



NEWS RELEASE

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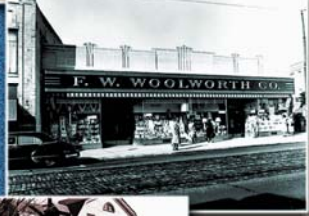
Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce celebrates it's 75th anniversary.

Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (EMCCC) celebrates it's 75th anniversary of serving the community. EMCCC serves as a catalyst to unite "businesses, community agencies, education and government to make our country a great place to live and work" according to the President of EMCCC, Pamela Sawyer. EMCCC has in excess of 700 members, with Leon Singletary, serving as Third Vice President and the Membership Committee Chair. Singletary, Principal of First Contact HR continues to help sponsor and provide services for EMCCC events. Singletary strongly believes that if you are not connected with your community, you can not move forward intelligently. As a business, we rely on the people we hire, and the community within which we operate.

The link for EMCCC is:

<http://www.emccc.org/>

The Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce celebrates 75 Years of service to the community



The Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce is celebrating its 75th year of serving the businesses, community agencies, educational institutions, government, and the public throughout eastern Montgomery County.

According to EMCCC President Pam Sawyer, "We're so pleased to be part of this exceptional community and would like to thank the hundreds of volunteers throughout the years who have contributed to the growth and success of our chamber and region."

Through unique programs and events such as the Economic Forum, Business Expo, Best of the Burbs, Breakfast with Your County Commissioners and monthly networking card exchanges and business seminars focused on key issues, the chamber strives to provide its members with opportunities to promote and help grow their businesses.

The beginnings of the chamber date back to as early as 1918 when a small group of businessmen in Jenkintown formed the Jenkintown Businessmen's Association. In 1922, the Old York Road Chamber of Commerce was created. Both of these organizations united in 1933 and incorporated to be formally known as the Jenkintown Businessmen's Association with a total of 44 members. Since then the organization has grown to almost 700 members in 2008.

At the time of incorporation in May of 1933, the Jenkintown Businessmen's Association was designed to address a myriad of community needs - both commercial and residential. It effectively represented some 30-square miles of the northern Philadelphia suburbs eventually to be known as the Old York Road corridor, including the sprawling towns of Elkins Park, Jenkintown, Willow Grove and Hatboro. Jenkintown was the cultural and social hub of this territory, hence attracted the leadership role.

In the 1930s the business group was concerned with supplying seeds for home gardens and community display plots, coordinating retail promotions, guiding favorable legislation through the borough and townships, while running a grandiose social program with many events at the Old York Road Country Club. They also coordinated the holiday decorations that eventually involved hanging lights up and down the corridor.

From the beginning of the business association, competition often occurred between the retail and non-retail membership, especially because the retail sector required more effort and expense than the business sector. The retailers formed their own group functioning under the chamber's "umbrella" several times, and eventually organized independently with their own officers and paid director. This group eventually became the Jenkintown Community Association when the local residents were brought aboard in the late 1990s.

The development and accomplishments of the Jenkintown Businessmen's Association since its incorporation followed a creative and intelligent vein promoting business profitability, forging a first class cultural and artistic reputation for Jenkintown and even improving its prestigious commercial center image.

Under talented leadership, the JBA (starting with a 44 members) satisfied many problems like joining with the general business community in planning and forming the Jenkintown Parking Corporation in 1954. This was financed with \$48,000 in stock purchases. The corporation bought and operated three lots accommodating some 56 autos (expecting at least three turnovers in a day). This authority is still in successful operation today.

As other chambers were formed around Jenkintown, the JBA decided to concentrate its influence and support to its hometown. A new name and bylaws were adopted making it the Jenkintown Chamber of Commerce in 1961. Now, more gregarious, the new chamber introduced these positive elements to its membership, now topping 100: specialty rated health insurance, a scheduled business promotion program, a golf tournament (in 1962) and sponsoring the first Jenkintown Fall Art Festival (in 1963), which benefited the Jenkintown Day Nursery. This art show —displayed up and down Old York Road— was professionally judged. As the chamber grew in membership and territorial eminence, the directors voted to add "greater" to the chamber's name in July of 1968, returning it to the area originally covered by the JBA.

