



Mantua-Shalersville Area Chamber of Commerce

NEWS BRIEFS

Spring Forward on March 11

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 changed the time-change dates for Daylight Saving Time. This year, DST will begin on the second Sunday in March and end the first Sunday in November.

In the U.S., clocks change at 2:00 a.m. local time. In spring, clocks spring forward from 1:59 a.m. to 3:00 a.m.



Most fire departments encourage people to change the batteries in their smoke detectors when they change their clocks because Daylight Saving Time provides a convenient reminder. More than 90 percent of homes in the United States have smoke detectors, but about one-third have dead or missing batteries.

Upcoming Chamber Meetings...

Wednesday, March 21 6:30 - 8:00 P.M.

Mantua Village Administration Bldg. (corner of Main & High)
Topic: Estate Planning & Business Succession
Local attorney, Holly Ohlrich, will address issues such as wills, trusts, property ownership, gifting, and powers of attorney as they relate to personal and business estate planning.

Wednesday, April 18 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

TL Express (Main Street, across from Circle K - former Village School)
Topic: Business Insurance Needs
Enjoy lunch, courtesy of TL Express, as you learn how to protect your assets. From liability to personal property to business interruption, navigate the maze of insurance options with the advice of an expert from Jack Kohl Agency.

Wednesday, May 16 6:30 - 8:00 P.M.

Shalersville Town Hall (corner of St. Rt. 303 & St. Rt. 44)
Topic: All About Economic Development
Diana Fierle, Portage County Economic Development Executive Assistant will discuss county-wide initiatives and resources. Dick Messner, Brimfield Zoning Administrator will explain the implications of a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD).

A Message from the President

Hello fellow Mantua-Shalersville Area Chamber of Commerce members and friends. I hope you are enjoying this cold and snowy weather, after a warm December and January. While some of us go into hibernation until the weather breaks, others are out and about enjoying the crisp winter air, cross country skiing, and the warmth of friendship around a cup of hot cocoa. Personally, I am a hibernator, but that is more a function of my business as a CPA. However, spring is coming, we will all be out and about, and your Chamber has some interesting meetings planned to help with some of the personal aspects of your business.

In March, a local attorney, Holly Ohlrich, will address estate planning and business succession concerns. This is an important, but often overlooked topic of concern to us all. This meeting will also give Mantua Village a chance to showcase the new Village Hall (the old Fire Station), which they moved into last year.

In April, we will tour another "new" facility, the new home of TL Express, which was formerly Mantua Village School. Come see what TL has done to transform this building into a business showcase, and listen to a presentation on business insurance needs. Insurance is another often-ignored area that is important to all of us. I am sure that there is plenty to learn, from liability to health to business interruption plans.

May will give us a chance to meet in the Shalersville Town Hall, to hear about economic development. We will have several speakers who will tell us how economic development tools can be used to assist businesses grow and thrive. Perhaps we will also be able to tour the new Shalersville Administration building (former Shalersville Elementary School) and see how the Township has adapted this building to serve the community.

Finally, in June we will be back in the Village for an old-fashioned walk-about. We will visit several businesses, starting on Prospect Street, and get a first-hand flavor of what our town has to offer. So, as winter turns into spring, let's prepare to see all of these new building projects that have taken place in the past few years and get some valuable business tips. We will be looking for you!! Please come.

Marie Stehli, President

Community Looks to the Future

During the January Chamber meeting, officials of area organizations presented accomplishments and goals for the future. Here's what they had to say...

Mantua Township officials' reports:

Victor Grimm, Trustee: Completing grant paperwork to secure Issue II money for road upkeep takes a lot of time. Over the past nine years they have only missed one round of grant applications. In the recent past, paving of Vaughn, East Mennonite and East Pioneer was completed. Future repaving plans include Hillcrest, Ambler, Coldbrook and Fernway, followed by Crackle, Harner and Benning. The township is currently in talks with Aurora for the one-half million dollar project to repave Townline Road. Following that, Mantua Center Road and West Pioneer Trail will be paved. Township meetings are held at the Township Hall on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month at 7:30 pm.

Lynne Harvey, Zoning Committee: The rewrite of the zoning code is in its final stages. Portage County officials should be finished "reviewing and tweaking" any day now, after which public hearings will be scheduled sometime early 2007. The township will try to work the 1999 Land Use Plan into code over the next few years. Plans call for a more concentrated business corridor - from the Village limits north to Skinner Road along St. Rt. 44 and east and west on St. Rt. 82 to - allow for preservation of green space.

