

# FOCUS ON BERKS COUNTY BUSINESS



## Furniture Soup — Great Solutions at a Great Value!

Furniture Soup is celebrating its 15th year in business. This Reading-based interior design and office furniture company helps their commercial clients construct creative, efficient and affordable office interiors. Designing with just the right blend of new, remanufactured and pre-owned office furniture and cubicles, Furniture Soup assists clients from the beginning concept of a project, through the detail planning, budgeting and final fit out.

Furniture Soup's dedicated staff are planners, designers, logistics experts, budget-minders, project managers, installers and movers. For projects both small and large, problem solving is their specialty.

Browse their gallery of past projects at <http://furnituresoup.com/gallery>; Or drop by their showroom for a look around at what's new, and at what's pre-owned! 1031D MacArthur Road, Building 2, Reading, PA 19605. Open M – F 9 AM – 5 PM. Phone: 610.926.8700.



Hear from one of their many happy clients: *"Furniture Soup has become our go-to source for design and fit-out for any commercial projects we come in touch with. They are creative, responsive and a vast resource for design solutions!!!"* Thanks FS! – **Christine Elliot, Owner/ White Gate Contracting**

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## Klein Transportation

Klein Transportation is one of the few bus companies in the area that has been family owned and operated for over 60 years. Those who pass by our location on Ben Franklin Highway/422 in Douglassville find it hard to miss our motorcoach fleet in the middle of the divided highway. Many are not aware we also have a full school bus fleet servicing both public and private schools and private charter in the tri-county area.

Klein provides both charter and tour services. Corporate clients, colleges and universities, senior living facilities and private clubs and organizations often charter with Klein to travel to their determined destinations. Klein also offers a day and overnight tour calendar, full of exciting destinations where individual passengers may be looking to travel for pleasure individually or with a few friends or family members.



Regardless of if you are interested in chartering a mini or full size motorcoach or a school bus for a group, or if you are interested in scheduling Klein Tour for yourself and a friend, our sales representatives are eager to assist you. Contact us today by calling 610.385.6700 or by visiting [www.kleintransportation.com](http://www.kleintransportation.com). We hope to travel with you soon!

# BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT



Van Scoy Jewelers is in the midst of its 40th anniversary celebration, and according to owner Caroline Hill, they have no plans on slowing down anytime soon. Beginning as part of the Van Scoy Diamond Mine franchise, Caroline said her business bought the rights to the name in the 1980s and renamed themselves Van Scoy Jewelers. Since then, it has operated as an independent jeweler.

Caroline feels that being independent is what makes Van Scoy so great. She said, "Having a local touch is something some jewelry stores will never be able to grasp. There are these big companies that call themselves jewelers that don't even have one in their store."

The jeweler in question at Van Scoy is Sal Sermania. With over 25 years in the industry, Caroline said, "He can basically fabricate anything and can do much more than fix broken prongs on ring." Sal's workshop is open to the public, and anyone who walks into the store can see him working. Sal is able to take an old piece of jewelry and turn it into something completely different. Caroline continued by saying, "This kind of service is something the mall's stores or internet shops can't do."

Community Involvement is also a big part of Van Scoy Jewelers. Van Scoy Jewelers has been voted as best jeweler by *Berks County Living Magazine* for



10 plus years. The category eventually had to be retired, and Van Scoy was awarded a lifetime achievement award. The award may come from the various events Van Scoy Jewelers hosts throughout the year. Periodically, an artist showcase is held where the store is transformed into an art gallery. Recently, Caroline and Patti Page helped the Girl Scouts earn their Jewelry

Badge in the store. Furthermore, Caroline recently completed a term on the Friends of Reading Hospital Board, has been involved with the Saint Joseph's Charity Ball, and just recently joined the committee for Dancing with the Stars by the Yocum Institute.

In terms of the future, Caroline says they have big plans for their 40th year. They were

named one of the Top 50 businesses in the Greater Reading Area by the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance for two years in 2017 and 2018. Caroline said that November is their official celebration, and she looks to announce big plans come that time. Until then, Van Scoy is getting ready to showcase some new product lines, which will excite a variety of different customers.

