

2018  
MAR/APR

# the Chamber Chatter

THE MEMBER NEWS & INFORMATION RESOURCE



PROVIDING ADVOCACY, RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## Chamber **ADVOCACY**

# Lesser-known changes (for businesses) due to the new tax law (TCJA)

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) provides businesses with more than just lower income tax rates and other provisions you may have heard about. Here's an overview of some lesser-known, business-friendly changes under the new law, along with a few changes that could affect some businesses adversely.

## Good News

Many of the new law's provisions will reduce the amount of taxes your business will owe, starting in 2018. Here are four examples that you might not be familiar with:

### 1. Faster Depreciation for Certain Real Property

For property placed in service after December 31, 2017, the separate definitions of qualified leasehold improvement property, qualified restaurant property and qualified retail improvement property are eliminated. Under the TCJA, those items are now lumped together under the description of qualified improvement property, which can be depreciated straightline over 15 years.

### 2. Faster Depreciation for New Farming Machinery and Equipment

The TCJA shortens the depreciation period from seven years to five years for new machinery and equipment that is placed in service after December 31, 2017, and used in a farming business (other than grain bins, cotton ginning assets, fences or other land improvements). In addition, the faster double-declining balance method can be used to calculate annual depreciation deductions for these types of machinery and equipment.

### 3. New Credit for Employer-Paid Family and Medical Leave

For wages paid tax years beginning after December 31, 2017, and before January 1, 2020, the TCJA allows employers to claim a general business tax credit equal to 12.5% of wages paid to qualifying employees while they're on family or medical leave.

There's a hitch: You must pay the employee at least 50% of his or her normal wage while on leave.

Additionally, the credit rate increases by 0.25% for each percentage point that the wage rate paid while on leave exceeds 50% of the normal rate. However, the maximum credit rate is 25%. For example, if you pay an employee 60% of her normal wage rate while on leave, you could qualify for a general business credit equal to 15% (12.5% + (10 x 0.25%)), if all other conditions are met.

**Important:** To be eligible for the credit, the employer must provide all qualifying full-time employees at least two weeks of annual paid family and medical leave. Part-time employees must be given proportional leave time.

### 4. Accounting Change for Long-Term Construction Contracts

Under prior law, construction companies were generally required to use the less-favorable percentage-of-completion method

(PCM) to calculate annual taxable income from long-term contracts for the construction or improvement of real property. However, construction companies with

2018 and beyond.

## Bad News

The tax breaks provided by the TCJA will cost the federal government a significant amount of revenue. As a result, the bill needed to raise revenue through other tax law changes. Here are two examples:

### 1. Less Favorable Treatment of Carried Interests

Historically, private equity funds and hedge funds have been structured as limited partnerships. Under prior law, carried interest arrangements allowed private equity fund and hedge fund managers to give up their right to receive current fees for their services and, instead, receive an interest in future profits from the private equity/hedge fund partnership. These arrangements are called "carried interests" because a private equity/hedge fund manager doesn't pay anything for the partnership profits interest. To add to the appeal, the private equity/hedge fund manager isn't taxed on the receipt of the carried interest (because it's not considered to be a taxable event).

The tax planning objective of carried interest arrangements is to trade current fee income for partnership profits interest. Current fee income would be treated as high-taxed ordinary income and subject to federal employment

taxes. But a partnership profits interest is expected to generate future long-term capital gains that will be taxed at lower rates. For tax years beginning after 2017, carried interest arrangements face a major hurdle: The TCJA imposes a three-year holding period requirement in order for profits from certain partnership interests received in exchange for the performance of services to be treated as low-taxed, long-term capital gains.

