



GREATER ROSTRAVER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

# CHAMBER Chatter

October 2009

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### Upcoming Events & Meetings

- November 1st - Daylight Saving Time Ends
- November 9th - GRC Executive Meeting
- November 11th - Veteran's Day
- November 17th - Membership Meeting
- November 26th - Thanksgiving
- November 27th - Light Up Night

## Greater Rostraver Chamber of Commerce

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 E-Mail: [grc@dp.net](mailto:grc@dp.net)

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

Chamber Office Hours  
 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday  
 8:00am to 3:00pm

*Please accept our apologies for any errors and/or omissions in this newsletter.*

## Letter from the President



I have had the pleasure of writing several articles this year for the *Chamber Chatter*. As a business owner and proud American today's comments will be about my opinions of where we are today.

First of all in Western Pennsylvania, we have been fortunate that this year business has not been anywhere near as bad as many other areas of our country. We do have the 10% unemployment problem. In conversation with other business owners, I find that most say they have had a slight increase in their business, but not as much as previous years. The goal of any Chamber of Commerce is to support their businesses and communities. I believe the GRC has done that. I urge all of you to continue to support your local chamber members. **With the "Christmas" season coming, I ask all to shop locally.**

Changing the subject, I would like to address the National Healthcare Issue. I believe that our healthcare is a very important issue that needs to be addressed. Private companies need to address costs to individuals and businesses. Tort needs to be reviewed. If passed, the proposed plan will badly hurt all small and large businesses. It will put many out of business. We do not have to be told by the government that we must have insurance provided by the government or face penalties. Our government has not done a good job running Social Security or Medicare. The government stimulus plan has put our country in deeper debt than ever before. The healthcare plan will add to that debt. I urge all to learn more about this plan that will be forced upon us. If you agree, I suggest that you ask your representative to vote against it.

After reading this article, I welcome your comments and opinions.

*Ron Kesten*  
 GRC President

# General Industries,

October 2009 GRC Business of the Month President and CEO of General Industries, Donald Ivill, has been in the construction industry since 1979. Over the last 30 years, his organization has become the premier builder and provider of Class-A commercial spaces in the tri-state area. Don's involvement in over 300 building projects, as well as his focus on client-centered services, has made him an innovative thought leader in the general contracting industry.

After graduating from Shippensburg University with a degree in Business Administration, majoring in Accounting in 1977, Don worked for Corning Glass for two years. In 1979, he joined his father at General Mechanical Contractors and Monessen Contracting Company as lead salesperson. With their focus on general construction, Don and his father built more general contracting capabilities into the business, and GMC was renamed General Industries in 1981.

Don became President and CEO of General Industries in 1993, and exponentially increased his organization's footprint. In 2000, Don launched Vale Vista Associates, an affiliate of General Industries also located in Charleroi. Vale Vista served as the primary commercial real estate organization for General Industries until 2008 when the Vale Vista brand was merged under the parent identity of General Industries. By focusing on providing each client and tenant with streamlined service, Don and his team carved their niche in the general contracting arena as a leading commercial space provider. With services like The Perfect Lease™ and The Smart-Build™, Don has positioned his company as an industry leader committed to designing, building and leasing commercial spaces meticulously tailored to meet client needs and requirements.

Don's enthusiastic dedication to the growth, success and development of the Mon Valley region and its surrounding areas is an asset to the many communities he serves and supports. Don and his wife, Gloria, reside in Rostraver Township, Pa, and have four children: Michelle, Matthew, Douglas and Justin.

*Community Involvement:*  
American Diabetes Association  
CASA (Westmoreland County)  
Dapper Dan Charities  
Mon Valley Progress Council  
Mon Valley YMCA  
The Scholarship Partners Foundation



Left to Right - Andrew Solan, GRC, Don Ivill, CEO General Industries, Ron Kesten, GRC President, Tom Mimidis, GRC Back: Matthew Ivill, Cynthia Grimm and Michael Allen of General Industries

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# GRC News

## 2010 GRC Board of Directors Announced

The following members have been elected to fill the seven GRC board positions for the 2010 year:

- Patrick Alberts - Mon Valley Hospital
- Mary Esther Antal - First National Bank
- Ron Kesten - Kesten Restaurant Equipment
- Tom Patterson - Patterson Plumbing
- Deborah Puglia - Howard Hanna Simon Realty
- Rachel Willson - BVA Federal Credit Union
- Bernie Zunic - Charleroi Federal Savings Bank

Elections for Board Officer positions will take place during the month of November. Watch your mailbox for the ballot and remember to vote!

