

The Derrick. and The News-Herald • 2026



BUSINESS

Review & Forecast

Friday, Feb. 13, 2026

Section F — Tourism

Section



File photo by Jamie Hunt

Cyclists at the 2025 Roughneck Gravel Roubaix make the turn onto Titusville's South Martin Street after heading out through the inflatable archway on East Mechanic Street. The annual cycling race has fast become a major draw for Oil Region tourism. To see the story about tourism, go to Page F2.

This section of the Business Review and Forecast takes a look at tourism and how local communities draw on it.

In the section's feature story on tourism, leaders from the Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce, the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce and the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism, talk about tourism's impact on the local economy, and why the region's events appeal to both tourists and local residents.

In addition, a story about a 2025 soft rollout of an ATV initiative in Venango County is laying the foundation for increased legal use of municipal roads for ATV operators, provided they have a permit.

There's also a story about Be Here Venango, which continues to build on its agenda to highlight what makes the Oil Region a great place to live, work and play.

In addition, readers seeking events and activities for much of 2026 can find them in a Calendar of Events on Page F4.

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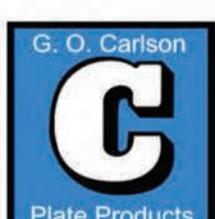
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File photo by Jamie Hunt

Jeff Little, of New Windsor, Maryland, fishes for smallmouth bass in the heart of Oil City during the 2025 Kayak Adventure Series Broodstock II fishing tournament. Little also gave a kayaking seminar. For the first time, Franklin in 2025 hosted the finale of the tournament.

‘An affordable destination’

ORA, local chambers tout everything the region has to offer

BY HELEN FIELDING

Staff writer

Though the economy and inflation are tightening pocketbooks, it didn't seem to have had a dramatic effect on tourism in the Oil Region in 2025.

“Maybe just a little, inflation slowed it,” said Emily Altomare, of the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism, which among the many hats it wears is the state’s designated tourism promotion agency for Venango County. “But we’re pretty inexpensive anyway ... thankfully, we’re such an affordable destination.”

Much of the Oil Region’s tourism appeal comes from free activities, especially outdoor recreation and use of the county’s extensive number of trails and outdoor spaces. Many events also are free, and those things that do cost money tend not to cost as much as they do in other places, Altomare said.

Also, the region is within reasonable driving distance of much of the northeastern U.S., including Washington, D.C., and other population centers, so that high air travel costs don’t tend to deter visitors.

“We like to say, it’s ‘affordable fun for everyone,’” Altomare said.

Jodi Lewis, who served as executive director of the Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce for 10 years before resigning earlier this year, agreed the ability to drive and not fly to the region has helped to prevent local tourism from being affected.

The Franklin Chamber’s central location on Liberty Street in the downtown area means it sees a lot of visitor traffic during the year, as people come in to get information and pick up brochures and maps of the area.

“I don’t think (inflation) has impacted tourism to any extent that we can say for sure yet,” said Lewis, who also pointed out that many regional events are free to attend.

While not strictly related to incoming tourism, one of Lewis’ predictions for this year is that with rising costs nationally, Oil Region residents might be more interested in staying local for their vacation activities.

During the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns, “Staycation” was a big word,” Lewis said. “I’m betting it will be a big word again in the next few years. We often don’t look to get away in our own communities, but you can camp at Two Mile Run County Park or Oil Creek State Park, or even stay at an Airbnb or bed and breakfast locally and not have to travel.”

And, especially in Franklin’s downtown, “so many events are walkable. That’s definitely a gift that we don’t overlook.”

Altomare said she would “strongly encourage people to be tourists in their own town. That helps them become advocates for the area. We want locals to talk about that, too, and bringing friends and family into the area.”

Oil Region’s draw

What draws the tourists (which, according to the industry standard, are those who travel from over 50 miles away) to the Oil Region?

2025 was no different from previous years: the biggest draw is outdoor recreation, along with the region’s history and, increasingly, the arts.

In marketing the region, Altomare said the ORA focuses on outdoor recreation because of the extensive trail systems and the river, combined with the



Kurt “The Mountain Man” Steiner winds up to cast his stone in the 2025 Rock in River Festival’s Pro Division as judge Pat Peletier awaits to count the skips. Steiner, who took first place, had 41 skips on his final throw.

historic aspect that “makes it unique.”

Events, which are always a draw, are often outdoor recreation-focused here, such as bike and mountain bike races, archery tournaments, fly-fishing events and the annual Rock In River Fest stone-skipping tournament in Franklin.

Recurring events, especially, have drawing power.

“They bring people who would maybe never come into the Oil Region, and when they came, we were able to make a great experience for them, and so they’re more likely to repeat the experience,” Altomare said.

“We’ve been seeing that with the Roughneck Gravel Roubaix, and the IBO Archery tournament. It brings hundreds of people.”

And, Lewis said, “They’re here to stay; once that happens, people talk about it.”

Last year, for the first time, Franklin hosted the finale of the national Kayak Adventure Series Broodstock II fishing tournament, which is only in its second year. The ORA received a state Marketing to Attract Tourists grant to help host the event.

“They want a small downtown feel, want a local theater (for awards), and they want to be able to be close and cozy but also have a lot of waterway activity,” Altomare said. “Franklin made sense.”

Altomare and Lewis both noted the increasing efforts of events to promote themselves and the area through social media and influencers.

Susan Williams, executive director of the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce, also commended how local historical organizations have collaborated over the past year.

And arts, she said, are becoming more high-profile, especially in Oil City and Franklin.

“We have some pretty unique activities,” Altomare said. “Like the silent movie series ... little unique things you can’t do just anywhere.”

Promoting the area statewide

The ORA has continued to tout the Oil Region statewide and beyond through advertising and strategically placed promotional materials.

The ORA has a full-page adver-

tisement for the Oil Region National Heritage Area, which it stewards, on page 87 of Pennsylvania’s 2026 Travel Guide.

“We want to make sure we’re putting the Oil Region front and center,” she explained. “The state has already done more than half the work,

because they have the audience and the customers interested in visiting Pennsylvania. Then it’s our job to be present and say, ‘Look, we’re here, we have things to offer!’”

While the ORA has enough resources to take out an advertisement in the state guide, most individual organizations in the region don’t.

So, once people are directed to take a look at the Oil Region and what it has to offer, the ORA publishes its own biennial guide to the Oil Region, in which local businesses, nonprofits and “mom-and-pop” shops have the same opportunity to show up with advertisements of what they have to offer.

The Oil Region National Heritage Area 2025-26 guide, along with other brochures and materials highlighting the area, are available in the region’s chambers, and across the state in rest areas and welcome centers, Altomare said.

“We pay to have them in select centers, not all of them, across the state,” she explained. Key areas include Interstates 79, 80 and 95, and in regions around Harrisburg.

“We’re spreading the message all across the state and out of state.”

Venango Chamber community calendar

Williams said hospitality and tourism “are really, really critical” to thriving communities. “If you provide lodging, or you are a restaurateur or retail shop, you need that influx of visitors throughout the year. There aren’t many of them that can make a go of it just with people that are here.”

At the same time, “People want to live in the same kind of places they want to visit. So if we’re thinking about putting the community in a place that’s attractive to visitors, that also makes it a place that people want to live.”

While the Venango Chamber’s main involvement in tourism mostly involves supporting its tourism partners and members, one of its own initiatives that benefits both local people and visitors was launched in January 2025: the community calendar.

The free calendar is available on or linked through the Be Here Venango website, the Venango County website, the Venango Chamber’s website, and on the websites of several partners. It aims to gather all the events happening in Venango County, and the chamber is continuing to seek more partners to host, for free, the calendar on their websites as well.

“Anyone with events can submit things to that calendar,” Williams said. “It’s free, and they can submit a flyer or an attached graphic.”

The calendar can be sorted by categories — such as art or music, date, or community — and Williams said it also can “scrub” and “geofence” certain websites, such as Eventbrite or Facebook events (not posts), to find events posted for the local area. While it’s primarily focused on Venango County, she said a few events on the outskirts might slip in as well.

Chamber staff also try to find and add events, but Williams emphasized that ultimately, the calendar’s full potential depends on people submitting their events.

“It’s a great calendar, but it can be even better,” she said. “It’s a free and dynamic way to share their events ... and we are more than happy to coach them through it, sit with them in person or sit with them on Zoom.”

ORA’s initiatives

The ORA hosted roundtable discussions in 2025 with Realtors, those interested in home shares, and restaurants to hear concerns and talk about industry trends.

The restaurant roundtable was the first one, and Altomare said the ORA is seeking to engage the food scene “more than we already have. I know everyone is stretched for time and staff ... but we want them to feel like they are part of tourism in Venango County.”

The ORA receives most of the county’s hotel tax income as the des-

ignated tourism marketing organization, and Altomare said income was down somewhat in 2025, and that 2023 was the organization’s best year.

“It’s still strong,” she said, adding that out-of-state license plates and increased participation in events prove visitors are traveling to the area. One reason for decreased hotel tax could be home shares, which aren’t always registered with the county and might not be fully regulated.

