

Upcoming Events

Saturday, October 10 – Lois Orange Ducoeur Breast Cancer Walk, Downtown Charleroi — www.teamcharleroi.org for information.

Tuesday, October 13 – Chamber Luncheon, Smitty's Marina, 11:45AM — 1:00PM

Wednesday, October 21 – Chamber Board Meeting, SPHS Board Room, 8:00AM

Thursday, October 22 – Lunch & Learn on the Hiring Process presented by Staff Masters, SPHS Conference Room A, 11:45AM — 1:00PM

Wednesday, October 28 & Thursday, October 29 – Time Management Workshop presented by Ken Sevick, ActionCoach Business Coaching, Mon Valley Career & Technology Center, 7:00AM - registration 7:30AM — 10:30AM workshop

Thursday, November 12 – Chamber Luncheon, Cedarbrook Clubhouse Grill, 11:45AM — 1:00PM

Wednesday, November 18 – Chamber Board Meeting, SPHS Board Room, 8:00AM

Watch your mail, e-mail, fax machine and the Chamber website for more information on all of these upcoming events!



**Valley's Finest
Honored By Chamber**
Story inside!

Regional Reporter

A monthly publication of the Mon Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce

October is
Breast Cancer Awareness
Month

One Chamber Plaza - Charleroi, PA 15022
724-483-3507

www.mvrchamber.org



Chamber honors outstanding achievement

More than 150 members and guests were on hand to recognize four very interesting and deserving honorees at the Mon Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce 2009 Awards Event.

The winners were Progeny Systems, Fields of Heather, the Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority and Stephen V. Russell.

As President Armand Ferrara welcomed the crowd, he commented that "among the awardees are two highly successful businesses, a vital non-profit agency, and an individual who exemplifies dedication to his profession and to the community."

Deb Keefer, Chamber Director, presented an accounting of each recipient during the program.

OUTSTANDING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AWARD **Progeny Systems**

A dynamic video of Progeny Systems' operation was narrated by John McKay, facilities manager. Progeny is a high-tech defense based manufacturer located at Alta Vista in Fallowfield Township, and is performing cutting-edge technical manufacturing and engineering.

Also noted was its outstanding corporate generosity and the unfortunate passing of Chuck Dreer, who brought the Progeny start-up to the region. "He was a 30-year Navy veteran, a keen businessman, and a true gentleman in every sense of the word," said Keefer.

EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS **Fields of Heather**

Fields of Heather owners Tom and Gretchen Speece were recognized for the distinctive designs they create and the outstanding customer service they have delivered for 20 years. The Speeces feel that the longevity of Fields of Heather is owed to the artistic team they have been blessed with and their many loyal customers. Gretchen Speece's grandfather was one of the 13 founding members of FTD.

REGIONAL SERVICE AWARD

Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority

The Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority was honored for the many strides it has made in providing a vital transit system to the Mid Mon Valley since 1985. Its "Moving in a New Direction" initiative has



From left are John McKay, Progeny Systems; Dr. Harry Miale, Chairman, Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority; Gretchen, Caitlin and Tom Speece, Fields of Heather; and Stephen Russell, BVA Superintendent of Schools.

streamlined fares, increased routes and modernized the fleet.

It was noted that in the last fiscal year, there was an 8 percent increase in total ridership, the largest gain in riders in the past six years.

Accepting the award was Dr. Harry Miale, Board Chairman, who contributed its success to the Authority's Executive Director, Valerie Kissell, and the MMVTA staff which often goes above and beyond its regular duties to deliver this service to the

public.

SHINING STAR AWARD **Stephen V. Russell**

Stephen V. Russell, Superintendent of BVA Schools and General Chairman of the Mid Mon Valley Sports Hall of Fame, accepted the Chamber's award for individual accomplishment, the "Shining Star" award. As an educator, historian, writer and speaker, Russell has excelled at all aspects of his life, and has actively promoted the Mid Mon Valley and its citizens

throughout his career.

Recognition was also given to Ron Paglia, who recently resigned from the Chamber Board of Directors, after serving for 17 years.