## Light up Night

Rostraver Township Light up Night is scheduled for Friday, November 27th - 6:00pm in the lot adjacent to the Rostraver Post Office. The event will include a parade featuring fire and rescue departments, mascots, local organizations and of course Santa!

The festivities for the evening include a visit with Santa, goody bags for the children, with treats and items donated by GRC members, tree lighting, bonfire, hot chocolate, cookies and more! The U.S. Marine Corps Reserves will be on hand to conduct their annual Toys for Tots campaign.

GRC members are asked to please donate 250 child-friendly items for the goody bags. If you are able to help out with this request, please call the Chamber Office.



This annual holiday tradition is presented by the Greater Rostraver Chamber of Commerce and the Rostraver Lions Club.

## GRC Holiday Party

Please plan to join the GRC for a unique holiday gathering on Thursday, December 10th, 6:00 to 10:00pm as we join the Willow Room for their Community Christmas Party.

The Willow Room will do all the planning and preparing. All you need to do is RSVP for a relaxing holiday evening.

The event will feature chef's food stations, including salad display, carving stations, pasta bar, baked potato bar, dessert station, cash bar and even a visit with Santa!

Whether your office is large or small, join the GRC at the Willow Room to celebrate the holiday season!

The cost is \$24.99 and reservations are required. Please call Kim at the Willow Room 724-379-5666 to reserve your table today! If you would like to be seated with the GRC, be sure to let Kim know.

## November Membership Meeting

Please note that the November Membership Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 17th instead of Tuesday, November 24th as previously listed.

This change was made for those members who may be out of town during the week of Thanksgiving. A another reminder will be sent closer to the meeting date.

## Join the GRC today!

New members pay 2010 dues now and enjoy immediate GRC benefits.

*Membership Renewals will be sent during the month of December.*



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# Member News

## BVA Leopards Wear Pink!

Orange, without a doubt is the most popular color during this month of tricks and treats. Everywhere you look you see blazing orange leaves, orange candy corn and orange pumpkins. However, you won't be seeing any orange in the Belle Vernon Area School District at the last home game of the season; you may not even see much gold and white. What you will see is pink!

The Belle Vernon Area Leopards along with 40 other schools in the WPIAL are participating in a "Pink Out" on Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup> as a way to raise funds and awareness for breast cancer. October is National Breast Cancer Awareness month. The idea was initiated when Ellese Meyer, a senior cheerleader from Mt. Lebanon School District approached her Athletic Director, John Grogan about a way to honor her mother who recently died from breast cancer. Grogan liked the idea, but wanted to take it to the next level and challenged the rest of the WPIAL to join in. He wrote to his colleagues and has been blown-away by the response.

BVA Football Coach Aaron Krepps contacted the Football Cheer Booster Association and asked for their support with the challenge. The Booster Association was immediately on board and contacted athletic director, Grogan to find out how the Leopards could support the cause. Grogan will supply Pink Ribbon helmet stickers for the entire Leopard football team and other participating teams in the WPIAL. In addition, the Booster Association began taking orders for pink BVA Football t-shirts. Ordering pink t-shirts was somewhat out of the realm for a booster association that typically stays with the school colors of gold and white. However, it was decided among the players and their coach that since pink is the color of the cause, pink is what they would wear. So an order for pink t-shirts was placed. In just one week, close to 450 pink BVA Football t-shirts have been sold to students, teachers, staff and fans. All profits from the t-shirt sale will be donated to the Young Women's Breast Cancer Awareness Foundation.

Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup> is Senior Recognition Night at BVA and in honor of the Pink Out all senior football, cheer and band mothers will receive a white flower with pink ribbon. Coach Krepps and the Booster Association are asking all fans to team up with this challenge by wearing pink to the game and by donating to the cause. The Middle School Cheerleaders will be at the gates collecting donations. Fans donating to the cause at the game will receive a Pink Ribbon sticker. The involvement and support of this cause has been amazing. Unfortunately, we all know someone who has had their life interrupted by this form of cancer. Please support the cause and join in the fight on October 30<sup>th</sup> to help the Leopards tackle Breast Cancer.

