‘SPROUT BROTHERS’
Sons carry late father’s work to next generation
BY JOHN TOWNES

While transitions of family businesses are always complex, the process was especially challenging for brothers Ari and Noah Meyerowitz.

For four decades their father, Steve Meyerowitz, had a career as an internationally prominent entrepreneur, author and educator about the practice of sprouting, juicing and healthy natural living.

Based in Great Barrington, he wrote and travelled internationally to spread his message as a pioneer in creating awareness of the health benefits of sprouting, vegetarianism and veganism, raw food, juice diets, and a healthy organic lifestyle.

An ebullient personality with an early background as a vaudeville performer, Meyerowitz had developed a popular persona as a healthy natural living.

erowitz had a career as an internationally

health EeQeÀts RI sSrRutiQJ YeJetariaQisP

travelled internationally to spread his mes-

healthy natural living.

about the practice of sprouting, juicing

An ebullient personality with an early

background as a vaudeville performer, Mey-

had developed a popular persona as

healthy natural living.

erowitz had a career as an internationally

Meyerowitz.

inspired by Pierce’s own experiences with then-two-year-old Sylvia’s stubborn attachment to her pacifier.

Kaitlyn Pierce (with daughters Delilah, 2, and Sylvia, 5) has created Binka Bear, a plush doll and accompanying product that includes a plush teddy bear doll, Binka Bear and the Magic of Willowspring.

by a children’s book,

Pittsfield mom draws on personal experience for ‘Binka Bear’ venture

BY JOHN TOWNES

After successfully “kick-starting” her new venture, Kaitlyn Pierce of Pittsfield is about to introduce its first product, Binka Bear, which is designed to ease the problems associated with the often-difficult stage of child development: weaning their child from the pacifier in a way that reduces the emotional upset that often accompanies the loss of this important form of security.

A challenge in weaning young children from their pacifiers is their attachment to it as a source of security and comfort. It can be very difficult for the parents and the child if it is suddenly taken away with no explanation the child can understand.

The Binka Bear kit is intended to encourage the child to give up the pacifier for a good purpose.

“It gives the child a positive incentive,” said Pierce, who did extensive research on child development as part of the process of creating her product concept.

Following about six months of planning and development, Pierce launched a campaign on the fundraising website Kickstarter, which was conducted from July 6 to Aug. 10. Its goal was to raise at least $20,000 to finance the production of the first order of 1,500 Binka Bear packages.

The campaign exceeded its goal, with $20,146 pledged from 154 backers and supporters. As incentives, contributors were given the opportunity to purchase the first of the products.

Following the Kickstarter campaign, Pierce has been working on final packaging continued on page 14

with pacifier

BY JOHN TOWNES

Now that construction is finally underway on the 20,000-square-foot Berkshire Innovation Center (BIC), the organization that will occupy the completed structure is focusing on building its membership, programs, financial base and technical facilities.

“Our objective is to have a ribbon-cutting next year and immediately open in a fully equipped building with a full slate of active programs,” said Stephen Boyd, chairman of the board and president of the Berkshire Innovation Center, a nonprofit, membership organization that will own and operate the facility.

Located in the William Stanley Business Park in Pittsfield, the $14.5 million BIC project was initiated in 2008 with a $9.7 million capital grant awarded to the city by the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center.

In 2015 ground-breaking had been planned but was put on hold when increased construction costs created a significant funding gap that left the BIC in limbo.

Finally, in March of this year, Gov. Charlie Baker announced that an additional $2.3 million had become available to move the project forward. A formal ground-breaking was held on Sept. 25, attended continued on page 26

BY JOHN TOWNES

No new venture offers more appealing dog food option – page 19

Big step for Berkshire Innovation Center

With construction started, long-awaited project looks ahead to fulfilling vital mission

BY JOHN TOWNES

“It still is in the early stage of development in terms of what BIC will ultimately become.”

With an updated design and expanded mission, the $14.5 million Berkshire Innovation Center at William Stanley Business Park in Pittsfield is now on track for completion by the fourth quarter of 2019.

By John Townes

November 2018

“The Business Journal for Berkshire County” Vol. 22 No. 7

Inside this issue

♦ NEW BRAND CONCEPT GETS TEST WITH ALLTOWN MARKET........................................ 2
♦ BETTER APPROACH TO OPPORTUNITY ZONE DEVELOPMENT...................................... 10
♦ MEETING TOMORROW’S WORKFORCE CHALLENGES AS ‘MASSHIRE’.................................. 11
♦ CHANGES IN STORE FOR FORMER MATT REILLY’S IRISH PUB.................................. 12

New venture offers more appealing dog food option

continued on page 14

BERKSHIRE TRADE & COMMERCE
monthly

Vol. 22 No. 7

“The Business Journal For Berkshire County” NOVEMBER 2018

Pittsfield mom draws on personal experience for ‘Binka Bear’ venture

Pittsfield mom draws on personal experience for ‘Binka Bear’ venture

Biggins

smoker to
good use

— page 20

continued on page 16

continued on page 26

continued on page 16

continued on page 14

Kaitlyn Pierce (with daughters Delilah, 2, and Sylvia, 5) has created Binka Bear, a plush doll and accompanying storybook designed to give children a positive incentive to part with their pacifiers. The product was inspired by Pierce’s own experiences with then-two-year-old Sylvia’s stubborn attachment to her pacifier.
BTF launches online version of A Closer Look

BY JOHN TOWNES

The Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation (BTF) has launched an online version of its comprehensive 2017 study of the region encompassing Berkshire County, and adjacent northwest Litchfield County, Conn., and Columbia and northeast Dutchess counties in New York.

A Closer Look is a new interactive web resource providing current data, resident perspectives and multimedia stories on the four-county region BTF serves. It includes economic and demographic trends and background, and detailed statistics, analysis and overview.

The website is based on A Closer Look, a report on the region that was released in July 2017, following a year-long study and analysis by the foundation and its research partner Mt. Auburn Associates (September 2017 BTAAC).

“Our intent from the start of preparing A Closer Look was to give people and organizations a better understanding of the issues affecting the region through data,” said Peter Taylor, president of BTF. “The website was always part of that plan.”

He added that it is also intended to serve as an ongoing public resource for larger discussions about the region and the work of community and economic development.

“For the website, we also created enhancements and additional features to make the information more accessible and interactive, such as data visualizations,” said Taylor.

BTF is a nonprofit public charity that manages private foundations and encourages philanthropic giving in the four-county region. In 2017 it distributed a total of $6.5 million through grants and scholarships to nonprofits and individuals in the arts and education, health and human services, and environmental protection.

BTF conducted the study, A Closer Look, as part of its own strategic planning to determine the needs of the region and set its own philanthropic priorities. It also was intended to share the results with other organizations, governments and individuals as a public information resource.

BTF and Mount Auburn, a research firm, conducted focus groups and surveys of residents. It also drew on data and other information from a variety of sources.

The website is organized by topics and issues such as population, jobs, education, income and poverty, and housing. The map also shows public school enrollment data for 30-plus districts. It includes graphs, charts and maps to bring five themes into focus: jobs and the economy, demographic transition, youth and the future workforce, deepening inequality, and assets and infrastructure.

It includes results from the foundation’s resident surveys, with responses available by age, income and education level. It also provides data on individual communities as well as regional overviews.

The site also features multimedia stories that illustrate these themes through the lives of local residents.

Taylor said the information and data will be periodically updated, as new information about its topics becomes available.

He noted that most of the basic benchmarks and trends have changed only slightly in the year since the original report was released.

“The trends remain the same,” he said. “Our intent from the start was to give people and organizations a better understanding of the issues affecting the region through data.”

“Our intent from the start was to give people and organizations a better understanding of the issues affecting the region through data.”

Northern Berkshire Orthopedics

Northern Berkshire Orthopedics has exceptional providers ready to care for you. Through our team-based approach with Southwestern Vermont Medical Center and our Dartmouth-Hitchcock affiliation, you have access to board-certified, fellowship-trained specialists when you need them. Whether you need care for a sports injury, a joint replacement, reconstructive shoulder surgery, or fracture care, our goal is to get you back to the activities you love as quickly—and painlessly—as possible.
It closed the existing store and removed the pumps last fall. Following months of construction, the new store opened in June. The Alltown Market increased the size from about 2,500 to 3,000 square feet, and the building is taller, with a contemporary wood and metal design.

As part of the process, the layout of the site was reconfigured, with the store and a new line of gas pumps parallel to First Street. In some ways Alltown Market typifies a modern chain convenience store, with familiar brands and mix of snacks, drinks, coffee, cigarettes and other sundries. However, it also offers products more associated with a store like Guido’s Fresh Market, including organic, natural, vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free and locally sourced items. For example, it carries Amy’s, a well-known brand of frozen meals made with natural ingredients. It also carries all natural teas, juices, and soda.

The store also sells “grab-and-go,” prepared meals including sandwiches, artisan flatbread pizza, breakfast sandwiches made with cage-free eggs, all-natural antibiotic-free chicken tenders, and organic potato puffs.

The Alltown Market has a small outdoor dining area with Wi-Fi where people can relax over a meal or coffee in season.

Riggs said that Pittsfield is one of the initial stores with the Alltown brand and, in a sense, is a prototype for that concept, which combines the advantages of a typical convenience store with the selection and atmosphere of a neighborhood market.

“We want to provide an enhanced offering to customers, including healthy options,” he said. “We also want to be part of the community and offer a welcoming environment in the store with friendly staff.”

While not a full grocery store, its product selection is more diverse than what is usually found in typical convenience stores.

“We saw an unmet need and opportunity that we want to fill,” said Riggs. “People associate convenience stores with speed and ease. However, the experience doesn’t usually offer a lot to delight customers.”

“There are certain basic principles we believe strongly in,” he continued. “That includes better food, a positive experience, and a visually appealing store. Within that framework, we are experimenting and trying new things out in the store. As we learn what specific ideas and products resonate with customers, we’ll also apply them in our other stores.”

As a result, he said, they will be adjusting the merchandise and features in the Pittsfield store. “We’re committed to the basic concept, but we will tweak it and make specific changes from time to time. We also welcome customer feedback to help us learn what people want.”

Rather than being in an upscale neighborhood, Alltown Market is located in a part of the city with a large lower-income population which also is a target for neighborhood and business revitalization efforts.

The Morningside neighborhood has also been referred to as a “food desert” – a term for an area that does not have walkable access to a supermarket. While not the same as a full-service grocery, the Alltown Market does serve as a source of fresh, healthy food.

Riggs said his company was familiar with the area and believes it is a good site for the store. It is on a busy intersection with a lot of traffic.

“This might resonate more quickly in other neighborhoods with more of this type of business,” he said. “But we were confident enough in this concept and the neighborhood to open it there. One of the things we hope this will do is enable people to learn more about healthy options for eating. Everyone has been very welcoming to us.”

It has been very welcoming to us.”

As a result, they have been referring to the store as a “food desert” – a term for an area that does not have walkable access to a supermarket. While not the same as a full-service grocery, the Alltown Market does serve as a source of fresh, healthy food.

Riggs said his company was familiar with the area and believes it is a good site for the store. It is on a busy intersection with a lot of traffic.

“This might resonate more quickly in other neighborhoods with more of this type of business,” he said. “But we were confident enough in this concept and the neighborhood to open it there. One of the things we hope this will do is enable people to learn more about healthy options for eating. Everyone has been very welcoming to us.”

Contact Susan to book your special event! susan.coyne@marriott.com

berkshirescourtyard.com
70 Pittsfield Road, Lenox • 413-581-7700

CardPayment.com
We GUARANTEE To Beat Your Current Processing Rates!

Berkshire Merchant Services
413-637-2100

www.harschrealestate.com
413-458-4444

Celebrating 50 years...with you.

Events Space & Catering
Full Bar & Bistro
Starbucks Coffee
Firepit & Courtyard
Indoor Pool

COURTYARD®
Marriott

Make room for a little fun.

DIRECT DIstrict PAUL HARSCH:
413-458-4444
paul@harschrealestate.com
www.harschrealestate.com

Choose A Real Estate Expert

Expert: A person who has a comprehensive and authoritative knowledge of, or skill in, a particular area (synonym: specialist, authority).

Career: An occupation or profession, especially one requiring special training, education, or experience.

Paul Harsch has made real estate his life’s work, and has achieved a level of expertise that sets him apart in his profession.

GRI Graduate of the Realtors Institute
Licensed Real Estate Broker in MA, VT and NY
Massachusetts Certified Real Estate Instructor

In 1979 Paul established his own real estate firm, Harsch Associates, which he grew to five offices and a team of 50 sales associates, stretching from Lenox in the south to Manchester, Vt., in the north. At the vanguard of the transition from brick-and-mortar offices to the Internet, Paul saw that the future was not in physical locations and large rosters but in a closely managed small office backed by a robust online presence. As such, Paul began in 1990 to consolidate and reduce the footprint of the firm, which today operates highly efficiently with one location, three associates and two support staff. During his 43-year career, Paul Harsch has completed well over 600 sales totaling more than $155 million – from luxury homes to businesses, commercial real estate, land, subdivision of land and commercial leases. There is not one aspect of real estate sales and leasing in this region that Paul has not had extensive experience in handling. A compilation of letters and notes from many past clients offering praise and gratitude for Paul’s expertise, skill, integrity and caring manner is available to anyone interested in viewing it.
BERKSHIRE MONEY MANAGEMENT  
& BUILD IT, SELL IT, PROFIT  
PRESENT CNBC’S THE PROFIT  

MARCUS LEMONIS  

Discuss your people, product, and process  

A FREE FIRESIDE CHAT FOR BUSINESS OWNERS  

Wednesday, November 7th  
at 4:30 PM  
Cocktails start at 3:30 PM  
Limited Seating, Must RSVP  

Invite Only  
Contact AHarris@BerkshireMM.com to request an invitation  

Performance is not indicative of any specific investment or future results. Views regarding the economy, securities markets or other specialized areas, like all predictors of future events, cannot be guaranteed to be accurate and may result in economic loss to the investor. Investment in securities, including mutual funds, involves the risk of loss.
Oct. 17: Pittfield Green Drinks, interested in participating in our third monthly event. Join us for networking, talks and updates on environmental happenings. Visit our Facebook group for more information and to share the event with others. At the Berkshire Public Library or online at bit.ly/2Nao8Pq.

Oct. 18: Berkshire South hosts the first of a three-part event series on how to choose a good partner for your nonprofit. The first of three sessions begins tonight at 5:30 p.m. at the Berkshire South Cultural Center, 178 Main St. For more information, call 413-499-4241 ext. 200 or go to berkshiresouth.org.

