

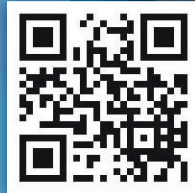


**TO PRESERVE, PROTECT AND DEFEND THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM OF LYCOMING COUNTY**

**Leadership Lycoming  
Holds Leadership and  
Community Service  
Program Day**

**New Chamber Members!**

**PM Exchanges/ Ribbon  
Cuttings**



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## From Jason Fink's Desk - President/CEO of the Chamber

There's been a fair amount of chatter lately with regards to the former Lycoming Mall property. In the time of instant information (accurate or inaccurate or just plain lies), it appears that a number of people have their thoughts on what should and shouldn't be going there. It always makes me smile when seeing and hearing people express their opinions in circumstances like this. For this one, the property has been in a steady decline for years. If people wanted to truly action their ideas, they could have bought the property themselves to redevelop it. Instead, we'll sit back and play armchair quarterback and critique those who have invested their own resources to undertake this project.

Yes, before you go any further, I completely understand that this redevelopment will have public funds associated with it. To be clear though, the money from the county is a loan payable in 5 years with interest. It is not a grant. There are grants from the state in the project. Those who say we have a right to know what is going in there are plain wrong in that thinking. There are a number of companies here and all across Pennsylvania who receive some level of funding akin to what is occurring with the former mall site. None of those projects have a stipulation that requires them to share the full scope and details of their project.

Taxpayers and residents of any community have protections in place which are primarily provided through their local zoning. This ensures that whatever type of development occurs in a particular area, that it meets what is permitted in it. I've heard that a number of people believe that there's going to be low income housing going into the site. Let me be blunt in stating that this is one of the dumbest comments I've heard about what is going there. Those who believe that, think about it. They spent roughly \$15m to acquire the former Mall, Best Buy, Big Lots and Bush properties. Their return on investment is not going to come from low-income housing. Also, do you think any retailer would be interested in a mixed-use development predicated on a low-income development adjacent to it?

The other item I read about in both the paper and northcentralpa.com was regarding the non-disclosure agreement (NDA). This very common document in business provides a business the ability to perform their due diligence without competitors finding out that they're considering a particular property or market. This also serves other purposes like allowing them to not be solicited for services until they're ready to engage in them for a project. I personally like them because it allows me to legitimately say that I can't talk about anything because I've signed one. For the FAMvest developers, the NDA is non-negotiable for them. They need to have them in place because the retail sector is still very highly competitive. Any advantage a business can have in entering a new market they want to maintain. The last thing a retailer wants is for their new market announcement to be shared by someone besides them. It's all about messaging and they want to control it to maintain their brand imaging.

I guess I need to stop referring to it as the former mall site as well given that they announced the new name, The District at Lycoming Valley. Apparently, there's been a number of people that have shared their opinions on the name with some liking it and others hating on it. All not surprising given the number of keyboard warriors out there ready to share their opinions on anything and everything. When I hear "District" in the name, I think of the Strip District in Pittsburgh. In the end, it's just a name though. The key to it all will be the retailers they're able to secure in the coming months and years that choose to locate at The District at Lycoming Valley.

Enough on that subject. I'm going to finish my column this month on a personal note to recognize a few key people. Back on Monday, December 16, 2013, I had one of those life-changing occurrences. While in Coudersport for a PA Wilds meeting, I had felt a slight tickling in my chest. It was an odd feeling, one that caused me to Google "heart attack symptoms". Nothing came up, but it continued to the point where I determined I needed to step away from the meeting to head to the hospital. Fortunately, I decided to pull into Cole Memorial instead of driving home that afternoon. After being checked in and them running a couple of tests, I remember being told that I was going to be flown to Geisinger Medical Center in Danville. They loaded me in the helicopter for a 25 minute flight, of which I really only remember about the last 10 minutes of it. From there I was taken into a corridor and that was about all I can honestly say I remember until waking up from a coma that Thursday.

I later learned from the surgeon performing the 8+ hour surgery that I had an aortic dissection. That evening when I was alone and had my phone, I Googled aortic dissection and I'll freely admit I cried having learned that I was one of the fortunate few to survive one. To say that I don't appreciate the last 10 years I've been given would be a gross understatement. Yes, I've had bad days over that period, but that's part of living and something I've been able to continue doing because of Dr. Woods and the team at Geisinger.