For the first time in 2025, the Venango County commissioners elected to send 25% of the hotel tax, about \$50,000 annually, to the Venango County Economic Development Authority instead of taking the previous 2% administration fee, Altomare noted, which somewhat decreased the ORA’s tourism budget. The change is set to continue in 2026.

The 2025 Marketing to Attract Tourists grant, which helped to bring the Kayak Adventure Series here, also funded a subscription to Placer.ai, a location analytics company that uses anonymized datasets collected from phones and other mobile devices to create “actionable insights derived from the analysis of geospatial data,” according to its website.

“It’s stuff that’s being collected all the time, we’re just tapping into it,” Altomare explained. Placer.ai’s website lists Pepsico, Adidas and Google, along with smaller brands like Wegman’s and Planet Fitness, as among its clients.

It was originally to analyze whether the Belmar Bridge is more traveled by tourists or locals, in preparation for applying for funding for future bridge repairs, but the service also has the potential to provide data in addition to the hotel tax on how many people are traveling to the area and from where, she said.

Ahead in 2026

Two major events are set to take place in Pennsylvania next year: the NFL draft, in Pittsburgh, and the FIFA World Cup, in Philadelphia.

Altomare said both the Oil Region and Visit PA guides, which contain a page advertising the Oil Region, are in rest areas around Pittsburgh and near Philadelphia throughout the year; so tourists traveling to those events should encounter them.

The ORA doesn’t expect to have quite as many tourism funds to work with in 2026, receiving 75% of the hotel tax instead of 98% and also with a lessening of state funding. Because of funding the two major state events, Altomare said Pennsylvania isn’t giving out Marketing to Attract Tourists grants this year.

But with the NFL draft and World Cup, “maybe we’ll see increased movement around the state,” she said.

Because of the decreased budget, the ORA is reconsidering plans for America 250, including a proposed kayak tourism trip.

Altomare said the ORA and the Oil Region have built a “nice rapport” with Pennsylvania’s first director of outdoor recreation, Nathan Reigner, who has visited the region a few times. “He’s said we’re doing more of what he wants to see across the state.”

HELEN FIELDING, reporter for The Derrick and The News-Herald, can be reached at helen-fielding.thederrick@gmail.com or 814-677-8374.



Be Here Venango expands community connections

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

In 2025, Be Here Venango continued to strengthen its role as a connector, storyteller and catalyst for community pride across Venango County. Building on its mission to highlight what makes the region a great place to live, work and play, Be Here focused on deepening engagement while expanding tools that make participation easier and more accessible for everyone.

A major milestone in 2025 was the creation of a dynamic, community-powered events calendar. The new centralized calendar not only highlights the wide range of events happening across Venango County, but is now free for organizations and businesses to embed directly on their own websites. This shared resource helps promote local events, reduces duplication of effort and strengthens collaboration by making it easier for residents to discover and engage with what's happening throughout the region.

Another significant advancement was Be Here's continued leadership of the Venango Heart & Soul initiative. As a Pennsylvania Community Heart & Soul designee, Be Here facilitated a resident-driven process that centers community voices in shaping the future. Story gathering, conversations and collaborative events brought people together across Franklin, Oil City and Cranberry Township to identify shared values and priorities, reinforcing Be Here's commitment to long-term, people-centered growth.

Storytelling and visibility also expanded in 2025. Through social media, digital campaigns and the ongoing Experience Venango video series, Be Here amplified positive narratives



and highlighted the people, places and opportunities that make Venango County unique.

Be Here recently introduced updated physical Venango County maps designed to help residents, visitors and newcomers navigate the region and explore key destinations. Available at businesses, events and community spaces, the maps support tourism and encourage exploration across the county.

Be Here has also expanded the presence of its Be Here stickers, which serve as a visible symbol of community pride and shared identity. This year, Be Here released a new sticker set created by a local artist.

On the digital side, Be Here recently released Experience Recreation in Venango, the latest installment in the Experience Venango video series, highlighting outdoor recreation assets that contribute to quality of life and site-selection appeal.

In partnership with the Venango County Historical Society, Be Here cohosted historic walking tours that activate downtown spaces and promote heritage tourism by inviting participants to engage with the stories and places that define the region.

Be Here also expanded its outreach to students by presenting to local high school classes, introducing young people to career pathways,

community assets and opportunities to build a future in Venango County.

Overall, 2025 marked a year of meaningful progress, with stronger infrastructure, deeper engagement and new tools that connect people more effectively to their community.

2026 Plans

Be Here Venango will continue building momentum in 2026 by focusing on connection, collaboration and community-driven progress. The initiative's growth will center on strengthening tools, partnerships and opportunities that help residents and organizations connect.

A major focus for the year ahead is the continued implementation of the Venango Heart & Soul initiative. Building on the listening and story-gathering work completed over the past year, Be Here will host additional community events to help turn shared values into action, aligning organizations, leaders and residents around common priorities.

Be Here will also continue to expand its role as a regional connector through its dynamic community events calendar. In 2026, the calendar will be further promoted as a shared resource that organizations and businesses can embed directly on their own websites at no cost.

New Experience Venango videos and digital content will spotlight additional aspects of the region. Website enhancements will continue to strengthen the "Live Here," "Work Here" and "Play Here" sections, supporting talent attraction/retention and community pride.

Be Here Venango will remain focused on creating pathways for participation, amplifying positive stories, and helping the

community move forward together.

Looking Back

Be Here Venango was established in 2017 as an initiative of the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce with a clear mission: to change the narrative about Venango County by celebrating its people, places and possibilities. From the beginning, the program focused on fostering pride, optimism and connection through storytelling and community engagement.

Early efforts centered on highlighting local success stories and sharing authentic voices from residents who chose to live, work and invest in the region. Through digital storytelling, events and grassroots outreach, Be Here helped elevate positive conversations and encourage greater community involvement.

As the initiative evolved, Be Here expanded its tools and reach. The launch of the Experience Venango video series and the Community Calendar of Events marked important milestones, providing residents and visitors with accessible ways to explore the county's cultural, recreational and economic opportunities.

Another defining moment came when Be Here was designated a Pennsylvania Community Heart & Soul community. This recognition positioned the initiative as a facilitator of resident-driven conversations focused on shared values and long-term community well-being.

Nearly a decade after its launch, the initiative continues to grow with intention, guided by community voices and a commitment to a thriving future for Venango County.

2025 laid the foundation for Venango's ATV initiative

BY HELEN FIELDING Staff writer

A "soft rollout" of Venango County's ATV initiative started in late summer 2025, and permits are now available for those who would like to obtain one to legally ride their ATVs on designated roads within the county.

The Oil Region ATV Association (ORATVA), a non-profit that is working with the county to bring legal ATV riding to some of the county's many country roads, announced on its website early last year that permits would be available starting in August at the County Treasurer's Office in the Venango County Courthouse Annex.

While in the future the permits will be good from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31 of one year, since the permits didn't become available until the middle of 2025, ORATVA board member Mike Bordell said in a December interview that the permits purchased in 2025 are good until the end of 2026.

It's considered a "soft start" because some of the connections on state roads are still receiving final approval, Bordell added.

"Many municipal roads are already posted (with ATV signs)," he said. "We need the state roads now."

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has said it's on board with allowing ATV routes on municipal roads to connect across or along sections of state road, allowing ATV riders to travel farther.

"The state is definitely behind this. They think it's a great idea to bring revenue," he said.

However, the state still wants municipalities to approve the sections of state road, just as they have already done with the municipal roads that will allow ATV access.

"Our plan is, I believe, once we get the interconnecting state roads, they want to have a grand opening event," Bordell said.

As of December, 18 of the 31 municipalities in Venango County had joined the

countywide ATV initiative, which aims to improve traffic to local small businesses in more remote areas, and to increase tourism in the county as a whole.

"My road is an ATV-approved road," said Bordell, who lives near Cooperstown. "I can jump on (my ATV), and there are two or three different restaurants I can get to easily." Bordell said he uses his ATV for that purpose quite often.

So far, most feedback has been positive.

Bordell said he personally hasn't had any negative comments addressed to him about the ATVs. When the association had a booth at Applefest, it sold several permits and many residents who approached the booth asked questions.

Some municipalities, however, have expressed opposition. "Not all municipalities are interested. Maybe they will be in the future," he said.

For residents whose municipalities have not passed an ordinance and who would

like to see ATV riding legalized along designated municipal roads, Bordell encouraged them to recruit neighbors and talk to township supervisors or borough councils.

Bordell emphasized ATV riding on roads is not legal where there is no posted signage; even if signage is posted, under the municipal ordinances it is still not legal without a permit.

The ordinances also contain other requirements, such as proof of insurance, helmets and noise limits.

Having to buy a permit is one of the two complaints Bordell said the association as a whole has heard about the program so far.

"Some people ask, 'Why do I have to buy a permit?' Well, you do still need a permit, it's in the ordinance," he said. "We're working on getting some sort of sticker for signs that say 'Permit required,' because people see the signs and think they're good."

The \$50 permit fee is a

major facet of the program, as \$20 of that sum goes into a pool of money that is paid to participating municipalities along the same lines as Liquid Fuels funds.

However, while Liquid Fuels funds must go toward road upkeep and repair, the ATV permit funds can go to any area of a municipality's budget, Venango County Commissioner Ken Bryan said last year.