The Awards Event Sponsor was Mon Valley Hospital and specialty sponsors were Charleroi Federal Savings Bank, Southwestern Pennsylvania Human Services, McGinley Maintenance and Guttman Oil.

Several door prizes donated by member businesses were won by those in attendance.

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From left are Rhonda Gifford, California University; John Mollenauer, Senior Times; and Lynn Baron, Sheana Malyszka, Terri Green, Kelly Hunt and Gordon Core, all of California University.



The late Chuck Dreer was recognized during the Progeny Systems award presentation.



Shining Star recipient Steve Russell poses with BVA School District staff members Eileen Navish, left, and Pat Marsden.



The crowd gets ready for the 2009 Chamber Awards program.



Caitlin Speece distributes roses to attendees of the 2009 Awards Event.



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Fall membership special offered

Join the largest business organization in the Valley

In recognition of the valuable contributions made by local chambers of commerce, Gov. Ed Rendell has proclaimed October 2009 as

"Local Chamber of Commerce Month" in Pennsylvania.

Included in the proclamation is Rendell's statement that "Pennsylvania remains firm in its commitment to forming partnerships that draw upon the best that business, labor, education, and government have to offer, and our local chambers of commerce are critical to the fulfillment of that goal, as

well as to the commonwealth's continue economic growth and advancement."

There are presently more than 200 local chambers of commerce in Pennsylvania representing approximately 250,000 businesses.

"The Mon Valley Regional Chamber is proud to be the largest business organization in the area and the growth that is being experienced, in spite of the financial condi-

tions that exist nationally," added Deb Keefer, Chamber director. "I believe that the business community is finding that a low membership investment in our organization has many opportunities that would be otherwise missed."

There are presently 275 members participating in the MVRCC, and has been named one of the "25 largest Chambers of Commerce in

the Pittsburgh region" for the last six years.

A fall special introductory dues rate which includes three months free covers membership for all of 2010.

An on-line application is available at www.mvrchamber.org or interested businesses, non-profit groups or individuals may contact Deb Keefer at the Chamber at (724) 483-3507.

Leads over Lunch event Oct. 13

It's not too late to reserve your seat for the Chamber's "Leads over Lunch."

Attendees at this chamber luncheon will present his or her 15-second "elevator speech" to the group with time for open networking.

The luncheon will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 13, from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Smitty's Marina in Lower Speers.

The cost is \$15 for members and \$18 for non-members. The Chamber's Pot of Gold is worth \$300.

Please call the Chamber or print out a registration form at www.mvrchamber.org

Chamber update

Lunch and Learn focuses on hiring

Hiring new employees? Join an interesting and informative discussion on the value of the employment screening process presented by Staff Masters Thursday, Oct. 22, at the Southwestern Pennsylvania Human Services Conference Room A from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.

A bag lunch and a complimentary insulated lunch bag will be provided compliments

of Staff Masters. The program is free for Chamber members and \$5 for non-members.

Please call the Chamber or print out a registration form at www.mvrchamber.org.

Time management workshop planned

Not enough hours in the day? Attend a workshop on time management presented by Ken Sevick of ActionCoach

Business Coaching.

The two-day workshop will be held Wednesday, Oct. 28, and Thursday, Oct. 29, from 7 to 10:30 a.m. at the Mon Valley Career & Technology Center, Guttman Boulevard in the Speers Industrial Park. The cost will be \$49 for both days.

Please call the Chamber or print out a registration form at www.mvrchamber.org.

Horrells head to Belgium

Linda and Bill Horrell of Mar-Bill Jewelers will head to Antwerp, Belgium, the diamond-buying capital of

the world, for their annual diamond buying trip on Oct. 17.

More than 60 percent of the world's uncut diamonds are cut, polished or traded there and they will be hand-selecting the most beautiful, brilliant gems from thousands of diamonds, half-carat to ten carats.

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Walk with us!

The Lois Orange Ducoeur Breast Cancer Walk will take place Saturday, Oct. 10.

Plan to attend this one- or two-mile fun walk.