### 2. Self-Created Intangible Assets No Longer Treated as Capital Assets

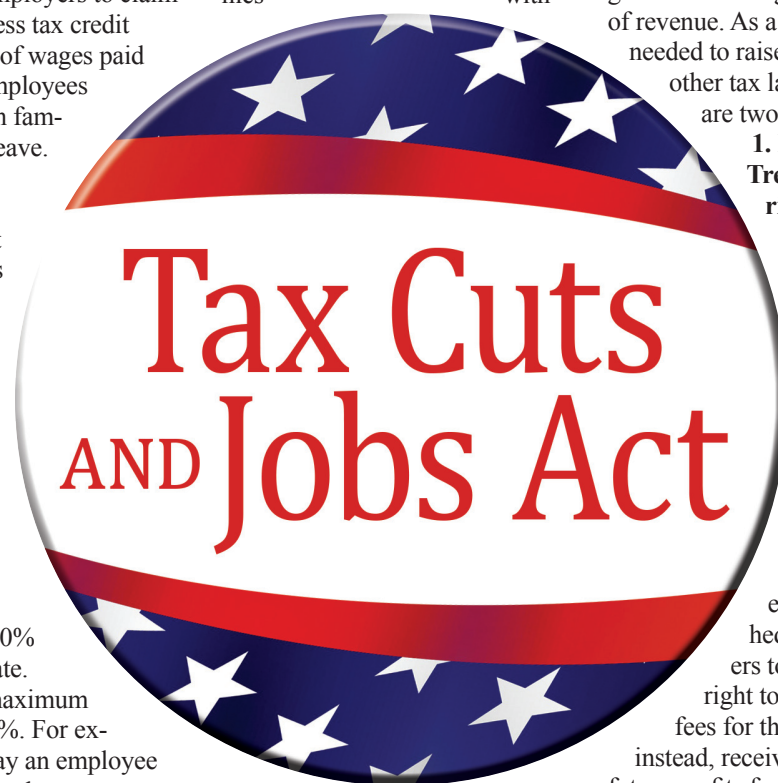
Effective for dispositions in 2018 and beyond, the TCJA stipulates that certain intangible assets can no longer be treated as favorably-taxed capital gain assets. This change affects:

- Inventions,
- Models and designs (whether or not patented), and
- Secret formulas.

The change will cover the above types of intangibles that are 1) created by the taxpayer, or 2) acquired from the creating taxpayer with the new owner's basis in the intangible determined by the creating taxpayer's basis. The latter situation could happen if the creating taxpayer gifts an intangible to another individual or contributes an intangible to another taxable entity, such as a corporation or partnership.

## Need Help?

If you're feeling overwhelmed by the new tax law, you're not alone. The TCJA is expected to have far-reaching effects on business taxpayers. Contact your tax advisor to review the substance of the bill and how your company can manage the impact.



average annual gross receipts of \$10 million or less in the preceding three tax years were exempt from this requirement.

The TCJA expands this exemption to cover contracts for the construction or improvement of real property if they:

- Are expected to be completed within two years, and
- Are performed by a taxpayer with average annual gross receipts of \$25 million or less for the preceding three tax years.

This beneficial change is effective for contracts entered into in



Chamber**ADVOCACY**

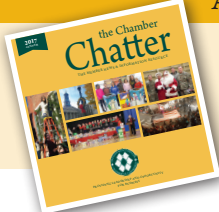
# How did your state house member vote?

**S**enate Bill 936 is legislation to implement a prescription drug formulary for Pennsylvania’s workers’ compensation system. State after state has adopted this policy with bipartisan support in response to the opioid epidemic. California, for example, recently finalized implementation after passing legislation in 2015 and the head of their Workers’ Compensation Department said: “The adoption of the drug formulary is a step forward for California’s injured workers and should help address the overuse of high-risk medications such as opioids.”

Unfortunately, the bill was three votes short of passing the House. Opposition to this legislation can be traced back to a scandal in Philadelphia that was detailed in a series of Philadelphia Inquirer articles exposing an “unholy alliance” between certain workers’ compensation lawyers and a “secretive network of doctors that prescribes unproven and exorbitantly priced pain creams to injured workers” and funnels unsuspecting patients to pharmacies owned by the doctors and lawyers themselves. The article further helped reveal how the law firm at the center of this scandal is working to defeat this legislation.


Visit <http://www.legis.state.pa.us> to see how your state House member voted – we urge you to thank House members who supported the bill. For those who did not, they may have an opportunity to support the bill in the future and should be urged to do so.

As seen in *The Sentinel*, a weekly publication of the Pennsylvania Chamber. Founded in 1916, the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry is the state’s largest broad-based business association, with its statewide membership comprising businesses of all sizes and across all industry sectors. The PA Chamber is The Statewide Voice of Business™.