A fee of \$6.50 goes to the county for administrative costs related to issuing ATV permits, and the remaining \$23.50 goes to the association for road signs, trail cams as needed, nonprofit insurance and also a possible future purchase of land for off-road trails, according to the ORATVA website.

"There might be 100 acres that comes up for sale, and we could purchase it and try to open a trail system," he said, and that some private landowners in the county also have already approached ORATVA about developing off-road trails.

The other complaint Bordell mentioned was some people said the ATVs made the roads too dusty in summer.

"It's just like a car," he said of the dust issue. "Riders are supposed to obey posted speed limits, and I've seen places where people have put up signs on their property that say, 'Slow down, keep the dust down.' I try to do that and be respectful of people."

He has spoken to restaurant owners who are excited about the proposition as well, he said, and future plans include making fold-up maps (a digital map already is avail-

able on the ORATVA website of currently legal ATV-riding roads), and hopefully eventually a GPS app.

Other counties, such as Clarion and Crawford, also have reached out to Venango with interest in how the program is working, he said.

"It's going well," he said. "It's slow, word still needs to get out."

HELEN FIELDING, reporter for The Derrick and The News-Herald, can be reached at helenfielding.thederrick@gmail.com or 814-677-8374.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Sunday, Feb. 1

Winter breakfast — 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.; Rainbow Sportsman's Club, 481 Rainbow Rd., Polk; cost is \$10 will continue on every Sunday

Friday, Feb. 6

Nature Art Showcase & Sale — 5 p.m.; Barrow-Civic Theatre, Franklin; annual event hosted by Council on Greenways & Trails and Penn Soil RC&D; features original artwork inspired by local natural or outdoor recreation areas; paintings, sculpture, fabric arts, photography, pottery, metalwork and woodworking; special "On the Wing" category highlighting winged wildlife; public invited to view artists' work and vote for People's Choice

Saturday, Feb. 7

Cabin Fever Party — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; historic Pithole City visitor center 14118 Pithole Road, Pleasantville; guides present to answer questions on legendary oil boomtown; activities; storytelling and more; for more info visit www.drakewell.org/events **Franklin on Ice** — all day; downtown Franklin; Franklin's winter festival featuring live ice carving, carriage rides and other activities; presented by the Franklin Fine Arts Council **Polar Plunge 2026: Justus Jaunt** — registration 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., plunge at 1 p.m.; Crosby Beach, Two Mile Run County Park; for ages 12-99; early registration \$25 includes T-shirt, day-of registration \$25 without T-shirt; shirts available for purchase day of for \$10 while supplies last; for more information, those interested can contact the park office at 814-676-6116 **Nature Art Showcase & Sale** — 6 p.m.; Barrow-Civic Theatre, Franklin; annual event hosted by Council on Greenways & Trails and Penn Soil RC&D; features original artwork inspired by local natural or outdoor recreation areas; paintings, sculpture, fabric arts, photography, pottery, metalwork and woodworking; special "On the Wing" category highlighting winged wildlife; public invited to view artists' work and vote for People's Choice

Monday, Feb. 9

Bald Eagles of Crawford County — 6 to 7 p.m.; Titusville Historical Society, 201 W. Spring St.; presentation by the Pennsylvania Game Commission exploring the history of bald eagles nationally and in Pennsylvania, with a focus on Crawford County's resurgence; includes a hands-on educational display; free and open to the public

Friday, Feb. 13

Silent Film Double Feature — 7 p.m.; DeBence Antique Music World, 1261 Liberty St., Franklin; screening of Buster Keaton's *One Week* and Harold Lloyd's *For Heaven's Sake*; live accompaniment by the Pittsburgh Silent Film Orchestra; free admission with reservations required; reserve by calling 814-432-8350

Thursday, Feb. 19

Winter Academy (virtual) — noon to 1 p.m.; Drake Well Museum for a virtual presentation on the different events and programs planned for 2026; for America 250 by the museums and historical societies of Venango County; free; Register Zoom link by emailing ra-phdrakewell@pa.gov; for more info visit www.drakewell.org/events; there will be another winter academy on Friday, Feb. 27

Saturday, Feb. 28

Annual Chili Cookoff — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; The Merc, Titusville; Titusville Chamber of Commerce chili tastings in local downtown businesses; \$25 entry fee, \$10 taste taster fee; tea and water provided; wine tastings from Cork & Screw; People's Choice winners; trophies and prizes handed out at 4 p.m.; to sign up, email info@titusvillepachamber.com or call 814-827-2941 March Thursday, March 5 **Wisdom and more first presentation** — doors open at 5:30 for social gathering followed by presentation 6:30 p.m.; social hour before presentation will have libations to sample; presentation on humankind's early ancestors from *Homo erectus* to Neanderthal; actual relics to see and handle; admission is free for members of Friends of Drake Well and \$5 for non-members; for more info visit www.drakewell.org/events

MARCH

Sunday, March 8

Celebration at Drake Well Museum — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; celebrate Pennsylvania's 345th "birthday" at Drake Well Museum and Park; free admission; visitors receive a birthday cupcake while supplies last; For more info visit www.drakewell.org/events

Wednesday, March 11

Colonial Tea Tasting & the Boston Tea Party — 6 to 7 p.m.; Benson Memorial Library, 213 N. Franklin St., Titusville; educational program exploring the Boston Tea Party with an opportunity to sample teas similar to those thrown into the harbor; free event open to the public; tea samples are first come, first serve

Thursday, March 12

Wisdom and more second presentation — doors open at 5:30 for social gathering followed by presentation 6:30 p.m.; social hour before presentation will have libations to sample; presentation from Jesse Shetrom "Tanks a Lot: Moving Oil by Rail" admission is free for members of Friends of Drake Well and \$5 for non-members; for more info visit www.drakewell.org/events

Tuesday, March 17

Leprechaun Crawl — Seneca Street party; hosted by Oil City Merchants

Thursday, March 19

Wisdom and more third presentation — doors open at 5:30 for social gathering followed by presentation 6:30 p.m.; social hour before presentation will have libations to sample; Barry Cressman will present "The Sagas of Three Oil Dynasties that Changed the World" admission is free for members of Friends of Drake Well and \$5 for non-members; for more info visit www.drakewell.org/events

Saturday, March 21

MAC Expo — 1 to 5 p.m.; MAC Event Center, 228 Seneca St., Oil City; community expo featuring local artists, musicians, instructors and organizations; hands-on activities and information on classes, workshops and creative opportunities in the area

Thursday, March 26

Wisdom and more fourth presentation — doors open at 5:30 for social gathering followed by presentation 6:30 p.m.; social hour before presentation will have libations to sample; Dan Soeder, will present "The Shale Gas Revolution and the Development of the Marcellus Shale"; admission is free for members of Friends of Drake Well and \$5 for non-members; for more info visit www.drakewell.org/events

Saturday, March 28

Easter egg hunt — 12:30 p.m.; Rainbow Sportsman's Club, 481 Rainbow Rd., Polk; free for kids 12 and under; rain date will be April 4 **Spring Fling at the Mall craft and vendor show** — 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Clarion Mall, 22631 Route 68, Clarion; craft and vendor show featuring local artisans; free drawings offered by participating vendors; benefits Charitable Deeds; Easter Bunny appearances from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 to 5 p.m.

APRIL

Sunday, April 5

Easter Sunday Sunrise — Cook Forest 113 River Road, Cooksburg; for more info call 814-744-8407

Friday, April 24

Oil City Uncorked — 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.; South Side Music Under the Lights on Linden — 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. South Side

MAY

Friday, May 1

First Friday and music on the square — 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.; vendors on Seneca Street and activities; town square music by White Cat Out; First Fridays on Seneca Street Brought to you by merchants, Arts Oil City, Oil City Arts Council and Main Street **Summer Open Studios** — 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.; National Transit Building Art Studios second floor, 206 Seneca Street, Oil City; free and open to the public; meet artists and craftspeople, see the studios where they create and learn about their processes, and watch demonstrations; woodworking, textiles, handmade candles, mixed media 3-D art, porcelain, photography, painting, art puzzles, prints and cards

Saturday, May 2

Kids fishing derby — Clear Creek Kennerdell Rd, Kennerdell; for more info call 814-744-8407

Sunday, May 3

Engine Start-up Day — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Drake Well Museum and Park, 205 Museum Lane, Titusville; Engine Start-Up Day featuring the seasonal opening of outdoor exhibits including the Drake Well replica with its steam engine and the Central Power exhibit; staff and volunteers will be on hand to interpret exhibits; special presentation to be announced; regular admission fees apply; event is weather permitting with a potential reschedule date of May 10 **Veterans and first responders fishing derby** — Clear Creek Kennerdell Rd, Kennerdell; for more info call 814-744-8407

Friday, May 8 & Saturday, May 9

Woodsy Owl Weekend — Clear Creek Kennerdell Rd, Kennerdell; for more info call 814-744-8407

Saturday, May 9

May Madness Demolition Derby — 7 p.m.; Wolf Corners Fairgrounds

Friday, May 15 – Sunday, May 17

Spring Conference — Cook Forest 113 River Road, Cooksburg; for more info call 814-744-8407

