Join the Canton Regional Chamber on Feb. 27 for the 2020 Business Expo Presented by AultCare! This annual event, held at the Kent State University at Stark Conference Center, has grown to include over 100 exhibitors, complimentary tasty treats from local restaurants as part of our “Taste of Stark” sponsored by Spectrum Reach, plus several hundred attendees!

Exhibitors can expect to develop business leads, network with local businesses as well as the public, gain invaluable connections and be part of an ever-growing event. Attendees can expect to network while visiting exhibitor booths and enjoying delicious local food samples.

Come out for one of the best networking opportunities of the year, on Feb. 27 from 4-8 pm at the Kent State University at Stark Conference Center. Exhibitor booths are $175 and include a 9’x 9’ booth space, two chairs, 8’ table and pipe and drape. Booth space is extremely limited!

The general public is invited to attend for $5.00 or FREE with a vendor pass. Register to attend or exhibit at www.CantonChamber.org.

See page 15 for a list of exhibitors to date!
ABCs of Medicare

Are you new to Medicare?
Attend a meeting at no cost and learn the ways to fill the gaps in Medicare.

A - Hospitalization
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C - Medicare Advantage
D - Prescription Drugs

Call today to reserve your seat.

1-888-563-6220 (TTY: 711)

Reservation Center Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

For more information, please contact PrimeTime Health Plan at 1-800-577-5084 or TTY users can call 1-800-617-7446, Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (October 1 - March 31, we are available 7 days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.). PrimeTime Health Plan is an HMO-POS plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in PrimeTime Health Plan depends on contract renewal. Our plan does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in its health programs or activities. English: ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-800-577-5084 (TTY 1-800-617-7446). Español (Spanish): ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-577-5084 (TTY 1-800-617-7446). 繁體中文 (Chinese): 注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-800-577-5084 (TTY 1-800-617-7446).
March 19, 2020
7:30 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. Barrette Center, Walsh University

Learn what you need to know about the present and the future of Utica oil and gas exploration at the Utica Midstream, a production of the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce in partnership with Shale Directories, an oil and gas business development company.

Since 2012, shale oil and gas industry experts have come to Canton at our invitation to make presentations about the latest developments in Utica upstream, midstream and downstream. These speakers have attracted a diverse business audience from throughout Ohio, western Pennsylvania and northwest West Virginia. Audience members have networked with speakers and each other and frequently have discovered their Utica business opportunities.

Speakers include:

- Colette Breshears, Genscape
- Jason Stechschulte, MPLX, Business Development Manager
- Sam Schupbach, Vice President, Processing G&F
- Mike Tritt, President, Lane Power & Energy Solutions
- Jackie Steward, Director of External Affairs, Encino Energy
- Tony Barbera, Co-Owner, Barbco, Inc.
- Labor Panel Discussion, Bob Wilds, Bryan Abel and Paul McCormack
- Rick Simmers, ODNR (waiting to confirm)

Utica Midstream will provide valuable information about exploration and production, oil and gas public policy, midstream development, ethane cracker plants, sustainable jobs in manufacturing, and much more!

The Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce is proud to be the only chamber of commerce in Ohio that consistently offers these highly informative oil and gas education programs that businesses in Utica Shale country need to understand because it will transform Ohio’s economy for decades to come. Join us on March 19 by registering today at www.uticacapital.com or www.uticasummit.com. For questions or sponsor information, call Chris Gumpp at 330.458.2055.

REGISTER NOW for UTICA MIDSTREAM

RESERVATION CENTER HOURS OF OPERATION:
Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Call today to reserve your seat.
1-888-563-6220 (TTY: 711)

REGISTER NOW:
www.UticaSummit.com

Utica Midstream sponsors to date:

IUOE - PLCA
National Pipeline Training Fund
Featuring Melissa Loomis & Dr. Ajay Seth; the “Most Advanced Amputee in the World” and the Canton surgeon who performed the surgery.

When Canton native Melissa Loomis developed sepsis from a raccoon bite she had to have her right arm amputated.

Dr. Ajay Seth, the orthopedic hand surgeon who treated her, thought she would be a great candidate for a new surgical technique. The surgery, never-before-performed in the US, allows redirection of nerves to move a prosthesis with the brain.

Loomis is the first amputee who can feel cold, pressure and pain through a prosthetic arm. She is also able to move her artificial fingers using her brain. The operation has been called ‘revolutionary’, branding Melissa ‘the most advanced amputee in the world’.

Seth also wrote a book, Rewired, about this journey.