Oct. 19: Two Truths and a Treasure, an evening event hosted by Berkshire History Group featuring a talk on the history of two objects brought in for appraisal. Two Truths and a Treasure is free and open to the public from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Berkshire Athenaeum. For more information, call Natalie Narotzky at 413-499-4241 ext. 200.

Oct. 19: Berkshire County Arts Council presents “The Best, Worst, and Weirdest of 2018, Part 1” at Greenock Country Club in Lee. Cocktails at 5:30, general admission starts at 6:30, and the program begins at 7:15. Cost $50 per person. RSVP by Oct. 17. Sponsorship levels are still available, benefiting the Berkshire Artists’ Cooperative and ACentral Women in the Arts. For more information and to purchase tickets, call 413-499-9366 or info@berkshirearts.org.

Oct. 19: 6th Annual All Alcoholic Restaurant Liquor License Ceremony — Celebrating the Issuance of the 178th License — a formal ceremony by Tea Tell Truth and a complimentary cocktail hour provided by Nejma’s Wine Cellars. RSVP by Nov. 1. For more information, visit berkshiresouth.org. Event includes a breakfast, and a donation of $25 per person is requested. Visit berkshiresouth.org for more information. Sponsorship levels are still available, benefiting the Berkshire Artists’ Cooperative and ACentral Women in the Arts.

Oct. 19: Three Winning Storytelling Strategies, workshop presented by the Newspaper Enterprise Association at 2 p.m. in Room 203 in City Hall, 70 Allen St. To register early, contact Nancy Nambrudhi at 413-499-9366 or nancy@pittcon.com.

Oct. 20: Squeak Castle Program & Tour, presented by the Great Barrington Historical Society at 10 a.m. at Squeak Castle, 49 S. Main St. For information, call 413-528-1030 or send an email to info@gbhs.org.

Oct. 20: The First Meeting of Firsts, a free, informal gathering with a keynote speech by Soul Fire Farm’s Leah Penniman, co-founder of the Farm, who is working to return land to its original owners and helping activists and food justice advocates from across the nation manage and deliver the First National Poor People’s Economic Human Rights Freedom Summer. The meeting is free and open to the public. Visit berkshiresouth.org or info@berkshiresouth.org for more information.

Oct. 20: Mastronardi, Tom, and the Great Barrington Free Public Library announce the creation of the 6th Annual All Alcoholic Restaurant Liquor License Ceremony — Celebrating the Issuance of the 178th License — a formal ceremony by Tea Tell Truth and a complimentary cocktail hour provided by Nejma’s Wine Cellars. For more information, call berkshiresouth.org. Event includes a breakfast, and a donation of $25 per person is requested. Visit berkshiresouth.org for more information. Sponsorship levels are still available, benefiting the Berkshire Artists’ Cooperative and ACentral Women in the Arts.

Oct. 21: Annual All Alcoholic Restaurant Liquor License Ceremony — Celebrating the Issuance of the 178th License — a formal ceremony by Tea Tell Truth and a complimentary cocktail hour provided by Nejma’s Wine Cellars. For more information, call berkshiresouth.org. Event includes a breakfast, and a donation of $25 per person is requested. Visit berkshiresouth.org for more information. Sponsorship levels are still available, benefiting the Berkshire Artists’ Cooperative and ACentral Women in the Arts.

Oct. 22: 27th Annual E.F. Schumacher Lecture, featuring the 135th anniversary of the birth of W. E. B. Du Bois, are renewable through the Berkshire Athenaeum’s $1,000 challenge grant. For more information, call 413-499-9366 or info@pittcon.com.

Oct. 23: Community Preservation Act Funds and the City’s Priorities in Action, sponsored by the Berkshire Athenaeum; Christa Collier, executive director of the Berkshire Family YMCA. Free to Berkshire Museum members, $35 for nonmembers. For more information, visit berkshirebotanical.org.

Oct. 24: Three Winning Storytelling Strategies, workshop presented by the Newspaper Enterprise Association at 2 p.m. in Room 203 in City Hall, 70 Allen St. To register early, contact Nancy Nambrudhi at 413-499-9366 or nancy@pittcon.com.

Oct. 25: A Spring Fairy Tale, a reading and talk for children ages 3-8 and their parents, presented by the Berkshire Athenaeum’s Children’s Librarian, at 2 p.m. at the Berkshire Athenaeum’s Children’s Room. For more information, call 413-499-9366 or info@pittcon.com.

Oct. 25: First Friday Artwalk featuring the work of over a dozen accomplished regional artists at Pittsfield's Upstate Cultural District from 5 to 9 p.m. Free guided walking tour begins at 5:30 p.m. at the Inn at the Center of BRATTLEBORO. More artists exhibit on an onstage stage, providing entertainment, beer and wine, and of participating artists and locations, visit www.FirstFridayArtwalk.com.

Oct. 26: Arts & Craft Festival presented by Berkshire South Regional Community Center at 15 Clapsley Rd., Great Barrington. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, call 413-528-9475.

Oct. 27: 100th Anniversary of the Berkshire Athenaeum, a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Berkshire Athenaeum. Free to Berkshire Museum members, $35 for nonmembers. For more information, visit berkshirebotanical.org.

Oct. 30: 100th Anniversary of the Berkshire Athenaeum, a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Berkshire Athenaeum. Free to Berkshire Museum members, $35 for nonmembers. For more information, visit berkshirebotanical.org.
Berkshire Trade & Commerce

November 2018

Community Health Programs (CHP) has received a $285,000 federal grant for expanded treatment of mental health disorders that can place patients at risk of substance abuse. The grant from the Federal Health Resources and Services-Administration is part of a $396 mil- lion federal allocation. Of this, $12 million will be shared by 38 Massachusetts-based community health centers. CHP will strengthen its integrated behavioral health strategy by adding two full-time licensed clinical social workers to its primary care practices at CHP Lee Family Practice and CHP Great Barrington Health Center. “This award helps us to double down and strengthen our approach,” said Jerry Burke, CEO and president of Hillscliff Education Centers. “We are thankful for their thoughtfulness and support of the incredible work that our staff, students and families perform on a daily basis.”

The financial aid offices of Berkshire Community College (BCC), Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA), and Williams College have scheduled a series of high school financial aid presentations throughout the county. Parents and students who are unable to attend their own high school program are encouraged to attend another presentation in a neighboring community on an alternate date. Program will include a discussion of financial aid concepts, the application and delivery process, an update of federal, state and college financial aid programs, and an in-depth review of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and PROFILE application forms. Financial aid deadlines are scheduled as follows: Oct. 23 at Pittsfield High School in Pittsfield at 6:30 p.m.; presented by Kurtis Traunier of BCC; Oct. 25 at McCann Technical High School in North Adams 6: p.m., presented by Carrie Aliboez of MCLA; Oct. 3 at Mr. Greylock Regional High in Williamstown at 6:30 p.m., presented by Betsy Hobson of Williams College; Oct. 23 at BART Charter School in Adams at 6:30 p.m., presented by Lori Keating of MCLA, Oct. 24, at Wahconah Regional High School in Dalton at 6 p.m., presented by Ann Lundhild and Richard Davis of Williams College; Oct. 24 at Monument Mountain Regional High School in Great Barrington at 6:30 p.m., presented by Ann Martagh Gittis of Yassar College; Oct. 25 at Mr. Everett Regional High School in Sheffield at 5 p.m., presented by Ann Martagh Gittis of Yassar College, and Nov. 1 at Drury High School in North Adams at 6:30 p.m., presented by Beth Penti of MCLA.

Berkshire Humane Society will open a second location of Carvela, Boutique, its successful women’s resale shop, in downtown Lenox in early 2019. The original Carvela, Boutique, at 2325 Stockbridge Road, opened in May 2014. The shop specializes in affordable women’s clothing with an emphasis on designers and upscale labels, current styles, and contemporary fashion. Shoppers can also purchase handmade jewelry, soaps, and other products that proceed from the shop benefit Berkshire Humane Society and its dual mission to care for animals, as they say, “so well,” said John Perreault, executive director for Berkshire Humane Society. “We hope this second location will help us to expand our community and give people in Lenox and Pittsfield a new, local shop.” The location, at a recently renovated building on Church Street next door to Alta and Pittsfield Lenox. The “new local shop” will be in a larger space, as we’re going to have more room for clothes and accessories. There will be a focus on clothing, with large mirrors and wonderful light,” said Cindy Bartlett, president for Berkshire Humane Society. “We have a lot of people working with us to make Carvela Lenox happen. We have donors helping define some of our initial costs, and we’re gathering new volunteers who love clothing and fashion as much as they love animals.” Carvela Boutique is entirely stocked by community donations. A charitable clothing drive to collect items for the Lenox location is underway. All women’s clothing and outerwear, jewelry, shoes, handbags, wallets, scarves, hats, and gloves will be accepted; however, items will be accepted at the Pittsfield location. Donations to the Lenox location may be scheduled by emailing cmeagrr@ berkshirehumane.org.

Downtown Pittsfield Inc. is holding a photo challenge to find that photo which best captures why downtown Pittsfield is the “Heart of the Berkshires.” The first-place prize, awarded by a panel of local judges, will have their photo featured in Pittsfield’s 2019 Downtown Guide and a Downtown Pittsfield social marketing campaign. The first- and second-place winners will also take home a prize pack donated by local downtown businesses. In addition, select entries will be exhibited at Downtown Pittsfield Inc., 33 Dunham Hall, in 2019 during downtown First Fridays Artwalk. Photo submissions will be accepted through Nov. 30, and winners will be notified by Jan. 2. Full contest rules and entry information can be found at downtownpittsfield.com.

Berkshire Community College (BCC) has been awarded a nearly $200,000 grant from Guardian Life Insurance Company of America for a proposal to expand the college’s financial planning program by offering a new financial literacy course, offering, at no cost to students, the Money Management for Life course, as well as debt forgiveness grants. The grant will also support hiring a new financial services coach at the college to provide individualized coaching to students, and expanding marketing for the Guardian-supported efforts. “We are so excited to have received these funds from Guardian for that brilliant team here at the college put together to help students in the financial literacy endeavors,” said BCC President Ellen Kennedy. “This program will really change lives.” BCC received an initial grant last year from Guardian to begin offering a free three-credit course to students called BUCS: Basic Understanding of Consumer Strategies. This funding was recognized as the event’s special founding partner of the Berkshire Innovation Center in Pittsfield. General Dynamic System, Inc. also presented a special honor for Pittsfield on the May 2, 2019. The Berkshire Trendsetter Award winners were announced on Berkshire's Celebrate Business Day, May 2, and are chosen to recognize businesses, organizations and individuals whose achievements and contributions have strengthened the economy and helped the Berkshires grow. In the Comprehensive Market- ing category, Success Stories presented by the Arts (CATA) took home the award for their social media and marketing campaign, new website, and creative collaboration with a unique brand. The Newcomer of the Year Award was presented to Community Health Programs in the Berkshires for their high-impact first year of operations. The Brian Center was named Nonprofit Organization of the Year for its significant impact on the behavioral health and treatment services sector. Winning the Community Impact Award was WAM Theatre for being champions of hu- man rights, working to create change by creating community and finding their work in their dual mission.

Berkshire Agricultural Venture was recently awarded the Berkshire Economy Award for their dedication to the growth of food entrepreneurs throughout the region. Kyra Gillett of General Dynamic System, Inc. was named the Under 40 Change Maker for her passionate and highly motivated work in local STEM initiatives that target young women. The Entrepreneur/Visionary of the Year Award went to George Boyer of Berkshire West, the CEO and board director of Boyd Technolo- gies in Great Barrington. The Sherry Howard, founding partner of the Berkshire Innovation Center in Pittsfield, General Dynamic System, Inc. also presented a special honor for Pittsfield on the May 2, 2019. The Berkshire Trendsetter Award winners were announced on Berkshire's Celebrate Business Day, May 2, and are chosen to recognize businesses, organizations and individuals whose achievements and contributions have strengthened the economy and helped the Berkshires grow. In the Comprehensive Market- ing category, Success Stories presented by the Arts (CATA) took home the award for their social media and marketing campaign, new website, and creative collaboration with a unique brand. The Newcomer of the Year Award was presented to Community Health Programs in the Berkshires for their high-impact first year of operations. The Brian Center was named Nonprofit Organization of the Year for its significant impact on the behavioral health and treatment services sector. Winning the Community Impact Award was WAM Theatre for being champions of hu- man rights, working to create change by creating community and finding their work in their dual mission.

The board of trustees of the Berkshire Mus- eum has selected the executive search firm Brent D. Glass LLC to identify candidates for the museum’s position. This includes providing management consulting to museums, historical sites, and other cultural organizations, and conducting research on the geography and educational organizations around the world. The board also announced that William Grady, who retired this past summer, is expected to take six to nine months. David Ellis is serving as interim executive director. The board also board also announced that two works – Hunter and The Last Arrow and The Last Arrow – will be offered by Sotheby’s at the firm’s American Art and Design sale on May 24 and 25. The Last Arrow by George Henry Durrie, a part of the second group of works offered for sale on May 24, has been described by the Windsor, New York, Historical Society and the Berkshire Humane Society. The Berkshire Humane Society’s annual endowment and fund renovations and repairs to the museum’s more than 100-year-old building.
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) has announced the first of its series of four talks focused on the importance of art and architecture in shaping communities and changing societies. The talks will be held on Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Jan. 20, and Feb. 10 at 3 p.m. in the auditorium in the Clark Art Institute’s Morton Research Center. All lectures in the series are free and open to the public. The lecture series highlights influential projects Krens has either led or played a major role in developing—including MASS MoCA’s 30-year ago the Guggenheim Museum’s Rockwell in Our Time and the early 1990s, the Saualiah Island Cultural District in Abu Dhabi (including the newly opened Louvre Abu Dhabi); the Meizia Lake Museum of Modern and Contemporary art in Changsha, Hunan Province, China; the suite of exhibitions currently planned; and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi; and the “Hub for the Arts” in Saudi Arabia, a project that began as an island in the Red Sea. Krenn’s talk on the title is "Art, Money, Oil, and Guns: The Saga of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi." The lecture traces the narrative arcs of two important elements that combined to produce the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, a new museum Krens has called “the Apotheosis.” Additional lectures in the series include: "Bilbao," Nov. 18; "The Manhattan Project," Jan. 20; and "Unfinished Business: The EMRCA and the Diseases of Despair." Feb. 10.

Berkshire Bank has been honored with the inaugural Rockwell in Our Time: Innovation Award for Small-Medium Enterprises (SME). The award, which was presented during IMPACT2030’s Global Summit at the United Nations headquarters in New York, recognizes excellence in directing the collective efforts of businesses and organizations towards the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), IMPACT2030, a private-sector-led initiative that renews the SDGs. IMPACT2030, a private-sector-led initiative that aims to contribute to the advancement of the SDGs.