Saturday, May 16

Oil Creek 5 and 13 stacked trail races — 7 a.m.; Drake Well Museum and Park, 205 Museum Lane, Titusville; Annual Oil Creek 5 & 13 Stacked Trail Races featuring a 5-mile race at 7 a.m. followed by a 13-mile race at 8:30 a.m.; participants can run both to compete for a "stacked" finish time; races utilize trails around the museum and the Gerard Hiking Trail in Oil Creek State Park; finisher awards given for each race and the Stacked Challenge; all proceeds benefit Friends of Drake Well, Inc.; registration required at www.drakewell.org/events/trail-races

Tuesday, March 17

Friday, May 22 – Sunday, May 24

Living History Weekend — Cook Forest 113 River Road, Cooksburg; for more info call 814-744-8407

JUNE

Thursday, June 4

Curb Market — 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Central Avenue Plaza; every Thursday through Sept. 10; if you are interested in being a vendor, bringing a food truck, or being one of our buskers for the day, week, or season, call 814-677-3152 ext. 101

Friday, June 5

First Friday and music on the square — 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.; vendors on Seneca Street and activities; music in town square by Billy and the Neptunes; First Fridays on Seneca Street Brought to you by merchants, Arts Oil City, Oil City Arts Council and Main Street

Summer Open Studios — 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.; National Transit Building Art Studios second floor, 206 Seneca Street, Oil City; free and open to the public; meet artists and craftspeople, see the studios where they create and learn about their processes, and watch demonstrations; woodworking, textiles, handmade candles, mixed media 3-D art, porcelain, photography, painting, art puzzles, prints and cards

Saturday, June 6

Children's fishing derby — Cook Forest 113 River Road, Cooksburg; for more info call 814-744-8407 **Third Thursday Night Market Under the Lights of Linden** — 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.; live music and night market featuring artisans and makers

Saturday, June 27

St. Joseph's Annual Liberty 5k run/walk — 8 a.m.; Lucinda Train Station, 1040 Lander Dr., Lucinda; more info call 814-226-7288 or watch4deercatholic.church or Facebook @stjoseph5k

Sunday, June 28 – Saturday, July 4

Wolf Corners Fair — Wolf Corners Fairgrounds; demolition derbies, tractor pulls, ATV obstacle races, horse pulls, rough truck competitions, side by side races, double figure eight races, fireworks and much more; for additional details and a complete event schedule visit wolfcornersfair.com

JULY

Saturday, July 4

Fourth of July celebration — 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; St. Joseph Church parish grounds, Route 66, Lucinda; dinner, drawings, games of skill and chance; music; more information call 814-226-7288 or watch4deercatholic.church or Facebook @stjoseph4thofjuly

Friday, July 5

Summer Open Studios — 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.; National Transit Building Art Studios second floor, 206 Seneca Street, Oil City; free and open to the public; meet artists and craftspeople, see the studios where they create and learn about their processes, and watch demonstrations; woodworking, textiles, handmade candles, mixed media 3-D art, porcelain, photography, painting, art puzzles, prints and cards **Third Thursday Night Market Under the Lights of Linden** — 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.; live music and night market featuring artisans and makers

Friday, July 25 & Saturday, July 26

Flea Market — 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Rainbow Sportsman's Club, 481 Rainbow Rd., Polk

AUGUST

Friday, Aug. 7

First Friday and music on the square — 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.; vendors on Seneca Street and activities; music in town square by Killin Time; First Fridays on Seneca Street Brought to you by merchants, Arts Oil City, Oil City Arts Council and Main Street **Summer Open Studios** — 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.; National Transit Building Art Studios second floor, 206 Seneca Street, Oil City; free and open to the public; meet artists and craftspeople, see the studios where they create and learn about their processes, and watch demonstrations; woodworking, textiles, handmade candles, mixed media 3-D art, porcelain, photography, painting, art puzzles, prints and cards

Sunday, Aug. 9

Drake Day — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Drake Well Museum and Park, 205 Museum Lane, Titusville; Drake Day: Celebrate America 250 marking the 167th anniversary of Edwin L. Drake striking oil and the 250th birthday of America; event features living history activities and presentations illustrating life during Pennsylvania's oil boom days with a focus on American innovation; regular admission fees apply; details and updates available at www.drakewell.org/events

Friday Aug. 15

Bridgefest — 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Center Avenue Bridge; family friendly free fun on the bridge; music, artisans, makers, food trucks and more; presented by Oil City Main Street **Drake Well Marathon and Half** — 7 a.m.; 10K race, 5K and half marathon races; the marathon is also a qualifier for the Boston Marathon; registration for all three races can be found at drakewell.org/events **Third Thursday Night Market Under the Lights of Linden** — 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.; live music and night market featuring artisans and makers

Saturday, Aug. 22

Cornhole tournament — noon start; Rainbow Sportsman's Club, 481 Rainbow Rd., Polk

SEPTEMBER

Friday, Sept. 4

Summer Open Studios — 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.; National Transit Building Art Studios second floor, 206 Seneca Street, Oil City; free and open to the public; meet artists and craftspeople, see the studios where they create and learn about their processes, and watch demonstrations; woodworking, textiles, handmade candles, mixed media 3-D art, porcelain, photography, painting, art puzzles, prints and cards

Friday, Sept. 11

ARMA Fest — 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Oil City Uncorked; \$25 in advance or \$30 at door; food truck frenzy in Justus Park and Battle of the Bands pre-registration in town square 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 12

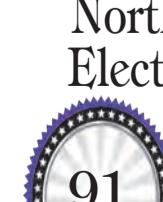
ARMA Fest — 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Justus Park; food truck frenzy; art demos including Fallen Shoppe/Kaleb Lewis' creation of the woodland creature for 2026; artisan and crafter booths; live music starts at noon, Memphis Honey Blues 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Croston Cross Band 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Friedhabers's Family Friendly Poker Run starts and ends in town square registration is at 8 a.m. in town square; Plain Air Artist Contest; art auction in town square; silent films, theatrical performances, outdoor movie and more; Bridge Literary Art Festival at Oil Region Venango Campus

Annual Fall Gas Up — 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Drake Well Museum; antique engines, tractors, oilfield equipment and more; regular admission fees apply; visit drakewell.org/events

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HONOR ROLL OF BUSINESS

PLEASE JOIN US IN HONORING THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES FOR PROVIDING YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY.

<p>St. Joseph Parish  35 Pearl Avenue Oil City 814-677-3020</p>	<p>St. Paul's Senior Living Community  339 E. Jamestown Rd. Greenville, PA 724-588-7610</p>	<p>Clarion Free Library  644 Main St. Clarion, PA 814-226-7172</p>	<p>Wiegel Brothers Marine  701 1/2 Elk St. Franklin 814-437-2077</p>	<p>Fairview Cheese  1734 Perry Highway Fredonia 724-475-4154</p>
<p>Barr's Insurance  257 Seneca St. Oil City 814-677-3012</p>	<p>Lang Motors "2010 PIADA Quality Dealer of the Year"  821 Martket St. Meadville 814-724-2500</p>	<p>Clark's Donuts  3486 Rt. 257 Seneca 814-677-7336</p>	<p>Hirsch's Meats  Corner of Rt. 322 & Rt. 338 Kossuth 814-797-5206</p>	
<p>Franklin Precision Casting The oldest continually operating casting foundry in Pennsylvania  655 Grant St. Franklin, PA 814-437-6891</p>	<p>Morrison Funeral Home  110 Petroleum St. Oil City 814-677-4000</p>	<p>Galaxy Federal Credit Union  1313 Liberty St. Franklin 814-432-1207</p>	<p>Sandy Lake Implement  3675 Sandy Lake Rd 1 1/2 Miles N. of Sandy Lake on Rt. 173 724-376-2489</p>	
<p>Franklin Elk's Lodge #110  1309 Buffalo St. Franklin, PA 814-432-8119</p>	<p>YWCA of Oil City  109 Central Ave. Oil City 814-676-6528</p>	<p>Franklin Service & Supply, Inc.  119 Grant St. Franklin 814-432-8016</p>	<p>Venango Regional Airport  1560 Airport Rd. Franklin 814-432-5333</p>	
<p>Family Service & Children's Aid Society  716 E. 2nd St. Oil City 814-677-4005</p>	<p>Phillips-Kifer Flowers  1405 E. Main St. Clarion 814-226-8460</p>	<p>Log Cabin Restaurant 9 years under new ownership  106 East State Rd. Seneca 814-676-1011</p>	<p>Tionesta Builders Supply Home Improvement Center  613 PA-36, Tionesta 814-755-3561 81 T-580, Shippensburg 814-226-5040</p>	
<p>Lander's General Store  27110 Rt. 66 Lucinda, PA 814-226-9688</p>	<p>Rossbacher Insurance Group  7137 US 322, Cranberry, PA 814-677-4095</p>	<p>American Legion Post 720 Berlin-Bowser  70 Veterans Rd. Knox 814-797-5615</p>	<p>Oil City Housing Authority  110 Moran St. Oil City 814-676-5764</p>	
<p>Titusville Hospital  406 West Oak St. Titusville, PA 814-827-1835</p>	<p>Minich's Towing & Recovery  1682 Riverside Dr. Oil City 814-676-2156</p>	<p>McNerney's  245 Seneca St. Oil City 814-676-4470</p>	<p>Cross Creek Resort  3815 State Rt. 8 Titusville 814-827-9611</p>	
<p>FL Crooks & Co.  539 Main St. Clarion 814-226-8020</p>	<p>Erie Zoo  423 W 38th St. Erie 814-864-4091</p>	<p>Riddle Brothers Complete Collision Repair Unibody & Frame Specialists  3743 US Rt. 322 Franklin 814-432-8663</p>	<p>Seneca Lanes 44 Years-Dean & Stephanie Sole Proprietors  2771 Route 257 Seneca, Pa 814-676-4618</p>	
<p>Mercer County State Bank  3279 S. Main St. Sandy Lake 724-376-7015</p>	<p>Provanta Propane  2096 Allegheny Blvd. Reno 814-676-8300</p>	<p>Char-Val Candies  1391 Route 66 New Bethlehem 814-275-1602 www.charval.com</p>	<p>Rankin Auction Service  Clarion 814-379-9862 814-764-3502 AuctionZip.com</p>	
<p>PNA Club  410 Seneca Street Oil City, PA 814-676-4679</p>	<p>Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative  23534 Hwy 86 Cambridge Springs 800-352-0014</p>	<p>Constable Refuse Service  Rt 322 West Franklin 814-432-2509</p>	<p>Meadville Livestock Auction  Saegertown, PA 814-763-2240</p>	