Beyond the team at Geisinger, the support of my family was and continues to be most key. My wife, kids, parents, brother and in-laws all helped me in getting back to living a full and healthy life. There have been many others along the way as well from co-workers and friends, too numerous to name them all here. What I can say is thank you to everyone for being there for me when it was most needed. Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas and a most happy New Year!

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**From the staff at  
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of Commerce!**



## ***Upcoming PM Exchange***

### **Journey Bank**

Thursday, December 14, 2023

5:00-7:00pm

201 South Market St, South Williamsport

Journey Bank invites you to join them in their South Williamsport location for the December PM Exchange. Let us be a part of your holiday journey during this festive season. Journey Bank looks forward to celebrating this evening with you!





# November PM Exchanges/Ribbon Cuttings



On November 9, Axe of Faith held a PM Exchange. Members were treated to delicious food and beverages while networking and getting the opportunity to learn how to throw axes.



Congratulations to FASTSIGNS on their brand new location at 66 Mall Parkway in Muncy. Go and check out all that they have to offer!



Six West Settlements opened their Williamsport office with a Ribbon Cutting at 201 Basin Street. Congratulations and best of luck!



Jamerican Soul Food Restaurant cut the ribbon on their location at 1164 West Fourth Street in Williamsport. Keep an eye out for their delicious food!



# November Ribbon Cuttings



**Ciocca Hyundai held a Ribbon Cutting to unveil their brand new showroom and offices at 202 Lycoming Mall Drive in Muncy. Congratulations!**



**Miele Manufacturing has a great new space in Muncy at 66 Mall Parkway that they showed off during their Ribbon Cutting ceremony.**



**Congratulations to Lanna Beauty Bar in Williamsport on their Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening celebration. You can find them at 418 William Street!**



# FEATURE MEMBER



SUN-GAZETTE FILE PHOTO

The Williamsport Symphony Orchestra performs at a 2019 concert.

## Music of Williamsport Symphony Orchestra makes region special

By **ISABELLA BRIDY**  
ibridy@sungazette.com

The Williamsport Symphony Orchestra has been gracing the community with music since 1915. This year for Christmas, they will be performing “A Broadway Holiday Celebration” at the Community Arts Center Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m.

Founded by violinist E. Hart Bugbee in 1915, the orchestra endured through name changes and World War II. In 1947 after the war, it was picked up and directed by Osborne Housel before changing hands again to Dorothy Baumwoll and Dr. William Barrison. The two had created the Susquehanna Valley Symphony Orchestra in 1964, and by 1984 both programs had merged and established as the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra under a man named Rolf Smedvig’s leadership.

The orchestra is currently “a non-profit organization governed by a board of directors. Hind Jabbour serves as the director of operations, Janet Harris as the director of development, and Gerardo Edelstein as the music director and Conductor” said Hind Jabbour.

The conductor, Gerardo Edelstein, is described by Jabbour as “a native of Argentina, has an extensive background conducting orchestras worldwide. He has been the

music director and conductor of the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra for 14 seasons. With a commitment to musical diversity, Maestro Edelstein has led the orchestra to new artistic heights. In addition to his role with the WSO, he holds various positions at Pennsylvania State University and has conducted orchestras across the globe, earning praise for his charismatic and energetic performances.”

The orchestra itself is comprised of 80 semi-professional musicians with more than half being comprised of violins, violas, cellos, and double basses. Jabbour said the musicians “enjoy being challenged with big works, diversity of composers, and a variety of styles.”

“The Broadway Holiday Celebration” will feature Leroy Anderson’s “Christmas Festival”, Stephen Bulla’s “Rhapsody for Hannukah”, Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas Overture” arranged by Rob Byham, solos from Jennie Judd, Bebe Tabickman, Zack Krajnyak, and Jared Whitford, and will close with “White Christmas” and “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas”.

“I am so happy to be collaborating with the WSO,” said Jared Whitford, creative and staging director and performer for the show. “I am so excited to perform again on the CAC stage with Zack and Jennie, after we have all been out in the world working in the theater world, as well as welcoming extra special guest Bebe Tabickman. There is

nothing more special [than] getting to work with Maestro Edelstein on these incredible Broadway tunes making a special holiday celebration specially made for the Williamsport audiences.”