Commercial properties require only 25¢ in support services per \$1 in taxes paid compared to \$1.40 per \$1 for residential properties. Currently, 93% of Mantua Township is residential/agriculture. If all 60 acres at Mantua Corners and the 78 acres of light-industrial property along St. Rt. 82 were developed, the proportion of residential/agriculture to commercial/industrial would shift to 90%/10%. If the Land Use Plan were implemented, the ratio would be 79%/21%. A program known as "transfer of development rights" could also be implemented in the future. Lynne asked for suggestions on a plan to combat littering in the township. Zoning meetings are held at the Township Hall on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 7:30 pm.

Mantua Village officials' reports:

Claude Hopkins, Mayor: Mayor Hopkins reported that he has spent 19 years serving the Village...nine years on council and the last ten as Mayor. He hopes to reactivate the "Four Corners" meetings he had implemented several years ago. These meetings include representatives from Crestwood Schools, Mantua Village, Mantua Township and Shalersville Township in an attempt to encourage cooperation among the four entities for the good of everyone.

According to a report from Roy Weber, Eaton will still be in full operation at the Mantua plant until July 2007, at which time they will begin transferring equipment and jobs to Aurora, Ohio and Mexico. The Mantua facility is for sale. Demolition is a last resort. TL Express has moved their corporate headquarters into the former Village School building. There have been ongoing talks with University Hospital to bring in one or two doctors on a five-day-a-week schedule. They would possibly occupy the first floor of the TL Express building. It was noted that many of the residents of this area use University Hospital and that MSFD could transport patients there, just about as easily as they can to Robinson Memorial or Geauga Community Hospitals.

The Village is very proud of the hike and bike trail and has received a grant to connect the trail behind Mantaline Corporation to the park. Work will begin this spring. There will also be work on the trail at the lake located behind the Water Treatment plant, with plans to construct observation decks.

The Village is also in negotiations with Portage County to sell raw water to Streetsboro and Aurora, who will have a combined need for approximately 11 millions gallons per day. As of July 1st, the Village will have a residential building department, as required by the State of Ohio. It will be responsible for one-to-three unit residential building procedures.



Jim Rogers, Council President: The Portage County Regional Planning Commission presented a draft of last year's study of the Village. Community meetings will be scheduled to determine where we go from here. Jim would be the person you should contact to discuss possible property tax abatements for renovation/new construction in the Village. Planning/Zoning meetings are held at Village Hall on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm.

Shalersville Township officials' reports:

Larry Solak, Trustee: Road paving projects have been completed. There are currently two roads in the township which remain unpaved, but there are no plans to do so, due to the fact that one is primarily farmland and the residents of the other would prefer that it stays the way it is...to control traffic speed. The Opportunity School is moving out of the east wing of the Township Center building, so they are looking for a new tenant...possibly a day care center. The trustees are glad they were able to purchase this building from Crestwood Schools and make it available for use of residents for events.

Portage County Airport is currently undergoing some improvements. Work is being done to the landing area to accommodate larger planes and new hangers are being constructed. Barnstormers Restaurant should be open soon and will be a nice addition to the area. People will be able to dine in the restaurant and observe planes come and go.



Ronnie Kotkowski, Zoning Committee: Current zoning requires a two-acre minimum for construction of single-family residences. The township is looking into a "planned unit development" concept, which would allow denser housing units or cluster homes while maintaining large open spaces. Normally, homeowner's associations do a good job maintaining "open spaces" in housing developments, but often they "go defunct" and stop caring for it. Ron is a member of the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, so it

is very important to him that the Township does a good job conserving green spaces. Ron stated, "If you want the area to look like Streetsboro, Twinsburg and Solon...don't get involved. If you want to maintain the rural character...get involved. We're lonely at zoning meetings...busy but lonely!" Zoning meetings are held at the Township Hall on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm.

