



December 2011
January 2012
February 2012

Volume XXIX, No.4

Members-only savings on HR outsourcing, fuel, telecom and online training available through Chamber Affinity partners

The Chamber's Affinity Partners provide discounted goods and services exclusively to other North Central Mass. Chamber members. Most members can benefit from one or more offerings from the current list of participants--and that list is growing.

A description of the Chamber's Affinity Partners and what they can offer to members--at substantial savings--is listed as follows.

Internet marketing strategies

For members who can use help with online marketing, eMarketing4us provides an affinity partnership that includes 24/7 access to a self-paced educational platform that offers progressive learning and practical "how-to" steps for growing businesses online. Chamber members will be able to take these courses at a discount of 15 percent.

The self-paced "how-to" courses have been designed for the non-technical, non-marketing person. Course categories include creating an effective website presence, search engine optimization, internet marketing, and how to put together a customized social media marketing program.



*Deborah Buckley
President
eMarketing4us*

"Our courses ... can be easily understood no matter the individual's level of marketing expertise, so business owners can successfully master the material and immediately see results," says Deborah Buckley, president of eMarketing4us. "We enable entrepreneurs and business owners to learn at their own pace."

She may be reached at 978-466-7637 or for more information see www.emarketing4us.com/free-website-analysis/

Telecom discounts

Schooley Mitchell Telecom Consultants is a Lunenburg-based professional telecom consultant company working with local businessES. "We are completely independent and objective of all telecom suppliers and solely look out for your best interest," reports consultant Dennis Mannone Jr..

He points out that surveys indicate almost all organizations are billed more than they should be for telecom services. With 7,100+ active clients in the U.S. and Canada, he adds, "Most of our clients reduce their telecom expenses by 23-28%."

The firm analyzes services such as: local and long distance calls, cellular, data connectivity, internet and credit card processing. All work is provided on a contingency basis, so there is no cost or effort on the part of clients. To have Schooley Mitchell do an analysis of your firm's telecom costs, and investigate future savings, contact Mr. Mannone at 978-870-0135.



*Ray Lopez
President
RMI*

Professional employer organization

Fitchburg based Resource Management Inc. (RMI) is a local "professional employer organization" (PEO). With nearly 5,000 employees under the services of RMI, the firm provides "one stop shopping" for all

employment related needs. RMI's services are bundled to include integrated payroll/tax filing services, employee benefits, "Pay-As-You-Go" workers' compensation insurance and human resource and labor law compliance guidance. To learn about the RMI discount of 10% for Chamber members with the Affinity Partnership, contact Trish Barnes at 978-343-0048, x110.

Gasoline discounts

Alliance Energy, LLC, is one of the largest gasoline marketing distributors in New England and can provide businesses of all sizes with corporate Fleet Cards. NCMCC members save three cents per gallon with Fleet Card purchases. "The Alliance Energy Corporate Fleet Card is available to businesses of all sizes... and for any vehicle as long as it is used for business purposes," states Jan Cochran, commercial sales manager at Alliance.

Using the Fleet Card ensures greater control of fuel expenses in real time, simplify fleet expense management with simple, easy-to-use reports. To get a Fleet Card, call Ms. Cochran at 617-803-8149.



*Jan Cochran
Sales manager
Alliance Energy*



*Dennis Mannone, Jr.
Consultant
Schooley Mitchell*

INSIDE

- New membersp.2
- Gov. Affairsp.3
- Breakfastp.4
- HR Councilp.5
- New Director Profile.....p.6
- Business After Hoursp.7
- EWNp.7
- Order formp.8
- Chamber Actionsp.A

New Members

Please welcome & patronize these businesses--

ALDI

241 New Lancaster Road
Leominster, MA 01453
Mr. Bruce Persohn
(860) 290-2900
GROCERS - RETAIL

Ameriprise Financial Services/Christine Delbrocco

531 King Street, Suite 1
Littleton, MA 01460
Ms. Christine Delbrocco
(978) 486-0022
FINANCIAL SERVICES

Arisu Korean Restaurant

704 N. Main Street
Leominster, MA 01453
SOO EUN DO
(978) 466-8688
RESTAURANTS

Bowditch & Dewey, LLP

PO Box 15156
Worcester, MA 01615
Atty. Terrence J. Briggs
(508) 926-3466
LAWYERS

Cardiology Internists of Leominster, Inc

100 Hospital Road, Suite 3B
Leominster, MA 01453
Nicholas M. Mercadante, M.D.
(978) 534-3179
PHYSICIANS

Christopher D. Meagher Decorative House Painter

76 Haynes Road
Townsend, MA 01469
Mr. Christopher Meagher
(978) 597-2151
PAINTING CONTR.

Clean Impressions

47 Green Briar Road
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Mr. Edward Herter
(978) 400-7086
RUBBER STAMPS

Comcast Business Services

55 Concord Street
N. Reading, MA 01864
Mr. Keith Enos
(978) 825-2386
TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Law Office of Michael DellaMonaca

982 South Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Atty. Michael Dellamonaca
(978) 342-1914
LAWYERS

Zbigniew Dombek, MD PC

76 Summer Street, Suite 50
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Zbigniew Dombek, M.D.
(978) 353-0004
PHYSICIANS

Stuart S. Fay, MD, PC

33 Electric Ave, Suite 104
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Dr. Stuart S. Fay
(978) 342-8752
PHYSICIANS

First Choice Limousine

PO Box 200
Lunenburg, MA 01462
Mr. Daniel Bettencourt
(978) 582-0005
LIMOUSINE SERVICES

Gatsby Grounds Co., Inc.