To learn more about the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra, visit their website at [www.williamsportsymphony.org](http://www.williamsportsymphony.org) or check them out on Facebook at Williamsport Symphony Orchestra or on Instagram @williamsportsymphonyorchestra\_.

For tickets to Williamsport Symphony Orchestra: A Journey Through Time and “A Broadway Holiday Celebration”, visit [www.caclive.com](http://www.caclive.com).

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# SMALL BUSINESS

## Purity Candy a family effort

By **SETH NOLAN**

Sun-Gazette Correspondent

Although Purity Candy has changed hands a few times in its 117 years, the past is always a sweet piece of the present.

Purity Candy is a manufacturing and retail business created by Ford G. Birchard in 1907.

“Ford was a candy maker in Williamsport in the late 1800s and decided to strike out on his own,” said current owner John Burfeindt Jr. “After going to a bunch of places — down south and then Eagles Mere — he found a place in Lewisburg in 1907.”

Burfeindt’s family bought the company nearly 35 years ago. John has been the head candy maker for 32 of those years and bought the company with his wife about three years ago.

“My parents bought this store when I was a senior in high school,” Burfeindt said. “When they bought it they had zero experience in candy. My mother had a small shop selling fabrics and clothes on Long Island, but that was about the extent of it.”

Within the first four years, the Burfeindts began growing the business out of its flagship store on Market Street, in Lewisburg, and realized they needed a larger manufacturing spot. They built the factory in Allenwood and put a store in front of it. Today, both locations still exist.

Since 1907, regardless of who owned the company, Purity Candy has been a family business.

“Although it’s not our family that owned it for 117 years, when I started working here I started with Arlene Zeiber,” Burfeindt said.

Arlene and her Husband George “Buck” Zeiber met at Purity Candy when they were teenagers and ended up buying the business. “When they sold it,



**The crew at Purity Candy finishes hard candy curls — a 115-year-old version of ribbon candy — in this photo from the company’s social media.**

Arlene kept working there,” Burfeindt said.

“Usually you start as an apprentice doing a little more each day,” Burfeindt said. “Arlene and Buck pushed me here and pushed me there ... they let me learn from my mistakes and Arlene ended up working at Purity for 75 years.”

Arlene and Buck Zeiber worked with the original owner’s son and the original owner would come in and help out, drawing a clear family connection that spans over a century.

“Those candy making methods passed through generations like Arlene and Buck and then onto us,” Burfeindt said. “It seemed like there was always this connection to the past as if that’s exactly how Pap (Birchard) would do it or his son Roy.”

Today, both locations consist of 25 employees. Many family members and legacy employees still work crucial or seasonal roles in the business.

(See PURITY, Page 8)

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# LEGACY MEMBER

## Fourth-generation business committed to community

By MARK MARONEY

mmaroney@sungazette.com

There is passion in the voice of Nicole Miele when she refers to the family-owned Miele Group.

It is a genuine tone of expression of love of what being a leader in the fourth-generation business does for her each day.

Headquartered at 66 Mall Parkway, Muncy Township, Nicole can be found at the modern facility, site of the former Gander Mountain.

Today, the facility consists of a 66,000 square foot, state-of-the-art manufacturing and operations center - with an environmentally-conscious power source - solar panels affixed to the roof.

"Our roof is solar," Nicole said, adding, "We're off the grid."

Miele Group, overall, is an amalgamation of several enterprises.

It consists of Miele Manufacturing, Miele Amusements, Fastsigns, Virginia Amusements, Skillco Gaming, Miele Development, and their charitable foundation - Angelina's Song.

Tradition is what first comes to mind with this family-owned enterprise.

Established in 1935, today the Miele Group leadership team consists of Lou Miele, president of Miele Manufacturing and the third-generation operator of Miele Amusements.

With nearly three decades in the industry, Lou Miele is an innovator.

Lou began his manufacturing career after designing and manufacturing jukebox conversion kits for TouchTunes. These kits were built to convert a standard CD jukebox into a digitally downloading jukebox using the same cabinet.

He also helped bring Pace-O-Matic's products to the market by distributing and manufacturing Pennsylvania Skill games.

