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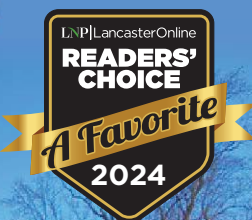
Awards

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If you've lived in Lancaster County for any length of time, you already know — our local businesses are something special. They're the places you rely on, the people you remember your name, and the small moments that turn everyday errands into meaningful connections.

When you support local, you're doing more than checking something off your list. You're helping your neighbors succeed and keeping our community strong. For more than 25 years, LNP | LancasterOnline has been proud to celebrate the people and businesses that make this place so unique. Now, as we kick off the 26th year of Reader's Choice, we'd love for you to be part of it.

I've been lucky enough to see Reader's Choice grow from its earliest days, when it included just a handful of categories, into today's celebration of more than 900 incredible local businesses, all chosen by readers like you. What hasn't changed is what makes it meaningful: your voice.

Every vote you cast is a way to recognize the businesses that show up for you — whether it's your go-to coffee shop, your favorite place to eat, or the service providers you trust. These are the people who work hard behind the scenes, support our community, and



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‘Credibility and trust’

Businesses reflect on impact of winning LNP | LancasterOnline’s Readers’ Choice Awards

LAURA KNOWLES
LNP CORRESPONDENT

What do the LNP | LancasterOnline Readers’ Choice Awards mean to local businesses? They help businesses get their message out to the community and build customers through word of mouth – in print and online.

Each year, more than 100,000 votes are cast in nearly 250 categories for the favorite businesses of LNP | LancasterOnline readers. Readers can vote for their favorites in categories that include entertainment, retirement communities, medical care, recreation, education, insurance, real estate, restaurants, home and garden, apparel, food and beverage suppliers, legal services, financial services and more.

Voting in the Readers’ Choice Awards is a lot like word of mouth, telling friends in the community about the businesses you know and like the best.

Thanks to the LNP | LancasterOnline Readers’ Choice Awards, readers get to provide the answers to the most important questions: Who do you trust for vision care? Who’s your go-to Realtor when it’s time to buy or sell your home? Where can you find paint and decorating expertise? Who’s your favorite landscaper? Who cleans your house the best? Where do you go for spa and salon services? Who makes the best pizza in Lancaster County? Where do you get the best ice cream?

A sign of satisfaction

For Jim Hecker of Enck’s Plus Catering, winning the top Reader’s Choice Award in catering gives his business a boost.

“Winning the Reader’s Choice Award shows our customers that we are committed to total customer satisfaction, and beyond,” Hecker says.

Headquartered in Lancaster, Enck’s Plus Catering is Pennsylvania’s premier catering company, Hecker says, serving Lancaster, York, Berks, Dauphin and Lebanon counties.

“We have been awarded first place in the Reader’s Choice Awards with specialties in wedding catering, special event catering and corporate catering,” he says. “Our commercial division for contracted food services offers food services management, procurement and administration for facilities, institutions and enterprise.”

That includes event catering, wedding catering, corporate catering and more, with catered food that ranges from picnics with barbecue and burgers to elegant feasts featuring steak, seafood and fine cuisine. They even offer dessert bars, breakfast buffets with eggs Benedict, and tea parties.

“This award attracts clients, because the public voted for us,” Hecker says. “We

are in the people-pleasing business and this award puts an exclamation point on it.”

A promotion tool

Andrew Karasik of Go ‘N Bananas Family Fun Center shares that kind of excitement about winning Reader’s Choice Awards in the categories of best child’s birthday party, best team building party, and team building.

Located at Manheim Pike and Dillerville Road in Lancaster, Go ‘N Bananas is a family-fun space with 2,300 square feet of activities such as bumper cars, rope climbing, laser tag, a theater, arcade games, a toddler zone, a Ballocity indoor play structure and even activities for kids with special needs. It’s also home to the Congo Café, which serves up pizza, burgers, wings, and quesadillas.

“We are a family space for kids from toddlers to 14 or so,” says Karasik, who has owned Go ‘N Bananas with his wife, Amber, since 2025.

“We visited and were just blown away by the staff, the quality of the attractions, the quality of the experiences, the theming, the cleanliness,” says Karasik, adding that they were pleased to carry on the business started in 2015 by the Legenstein family, who had owned Certified Carpet.

When the Karasiks became the new owners of Go ‘N Bananas, it was about more than taking another step in their careers in the entertainment and amusement industry. It was about family.

At Go ‘N Bananas, the goal is to create experiences for families of all abilities. The Karasiks have added sensory-friendly areas and schedule programming specifically designed for the special needs community.

Karasik reports that the Reader’s Choice Awards help promote their business and they post the awards on the front of their building. As 10-year winners, they take the awards very seriously.

“It was one of the main reasons we bought the business,” Karasik says. “It’s all a part of our marketing and reputation in the community.”