**Van Scoy Jewelers is located at 2733 Paper Mill Road, Suite X3, Wyomissing, PA 19610; 610.832.3600; [www.vanscoy.com](http://www.vanscoy.com).**

# FOCUS ON BERKS COUNTY BUSINESS

## Riverfront FCU Riverfront's Merchant Partnership Program

Riverfront's Merchant Partnership Program helps local businesses stay ahead of the competition by providing them with a seamless online financing option for their customers. Through the Partnership Program, loan applications can be submitted online 24 hours a day/7 days a week. It's quick, it's easy, and it's a great way to attract new customers and satisfy current ones. We'd like to introduce you to some of our Merchant Partners:

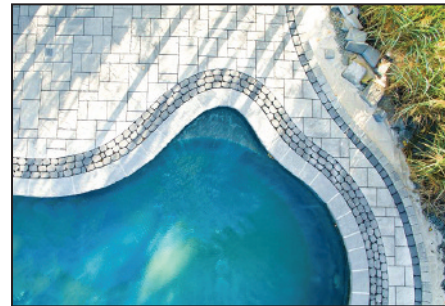
**A&T Heating and Air Conditioning** prides itself on providing fast and friendly service. Its highly trained technicians can service any make or model of air conditioning and heating units. A&T specializes in new unit installations; thermostat installations and service; whole house humidifier installations; duct repairs and modifications; in-floor radiant heat systems; electric/propane and gas hot water heater installations; and much more.

**Connelly Lawn and Garden, Inc.** is an award-winning professional landscape design,



install, and maintenance firm that's been in business nearly 30 years. Serving both residential and commercial customers, Connelly Lawn and Garden's offerings include: outdoor living designs such as hardscapes, retaining walls, walkways, patios, and pool surrounds; landscape designs and installation; fire and water features; low voltage lighting; and irrigation install and repair.

**D&B Elite Construction Group** works with all types of businesses and organizations in Eastern Pennsylvania. D&B Elite services include general contracting; construction management; design/build; tenant improvement; pre-construction consulting; developmental studies; on-site management consulting; tenant fit-outs; and



much more. Its commercial experience ranges from retail and office to medical, religious, industrial, and multi-family dwelling projects.

**Imperial Contracting Group** is a family owned and operated full-service residential contracting company. With more than 20 years of experience under its belt, Imperial Contracting is focused on making sure every client is completely satisfied. Exceptional workmanship underscores all of its services, which include but are not limited to: new construction; additions; kitchens; bathrooms; finished basements; and outdoor living.

**Sal's Landscaping and Lawn Care** has more than three decades of satisfying



hundreds of customers in Berks County and beyond. Sal's provides commercial and residential landscaping services that meet the individual needs of each customer. Areas of expertise include landscape design; exterior lighting; outdoor structures; irrigation; excavation; patio construction and maintenance; outdoor kitchens; fire pits and fireplaces; retaining walls; water features; and grading and seeding.

Riverfront is proud to be aligned with such great Merchant Partners and is always looking for opportunities to expand its Partnership Program. To learn more, contact us today at 610-374-8351 and visit [RiverfrontFCU.org/merchant-partner.asp](http://RiverfrontFCU.org/merchant-partner.asp).

**Thank You!** To our Customers, Employees, Greater Reading and Berks County and all the communities we serve.

We would not place on the Chamber list year after year without your support.

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# FOCUS ON BERKS COUNTY BUSINESS

## Storage World

Founded in 1998 alongside a wooded back road in Sinking Spring known as Morgan Drive, Storage World currently owns and operates multiple storage facilities throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

In March of 2017, construction began on our 11th location in Exeter, PA, which is slated to open this July. Our newest location is temperature and humidity controlled. We have numerous sizes available to meet your needs, and the entire building will have high security access control and video surveillance.

Storage World aims to provide all our customers with a positive experience. We are a straight forward, no nonsense, self-storage operator.

Recent implementation of new technology allows the option to review unit size, availability, and pricing online from the comfort of your home or office. Once you have found the right size, you have the option to reserve or rent the space from your smart phone, tablet, or computer. If you complete an online rental you will have access to the space within minutes. Your free high security lock and move in packet will be waiting for you in your



storage unit. As an added convenience, new customers receive extreme discounts towards moving truck or van rentals.

We take pride in providing quality, clean, and convenient self-storage. We have automated access, video surveillance, and 24-hour rental and payment centers, that can assist customers after hours and on weekends.

Most locations feature standard drive-up units, and select locations have climate and

humidity-controlled space. Most sites have outdoor parking spaces, so if you are tired of having your boat or RV in your driveway, we can help. At select locations, we feature XL storage units, so you can store your boat or motorhome indoors.

All our locations have moving truck or van rentals and a full line of moving and packing supplies available!