Nicole, meanwhile, joined Miele Manufacturing in 2010.

Nicole joined Lou to help with the family business after having a 15-year career in radio advertising sales and management.

Nicole began managing Fastsigns, of Williamsport, and has since brought her public relations, marketing, and advertising expertise to Miele Manufacturing and the rest of Miele Group.

Other team members include: Bob Hager, CFO, Jeff Millay, Director of Sales and Service for Miele



SUN-GAZETTE FILE PHOTO

**Nicole Miele, public relations, right, and Louis Miele, president of Miele Manufacturing, right, at Miele Manufacturing in Muncy Township.**

Manufacturing; Brent Peace, General Manager of Miele Manufacturing, Ed Pinkerton, Sales Manager Miele Manufacturing, Mark Stiller, Regional Sales Manager for Miele Amusements.

Pennsylvania Pride

Most of the products that are used in the manufacturing of skill games are made in the Keystone State.

"We are extremely proud that many of the parts to make the machines are sourced from Pennsylvania companies," Nicole said.

For example, the wood is from Lancaster County, Tioga Container provides the boxes and Miele gets critical materials made at Radiant Steel in Williamsport.

The income generated by skill games also creates jobs and the revenue is used by locations that have skill games to pay bills, boost wages, pay for health care, make business updates, provide charitable donations, and more.

This revenue provides a huge contribution to the economy, by bolstering small businesses, assisting fraternal organizations, helping fund critical needs for volunteer fire companies and supporting the financial needs of veterans groups throughout Pennsylvania.

Because of this contribution to the economy, skill game supporters have the backing of the area's state lawmakers to regulate and tax skill games which would benefit the state's residents and would generate millions of extra tax dollars

for the commonwealth.

Miele Amusements, begun in 1935 by Lou's grandfather, supplies jukeboxes, pool tables, dart boards and automatic teller machines to businesses like restaurants, bars and fraternal clubs at hundreds of locations throughout Pennsylvania, Nicole added. "It's incredible to believe that now the 4th generation is coming up in the business! I can't wait to see how they put fresh eyes on the business and take it to the next level!" said Nicole.

Signs and graphics

Another component of Miele Group is Fastsigns, which opened in 2010, and is a locally owned franchise. FASTSIGNS began by printing graphics for Miele Manufacturing, then opened their store to provide other companies within a 60-mile radius signage and graphics.

Charitable Giving

Clearly, one of the best aspects of the Miele Group is how the company and its employees help to improve lives and make a difference in the communities they serve. For example, revenue generated by the skill games is used as part of the nonprofit Pennsylvania Skill Charitable Giving.

Nicole is the director of Pennsylvania Skill's Charitable Giving. These donated funds are granted to all kinds of Pennsylvania non-profits, like volunteer fire companies, community organizations and veterans groups, she said. On any given

(See FOURTH-GENERATION, Page 9)

## Purity Candy a family effort

(From Page 7)

"My mother still works here doing orders," Burfeindt said. "My sister is the general manager of the company and the manager of the retail store in Lewisburg. My wife, who works another job, helps me with the books and other things. My nieces and nephews come in and help on Saturday's. My son was just in from Vermont helping."

Just like his parents and the owners before him, Burfeindt is surrounded by help from family, especially during the holidays.

"I used to come home and help around this time too," he said. "Everyone likes the holidays. It's hectic, but it's a fun time of year here."

The head candymaker said among all of its various products, the chocolate covered pretzels, caramels, and peanut butter smoothies are the most popular.

"If you come to the store in Allenwood, you can see all of it being made through the observation window into the manufacturing spot," he said. "These are products that are handmade by people who live around your town and you can come and watch it being made. It's a unique experience and the people of Lewisburg have known this for a long time."



# Fourth-generation business committed to community

(From Page 8)

month, the Miele's and their team can be seen out and about Pennsylvania communities proudly raising the big checks - made possible by the revenue from the skill games.

Additionally, Nicole is the president of Angelina's Song. This will tug at anyone's heart. Founded by Lou and Nicole in 2017 in memory of Angelina Miele, who succumbed at age 11 to cancer, the Miele's raise funding for music therapy programs.

