

# The News Gusher

The Oil Region Alliance is pleased to send you its newsletter. If you have difficulty viewing this format via this email, it will be posted on [www.oilregion.org](http://www.oilregion.org) soon. Also, depending upon your computer system, you may need to click on "view images" to see the images. Feel free to contact me at [wthomas@oilregion.org](mailto:wthomas@oilregion.org) with questions and comments concerning the newsletter.

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## Geowoodstock IX Comes to the Oil Region

*By Mike Henderson, Project Manager Heritage Development*



The world of geocaching has its own "Superbowl" event that attracts more participants than any other event worldwide. Dubbed "Geowoodstock," this convergence of geocachers attracts travelers from throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. For the first time in the history of the event, Geowoodstock was held in the northeastern United States, at the Warren County Fairgrounds in Pittsfield, on Saturday, July 2.

An estimated 5-6,000 people gradually made their way here over the course of the week leading up to July 2. Geocachers filled hotels, motels, and campgrounds to



### In This Issue

[Thank You, New and Renewal Members](#)

[Oil History Workshop Scheduled](#)

[Featured Article](#)

July 2011

Volume 7, Issue 5

### The Call to Hiring!

*By Deb Lutz, VP Economic Development*

### ORCHARD BRANDS

TheBlair / Orchard Brands Service Center in Franklin recently presented a hiring challenge to the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism along with the Oil Region CareerLink and their partners to assist in their 'mega hiring event' of 30 employees per week for a three week run in May, and we proved we were up to the challenge!

Customer Services HR Manager, Mary Ann Zigler stated, "I was very happy with the

capacity, with some procrastinators being forced to book their overnight stays as far away as Erie and Buffalo. One of the most popular accommodations was the Caboose Motel in Titusville, partly because the many spin-off events surrounding Geowoodstock included a special ride on the OC&T Railroad. Sold out for months in advance, visiting geocachers were treated to a train ride through the Valley That Changed the World, which included an extended stop in Petroleum Center, to allow them time to go find some nearby geocaches and get lunch, served by Friends of the Railroad. Those who weren't able to get tickets for the train drove to the event to meet up with other cachers; attendance was estimated to be somewhere between 600 and 800 people, making the "Geowoodstock Express" the most heavily attended spin-off event.

Feedback from participants, who continued to linger in the area during the week after Geowoodstock, was very positive. Many travelers from outside the area marveled in the beauty of northwestern Pennsylvania, and expressed a genuine interest to return again soon.

### **"Murray's Scenic View" Formally Dedicated**

*By Kim Harris, Project Manager Heritage Development*



A dedication ceremony was held July 7 on Grandview Road in Oil City to celebrate the completion of "Murray's Scenic View." A crowd of over 35 people including community members and elected officials attended the event to hear the speakers' remarks about this Scenic View and the Oil Region National Heritage Area.

assistance we received. The efforts of the Oil Region Alliance and the CareerLink were a huge help. It has been a long time since we have been able to hire this many people this quickly in Franklin. Things are really looking up!"

The Franklin Service Center opened in 1997 and now employs 300 Sales and Customer Service Agents and support staff. In addition to serving the Blair brand, employees at the center receive inbound order calls for over a dozen other catalogs as well. In 2010, the Franklin Service Center received an award from the State of Pennsylvania for their hiring practices. Blair / Orchard Brands Service Centers are also located in Warren and Erie, PA. There will be more recruitment /hiring done for part-time telephone sales agent positions throughout the summer and into the fall and winter, leading up to the Christmas peak season, the busiest time for telephone sales orders. Blair / Orchard Brands utilizes the CareerLink

Sunny James, a local recording artist known locally as Beth Schmader, and a native of Oil City, treated the crowd to a special performance of her signature song "Pennsylvania Hills."

This Scenic View, located on Grandview Road (adjacent to Fat Dog's) on the municipal boundaries of Oil City and Cornplanter Township, was previously called the Stewart's Overlook, a site used by the public for decades. In 1982, the site was purchased by the Murray Family and continued to be maintained as an informal overlook.