Crestwood Schools, Carol Corbett, Treasurer: The High and Middle Schools are in need of continuous repair, since they are the oldest buildings in the system. Recently, the School system used some of the monies generated from the sale of the Village School, along with funds donated by the Crestwood All-Sports Boosters, to re-crown the football field, install the new all-weather track and build practice fields. Sports continue to be popular for Crestwood schools, with the addition of several new activities, including boys' volleyball in the spring and bowling. The new swimming team uses Hiram College facilities. Due to "gender equity," sports must have equal representation for boys and girls. School Board meetings are held the 1st Monday of each month at the Board office on West Prospect Street.



Rotary, Jim Rogers: Rotary International recently celebrated its 100th anniversary, making it the oldest organization of its kind in the country. Their motto, "Service Above Self" continues to help the community in many ways. Some local projects are: providing dictionaries to each of Crestwood's 3rd grade students...hosting the Farmers' Market at the Village Park (which they hope to expand)...sponsoring signage for the Glacial Esker Trail and Rotary Grove next to the lake and hike & bike trail behind Mantua Village Water Treatment Plant...coordinating the Bi-annual Christmas Homes Tour in conjunction with Garrettsville (2007 is Mantua's turn)...producing the Annual Talent Showcase in February...hosting exchange students at Crestwood. Dinner meetings are held weekly on Monday nights at 6:15 at Hilltop Christian Church.

A Makeover for Mantua Village

The Mantua-Shalersville Area Chamber of Commerce is concerned about the health and well-being of businesses throughout the Mantua-Shalersville area. One particular concentration of businesses under the Chamber's watch is struggling – downtown businesses. The Village is a central business district that represents the larger Mantua-Shalersville area. While turnover is a natural part of all commercial districts, the Village is having a particularly rough time retaining businesses.

Because of this, several chamber members formed a steering/explore committee to concentrate on downtown Mantua. The committee has been researching what other communities do to keep a healthy business/residential mix. Most of their findings are summarized in a special newsletter, which is available at www.MantuaShalersvilleChamber.com.

Most recently, the group read a report prepared for Kent and discussed how to apply suggestions in that report to Mantua. The ideas all pointed back to an issue that keeps coming up: downtown Mantua just isn't attractive.

Unfortunately, the Chamber can't make a big enough impact. Newsletter articles about business appearance, a spring clean-up, and discounts on supplies and services only help so much. Business owners don't have much incentive to make their storefronts look fabulous when what's around them doesn't look good. Consumers won't be motivated to spend time and money downtown without comprehensive improvements - a makeover of sorts.

The explore committee decided to focus on a comprehensive downtown improvement project. With a nod of approval from Village officials, this group is forming a separate non-profit entity and beginning to collect funds for a streetscape. The streetscape will focus on public areas – streets, sidewalks, parks – and will improve the appearance and accessibility of downtown parking.

Donations are already rolling in to get the project off the ground: Stamm Contracting \$2000; B&H Rentals \$2000; TL Express \$500; and The Village Tavern \$500. In-kind contributions totaling \$1000 have come

from Middlefield Bank, Business Image Solutions, and David Benjamin. Others will have the opportunity to contribute during a full-scale fundraising campaign, starting soon.

The organization will interview three design consultants and choose the firm offering the most service and best chances for obtaining grants toward construction costs. The community will be invited to give input on design ideas and vote on a "theme" for downtown.

More information will be available as progress is made. In the meantime, please contact any of the following with questions or comments:

Becky Newell 216-990-5086
bbjnewell@adelphia.net
Edie Benner 330-274-2747
ebenner@adelphia.net
Ellie Stamm 330-274-8230
elliestamm@yahoo.com
Eric Hummel 330-958-6200
eric@hummelconstruction.com
Jim Rogers 330-274-8738
jimrogers39@sbcglobal.net
Michelle Barnauskas 330-603-5519
mlbarnauskas@hallrich.net
Melanie Miraclefox 330-622-6461
miraclelot@sbcglobal.net

The mission of the Downtown Mantua Revitalization Committee

is to empower the people, government, organizations, and business and property owners to develop and implement a consensus-based plan to enhance the appearance of downtown Mantua. This plan's intent is to bring shoppers, pedestrian traffic, and residents downtown to enjoy our historic district, bustling with eateries, professional offices, niche shops, and downtown living spaces, which support our river and planned growth to preserve our rural character.



2007

Get Involved!

Business entities, organizations, clubs, and individuals are eligible for Chamber membership. You do not need to attend meetings to receive membership benefits. Participate at your pace, on your schedule. We share a commitment to the community and we all hold a stake in the future of the area.