Wednesday, February 19
11:30 am – 1:00 pm
(Registration begins at 11:00 am)
La Pizzaria
3656 Dressler Rd. NW, Canton 44718
$18/members, $25/non-members
Register by November 18 at www.CantonChamber.org

Entrée of the month: Penne Pasta with Meat Sauce & Salad

AultCare QuickConnect attendees can obtain business leads through enjoyable networking activities, hear a compelling speaker, meet new business contacts and enjoy a delicious meal. Plus, when you bring a door prize valued at $15 or more, you’ll receive 30 seconds at the microphone to promote your business.
GREETINGS!

This year, the nation’s eyes will focus on Canton, Ohio, as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birthplace of the National Football League. Football is a fitting metaphor for exemplifying virtues such as teamwork, inclusion, and collaboration. Your Chamber is guided by these same virtues, which are the cornerstones of our mission and strategic plan for promoting economic development of the region—north, south, east, and west.

Once again, the Chamber has teamed up with the Pro Football Hall of Fame for the 56th Enshrinement Festival and for what promises to be a spectacular centennial celebration in September. The Chamber has teamed up with the City of Canton and local business to build the iconic Centennial Plaza, an exciting destination that promises to attract families to downtown Canton for years to come. We’ve teamed up with the Stark County Minority Business Association and the Manufacturing and Advocacy Growth Network (MAGNET) by literally giving them a window to the community.

Your Chamber has teamed up our schools at all levels to prepare students for good paying jobs. The Chamber offers programs such as Leadership Stark County and yes! that aimed at attracting and retaining young people in the region.

These are but a few of the many valuable programs and services (too many to mention) that the Chamber offers its members.

It is my honor to serve as this year’s Chair of the Board of Directors of your Chamber. I want to thank last year’s Chair, Rick McQueen, for his leadership. I look forward to working with President & CEO Denny Saunier and the Chamber’s talented and dedicated staff, as well as with the entire Board of Directors and the Chamber’s many hardworking volunteers and partners.

Whether you’re a large company or small business, engaged in manufacturing, retail, services, or hospitality, we want to serve you. Tell us how we can help your business.

Respectfully,

Joseph J. Feltes
Chairman of the Board
Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce
Did you know by the age of three a child's brain is already 80% developed? Did you know young children whose parents read to them five books a day enter kindergarten having heard about 1.4 million more words than kids who were never read to. In addition, research has shown that a child with 25 books in their home complete an average of two additional years of schooling compared to their peers without books in their home.

Why should this matter to the business community? Because studies have shown that a child with books in their home will be more successful in school and jobs, which contribute to a stronger community.

It is critical for children to have access to books, language, and reading activities from birth. Governor DeWine’s goal is that every kindergartner begins school with 60 books in their home. To reach this goal in Stark County, several agencies have collaborated to ensure our youth have this access to early childhood books through the Governor’s and Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library Foundation.

The program mails 1 book a month to registered children from ages 0 to 5 to encourage literacy and a love of reading.

The Ohio Governor’s Imagination Library is generously providing 100% match funding for county affiliates to help cover the $25 per year per child costs. Stark County Library is the named affiliate in Stark County with support from the United Way, as well as the support from independent libraries. Enrollment to receive books, opportunities to donate to the program, and opportunities to volunteer in the Governor’s initiative are through https://www.ohioimaginationlibrary.com/

The Dolly Parton Imagination Library has mailed over 130 million books since 1995 to children in the US, Australia, Canada, Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom. As we now know… early childhood literacy matters.

By Barbara Hammontree Bennett, PS, LEED-AP
Director of Education Initiatives
Preparing for 2020

SMALL BUSINESS OUTLOOK AND CHALLENGES

By all accounts, the economy did well in 2019, and it continues to hum along at a decent pace in early 2020. GDP growth, unemployment, core inflation and manufacturing all moved in encouraging directions in 2019, and for most small businesses, that’s been good news for their bottom line.

But while the economy remains strong now, our latest infographic, Small Business Outlook and Challenges for 2020, shows that growth may slow over the next couple of years.

LOOKING AHEAD
The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System predicts:

- GDP will decline to 2.0% in 2020, down from 2.2% in 2019,
- Unemployment is expected to improve slightly this year, but it is expected to climb in 2021 and 2022
- Core inflation is also expected to rise in 2020
- U.S. manufacturing sector is expected to see its steepest production decline since the 10-year period following the Great Recession (between 2008 and 2018).

It’s not all doom and gloom, though. Roughly 62% of small business owners report they’re feeling at least somewhat prepared for economic uncertainty, and 24% of them say they feel very confident about the future.

For small businesses wishing to survive the first year of the Roaring 20s, it all comes down to being prepared for uncertainty.