"Projects like today mean we have a quality of life that new businesses want to have for their employees. When visitors are here in the region, they can enjoy the splendor and beauty of the region. That's why today is such a special moment," stated Randy Seitz, President of the Oil Region Alliance.

Mrs. Eileen Murray and her family, in 2008 entered into a formal easement agreement with the ORA permitting upgrades, safety improvements, and interpretation of historic sites visible from the site, and permitting free public access. With the formal agreement in hand, ORA secured federal, state, and private funds for the design and upgrades to the site.

"It is really nice to come here today to dedicate this site to the people of Oil City, Cornplanter Township, and the Oil Heritage Region." The help and participation that we have had (on this project) is really remarkable," Bob Murray, member of the Murray Family, remarked.

Upgrades to the site include a paved parking area, cedar split-rail fencing, limestone walkway, benches, litter receptacles, interpretive panels, landscaping using native plantings, and a telescope for viewing the historic Oil Creek Valley. The ceremony concluded with an official ribbon cutting.

This project was financed in part by a Community Conservation Partnership Grant; Growing Greener II; the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. Additional funds were provided by the Federal Highway Administration Transportation Enhancement Funding via the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation; a

located at 255 Elm Street in Oil City for hiring, or you can stop in at their Franklin Service Center located on Route 8 in Reno between the hours of 8 am to 8 pm Monday - Friday to fill out an application.

## **FREE MUSICAL PROGRAMS CONTINUE AT THE NEILLTOWN CHURCH**

*By Toni*

*Kresinski, Meetings & Events Coordinator*

There's still time to catch a free musical program this summer at the historic Neilltown Church outside Pleasantville. The first program of the season was held on June 26 and featured Carolyn Longo, a guitarist, singer and songwriter.

On July 24, Judi Marti, a banjo pickin' girl, will perform. She plays traditional music in the style of folk artist Ola Belle Campbell. Her appearance was made possible by the PA Humanities Council, a private non-profit organization that

Pennsylvania Heritage Area Program Grant from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Mrs. Eileen Murray, and other private donors.

Questions about this project can be directed to Kim Harris, Project Manager at 814-677-3152, Ext. 120, or email [kharris@oilregion.org](mailto:kharris@oilregion.org).

## New Company in Franklin

*By Deb Lutz, VP Economic Development*



Marc Turner, President of Career Concepts Staffing Services, Inc. has announced they will locate a new branch in Venango County. The office will be located at 454 Allegheny Avenue, Suite B, Franklin (Pennwood Office Building) and will be under the direction of branch manager, Lisa Sachs.

Career Concepts is a full-service staffing organization specializing in clerical/administrative, professional, technical and information systems: industrial on a temporary, temp-to-hire, contract or direct hire basis. Their main office is located in Erie. Other locations include Girard and Meadville.

The Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism was contacted by Mr. Turner to assist in identifying available office locations in the county. Turner stated: "The ORA was very helpful in our efforts to locate in Venango County, and we appreciate their assistance and look forward to a long and successful tenure in Venango County."

To learn more about the services provided at Career Concepts, go to their website at [www.careerconceptsinc.com](http://www.careerconceptsinc.com), or call their Venango office at 432-2222.

## Bringing Home the Busses

*By Betty Squire, VP Tourism Destination Marketing*



inspires individuals to enjoy and share a life of learning.

The Forest County Country Music Association will perform on August 14. This local group consists of many local musicians who play bluegrass, old-time fiddle, country and gospel.

Concluding this year's musical series will be The Dempseytown Ramblers on August 28. They've been together for ten years, playing traditional bluegrass music throughout the tri-state area.

All programs begin at 2 p.m. and are free to the public. Donations will be accepted which will go toward efforts to preserve the church building, which is located on Pineville Road just north of the intersection of Pineville Road and Route 227 in the village of Neilltown, in Harmony Township, northwest Forest County.