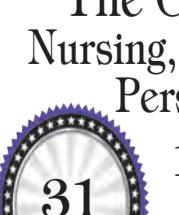
HONOR ROLL OF BUSINESS

PLEASE JOIN US IN HONORING THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES FOR PROVIDING YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY.

<p>Cooperstown Sand & Gravel  3070 US 322 Franklin, PA 814-374-4412</p>	<p>Franklin Animal Clinic  1623 Pittsburgh Rd. Franklin, PA 814-437-5768</p>	<p>Sanford Company Janitorial Supplies  Franklin, PA 800-864-2693 www.sanfordcompany.com</p>	<p>Gahr Excavating  1102 East 2nd St. Oil City, PA 814-758-9514</p>	<p>Computer Support & Associates, Inc.  860 S. 5th Ave. Clarion 814-226-7456</p>
<p>Lowry Auto Body, Inc.  605 Wiley Ave. Franklin, PA 814-432-3050</p>	<p>Blairs Key Locksmith  715 Grant St. Franklin, PA 814-437-6903</p>	<p>Oak Hill Apartments  10 Taylor St. Franklin 814-432-4035</p>	<p>Cheri Schiffer Salon  1237 Liberty St. Franklin, PA 814-432-2600</p>	
<p>Franklin Commons Apartments  9 Cestwood Drive Franklin, PA 814-432-3199</p>	<p>Terry W. Kahle  423 E. Railroad St. Knox 814-797-1188</p>	<p>King's Landscaping  154 Siverly Ave. Oil City, PA 814-676-6125</p>	<p>Waterproofing Specialties  3360 Ridgway- Johnsonburg Rd. Ridgway, PA 814-772-9291 877-644-9226</p>	
<p>Jones Party Magic  3830 US 322 Franklin, PA 814-432-7812</p>	<p>Wolfs Camping Resort  308 Timberwolf Run Knox, PA 814-797-1103</p>	<p>Snug Harbour Restaurant & Lounge  6447 Rt. 66 Fairmount City 814-275-3355</p>	<p>Professional Cycle Inc.  23070 US 322 Cochranton, PA 814-425-3537</p>	
<p>UCIP  155 East Bissell Ave Oil City 814-336-4157</p>	<p>Franklin Retail Association  1255 Liberty St. Franklin 814-432-5607</p>	<p>Baytree Farm  2265 Rockland Nickleville Rd. Emlenton, PA 814-671-3922</p>	<p>Liberty Electronics  189 Howard St. Franklin, PA 814-432-7505</p>	
<p>Community Ambulance Service, Inc.  Franklin · Oil City Seneca Always dial 911 & ask for Community Ambulance Service</p>	<p>Anderson Metal Industries, Inc.  1385 Pittsburgh Rd. Franklin, PA 814-437-7814</p>	<p>Lofink Auto Body  780 Sunville Rd. Franklin 814-432-3574</p>	<p>Hartzell's Water Conditioning, Inc.  Thank you for your business! 1-800-821-5261 www.hartzellwaterinc.com PA 44941</p>	
<p>Community Services  206 Center St. Oil City, PA 814-678-7766</p>	<p>H. Jack Buzzard Funeral Home  Eau - Claire Parker 724-791-2484</p>	<p>Bauer Truck Repair  140 McClain-Watson Rd. Shippenville, PA 814-226-6023</p>	<p>Rizer Fireworks  40147 PA-66 Marienville 814-927-6637</p>	
<p>Two Mile Run County Park  471 Beach Rd. Franklin, PA 814-676-6116 www.twomilerun.net</p>	<p>New Directions Community Credit Union  101 N. 13th St., Franklin 25 E. 1st St., Oil City 206 S. Martin St. Titusville www.newdirectionscsu.com</p>	<p>Maurer's Trading Post  1696 Pittsburgh Rd., Franklin 814-437-9570</p>	<p>Agway  550 N. Seneca St. Oil City, PA 814-677-2031</p>	
<p>Friedhaber's Appliance  14 East First St. Oil City, PA 814-676-5694</p>	<p>Pin Oak Village  139 Acorn Dr. Seneca, PA 814-676-0193  pinoak@positive-housing.com</p>	<p>Drayer Electric Services, LLC  5312 Georgetown Rd. Franklin, PA 814-432-5478</p>	<p>Hartland Homes & Excavation  814-354-2618</p>	
<p>Heath Oil Inc.  5821 US 322 Franklin, PA 814-432-8003</p>	<p>Nicolls & Auction Offices in Cochranton & Meadville  25865 Bell Hill Rd. Cochranton 814-333-1988</p>	<p>Insurance Services 601 Grant Street · Franklin Cynthia Cauvel 814-432-3365 Nick McLaughlin 814-432-2011 Kyle Jacoby 814-346-1881</p>	<p>Oil Creek & Titusville Railroad  409 S. Perry St. Titusville 814-676-1733</p>	

HONOR ROLL OF BUSINESS

PLEASE JOIN US IN HONORING THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES FOR PROVIDING YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY.

<p>Burger King  5758 State HWY 8 Harrisville 814-786-9785</p>	<p>WV Glass  11521 Rt. 58 Sligo, PA 814-745-2323</p>	<p>Williams Travel Plus 2 years under new ownership  8 State Street Oil City 814-677-1237</p>	<p>All Seasons Temporaries  1288 Liberty St. Franklin, PA 814-437-2148</p>	<p>USA Choice  217 Frame Hall 1801 West 1st St. Oil City, Pa 814-678-8831</p>
<p>Virgile Iron & Steel 4 Years Under New Ownership  191 State Rt. 8 Oil City 814-676-1100</p>	<p>Clark Electric, Inc.  53 South 4th Ave. Clarion 814-226-6100</p>	<p>Barrow-Civic Theatre  1223 Liberty St. Franklin 814-437-3440</p>	<p>Higley's Archery  17857 State Highway 8 Centerville, Pa 814-654-7939</p>	
<p>Main Street Market  714 Main St. Polk 814-432-5558</p>	<p>Certified Auto Care  South Fifth Ave. Clarion, PA 814-226-4624</p>	<p>Hards Fabrication & Welding Inc.  231 Gilmore Dr. Seneca, PA 814-677-2460</p>	<p>Emlenton IGA  514 River Ave. 724-867-2427</p>	
<p>Lifelike Taxidermy  510 Kennerdell St. Franklin 814-432-4142</p>	<p>Lee's Fine Detail & Auto Sales  1850 Allegheny Blvd. Oil City, PA 814-677-6514</p>	<p>Coal Oil Johnny's Eatery  117 East State (At the Light) Pleasantville, PA 814-589-5500</p>	<p>Hepler's Meats  Route 38 Emlenton Route 322 Cranberry 814-498-2813</p>	
<p>Hugh Water Services  7344 US-219 Brockway, PA 814-265-8981</p>	<p>Jane's Stromboli Home Baked Goodness  Stoneboro Store: 724-376-3828 Home: 814-786-9733 www.janesstromboli.com</p>	<p>Belknap Livestock Auction  140 State Rt. 1025 Dayton, PA 724-762-2634</p>	<p>Holy Jeans Local Youth Choir 12 Smedley St. Oil City 814-758-2240 30 Year Concert Celebration March 29th - 3PM · Barrow Civic</p>	
<p>Best Printing  111 Walnut Street Oil City 814-676-5311</p>	<p>Champion Modular, Inc.  451 Southern Ave. Strattanville 814-764-5581 championhomes.com</p>	<p>Oakwood Mini Storage  Rt. 62 & Rt. 157 Oil City, PA 1-800-494-2299</p>	<p>Seneca Motors, Inc.  Seneca, PA 814-677-2791 www.senecamotors.net</p>	
<p>Clarion Beverage  9 North 4th Ave. Clarion 814-226-7031</p>	<p>Electralloy/GO Carlson  175 Main St. Oil City, PA 814-678-4100</p>	<p>Amy's Closet  Emlenton and Oil City 814-758-6591</p>	<p>Knepp Buildings  13436 Foust Road Conneaut Lake, Pa 814-382-0392</p>	
<p>MC Auto Repair & Towing, LLC  53 Rehobeth Church Rd. Clarion, PA 814-745-3254</p>	<p>Auditory Services  310 13th St. Franklin 814-868-8487</p>	<p>Myers Custom Woodworks  2718 PA 417 Franklin, PA 814-437-0750</p>	<p>Bugle Point Elk Ranch Elk Meat for Sale  1105 Kilgore Rd. Stoneboro, PA 814-786-7806</p>	
<p>Gravatt Painting & Services, Inc.  PO Box 657 Franklin 814-437-7577 State Register Number PA 038888</p>	<p>Oil City Arts Council  228 Seneca Street Oil City 814-676-1509</p>	<p>Montana's Country Cafe Owners: Gabe & Kensey Montana  Marble, PA Call for all your catering needs! 814-354-7376</p>	<p>Karnish Financial Advisors  1510 West First St. Oil City 814-678-3438</p>	
<p>Corbin's Stained Glass Studio  217 Main St. Summerville 814-856-3133 See us on Facebook</p>	<p>Keystone Community Education Council  206 Seneca Street Oil City, Pa 814-677-4427</p>	<p>The Caring Place Nursing, Rehabilitation, Personal Care  103 North 13th St. Franklin 814-432-4491</p>	<p>Swartfager Welding, Inc.  199 Boyle Memorial Drive Knox, PA 814-797-0280</p>	