P.O. Box 401
Lancaster, MA 01523
Mr. Tanner Cole
(978) 365-9880
LANDSCAPE CONTR.

Michael E. Gotthelf MD

50 Memorial Drive, Suite 211
Leominster, MA 01453
Ms. Cynthia Bennett
(978) 537-3355
PHYSICIANS

Kevin's Place, Inc.

376 Main Street
Ashby, MA 01431
Mr. Kevin Michaud
(978) 877-8874
AUTOMOBILE REPAIR

Neighborhood Pediatrics

881 South Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Daria M. Karos, M.D.
(978) 342-4437
PHYSICIANS

Pediatrics West

19 Pierce Avenue
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Ms. Jessica Hennessey
(978) 577-0437
PHYSICIANS

Sencillo Solutions

2 Shaker Road Suite D214
Shirley, MA 01464
John Heckel
(978) 785-9620
ACCOUNTANTS

Iris Sullivan, MD PC

64 Whalon Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Iris Sullivan, M.D.
(978) 342-4500
PHYSICIANS

Tractor Supply Co.

235 New Lancaster Road
Leominster, MA 01453
Ms. Lori Rao
(978) 534-9620
ANIMAL FEED & SUPPLIES

Vinyl Technologies

195 Industrial Road
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Mr. Dirk Burrowes
(978) 342-9800
MANUFACTURERS

Yamato Japan

975 Merriman Avenue
Leominster, MA 01453
Mr. Ramerd Tang
(978) 466-6688
RESTAURANTS

Zedas Pizza & Restaurant

65 Laurel Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420
Alan Wernick
(978) 342-9876
RESTAURANTS - PIZZA

Manor On The Hill

Luxurious Living at an Affordable Price!



Assisted Living,
Memory Care
Respite Care &

Adult Day Health Center

Peace of Mind

Knowing that your
loved one will be kept
safe and warm
in our happy home.

member discounts available

450 N. Main St. - Leominster, MA

978-537-1661

www.manoronthehill.com

manoronthehill1@aol.com

www.facebook.com/moth01

Holiday Blue Laws

-- Christmas Day is Sunday, Dec. 25
-- New Year's Day is Sunday, Jan. 1
-- Presidents Day is Monday, Feb. 20
-- M L K Day is Monday, Jan. 16

- Federal, state and municipal offices, the Chamber office, schools & most banks are closed.
- Retail stores and businesses may not open on Christmas.
- Retail, grocery stores and package stores as well as manufacturers and other non-retailers--if open on holidays other than Christmas--may require a permit or be restricted to voluntary employment or overtime pay. For specific exceptions concerning mandatory/voluntary hours or extra, holiday compensation, or for more information, see: www.mass.gov/dos/bluelaw/index.htm

Small businesses may be eligible for tax credit

Millions of small employers received postcards from the MIRS, beginning in April of last year that alerted them to the new small business health care tax credit and encouraged them to check their eligibility. Apparently many are not taking advantage of the credit, for the US House Ways and Means Oversight Subcommittee held a hearing Nov. 15 focused on whether small businesses are benefiting from the provision.

Even if you didn't receive a postcard, your business still may be eligible. The Small Business Health Insurance Tax Credit was enacted as part of the Affordable Care Act in 2010. It was put in place to help small businesses and tax-exempt organizations that pay at least half of the premiums for their employees' health insurance coverage. The credit is available to businesses and tax-exempt groups with 25 or fewer employees with average incomes of \$50,000 or less. The credit phases out

gradually for firms with average wages between \$25,000 and \$50,000 and for firms with the equivalent of between 10 and 25 full-time workers.



Critics note that the calculation to determine eligibility for the credit is complex. However, it may be worth the time and effort. The credit is worth up to 35 percent of a small business' premium costs in 2010 (25% for tax-exempt employers). On Jan. 1, 2014, this rate increases to 50 percent (35 percent for tax-exempt employers).

Administered by the IRS, Small employers, whether businesses or tax-exempt organizations, will use new Form 8941, Credit for Small Employer Health Insurance Premiums, to calculate the small business health care tax credit. Small businesses will include the amount of the credit as part of the general business credit on their income tax returns.

Ambassadors help members get the most from Chamber membership

The Ambassador Committee has added five new members for a total of ten. Chamber Ambassadors are tasked with making proactive calls to members to ensure that the Chamber is meeting their expectations.