Berkshire Bank is partnering with GreenPath Financial Wellness—a national nonprofit organization that provides financial counseling, education and products to empower people to lead financially healthy lives—to offer its employees, retirees and their communities practical and educational tools and methods to improve their financial well-being. The partnership with GreenPath features no-cost access to personal and family budgeting; credit report education, including how to improve your credit score by disputing consumer credit errors and avoiding bankruptcy, foreclosure or repossession. Berkshire Bank established a dedicated website (www.greenpath.com/berkshire) and phone line (866-692-2059) to provide access to GreenPath services, and GreenPath resources will be integrated into the platform throughout all areas of the bank. The bank also plans to deliver financial education seminars on topics including Money Concepts for Teens and Young Adults, Identity Theft, and The Psychology of Saving. Funding for the new collaboration was made possible, in part, by a contribution from Berkshire Bank Foundation.

One of many historical properties we protect every day.

Lee Audio ‘N Security, Inc. Since 1970

1-800-369-3905
www.LeeAudioNSecurity.com
M.A. Lic #168C
NY Lic #12100022698

NEWS & NOTES FROM THE REGION

The Clark Art Institute is welcoming Thomas Krens, the Director of the Extreme Model Railroad and Contemporary Architecture Museum and director emeritus of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, for a series of four talks focused on the importance of art and architecture in shaping communities and changing societies. The talks will be held on Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Jan. 20, and Feb. 10 at 3 p.m. in the auditorium in the Clark Art Institute’s Morton Research Center. All lectures in the series are free and open to the public. The lecture series highlights influential projects Krens has either led or played a major role in developing—including MASS MoCA’s 30-year ago the Guggenheim Museum’s Rockwell in Our Time and the early 1990s, the Saualiah Island Cultural District in Abu Dhabi (including the newly opened Louvre Abu Dhabi); the Meizia Lake Museum of Modern and Contemporary art in Changsha, Hunan Province, China; the suite of exhibitions currently planned; and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi; and the “Hub for the Arts” in Saudi Arabia, a project that began as an island in the Red Sea. Krenn’s talk on the title is "Art, Money, Oil, and Guns: The Saga of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi." The lecture traces the narrative arcs of two important elements that combined to produce the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, a new museum Krens has called “the Apotheosis.” Additional lectures in the series include: "Bilbao," Nov. 18; "The Manhattan Project," Jan. 20; and "Unfinished Business: The EMRCA and the Diseases of Despair." Feb. 10.

Berkshire Bank has been honored with the inaugural Rockwell in Our Time: Innovation Award for Small-Medium Enterprises (SME). The award, which was presented during IMPACT2030’s Global Summit at the United Nations headquarters in New York, recognizes excellence in directing the collective efforts of businesses and organizations towards the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), IMPACT2030, a private-sector-led initiative that renews the SDGs. IMPACT2030, a private-sector-led initiative that aims to contribute to the advancement of the SDGs.

Berkshire Bank is partnering with GreenPath Financial Wellness—a national nonprofit organization that provides financial counseling, education and products to empower people to lead financially healthy lives—to offer its employees, retirees and their communities practical and educational tools and methods to improve their financial well-being. The partnership with GreenPath features no-cost access to personal and family budgeting; credit report education, including how to improve your credit score by disputing consumer credit errors and avoiding bankruptcy, foreclosure or repossession. Berkshire Bank established a dedicated website (www.greenpath.com/berkshire) and phone line (866-692-2059) to provide access to GreenPath services, and GreenPath resources will be integrated into the platform throughout all areas of the bank. The bank also plans to deliver financial education seminars on topics including Money Concepts for Teens and Young Adults, Identity Theft, and The Psychology of Saving. Funding for the new collaboration was made possible, in part, by a contribution from Berkshire Bank Foundation.

Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation has awarded grants totaling $13,780 to 24 local organizations that support a broad variety of programs for Berkshire County citizens living with disabilities. The 2018 grant recipients were: Berkshire County Arc, Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority, Berkshire Horsecrosses, Berkshire Museum, Berkshire South Rural and Community Development, Blue Rider Startables, Boys and Girls Club, Community Health Program, Community Legal Aid, Dalton Community Business Partnership, Dalton Council on Aging, Elder Services of Berkshire County, Faithful Friends, First Parish in Sandwich, Gladys Allen Bridgehampton Community, GuideWay, Hancock Shaker Village, Hillcrest Education Foundation, Hoosic Valley National Alliance on Mental Illness, Pediatric Development Center, Southern Berkshire Elder, a transportation Corp., Special Olympics, and United Cerebral Palsy Association of Berkshire County, “All of the programs supported address the needs of Berkshire County residents battling physical or developmental disabilities,” said foundation president Alycia Sacco Duquette, second vice president and chief compliance officer, Berkshire Life Insurance Company, Company of America. “We continue to focus our grants on programs that support people of all ages and races.” The Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation was chartered in 2001 to honor two Berkshire life insurance companies, which were formed in 1893 and 1933, respectively. The foundation now supports 42 local organizations, serving the needs of Berkshire residents and the region as a whole.

The Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation has awarded grants totaling $13,780 to 24 local organizations that support a broad variety of programs for Berkshire County citizens living with disabilities. The 2018 grant recipients were: Berkshire County Arc, Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority, Berkshire Horsecrosses, Berkshire Museum, Berkshire South Rural and Community Development, Blue Rider Startables, Boys and Girls Club, Community Health Program, Community Legal Aid, Dalton Community Business Partnership, Dalton Council on Aging, Elder Services of Berkshire County, Faithful Friends, First Parish in Sandwich, Gladys Allen Bridgehampton Community, GuideWay, Hancock Shaker Village, Hillcrest Education Foundation, Hoosic Valley National Alliance on Mental Illness, Pediatric Development Center, Southern Berkshire Elder, a transportation Corp., Special Olympics, and United Cerebral Palsy Association of Berkshire County, “All of the programs supported address the needs of Berkshire County residents battling physical or developmental disabilities,” said foundation president Alycia Sacco Duquette, second vice president and chief compliance officer, Berkshire Life Insurance Company, Company of America. “We continue to focus our grants on programs that support people of all ages and races.” The Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation was chartered in 2001 to honor two Berkshire life insurance companies, which were formed in 1893 and 1933, respectively. The foundation now supports 42 local organizations, serving the needs of Berkshire residents and the region as a whole.

The Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation has awarded grants totaling $13,780 to 24 local organizations that support a broad variety of programs for Berkshire County citizens living with disabilities. The 2018 grant recipients were: Berkshire County Arc, Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority, Berkshire Horsecrosses, Berkshire Museum, Berkshire South Rural and Community Development, Blue Rider Startables, Boys and Girls Club, Community Health Program, Community Legal Aid, Dalton Community Business Partnership, Dalton Council on Aging, Elder Services of Berkshire County, Faithful Friends, First Parish in Sandwich, Gladys Allen Bridgehampton Community, GuideWay, Hancock Shaker Village, Hillcrest Education Foundation, Hoosic Valley National Alliance on Mental Illness, Pediatric Development Center, Southern Berkshire Elder, a transportation Corp., Special Olympics, and United Cerebral Palsy Association of Berkshire County, “All of the programs supported address the needs of Berkshire County residents battling physical or developmental disabilities,” said foundation president Alycia Sacco Duquette, second vice president and chief compliance officer, Berkshire Life Insurance Company, Company of America. “We continue to focus our grants on programs that support people of all ages and races.” The Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation was chartered in 2001 to honor two Berkshire life insurance companies, which were formed in 1893 and 1933, respectively. The foundation now supports 42 local organizations, serving the needs of Berkshire residents and the region as a whole.

The Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation has awarded grants totaling $13,780 to 24 local organizations that support a broad variety of programs for Berkshire County citizens living with disabilities. The 2018 grant recipients were: Berkshire County Arc, Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority, Berkshire Horsecrosses, Berkshire Museum, Berkshire South Rural and Community Development, Blue Rider Startables, Boys and Girls Club, Community Health Program, Community Legal Aid, Dalton Community Business Partnership, Dalton Council on Aging, Elder Services of Berkshire County, Faithful Friends, First Parish in Sandwich, Gladys Allen Bridgehampton Community, GuideWay, Hancock Shaker Village, Hillcrest Education Foundation, Hoosic Valley National Alliance on Mental Illness, Pediatric Development Center, Southern Berkshire Elder, a transportation Corp., Special Olympics, and United Cerebral Palsy Association of Berkshire County, “All of the programs supported address the needs of Berkshire County residents battling physical or developmental disabilities,” said foundation president Alycia Sacco Duquette, second vice president and chief compliance officer, Berkshire Life Insurance Company, Company of America. “We continue to focus our grants on programs that support people of all ages and races.” The Berkshire Life Charitable Foundation was chartered in 2001 to honor two Berkshire life insurance companies, which were formed in 1893 and 1933, respectively. The foundation now supports 42 local organizations, serving the needs of Berkshire residents and the region as a whole.
Jennifer Berne has joined Berkshire Health System (BHS) as the vice president of academic affairs and the dean of the college of health sciences.

MacDonald-Dennis has been elected a director of the TRIO (Tal- ent, Resources, Initiative, Opportunity) Program. Prior to Berne previously worked as the dean of liberal arts at Harper College in Illinois. Prior to that, she served as a associate professor and department chair at Kansas City and Elementary Education at Northern Illinois University. Earl Anderson, her current career, she spent a number of years at National Louis University as a member of the faculty and department chair. A prolific writer and presenter, Berne is an active Presidential Fellow and she has been in the accreditation work for the Higher Learning Commission. MacDonald-Dennis comes to BCC from Normandale Community College in Minnesota, where he has been a full professor for the past three years. He brings over 25 years of experience in higher education administration, including at University of Minnesota, Haverford College, Art Institute of Philadelphia, Institute of International and Emeritus University. The TRIO Program at BCC is a federally funded program that provides free support services to students to help them succeed academically.

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) has announced the appointment of 11 new faculty members. Travis Beaver has joined MCLA as an assistant professor in the Department of English, focusing on diversity and inclusion. Beaver is a divisional professor at MCLA's English Department. Beaver will be teaching courses in the Department of English, focusing on diversity and inclusion. Beaver is also a frequent lecturer and workshop presenter, having taught at numerous institutions throughout the United States. He brings over 25 years of experience in diversity and inclusion and has served as a consultant and trainer for numerous organizations, including higher education institutions. Beaver is currently serving as the chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee at MCLA. He is also a member of the Network of Diversity and Inclusion Leaders in Higher Education (NDILE), a national organization dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion on college campuses.

The Berkshire Immigrant Center (BIC) has announced the appointment of Michael McEwan as its new executive director. McEwan has served as the center's chief operating officer since 2015 and has been involved in the organization's development and growth. He brings over 20 years of experience in community organizing, nonprofit management, and policy advocacy. McEwan was previously director of public affairs and policy at the National Immigration Law Center. He is a graduate of Harvard University and received his law degree from the University of Michigan Law School. McEwan is a native of New York City and has been active in local politics and community organizing. He has served on the boards of several organizations, including the New York Immigration Coalition and the New York City Bar Association.

The Berkshire Immigrant Center (BIC) has announced the appointment of Michael McEwan as its new executive director. McEwan has served as the center's chief operating officer since 2015 and has been involved in the organization's development and growth. He brings over 20 years of experience in community organizing, nonprofit management, and policy advocacy. McEwan was previously director of public affairs and policy at the National Immigration Law Center. He is a graduate of Harvard University and received his law degree from the University of Michigan Law School. McEwan is a native of New York City and has been active in local politics and community organizing. He has served on the boards of several organizations, including the New York Immigration Coalition and the New York City Bar Association.
Leonard Cohen and Kevin Kinne, two of the founding partners of the law firm Cohen Kinne Valentic & Cook LLP, have been recognized in The Best Lawyers in America 2019, alight on a peer-review evaluative process. Cohen is a criminal defense attorney who has handled more than 5,000 cases, including 50 first-degree murder cases, throughout his career. In 2009, Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly named Cohen as one of the most influential lawyers in Massachusetts and within the criminal justice community. Kinne was honored for his work in litigation as well as labor and employment matters. Kinne regularly advises employers throughout the Berkshires on a broad range of employment law matters including counseling for employee issues and drafting employer-related documents. On the litigation front, Kinne is an experienced federal and state court attorney who last year achieved settlements in excess of $5 million for his clients.

Michael D’Amour has been elected to the board of directors of Big Y Foods Inc. D’Amour is currently executive vice president of the Springfield-based supermarket chain, and will continue in his role of overseeing sales, marketing, distribution and merchandising for the family-owned company. D’Amour joined Big Y in 1987 as a service clerk in their East Longmeadow store, and has worked in all areas of the markets in a range of positions of increasing responsibility. He was appointed vice president of sales and merchandising in 2011 and two years later was named to his current position of executive vice president.

Morgan Russell has joined the Main Street Hospitality Group (MSHG) as manager of guest experiences across four MSHG properties. Originally from Boston and then growing up in the Berkshires, Russell brings 10 years of luxury hospitality concierge experience to his new position. Prior to joining MSHG, he specialized in building guest engagement programs for high-end boutique hotels in Colorado, including the Auberge at Vail Square, The Sebastian Hotel, and The Chamaeleon. In his new position, Russell will work collaboratively with partners throughout the region to expand the guest experience program at The Sebastion in Stockbridge. Postech fans at MASS MoCA in North Adams, Hotel on North in Pittsfield, and Brasfield in Great Barrington, and will provide visitors an added layer of connectivity to the Berkshire experience.

Community Health Programs (CHP) has named Elizabeth “Betty” Strickler as chief communications officer for the CHP countywide health and medical network. In this role, she will lead strategic marketing, communication and fund-raising initiatives for the organization. Strickler has worked for Berkshire region nonprofit and for-profit organizations, focusing on strategic planning and marketing, brand management and external relations. She was most recently the director of external relations for Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health in Stockbridge. She has previously served as director of admissions at Darrow School, and as director of sales and marketing at Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort. Earlier she worked as an account executive at Winstonble Partners, a Lenox-based advertising agency. Strickler has also worked in the education sector at Miss Hall’s School in Pittsfield, Northfield Mount Hermon and the University of New England in Biddeford, Maine.

Our Small Business banking professionals are trained to help your business become everything you dream it could be. We are a preferred Small Business Administration (SBA) lender and participant in the Massachusetts Treasurer’s Office Small Business Partnership Program.

Small Business Lending

Berkshire offers a full suite of financial services to help make your small business thrive and prosper:

- Business Lines of Credit
- Equipment Financing
- Business Real Estate Financing

To learn more about our Small Business Banking, contact H. Jay Bailly, VP, Senior Business Banking Officer 413-236-3180

Berkshire Insurance Agency, a registered trade name for Berkshire Insurance Group, Inc., a Berkshire Bank affiliate:

GOVERNMENT AGENCY and MAY GO DOWN IN VALUE.