## Shop for a Cause

Join Center on the Hill, in Washington Township, Belle Vernon for a Holiday Bliss event on Thursday, November 5<sup>th</sup> from 1:00pm to 3:00pm.

The event will feature specialty vendors who will help you navigate through your gift list. The Gift Therapist will also be on hand to offer free gift giving advice to all in attendance. Enjoy an afternoon of shopping, entertainment, light refreshments, basket raffles and much, much more!

Tickets are \$5.00 each and may be purchased in advance at Center on the Hill. For more information call Pat Beniccio at 724-930-8512.

The Holiday Bliss event will benefit senior programs at Center on the Hill. The event is sponsored in part by the Greater Rostraver Chamber of Commerce and the Gift Therapist.

## Sip & Save

Stop in the Rostraver Dunkin Donuts for a perfect fall treat. Enjoy their Sip & Save offer and receive a .99 cent small latte in the flavor of your choice. A latte is the perfect way to chase away the autumn chill.



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## Advertising Opportunity

Here is a great advertising opportunity for area businesses. The Valley Independent, together with Monongahela Valley Hospital, offers a special program called “bridge to home”, whereby the newspaper is delivered daily to the hospitalized patients with their lunch trays.

As a local business owner, you can benefit from this program. Each newspaper distributed has a “post-it” note on the front page, displaying a message from the sponsoring business. The “post-it” can include your business name, address, phone number and any slogan you normally use in advertising.

The cost is \$400.00, which includes the printing of the “post-it” and the discounted cost of the newspapers delivered the same day each week for 16 weeks. With this program, approximately 150 patients and their visitors will your advertisement.

If you would like more information about the “bridge to home” program, please call Lori Byron at the Valley Independent 724-684-2644, or Erin Sinko at Monongahela Valley Hospital 724-258-1444.

## Scholarship Winners Announced

The annual GRC Golf Outing supports the scholarship program. Each year the GRC awards a scholarship to students in our service area who attend Westmoreland County Community College, California University and Douglas Education Center.

Scholarship winners have been announced for WCCC and California University. Congratulation to Nicholas Zocco (WCCC) and Kristin Condupa (California University).

The Douglas Education Center recipient will be announced as soon as information is available.

## Tax-Aide Volunteers Needed

The Tax Counseling for the Elderly Program (TCE) needs volunteers, age 55 and older, to help people file their tax returns.

Tax-aide volunteers provide free assistance to taxpayers who cannot afford professional tax help, particularly those who file simple tax returns. Volunteers assist low income, elderly, non-English speaking and persons with disabilities. The taxes are completed at sites throughout the county.

Volunteers attend a six-day training session that is conducted by the Internal Revenue Service and specially trained volunteer instructors. The training, which begins in December, includes testing of volunteers to ensure accurate service to TCE taxpayers. All volunteers must achieve a minimum score on the open book test to serve as a TCE assistant.

For more information or to participate, call the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program at Westmoreland County Community College at 1-800-262-2103, ext. 4213.

## Holiday Kid Camp

Get the kids moving and having fun instead of moping around the house! Bring them to the Center for Fitness and Health for a few hours of pool and fitness activity!

Camp is from 11am-1pm, with one hour being spent in pool games and one hour playing land games and fitness activities. Dates: Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup> and Monday, December 28<sup>th</sup> - Wednesday, December 30<sup>th</sup>.

Kids should arrive in their swimsuit and bring clothing for the land activities. \$20 per day. Call 724-379-5100 for more information or to register.

## Give Thanks!

*Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it!*



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## History along the Monongahela

November 6, 7, and 8 from 10:00am to 6:00pm you are invited to drive at your leisure and visit participating historical sites along the Monongahela River. This is a great opportunity to learn about the rich historical heritage of the area.

Pick up a card at one of the thirteen participating locations, have it stamped at seven participating locations and drop it in the box at your last site for a chance to win a \$500 grand prize! For more information contact BARC at 724-785-9331.

## All Aboard!

You are invited to the 13th Annual Fundraiser Luncheon sponsored by Howard Hanna Simon Real Estate Services.