The Neilltown Church Building is a wood frame one-story building constructed in

The 2011 Pennsylvania Bus Association's Annual Meeting, Sales Retreat & Industry Expo was held in Niagara Falls, New York June 14 - 17. Betty Squire, VP Tourism Destination Marketing, and Marie Rainey, Tourism Services Coordinator, attended this event that was billed as ***Up Close & Powerful*** with FAM (familiarization) Tours of the Niagara Falls region, including an exciting and very wet jet boat ride that emphasized the living history, an electrifying take on hydropower and so much more. The Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation rolled out the red-carpet to PBA in extending their warm hospitality.

Seminars featuring industry professionals discussed current topics and trends that appealed to both the operators and suppliers. Several of the seminars that were attended included "Partnering Together to Face the Future" , a panel discussion from the perspective of the supplier, motor coach operator, customers, receptive and Convention & Visitor Bureaus.

The most interesting seminar we attended was "Quality Service Leadership: Making Employees Feel Valued; Making Guests Feel Welcomed!" This seminar was presented by Jan H. van Harssel, Ed.D Niagara University Tourism Department, Niagara, NY. His talk was centered on community tourism planning and development, guest services management, event and attractions management, behavioral economics, and special interest/heritage tourism. Dr. van Harssel consults frequently on issues impacting the regional and national hospitality and tourism industry, and he is the author of several text books, including the college text *Tourism, An Exploration*.

At the Sales Retreat Special Session we had the opportunity to talk with tour operators, motor coach operators and destinations and presented them each with our '*Must-See Attractions in the Oil Heritage Region*' materials. Several of those in attendance were from Greenville, Philadelphia, Williamsport, Bethlehem, Phoenixville and York Springs, PA. A follow up of additional information packets and individual contacts will be made.

The PA Bus Association meeting for 2012 will be hosted by Erie Convention Center and VisitErie. The Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism will also play a part in this event as the PA Great Lakes Region.

## **Volunteers Needed!**

*By Jonathan Wenner, General Manager Venango Video*

1842. During intermission, brief remarks about the former church building and ongoing efforts to preserve and rehabilitate it will be given by staff from the Oil Region Alliance.

The 2011 musical programs were supported by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency, through the Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts (PPA,) its regional arts funding partnership. State government funding for the arts depends upon an annual appropriation by the Pennsylvania General Assembly and from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. The Elk County Council on the Arts administers the PPA for the Neilltown Church musical programs.

The programs continue the series entitled "Music Returns to the Neilltown Church." Additional information about the concert series and educational programs scheduled at the Neilltown facility is available by contacting Toni Kresinski, Oil

Volunteers! Volunteers! Volunteers! We Need You! Venango Video has been bringing Venango County local television for over 35 years. In order for us to maintain this time honored tradition we need you. We have a exciting opportunities for you to meet new people, learn how television shows are made and just have an exciting and fun time. Volunteer positions include/ but not limited to: camera operators, directors, technical assistants, on-air talent, script writers, editors, producers and day/night time programmers. If you have an interest and want to help bring exciting and interesting television to the area you can contact us at 677-3152 ext 123 or email at [jwenner@oilregion.org](mailto:jwenner@oilregion.org). You can also follow us on Facebook. Remember, volunteering is not just for the organization you are helping, your are helping make your community stronger!

## Two Area Residents Receive Awards from the Petroleum History Institute

*By Marilyn Black, VP Heritage Development*



During their June 24 Annual Awards Banquet, the Petroleum History Institute (PHI) presented the 2011

Region Alliance  
Meetings and Events  
Coordinator, at (814)  
677-3152, ext. 110.



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## Oil History Workshop!