Banking products are provided by Berkshire Bank: Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender. Berkshire Bank is a member of the Federal Home Loan Bank System. No obligations, no guarantees. Some restrictions may apply. Rev. 8/7/18

Insurance products are provided by Berkshire Insurance Group, Inc., a Berkshire Bank affiliate, and by New York by Berkshire Insurance Agency, a registered trade name for Berkshire Insurance Group Inc., a Berkshire Bank affiliate. Berkshire Bank does not underwrite insurance products, is not liable for any such products, and makes no representation as to the accuracy or completeness of any such product. NOT GUARANTEED BY THE BANK, INSURED BY ANY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY AND MAY GO DOWN IN VALUE.
Communities should seek investments that lead to thoughtful transformation

BY LAURIE LANE-ZUCKER

If you are an investor looking to have impact and for the latest, greatest thing since sliced bread, opportunity zones may well be your XS Max, Hyperloop and impossible Burger rolled into one. A multi-billion dollar investment fund proclaimed, at the Opal Impact Investing Forum in New York City I attended recently, that they had set aside 25 percent of their assets for opportunity zone investments.

Simply put, opportunity zone legislation, approved in the U.S. Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017, allows investors with any kind of capital gains to reinvest those gains in “opportunity funds” that invest in underserved communities (specifically designated by states as opportunity zones). If they keep the money deployed in opportunity funds for 10 years, not only do they get a 15 percent discount on the taxes they owe on those original capital gains, but any and all profits made from the investments in the opportunity fund are entirely tax free. (There are also incentives for keeping the investments in a particular zone for a shorter period of time, but let’s get too much into the weeds here.)

Earlier this year, parts of Pittsfield, Adams and North Adams were designated by the state as opportunity zones. The opportunity zone part of the Tax Bill is an extraordinary piece of legislation that had across-the-aisle support in a Congress that otherwise knows the meaning of bipartisanship, making it all the more exceptional. It is a piece of legislation that has the potential for doing amazing amounts of good by unleashing seriously large amounts of investment (e.g., the 25 percent figure mentioned above) into poor neighborhoods around the country that have had great difficulty attracting private investment.

Well, it seems to be a brilliant piece of legislation, with lots of win-wins, it is also one that could hold some significant drawbacks for the communities in question. One of the most commonly voiced negatives is that the economic improvement that opportunity zone investment brings – beginning with an obvious one, real estate – could gentrify the communities to the extent that the inhabitants, which is seemingly supposed to be helping, are priced out of the market and will have to move away. (Some people feel that this is a viable option; for example, as regards real estate, a voucher system that subsidizes rents for original tenants. I, for one, question whether this is the right approach and whether it would be enough.)

Another potential negative of opportunity zones is that one of the bill’s positives: that, as far as the federal legislation is concerned, there aren’t many – if any – restrictions on what opportunity funds can invest in. As long as a business or project is within the designated opportunity zone, it is eligible for investment by an opportunity fund. While one can argue that any kind of capital investment is not the poorest communities need one step in the right direction, this does not necessarily promote a local economy that the community can be proud of – or, even more critically, one that reflects an awareness of the social and environmental realities and needs of the 21st century. Indeed, it strikes me that this provision could inspire a great deal of abuse – if not outright fraud – if not simply managed. Remember, Times Square was a bustling place in the 1980s but not necessarily a healthy model for the center of an economy.

This last point – the need for sustainable and responsible economic development – is enough to give opportunity zone communities pause when considering how to engage with the program. As Dennis Price reports in ImpactAlpha, which has done an excellent series on opportunity zones, “Champions of impact investing are working together to ensure that investment strategies align with community goals. The idea is to coordinate among community stakeholders, set social and environmental objectives, and fund local businesses that create good jobs, raise wages and build wealth for local communities as well as investors.”

At the Impact Entrepreneur Center, we are focused on adapting models for what we call “impact economy.” An example of this work is our recent international leadership summit and report with Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, “Philanthropy Transforming Finance: Building an Impact Economy.” Growing from this impact economy work, which also includes instruments such as Public Benefits, Enterprise Zones, and Integrated Impact Finance Vehicles, I would propose to opportunity zone communities that they create an overlay of community development plans prior to seeking funding from opportunity funds.

Likewise, this overlay of “Impact Economy Opportunity Zone (IEOZ),” which, ideally, would have the following core characteristics:

- **IEOZs have global sustainability context.** This means that they are not only deeply attuned to local stakeholders’ needs, but also to their potential challenges. Since 2015, impact economy builders (including entrepreneurs, investors, local government officials, and others) around the world have been able to circle around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on the map and chart each stone for global sustainability context.

- **IEOZs’ “operating system” has a triple-bottom-line brain chemistry.** As mature impact economy is distinguished by its abundance of authentically blended values: Certified BCorporations, benefit corporations and L3Cs.

So, IEOZs should emphasize to opportunity funds – and to entrepreneurs and local business people pursuing investments in these kinds of entities are most well received. Indeed, the “soft” incentives I have described in our Impact Enterprise Zone model fit well into this thinking as they accumulate and reinforce local leadership and business development and investment.

- **IEOZs are fueled by impact investments.** To make it easy for the communities so starved for capital – any opportunity zone investment is an impact investment. As Angela Ahrendts, Apple’s retail chief, pointed out at the 2017 Impact Economy Opportunity Zone Zone event, “I don’t think that impact investors seek measurable social and environmental benefits alongside their financial return. The reputable impact investors (e.g., RSF, Calvert, Acumen, Root, Leapfrog and Omidyar) make the argument that companies that have long-term social and environmental benefits of their potential investments – and their sustainable business models and deployment – paramount in their process.”

- **IEOZs are keyed into the principal economic changes.** This is a rapidly growing philosophy and practice within impact investing. We have a good bit of information on place-based impact investing in our “Philanthropy Transforming Finance: Building an Impact Economy” report (request a copy). Additionally, a great example of this in practice is the Boston Impact Initiative, and the local community of journalism around place-based impact investing.

These last two points are really crucial. Advocates of opportunity zones believe they may unleash a frenzy of investment into underserved communities, and much of that investment is likely to come from outside the community – far outside. Inevitably, however, along with any gold rush comes a fever. Communities need to consider the pros and cons of investment coming from opportunity funds that are located in far off cities, with investors who may be scattered widely, and they need to create some clear rules of the game. Yes, it is much-needed capital, but it may well come from sources that do not necessarily have the communities’ best interests in mind, such is the nature of the extremely attractive tax incentives built into the legislation.

So, I urge opportunity zone communities like those in Pittsfield, Adams and North Adams to embrace the concept of Impact Economy Opportunity Zone and not settle for a “take the money and run” opportunity zone investment. Ideally, they should view the opportunity zone as a way to seize a right opportunity. At Impact Entrepreneur, our first definition of “impact” is the “right problem for the right people.” Our second definition is “transformation.” Opportunity zones offer the potential for transformation, but making the transformation real and lasting – and truly in service to the people within underserved communities and the broader region – will require a great deal of rigor, sacrifice and care. ☝
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Who is responsible for cybersecurity?

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, an increasingly im-
portant but still elusive topic. Growing numbers of individuals and organi-
zations are being targeted and falling victim to cyber-
crimes. So, whose responsibility is it to ensure online safety at work and at home?

While NBT Bank and other banks across the country – and the world – are 
laser-focused on safeguarding and educat-
ing customers, the real answer is that it 
takes a village.

At work, each employee is responsible and 
play a significant role in safeguarding 
information. It is important to report any 
e-mails you suspect might be a phishing 
attempt. Your organization’s leaders, your 
technical support or your bank can help 
determine if a suspicious email is phishing 
and act accordingly.

At home, anyone who uses an inter-

cent-protected device should make it a 
priority to understand how to stay safe in 
everyday life, such as creating strong passwords and protecting your 
passwords, safeguarding and properly discarding sen-
sitive documents, securing your wireless 
and keeping devices up-to-date, and knowing how to recognize and avoid 
suspicious emails.

More than a name change

With the transition to MassHire Berkshire Works, one of the first states in the nation to launch a unified brand for its workforce boards and 
career centers – a move meant to significantly expand and increase the visibil-
ity and access of the workforce system. The Berkshire Career and Workforce 
Employment Board Inc. (BCREB) and BerkshireWorks Career Center are part of 
this initiative.

Our local MassHire Berkshire Work-
force Board (formerly the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board) 
will continue to implement strategies and regional programs that best meet the needs 
of businesses and youth in the region while overseeing the Berkshire workforce 
system. Visit MassHireBerkshire.com to preview regional priorities, access labor 
market data to help community organiza-
tions apply for grants, learn about employ-

er training programs to upgrade the skills 

of the current workforce, and to participate in the region’s college and career readiness 
programs which connects more than 2,500 youth with summer jobs, career awareness with exploration activities that helps to 
supply businesses with a pipeline of skilled 
workers.

MassHire Berkshire Works is now 
known as MassHire Berkshire Career and will continue to 
be that vital link between workers and 

employers to bring about economic oppor-
tunity. Visit MassHireBerkshire.com to 

post/view job opportunities, learn about 
training and apprenticeships, preview 
labor market information, and learn about 
the myriad of workforce programs for both 
the job seeker and employer.

As part of this transition, Berkshire- 
Works will now be known as MassHire 
Berkshire Career Center and will continue 
to be a major player in the workforce 
system. As a result of this transition, 
BerkshireWorks Career Center are part 
of this initiative.

Our local MassHire Berkshire Work-
force Board (formerly the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board) 
will continue to implement strategies and regional programs that best meet the needs 
of businesses and youth in the region while overseeing the Berkshire workforce 
system. Visit MassHireBerkshire.com to preview regional priorities, access labor 
market data to help community organiza-
tions apply for grants, learn about employ-

er training programs to upgrade the skills 

of the current workforce, and to participate in the region’s college and career readiness 
programs which connects more than 2,500 youth with summer jobs, career awareness with exploration activities that helps to 
supply businesses with a pipeline of skilled 
workers.

MassHire Berkshire Works is now 
known as MassHire Berkshire Career and will continue to 
be that vital link between workers and 

employers to bring about economic oppor-
tunity. Visit MassHireBerkshire.com to 

post/view job opportunities, learn about 
training and apprenticeships, preview 
labor market information, and learn about 
the myriad of workforce programs for both 
the job seeker and employer.

With the transition to MassHire Berkshire Works, one of the first states in the nation to launch a unified brand for its workforce boards and 
career centers – a move meant to significantly expand and increase the visibil-
ity and access of the workforce system. The Berkshire Career and Workforce 
Employment Board Inc. (BCREB) and BerkshireWorks Career Center are part of 
this initiative.

Our local MassHire Berkshire Work-
force Board (formerly the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board) 
will continue to implement strategies and regional programs that best meet the needs 
of businesses and youth in the region while overseeing the Berkshire workforce 
system. Visit MassHireBerkshire.com to preview regional priorities, access labor 
market data to help community organiza-
tions apply for grants, learn about employ-

er training programs to upgrade the skills 

of the current workforce, and to participate in the region’s college and career readiness 
programs which connects more than 2,500 youth with summer jobs, career awareness with exploration activities that helps to 
supply businesses with a pipeline of skilled 
workers.

Meeting tomorrow’s challenges

One thing that has not changed with this rebranding is our understanding that the 
partnerships between workforce develop-
ment, education, businesses and talent 
development agencies are absolutely vital to meeting tomorrow’s workforce 
challenges.

What is responsible for cybersecurity?  What are the risks?  And how do we 
safeguard against them?  These are the questions we need to ask ourselves, and 
how do we take action to protect our information from cybercrime.

The “village” that we have described to 

our workforce boards and career centers – a 

move meant to significantly expand and increase the visibil-
ity and access of the workforce system. The Berkshire Career and Workforce 
Employment Board Inc. (BCREB) and BerkshireWorks Career Center are part of 
this initiative.

Our local MassHire Berkshire Work-
force Board (formerly the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board) 
will continue to implement strategies and regional programs that best meet the needs 
of businesses and youth in the region while overseeing the Berkshire workforce 
system. Visit MassHireBerkshire.com to preview regional priorities, access labor 
market data to help community organiza-
tions apply for grants, learn about employ-

er training programs to upgrade the skills 

of the current workforce, and to participate in the region’s college and career readiness 
programs which connects more than 2,500 youth with summer jobs, career awareness with exploration activities that helps to 
supply businesses with a pipeline of skilled 
workers.

Meeting tomorrow’s challenges

One thing that has not changed with this rebranding is our understanding that the 
partnerships between workforce develop-
ment, education, businesses and talent 
development agencies are absolutely vital to meeting tomorrow’s workforce 
challenges.

What is responsible for cybersecurity?  What are the risks?  And how do we 
safeguard against them?  These are the questions we need to ask ourselves, and 
how do we take action to protect our information from cybercrime.

The “village” that we have described to 

our workforce boards and career centers – a 

move meant to significantly expand and increase the visibil-
ity and access of the workforce system. The Berkshire Career and Workforce 
Employment Board Inc. (BCREB) and BerkshireWorks Career Center are part of 
this initiative.

Our local MassHire Berkshire Work-
force Board (formerly the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board) 
will continue to implement strategies and regional programs that best meet the needs 
of businesses and youth in the region while overseeing the Berkshire workforce 
system. Visit MassHireBerkshire.com to preview regional priorities, access labor 
market data to help community organiza-
tions apply for grants, learn about employ-

er training programs to upgrade the skills 

of the current workforce, and to participate in the region’s college and career readiness 
programs which connects more than 2,500 youth with summer jobs, career awareness with exploration activities that helps to 
supply businesses with a pipeline of skilled 
workers.

Meeting tomorrow’s challenges

One thing that has not changed with this rebranding is our understanding that the 
partnerships between workforce develop-
ment, education, businesses and talent 
development agencies are absolutely vital to meeting tomorrow’s workforce 
challenges.

What is responsible for cybersecurity?  What are the risks?  And how do we 
safeguard against them?  These are the questions we need to ask ourselves, and 
how do we take action to protect our information from cybercrime.

The “village” that we have described to 

our workforce boards and career centers – a 

move meant to significantly expand and increase the visibil-
ity and access of the workforce system. The Berkshire Career and Workforce 
Employment Board Inc. (BCREB) and BerkshireWorks Career Center are part of 
this initiative.

Our local MassHire Berkshire Work-
force Board (formerly the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board) 
will continue to implement strategies and regional programs that best meet the needs 
of businesses and youth in the region while overseeing the Berkshire workforce 
system. Visit MassHireBerkshire.com to preview regional priorities, access labor 
market data to help community organiza-
tions apply for grants, learn about employ-

er training programs to upgrade the skills 

of the current workforce, and to participate in the region’s college and career readiness 
programs which connects more than 2,500 youth with summer jobs, career awareness with exploration activities that helps to 
supply businesses with a pipeline of skilled 
workers.