They want to find out if business owners are taking advantage of their benefits, and if not, helping them to do so. In addition, they contact new members to

welcome them to the chamber, and assist with educating the "not yet" members about the Chamber. Their role also includes attending ribbon cuttings and Chamber events (to meet and greet).

This year's Ambassadors include: Jim Adams, Rollstone Bank & Trust; Cynthia Bryant, MassMutual Financial Group; Leslie DelMonaco, Century 21 Realty Team; Donna DiMarzio, Curves for Women; Ed Herter, Clean Impressions; Dennis Mannone,

Schooley Mitchell Telecom Consultants; John Raymond, Workers' Credit Union; Kelli Rooney, HealthAlliance Hospital; David Roth, 4 the Cause Marketing & Consulting; and, Denise Wortman, Exit New Options Real Estate. The group is chaired by Marcia Fernald, Moore Enterprises.

Contact Yasmin Loft at 978-353-7600, x234, if you would like to represent your business and the Chamber by getting involved as an Ambassador.



Fidelity Bank
HELPING YOU GET WHERE YOU WANT TO BE



The HYPE! program [Helping Young Professionals Emerge] offers monthly events for business people in the North Central region who are age 21 - 40 with an emphasis on both social and professional networking. Events are free of charge; don't miss the following dates:

- **Thursday, Dec. 8, 2011**, from 5 - 7 p.m., the group meets at the Fay Club, 658 Main St., Fitchburg.
 - **Thursday, Feb. 2, 2012**. The club/cafe Destaré at 320 Main St., Fitchburg, will host HYPE from 5 - 7 p.m. on
- For information, call 978-353-7600.



Frigoletto & Associates Inc
Real Estate Appraisers
Trusted Since 1959

Providing Residential Real Estate Appraisals
in Massachusetts and New Hampshire
Don@Frigoletto.com 978-537-3772
www.frigoletto.com

Jan. 20 features Red Sox writer Gordon Edes

The January 20th Good Morning Breakfast will present Gordon Edes, famous among sports fans as a senior baseball writer for ESPN Boston, covering the Boston Red Sox. A native of Lunenburg, Edes was a correspondent throughout high school for the Fitchburg Sentinel, Leominster Enterprise, and Worcester Telegram, never imagining that this would be the start of a career that spans over 30 years and some of the country's top news-gathering organizations: Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel and Yahoo Sports. He returned to New England in 1996, and covered the Red Sox for 12 seasons for the Boston Globe. For the last two years, he has been at ESPNBoston.com



Gordon Edes

Program opens doors for region's future leaders



Monthly classes of the NCM Community Leadership program began in October. Each full-day session focuses on two themes, and November's were "Media" and "History of the Region." Shown above, participants role-played crisis communication situations. Mike Kushmerek of Fitchburg State University is shown onscreen, being interviewed by Bill White of Planning Concepts, Inc.

The 2012 Leadership Class members and their sponsoring companies include: Janet Warren, American Red Cross; Karen Smith, Avidia Bank; Joana Dos Santos, Cleghorn Neighborhood Center; Rick Swanson, Community Health Connections, Inc.; Victoria Briggs, Employment Resources; John Labarre, Family Federal Savings F.A.; John Kelley, Fidelity Bank; Michael Kushmerek, Fitchburg State University; Serina Arcila, Four Points Hotel by Sheraton; Michael Halstead, Halstead Insurance Agency, Inc.; Paul Wesolowski, HealthAlliance Hospital, Inc.; Bruce Mathieu, IC Federal Credit Union; Todd Sibley, Leominster Credit Union; Cheryl Gallant, Micron Products, Inc.; Jeremiah Riordon, Mount Wachusett Community College; Emily Austin-Bruns, North Central Charter Essential School; Bobbie Parker, Rollstone Bank & Trust; Robert Ayles, Simonds International; Chris Gargas, SimplexGrinnell; Jennifer Stace, TD Bank; Kathy Heintz, United Way of North Central MA, Inc.; John DiNapoli, Unifit; Will Aubuchon, IV, W. E. Aubuchon Company, Inc.; Audra Lissell, Wachusett Mountain Ski Area; David Thibodeau, Workers' Credit Union.



Good Morning Breakfast

Breakfast events start at 6:45 a.m. with coffee and buffet breakfast, at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel Leominster, 99 Erdman Way off Route 12 at Rte 2.


To reserve, see the back page or for more information call 978-353-7600, ext. 235

Free Business Counseling is available in the Chamber office

Small business owners often need advice about growing their business--or starting a new one. Funding for business counseling may be limited for startups on a tight budget. There are professional business counselors available at no cost, by appointment, in the Chamber office. Also, local business owners who may be applying for loan financing may get their business plan or entrepreneurial concept reviewed by an expert.



Call today at (978) 353-7600, ext. 221 and make an appointment with Mike Holbrook, a counselor with the Mass. Small Business Development Center based at Clark University. He is at the NCM Chamber on Tuesdays and states, "I am always pleased to meet and talk with business owners and entrepreneurs about their ideas, plans, and challenges."