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## Chamber Membership ANNIVERSARIES

*Please help us congratulate these businesses celebrating milestone anniversaries who renewed their membership with the Greater West Chester Chamber of Commerce.*

### 20 Years

Mr. William J. Scott  
American Helicopter Museum & Education Center

### 10 Years

BHHS Fox & Roach Realtors / Anthony Scimone  
Briggs Auction, Inc.  
Horace Mann Companies  
Computer Systems Resource, Inc.  
The Antique Shop  
A Taste of Olive

### 5 Years

Tish Boutique  
TPL Photography  
Moody's Analytics



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Join us on April 13 with colleagues and friends to enjoy the Chamber's most exciting social event of the year!

# Grand Club

**WHEN:**

Friday, April 13, 2018

**WHERE:**

The American Helicopter Museum

**1 in 200 chance to win \$10,000**

**Dinner & Drinks**

provided by John Serock Catering!

Benefits the Chamber's Education Foundation Scholarship Program

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**MAY 4, 2018**

5pm - 9pm (rain or shine)

30+  
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Art shows throughout downtown West Chester.  
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**BMT BRYN MAWR TRUST**

**Monday, June 4, 2018**

at Concord Country Club

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# Active bystanders make a difference

By Joe Myers

One child pushes another on the playground at recess. A teenager laughs at a classmate when they drop their books in the hallway. A group of men whistle at a woman as she walks by their front porch on a party night in a college town. What do all of these incidents have in common? Bystanders who did nothing.

Every community experiences positive and negative behaviors. A behavior that affects one member of the community ripples out, affecting everyone. Every

member of the community has a responsibility to contribute positively to the overall health of that community. The only way that can happen is for every bystander to change from inactive to active.

In each of the scenarios listed before, there was an opportunity for someone to do something to help. Become an active bystander by intervening in situations in healthy and safe ways. Teach and empower children to be good friends, building on the natural empathy of young people. Challenge teenagers to find their voice and call-out

their friends for making inappropriate or harmful jokes. Encourage adults, the role models for these young people, to address the bad choices of the other adults around them.

Children on the playground can help that child up, take them to an adult, and ask the child who pushed them to play nicer. The laughing teenager's friend can ask them "how would you feel if someone laughed at you for dropping your books?" Someone on that porch can easily tell those men that they are making that woman on the street incredibly uncom-

fortable. These acts, no matter how small, can make a community safer and healthier. Utilize the amazing ability that every person, every bystander, has at their disposal.

*Joe Myers, Community Outreach Supervisor at The Crime Victims' Center of Chester County, Inc., a nonprofit agency providing free, immediate, and confidential crisis response and compassionate support to children and adults impacted by crime and violence. 610-692-1926 | [www.cvcfcc.org](http://www.cvcfcc.org)*



## Being a buyer today can be challenging in the current housing market

By Kit Anstey

The American dream is and always has been the dream of owning your own home. Not paying rent which offers no tax benefit, today's historically low interest rates offer more of a possibility to own a home than ever. There are many programs that offer little or no money down in mortgage financing. Selecting the right real estate agent to represent you (as your buyer's agent) is a very important factor to guide you and lead you down the path to achieve your dream.

Upon the first consultation your agent should make it clear of the total process which includes being prepared with a preapproval letter with a reputable lending institution so when your agreement is written this will accompany it to make your offer more attractive. Understand the home inspection process and what you can expect when defects or problems are found.

It is a seller's market. Homes today properly priced in excellent West Chester locations tend to bring multiple

offers and many times sell for more than asking price. Your agent should be aware of the proper strategy to possibly include an escalation clause to your agreement. Today with the limited inventory the house you decide to purchase may sell for more than it has in the past, setting a new benchmark on what the real value of this home is. Talk with your Realtor to understand appreciation and the benefits and tax advantages of owning over renting.

It's not always about the highest price to be the winning bid in a multiple offer situation, terms can sway the seller as much as the price. Possibly offer a home warranty that will cover yourself one year after settlement but also protect the seller at no charge until closing.