Meeting tomorrow’s challenges

One thing that has not changed with this rebranding is our understanding that the 
partnerships between workforce develop-
ment, education, businesses and talent 
development agencies are absolutely vital to meeting tomorrow’s workforce 
challenges.

What is responsible for cybersecurity?  What are the risks?  And how do we 
safeguard against them?  These are the questions we need to ask ourselves, and 
how do we take action to protect our information from cybercrime.

The “village” that we have described to 

our workforce boards and career centers – a 

move meant to significantly expand and increase the visibil-
ity and access of the workforce system. The Berkshire Career and Workforce 
Employment Board Inc. (BCREB) and BerkshireWorks Career Center are part of 
this initiative.

Our local MassHire Berkshire Work-
force Board (formerly the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board) 
will continue to implement strategies and regional programs that best meet the needs 
of businesses and youth in the region while overseeing the Berkshire workforce 
system. Visit MassHireBerkshire.com to preview regional priorities, access labor 
market data to help community organiza-
tions apply for grants, learn about employ-

er training programs to upgrade the skills 

of the current workforce, and to participate in the region’s college and career readiness 
programs which connects more than 2,500 youth with summer jobs, career awareness with exploration activities that helps to 
supply businesses with a pipeline of skilled 
workers.
Changes in store for former Matt Reilly's Irish Pub

New owners putting their own mark on popular restaurant

BY JOHN TOWNES

Matt Reilly's Irish Pub, one of the only restaurants offering waterfront dining in the central Berkshires, has been purchased and is undergoing changes — including a new name, the Lakeside Bar & Grill.

Located at 750 Main St. (Route 7) in Lanesboro, the 75-year-old restaurant is well-known for its popular outdoor deck on the shoreline of Pontoosuc Lake, which has a scenic view of the lake and the mountains beyond it.

Matt Reilly's business and property has been purchased for $775,000 by a partnership that includes Kim McArdle of Pittsfield, her brother Brant Boyington, an accountant and finance executive in Weymouth; and Paul Ambrus, who owns and operates the Canyon Inn Sports Bar & Grill in Yorba Linda, Calif.

The seller was Helen Reilly, whose family had operated Matt's Irish Pub to varying degrees since 1961. The purchase was financed by Greylock Federal Credit Union.

As the Lakeside’s peak season for outdoor dining winds down, the new owners are planning to close it for a week — most likely in November — to refurbish the interior.

Matt Reilly’s has long been a popular spot in Lanesboro as a bar and restaurant. It also attracts customers from the surrounding area and travelers on Route 7.

Its namesake, Martin (Matt) Reilly, purchased the business and it was originally primarily a bar.

“Matt’s wife, Hazel, started making homemade meals for the regulars, and that grew into regular food service,” said McArdle.

He died in 1966. His son, Joe Reilly, and Joe’s wife, Helen, subsequently purchased it, and expanded the restaurant. After a 1999 fire extensively damaged the building, it was reconstructed.

Helen Reilly operated it on her own after her husband’s death in 2006. She expanded the outdoor dining and named the deck for her late husband.

In recent years, Helen Reilly began looking to retire and put the business on the market, which led to its purchase by McArdle and her partners.

McArdle said the sale was the result of a chance encounter. She and Boyington, who grew up in Pittsfield, had been discussing the possibility of going into business together. McArdle has a background that includes operating a marketing firm and previous restaurant experience.

“By coincidence, my husband and I met the bookkeeper and office manager of Matt Reilly’s while playing pitch (a card game) at a tavern in New Lebanon,” said McArdle.

“The subject of my search for a business came up in conversation, and she mentioned that Helen had been wanting to sell Matt Reilly’s.”

They contacted Reilly and came to a purchase agreement early this year. “She was ready to sell and retire, and it made sense, so the sale moved forward quickly,” McArdle said.

They also recruited Ambrus as a third partner. Although a longtime resident of California, Ambrus has various connections with Pittsfield and owns a house in the city.

His late father had lived here. He also played collegiate league baseball here in the 1960s. McArdle had worked with him in the past in her marketing business.

She said Ambrus plans to spend much of his time in the Berkshires and is actively involved in the Lake-side’s management and operations.

Although not an owner, McArdle’s husband, Tom McArdle, also has a key role.

He has spent most of his career working at Mario’s restaurant in New Lebanon, N.Y.

He now is the executive chef at Lakeside.

Kim McArdle said they immediately changed the name and made some initial adjustments after taking over the restaurant, but postponed any major changes during the busy summer season. “We had originally intended to close in the spring to prepare it before the summer, but the sale wasn’t finalized until early July,” she said. “So we focused on getting through the summer.”

Despite some early operations and service issues related to the changeover, McArdle said the initial transition process has been successfully completed.

Their overall strategy moving forward is to do a basic physical makeover of the interior this fall, and phase in other changes over time.

McArdle said the changes will be notable but the Lakeside Bar & Grill (413-447-9780) will retain the basic role of Matt Reilly’s.

“Matt’s Reilly’s was an institution, and we knew we could not take over and run it exactly as it was,” she said. “There will be distinct changes. Physically we will give it a fresher, more modern look, and our approach to the menu is changing. But we plan to stay casual. Our goal is to continue to be a place where everyone can come in to just relax and enjoy a drink or order a full meal. The restaurant will also be family-friendly.”

McArdle noted that one of their basic goals is to increase business during the colder months.

The 2,500-square-foot restaurant has a total of 204 sets. Of those, 90 are inside and the rest are on the outdoor deck. Its staff varies from about 50 in the summer to 30 in winter.

“Right now, the majority of its business is in the summer when the deck is open,” McArdle said. “Winter is much quieter. We want to make it a welcoming place that people will want to visit year-round.”

The initial renovation will include changes in its configuration.

“One of the priorities is opening up the interior,” said McArdle.

“Right now the restaurant is divided into smaller sections, with separate rooms for the bar and the restaurant. We’re going to remove most of that wall to connect the two areas.”

They will also install new flooring, and change the colors and decor.

She said additional changes will be made in the future. This will include remodeling and expanding the outdoor deck, and escaping the property to take more advantage of its physical relationship to the lakefront.

“We haven’t worked out all of the details yet, but one feature we are planning to add is dockside service,” she said. “People who are out on the water and are hungry don’t necessarily want to put their shoes on and come into the restaurant. We want to set it up so that people can be served at the dock. They’ll be able to call ahead and pick up their meal from their boat and get right back out on the lake.”

There will also be a different approach to its menu and food preparation.

“We keep the items that are popular, but expand the menu,” McArdle said. “We will offer the full gamut, from a quick lunch to a full sit-down dinner.”

They also are placing an emphasis on ingredients from local farms and food producers as much as possible. “Our philosophy is to make it fresh and local,” she said.

Its current menu includes a selection of char-broiled meat or vegetarian burgers ($8.95 - $9.95), hot dogs ($5.95) and grilled chicken club ($8.95).

Reflecting its waterfront location, it has a variety of seafood offerings, including lobster roll ($15.95), clam roll ($15.95), fish and chips ($13.95), deep-fried seafood platter ($15.95 to $20.95), baked stuffed seafood ($16.95 to $18.95), and grilled salmon ($18.95), among others.

Also on the menu are various deli sandwiches, wraps and rolls, and French Dip ($15.95 to $19.95), as well as “starters” such as wings, dips, scallops in bacon, steamed crabs, and oysters ($6.95 to $10.95).

In addition to the basic menu, which is offered during the day and evening, the Lakeside also features dinner entrees after 4 p.m. such as lemon chicken, prime rib, veal Oscar, and surf-and-turf ($14.95 to $24.95).

“We also feature frequent daily specials,” noted McArdle.

She said the initial response to the change of ownership has been positive. “The response has been excellent,” she said. “People around here are pulling for us, and everybody has been great.”

Accepting new patients in need of Orthopaedic, Hand and Upper Extremity surgery

Jarod E. Goodrich, D.O.

Board certified and fellowship trained in Orthopaedic Surgery and Hand and Upper Extremity Surgery, Dr. Goodrich joins Berkshire Orthopaedic Associates, an affiliate of Berkshire Health Systems, in providing comprehensive Orthopaedic Services.

Specialty: Orthopaedic and Hand & Upper Extremity Surgery
Board Certified: American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery
Medical School: Nova Southern University College of Osteopathic Medicine
Fellowship: Hand & Upper Extremity Surgery, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

For an appointment with Dr. Goodrich or any of his colleagues, call Berkshire Orthopaedic Associates, 413-660-0600.
In Pittsfield, this is the home of

VALUE BANKING.

Value Banking means getting more than you expect from your bank. Like select checking accounts with ATM rebates, identity theft protection,* and an easy-to-use banking app with mobile deposit. Plus, our unwavering commitment to our customers and the communities we serve. How’s that for value?

Stop by our Pittsfield office, call, or visit us online.
mountainone.com   855-444-6861

*IDProtect® is provided by a third party service provider, Econocheck Corporation, and is not an affiliate of MountainOne Bank. Certain restrictions apply. Please refer to program materials for further details. Member FDIC. Member DIF.
Sprout Brothers
continued from page 1

“We believe in what he had been doing, and Noah and I had grown up with it. And after he passed away, we heard from many people talking about how our father had improved or saved their lives through his work. So that also inspired us.”

In a new initiative, the brothers are currently releasing a product called Sproutman’s Wheatgrass Juice Capsules. The outdoor-grown wheatgrass is slow-juiced and dehydrated to minimize oxidation and to preserve all natural source of proteins, vitamins and minerals, enzymes, and bioflavonoids. The sprouts can be eaten as snacks, incorporated into salads or other meals, or combined with other ingredients to make juices.

As his knowledge grew, Meyerowitz set up classes in his New York apartment, which blossomed into a career, and he formed a business in 1977. He later moved to the Berkshires, where he continued his activities. Meyerowitz was one of the early leaders in the development and promotion of methods that enable people to easily grow sprouts in indoor containers. Among other accomplishments, he invented a counter-top growing container known as the Sprout House. He helped to develop high-quality sprout-specific seeds. He also was a propo- nent of juicing.

Ari and Noah Meyerowitz pointed out that sprouting and juicing are low-maintenance and easy forms of growing and consuming fresh natural food at home that anyone can do to provide a healthy nutritional base.

“You can go from planting a seed to eating the sprouts in a week,” said Noah. “It doesn’t take any effort to grow them.”

They said that one of the benefits of sprouting and juicing is that people can either adapt them as part of a larger dedication to natural foods, or simply as a supplement to their existing diet.

They noted that their market is diverse, ranging from people who are devoted to raw foods and other healthy practices to people who incorporate sprouts and juices into their lives in whatever ways work best for them. We have a large base of people who grow sprouts on their kitchen counter and then add them to whatever else they choose to eat. They might decide to have a snack made with sprouts instead of heating up a frozen pizza.”

Early involvement
Both brothers had grown up with their father’s principles and his business. In addition to practicing what he preached at home in terms of a healthy family lifestyle, Steve Meyerowitz had involved his children in his professional activities.

“He used to encourage us to participate in various ways,” said Ari. “Sometimes he bribed us. For example, one time he was going to a trade show in Florida, and he invited us by saying: ‘If you come to the trade show with me, I’ll take you to Disney afterwards.’”

At the time of their father’s death, Ari and Noah each were in different circumstances. Although the timing was unexpected, Noah was already working in the business and was preparing to eventually succeed his father.

“I always had an interest in the business, and I was working in it with plans to take it over one day,” said Noah. “My father was passing along his knowledge, with a plan to gradually turn more of the responsibilities over to me. So we had already been moving in that direction when he had his accident. But that was certainly not the time or the way I envisioned.”

Making it means even more to you.

The editors of the Financial Times evaluate a variety of factors, from advanced industry credentials to reliability and experience managing assets to investment skills and positive compliance records. Have a conversation with Gary Schiff, Managing Director, and discover the qualities which contributed to our inclusion in the 2018 Financial Times FT300.

October Mountain Financial Advisers
103 West Park Street
Lee, MA 01238
(413) 243-4331
www.octobermountainfa.com


Member SEC, FINRA, SIPC

Country Curtains, based in Lee, MA, closed its operations in April 2018 and selected Stone House Properties, Commercial Industrial Division to market their properties.

Celia Clancy, CEO of Country Curtains had this to say:

“Rich Aldrich and Tony Blair did a terrific job of selling all of Country Curtains real estate in under six months, and for more than we thought we would sell it for.”

“It’s not just people who are totally into raw foods and yoga,” said Ari. “People fit it into their lives in whatever ways work best for them. We have a large base of people who grow sprouts on their kitchen counter and then add them to whatever else they choose to eat. They might decide to have a snack made with sprouts instead of heating up a frozen pizza.”

Sprouting interest
Sproutman had started with Steve Mey- erowitz’s personal exploration of diet and health to help him cope with serious allergies and asthma. He incorporated vegetarianism and other practices to develop a healthy diet and lifestyle.

He became especially interested in the practice of sprouting – the growing of small plants for eating in their very early stages of development – as a fresh and concentrated source of nutrients, vitamins and minerals, enzymes, and bioflavonoids.

“Sprouting and juicing are low-maintenance methods that enable people to easily grow sprouts in indoor containers. Among other accomplishments, he invented a counter-top growing container known as the Sprout House. He helped to develop high-quality sprout-specific seeds.”

Tony Blair
TonyBlair@att.net
413-329-3879

Rich Aldrich
413-243-1739
rich.aldrich01238@gmail.com

RICH ALDRICH
413-243-1739
rich.aldrich01238@gmail.com
STONE HOUSE PROPERTIES, LLC
COMMERCIAL-INDUSTRIAL

3.4 ACRES OF LAND
17,000 SF WAREHOUSE WITH 1.8 ACRES OF LAND
3.4 ACRES OF LAND
SOLD $250,000
SOLD $650,000
SOLD $3,000,000

www.berkshirecommercialproperties.com
Ari’s situation was different. He had moved out of the Berkshires after school and was pursuing an independent life. At the time of his father’s death, Ari was living in Berlin and working at a coffee roasting company.

But he said he readily moved back to the Berkshires to dedicate himself to the business. “I already had the education and knowledge, and I had enjoyed working with my father in the business when I was young,” Ari said.

While they did not have to struggle with the decision to carry on, the transition was more complex than passing along a straightforward business such as a retail store.

One challenge was continuing with a business that had been based on the knowledge and irreplaceable personality of their late father, while putting their own stamp on it and adapting it to contemporary times.