Please join us on Friday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009 from 12:00 – 3:00 at the *Clubhouse Grille, Cedar Creek Golf Course*. Lunch, Chinese auction, live auction, raffles, bake sale and more!

Donations are greatly appreciated; whether it's cash or items which will be used for the auctions and raffles. Our fundraisers would not be successful without your help. You can contact either Cindy Walman or Diane Mesiarik at 724-929-9699 for information.

All proceeds from the event go to the Mon Valley Hospital Children's Free Care Fund.

## CD Release Concert

GRC member, Greg Capozzi will be giving a CD Release Concert for his new CD, "One More Day" on Saturday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 8:30pm to 12AM at the River House Café in Charleroi.

With a background in classical piano, Greg fuses this with influences from such 70's & 80's groups as Kansas, Yes, ELP, Genesis and Styx. This is not typical "praise & worship" music. This is 70's modern rock ballads with lyrics that make you think!

Greg will be bring his 7 foot grand piano to the venue. Professional lights, sounds and video will make this truly a concert to remember. Greg will also be doing some Billy Joel and Elton John covers, along with a few other surprises.

Admission is \$10.00, and includes a free copy of the CD "One More Day". For tickets call 724-930-9330.

## Keep the Chamber Updated

Please help me keep you in the loop of Chamber events and activities by keeping me updated.

If you have changed your email address, phone number or address, please send me your new contact information so that I can update the Chamber database.



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## Library News

The Rostraver Public Library had another successful Vendor & Craft Show this past month. The participating vendors displayed a variety of products. Thanks to the wonderful library volunteers, a used book sale and a bake sale were also conducted. A representative for the library stated, "all in all, it was a profitable and fun day."

Currently, the library is selling Enjoy books. Call the library today to order your books – they make wonderful Holiday gifts. The next fundraising event scheduled for the library will be the Fashion Show. We are planning to hold this in early spring so watch for details. The Wine Tasting, which is our biggest and best fundraising event is tentatively planned for early April.

The library is also in the process of beginning a Junior Friends of the Library. We are hoping to attract the younger members of the community as they are the heart of the Library. Their children attend our story times, our book groups, use our computers, and help us in many ways. We are looking for people who would like to help out a little or a lot. We need your ideas and thoughts on ways to better serve the residents in Rostraver.

The new digital sign at the entrance to the Library is the latest result of fundraising efforts. Take a minute and come see us.



### Lizzette Sterner

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## "Making Manners Matter"

Just in time for the holiday season, Maryann Sawka Etiquette Academy is holding a workshop on Table and Party Etiquette designed for children aged 5-12.

This workshop series will introduce the group to the idea of manners and appropriate social behavior and will include topics on sharing a meal, good guests and good hosts, conversation and more.

For your convenience, the workshop will be held twice. The first workshop will be held Saturday, November 21st, Panera Bread, Washington, 9:00am to 11:00am.

The second workshop will be held Saturday, November 28th, Panera Bread, Greensburg, 9:00am to 11:00am. The cost is \$25.00 at the door; \$20.00 online preregistration.

Go to [www.maryannsawka-etiquetteacademy.com](http://www.maryannsawka-etiquetteacademy.com) to registers today! Or call 724-689-3102 for more information.

Maryann Sawka is a Certified Child Etiquette Trainer. She believes that social skills and etiquette training are the foundation for developing a strong character.

## 2009 Executive Members

### GRC Executive Board:

Ron Kesten, President  
Kesten & Associates Restaurant Equipment

Mary Lou Taylor, Vice President  
National City Bank

Bernie Zunic, Treasurer  
Charleroi Federal Savings Bank

Mary Esther Antal, Secretary  
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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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# "Holiday Bliss"

"Shop for a Cause!"  
**Thursday, November 5<sup>th</sup>**  
1:00pm - 3:00pm  
Center on the Hill

Benefiting Senior Programs at  
Center on the Hill



## Want to Get a Jump on Holiday Shopping?

Grab your mom, grandma or girlfriends and do some shopping in support of a great cause!

***Bring your GOLD and SILVER jewelry and cash in with our onsite gold buyer!***

Specialty vendors will be delighted to help you navigate through your gift list! Need help selecting the perfect gift? The Gift Therapist will be on hand to offer gift giving advice to all in attendance!

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