*Kit Anstey, Team Leader, The Kit Anstey Team, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices, Fox & Roach Realtors®, Recognized in the top 100 teams nationwide. 610-431-1100 | [Kit@AnsteyTeam.com](mailto:Kit@AnsteyTeam.com) | [www.AnsteyTeam.com](http://www.AnsteyTeam.com)*







# Spring events CALENDAR

See full details of Chamber events at [GreaterWestChester.com](http://GreaterWestChester.com)

## Thursday, March 8, 2018 5:30 – 7:30pm

### *“Grow your Network” Event*

The most exciting networking event to kick-off spring is here and it just got a little more exciting! Join us at Zukin Realty/Optimal Massage for food and drinks, courtesy of restaurants throughout town. 121 East Gay Street, West Chester Chamber members - Free / Non-members- \$10 - RSVP not required

## Wednesday, March 14, 2018 11:30am – 1:00pm

Education Series: Business Owners  
In the Know

### *“Leveraging LinkedIn for your Business” with Brynn Tillman, Vengreso*

Business owners and sales professionals will learn how to leverage LinkedIn for business development. The program is performed through live LinkedIn navigation, quips and stories that leave every business development profes-

sional energized and motivated to use LinkedIn to amplify their brand, develop a powerful profile that attracts, teaches and engages their buyers, find key prospects, request introductions from the clients and centers of influence and ultimately schedule more qualified appointments.

Delaware County Community College, Exton Campus  
Chamber members - \$25 / Non-members- \$35 - RSVP required

## Wednesday, March 28, 2018 5:30 – 7:30pm

### *Women’s Executive Roundtable sponsored by Krombolz-Sheets Insurance*

Featured Speaker: Sandra Knapp, Gawthrop Greenwood, PC

### *“True Grit: Transforming Obstacles into Opportunity”*

Too often, women find themselves paralyzed by change. Or worse, they feel like victims in the face of adversity, instead of champions of

their own path forward. Sandra L. Knapp shows you how to tap into your reservoir of True Grit to turn periods of transition into opportunities for greatness. She will share strategies to help you navigate the many phases of your career and life.

Location: Faunbrook Bed & Breakfast, wine and dinner pairing  
\$55 Chamber members / \$75 non-members - RSVP is required

## Friday, April 13, 2018 7:00 – 10:00pm

### *10 Grand Club*

Unique Venue, Amazing Food, Another Year of Chances....

Join us for the 13th Annual 10 Grand Club on Friday, April 13!

Your \$200 ticket includes:

1 in 200 chance of winning \$10,000

PLUS Dinner & Drinks provided by John Serock Catering!

For More Information visit [GreaterWestChester.com](http://GreaterWestChester.com)

## Wednesday, April 25, 2018 5:30 – 7:30pm

### *Women’s Executive Roundtable sponsored by Krombolz-Sheets Insurance*

Featured Speaker: Donna Phillips, Bryn Mawr Hospital

“Mission Driven Leadership: Affecting Change through Community Outreach”

Research underscores the significance of corporate responsibility in driving customer loyalty and in reinforcing a brand’s authenticity. The most effective leaders understand this connection, and demonstrate a genuine commitment to living these organizational values while strategically investing in community outreach efforts to affect positive change.

Location: TBD, wine and dinner pairing

\$55 for Chamber members / \$75 for non-members - RSVP is required



## RECIPE: Roasted lamb

### INGREDIENTS

For the lamb:

- 1 leg of lamb, on the bone (roughly 5-6 lbs. to serve 6-8)
- 4-5 garlic cloves, sliced into slivers
- 3 sprigs of rosemary, leaves finely chopped
- 3 tbsp of rapeseed oil
- Sea salt and ground black pepper

For the wild garlic pesto: (optional)

- 4oz of wild garlic, washed and dried
- 2oz of pine nuts
- 3oz of Parmesan or mature Coolea cheese, grated
- 12oz of extra virgin olive oil or Irish rapeseed oil

For the braised baby gem and peas:

- 1 tbsp of butter
- 4oz of smoked streaky bacon, roughly chopped
- Zest of 1/2 lemon
- 2.5oz of white wine
- A few thyme sprigs
- 2oz of chicken stock
- 1/2lb of frozen peas
- 6 spring onions, trimmed and sliced in half
- 6 baby gem lettuce, sliced in half

To make the lamb: Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place the lamb in a large roasting dish. Mix the wild garlic, lemon zest, rosemary and canola oil in a small bowl. Massage the lamb leg with the paste all over and then season with sea salt and ground black pepper. Place in the oven to roast for 15 minutes per pound for medium rare, or longer if you prefer your meat more well done. (Cook to an internal temperature of 125°F for rare or 135°F for medium.) Remove from the oven, tent loosely with foil, and rest for 15 minutes before serving in thin slices.

To make the pesto: Place garlic, cheese, and pine nuts in a food processor and process until a coarse paste forms. With the food processor running, drizzle in 2/3 cup of the oil until a smooth paste forms, adding more oil if needed. Season with sea salt and ground black pepper. Set aside to serve with the lamb.

To make the braised baby gem and peas: Melt the butter in a large high-sided frying pan. Fry the bacon until sizzling and crisp. Pour in the wine and allow to sizzle for about 30 seconds before adding the thyme sprigs, lemon zest, and chicken stock. Add the peas to the liquid and then nuzzle in the spring onions and baby gem lettuce. Cover with a lid and cook for 5 to 8 minutes until the lettuce is just braised.

Serve slices of the warm lamb with braised lettuce and pesto.

*Recipe courtesy of Dane Gray, Owner Operator of Kildare's Irish Pub West Chester. 610-431-0770 | [Dane@kildarespubwc.com](mailto:Dane@kildarespubwc.com) | [Kildarespubwc.com](http://Kildarespubwc.com)*





# eSight glasses help start a new chapter

By Mary Sue Boyle

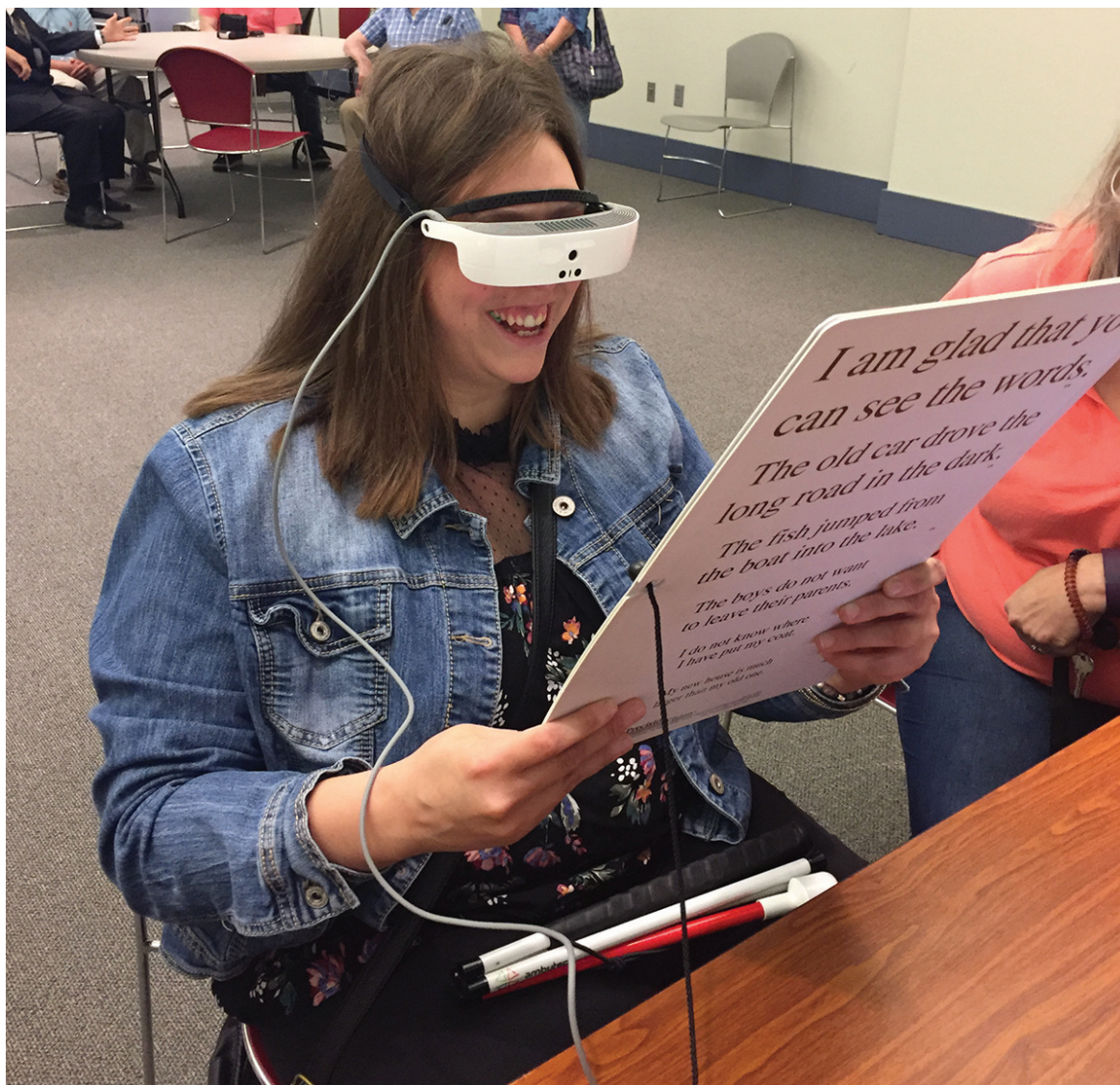
Rapid technological advances are changing the way people with vision loss navigate and perceive the world. Kristin Hale, whose interest was captured by a smart glasses demonstration at her local blind association, is no exception to this. Eager to try a wearable device for people with low vision, Hale was able to see her mother clearly for the first time in 24 years. Following the demonstration, a door of possibilities was opened by visiting the facility and meeting low vision rehabilitation staff.