“It put us in a unique position,” said Ari. “We were running a start-up that already had a history. Our father is still an icon in this field. The good thing is that he had brought an incredible amount of goodwill to the business. He was very respected among his peers, and suppliers and customers.”

Striking a balance

They have worked to strike a balance between their father’s heritage and their own identities and goals. They set up a new limited liability corporation, The Sprout Brothers, doing business as The Sproutman.

“Basically, we want to introduce him and his work to a wider audience and use his persona in a positive way,” said Ari. “He would love that.”

At the same time, they also recognize the need to establish their own identity. As The Sprout Brothers they do personal appearances and presentations at health expos, trade shows and other public events.

“We’re happy in front of a crowd and enjoy the public appearances, so that comes naturally to both of us,” said Noah.

Another challenge was consolidating their father’s businesses. Over the years, he had developed different sources of income through books, personal appearances, classes, and products, as well as licensing and product endorsements.

Noah noted that their father had been working to simplify the business at the time of his death. “He was already making a transition,” said Noah. “In fact, his accident occurred while he was on a business trip to finalize an agreement with a company in Connecticut (Healthnut Alternatives) to handle all of our order fulfillment and warehousing.”

In addition to maintaining the core of the existing business operations, Ari and Noah are also pursuing new opportunities for growth and expansion.

They have been planning new activities to educate and engage the public through online education. They are also pursuing activities such as online juice fasts.

Their latest product, Sproutman’s Wheatgrass Juice Capsule, is the first in a new line of products they plan to introduce.

They have also relocated the business from their father’s home office to an office in West Stockbridge. They are among the first tenants in “The Berkshires,” an office complex in the recently redeveloped upper floor of the landmark commercial building housing the Shaker Mill Tavern (April 2018 BT&C).

At this point, Sproutman is basically a two-person operation, with the assistance of other family members. “We work with some contractors, but we keep our overhead as low as possible,” said Ari.

Looking forward, they plan to continue to seek and pursue opportunities to develop the business. They see much potential, but acknowledge it is not the most lucrative or predictable career they could have chosen.

“We obviously want to make a decent living,” said Ari. “However, you don’t go into the sprout business to become wealthy. We’ve chosen to do this because we enjoy it, and it’s an opportunity to do some good in the world.”

NEW Limited-Time Offer

Special CD Rates, View our Terms

There’s an art to successful meetings.

CUTTING EDGE A/V + SURROUND SOUND

OUTDOOR HEATED POOL + FITNESS CENTER

BONFIRE PIT + GAZEBO

the Porches Inn

at MASS MoCA

231 RIVER STREET, NORTH ADAMS, MA 01247
PORCHES.COM 413.664.0400

November 2018

Berkshire Trade & Commerce

Adams Community Bank

Member FDIC

17-month CD

10% APY**

42-month CD

2.70% APY**

Take in the view of our Special CD Rates

Stop by and open an account today!

413.743.0001 | adamscommunity.com
Binka Bear
continued from page 1

design and other details, and has made production arrangements with a contract manufacturer in China.

While originally anticipating that the first production run of Binka Bears would be completed and delivered back to the U.S. by early to mid-autumn, Pierce said she has experienced an unanticipated delay in getting her Binka Bear prototype through customs and into the hands of the manufacturer.

“I’m incredibly frustrated,” she said in an early October update. She noted that she is working to resolve the delay, and anticipates getting the finished products within the next 45 to 60 days.

In the meantime they have started taking advance orders for the $39 package on the website.

Source of inspiration
For Pierce and her development of Binka Bear, necessity was truly the mother of invention.

She explained that the project was inspired in 2015 when her older daughter, Sylvia, was about to turn three.

“She was very attached to it,” said Pierce. “So I knew it was going to be a battle for the ages when it was time to actually take away the pacifier. I looked for a product that might help, but I could not find anything on the market.”

Finally an acquaintance suggested a compromise idea that some parents had used, which involved putting the pacifier into a stuffed toy that the child could play with, without being able to put the pacifier into her mouth.

“We did a DIY version with a plush bear doll,” Pierce said. She also came up with a basic story to explain that allowing the bear to have the pacifier would help her children.

“It worked,” she said, adding that she also shared the idea with other parents who had positive results.

That led her to consider creating a product based on the concept.

Pierce noted that she has an entrepreneurial streak. She has a background in marketing and launched her own business, Pierce Social, a social media marketing company, in 2016.

However, she didn’t take the leap immediately. “I thought about it more and more until last December, when I couldn’t keep it in my head any longer and decided I had to seriously pursue it,” she said.

Kaitlyn Pierce is shown with the final prototype of Binka Bear (which as of early October was caught in Chinese customs limbo on its way to the manufacturer). The accompanying book, Binka Bear & The Magic of Willow Spring, is shown on the opposite page. (Photos provided by Kaitlyn Pierce)

Are You a Newly Appointed Executor/Personal Representative?
If you’ve recently lost a loved one, you’re learning that in addition to the emotional trauma, the loss can create a bunch of tax headaches as well.

I can guide you with integrity, patience and compassion through the potentially complex federal and state tax filing responsibilities.

CALL TODAY FOR A FREE INITIAL CONSULTATION

Karen M Kowalczyk
KMK-CPA

Phone: 413-464-7068 - Email: karen@kmk-cpa.com - Website: www.kmk-cpa.com

WE’VE MOVED!
Visit us at our new location in Suite 302 at the Noyad Mill, 60 Roberts Drive, North Adams

OCTOBER HOURS:
Sunday 12 to 4
Monday-Thursday 12 to 5
Friday-Saturday 10 to 5
(Please check our website for November hours)

413-344-6257
www.spinoffyarnshop.com
The book tells the tale of Binka Bear and his friends and the magic they receive when a “big boy or girl” is ready to share their pacifiers. To use the Binka Bear, the instructions suggest the parent first prepare the child in advance by describing it as something to look forward to. Then they set aside a special time and read the book to their child. The bears have a special pouch in their paws in which one or two pacifiers are placed. The story has a special letter for the child at the end to encourage them to put their pacifier into one of Binka Bear’s pouches, but not into their own mouth. However, they can play with and care for the bear knowing that the pacifier is safely tucked away in its pouch. This provides the security of knowing the pacifier is still present, even as they learn to live without using it.

Pierce added that it is up to the parents to determine the specifics of the weaning process. Some still allow their child to use a pacifier on a limited basis after the transfer for a more gradual weaning. Others may choose to end the use of a pacifier more quickly. Pierce noted that, while Binka Bear is oriented to children age one and over, each parent’s judgement will determine what age is most appropriate for their child. While every child is different, she said, they should have reached a sufficient level of understanding to make the bear and accompanying story as effective as possible.

“Some parents wean their children sooner, and others allow the children to use pacifiers until about the age of three,” she said.

Pierce said that the process of developing the plush bear as a product has been complex. “There were a lot of details to be worked out, in terms of creating and designing it, developing a business structure and a plan, marketing it, and working out things like production and logistics,” she said.

Before finalizing the look of Binka Bear, they experimented with prototypes to find a version that would work both as a stuffed doll and as an illustrated character. That required a lot of back and forth with the contractor to work out the details of the design and manufacture. “We’ve also had to work out practical issues like where to store all those pallets of the product once they arrive,” Pierce said.

She and the other core team members are initially handling the sales, marketing and order fulfillment. She said they are presently looking for a distribution and fulfillment service. Pierce is relying on a combination of social media and other media outlets to promote and market Binka Bear. She has posted regular updates on the progress of the project on Facebook and Instagram, in addition to information related to the Kickstarter campaign. She said that has attracted many followers. “It was a way to generate advance interest,” she said. “It also turned out to be helpful for other people who had ideas and were considering starting a business. We’ve heard from people who said we inspired them to look into turning their own ideas into products.”

Pierce said that, while initially concentrating on Binka Bear’s roll-out, she is also looking beyond that product. She said she wants to develop additional products and characters of a similar nature relating to other issues and rites of passage for children. “As the business grows, we have a mission to develop products that help parents guide their children and bring more awareness to coping skills and emotional intelligence,” she said.

Pierce noted that she is currently in the same position as many of the company’s initial customers, because her younger daughter Delilah is reaching the age to be weaned from her pacifier. “We’ve told her about Binka Bear and she’s ready for it,” Pierce said. “So, as parents, we’re eagerly waiting for the first shipment to arrive so we can use it ourselves.”

Margaret Gordon-Fogelson, MD
Dr. Gordon-Fogelson joins Berkshire OB/GYN of BMC in providing comprehensive Obstetric and Gynecologic services in Pittsfield and North Adams.

Specialties: Obstetrics and Gynecology
Medical School: University of Vermont College of Medicine, Burlington, VT
Residency: Residency in OB/GYN at University of Cincinnati Medical Center

For an appointment with Dr. Gordon-Fogelson or one of her colleagues, call Berkshire OB/GYN of BMC at 413-499-8570.

Berkshire Health Systems - Expanding Community Access to Quality Care

Thank you Berkshire County for voting Lee Bank...

BEST PLACE TO WORK
Stop by your local branch to find out why!

Berkshire Eagle Readers’ Choice Award two years running!

2017-2018
DON’T SELL YOUR BUSINESS WITHOUT READING THIS BOOK!

PLAN A GREATER ESCAPE

BUILD IT, SELL IT, PROFIT

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS TODAY TO GET TOP DOLLAR WHEN YOU RETIRE

ALLEN P. HARRIS, CEPA

...take some BOLD actions now.
Prepare for your next ADVENTURE.

DRAMA can be avoided with solid planning...

Author Allen Harris – founder and owner of Berkshire Money Management – guides you toward a more profitable, smooth transfer of your business with actionable, sound advice. Get a complimentary copy or begin a confidential conversation about retiring by emailing him at AHarris@BerkshireMM.com.

TAKE OUR 13-MINUTE VALUE BUILDER SURVEY™ AT BERKSHIREM.M.COM/BUSINESS-OWNERS

BERKSHIRE MONEY MANAGEMENT

Historical performance is not indicative of future results. The investment return will fluctuate with market conditions. Performance is not indicative of any specific investment or future results. Views regarding the economy, securities markets or other specialized areas, like all predictors of future events, cannot be guaranteed to be accurate and may result in economic loss to the investor. Investment in securities, including mutual funds, involves the risk of loss.
BERKSHIRE HILLS FRESH
Venture offers more appealing food option for discerning dogs

BY BRAD JOHNSON

In the dog-eat-dog world of pet food sales and marketing, there are ever more brands and varieties vying for the job of keeping our canine companions nourished – some boasting of nutritional value and/or health benefits, with others focusing on better taste or more palatable pricing.

Within this crowded pack of competing options, a new North Adams business is nipping out a tiny niche for itself serving area residents who are interested in providing a fresher and more recognizable food for their dogs.

“Building our customer base slowly and manageably is our goal, and that would mean that more dogs are benefitting from our fresh food,” said Kris Maloney, who with her husband, John, and other family members has launched Berkshire Hills Fresh, a home-based business that produces and sells three flavors of dog food made with 100 percent natural, human-grade ingredients.

These ingredients include 70 percent USDA meat (tenderly ground chicken, beef or lamb), 15 percent fresh human grade vegetables (washed, trimmed and ground), 5 percent ripe fruit, and 10 percent comprised of other fresh products such as organic eggs, flax seeds, yogurt, and garlic.

“After part of this is shopping for ingredients,” said Maloney, whose day job is ben-eficial to her new business, as the human resources officer at Williamstown College.

That shopping is done primarily at nearby supermarkets, with occasional produce obtained from local growers.

“Now that it’s summer, I can source some produce from the farmers market,” she said, referring to the North Adams Farmers Market, where Berkshire Hills Fresh has been an occasional vendor this season.

In their home kitchen, newly equipped with such necessities as a commercial meat grinder and large mixer, the Maloneys do all the preparation and production themselves.

“We manage it to fit in when we can,” said Maloney, noting that this usually means after work or on weekends.

She explained that each recipe starts with a full pound of meat, which, with other ingredients added in along the way. One batch takes about two hours, and yields 52 eight-ounce containers of fresh dog food. During the warmer months, containers are then immediately frozen, which is how they are sold to the company’s customers.

“The dogs enjoy them, and they don’t like all natural ingredients, freezing it so that they can then be thawed [by customers] when ready for use is the only way to do this,” said Maloney.

These frozen containers are sold in sealed packages of seven for $22.50, depending on recipe.

Maloney noted that bulk order savings are available. Customers can arrange to pick up the food themselves from the Maloneys’ residence at 447 Walnut St. in North Adams, or to have it delivered to their homes.

Help with health issues

She pointed out that Berkshire Hills Fresh products are used by some customers as their dogs’ primary food, while others mix it with quality kibble at meal time. Some also use it as an occasional supplement or treat for their pets.

Maloney said that, aside from the satisfaction of knowing that their dogs are being fed a high-quality, human-grade food, customers also are looking to this type of diet to address a range of health issues.

“We, among our customers, many have had health issues with their dogs,” she said.

“They are well versed in the benefits of feeding raw, and want their dogs to continue to thrive.”

Veterinary advocates of fresh whole raw food for dogs have cited such benefits as increased energy levels and lean body mass, reduced incidence of dental and skin problems, and improvements in arthritic and diabetic conditions, among several others (see the company’s website www.berkshirehillsfresh.com for more details.)

In light of potential health benefits, Maloney noted that the higher cost associated with fresh dog food may be offset in the long run by decreased vet bills and medical costs.

Followed sister’s example

While Maloney noted that dogs have always been a part of her household, the introduction to fresh whole raw food is a more recent development there – one that came about through other members of her family.

“My sister and brother-in-law have a farm in Lunenberg where they raise Russian Wolf Hounds,” she explained. In looking for better food for their dogs, she said, “We, along with several decades of experience successfully using these recipes for his own dogs and patients.

“They started making the food themselves, and then said, ‘Let’s see if we can sell this to cover the cost of feeding our dogs,’” said Maloney. That led to the launch of her sister’s business, Highmeadow Naturals.

Inspired by this example, Maloney started making fresh food for her own dogs, based on her sister’s recipes. “Then, back in January, we decided to launch it as a full-fledged business,” she said.

With her and John gearing up for production and other logistics, they turned to their daughter, Allison Turcio, for assistance with marketing and social media positioning to launch the business. She provides these services from her own base in New York’s Capital District.

“I also spent time with my sister to understand the process before setting things up here,” Maloney said. Even though she was starting a business very similar to her sister’s just a few hours’ drive away, Maloney noted that there were no competitive concerns due to the relatively small geographic market that each of them serve. “With these kinds of products, everything is very local,” she said, adding that cost and other factors make it impractical to sell to or ship to more distant customers.

The Maloneys also gained approval from city officials for the type of operation they would be conducting from their home, and followed regulatory protocol by submitting their products and recipes to a certified laboratory for nutritional analysis.

