc., or SEI, specializes in serving the crane and heavy lifting industries and the construction, paving, and road repair and maintenance markets in

the Pennsylvania and New York state areas. SEI offers new and used crane sales, crane rentals, crane parts, and crane service.

The A. Duie Pyle, FedEx Ground, and Stephenson Equipment buildings were the first to be constructed in Grimes Industrial Park for many years.

"The new road project really boosted the park's fortunes," said Mericle Vice President of Marketing Jim Cummings. "Although the park had sites available, it had been a bit stagnant for a while. Our phone started ringing as soon as the highway project started." Cummings said since

the start of the infrastructure project, Mericle completed four building pads in the park to meet client demand. A. Duie Pyle and Stephenson took two of the pads. The other two are capable of supporting 83,200-square-foot and 24,000-square-foot buildings, he said.

Cummings said that several industries have used the two pads for overflow trailer parking.

"We prepare our ReadyToGo! Sites in such a way that they can be used for short-term trailer parking until such time that we construct buildings," he said.

Recently, Mericle purchased a 38-acre site at

the end of Oldfield Boulevard adjacent to the new FedEx Ground building. "We can construct up to 300,000 square feet on the parcel," said Cummings. He said the site is an excellent location for an e-commerce fulfillment company that needs to be in close proximity to overnight delivery companies.

"FedEx ground is immediately adjacent to the site and UPS is less than five minutes away. Access to the interstate is now excellent. We think the site has the potential to support a very significant economic development project," he said.



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