

FOCUS ON POTTSTOWN REVITALIZATION

Spring Has Arrived in Pottstown



**By Peggy Lee-Clark, Director,
Pottstown Area Economic
Development**

Spring is always a great time for Pottstown. The streets and parks come alive with a bevy of activity. The flowers are plentiful in the Downtown.

The trees throughout the Borough once again green. The first weekend in May sees the return of the POW WOW, the Pottstown Nights Car Show and, if the weather cooperates, outdoor venues like Iron Gate and The Alley are full with people.

Every subsequent spring weekend is filled with activities. Some are annual events like the Car Shows and Pottstown Farm, and some are first-time events like Pottstown Arts in the Park and Pottstown Children's Discovery Center Cardboard Build. There are also one-time events like ribbon cuttings for Ms. Pickles Sandwich Shop, Gazzos Steaks, Enchanted Elements Apothecary, The Collective, and a Goodwill Store.

Pottstown Area Economic Development's work is often not visible. The projects we spend the most time on are complex, and can take as much as ten years to complete. 215 South Washington Street was such a project.

The former Pottstown Plating works had environmental and financial encumbrances that took years to resolve. Once it was completed and leased to an employer, there was little fanfare from the general public. It's as if people have forgotten what a blight the property was on Pottstown.

At times, frustration can take over when there appears to be a lack of appreciation for the efforts required to get a project like that over the finish line. The emphasis and excitement by the general public over smaller projects can sometimes appear excessive. After all, doesn't economic development come when old buildings are repurposed and job producing development takes place? I have come to realize that economic development is not an "either/or."

It is an "and." It is all-encompassing. Like spring, these events and celebrations bring hope to what is to come. Highly visible wins are like the flowers that grow in a season. They are what inspires Pottstown to keep going. At the same time, most of PAED's projects are like the trees that take years to mature. It is work that takes persistence and patience, and both are necessary for revitalization success in the Borough of Pottstown.

For additional information please visit PAED at www.IPickPottstown.org.



BUILDING COMMUNITIES



PAED's mission is to develop, coordinate and implement an overall economic development strategy for the Borough of Pottstown designed to stimulate investment which will maintain and enhance the tax base; retain and create job opportunities; and restore and utilize or remove under-utilized buildings.



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Sanatoga Animal Hospital, LLC

With quality care, a friendly staff, and a loving doctor, Sanatoga Animal Hospital is the place for your pet. Located at the corner of Park Road and High Street in Sanatoga, just off of Route 422, the staff works hard, in order to assure the safety of your pet. The hospital has been accredited by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) since 1990. AAHA accreditation ensures that a hospital meets high standards in dentistry, diagnostic imagery, laboratory testing, surgery, pain management, pharmacy, and patient care. Only 12 percent of veterinary practices in the United States of America and Canada voluntarily allow on-site inspection by AAHA to establish and maintain these standards.



Dr. Jitendra Sharma, DVM and the team at Sanatoga Animal Hospital provide loving care and compassion. They have state of the art equipment. The services offered include dental care, diagnostics, surgery, radiology, and general preventive patient care. A comprehensive approach is emphasized in treating patients. Routine surgeries such as spay and neuter or tumor

removal are performed with laser technology. Laser surgery is less painful for the patient and allows a faster recovery. Peri- and postoperative pain management is achieved through pharmaceutical as well as therapeutic laser treatment.

Sanatoga Animal Hospital has been voted multiple times as The Best Animal Hospital in Mercury's Readers Choice. Sanatoga Animal Hospital is open Monday through Saturday. For more information and coupons please visit www.sanatogavet.com.

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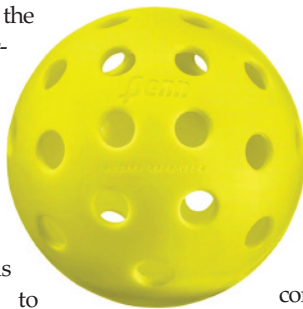
Fit Life Fitness: Bringing Pickleball to the Pottstown Area

Located in the heart of North Coventry Township, at the Shoppes at Coventry, Fit Life Fitness is a gym that caters to the diverse fitness needs of the community. With memberships starting at an affordable \$10.00 bi-weekly, the gym offers a range of exercise options for all ages and fitness levels.

In an exciting development, Fit Life Fitness is expanding its facilities to include 12 indoor pickleball courts, catering to the growing popularity of this engaging sport. Pickleball, a combination of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong, has gained a significant following among people of all ages, and Fit Life Fitness aims to provide a dedicated space for enthusiasts to enjoy the game.

Pickleball: A Sport for All

Pickleball is a unique sport that can be enjoyed by players of all skill levels, making it an inclusive and accessible activity. With its smaller court size and lightweight paddles, pickleball offers a low-impact



workout that is easy on the joints, making it an excellent choice for individuals seeking a fun and social form of exercise.