HONOR ROLL OF BUSINESS

PLEASE JOIN US IN HONORING THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES FOR PROVIDING YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY.

Sherman's Auto Repair  703 Rockdale Rd. Emlenton, PA 724-867-5871	Specialty Fabrication & Powder Coating  445 Allegheny Blvd. Franklin, PA griffin@specfab.com www.specfab.com	Cottage Hill Fudge Fresh fudge made with cream & butter  169 E. Bissell Ave. Oil City, PA 814-676-2655	Gilmore Audiology Terri Gilmore, AuD, CCC/A  1422 Liberty Street, Franklin, PA 814-432-2642
Jeff's Outdoor Services Full Service Landscaping & Firewood Sales  814-428-9885	Next Step Therapy  145 Steffee Blvd. Seneca 814-677-1390	C & C Plumbing 16+ Years of Education & Experience  Drain Lines, Water Lines, Gas Lines 814-374-2628	Ocean Spray Car Wash  299 Duncomb St. Oil City, PA
Cinderella's House Cleaning Services We don't cut corners - we clean them 814-673-3107 Credit cards accepted 	Schoch Construction  Floors - Kitchen Bath- Painting Tile - Roofing 814-671-0235	Salon Dolce (Across from the Elks)  507 13th St. Franklin, PA 814-432-4400	Jennifer Mays Farmer's Insurance  3191 PA 257 Seneca 814-670-0096
Seneca Primary Care  3529 State Rt. 257 Seneca 814-677-7388	Creekside Granite  1884 Allegheny Blvd Reno, PA 814-670-1044	Nelson Auto Service and Repair  Rt. 322 Cranberry, PA 814-676-9303	Liberty Street Antiques  1239 Liberty St. Franklin, PA 814-437-6550
Paul Como Allstate Insurance  317 13th St. Franklin 814-432-5590	Cadman Fire Extingisher Service  4528 US Hwy 322 Jamestown, PA 724-866-7474	Schiffer's Custom Cabinetry  149 Meadow Rd. Seneca, PA 814-516-2656	Rose & Black Funeral Home & Crematory Inc.  99 Franklin St. Stoneboro, PA 724-376-4000
Andres-Bush Internal Medicine  3742 State Rt. 257 Seneca 814-678-9518	Prime Fitness  Specialty Fitness Systems Franklin	Hartle Dental, LLC  1339 Liberty Street Franklin, Pa 814-437-1185	Griffin Collision & Design  133 Meadow Road Seneca Pa 814-657-3464
Contempo Tech Window Washing  Commercial Residential 814-673-4198	Heritage Elder Law & Estate Planning, LLC  484 Allegheny Blvd. Suite C, Franklin 724-841-0004 www.HeritageElderLaw.com	Knox Country Farm Supply  6504 Route 208 Knox, PA 814-797-1256	Triple States Family Auctions  45 years experience 10416 Free Rd. Conneaut Lake 814-724-9947
Struxures, LLC  3545 Rt. 322 Seneca, PA 814-676-1432	Bayless Fuel  202 South Brown St. Titusville 814-827-6463	The Printer's Cabinet & Curiosities  415 12th St. Franklin 814-671-0626	Banquet & Party Rentals  Seneca, PA 814-657-5423
Forest Glen Alpacas  316 McCurdy Rd. Titusville, PA 814-827-2352	RS Roofing & Construction  Amish Roofing Crew 814-221-3516 Free estimates	Richar Accounting Group P.C.  3249 Rt. 257 Seneca, PA 814-670-0235	Moore Heating & Air Conditioning  Dalton Moore, Owner Pleasantville 814-964-2591
Tidioute Community Charter School  241 Main St, Tidioute 814-484-3550	Linda Lou's Family Restaurant  1572 Mercer Rd. Franklin, PA 814-432-2009	Tranquil Moments Massage Raeann Rauch, LMT 110 W. Spring St Titusville 814-564-1335	Bailey's Jewelers  3142 PA-257 Seneca 814-670-0900

Barrow-Civic Theatre sees audiences grow in 2025

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

The Barrow-Civic Theatre, owned and operated by the Franklin Civic Operetta Association (FCOA), reported a steady increase in attendance throughout 2025, buoyed by a season of technical milestones and sold-out performances.

The Main Stage season opened with Neil Simon's farcical comedy "Rumors," followed by the musical comedy "Spamalot." The summer production of the 1980s pop classic "Footloose" played to sold-out audiences.

During the Applefest festival, the theatre presented "Singin' in the Rain," a production that featured the technical feat of actors tap dancing in rain on stage. The Main Stage season concluded with "Frozen, Jr.," featuring a cast of talented local youth.

The "Off-Barrow" program, designed for the venue's intimate Little Theatre space, also continued to evolve in 2025. The season included "Space Cadets" (written by local youth), the dramas "Doubt" and "Rabbit Hole," and the adult holiday comedy "Who's Holiday."

In August, the theatre also premiered the folk operetta "Yonder Mountain," written by local author and composer John Krumich. The show also traveled to Cook Forest for a collaborative performance at the Sawmill Center for the Arts.

The Youth Theatre Program also celebrated the work of George M. Cohan in "Song and Dance Man" during its annual summer camp.

Renovations and Fundraising

The FCOA Board of Directors continues to invest in the historic building. The "Replace the Stage" campaign allowed for significant upgrades during the 2024 and 2025 fiscal years, including lighting fixture installations, electrical and rigging upgrades, and new stage curtains.

Looking forward, the organization has launched the "Face the Future" campaign to fund necessary repairs to the building's façade in the coming year.



Leadership and Staff

The theatre maintains a staff including three full-time and seven part-time employees. Zachary Covington continues as the theatre's executive director, while Kristy Moore maintains her role as general manager. James Amero continues to serve as the Barrow-Civic's technical director with the help of tech assistant Brandon Huff, who joined the theatre's team last year. Jenalee Schenk is the marketing and graphic designer, and Gary Barton returns as the volunteer and events assistant. Holly Galmish remains the theatre's bookkeeper, and Deb Shoup, James McDonald and Ben Augenbaugh continue to help out as the theatre's custodians.

Aside from dedicated staff, hundreds of volunteers and occasional interns continue to assist the Barrow-Civic Theatre in advancing its mission and producing its shows and events.

2026 Season and Events

The Barrow-Civic Theatre's audience numbers revealed a steady increase in attendance throughout 2025, and they are hopeful that 2026 will continue this growth trend.

The current line-up of productions at the theatre for 2026 includes:

- "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change"



- "Murder On the Orient Express"
- "Disney's The Little Mermaid"
- "Mean Girls"
- "A Christmas Carol"

The coming year will also see the return of the "Red Eye Theatre Project," Silver Cornet Band, Venango Symphony Orchestra, Oil Region Ballet and HOLEY Jeans concerts.

Touring productions "On the Lash" and "Corvettes Doo Wop Revue" are also scheduled to return.

Memberships, sponsorships, subscriptions and tickets are available

now. For more information, visit www.barrowtheatre.org.

A look back

Since 1993, the theatre has been committed to being a leader in the cultural growth, diversity and vitality of the region.

Their vision is to provide expanding opportunities for quality programming and entertainment for the broad-based audience while maintaining financial stability.

A nonprofit organization, FCOA's Barrow-Civic Theatre provides creative arts opportunities to all ages throughout the year, with a season of shows running from January through December.