"Angelina loved music," Nicole said. The charity allows children in hospitals throughout the United States to have access to music and music therapies, she said. "Music is such a powerful tool in helping children cope with the uncertainty of being in the hospital and the discomfort of treatments and procedures they need to endure". Music can lower heartrates in premature and newborn babies, can be used as a distraction during painful

procedures in which very often the amount of medicine needed can be lessened. Music therapy is used to regain speech after brain traumas, and playing instruments is often used as physical therapy to motivate patients to achieve physical goals and milestones.

Using music-delivery devices such as jukeboxes, donated by TouchTunes, the children can hear music of their choice while they undergo therapy and treatment at medical facilities such as the Janet Weis Children's Hospital at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and UPMC Pittsburgh, and their newest jukebox installation location, Children's Minnesota.

"It is a charity that we feel strongly about and it is truly our "therapy". Helping children in Angelina's memory helps us to deal with the pain of losing her," Nicole said. For those who want to contribute to Angelina's Song, you can visit the website [angelinassong.org](http://angelinassong.org)



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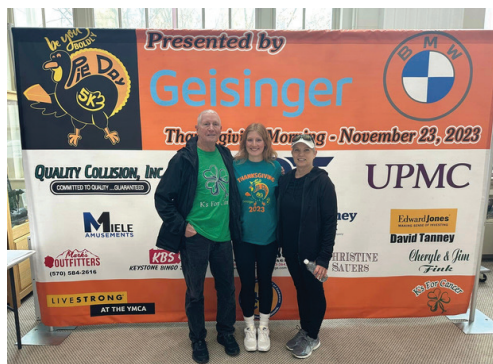
Thank you to the 730 participants in this year's annual Pie Day 5K Run/Walk. We would also like to thank all of our sponsors for this year:

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Stay up to date on Lycoming County events through our Facebook page.





# Leadership Lycoming Holds History and the Arts Program Day

*The Leadership Lycoming Class of 2024 had their second Program Day; History and the Arts, beginning at the Community Theatre League. Hosts Adam Dincher, Class of 2021, and Michael McCullen, Class of 2022, welcomed the class and gave a little background of themselves before introducing the first presentation and tour of the Community Theatre League by Andree Phillips, Founder/Board Chair and Seth Sponhouse Executive Artistic Director. The class was then picked up via Trolley provided by River Valley Transit, for a Millionaires' Row Tour, by Gina Edwards. The next stop was the Thomas T. Taber Museum, where Gary Parks, Executive Director and Scott Sager, Curator of Collections, led the class on a tour through the museum. The final stop of the morning was at The Peter Herdic House, where the class enjoyed lunch prepared by Chef Liz Miele.*

*The afternoon continued with a presentation of the James V. Brown Library by Amy Resh, Executive Director, and Dana Brigandi, Development Director.*

*The class ended the day with a fun leadership project at Wine and Design, by Stefanie Allison, Owner.*

*Thank you to our Tier 3 Sponsor, James V. Brown Library and Tier 2 Sponsor, Wine and Design. Thank you to the Leadership Lycoming 2024 Annual Sponsors, UPMC and North Central Sight Services. Thank you to the day's hosts Adam Dincher and Michael McCullen. Special thank you to River Valley Transit for our transportation for the Millionaire's Row Tour. Also, thanks to Robbie Wendeborn, Bald Birds Brewing Company and Nichole Frye, UPMC.*



**Wine and Design  
Project**



**Suzanne Glisan, Hope Enterprises, LLC,  
at the Community Theatre League**



**Member Renewals**  
**October 30 through November 30**  
**Thank you....you are appreciated!**

**First Year Renewals**

Concepts Design Group  
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**Members 2 - 5 Years**

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 Martina Guerra Goldsmith, LLC  
 One Focus Property Management  
 The Barn @ Pine Creek

**Members 6 - 10 Years**


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 (570) 326-1971 - [www.williamsport.org](http://www.williamsport.org)

**Lycoming County Visitors Bureau Announces 2024 Travel and Tourism Application Deadline**

The Lycoming County Visitors Bureau is pleased to announce the Lycoming County Travel and Tourism Grants program is now open. Grant applications are available December 1 and are due to the Lycoming County Visitors Bureau by 11:59pm on January 15, 2024.