Building credibility

For Josh March of EmPower Training Systems at Granite Run Drive, winning Reader’s Choice Awards in three categories is a big deal for the training facility.

“We have won Reader’s Choice Awards for personal training facility, fitness facility and fitness cross training facility for the past 12 years,” March says.

EmPower Training Systems opened 15 years ago, with the goal of offering custom fitness training for everyone from athletes to teens to seniors.

“The Reader’s Choice



Above: The team at EmPower Training Systems.



Left: Andrew and Amber Karasik became the new owners of Go ‘N Bananas in 2025.

Below: Winning Readers’ Choice Awards has given Enck’s Plus Catering a boost in business.



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HOW TO VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITES

The LNP | LancasterOnline Readers' Choice Awards give our readers the chance to vote for their favorite Lancaster County businesses. We're proud of the ways that the Readers' Choice Awards program has grown and changed over the past 26 years, but the main goal has always been the same: to recognize and support our readers' favorite local businesses!

Each vote is important and meaningful to local businesses, who look forward to this contest each year. In 2026, Readers' Choice Awards voting will be online only. Please visit lanc.news/RCAvoting to select your favorites.

There are also prizes for readers who participate in this contest! Fill out at least 25 categories on your ballot, and you'll be entered to win one of three \$200 Visa Gift Cards. So be sure to vote!

NEW THIS YEAR: The standings of each business will be visible from May 1-21. After that, there will be a go-dark period during which the standings will not be visible from May 22 until voting finishes on May 31. Winners will be revealed on Sunday, Aug. 23, in a special Readers' Choice Awards magazine inserted into LNP and on LancasterOnline.com.

There are almost 250 categories to vote for, which fall into 15 groups: Apparel, Arts & Leisure, Automotive, Bridal, Education, Food & Beverage, Health & Beauty, Home & Garden, Kids, Medical, Pets, Professional & Advisory Services, Restaurants, Retirement Living and Shopping. The list of each of the categories can be found below.

APPAREL

- Athletic Footwear Store
- Dry Cleaner
- Men's Clothing Store
- Shoe Store
- Women's Clothing Store

- Live Theater
- Martial Arts Studio
- Miniature Golf Course
- Movie Theater
- Museum
- Photographer
- Place To Take Cooking Classes
- Radio Station
- Team Building Activity
- Travel Agency

ARTS & LEISURE

- Art Gallery
- Bowling Center
- Entertainment Venue

AUTOMOTIVE

- Auto Dealer Service Department
- Auto Dealership
- Auto Painting
- Auto Repair Center
- Body Shop
- Car Wash
- Diagnostic Center
- Oil Change
- Tire Store
- Towing Company
- Transmission Repair Center
- Used Car Dealership

BRIDAL

- Bridesmaids Gifts
- Dress Alterations
- Engagement & Wedding Rings
- Entertainment
- Florist
- Groomsmen Gifts
- Wedding Cakes
- Wedding Dress
- Wedding Photographer

- Wedding Transportation
- Wedding Venue

EDUCATION

- College/University
- Place To Take College Courses
- Place To Take Graphic Design Classes
- Private School

FOOD & BEVERAGE

- Bakery
- Beer Distributor
- Birthday Cakes
- Candy Store
- Catering
- Deli
- Discount Grocer
- Doughnut Shop
- Farm Market
- Gourmet Shop
- Grocery Store
- Homemade Chocolates
- Pies
- Ribs

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Drug Store/Pharmacy
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Family Practice
Foot/Ankle Practice
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Home Health Care Agency
Hospice and Palliative Care Specialist
Hospital
Laser Eye Center
Medical Spa
Neurologist
Neurosurgeon
Obstetrical Practice
Ophthalmologist
Oral Surgeon
Orthodontic Practice
Orthopedic Practice
Physical Rehab Center
Sports Medicine
Urgent Care

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Barber Shop
Cross Training Facility
Fitness Center
Hair Salon
Holistic Health
Laser Hair Removal Center
Nail Salon
Personal Training Facility
Skin Care Provider
Spa
Tattoo Shop

HOME & GARDEN

Apartment Community
Appliance Repair
Appliance Store
Awnings
Battery Supplier
Birding Store

KIDS

Child's Birthday Party
Dance Studio
Day Camp
Outdoor Activities
Pediatric Dentist
Pediatric Eye Care Center
Teen Birthday Party
Toy Store

MEDICAL

Chiropractor

PETS

Dog Day Care
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More on page 6

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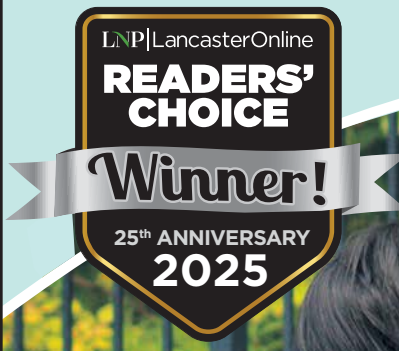
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