FCOA continues to produce the musicals and plays presented in the Main Stage and Off-Barrow seasons at the Barrow-Civic Theatre. The 13-member Board of Directors is 100% volunteer, and members serve as producers and business managers for the shows.

The Bridge Literary Arts Center revives journal, hosts writers

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

The Bridge Literary Arts Center is celebrating a year of growth in its mission to support literature, language and art in the greater western Pennsylvania region.

Tracing its roots to 1993 as The Bridge Coffee House at the Barrow-Civic Theatre, the organization has evolved significantly. Since 2023, The Bridge has been an affiliate of The Bridge Builders Community Foundation, a partnership that has allowed for expanded workshops and open mic events at the Oil City and Franklin libraries, as well as venues such as the Transit Building, Core Goods, The Cork 'n Screw and the Oil Region Venango Campus.

Bridge Lit Fest and Journal Launch

In September, The Bridge partnered with the Allegheny River Music and Arts Festival to host their third annual Bridge Lit Fest. The event also marked the launch of the expanded "Bridge Lit Journal," edited by Tracey Landre-Garrett and the board staff.

The launch party, held Sept. 12 to a standing-room-only crowd at The Cork 'n Screw in Oil City, featured traditional music by Keridwyn. The journal now features regional, national and international artists, reflecting the organization's goal to serve as a "bridge" connecting local creators with the wider world.

The festival continued Sept. 13 at the Oil Region Venango Campus with workshops in fiction, nonfiction, world-building, poetry and songwriting. Taking advantage of the campus grounds, participants also engaged in "plein air" and "bike and write" sessions.

Year-Round Programming

In April, the organization hosted a "Mini Lit Fest" at the Venango Campus library, offering introductory workshops on poetry, fairy tales and nonfiction, followed by an open mic at Core Goods.

The Bridge also continued its Zoom open mic series, connecting local writers with authors from outside the region. Featured guests included poets Cindy Eckert, Bubba Henson and Alfred Encarnacion, as well as Lit Fest instructors Karen Shubert, Marc Neison and Mathew Ferrence.

In December, Lander-Garrett led a workshop series at the Oil City Library on "Epic World Building." The sessions were designed to appeal to a broad creative audience, including gamers, gamemasters, puppet makers and storytellers.

Community Collaborations

The Bridge participated in the Oil City Arts Council's Artists Sunday in November, hosting an open mic and authors' fair at Core Goods. The event showcased area writers such as Wayne Swanger, Greg Clary and Philip Terrian, along with musicians Brady Buchanan and Herb Luthin.

Building on a 2024 collaboration with Foxburg's Red Brick Gallery on an "ekphrastic" exhibit (writing inspired by art), The Bridge plans to partner with gallery curator Jason Lewis for a "reverse ekphrastic" event, where visual artists will create work inspired by local writing.

Looking Ahead

In 2026, The Bridge aims to further empower regional citizens to share their stories by offering workshops in a wider array of locations and hosting more non-regional writers to improve accessibility for local residents.

The Bridge Literary Arts Center welcomes new participants. For more information, email bridgeliteraryartscenter@gmail.com or visit www.bridgeliteraryartscenter.org.

Council on Greenways and Trails preserves land for future generations

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

The nonprofit Council on Greenways and Trails conducts free public events and projects aimed at emphasizing public appreciation for greenways and trails situated in Clarion, Crawford and Venango counties. CGT also provides technical assistance to member entities and official planning organizations to include continued enhancements and maintenance of outdoor recreational facilities, venues and activities.

In addition, the organization, founded in 2008, points out some of the lesser-known facilities and sites that can handle more hikers, bicyclists, paddlers and wildlife watchers.

Last February, more than 700 people attended the 9th Annual Nature Art Showcase and Sale held in the lobby of the Barrow-Civic Theatre during the "Franklin On Ice" festival. In total, the showcase featured 76 area artists displaying original 2D and 3D artwork depicting landscapes, closeups of wildlife and planets, people participating in outdoor recreation and locations offering free public recreational opportunities in northwestern Pennsylvania.

The Nature Art Showcase is operated by CGT, with significant administrative support by the Penn Soil Resource Conservation & Development Council headquartered in Warren. In the coming weeks, the same administrative team will conduct the event's tenth edition at the same location Feb. 6-7 thanks to sponsorships by area businesses, art galleries and frame shops, and economic development partners.

Awards Ceremony

On June 5, during National Trails Week, Cochranton Lions Community Park in Crawford County was the site for the 2025 Annual Greenways Awards Ceremony. Three awards were presented that day. The overall event sponsors for the awards program were the Titusville Community Development Agencies and Cochranton Borough.

The James E. Holden Greenways Volunteer of the Year Award went to Susan M. Hilton, of Franklin, who is retired



from the faculty of PennWest Clarion University. In her acceptance remarks, Hilton pointed out that volunteering was encouraged and practiced by her parents and extended family for as long as she could remember. In recent years, Hilton has focused on volunteering with groups undertaking gardening, protection of the area's natural resources, and expansion/operation of public outdoor recreational trails. The Volunteer Award was sponsored by the Holden Family and friends.

The Richard M. Garrard Greenways Neighbor of the Year Award was presented to the Cochranton Area Redevelopment Effort (CARE), which owns the Greenways Trail that is a next-door neighbor along residential and business properties, linking Cochranton Landing along French Creek, Cochranton Fairgrounds along Little Sugar Creek, and Cochranton Lions Community Park.

CARE participated actively in recent borough-wide comprehensive recreational planning, furnished private sector matching funds to augment several public grants received by Cochranton Borough, and coordinated numerous free public musical performances and heritage events in the park. Jesse McCullough, president of CARE, received the award items from CGT President Kristin Hauser. Anonymous friends of the Council on Greenways and Trails sponsored this award.

Six entities which collaborated on the relocation and rehabilitation of a historic bridge to become an extension of the Spillway Trail in Linesville shared the Thomas J. Allen Greenways Partner of the Year Award, which was sponsored by the Franklin Industrial and Commercial Development Authority.

An 1876 metal truss bridge was removed from its eastern Crawford County constructed site, rehabilitated, positioned across another stream in western Crawford County, and then Messerall Bridge was paved to link a new segment of hike/



At the 2025 Annual Greenways Awards ceremony, the Richard M. Garrard Greenways Neighbor of the Year Award was presented to the Cochranton Area Redevelopment Effort (CARE). CARE Board members Mark Roche, left, and Jesse McCullough, right, accepted a framed certificate presented to CARE from CGT President Kristin Hauser.

bike Spillway Trail in the northern corner of Pymatuning State Park. The recognized agencies are the following: County of Crawford; PennDOT District #1; PA DCNR — Pymatuning State Park; Pa. Fish and Boat Commission; Pa. Game Commission; and Pine Township.

Nominations for 2026

Nominations are being accepted now for the 2026 Greenways Awards, recognizing accomplishments of the prior five years; see the nomination form and instructions at www.councilongreenwaysstrails.org. The 2026 awards ceremony will be held on the afternoon of June 4; the site is still pending. Sponsorships for the Greenways Awards are still available.

Officers of the Council on Greenways and Trails are the following delegates:

- President: Kristin Hauser of Meadville
- Vice-President: Caryl Holden of Franklin
- Secretary: Anthony "T. J." Parks of Franklin
- Treasurer: Marilyn Black of Cochranton

CGT holds its quarterly business meetings on the second Thursday afternoon in January, April, July and October at the Conference Room of the Emerging Technology Center, operated by the Franklin Industrial and Commercial Development Authority in

the Franklin Industrial Park. Each meeting begins with a guest speaker, followed by the business meeting. Guests are welcome to attend the 2 p.m. meetings, and interactive video linkage is available.

Members of the CGT in 2026 include the following municipalities, nonprofit organizations, authorities and associations: Allegheny Valley Trails Association (AVTA); City of Franklin; City of Oil City; Clarion County Economic Development Corporation; Clear Lake Authority (CLA); Cochranton Borough; Cornplanter Township; County of Clarion; County of Venango; Cranberry Township; Franklin Industrial & Commercial Development Authority; French Creek Recreational Trails, Inc.; French Creek Valley Conservancy (FCVC); Northwest PA Mobility Alliance; Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism (ORA); Titusville Area Trails Association which is a subsidiary of Titusville Renaissance, Inc.; and Titusville Community Development Agencies.

CGT operates as a volunteer incorporation and coordinates its major projects to also involve multiple partners and sponsors.

The motto of CGT is "Recognizing the worth of natural, heritage and recreational resources. Planning now, enjoying forever."

Venango Museum sees younger audience

New exhibits are planned for 2026

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

The Venango Museum of Art, Science and Industry welcomed approximately 4,000 visitors during its 2025 season, noting a significant demographic shift for the historic institution.

While visitors ages 65 and older previously dominated attendance, the museum reported that young adults under 40 now comprise the majority of daily visitors. The number of visiting families has remained steady. Most guests travel from larger nearby urban areas, including Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Erie.

Restoration and Preservation

Housed in the historic 1905 U.S. Federal Building at 270 Seneca St., the museum focused heavily on preservation in 2025. In partnership

with the Oil City Main Street Program and Take Pride in Oil City, the museum completed a \$20,000 restoration of the building's façade.