*By Melissa Mann, Sr. Project  
Manager Heritage  
Development*

On Thursday, July 21, the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism will present an Oil History Workshop entitled "The Oil City Continental Refining Company (CORECO): Its History and Legacy, 1885-1950." This free workshop will begin at 2 p.m. at the Venango Museum of Art, Science & Industry, located at 270 Seneca Street in Oil City, Pennsylvania.

Dave Anderton, great-grandson of CORECO founder Thomas Anderton, will present the workshop. An avid collector of CORECO artifacts, Mr. Anderton is well-versed in the refinery's history. Using historic images and other visuals, he will conduct a program that is both informative and entertaining.

"Samuel T. Pees Keeper of the Flame Awards" to Neil J. McElwee and William L. Huber. This award recognizes individuals who have provided great service in preserving and bringing before the public the heritage and history of the oil and gas industry.

This ceremony was part of the Symposium on Oil History, held this year in Marietta, Ohio on board a sternwheeler boat. These two residents of the Oil Region National Heritage Area are this year's sole recipients of this prestigious award.

Neil McElwee's activities as an author, educator and oil historian were described. This Oil City resident has published several books on area history and presented numerous oil history workshops, often in conjunction with the Oil Region Alliance and Oil 150. During the Symposium, he presented a session regarding the Oil City Oil Exchange. His wife, Lois McElwee, attended the Symposium, too; she received the Samuel T. Pees Keeper of the Flame Award in 2008. Together, the McElwees are the first couple to each have individually received this award.

Bill Huber's life-long work as an independent oil producer who has shared his experiences via documentary films, media interviews, and presentations at oil history workshops were highlighted. He continues to maintain and operate oil wells on leases initially developed by his father and grandfather in the vicinity of Plummer in Cornplanter Township within Venango County. Mr. Huber was accompanied to the awards ceremony by his wife Kathryn Huber and grand-daughter Katie Huber.

The Petroleum History Institute is a nationwide non-profit corporation headquartered in Oil City, Pennsylvania. The mission of PHI is to pursue the history, heritage and development of the modern oil industry from its 1859 inception in Oil Creek Valley, Pennsylvania, to its early roots in other regions in North America and the subsequent spread throughout the world to its current global status. PHI maintains a library/archives collection which is available by appointment, by contacting PHI Secretary, Marilyn Black at the ORA office.

### **Member Spotlight: Cranberry Mall**

Randy Seitz, President and COO of the Oil Region Alliance, stated, "The Alliance is excited to present this free educational program as part of Oil City's Oil Heritage Festival. Mr. Anderton's personal connection to the Continental Refining Company story is sure to enlighten the audience."

Light refreshments will be provided by the Venango Museum and the Oil Region Alliance.

There is no charge to attend this workshop; however, pre-registration is requested. For additional information about the workshop, or to register, please contact Melissa Mann at (814) 677-3152, ext. 103 or [mmann@oilregion.org](mailto:mmann@oilregion.org).

**Board/Staff  
Spotlight:  
Joe Pastor  
President/CEO**

**Barr's Insurance**



In the late 70's in Cranberry Township on US 322 there was just a drive in movie theatre, a farm and some houses in what is now a nicely developed retail center. The first major step from fields to retail was the Cranberry Mall. The shopping center first opened its doors on October 5, 1981 with Sears, Hills and approximately 13 small shops. The mall was built with beautiful sky lights, fountains, and benches that made just walking through the mall a real treat for young and old alike. Shops have come and gone through the years, but the mall has always been a prime space to locate your shop or restaurant. Today there is a diverse set of stores, businesses and services available inside the mall. The anchors are Sears, JCPenney, The Bon-Ton, Ollie's Bargain Outlet and Dunham's Sports. Other key retailers include Bath & Body Works, Kay Jewelers, Maurices, GameStop, Label Shopper, Matthew's Hallmark, JoAnn Fabrics, and The Movies@Cranberry. Over the past four years, Cranberry Mall has experienced some significant improvements, including extensive renovations resulting in the opening of Dunham's Sports and The Movies at Cranberry. In 2008, an interior remodel included a new color scheme, floor tile replacement, new benches, and updated furnishings. In 2010, the mall's entrance canopies received a makeover and new mall signs, and a new pylon sign with an electronic message board was installed along Route 322. New stores in 2010 included the Shoe Dept. expansion, Lydia's Stitches, Deer Creek Winery and Label and in 2011 Cranberry Mall joined Facebook. General Manager Kathy Bailey says this about the recent developments at the Mall, "We have experienced some great changes in recent years, and we look forward to more improvements in the future, both in terms of new stores and property upgrades. Our goal is to keep evolving for years to come." Those interested in leasing opportunities at Cranberry Mall can contact Bailey at (814) 676-3406, ext. 103 or at [kbailey@cranberrymall.com](mailto:kbailey@cranberrymall.com).