The addition of the pickleball courts at Fit Life Fitness is a testament to the gym's commitment to providing diverse fitness opportunities for its members. By embracing this rapidly growing sport, the gym aims to foster a sense of community and encourage an active lifestyle among its patrons.

A Vision for Fitness and Community

Behind this ambitious expansion project is Bob Sichelstiel, the owner of Fit Life Fitness. With a passion for promoting health and wellness, Sichelstiel recognizes the importance of offering a variety of fitness options to cater to the diverse interests and needs of the Pottstown community.

"Our goal is to create a space where people can not only exercise but also connect with others who share their

passion for an active lifestyle," says Sichelstiel. "Pickleball is a perfect addition to our offerings, as it combines physical activity with social interaction and fun."

Anticipation Builds for the New Pickleball Facility

While the gym is currently operational, the pickleball facility is expected to open its doors in mid-July. The anticipation among pickleball enthusiasts and fitness enthusiasts alike is palpable, as they eagerly await the opportunity to experience the new courts and embrace this exciting addition to the Pottstown fitness scene.

With its commitment to providing affordable and diverse fitness options, Fit Life Fitness is poised to become a hub for health and wellness in the Pottstown community. The addition of the pickleball courts not only caters to the growing demand for this engaging sport but also reinforces the gym's dedication to fostering an active and inclusive environment for all.

For additional information, please call 484.927.9081.

Miller's Greenhouses

Miller's Greenhouses, located off of Route 724 and Sanatoga Road, is locally known for its commitment to quality. For over one hundred years, our family business has thrived on providing the community with long-lasting, quality products.

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We are a Retail and Wholesale location that has successfully worked for years with the general public, municipalities, churches, fundraising groups and the landscaping industry.

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Fromm's Enduring Legacy and Vision for the Future

In 2023, Fromm marked a major milestone: 100 years in business. Founded by Alexander Fromm in 1923, the company has grown from a small storefront with four employees into a leading electrical supply and services firm in the Mid-Atlantic, with nine branches and over 120 employees. Through three generations of family ownership, Fromm has remained committed to its core values: an unwavering dedication to customer experience, in-depth knowledge of the electrical industry, and a commitment to giving back to the local community.

Fromm's presence in Pottstown dates back to 1984, when it opened its first satellite branch to support a growing customer base in Montgomery County. Since then, the company has become an integral part of the local business community, working closely with the Pottstown Area Economic Development Corporation to promote growth and development. Fromm's dedication to Pottstown and Montgomery County has made it a trusted partner for electrical contractors and manufacturing customers throughout the region.

As Fromm looks to the future, the company is launching a new division called FrommConnect. This exciting initiative represents a significant departure from Fromm's traditional distribution business, and is designed to provide a range of engineering, fabrication, and labor-saving services to its customers. FrommConnect was born out of the need to help customers navigate the challenges of a competitive business environment, where the skills and knowledge of retiring employees can be difficult to replace.



Where Fromm currently supplies electrical materials and equipment, FrommConnect will offer a menu of services including control panel fabrication and assembly, fixture pre-wiring, training, software programming, automation system design, and technical troubleshooting. By providing these value-added services, FrommConnect will help customers streamline their operations, improve efficiency, and stay ahead of the curve.

"For years, our customers have asked us to provide services that were typically sourced from third parties, and we would politely decline because we felt the need to stay in our lane," says CEO Michael Fromm. "Ultimately, we decided this strategy was short-sighted and that the risk of being complacent was greater than the risk of rocking the boat."

As Fromm embarks on this exciting new chapter, the company remains committed to its customers in Pottstown, Montgomery County, and throughout eastern Pennsylvania. With FrommConnect, the company is poised to meet the evolving needs of the marketplace, while continuing to deliver the exceptional service and expertise that have defined Fromm for a century.

For additional information, please call 610.323.1555 and visit www.fromm.com



750 Guests Expected to Gather for 7th Annual Fete en Blanc in Pottstown

Seeking Sponsors to Ensure Another Successful Event

Two area nonprofits, Pottstown Area Economic Development and Hobart's Run, are hosting the greatly anticipated Seventh Annual Fete en Blanc in Pottstown, which will again light up Smith Family Plaza at Pottstown Borough Hall, 100 E. High Street on Friday, September 6, from 6 to 9 p.m. The event is modeled after traditional late summer or early fall Dinner in White events held in communities around the world, from Paris to Philadelphia, with all attendees decked in white attire.

Sponsorship opportunities allow regional businesses and other organizations to play a prominent role in this highly anticipated end-of-summer celebration, expected to again sell out, with a cap on available seats set at 750 guests. Sponsorship levels include \$2,500 Platine (platinum), \$1,000 Blanc (white), \$500 Dore (gold), and \$250 Argent (silver) level sponsorships, as well as \$5,000 Presenting Sponsorships. Our generous supporters receive recognition and complimentary ticket reservations appropriate to each level, as detailed on the Fete en Blanc website. All sponsors will be acknowledged via social media before the event as well as honored during and after the celebration, noting their generosity and tangible role in bringing our community together and welcoming Pottstown visitors.