Festivities begin at 9 a.m. in the Charleroi Market House on McKean Ave. Participate in the opening ceremony at 10 a.m., followed by the walk at 10:15 a.m.

For additional information or registration forms, contact TEAM Charleroi at (724) 483-3070, team-charleroi@mvrchamber.org or visit us on the web at www.team-charleroi.org.

This event is sponsored by Monongahela Valley Hospital, Ducoeur's Furniture and Sci-Tek Consultants.



Wayne Ray/For The Valley Independent

Congratulations to Charleroi's 2009 Homecoming King and Queen. From left are 2008 queen Kristie Bruno, 2009 queen Tiffany Lee, 2009 king Jesse Stringer, and 2008 king Jake Cheplic.



For information, call (724) 483-3070.
E-mail: teamcharleroi@mvrchamber.org
Or visit www.team-charleroi.org

Thank you to the 2009 sponsors!

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Spooktacular schedule set

Attention, ghosts and goblins. You won't want to miss the Halloween Spooktacular Wednesday, Oct. 28, in Charleroi.

The festival schedule is as follows:

4 p.m. — Fall Festival in the Charleroi Market House, sponsored by the John K. Tener Library. The event begins at 4 p.m. and runs through 9 p.m. The festival includes food, baked goods, games, crafts, Tarot card readings and ghost stories.

5 to 6 p.m. —Downtown Trick or Treat, sponsored by local businesses. Participating locations will be published in *The Valley Independent* Oct. 21 and 26.

6 to 6:30 p.m. — Mad

Science Gals.

7 p.m. — Halloween Parade, organized by the Charleroi Fire Department and sponsored by Greater Charleroi Community Development Corporation, Charleroi Rotary Club, Charleroi American Legion and the Charleroi American Legion Women's Auxiliary.

8 to 9 p.m. — Karaoke contest with huge prizes!

To register for the karaoke contest call (724) 483-8282.

For additional information about this event, please contact TEAM Charleroi at (724) 483-3070, via e-mail at teamcharleroi@mvrchamber.org or visit our Web site, www.teamcharleroi.org.



In front, from left, are Juliann Pfrogner, Nikkie Naulty, Emily Anders, Tori Hough and Mallory Santoro. In back, from left, are Morgan Bardzil, Ryan Pfrogner, Brett Cornelius, Ben Cornelius, Ronny Pfrogner, Jacob Anders, Noah Sapko, Andrew Lisovich and Tony Little.

B.L.U.R. receives October 'Charleroi Pride Award'

Youth from the Gatekeepers Community Church, B.L.U.R. (Breathing Life for Ultimate Restoration) were selected by TEAM Charleroi as winners of the October "Charleroi Pride Award."

In August, this youth group began work on the first of many community clean-up projects by pulling weeds and clearing debris from the planter at the entrance to Charleroi. This enthusiastic team was back to work in

September painting benches at the community park.

"The group feels that we do not have to accept the way things are now," said Pastor Gregg Anders. "They can make a difference and will continue to reach out and support the community in whatever ways they can."

October's project is already on the calendar with B.L.U.R. planning clean-up around the Honor Roll in Charleroi to get it ready for

the annual Veterans Day Services.

Local teens in grades 6 to 12 interested in taking part in these and other youth activities should contact the Gatekeeper Community Church at (724) 483-4988 for additional information.

If you'd like to nominate a business, organization or individual for the "Charleroi Pride Award," please e-mail teamcharleroi@mvrchamber.org or call (724) 483-3070.



From left are Charleroi Area School Board President Ken Wiltz, PTA board members Tiffany Payne and Toni Pellegrini and Superintendent Dr. Brad Ferko.

Students accept Rachel's Challenge

Rachel Scott was the first person killed in the Columbine shootings in 1999 and at that time few knew that her story would reach millions of people each year.

After her death Rachel's family found six diaries, poems and several drawings that reflected Rachel's philosophy and beliefs about life. In her diary Rachel wrote: "I have this theory that if one person can go out of their way to show compassion, then it will start a chain reaction of the same. People will

never know how far a little kindness can go."