Funding is to assist with non-profit organizations in their travel and tourism related activities and is to be used for underwriting the expense of promotional and publicity initiatives by those assets for the purpose of increasing tourism within Lycoming County. Awards are granted on a competitive basis. Grant funding is limited to non-profit organizations and preference will be given to the assets that demonstrate the ability to attract patrons from outside Lycoming County.

Organizations meeting the criteria for the grant are strongly encouraged to apply for this funding. Applications and guidelines may be obtained by going to the Visitors Bureau website, [www.visitlycomingcountypa.com](http://www.visitlycomingcountypa.com), or the Chamber's website, [www.williamsport.org](http://www.williamsport.org). They can also be obtained by calling the Chamber at 570-326-1971.

Since 2000, the Lycoming County Visitors Bureau has granted out through this program over \$1.7 million to 55 non-profit organizations conducting travel and tourism related events and activities here in Lycoming County.

**Upcoming Member Events**

**Ribbon Cutting: The Williamsport Home**

Woodland Vista Personal Care Suites  
 Tuesday, December 12, 2023  
 Ribbon Cutting - 4:30pm  
 Open House from 4-6pm  
 1900 Ravine Road, Williamsport  
 Refreshments will be served and tours will be offered.

**Montoursville Chamber of Commerce Winter Mixer**

Twin Meadows Farm  
 361 Mountain Road, Montoursville  
 Tuesday, January 30, 2024  
 5-7pm  
 Free to attend, but please register.



## Help support Leadership Lycoming this Holiday Season

We are once again selling raffle tickets for the month of January. Each ticket you purchase for \$5 gives you 31 chances to win! When the **PA Lottery Pick 3 evening drawing** matches your numbered ticket, you win! Prizes range from \$25 to \$250 and are paid out two weeks following the drawing.

**Leadership Lycoming**  
Rules: All numbers played straight. Winning number based on the PA Lottery Pick 3 Evening Number only. Winners paid within two weeks following the drawing. EACH TICKET COST \$5.00 - ONLY 1000 TICKETS SOLD. Leadership Lycoming is a program of the Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce.

Proceeds support the Leadership Lycoming Program. Lic. No. 771

Su	M	T	W	T	F	S
January 2024 #001						
	3	2		3	4	5
\$50	\$25	\$45	\$30	\$40	\$35	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
\$50	\$25	\$35	\$40	\$25	\$25	\$45
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
\$35	\$30	\$45	\$50	\$40	\$30	\$25
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
\$30	\$250	\$35	\$50	\$25	\$40	\$45
28	29	30	31	Thank You!		
\$25	\$40	\$30	\$35			

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

#001

To purchase, please contact Leadership Lycoming at 570-326-1971 or visit the Chamber office at 102 W. Fourth Street in Williamsport.



Leadership Lycoming is a program of the Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce



## PRINCE FARRINGTON'S BOOTLEGGER TOUR

**LIBATIONS & ADVENTURE AWAIT!**  
 Prince Farrington's Bootlegger Tour is a year-round, self-guided tasting adventure, designed for you to explore at your own pace.

All you need is an official passport and sense of adventure.

**\$30/PASSPORT**



Visit [princefarrington.com](http://princefarrington.com) to get your passport!

\*Passport holders must be 21 years old or older to participate. Only one passport per person is permitted.

## Montoursville Chamber of Commerce WINTER MIXER Sponsorship Form



**Tuesday, January 30th, 2024  
 From 5-7pm**

**Twin Meadows Farm  
 361 Mountain Road, Montoursville**

**Help us make this event a success  
 with a \$200 sponsorship!  
 Your sponsorship includes:**

- Company logo displayed at event
- Company logo on all event advertising

Catering provided by



Beverages provided by





VISITLYCOMINGCOUNTY.COM • WILLIAMSPORT.ORG



We would like to say

# THANK YOU

to all of our Tour of Lights Sponsors!

**PROUDLY SPONSORED BY:**

**UPMC**  
LIFE CHANGING MEDICINE



**Geisinger**



**CLEAR VIEW**  
ASSET PROTECTION, LLC



The Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce is proud to partner with Williamsport Trolleys on the Tour of Lights

TOUR OF LIGHTS SNACKS DONATED BY: **DUNKIN'**