## Advanced Manufacturing in Berks County

Manufacturing remains Berks County's largest industry sector by economic output and by employment with over 31,000 jobs (17.5% of local employment). Berks County's more than 500 manufacturing establishments provide jobs that pay, with average annual earnings of more than \$56,000 per year. The above average benefits packages that accompany manufacturing jobs increase average total compensation to more than \$75,000 per year. Investments in advanced manufacturing technology and productivity improvements supported steady wage growth over the past decade and above average wage growth is expected to continue going forward.

Most Berks County manufacturers find current business conditions to be favorable and the sector continue to add jobs at a modest rate. Layoffs among Berks County manufacturing workers are at historically low levels. Skilled manufacturing technicians in particular are in great demand with plentiful employment options.

*(Continued on page 16)*

A large advertisement for Storage World. The background is a photograph of a modern, two-story building with a stone and brick facade and large windows. The text "Storage World" is prominently displayed in a stylized font, with the 'O' in "World" containing a globe. Below this, it says "Opening in Exeter Summer 2018!". At the bottom, it reads "Temperature &amp; Humidity Controlled Self-Storage" and "Check Us Out @ www.StorageWorldOnline.com". There are also social media icons for Google+, Twitter, and Facebook. In the bottom left corner, there is a cartoon illustration of a black dog's head.

## 3 Things to Know About Protecting Yourself From a Lawsuit

What would you do if you found yourself suddenly sued for negligence? Would your home, retirement savings, or wages be at risk? Losing important assets is a reality faced by thousands of Americans caught up in legal battles each year. In many cases, the incident that initiated the situation began with a completely unavoidable incident.

A generally cautious driver could make a mistake on the road and suddenly find themselves liable for another person's death. The owner of a friendly dog could have a guest attacked and seriously injured by their pet. There are many other different scenarios where an accident can happen. However, there are a few things you can do in advance to help protect your financial future. Here are three tips to consider:

### #1: Clearly Understand Your Risk

The first step is clearly understanding your risk. If you regularly have guests to your home, own a pool, or entertain often, there is a greater chance that a guest could be seriously injured while on your property. Parents of teen drivers and those who commute a great distance for work have a much larger probability of filing a serious auto insurance claim. By taking a look at your lifestyle, you can easily determine how much protection you need against an incident.

### #2: Make Sure You Have Proper Liability Insurance Coverage

Another step to protect yourself against a lawsuit is by making sure you have proper liability insurance coverage on your auto policies. In Pennsylvania, the minimum liability limit for vehicle coverage is just \$15,000 per person and \$30,000 per accident (for

multiple people involved in an accident). With the skyrocketing cost of medical treatment, these funds can be completely used up even in even a relatively minor crash. The lesson? Always purchase a higher amount than the state requires.

### #3: Consider Purchasing an Umbrella Policy

Another way to protect yourself from a lawsuit is by purchasing an umbrella policy. This type of policy acts as an extension of the liability coverage on your home and auto policies. In many cases, your insurance carrier requires that you have a certain level of liability coverage on your home and auto policies before they will allow you to purchase an umbrella policy. For most providers, this figure hovers somewhere around the \$250,000 to \$300,000 mark. However, it is important to speak with your agent directly to determine what changes you need to make to those policies.

Don't put your family's financial well-being at risk! Contact our knowledgeable team today. You may be surprised to know an Umbrella policy is very affordable—often around \$200 to \$300 a year. Additionally, you may be eligible for multi-policy discounts too. Call us at 610-413-9880 for more information on how insurance can protect you from a serious lawsuit.



**Cheryl Whitcombe: Insurance Advisor**



**Nathaniel Eshleman: Insurance Producer**



**Tawnya Eldredge: Client Services Director**



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# FOCUS ON BERKS COUNTY BUSINESS