In February and March, they ran a promo-
tion on Facebook offering free samples of Berkshire Hills Fresh products. “I delivered some of those samples as far away as Great Barrington,” said Maloney.

That promotion generated good response and helped establish an initial base of customers. “But we’ve still nothing built that base. It’s still a work in progress.”

Given the demands on their time from their day jobs (John Maloney also is an employee at Williams), she noted that their current goal is a slow and gradual growth of their customer base. “Right now, it’s manageable,” she said.

“But, honestly, we’d have a hard time handling a sudden large increase in demand.”

Slowly growing that customer base has been the focus of Maloney’s participation in the North Adams Farmers Market this season, where she sells eight-ounce samples of her products. “I’ve been there on select Saturdays,” she said. “On other weekends, I have to make the food.”

She added that the market has been an effective way to introduce her products to potential customers, as well as an overall pleasant experience. “What I’ve enjoyed most is meeting new people, and seeing others that I haven’t seen in years,” she said.

Maloney said Berkshire Hills Fresh will continue to participate in the market when it shifts indoors on a once-a-month schedule in late fall and winter. “I’ll also be going to many of the canine-related events that are held in the area,” she said.

While not yet expecting Berkshire Hills Fresh to draw her away from her longtime position at Williams, Maloney said the venture has been a welcome – albeit time-consuming – addition to her life. “We’d like this to be successful as a business,” she said.

“But it’s also about the love we all have for our dogs and the desire for them to be as healthy and happy as possible.”

As a semi-regular vendor at the North Adams Farmers Market this season, Kris Maloney has been connecting with potential customers who are interested in the benefits of her fresh-made dog food products. According to Maloney, one reason that Berkshire Hills Fresh may be differentiating itself from the competition is its commitment to sustainability.

“We’d like this to be successful as a business,” she said. “But it’s also about the love we all have for our dogs and the desire for them to be as healthy and happy as possible.”

In November, the Maloneys launched a crowdfunding campaign to help cover the production costs of Berkshire Hills Fresh. “We can’t wait to hear the feedback from people who try these products,” said Maloney.

The Maloneys also have received positive feedback from their customers. “They love the taste and the quality of the food,” said Maloney.

Maloney added that the market has been an effective way to introduce her products to potential customers, as well as an overall pleasant experience. “What I’ve enjoyed most is meeting new people, and seeing others that I haven’t seen in years,” she said.

Maloney said Berkshire Hills Fresh will continue to participate in the market when it shifts indoors on a once-a-month schedule in late fall and winter. “I’ll also be going to many of the canine-related events that are held in the area,” she said.

While not yet expecting Berkshire Hills Fresh to draw her away from her longtime position at Williams, Maloney said the venture has been a welcome – albeit time-consuming – addition to her life. “We’d like this to be successful as a business,” she said.

“But it’s also about the love we all have for our dogs and the desire for them to be as healthy and happy as possible.”

THE PROTECTION YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS

Burglar Alarm & Fire Alarm Systems
UL Central Station Monitoring
CCTV Systems • Access Control
Heat Loss Monitoring

NEW ENGLAND DYNAMARK SECURITY CENTER

email your firm’s news and announcements to: 
info@btaonline.com

Your business has a plan. So should your IT.

Expect more.

CompuWorks

Berkshire Trade & Commerce

November 2018

Office Suite Available

Steps away from the Court House

and Downtown, this 1,200 sq. ft.

floor suite has three individual

rooms, one large open area and two

private bathrooms. Private parking,

elevator access and flexible leasing

terms. A perfect space for attorneys,

realtors or any small business.

For more information, please call:

413-442-2274

www.nedynamark.com

413-442-5647 • 800-821-SAFE

Protecting area businesses since 1978
Food service veterans Terry and Jennifer Bishop have come up with a creative concept for their own first venture, Biggins Diggins, which features on-premise smoked meat and other items throughout the menu.

“Terry did this so that when the weather turns bad, it will cut down on the door opening and closing on the dining room side, and it will keep things more comfortable there,” he said. “It also gives our take-out customers a comfortable place to sit and wait for their orders.”

Since opening in late July, Biggins Diggins has seen a good mix of both sit-down and take-out business for both breakfast and lunch service. “Honestly, the response has been pretty much overwhelming,” said Terry Bishop, who serves as full-time chef for ventures.

The restaurant is open Tuesday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday from 7 to noon. The Bishops explained that unlike other eateries that serve breakfast all day, Biggins Diggins has set times when the menu switches from breakfast to lunch service.

Food service veterans Terry and Jennifer Bishop have come up with a creative concept for their own first venture, Biggins Diggins, which features on-premise smoked meat and other items throughout the menu.

“Terry did this so that when the weather turns bad, it will cut down on the door opening and closing on the dining room side, and it will keep things more comfortable there,” he said. “It also gives our take-out customers a comfortable place to sit and wait for their orders.”

Since opening in late July, Biggins Diggins has seen a good mix of both sit-down and take-out business for both breakfast and lunch service. “Honestly, the response has been pretty much overwhelming,” said Terry Bishop, who serves as full-time chef for ventures.

The restaurant is open Tuesday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday from 7 to noon. The Bishops explained that unlike other eateries that serve breakfast all day, Biggins Diggins has set times when the menu switches from breakfast to lunch service.

Food service veterans Terry and Jennifer Bishop have come up with a creative concept for their own first venture, Biggins Diggins, which features on-premise smoked meat and other items throughout the menu.

“Terry did this so that when the weather turns bad, it will cut down on the door opening and closing on the dining room side, and it will keep things more comfortable there,” he said. “It also gives our take-out customers a comfortable place to sit and wait for their orders.”

Since opening in late July, Biggins Diggins has seen a good mix of both sit-down and take-out business for both breakfast and lunch service. “Honestly, the response has been pretty much overwhelming,” said Terry Bishop, who serves as full-time chef for ventures.

The restaurant is open Tuesday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday from 7 to noon. The Bishops explained that unlike other eateries that serve breakfast all day, Biggins Diggins has set times when the menu switches from breakfast to lunch service.

Food service veterans Terry and Jennifer Bishop have come up with a creative concept for their own first venture, Biggins Diggins, which features on-premise smoked meat and other items throughout the menu.

“Terry did this so that when the weather turns bad, it will cut down on the door opening and closing on the dining room side, and it will keep things more comfortable there,” he said. “It also gives our take-out customers a comfortable place to sit and wait for their orders.”

Since opening in late July, Biggins Diggins has seen a good mix of both sit-down and take-out business for both breakfast and lunch service. “Honestly, the response has been pretty much overwhelming,” said Terry Bishop, who serves as full-time chef for ventures.

The restaurant is open Tuesday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday from 7 to noon. The Bishops explained that unlike other eateries that serve breakfast all day, Biggins Diggins has set times when the menu switches from breakfast to lunch service.

Food service veterans Terry and Jennifer Bishop have come up with a creative concept for their own first venture, Biggins Diggins, which features on-premise smoked meat and other items throughout the menu.

“Terry did this so that when the weather turns bad, it will cut down on the door opening and closing on the dining room side, and it will keep things more comfortable there,” he said. “It also gives our take-out customers a comfortable place to sit and wait for their orders.”

Since opening in late July, Biggins Diggins has seen a good mix of both sit-down and take-out business for both breakfast and lunch service. “Honestly, the response has been pretty much overwhelming,” said Terry Bishop, who serves as full-time chef for ventures.

The restaurant is open Tuesday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sunday from 7 to noon. The Bishops explained that unlike other eateries that serve breakfast all day, Biggins Diggins has set times when the menu switches from breakfast to lunch service.
and Doolan also began a related catering service. This led to the need for a kitchen of their own.

“With Cornucopia I wanted to elevate the concept of the food truck,” Kelly explained. “While it’s street food, we emphasize quality and the use of fresh ingredients from local farms. We change it up, based on what’s available and seasonal from local farms. I feel it’s a vital connection with the Viking. In Norse mythology, Valhalla is a majestic hall located in Asgard, ruled over by the god Odin. My girlfriend [Katie Law] is great at names,” said Kelly. “She came up with both the name for Valhalla and also the name Cornucopia for the food truck.”

Kelly said the food truck, which is seasonal, and Valhalla have common elements but different orientations. While most food trucks are focused on particular specialties, Cornucopia has eclectic and frequently changing offerings.

“Some of it will be seasonal or daily specials, but overall the basic menu won’t change that much,” he said. “In part it will reflect the local market. There’s a large Polish community in Adams, and we’ll have some Polish specialties. Overall, Kelly described the fare as variations of comfort food.

“We offer what you want to fill you up and warm your belly,” he said. He added that they also have some items for vegetarians and can also accommodate food allergies such as gluten intolerance. Their selections, with names from Norse mythology, include several varieties of burgers such as The Vor, which comes with crispy onions, mashed potatoes and cheddar cheese sauce ($9). It also features sandwiches such as The Loki with grilled Cajun chicken, bacon, greens and honey mustard ($9).

Valhalla offers entrees such as Hildr with cheese sauce and bacon ($5), and Signy with macaroni and cheese, onion and grilled Cajun chicken ($15). There are also salads, lighter sides and “smalls” such as the Mjolner with garlic mash potatoes, cheese sauce and bacon ($5). There are creative daily specials as well, such as a glazed donut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday such as a glazed doughnut burger that was a popular item with customers on a Saturday.
BY TREVOR FORBES

The financial industry loves jargon. We use it all the time – mainly as a shorthand to communicate with other professionals, but for some it is used to create a mystique around the complexities of investing.

Humans also love to reduce complex situations to acronyms which, again, acts as a shorthand, or a way to be economical with language. This, of course, was one of the themes of George Orwell’s Nineteen Eighty-Four where he dealt with the acronym-based riddle and rather sinister “Newspeak.”

Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) has also spawned a series of descriptive acronyms. What we started calling Ethical Investing in the 1980s became SRI in the 1990s, and more recently has become ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) investing. This three-letter stand-in for the concepts of environmental sustainability, social responsibility and corporate governance is clearly more descriptive and encompassing than just Ethical Investing or SRI. As well as all the other reasons just mentioned, it brings in very clear environmental concerns, labor practices and health issues, together with the way in which we can manage companies themselves from a diversity and gender perspective. This corporate governance aspect can often include production-related and safety advertising policies, safety in the workplace, the provision of benefits and extending this to parts of the world where good governance may not be commonplace.

Ethical investing has its roots in the 1970s where socially responsible elements were established. Driven by that era’s anti-apartheid sentiments but also inclusion for those companies deemed to have good policies.

The problem with this form of investing is that although there may be some commonalities among like-minded investors as to what may or may not be appropriate for inclusion in an ESG portfolio, there is also room for individual differences.

For example, one ESG investor may be quite happy with companies that produce and sell alcoholic products but may be passionately about any company producing weaponry of any kind. Another investor may be happy with the production of defensive weapons but unhappy including pharmaceutical companies which are perceived to have predatory marketing practices just to push their products against the interests of the patient. Yet another investor may be very broad with pharmaceutical companies but may object to investment banks who they see as predatory in their investment practices. But many of these investors may be able to agree on will be the desirability of investing in companies which are seen to be “doing good.”

Individual differences

The problem with this form of investing is that although there may be some commonalities among like-minded investors as to what may or may not be appropriate for inclusion in an ESG portfolio, there is also room for individual differences.

For example, one ESG investor may be quite happy with companies that produce and sell alcoholic products but may be passionate about any company producing weaponry of any kind. Another investor may be happy with the production of defensive weapons but unhappy including pharmaceutical companies which are perceived to have predatory marketing practices just to push their products against the interests of the patient. Yet another investor may be very broad with pharmaceutical companies but may object to investment banks who they see as predatory in their investment practices. But many of these investors may be able to agree on will be the desirability of investing in companies which are seen to be “doing good.”

Such companies could include those operating in the provision of clean water, clean up the environment, providing for good governance, providing for good stewardship of the environment, rejecting the use of child labor by third world suppliers, using resources from a sustainable source and, of course, not polluting the environment.

In this area, the production and distribution of fossil fuels is probably one of the commonest exclusions, and the provision of alternative energy products the most common inclusion.

Sound easy? Well, it is actually a very complex screening exercise for any investment manager seeking to offer this form of investment option to their clients. Very few companies either display all the good characteristics we may be seeking – and many companies will include, somewhere in their operations, businesses we would prefer they didn’t have. So, the screening has to acknowledge that most companies will have some issues with a level of revenues, profits or capital investment above which we would exclude them from consideration.

Financial screening

The companies should also have to pass one important other screen. Are they sound companies financially and will they make good investments for the clients’ goals? There is, of course, nothing inherently wrong for the good that they do without thorough fundamental analysis, investors’ returns and prior investment results in mind.

And, so, an investment manager seeking to provide their clients with this form of investment approach has to spend enough time in significant ESG and financial screening but they also have to have a portfolio management system that enables a tailored approach on a client-by-client basis. In ESG investing, one size does not fit all.

The mutual fund route may not suit investors seeking this form of investing. Many funds we have analyzed include, for example, companies operating in the production of fossil fuels. The rationale for their inclusion may be as simple as an acknowledgement in their report and accounts that they are operating ethically and within the limits of environmental policy. Similarly, many ESG mutual funds have significant positions in pharmaceutical companies and investment banks which, as we have seen, may not suit all investors.

In a recent survey published by Investment News, a leading source of investment management data, it was found that when questioning potential new investment management firms, 82 percent of potential clients asked about ESG investing. Yet, only 18 percent of Registered Financial Advisers were prepared to invest for a socially conscious investor, although 34 percent admitted to including some ESG investments in the portfolios they manage.

A personal approach to investing should be the cornerstone of an ESG client relationship. Not two client portfolios will look exactly the same. Investments should be chosen for their suitability within an individual portfolio to match the client’s specific investment goals.

So, will ESG investing reduce the expected performance of your portfolio and open you to more volatility than the market? When a portfolio manager invests for a wholly ESG portfolio, they are picking from a stock universe that is inevitably smaller than the S&P 500 Index, although it is also fair to say that many of the investments chosen for ESG clients will also be incorporated across other portfolios. Why? Because they should have passed general screens for financial success.

To gain some of the industry exposure sought, the investment manager may need to invest more outside the U.S., which can also increase volatility. However, the portfolio of stocks should still be highly diversified, which should help dampen overall volatility. As a result, the volatility of an ESG portfolio should not be significantly different to an S&P 500 Index benchmarked portfolio.

Performance can diverge depending on the extent to which certain characteristics are removed from the investment universe in question. From our research, while performance may not necessarily differ significantly from an S&P 500 Index benchmarked portfolio, there may be times when this can happen. For example, an ESG manager may have a higher proportion of smaller and mid-sized companies, and this can lead to greater volatility (than the broader market) at times of economic and financial stress.