For more information, contact:
Membership Chair: Becky Newell
216-990-5086 or 330-274-3238
bbjnewell@adelphia.net

**Affordable
Yearly Chamber Dues**

0-5 Employees	\$50
6-20 Employees	\$100
21+ Employees	\$150

**Mantua-Shalersville Area Chamber of Commerce
Membership Application**

Organization Name: _____

Contact Name: _____

Business Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Web Address: _____

E-mail Address: _____ Please limit use.

Phone Number: _____

Alt. Phone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____ Please limit use.

Business Description: _____

In addition to using U.S. mail, the Chamber communicates with members via e-mail and fax. If you prefer not to receive correspondence via e-mail or fax, please check the appropriate box above.

Be sure to complete your web profile at
www.MantuaShalersvilleChamber.com to be listed in the Member Yellow Pages!

**Return to:
Membership
PO Box 111
Mantua, OH 44255**

Business Startup Orientation

The Kent Regional Business Alliance (KRBA) is a team of Northeast Ohio organizations dedicated to promoting small business in Ohio. KRBA provides services (including free business consulting) and products for both growing businesses and people who want to start their own businesses in Ohio.

Free, two-hour Business Startup Orientation workshops cover information needed for starting a business in Ohio. Participants receive a folder that will include a check-list for starting a business, the pros and cons of different forms of business-ownership, a business-plan outline, loans available to the small-business owner, and much more. Workshops are held in The Small Business Development Center, Room 300A (third floor) of the Business Administration Building at Kent State University:

8 March 1:00-3:00 pm	15 March 3:00-5:00 pm
22 March 1:00-3:00 pm	29 March 3:00-5:00 pm

Register online at www.krba.biz/workshops or call 330-672-1275.

Welcome New Members:

Mantua Auto Parts
330-274-2212

The MAP Program LLC
330-687-2293
John@MAPProgram.org

Mike's Electric
330-274-2201

Perfect Choice Auto Collision
330-274-8225
PerfectChoice@sbcglobal.net

The Smiling Dutchman

Strategies for Success Guide to Starting a Small Business

This free, self-paced, online course is available at www.sba.gov. It is easy to use, comprehensive, and can be completed in about 30 minutes. The course is designed to:

- Help assess your readiness for starting a business
- Provide an overview of key business principals, such as getting started, business planning, legal aspects, finance and marketing
- Introduce and link you to important small business resources, such as SBA district offices, Small Business Development Centers, SCORE, Women's Business Centers, lenders, and online resources.

Free Advice and Online Resources

SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business" offers free and confidential small business advice for entrepreneurs. SCORE's 10,500 volunteer counselors have more than 600 business skills; they are working or retired business owners, executives and corporate leaders who share lessons learned in business. Go to www.score.org to learn about:

- "Ask SCORE" email advice online
- Face-to-face small business counseling
- Low-cost workshops
- "How to" articles and business templates

Historic Change is Here

Starting February 15, the United States Mint will issue a new series of \$1 coins honoring former U.S. presidents. The first four coins are set for release according to the following schedule:

- George Washington: February 2007
- John Adams: May 2007
- Thomas Jefferson: August 2007
- James Madison: November 2007



After that, four new presidential \$1 coins will be released each year, in the order in which the presidents served. They will be accepted everywhere, including most vending machines and transit systems.



The new coins bear a design of the Statue of Liberty on one side and traditional coin inscriptions – "E Pluribus Unum," "In God We Trust," the year of minting or issuance, and the mint mark – are cut into the edge of the coins, not the coin surface, to allow for larger images.

Visit [www.usmint.gov/\\$1coin](http://www.usmint.gov/$1coin) for additional details about the Presidential \$1 Coin Program.

Heads Up! Reg Alerts Keeps You in the Know

Small businesses communicating with government is not a new idea. A 1964 business guide noted, "Often businessmen come down to Washington when they are almost purple with apoplexy. A particular piece of legislation or an administrative ruling has been either passed or under consideration for weeks, months, or perhaps even a year. When it is about to be finalized...the businessman shows up in Washington for a last-ditch effort....How much better for him if he makes himself known to people in government in advance."

The difference in 2007 is that if the government is about to, for example, change the auditing standard in a way that will dramatically affect your business, you can learn about it in advance—and possibly help ameliorate its impact—from your desktop. How? One avenue is the Office of Advocacy's Regulatory Alerts webpage.