**Doing what's right for
*building business.***

Scott Brown, Owner, Verizon Wireless Zone Stores

**Phones are Scott's business.
With Workers', his connections are endless.**

Workers' is here for all of your business needs.
Call 978-353-7178 to speak with a business lender today.

workerscu.com

MSC NCUA FDIC

Workers' Credit Union

Doing what's right for you.

Acton • Chelmsford • Fitchburg • Gardner • Groton • Lancaster • Leominster • Lunenburg • Orange • Townsend

HUMAN RESOURCES COUNCIL HRC

HRC events are from 11:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. in the Chamber Conference Room and include lunch. Use Page 8 to reserve.

December 14 features a health insurance panel discussion



William Stuart

This HRC session will offer a panel discussion with representatives from Fallon Community Health Plan, Blue Cross Blue Shield and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care. Topics may include tax-advantaged reimbursement accounts, such as Health Reimbursement Arrangements [HRAs], and Health Savings Accounts, [HSAs]. Panel representative for Harvard Pilgrim is, William G. Stuart, who has been a product specialist at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care for 13 years. He also has experience in the consumer packaged-goods and pharmaceutical reimbursement industries.

Mr. Stuart works with health plan advisors (consultants and brokers), employers and employees to create and communicate the benefits programs designed to help employers and employees manage overall health care costs and the health of employees and their covered family members. He is the author of Health Savings Accounts: A Practical Guide for Account Holders.

Attorney addresses use of social media by employees on January 18

“Social networking and beyond: being an employer in the 21st century” will be presented by David M. Felper, a senior partner with Bowditch & Dewey, LLP.

This program will focus on key legal and policy issues related to the use of social media by employees, both while at work and away from it. The program will address free speech, illegal speech (defamation, obscenity, etc), harassment and discrimination and privacy. There will also be an interactive discussion about the proactive steps employers should take to address issues before they arise.

With a practice area of litigation, labor and employment Mr. Felper typically represents management in matters including defense of discrimination and wrongful termination claims, wage and hour and OSHA complaints, non-competition agreements, contract negotiations, grievances, union organization and permissible conduct under all federal and state labor and employment laws. He represents clients in federal and state courts, including unemployment compensation and section 28 workers' compensation hearings. Mr. Felper also drafts employment contracts, personnel policies and other employment-related documents. He is a frequent speaker on employment and labor law and has taught courses in the field of labor and employment law.



David Felper

He also is a former president and director of Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce and has served on boards of numerous organizations as well as participating in the selection of executive directors for several nonprofits, setting executive compensation and benefits.

RELATIONSHIPS MATTER



Meet Melissa Maranda - Melissa is now a part of Rollstone Bank & Trust.

As the manager of our Wealth Management Division, she will answer all your trust and investment questions, and help you develop a customized plan aimed at meeting your financial and personal goals. Call today and develop a relationship with Melissa. The better she knows you, the more she can help.

You can reach Melissa at 978-343-2202 or toll free 1-800-640-1166.



www.RollstoneBank.com

Overview of federal regulations offered on February 15

On February 15, join Lili Palacios-Baldwin, counsel with Hirsch Roberts Weinstein LLP in Boston, in reviewing the highlights of the 2008 Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act, the EEOC's ADAAA regulations and talking through compliance tips and best practices for employers grappling with providing reasonable accommodation (and other ADA compliance) in the workplace.

Ms. Palacios-Baldwin has a solid background in equal employment opportunity and the area of federal employment discrimination. She represents employers on many workplace issues including employee discipline and termination, workplace policies and practices, investigations and training. Prior to joining Hirsch Roberts Weinstein LLP she was a senior trial attorney with the Boston Area Office of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, litigating on behalf of the EEOC in federal courts. She was also responsible for coordinating efforts with the local Fair Employment Practice Agencies (FEPAs) in several states including the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD).



Lili Palacios-Baldwin

New Director Profile

Mary Leger, at Ruel Electric, can promote benefits of membership--from personal experience

Mary Leger holds the title of CFO, as co-owner of Ruel Electric, located on Broad Street in Fitchburg. She'll be the first to admit that "officially, I'm in charge of finances and human resources, but I actually do everything from billing and collections to cleaning the bathroom." The company was founded in 1954 by Roland Ruel. Ms. Leger and her husband Raymond are the third owner. "Ray and I were both teachers for many years... he taught electrical at Monty Tech and I taught special ed... We were ready for a change."

She described Ruel as known for "service work" and renovating older buildings, whether they're residential, commercial or industrial. "We pull out a lot of 'knob & tube wiring' from the 1930s. Insurance companies won't insure [your property]," she notes, when there are still wires strung on ceramic knobs in walls and basements. "Right now we have nine employees and five service trucks," she continues, "We've done work at the Fay Club, the art museum, the renovation at ARC [Employment Resources]..."