Born and raised right here in Oil City, Joe Pastor is happy to still be a major part of the landscape of the Oil Region. As a graduate of Pittsburgh University Joe has never really left western Pennsylvania. In 1985 Joe joined the Barr's Insurance team and has now risen through the company to the top as he is now the President and CEO of the world's oldest Traveler's Insurance agency. Managing 23 employees in 3 offices and representing over 20 companies keeps Joe busy but Joe finds ways to serve the community through service on multiple local boards including a recent addition to the Board of Directors of the Oil Region Alliance.

When not working at the office or serving on a board of directors

## The Alliance Thanks These New Members

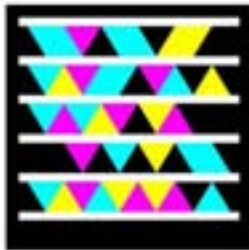
Alturna Mats Inc.  
The Witherup House  
Career Concepts Inc.

## ...and These Renewal Members

Svetz Consulting Services LLC.  
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State Street Furniture  
Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
Dale Wilson Real Estate  
Welch & Welch  
The Barnard House Bed & Breakfast  
Ohio Oil and Gas Energy Education Program  
Weltner, Phyllis and Frank  
Vantage Holding Company, LLC.

Membership benefits everyone that lives, works, and plays in the Oil Region of Northwestern PA  
Find out how you can help your community by calling 814-677-3152 or logging on to [www.oilregion.org](http://www.oilregion.org) .

Willis Thomas  
Marketing & Communications Manager/BREP Coordinator  
814-677-3152 extension 117  
Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism  
217 Elm Street, Oil City, PA 16301



somewhere he is enjoying time with his wife Cheryl, their 5 children, and 9 grandchildren. He and his wife love to travel all over the United States especially to National Parks. They like to hike and will hike usually around 10 miles in one day through the park. They also really enjoy working on their home and garden, where they can many of the fruits and vegetables that they grow. Joe also enjoys being outdoors biking on local bike trails and hunting.

An avid sports fan Joe roots for all of Pittsburgh, with the slight exception of his love of the Minnesota Vikings, but calls the Steelers his number 2 team.

Here at the Oil Region Alliance we are glad to have Joe on our Board of Directors! You can find Joe at his Barr's Insurance office in Oil City.

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If you have suggestions or new ideas you would like to share, feel free to email them to [chairman@oilregion.org](mailto:chairman@oilregion.org).

**We welcome input from you, the Oil Region**

community.



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To see upcoming events in the Oil Region, go



to

[www.oilregion.org](http://www.oilregion.org)

and check out the "Event Calendar" on the home page.

**Thanks to the Oil Region Alliance's Major Members!**



**FLY FKL**



Gulfstream International Airlines serves Venango Regional Airport with daily flights between Franklin and Cleveland -- Continental Airlines' hub -- with connections to more than 60 locations. Travelers can park for free at the airport while on their trip. There are same day departure and arrival capabilities.

The Alliance urges business and pleasure travelers to use this valuable asset when planning trips.

To FLY Franklin (FKL), simply work with your travel agent, go to your favorite travel web site, or call O.C. Bell at the airport at (814) 432-5333.

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