Tickets always move quickly for this 750-seat, rain or shine event. To purchase a seat (\$15 per person, with a limit of six tickets allowed per person), go to feteenblancpottstown.com, beginning on June 1, 2024.

Attendees enjoy takeout from one of Pottstown's restaurants and eateries, or prepare their own picnic meal, dine together, and say farewell to summer with a ceremonial white-napkin wave.



Many guests bring creative white centerpiece arrangements to make the setting even more special.

The beautiful evening will again feature beverages for purchase from excellent Pottstown purveyors including Manatawny Stillworks, Spirit Express Kiki Vodka, Sly Fox Brewing Company, professional live music by the Louis Rieger ensemble, and – best of all – an eclectic and enthusiastic gathering of residents, business and property owners, and visitors eager to celebrate Pottstown's revitalization. An increasing number of attendees from outside Pottstown enjoy the event due to its reputation as a lovely, upbeat party in a fun, celebratory setting.

The Pottstown Fete en Blanc annual event is funded by a combination of ticket sales and sponsorships. All ticket sales and sponsorships are used for the purpose of the event to cover essential costs for necessities such as table, chair, and linen rentals; security measures; entertainment expenses; and restroom facilities, etc.

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Promisland Murals

Carrie Kingsbury, has been a full-time mural painter since 1999, when she started Promisland Murals. She has many large commercial, community, public school and residential projects in her portfolio such as PF Chang's in Lancaster, PA, World Of Beer & MOD Pizza in Exton, PA, Children's Hospital Of Philadelphia & St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in Philadelphia, Julius Silvert's & Davita's corporate headquarters, several restaurants, Philadelphia Premium Outlets, Reading Railroad Museum, multiple historical murals in Berwyn, Malvern, & Hamburg, PA, and many fine homes on the east coast.



Carrie has traveled as far as California, Romania, and India to paint. In 2009, her work was displayed as part of the television show Extreme Home Makeover (Berks edition), Carrie was involved in many Designing for Hope projects involving murals and painted a backdrop for Quaker City String Band for the Mummies. You can view her most recent work at the Philadelphia Premium Outlets.

Carrie currently works out of her mural studio located in Stowe Pa. Call for a free quote at 484.919.3414.

www.facebook.com/carriecj5

www.promislandart.com

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Steel River Playhouse Announces New Executive Director

The Board of Directors of Steel River Playhouse recently announced the appointment of Alec Lee Williams as Executive Director.

Alec currently is the Managing Director at EgoPo Classic Theater, Philadelphia, where he oversees finance, fundraising, branding/marketing/publicity, and production-related operations. At EgoPo he orchestrated a range of sold-out, successful events, served as the primary grant writer and donor manager, and increased revenue through merchandising, grants, and private donations – all while decreasing overhead expenses.

“I am honored to join the team of Steel River Playhouse and facilitate its important mission and impacts,” Williams said. “In my visits to Pottstown, I was amazed and inspired by the local community’s passion for theatre. I look forward to working alongside the Board and Staff to achieve an even greater level of artistic and educational excellence, community engagement, and organizational success.”

Founded as Village Productions in 2001, in 2008 the organization purchased a turn-of-the-20th century department store in Pottstown and transformed it into a

\$2.4 million performing arts center named Steel River Playhouse. The Playhouse sees more than 20,000 audience members per year and more than 2,000 students in their educational programming. As a lynchpin of the revitalization of High Street, the Playhouse has also welcomed community events and meetings into the space. Alec will join a staff of seven employees and seven Board Members.

The final show of 2023-2024’s season, *The Prom*, will run through June 9th. Performances will be at 7 PM on Friday and Saturday nights, 2 PM on Saturday June 1st and 8th, and 2 PM on Sundays. Season subscriptions for Steel River’s 2024-2025 season are now on sale at steelriverplayhouse.my.salesforce-sites.com/ticket#/subscriptions. A few spots remain in the Summer Camp programs for students in 3rd through 12th grades. Check <https://steelriver.courses-torm.com/> for full details.

Steel River Playhouse is a non-profit (501c3) theater and education organization dedicated to sharing stories that reflect our collective humanity in an environment that represents and serves our diverse community. For more information email info@steelriver.org or check the website at www.steelriver.org.

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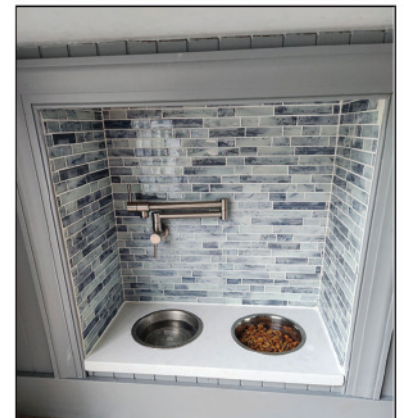
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