She admits that the December 2008 ice storm, "has been a big thing for us. We're still putting in generators, this fall."

By serving on the Chamber Board of Directors Ms. Leger intends to promote the benefits of membership to more members. "I think the Chamber is a real gem that people do not use to its full

est capacity... members often pay their dues and then don't pay attention to it."

She described how Ruel Electric has gotten positive results from networking through the Chamber. The company provides an example for other contractors and tradesmen who don't realize how Chamber programs and benefits can help their businesses grow.

The secretary at Ruel, Paula Ouellette, has attended Human Resource Council workshops, Ms. Leger points out. "I was very happy with what she came back with," state Ms. Leger, "She was very enthusiastic, meeting new people.... My electrician Kyle Ridley, has also attended some HYPE events." This networking program, "Helping Young Professionals Emerge," is aimed at people under age 40.

Ms. Leger adds, "I want to get into the ChamberMail program" in which the Chamber provides a mailing [that markets participating Chamber members] to addresses of people who are new to the area. "As a director," says Ms. Leger, "I'm going to push more people to get involved and take advantage" of their Chamber benefits.

When they take a break from business and work duties, the Legers enjoy outdoor activities, "often with our four grandchildren," she notes, "We like to bike, hike and ski. I hiked every trail at Wachusett for my 50th birthday."



Reach new residents & new customers with ChamberMail™

ChamberMail™ targets consumers who've recently moved into the Chamber's multi-town service area, and is offered only to Chamber members. This program will assist our members in finding new business during the current, difficult economic climate. ChamberMail™ is a business-to-consumer, direct mail brochure delivered monthly into the hands of all new homeowners and residents within the 30 ZIP codes that comprise the North Central Massachusetts region. The ChamberMail™ publication includes a welcome letter from the Chamber and includes ads and promotions from advertising Chamber members. Delivery of the brochure takes place approximately two to four weeks after the new residents move-in. For information contact Yasmin Loft, 978-353-7600, x234.

RCAP Solutions to offer free seminar on water system regulations

Business owners may not be aware that many types of companies within Massachusetts meet the definition of a public water system and must follow state and federal drinking water regulations.

To explain the issues and potential liabilities, a free, one hour workshop on public water systems in Massachusetts will be presented at 9 a.m. on Thursday, January 19, 2012. The NC-MCC, along with RCAP Solutions, have organized a Public Water Systems Workshop. RCAP stands for "Resources for Communities & People" and is based in Gardner. Formerly known as Rural Housing Improvement [RHI] the nonprofit agency works on behalf of communities to develop and maintain safe, affordable housing, along with oversight of water and wastewater issues.

This workshop is designed specifically for realtors, lenders, attorneys, planners and building inspectors. Understanding the laws, responsibilities, and options that apply to drinking water supplies may save your business or your clients money and will protect public health.



SOLAR & KILCOYNE, PC Certified Public Accountants

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Todd S. Solar, CPA | John F. Kilcoyne, CPA |
| • Individuals | • Businesses |
| • Nonprofits | • Construction |
| • Trusts & Estates | • Manufacturing |

Leominster, MA • 978-537-2929
Worcester, MA * 508-854-2900
www.solarkilcoyne.com

'Brown Bag' seminars
are free
Bring your own lunch

These lunch events are from 11:45 a.m. - 1.30 p.m. and unless indicated otherwise, are held at the Leominster Lodge of Elks, 134 North Main Street in Leominster. Each EWN brown bag lunch event includes the opportunity to promote your business or service with a tabletop display for the duration of the lunch and workshop. Exhibitors may set up on a 2' x 6' table, available to Chamber members for \$30 and nonmembers at \$50. Use the back of this newsletter to reserve a table top. Contact Marissa Torres at (978) 353-7600, ext 235 or torres@massweb.com for more information.

December 7 Holiday Social will benefit LUK Mentoring

In place of the usual speaker/topic, the EWN event at the Leominster Lodge of Elks on Wednesday, December 7 will be a Holiday Social. Guests will still bring 'brown bag' lunch, but dessert will be provided. This social will include a raffle to support the LUK Mentoring program which pairs caring, concerned role models with youth who will benefit from additional support. LUK, Inc. is a Fitchburg-based social service agency that serves families and youth at risk. Anyone with items to donate for the raffle are asked to contact Marissa beforehand at 978-353-7600, ext. 235.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to get together with friends, associates and new contacts while helping a great organization.

January 4 workshop looks at 'laughter yoga'

Featured guest on Jan. 4 will be Lynn Gerrits, MA, RMT, a holistic practitioner and the Wellness Coordinator for the Simonds-Hurd Complementary Care Center at HealthAlliance Hospital in Fitchburg. She is responsible for management of the Center, and is a master's level mental health clinician with 20+ years experience specializing in stress management and the treatment of anxiety and depression.