In her essay and other writings, Rachel challenged her readers to do five things that have become the basis for the largest school assembly and student training program in the country:

- Look for the best in others – eliminate prejudice.
- Dream big – set goals – keep a journal.
- Choose positive influences.
- Small acts of kindness

(See RACHEL, Page 7)



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Team Charleroi

■ Education/Safety Committee Meeting — Tuesday, Oct. 6, at 8 a.m. in the superintendent's conference room at the Charleroi School District Administration building. This committee is working to improve the safety of Charleroi and promote the focus on business and educa-

tion. All residents and business owners in the Greater Charleroi Area are welcome to attend.

■ Lois Orange Ducoeur Breast Cancer Walk — Plan

to attend this one- or two-mile fun walk Saturday, Oct. 10. Festivities begin with registration at 9 a.m. in the Charleroi Market House on McKean Avenue in Charleroi. Participate in opening ceremony at 10 a.m. followed by the walk at 10:15 am. All proceeds from this event help to provide quality care, comfort and hope to local cancer patients using the Charles L. and Rose Sweeney-Melenzyer Pavilion and Regional Cancer Center at Monongahela Valley Hospital.

For additional information or registration forms, please contact TEAM Charleroi: at (724) 483-3070, e-mail to teamcharleroi@mvrchamber.org or visit us on the Web at www.teamcharleroi.org.

■ Design Committee of TEAM Charleroi will hold its quarterly meeting Wednesday, Oct. 14, at 8:30 a.m. in the Charleroi Borough Building. The purpose of this committee is to shape the physical character of downtown Charleroi as a place that is attractive to shoppers, investors, business

owners and visitors. All residents and business owners are encouraged to attend.

■ "Charleroi - The Future is Now" — Thursday, Oct. 15, at 6 p.m. at the Gatekeepers Community Church, 1006 Fallowfield Ave., Charleroi. This is a group of concerned citizens, business owners and organizations sharing ideas and working on various projects to improve and enhance the Greater Charleroi Area. This meeting is open to the public and everyone is encouraged to attend.

■ A new Charleroi restaurant is opening. B.J.'s Diner at 1000 McKean Ave. will open for breakfast and lunch beginning Oct. 20. Hours are 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sundays. Eat in, take out and local delivery are offered.

The breakfast menu will include omelets, breakfast sandwiches, homemade hash, sausage gravy and biscuits, donuts, pastries. The lunch menu will include homemade soups, hot dogs, hamburgers, salads and sandwiches. Daily specials will be offered.

Charleroi Fire Department

The Charleroi Fire

Department is hosting a "Gun Bash" Saturday, Oct. 17 at the Charleroi Fire Hall. Doors open at 3 p.m.

For additional details about any of these events, contact the Charleroi Fire Department at (724) 483-7311.

Charleroi Boy Scout News

Boy Scout Popcorn sale — The popcorn is from Trails End (www.trails-end.com) and each scout earns a percentage of the sale.

Support a local boy scout or e-mail the assistant scoutmaster at mbrigode@charleroiboyscouts.org and sales will be distributed to a needy scout.

Charleroi Community Events

Celebrate the season in the Magic City Dec. 5. Save the date for this upcoming community event which will include the annual holiday parade, lunch with Santa at the Charleroi Elks Club, beautiful painted window displays, a "Festival of Trees" and much, much more!

There will be a planning meeting for these festivities at 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15, at the Gatekeepers Community Church. Anyone interested in participating is encouraged to attend.

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Rachel

(FROM PAGE SIX)

reap huge results ■ Start a chain reaction of kindness.

Spurred by Rachel's writings, Rachel's Challenge was formed in 2003. Since that time more than 11 million people in 48 states and six countries have heard this inspirational, true story.

On Sept. 23, students and community members heard Rachel's message through a series of assemblies throughout the day and a community event in the evening, held at the Charleroi Area School District.

To date, approximately 180 local students have been motivated to become "Friends of Rachel" by joining the local club designed to encourage random acts of kindness to fellow students as well as inspire positive outreach in the community and the world at large.

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