Hale was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa (RP) when she was in high school and her vision was declining rapidly. She had problems seeing anything at night or in bright sunlight, and her small tunnel of remaining vision was getting smaller. "I didn't realize there was anything wrong with my vision," she said. "When I ran into people, I thought they had run into me. When I fell up the steps and sprained my ankle, the doctor suggested I was clumsy.

I even got hit in the head once resulting in a concussion, because I was standing too close to somebody swinging a bat. I just didn't see it."

High school and beyond should be a time of exploration. For Kristin, it has been a time of withdrawal. She is eager to turn the page through low vision rehabilitation. "Right now, I don't go out of the house much, except with my mom," she explained. She is not comfortable with paratransit. "I'll be taught how to travel safely," she said. "I'm finally going to get the help I need. I know with the right training, I'll be set." Hale is confident that she is starting a new chapter – one in which she is able to master the skills of living as an independent person with vision loss.

*Mary Sue Boyle is the Chester County Services Liaison for VisionCorps, an organization that for more than 90 years has empowered individuals with vision loss to attain independence through rehabilitation services and/or employment opportunities. 717-291-5951 | mboyle@visioncorps.net | visioncorps.net*



## Your old trophies can have a second life

By Jackie Tate

Running a trophy and awards business provides some unique experiences and opportunities. An unexpected but common question we often hear is, "Do you take old trophies?" Typically the inquiry comes from that empty-nester Mom whose son/daughter left for college or moved away and she's looking for a place to get rid of an entire bin of trophies they no longer want.

Being an avid recycler, my response

is, 'of course we take old trophies.' The thought of trophies adding to landfill inventory was not something I was willing to entertain.

So, after I began accepting old trophies I asked myself, 'what do I do with these trophies?' The answer presented itself when I started being asked the second most common question, "Would you be willing to donate trophies to our organization?" Ureeka! A formula was born for making use of old trophies.

We discovered there are parts of old trophies

that can be reused. The process also provides a project for younger children, such as my daughter, who likes to disassemble the trophies and organize all the parts into different piles. After everything is sorted, cleaned and inventoried, we reuse the old parts, add new parts, and build shiny new trophies that can be donated to needy organizations for various causes.