Lynn Gerrits

A Reiki Master Teacher, she is a registered member of the International Association of Reiki Practitioners. Ms. Gerrits teaches the "Peace" and "Stress Solutions" classes at the center and facilitates the newly formed Laughter Yoga Club as a Certified Laughter Yoga Leader. As a volunteer for both the Hospital and the American Cancer Society, she facilitates the monthly Cancer Survivor & Caregiver Support Group. Ms. Gerrits is responsible for overall management of the center, staff and operations. The center offers therapeutic services including a variety of massage techniques, acupuncture, Reiki, reflexology and guided imagery, while also provides a variety of classes ranging from yoga, tai chi, and qigong to stress management, Nia, Zumba and a variety of fitness classes.

Learn about the service dogs of NEADS on February 1

Headquartered in Sterling, the National Education for Assistance Dog Services, known as NEADS, will be the focus of the Feb. 1 EWN event. Also known as Dogs for Deaf and Disabled Americans, NEADS is a non-profit organization that was established in 1976 to provide canine assistance for people who are deaf or have a disability. These assistance dogs become an extension of their handlers and bring freedom, physical autonomy and relief from social isolation to their human partners.

NEADS has trained over 1,300 assistance dog teams since 1976. Donna Laconti, director of donor information and workplace campaigns for NEADS, will be the guest presenter. She will talk about the organization's Prison PUP Partnership in 13 prisons in New England and other programs, highlighting various accomplishments with the Canines for Combat Veterans program.

Gardner Visiting Nursing Association, Inc.



Home Care Services • Hospice • Adult Day Services
My Home Connection™ – A Private Duty Service
Lifeline • Home Assisted Living™
Community Health Programs • Corporate Flu Clinics

For more information call
978-632-1230 www.gardnervna.org

Proudly serving 24 cities & towns in North Central Massachusetts.

Better
Place...
Best
Value

Take the Tour
978.425.9399
or visit
phoenixparkonline.com
2 Shaker Road, Shirley, MA



PARK



PHOENIX

A GREAT PLACE TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Coming Events

Season Ticket holders must confirm attendance—
Please call (978)353-7600

CHAMBER BOARD

OFFICERS

Martin Connors, Jr.
Chair
Reinaldo Lopez
Vice Chairman
Robert Antonucci
Treasurer
David McKeehan
President

DIRECTORS

Richard Armstrong
Daniel Asquino
Thomas Bagley, III
Maedon Coburn
Paul DiGeromino
Gordon Edmonds
Paul Gauvin
Lawrence Gelsomini
Mary Leger
Laura Martino-Reynolds
Ward McLaughlin
Anthony Mercadante
Patrick Muldoon
Stephen Mullaney
Eric Shapiro

Reserve online at NorthCentralMass.com
under "Calendar"

Dec. 7, Wednesday

EXECUTIVE WOMEN'S NETWORK

Holiday Social
11:45 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Leominster Lodge of Elks
134 No. Main St., Leominster

Jan. 4, Wednesday

Feb. 1, Wednesday

EXECUTIVE WOMEN'S NETWORK

'Brown Bag' lunch seminar
11:45 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Leominster Lodge of Elks

Dec. 8, Thursday

Holiday
HYPE

5 - 7 p.m.
Fay Club
658 Main St., Fitchburg

Thursday, Jan. 19

Water Systems Regulations

Workshop
9 a.m.
Chamber Conf. Rm.
Free for members

Dec. 14, Wednesday

Jan. 18, Wednesday

Feb. 15, Wednesday

HRC

noon-1:30 p.m.
Chamber Conf. Rm.

Jan. 20, Friday

Good Morning

6:45 - 8:30 a.m.
Four Points Hotel
by Sheraton Leominster
99 Erdman Way

Feb. 2, Thursday

HYPE

5 - 7 p.m.
Destaré
320 Main Street, Fitchburg

Return the entire following portion of this page, including address label. **Please include payment.**

date	event	#tix	members	non-members	total
12/7	EWN Hoiday Social	_____	--	--	\$ _____
12/8	HYPE networking under-40	_____	--	--	\$ _____
12/14	Human Resources Council	_____	\$20	\$35	\$ _____
1/4	EWN ['BrownBag' free] Table Top	_____	\$30	\$50	\$ _____
1/18	Human Resources Council	_____	\$20	\$35	\$ _____
1/19	Water Systems Workshop	_____	--	--	\$ _____
1/20	GOOD MORNING Breakfast	_____	\$21	\$40	\$ _____
2/1	EWN ['BrownBag' free] Table Top	_____	\$30	\$50	\$ _____
2/2	HYPE networking under-40	_____	--	--	\$ _____
2/15	Human Resources Council	_____	\$20	\$35	\$ _____

Check enclosed

Charge my credit card (below)

Credit Card # _____ Total Enclosed \$ _____

Expiration _____ Signature _____ VISA / MC / AmEx

Editor:
Marie N. Auger
chamber@massweb.org

phone:
(978) 353-7600
fax:
(978) 353-4896
internet:
www.northcentralmass.com

NorthCentralMass.com (USPS 773-650) is published quarterly by the North Central Mass. Chamber of Commerce, 860 South Street, Fitchburg, MA, for \$5.00 per year which is withheld from annual membership dues. Periodicals postage paid at Fitchburg, MA.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to NorthCentralMass.com, c/o North Central Mass. Chamber of Commerce, 860 South Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420.