Inside, work continues on the museum's 1928 Wurlitzer Theater Organ. Originally installed in Oil City's Latonia Theater in 1929, the instrument is undergoing a restoration valued at more than \$60,000. As of December, \$43,000 of the work is complete.

To support the project, the museum expanded its Silent Film Series to six screenings, each selling out its 100-seat capacity.

2026 Season Outlook

The museum will reopen on April 7 with a new limited-time exhibit, "Before The Boom." Replacing last season's "Oil Boom Spectacular," the new display will explore Venango County history in the 1700s.

The Wurlitzer restoration is projected to be finished in the first half of the year, in time for the 2026



Silent Film Series. The upcoming series will again feature six screenings, including a performance by a five-piece orchestra playing historically accurate scores.

Regular hours of operation run from April through December, Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission is \$7 for adults and \$5

for seniors and students. Children 5 and younger and museum members are admitted free.

For more information, visit www.venangomuseum.org.



The Sim Room brings virtual racing to historic Wildcat Mansion

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

In July 2025, Franklin gained a unique indoor entertainment venue with the opening of The Sim Room, a private motion racing simulator lounge located inside the Carriage House at Wildcat Mansion.

The business was born from a casual conversation in early 2024 between founders Eli Busch and Devin Zagar. While playing a racing video game, the two joked about how much better the experience would be with real-world motion. That off-hand comment evolved into a months-long renovation project that transformed part of the historic property into a modern entertainment destination.

The Sim Room operates on a private, self-serve model believed to be the first of its kind in the region. Guests book time online and receive secure access codes and instructional videos, allowing them exclusive use of the space without on-site staff.

The lounge is designed for families, date nights and groups, offering more than just racing. Amenities include:

- A full-motion professional

racing simulator.

- Arcade games and darts.
- A seating area with TV, snacks and drinks.
- BYOB privileges for adult guests.

Since opening, the business has drawn visitors from Venango County, Pittsburgh, Erie and Cleveland, bringing new tourism traffic to the Wildcat Mansion grounds.

Plans for 2026

Going into their second year of operation, The Sim Room plans to launch organized racing leagues to attract more visitors. These weekly competitions will allow drivers to track their results and build a community, establishing the venue as a regular destination for both casual and competitive racers.

The owners also plan to focus on marketing in 2026, casting their net wider to nearby cities and states to try and attract more traffic, both to their business and to the area as a whole.

Management also plans to host a ribbon-cutting ceremony, open houses and community nights to introduce local residents to the space.

Silver Valley Lake Rentals offers secluded cabins near Franklin

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

Located just three miles outside of Franklin, Silver Valley Lake Rentals continues to offer a "hidden gem" for travelers seeking a quiet escape.

The property features cabins situated on a private five-acre lake. The location is designed for outdoor enthusiasts, sitting approximately

200 yards from the Allegheny River, Big Sandy Creek and the Sandy Creek bike trail.

Amenities and Events

The cabins, which have been newly remodeled, feature two bedrooms and distinct sunken fireplaces. Each unit offers clear views

2026 Outlook

Looking ahead to 2026, management plans to expand promotional efforts to introduce the secluded rental property to a broader audience. The business positions itself as a classic "cabin in the woods" experience with easy access to the region's wildlife and trails.

Franklin Fine Arts Council wraps 2025 season

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

The Franklin Fine Arts Council (FFAC) concluded its 2025 season with a schedule of more than 68 events, reinforcing Franklin's reputation as an "Always Eventful" destination. The council reported that the diverse lineup of music, arts and family programs successfully drove activity to downtown businesses and highlighted the region's outdoor assets.

Winter and Spring Events

The year began in February with Franklin On Ice, featuring live demonstrations by DiMartino ice carvers. Downtown shops and restaurants participated in the weekend, while Grumpy Goat Distillery hosted a Chili Cook-Off. The event included magic shows at the Barrow-Civic Theatre and horse-drawn carriage rides sponsored by Village Auto.

Spring programming included the annual Easter Egg Hunt at Fountain Park on April 12. Sponsored by the Franklin Kiwanis, the event saw more than 5,000 eggs collected in minutes.

Summer Traditions

Summer began with the 17th annual Bill Beith Memorial Golf Tournament on June 9 at Wanango Country Club, raising funds for downtown events. Due to construction,

the Franklin Curb Market operated out of City Parking Lot D from May through October, hosting farmers, artisans and the Kid's Makers Mind entrepreneur club.

Meanwhile, the Alfresco Patio Series brought live music to Bella Cucina and Benjamin's Roadhouse, featuring local musicians and past Taste of Talent winners.

The Taste of Talent vocal competition itself drew 3,530 votes across six weeks at Bandstand Park, with Madelyn Williams earning the \$1,000 grand prize, sponsored by New Directions Community Credit Union.

The Thursday Night Concert Series featured the Silver Cornet Band and acts such as the Max Schang Trio, Brandon Rae Band and Pine Valley Boys. The series concluded with a tribute to the late Ronnie Beith by The Carnival Brothers.

Independence Day and Stone Skipping

July 4 festivities included a parade, fireworks over Riverfront Park and the Penny Carnival. The season concluded with the Rock in River Festival, Pennsylvania's stone-skipping championship. Kurt Steiner, of Emporium, secured the Pro Division title, marking a return to the top spot he first held 25 years ago.

Youth Division:

- Ben O. (Pa.) — 31 skips

- Sullivan H. (Ohio) — 29

skips

- Zach D. (New York) — 28 skips

Amateur Division:

- Logan Campola (Painesville, Ohio) — 36 skips

- Guy Dunkle (Little Cooly) — 29/26 skips

- Clayton Casper (Kennebelle) — 29/22 skips

Pro Division:

- Kurt Steiner (Emporium) — 41 skips

- David Ohmer (Erie) — 40/38 skips

- Andy Severns (Tidioute) — 40/36 skips

Holiday Logistics and Partners

A 35-foot Christmas tree, donated in memory of Jack Best by his family, anchored the city's holiday display. The installation was a complex logistical effort supported by local partners: Timberline Tree Service and Klapec Trucking transported the tree, while Sunbelt Rental and operator Jeff Lukonic assisted with the setup.

Volunteers, including Chip Abramovic, Areta Mong, Sue McCann, Chris Latchaw, Bob Spagnol and Dan Weiland, installed 18 strands of lights featuring 1,650 LEDs and 650 twinkle lights. The season peaked with Light Up Night and the Electric Lights Parade, featuring 73 units and fireworks by Pyrotecnico.

Community Collaboration

The FFAC acknowledged

major sponsors, including Mike and Joyce Hughes, UPMC Northwest, Komatsu, the Franklin Kiwanis Club, The EADS Group, Franklin Elks #110 and Edward Jones.

The council also highlighted the broader ecosystem of events and attractions that drive local tourism, including the May Garden Mart, Franklin Blues & Barbecue, Applefest, Downtown Trick-or-Treat and Pink Splash for the Cure.

Visitors to Franklin are encouraged to explore year-round attractions such as the Barrow-Civic Theatre, the Tiffany windows at St. John's Episcopal Church, Debence Antique Music World, the Venango County Historical Society, and the Allegheny River and Sandy Creek trails (with rentals available via O.A.R.S.).

Leadership and Contact

The 2025 FFAC Board included Pat Dolecki, Amy Ivell, Robin Shields-Holtzman, Areta Mong, Taylor Amos, Rachelle Surrena, Ashley Zaccari, Nancy Lindsey, Cheryl Brickner, Matt Beith, Chris Latchaw, Mary Dickson, Darrellyn Freeman, Kristy Ference, Jillian Harry and Jess Carroll. James Shrefler continued to serve as the City's events and marketing coordinator.

For event updates, visit www.franklinpa.gov.

Big Dog RC marks 16 years, hosts national events

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

Big Dog RC, a premier hobby shop and racing facility in Mercer County, is celebrating its 16th anniversary this year. Owned by John and Robin Raskob of Sandy Lake, the business has grown into one of the country's top-rated indoor radio-controlled (RC) model car tracks.

Drawing an average of more than 200 drivers weekly, the facility has become a regional tourism hub. Racers ranging in age from 5 to over

70 travel regularly from Ohio, New York and West Virginia to compete in year-round events.

National Championships and High-Speed Racing

Big Dog RC will serve as a national stage this summer. On June 27, the facility will host one of 10 qualifying races for the Tamiya RC Championship Series, a global competition organized by the

"scale speeds" of 700 mph. A newly sealed surface is slated for 2026.

Rock Crawling: A tri-level indoor course features mountains, bridges and a simulated mud pit for 1/24th scale trucks. The course is free to use, with ready-to-run trucks starting at approximately \$100.

To accommodate varied work schedules, Big Dog RC offers an "All Access Track Pass," granting members 24/7 access to the facility.

"The pass lets drivers come in on their own schedule to keep their skills sharp," the owners stated, noting that the flexibility supports second- and third-shift workers.

The facility includes a fully licensed kitchen — locally famous for its french fries — and a comprehensive hobby shop that provides warranty service and repairs, with pricing competitive with online retailers.

Big Dog RC is located at 482 Stoneboro Lateral Road, Stoneboro, just off Interstate 79. For more information, visit www.biggodrc.com or call 724-376-2379.



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