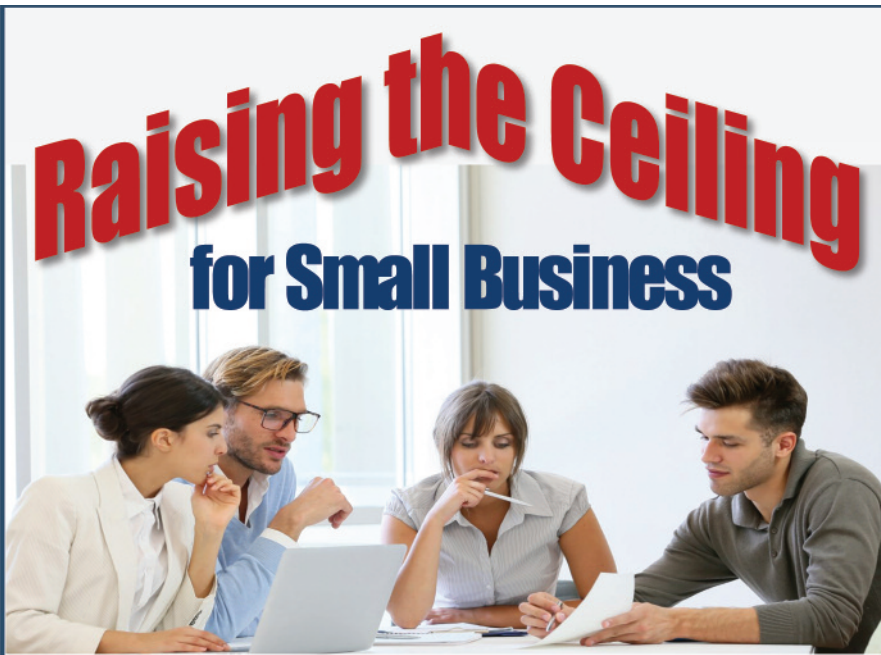
(Continued from page 14)

Continued productivity growth will likely allow the Berks County manufacturing sector to retain its position as the region's leading sector in economic output for the next decade. However, these same productivity improvements will mitigate job growth in the sector. At the same time, the ever-changing shop floor environment will require workers with increasing education and skills. The Berks County Workforce Development Board (WDB) expects that a thriving advanced manufacturing sector will still employ approximately 30,000 workers in 2025.

Berks County manufacturing employers face unprecedented demographic changes and skills shortages. Quite simply, the 31,000 workers who make up Berks County's experienced manufacturing workforce continue to age and many are approaching retirement or retiring at an alarming rate: 54 percent of incumbent workers in the sector are age 45 or older and 25 percent are age 55 and older.

As a result, the Berks County Workforce Development Board (WDB) projects that local manufacturing employers will need to hire at least 6,000 skilled and semi-skilled replacement workers by the end of 2025. At the same time, these employers will need to up-skill new entrants as well as their existing employees in order to remain internationally-competitive. Particular attention must be paid to developing critical technical skills in industrial maintenance (mechatronics), precision machining, welding technology and quality systems which make up an increasing share of essential skills in the modern advanced manufacturing workplace. In fact, the viability of many semi-skilled production and other manufacturing jobs depend directly on employer success in attracting, training and retaining skilled technicians. Employer judgments about their ability to find and develop the skilled talent they need will impact their expansion planning decisions regarding capital investment in technology. Simply put, companies will not invest in plants and equipment that they cannot effectively operate and maintain.

The current reality is that most semi-skilled and entry-level production workers lack the technical skills needed to advance into higher-paying technical positions without additional education and training. As a result, these individuals may lack employment security in a changing technology-driven environment and could be at risk for job elimination or forced replacement. While not all production workers need to acquire higher level technical skills, more and more will need to do so if their employers are to thrive and expand. In addition, many skilled manufacturing technicians are challenged to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to



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stay current with increasing-sophisticated and integrated advanced manufacturing equipment and systems.

This manufacturing demographic and skills problem has been decades in the making and local employers, especially small-medium size firms, cannot solve it with their own resources. As a forward thinking job retention, layoff aversion and economic development strategy, the Berks WDB supports a return to the historical practice of capitalizing on incumbent worker technical training to build advanced manufacturing worker competencies, while matching newly-entering talent with experienced employees for knowledge transfer. Individual production and maintenance workers will benefit by avoiding future job losses and attaining broad-level employment security in the sector. In cases where up-skilled workers do become dislocated, the enhanced technical skills provided by such training will enable them to be more quickly reemployed in similar well-paying jobs at other more successful local manufacturers.

(Source: Berks County Workforce Development Board)

technology resource help, HR and staffing solutions, business expansion strategies, legal and accounting support and strategic marketing planning. Unique to the Association's structure is the "Pitch and the Huddle," two services that help entrepreneurs launch and grow their business. In addition, the SBRA will place a focus on the employee and their family. Last but not least, is the ability to provide its members with savings on all types of insurances, including what every business needs — affordable health insurance.

The Small Business Resource Association is accepting members at its offices at 2395 Lancaster Ave. in Shillington. More information is available at [sbrassociation.org](http://sbrassociation.org).