860 South Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Periodicals
postage PAID
Fitchburg, MA
01420

To update your mailing address, or

advertise in this newsletter,

please contact Yasmin Loft at the Chamber office:

(978) 353-7600
x234

CHAMBER ACTIONS

This section samples activities of Chamber departments & committees in recent weeks.

STAFF ADDITION: Yasmin Loft joined the Chamber on August 1st as sales and member services manager. Yasmin (pronounced Jazz'min) has an extensive background in sales, including business services and print ads. Her primary role at the Chamber is member retention and new member sales. Yasmin also handles miscellaneous print and web ad sales for the Chamber.

LOANS: The Development Corporation has approved six loans that await closing. They include loans to start up a new exercise gym in Fitchburg; to fund growth of a Fitchburg-based waste removal & recycling firm; to assist in the purchase of a building for a non-profit community based organization in Fitchburg; working capital for a manufacturer of ornaments in Gardner; to assist in the purchase of a new facility for a mechanical contractor in Leominster; and a supplemental loan for working capital for a media conversion firm in Leominster. These loans total \$196,000 and will ultimately result in the creation or saving of 24 jobs.

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM: Marissa Torres, our events & marketing communications manager, attended the American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) annual conference, in Los Angeles, this year. Chamber staff from all over the United States was represented, as well as delegates from Canada, Norway and the United Arab Emirates. The conference featured daily "best practices" workshops on topics from events and fund-raising to issues surrounding membership and governance. She will fine-tune programs and implement new ideas picked up at the conference.

GOOD MORNING BREAKFAST SERIES: September's "Good Morning Breakfast" had 110 attendees as former New England Patriot linebacker Steve Nelson was the guest speaker. Research Results of Fitchburg was the sponsor, and we honored Bevovations, LLC, with our achievement award.

JATA WEBSITE UPGRADES: The Johnny Appleseed Trail Association has been working on updating our website so it is more user-friendly. One of our newest features is the Guide "Flipbook" which allows views to turn the pages virtually as well as click on ads hyperlinked to the company's website and Facebook page.

INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATIONS: Social networking is a priority in marketing Johnny Appleseed Country. We are now on Facebook and Twitter working to expand our message to a wider audience. Our Facebook numbers are up by 65% in the last three months due to diligent posting and research. The Visitors Center is still seeing steady traffic as fall is our busiest time.

RIBBON CUTTINGS: Ribbon cuttings for our members, as well as new area businesses, continue. Some recent ribbon cuttings included Anwelt Heritage Apartments, Busy Bees Preschool Center, Pediatrics West, and Zedas Pizza & Restaurant. We are exploring how we can conduct ribbon cuttings (upon request) for virtual and home-based businesses.

EXECUTIVE WOMEN'S NETWORK: We are pleased to announce that Fidelity Bank and HealthAlliance Hospital are co-sponsoring the EWN this year. The 2011/12 EWN season kicked off on September 7th with over 70 attendees gathered to hear Senator Jen Flanagan along with Mayors Lisa Wong and Dean Mazzarella provide local and state updates on the region. October's speaker was Mistress Carrie of WAAF, just back from her stint in Afghanistan, embedded with 800 National Guardsmen from Massachusetts.

BUSINESS COUNSELING: At least 16 hours of free advice are provided to small business people every week. The Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE) and a counselor from Clark University schedule appointments in our Chamber office to aspiring entrepreneurs and companies looking to grow. This resource is also invaluable to our alternative lending capacity.

Continued on Page B

**Save
The Date
Monday
June 4, 2012
9 a.m.
Oak Hill
Country Club
Oak Hill Road
Fitchburg**



ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND
GOLF TOURNAMENT
Sponsored by **LCU**
Leominster Credit Union

Take Charge HealthAlliance a member of UMass Memorial Healthcare **Occupational Health Program**

Our hospital-based program offers a wide range of occupational health services. We are conveniently located at the HealthAlliance Leominster Campus just off Route 2.

Occupational Health Clinic

- illness & injury treatment
- pre-employment physicals
- medical surveillance testing
- substance abuse testing

*Now offering
extended
morning &
evening hours*

Health Promotion

- on-site health & safety programs
- OSHA, federal & state mandated training
- Smoking cessation program

For more information call 978/343-5556

HealthAlliance Hospital, 60 Hospital Road, Leominster MA 01453
www.healthalliance.com

CHAMBER ACTIONS ...CONTINUED

HUMAN RESOURCES COUNCIL: The HRC group is off to a strong start with 26 attendees at our September meeting, including some new participants. Led by our new committee chair, Cheryl Gallant of Micron Products, we are planning the schedule for our spring meetings.