CHALLENGE 1: AN ECONOMIC DOWNTURN
While another recession is unlikely according to the experts, 67% of small business owners aren’t so sure. At the very least, they anticipate an economic downturn—or worse—over the next 12 months.

How to prepare:
In the same Gallup survey, however, 75% of these same small business owners rated their company’s 2019 cash flow as “good” or “very good.” If you’ve had a good 2019 but are worried about the future, taking advantage of your good numbers early in 2020 could be key to mitigating risk. Apply for financing while your numbers are strong, and you’ll have the financial backing to weather the tough times if or when they arise.

CHALLENGE 2: A TIGHT LABOR MARKET
All the good news about unemployment being so low has been a mixed blessing for small business owners. It is great to see people working and putting money into the economy, but the low unemployment rate, combined with the growth of the gig economy and the trend toward remote workers has made it more difficult than ever for employers to fill open positions.

How to prepare:
It is estimated that 43% of the workforce is comprised of freelancers, and this actually presents an opportunity for small businesses. Outsourcing is a great way to build your business while saving money on salaries, benefits and taxes.

If outsourcing isn’t your bag, put together a plan to attract and retain talent by offering them the flexibility that comes with working remotely. More employees than ever are working remotely in some capacity in 2020, so developing a perk package that includes flexible hours and working from home may edge out your competition when it comes to finding talented employees.

CHALLENGE 3: CYBERATTACKS
Cyberattacks aren’t isolated incidents anymore, and big, faceless conglomerates aren’t the only companies vulnerable to breaches. In fact, 43% of all cyberattacks targeted small business owners in 2019, the largest single sector of all. More than half of all attacks involved hacking, and 71% were financially motivated.

How to prepare:
The best way to prepare for a cyberattack is by educating yourself about what can be done to prevent breaches in the first place and then developing a plan to secure your business.

SCORE’s webinar, “What Small Businesses Need to Know About Cybersecurity” is a great place to start. Next, check out our eguide, “The Small Business Guide to Cybersecurity,” which not only helps you put the proper security measures in place, it outlines how to recognize and respond to a data breach if your business happens to experience one.

CHALLENGE 4: NATURAL DISASTERS
Natural disasters aren’t just the big, sweeping threats that so many associate with climate change. Natural disasters can be a lot less dramatic, but no less devastating. A burst pipe, a server failure or a power outage can be just as destructive as a hurricane or tornado to a small business’s economic vitality, and it can leave an owner reeling. Sadly, between 40 and 60 percent of these businesses don’t recover.

How to prepare:
SCORE has a host of resources available to help small businesses prepare and address natural disasters. The best part? We’ve compiled them into a handy guide that allows you to quickly get to where you need to go. Bookmark this page, and develop a plan to respond to natural disasters that could affect your business.

WHAT TO DO NOW
While our website has an extensive library of helpful content that can assist you in navigating the challenges facing your small business in the new decade, it is SCORE’s experienced and knowledgeable mentors who make all the difference. A SCORE mentor can work with you to identify the challenges you might face this year—be they economic or otherwise—and help you develop a preparedness plan to make sure you not only survive 2020 but thrive throughout it!

REACH OUT TO A SCORE MENTOR TODAY TO GET STARTED.

CONTACT CANTON SCORE OFFICE AT CANTONSECORE.ORG OR CALL: 330-244-3535
For 23 years, AultComp MCO focuses on what matters most: our community and personalized care. We assist with the efficient return to work for your employees, all while delivering exceptional customer service.

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Specializing in workers’ compensation medical management, AultComp MCO’s mission is to deliver high-quality services to our business partners. As we strive to exceed customer expectations, we will continually manage our resources cost-effectively, and maintain trust and integrity in all our partnerships.

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**Canton, Ohio 44718**

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Harness your sales prowess and cultivate relationships with 100 NEW CONTACTS.

FREE contact follow-up list for all attendees!

Friday, March 20
Courtyard by Marriott
4375 Metro Cir NW
North Canton Ohio 44720

8:00 am - Registration
8:30 am - Noon - Networking
Cost: $35 for members, $60 for non-members
$15 surcharge for walkup registrations. Full breakfast included.

Tabletop exhibits are available for $35.
Contact Molly Remig at (330) 833-4400 or mollyr@cantonchamber.org; space is limited!

Register by Mar. 18 at www.cantonchamber.org or contact Monique Thompson at moniquet@cantonchamber.org or (330) 458-2070.

Event is non-refundable. No-shows will be billed.
The Pro Football Hall of Fame and Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce have named two long-time community volunteers to the top leadership positions for the 2020 festivities that will celebrate the annual Pro Football Hall of Fame Enshrinement. Todd Stover will serve as General Chairperson and Dennis Manzella as General Vice Chairperson.