These issues can, however, be offset by increasing investment in real estate. This is, of course, consistent with normal investment management where the manager will adjust their proportion, and overall portfolio volatility as the economic cycle becomes more challenging for stocks.

While socially responsible investing is fast becoming a mainstream activity for investment managers, but there are relatively few who appear equipped to manage money on this basis. If ESG criteria are considered in isolation to appropriate financial data, then your investment returns are proportionately very clearly at risk. Additionally, a one-size-fits-all mutual fund solution may not suit individual client requirements from an ESG perspective.

Proudly serving The Berkshires for over 90 years.

QUALITY SERVICE – COMPETITIVE RATES

A Family Owned & Operated Business Since 1923

www.btaconline.com

If you have questions or comments, please contact us at:
413-662-2002 • info@btaconline.com
Superior Installation and Repair

194 Beech Tree Ln.
Date: 8/22/18
Price: $134,500
Mortgage: $138,750

63 Valley St.
Price: $120,380
Mortgage: $128,200

51 Summer St.
Date: 8/8/18
Price: $201,500
Mortgage: $205,400

306 Dean St.
Price: $197,000
Mortgage: $189,360

59 Bancroft Rd.
Price: $115,000
Mortgage: $115,000

343 Lenox Rd.
Price: $112,000
Mortgage: $114,350

61 Shaylor Hill Rd.
Price: $100,000
Mortgage: $100,000

895 Main St.
Price: $199,900
Mortgage: $189,500

5 Hillside Ave.
Price: $139,360
Mortgage: $139,360

143 Lebanon Village Rd.
Price: $328,000
Mortgage: $328,000

162 Bailey Rd.
Price: $154,388
Mortgage: $154,388

10 Maple Ave.
Price: $250,000
Mortgage: Seller

10 Cottage St.
Price: $149,900
Mortgage: $149,900

33 Chippewa Dr.
Buyer: Michelle Deubel
Price: $272,000

250 North St.
Buyer: Richard Schrader
Price: $222,000

235 Bald Hill Rd.
Buyer: FNMA
Price: $240,000

97 Narragansett Ave.
Buyer: John Toole
Price: $105,000

101 Cottage Dr.
Buyer: John Lazzara
Price: $153,700

14 Baldwin Hill Rd.
Buyer: Cindy Caruso
Price: $131,700

235 Blackbird Ln.
Buyer: Michael Nolin
Price: $225,000

229 Old Hill Rd.
Buyer: Michael Lott
Price: $228,000

253 Old Hill Rd.
Buyer: Peter Tsicoulias
Price: $195,000

101 Cottage Dr.
Buyer: John Lazzara
Price: $153,700
Buyer: Pamela Delaney
8 Averic Rd.
Mortgage: $131,348
Price: $115,000
Seller: Pennymac Corp
95 Water Farm Rd.
Date: 8/2/18
Price: $1,790,000
Buyer: Plaskolite Mass LLC
316 Chapel Rd.
Date: 8/7/18
Lender: Total Mtg

Buyer: Margaret Davis
Date: 8/14/18
Lender: Academy Mtg
Price: $138,000
1322 Home Rd.
Date: 8/17/18
Lender: Greylock FCU
Buyer: Nancylou Borges
Date: 8/21/18
Lender: Greylock FCU
Mortgage: $130,000
Price: $183,000
1345 Oakbg Rd.
Buyer: Sean Stever
316 Chapel Rd.
Date: 8/10/18
Lender: 6eGuar .ari 'iaPRQG
1322 Home Rd.
Date: 8/17/18
Lender: Greylock FCU
Buyer: Virginia Ororke
Date: 8/22/18
Lender: 6eGuar .ari 'iaPRQG
19 Hawthorne Rd. U:15B
Date: 8/15/18
Mortgage: $200,000
Price: $250,000
Seller: Ericka Roberts

Buyer: Marcie Simonds
1450 North St. U:401
Buyer: Margaret Bartel + Seller: Sean Bartus +25701400
4 Glen Ln. U:3
Buyer: Marce Simonds
Seller: Northfield Bank
NT = $164,000
Mortgage: $128,340
30x40
Buyer: Pamela Delaney
Seller: Plaskolite Mass LLC
Voluntary Sale
6th Amended
2018
6th Amended
2018:

Buyer: Virginia Ororke
Date: 8/22/18
Lender: 6eGuar .ari 'iaPRQG
19 Hawthorne Rd. U:15B
Date: 8/15/18
Mortgage: $200,000
Price: $250,000
Seller: Ericka Roberts

Buyer: Marcie Simonds
1450 North St. U:401
Buyer: Margaret Bartel + Seller: Sean Bartus +25701400
4 Glen Ln. U:3
Buyer: Marce Simonds
Seller: Northfield Bank
NT = $164,000
Mortgage: $128,340
30x40
Buyer: Pamela Delaney
Seller: Plaskolite Mass LLC
Voluntary Sale
6th Amended
2018
6th Amended
2018:
BIC moves forward continued from page 1
by Baker and other state officials, with a scheduled completion slated for the fourth quarter of 2019.

Boyd emphasized that, while the overall project has been in the planning stages for a decade, securing the funds for the building was a first step in the overall development of BIC. He said that as construction progresses over the next year, BIC will also develop and implement specific plans and put the other elements into place to fulfill its mission.

“The details of the mission have evolved over the last 10 years, but we’re basically a startup,” he said. “It’s still in the early stage of development in terms of what BIC will ultimately become.”

The basic goal of the BIC is to serve as a resource to expand the innovation capacity and growth potential of private industry in the Berkshires. It will provide high-tech equipment, lab facilities and other advanced capabilities for life sciences, the life sciences supply chain, and advanced manufacturing and technology for other industries. These resources will be available to manufacturers to use for research and development, specialized production needs and other activities.

The facility will also serve as a focal point for collaborative networking, education and workforce development and training in related skills and professions.

The BIC is also seen as an important aspect of the overall plans for the William Stanley Business Park, a 52-acre tract of former General Electric land in northeast Pittsfield. The BIC will occupy a tract in the southern end of the project along East Street (near the MountainOne Financial Center).

That broader project is being overseen by the Pittsfield Economic Development Authority (PEDA), a quasi-public agency created to develop and manage the park. The BIC will be owned by its parent organization, while the land it is built on will be leased from PEDA.

The effort to redevelop and lease sections of the William Stanley Park has been underway for almost two decades, but the project currently has only two active tenants: MountainOne Financial, and a utility-owned solar array.

“I’ve been ecstatic,” said Cory Thurston, executive director of PEDA, after the ground-breaking. “BIC has finally come to fruition as something that’s real. It is going to attract a lot of people to this site and could breed other activities here, including businesses that want to lease space in the park to be near BIC.”

He added that the facility will also increase the potential for overall economic development and startups in Pittsfield and the region. “It could lead to the development of concepts and ventures that start here and locate in the park or elsewhere in the area,” he said.

**Evoking mission**

Boyd, who is CEO of Boyd Technologies in Lee, joined the effort to develop the BIC in 2014, and guided it through the transition from its original focus on the life sciences and biotechnology.

“At first it was an earmark in a life sciences bond, with a more specific focus,” he explained. “However, that plan had problems being realized, and it had stalled. Rod Jane (a consultant retained to oversee the project) did feasibility studies that became a new business plan.”

While the plan continued to include life sciences and startup ventures, the emphasis was placed on a broader range of sectors, including high-tech precision manufacturing in the life sciences, medical devices and products in other industries.

“That also meant a shift from being just focused on startups to serving the region’s existing manufacturing base of large and small companies,” said Boyd. “That is a more sustainable model.”

Also, ownership and operation of the BIC was shifted from being a city initiative to an independent nonprofit membership organization with the same name as the facility.

In addition to a gap between the initially allotted funds and construction costs, the 2015 delay in the start of construction was due to that change in focus, which required a reevaluation of its budget and business plan, according to Boyd.

“The cost of building materials had inflated,” Boyd said. “Also, once the new board and I became involved in planning the specifics, it became clear there would be adjustments. Rather than just doing part of what was called for, we decided to pause construction-planning and go back to fund-raising to build a complete facility.”

With the recent additional earmarks, Boyd said the startup cost for BIC is $14.25 million for construction, along with initial equipment and programming. This includes $12 million from the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, $1.25 million from the city, $550,000 from PEDA and $450,000 from MassDevelopment (a quasi-public state economic development finance agency).

As one of its priorities, the organization is also raising other funds separately to support the BIC’s operating costs from sponsorships, grants, partnerships and other stakeholders. It will also rely on earned income from memberships, rental fees and other revenue sources.

BIC’s supporters and partners include General Dynamics and other regional manufacturing businesses, and organizations and institutions including PEDA, the City of Pittsfield, Berkshire and Berkshire Health Systems, among others.

BIC is also an educational initiative, and its board and partners include Berkshire Community College, Williams College, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, the University of Massachusetts, McCann Technical School, Taconic High School, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and SUNY Polytechnic College’s separate associate degree and engineering programs, among others.

**Design features**

The BIC’s design and configuration will reflect its mix of purposes, according to Boyd.

“It will have technical spaces with equipment, labs and work areas, as well as soft spaces for conferences and other meetings, and classrooms for education and training,” he said. “In addition, there will be an open accelerator space that startups can rent sections of and fit out for their needs.”

The technical areas will have a variety of equipment and workspaces available for specialized processes. These will include wet labs, clean rooms, microscopic suites, laser measurement machines, 3D software and printing equipment, and other resources.

This will enable companies to engage in research and development, reverse engineering and production, or providing access to equipment and resources they might not be able to afford individually.

As an example, said Boyd, his own company will benefit from the equipment there.

Boyd Technologies provides material sourcing, product development and advanced manufacturing services for customers in the medical device and life sciences industries. He explained that his company often needs to create or modify dies and tooling and prototypes for individual projects. “Currently we have to go to outside companies in the Midwest to make dies,” he said. “That adds to our costs, and also requires us to wait for the delivery of the ordered dies with BIC, we can have an engineer do that right here in the Berkshires. That will provide a cost savings and allow us to serve customers more rapidly.”

Boyd said that companies likely will use the equipment to differing degrees. Some may utilize the BIC on a more frequent basis for processes they perform regularly, while others will use it less frequently for specific projects or products. Still other businesses might only use the facility on a one-time basis for a special project.

While the primary users will be developers and manufacturers of precision products, Boyd noted that those in other industries and professionals such as financial or legal services or very small-scale production may also use its software or equipment for specialized tasks and projects.

“A legal firm that is doing work related to manufacturing can expand their understanding and ability to work with such cases by coming to BIC,” he said. “Or, if your newspaper wanted to create and produce a complex 3D version of your logo, you might come to BIC to do that.”

**Collaborative opportunities**

Boyd noted that one emphasis of the BIC is on fostering networking, the sharing of ideas and opportunities for mutual benefit, and other forms of collaboration among regional manufacturers and businesses.

To support that, the BIC’s “soft spaces” will include classrooms for training and small meetings and an amphitheater-style auditorium for large classes and other presentations. There will also be common areas for more informal interactions and meetings. Spaces can also be configured for the requirements of specific events, such as job fairs.

The technical equipment will also be available for educational purposes and to provide hands-on experience.

Boyd said the educational component will take many forms. It will augment the resources and equipment available at local schools, colleges and workforce-training programs.

It will also open new collaborative op-
opportunities for programs and partnerships with educational institutions outside of the Berkshires. This could bring related educational opportunities to residents here, as well as provide those institutions with access to resources here.

In addition, there are opportunities to conduct applied research on projects of those institutions, or connect local students to projects of private-sector industries.

“Schools and colleges here already have capabilities to provide education in fields like biology,” said Boyd. “BIC will offer additive opportunities. This may include the ability for students to apply that knowledge by conducting applied research into medical procedures and products in real-world conditions. They can gain practical experience in projects that also include factors they will encounter in their careers, such as cost, insurance implications and regulatory compliance.”

Besides its physical facilities, the BIC will also be oriented to fostering improved communications and interaction in other ways. For example, its meeting and classroom facilities will include the technology to conduct interactive online communications with other sites for distance learning or events that include companies in diverse locations.

Membership

As a membership-based organization, BIC will reflect the needs and goals of its members. It will also rely on membership and user fees as a source of operating revenues.

Boyd said they currently have about a dozen founding members and are working to expand its membership base. He said there will be several categories of membership, which will allow for differing levels of participation.

The top tier is “enterprise memberships” which will provide access to all of BIC’s programs and resources, and priority in terms of reserving space and equipment. The overall membership cost is highest, but these members will also pay lower fees for equipment and rentals.

Other forms of associate or public memberships will provide access to the BIC’s programs and services. Those members will also be able to rent equipment, but at somewhat higher rates.

Boyd noted that one emphasis of the BIC is on fostering networking, the sharing of information and ideas for mutual benefit, and other forms of collaboration among regional manufacturers and businesses.

There are also membership tiers for those who want to support BIC and receive newsletters and participate in initiatives, even though they might not require its resources themselves on a regular basis.

Nonmembers will also be able to access the BIC’s equipment and resources on an “as available” basis and at higher rental rates than members.

“Each member will choose a level that reflects their own needs,” said Boyd. “A company joining at the highest level is most likely already spending a lot on training and outside services for tooling and R&D. So the membership cost and user fees would be less expensive and more efficient than what they are currently doing.”

He added that it may make more sense for another company that requires the type of facilities and processes offered at BIC less frequently to choose a lower membership level. Other businesses, organizations or individuals that want to support BIC can choose the least expensive public memberships.

Boyd noted that, as construction on the BIC moves forward, the organization (www.berkshireinnovationcenter.com) will be hiring a staff, which will likely include an executive director, one or two support engineers and at least one administrative position.

Kevin Bisaccio
Senior Commercial Bank Relationship Manager
413.448.6162
kbisaccio@nbtbank.com

At NBT Bank, our goal is to help you reach yours. Our relationship managers have the expert guidance, capital and cash management solutions it takes to help grow your business. Our local perspective builds strong partnerships that maximize your potential for success. Let our experienced commercial banking team create real opportunity for your business.
The Pittsfield Cooperative Bank opened in 1889 intent on helping our neighbors to build a better community. Over the past 129 years, we have never wavered from that commitment.

When Jessica Rufo had an opportunity to grow, she stirred up a new location to offer fresh baked goods and to invest in what she loves – making donuts! She ordered financing from the Pittsfield Cooperative Bank.

The Pittsfield Cooperative Bank and Tyler and Pine – a sweet deal. If you have an appetite for local business and local banking, visit Tyler and Pine and the Pittsfield Cooperative Bank.

Buy Local – Bank Local – with Those You Know and Trust