HEALTH INSURANCE: Chambers Insurance, Inc. is now up and running. We are brokers for Blue Cross Blue Shield, Harvard Pilgrim, Tufts Health Plan and Fallon Community Health. Inquiries have been steadily coming in and an advertisement campaign is underway. Going forward we will aggressively market our health insurance options and the personalized service we offer to our members.

MEMBER BENEFIT: The Sales Leads Group, open to all members, continues to meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 8 a.m., every month in the Chamber conference room. The group now incorporates a “marketing moment” to the agenda. We created a NCMCC Sales Leads Group on LinkedIn for members who can’t always attend leads meetings but can still have a forum to acquire/exchange qualified leads. Sales leads group attendance since the end of July to-date has ranged from 20-28 and growing.

NEW TIME FOR SALES LEADS: A new Sales Leads Group, “Dollars & Sense,” meets on the 1st Tuesday every month in the Chamber Conference Room at 4 p.m. It should be a plus for members who can’t make morning meetings.

CHINA: The window of opportunity to sign up for the nine-day China Orientation visit will soon close. This

group trip departs April 19, 2012 for Beijing, Shanghai, Suzhou, and Hangzhou. The deadline for travelers to get in on this all-inclusive deal at under \$2,200 p/p is December 15th.

TOURISM FUNDING: The Mass Office of Travel & Tourism (MOTT) has announced their allocations for the competitive marketing grants. The Johnny Appleseed Trail Assn. will receive over \$90,000 in state funds for promoting visits to North Central Massachusetts and supporting its hospitality industry.

NETWORKING: HYPE (Helping Young Professionals Emerge) aims to bring together young talent from the region in order to foster their growth both personally and professionally. HYPE offers networking opportunities, both socially & professionally, for young people in business. There are also activities geared toward giving back to the community, as well as just going out and having some fun. The program is sponsored by Fidelity bank. The Hype group has reached 175 members since its birth in April 2011 and event attendance averages 64 members.

SMALL BUSINESS SEMINARS: Small business seminars are being planned for January. We plan to focus on marketing, social media and other inexpensive tools for businesses, along with more QuickBooks training sessions.

U.S. Postal Service STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)

Publication title: NorthCentralMass.com, Pub. # 773-650 File Date: 9-7-2011, issued quarterly, 4 issues annually at annual subscription price of \$5. Mailing address of known office of publication, headquarters or general business office and of publisher and editor: 860 South Street, Fitchburg MA 01420. Full names & complete mailing address of publisher, editor and managing editor: Publisher: David L. McKeehan, C.C.E., 860 South Street, Fitchburg MA 01420. Editor: Marie N. Auger, 860 South Street, Fitchburg MA 01420. No managing editor. Owner: North Central Mass. Chamber of Commerce, 860 South Street, Fitchburg MA 01420. No known bondholders, mortgagees or other security holders. The purpose, function and non-profit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes has not changed during preceding 12 months.

Publication title: NorthCentralMass.com. The issue date for circulation data below is September 2011. Total copies (net press run) is 1,550 average number copies for each issue during preceding 12 months, number copies of single issue published nearest to filing date is 1,350. Paid/requested, outside-county mail subscriptions stated on Form 3541 is 50 average for preceding 12 months, number copies of single issue published nearest to filing date is 43; Paid in-county subscriptions is 1,200 average for preceding 12 months, number copies of single issue published nearest to filing date is 1,055. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, counter sales and other averaged none for preceding 12 months; number copies of single issue published nearest to filing date is none. None in other classes mailed through USPS, either for preceding 12 months or issue nearest to filing date. Total paid and/or requested circulation average number each issue during preceding 12 months is 1,250 and for single issue nearest to filing date is 1,098. Free distribution by mail, outside county, average for preceding 12 months is 10; for single issue nearest filing date is none. Free distribution by mail in-county, average during preceding 12 months is 55; for issue nearest to filing date is 50. Free distribution by mail in other classes through USPS is none for both 12 month average and issue nearest filing date. Free distribution outside the mail is 100 average for preceding 12 months; number published nearest to filing date is 80. Total free distribution is 155 average for preceding 12 months; number published nearest to filing date is 130.

Total distribution: 1,405 average for preceding 12 months, number nearest to filing date is 1,228. Copies not distributed: average for preceding 12 months is 145; number nearest to filing date is 122. Total: 1,550 average for preceding 12 months, number copies of single issue published nearest to filing date is 1,350. Percentage paid/requested circulation: 89% average for preceding 12 months, number copies of single issue published nearest to filing date is 89%. This statement of ownership will be printed in December 2011 issue of this publication.

Signed: Marie N. Auger

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on this form may be subject to criminal sanctions and/or civil sanctions.

Join us on the first Thursday
of each month at 9:00 AM to

TAKE A LOOK
at Applewild School

120 Prospect St. Fitchburg

978-342-6053 www.applewild.org

See our teachers and
students (K-8) in action!

Applewild School
... A Belief in the Future

Next TAKE A LOOK
dates are December 1,
January 5, and
February 2