Under the chamber's first full time executive director, Terry McManus, the chamber was led out of virtual bankruptcy and into the light of solvency and effective business leadership supremacy in the greater Jenkintown area—as it spread its prestige and influence to surrounding towns like Elkins Park, Wynette, Abington, Roslyn, McKinley and even Willow Grove.

The first official chamber newsletter, "Commerce Comments," was inaugurated in 1984 by McManus and has continued with added informative copy and artful graphics.

During that year the chamber held its first "business mixer" at a local restaurant and its 11th annual art festival was renamed the Jenkintown Library Festival of the Arts since library personnel were staffing the event and a large portion of the profit went to the library.

After two years of negotiations and formal applications, the chamber received funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs for a three-year Main Street Manager program with \$150,000 budgeted costs in March 1986. These costs were to be shared by Jenkintown Borough and the Greater Jenkintown Chamber. The manager's role was to work toward the revitalization and improved growth of the Jenkintown business district. The chamber eventually paid much more than its share. Past President Paul Sieberowski (1984) and Director Stephen Silverman (president 1992-93) spearheaded the efforts. When Steve (who is now deceased) was president in 1992, the chamber board decided to take on a name indicative of its huge increase in effective influence and a new name was selected and incorporated — the Eastern Montgomery County Chamber Of Commerce.

Director Suzanne Nickelson, from Abington Bank, joined with past President Don Neiman in 1993 to start the "Taste the Best of the Burbs" restaurant showcase event that featured some 40 top caterers, caterers, wineries and breweries presenting their top offerings. Entertainment and prizes were included at the event started at the "Bridge" and later moved to the Abington old Sears building on York Road (opposite Alexander's, which is now Kitcher's Bar). Hundreds of merchants and residents attended this successful promotion.

In 1997, the "Taste" event was transformed into a "Best of the Burbs" celebration of art, business, charitable community, cultural, health and sporting events concluding with a business EXPO exhibit festival at Bryner Chevrolet's showroom on York Road in Jenkintown. Its allure has attracted almost a thousand spectators per year — for the sixth time this year.

Six years ago, Julie Slavet, chamber executive vice president, and Steve Greenbaum, of Manor College, initiated the development of a Leadership Program to provide an experience in personal and professional growth using a strengths-based approach to build the capacity of current and future leaders throughout the eastern Montgomery County region. Classes meet for 14 half-day morning sessions between September and June. Entering its fifth year this fall, the program has already benefited over 70 students and is sponsored by 18 area businesses and educational centers.

With the numerous services and programs now established including economic forums, meals and meetings with government officials, free entrepreneurship consulting, numerous networking exchanges, Web site and marketing opportunities, the EMCCC continues to grow and expand services available to its members and the business community.

Celebrate with
the Eastern
Montgomery
County
Chamber of
Commerce!

To commemorate its 75th anniversary, the Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce invites current and past members of the chamber to a special celebration on May 1st from 6-9pm at The Huntingdon Valley Country Club filled with networking, music, delicious food, dancing, and fun. There will also be a luck box raffle with a grand prize worth \$2000. This event is open to all those who would like to join in celebrating this special Chamber milestone. For tickets and more information you can go to www.emccc.org or contact the EMCCC at 215-887-5122. The EMCCC looks forward to continuing to serve the community in the years ahead.



EMCCC Board Members pose in front of the new signage on Old York Road.
Left to right: Front Row: Russel (Abington) Neiman; Back Row: Jeanine Baron (Streamliners, Inc.), Pam Sawyer (Comcast Spotlight), Don Neiman, Jeff Band (Goldenberg Rosenthal, LLP), Michael Cohen (Silus Properties), Stuart Tollen (Jenkintown Chiropractic Center, Inc.), Chris Heaven (Morgan Stanley), Steve Greenbaum (Manor College), Joel Johnson (The Montgomery County Housing Authority), Lance Kraemer (Lance R. Kraemer Associates), Robert Maher (Dyer & Maher), Leon Singletary (First Contact HR)

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