We accept old leftover trophies from the last few years' events as well as older trophies from the 70's and beyond. It is rewarding to do things that are beneficial

to the sustainability of our environment and provide a positive impact in our local community by giving trophies a meaningful second life.

*Jackie Tate is the owner of Right Touch Trophies & Awards offering trophies, medals, recognition plaques, sports apparel and promotional products located at Parkway Shopping Center, 929 S. High St., 22-A, West Chester. 484-576-7690 | righttouchawards@gmail.com | righttouchtrophies.com*



# Every customer has their cell phone within arm's length

Learn to leverage the most valuable marketing real estate



By Barbara Casey

Rapid technological advances are cThe world has changed. Over 6 billion text messages are sent each day in the US and that number is climbing. Text messaging is the most often used smartphone app. Unlike apps, text never needs updates and requires no maintenance. No matter how many texts you receive, texts don't slow your phone down (even if you never delete them.)

Today, more than 85% of all web searches are done via mobile phone. More people own smartphones than computers. To reach your customers, you must reach

them where their eyes already are for much of the day:

- Mobile marketing has exploded because it offers a direct line to your customer;
- Text message offers can be timed to send when a customer is thinking about making a purchase;
- With text message marketing, 98% of all messages are read within 5 minutes (Unlike email where it may take days for a customer to wade through the volume.)

Mobile marketing works in many verticals, especially those that rely on repeat visits: boutiques, car washes, auto repair, spas, restaurants, retail, med spas, chiro-



practors, fitness, etc.

There are many ways to use mobile marketing:

- Include links to online ordering, to your menu;
- Link to a video to enhance your message;
- Lead generation;
- Loyalty programs;
- Emergency or Weather alerts;
- Special Event announcements;
- Flash Sales to drive business into your location on slow days;

- Mobilize your inventory so customers can gather product info.

You are only limited by your own imagination. Text message marketing is completely trackable and delivers a strong return on investment. When compared to traditional advertising, it is much less ex-

pensive. Redemption rates on a mobile offer are 40% higher than on an email offer. The time is now to add mobile marketing to your toolbox.

*Barbara Casey, CEO of Mobile High 5, a Malvern-based Full-Service Marketing Firm – We provide digital solutions to engage and retain customers through a powerful platform that combines marketing and technology. 484-325-5725 | [www.mobilehigh5.com](http://www.mobilehigh5.com)*



# Things to consider when choosing your wedding cake/baker

By Chad Weldon

## • Ingredients Used

– Anyone...ok almost anyone can make a box/cake mix at home so why should you pay a professional baker quite a bit of money to use a mix for your cake?! Did you know only 20% of the bakeries in the United States today make their cakes from scratch? Scratch means you will see the raw ingredients (sugar, eggs, milk, etc) in the kitchen and blended together to create that perfect cake! So ask your baker that very important question and know what exact ingredients you are eating.

• **Dependability/Experience** – Make sure the baker always has a back-up plan in case of the worst case scenario (accident, injury, family emergency, etc.) Things can happen as cakes sometimes fall over in transportation, catering staff accidentally damages the cake, etc. You need to have confidence in your baker to come through! This is one stress that should not be there on your big...and perfect day!

An educated and experienced baker makes a difference. Check out their previous work online...and look at the detail they apply to their work. Remember everyone always puts their

best foot forward online so look at the details they can do that will be in your pictures forever.



• **Communication** - they should get right back to you...period. They should be timely in



answering your questions and concerns. Professionals are friendly and understand this to be one of the biggest days of your life! Their

website and social media pages should give you all the updated information about what they offer and who they are. The website is the best "Welcome" mat to any business after that the welcome should come in how you interact with them online, over the phone and in-store.

• **And finally**...check their reviews (make sure they are all not perfect [everyone makes mistakes]). Sometimes when reviews are too perfect it makes me doubt if that baker is human) and make sure you read what the good number of people say about them.

*Chad Weldon is the owner of The Master's Baker, voted 1 of the Top 10 Wedding Cake Bakers in the America - Delish.com (2017), Best of The Knot & Wedding Wire (2007-2018) and Best Cakes in Philadelphia (2011-2017). 610-436-9888 | TheMastersBaker.com*



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