The Reg Alerts page highlights pending regulatory proposals and provides critical links to the rule, Advocacy's staff contact, the place to comment, and Regulations.gov, the federal government's regulatory information site. For the latest on proposed rules, bookmark the Reg Alerts page: www.sba.gov/advo/laws/law_regalerts.htm.

The Office of Advocacy, the "small business watchdog" of the federal government, examines the role and status of small business in the economy and independently represents the views of small business to federal agencies, Congress, and the President. It is the source for small business statistics presented in user-friendly formats, and it funds research into small business issues.

Think of Hattie This March & April

March is MR/DD Month

March 2007 marks MR/DD awareness month and brings with it an excellent opportunity to inform the public that people with MR/DD are making strides to help better themselves and their communities. Many people fail to realize that people with MR/DD can hold a job, can be a great neighbor and can give back to their communities. The recently opened Hattie's Café, Fountain & Gifts, by Hattie Larlham, shows that people with disabilities can tackle the responsibility of a job. Eight employees with disabilities closely work with job coaches and are involved in all aspects of running a café from preparing food to clearing tables. Stop by 164 N. Main St. in downtown Hudson.

April is Volunteer Month

Volunteer opportunities are available at Hattie Larlham for individuals' ages eight years and older. For as little as an hour or two each week, volunteers can help make a difference in lives of the children and adults served by Hattie Larlham. Volunteers may give their time at the Center for Children with Disabilities in Mantua, Ohio, or at one of our many community homes located throughout Northeast Ohio. Many volunteers are able to work with individuals living right in their own neighborhoods. Contact Jenna Allen, Hattie Larlham volunteer coordinator, at jenna.allen@hattielarlham.org or 800.233.8611, ext. 3866 to learn more about opportunities near you.

Hattie Larlham

Established in 1961, Hattie Larlham serves 1,400 children and adults with disabilities throughout Ohio. Hattie Larlham was selected as one of the top 99 Northeast Ohio organizations to work for in 2006. For more information, visit www.hattielarlham.org.

NOACC Night with Cleveland Cavaliers 3-21-07

The hottest team in town and NOACC Chamber Members save \$5 on \$35 or \$25 tickets for the Cleveland Cavaliers vs. Dallas Mavericks on Wednesday, March 21st 8:00 p.m. Order direct from the Cavs by sending in the order form available at www.noacc.org. Only 300 tickets available...when they're gone.... THEY'RE GONE! Go Cavs!!

Remember www.noacc.org
for low-cost benefits and
discounted services!

Group Health Insurance • Group Life & Disability Insurance
Long Term Care Insurance • Managed Care Organization
Workers' Compensation Group Rating Programs
Employee Assessment Testing • Employee Wellness Program
Credit Card Processing • Payroll Processing
Freight Delivery • Overnight Delivery • Website Design

Portage County is Turning 200!

An entire year of events and activities is planned to celebrate Portage County's Bicentennial in 2008. Your help and input are welcome. For more information, visit www.co.portage.oh.us/pc2008, email Kerry Macomber at kmacomber@portageco.com, call 330-297-3603, or attend an upcoming bicentennial meeting: 6:00 p.m. on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Kevin Coleman Professional Services in the Sue Hettrick Building, 3922 Lovers Lane in Ravenna.

Portage County Bicentennial: *"Promoting our 200th birthday to the greater Portage County area through community celebrations, historical education, economic development and legacy projects."*

Mantua-Shalersville Area Chamber of Commerce

For Chamber
information, contact
Becky at 330-274-3238
or bbjnewell@adelphia.net

For newsletter inquiries, email
mlbarnauskas@sbcglobal.net

Or visit our
website!

www.MantuaShalersvilleChamber.com

Chamber Goals

- ▷ To advance the commercial, industrial, educational, agricultural, and civic interests of the area ◁
 - ▷ To work together to support and promote local businesses and their products ◁
 - ▷ To work with elected officials to promote proper planning and growth ◁
- ▷ To support and work toward local harmony for the betterment of citizens and businesses in the area ◁

**"We must indeed all hang together, or, most assuredly,
we shall all hang separately."**

~ Benjamin Franklin

**Mantua-Shalersville Area
Chamber of Commerce**

PO Box 111
Mantua, OH 44255