## Berks Digital Inc.

Gary and Elaine Brown founded Berks Digital Inc. in 2005, with a focus on maturing digital printing technologies, which have changed the printing industry. Starting in the basement of their Muhlenberg township home they quickly outgrew the home business. In 2008 they moved operations to their current location at 2620 Hampden Boulevard, Reading PA. In 2010 Berks Digital acquired a competing company that focused on the "Large Format" market and 2017 marked the 12th consecutive year of sales growth for the firm. 2017 also was the seventh consecutive year that Berks Digital placed on the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance Entrepreneurial growth list.

"This year we've upgraded our digital color press for expanded service and quality," said Gary Brown, partner at Berks Digital. With continued investment in automation technologies they have been able to offer both large and small companies fast turnaround times on high quality digitally printed materials at competitive prices.

Berks Digital can take on large production print, sign and banner orders, producing thousands of high quality pieces for large companies in a few days. "We've been able to prove that we can meet the needs of big business, when we get to speak to the right person in these companies the value we provide is pretty clear" said Gary Brown.

Berks Digital offers small format printed materials that businesses use, such as brochures, flyers, postcards and much more. Large format printing includes banners, pop-up displays, fine art reproductions and store signage.

With a focus on quality and customer service, Berks Digital has both national and local customers that rely on their expertise to make their print buying pleasant and affordable.

For additional information, please call 610.929.1200 and visit [www.berksdigital.com](http://www.berksdigital.com).

## Berks Association Provides Big Benefits to Small Business

Small Business owners in Berks will be excited to hear about the recent launch of the Small Business Resource Association, a service organization created to support small business through a variety of hands on services, benefits and cost-effective resources that deliver "connections for success."

Gary Seibert, business consultant and president of the SBR Association, realized a common need among many of his clients owning small businesses — a lack of time and resources to help them navigate through their day-to-day challenges that are threatening their business success. "So many small businesses struggle because of fundamental mistakes made early on in their business plan," says Seibert. "They are usually very skilled in the type of work they do, but they lack the background and experience in running a business," he adds.

The Small Business Resource Association provides a variety of resources such as

# Titus

## AIR SYSTEMS



Titus Air Systems, as with so many companies before it, started when opportunity knocked. Officially launched in 2008, the move into manufacturing was precipitated by an offer from Air Products and Chemicals, Inc. for Titus to take over the manufacturing and support of what was previously known as the Prism brand of membrane nitrogen generation systems.

Titus Air Systems' parent company, The Titus Company, has long been one of Air Products' largest distributors of membrane dryers to industrial, commercial and governmental markets. The move made sense because The Titus Company had long been a trusted partner and promoter of membrane technology, and it was committed to revolutionizing the industrial gas drying and nitrogen generation fields. The product transfer has worked beautifully.

The Titus Company started life as a manufacturer's representative with the C.M. Kemp Manufacturing Company in 1986. At the time Kemp was a major supplier of compressed air and gas drying systems, and Steve Titus had worked for Kemp for almost 10 years at the time he started The Titus Company. His knowledge of both Kemp's products and the markets they served led to the rapid development of The Titus Company as a major industrial distributor in eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. Eventually, The Titus Company became a full service distributor for air compressors and air treatment products in these



markets. This success coupled with the opportunity presented by Air Products' made the decision to expand into a manufacturing operation an easy one.

Since 2008 Titus Air Systems has ascended rapidly to become one of the most respected and innovative companies in the compressed air and gas dehydration and nitrogen generation markets. They have done this with a staff that brings 20+ years of experience on average to the industry. From application engineering to product design and fabrication, Titus Air Systems brings a wealth of expertise to the markets it serves. With award winning designs such as the TNX Series Expandable Nitrogen Generators and their turn-key skid mount or containerized systems, Titus is able to take on even the most demanding compressed air dehydration or nitrogen generation applications.

With the launch of several new technologies, including pressure swing adsorption systems, Titus has now moved into markets as diverse as laboratory, food & beverage, naval & merchant marine, chemical & petrochemical, nuclear, and pharmaceutical. Recent offerings focus on supplying dry air or nitrogen for food packaging, tank blanketing, laser cutting, purging and altitude chambers. The sales growth experienced has led to an expansion of the manufacturing facilities and the addition of more engineering and fabrication personnel. Titus Air Systems is proud to be a thriving manufacturing business in southeastern Pennsylvania.

For any and all compressed air or gas needs, Titus Air Systems has a cost effective & efficient solution. Contact James Bowers at 888.722.5253 or James.Bowers@TitusAir.com with any questions that you might have.