Stover and Manzella will lead the nearly 5,000-person volunteer corps that helps with the planning, coordination and execution of the events surrounding the annual enshrinement celebration. The volunteers provide a world-class experience to the hundreds of thousands of fans who will descend upon the Canton community for the 2020 Pro Football Hall of Fame Enshrinement festivities including Enshrinement Week Powered by Johnson Controls. The annual event kicks off the NFL’s season and centers around the Enshrinement Ceremony for members of the Class of 2020 that will take place on Saturday, Aug. 8 in Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium.

This summer’s celebration will be Stover’s 41st year as a volunteer, including 39 years on the Hall of Fame Security Committee, 10 years as the chairman. Stover, the Manager of Program Delivery & Controls, Emerging Technologies Group, FirstEnergy Corp, is a past-president and chairman of the Jackson-Belden Jaycees, past chairman of Parish Council of Saints Philip & James Church, and is a member of the Edison Men’s Club, Knights of Columbus #11037, and a long time United Way supporter. He and his wife Shelly reside in Canal Fulton and are the proud parents of University of Akron graduates Kyle and Lauren.

Manzella, a New York native, attended St. John’s University and New York University and is currently serving as Assistant Vice President of Marketing for Western Reserve Group in Wooster, Ohio. He is a member of OIA of Ohio, PIA of Indiana, and Big “I” Agent Association of Ohio and Indiana. He and his wife are parishioners at St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church. A long-time, dedicated Pro Football Hall of Fame Enshrinement Festival volunteer, he just completed his fourth year as chairman of the Concert for Legends Committee. He has previously chaired the Appreciation Party and Security and Logistics Committees. Dennis has also served on the Enshrinement and Game Committees. Dennis and his wife Rose Ann reside in Jackson Township.

Stover and Manzella will work closely with the staffs at the Pro Football Hall of Fame and Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce to provide training and resources to enhance an already solid foundation of dedicated community volunteers. The volunteer corps provides the support necessary to host the large celebration each summer in Canton. In addition, the community volunteers assist with other events throughout the year and will be integral to the Canton community hosting the NFL’s Centennial Celebration in September 2020.

The annual Enshrinement is a celebration of the Hall of Fame’s important mission to “Honor the Heroes of the Game, Preserve its History, Promote its Values and Celebrate Excellence EVERYWHERE.” The celebration, through the collaboration with the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce, has grown significantly over the past 56 years and now draws over 700,000 people that generates an estimated economic impact over $40 million for the Canton/Stark County area and nearly $65 million for the State of Ohio. In addition, millions of people tune in to experience a number of the events that are televised nationally.

In one of the greatest traditions in all of sports, more than 140 Gold Jackets (a term to reference living Hall of Famers) are expected to return to Canton this summer to participate in the festivities that surround the 2020 Enshrinement celebration.
The Pro Football Hall of Fame and the annual Enshrinement Festival including Enshrinement Week Powered by Johnson Controls will be celebrating 57 years of excellence in 2020, with the first event being the Queen & Royal Ambassadors Pageant on Thursday, May 7.

The age criteria for contestants is that on or before July 1, 2020, candidates must be a minimum of 17 years old, but not older than 22 years of age. Additionally, candidates must reside and, if employed, work within a 30-mile radius of Stark County.

Applications and tickets will be available at the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce, Enshrinement Festival department, 222 Market Ave. N., in downtown Canton, weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. beginning Monday, Feb. 10. In addition, applications will be available on-line at www.ProFootballHOFEF.com. The deadline to submit the application and a $70 fee is Monday, March 23, by 5 p.m.

While not mandatory, all potential candidates are invited and encouraged to attend the ninth annual “Queen & Royal Ambassadors Pageant Informational Session” which will take place Saturday, Feb. 22 at the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce from 9 to 11 a.m. This session will help prospective participants decide if they would like to enter the Pageant, and to give them a better idea of what to expect if they do. Participants will have the opportunity to review the 2019 Queen Pageant DVD which includes footage of the ambassador opportunities, learn about the judging experience from past years’ judges, hear from a past queen who will share her memories, and ask questions about the process. This informative, casual session is FREE, but reservations must be made in advance by calling Kathy Lindenberger at (330) 458-2056 or e-mailing her at: kathyl@cantonchamber.org.

The Queen & Royal Ambassadors Pageant on Thursday, May 7 will begin at 7 p.m. at The Canton Palace Theatre. All seats are reserved at $22 each, and tickets can be purchased at the Canton Regional Chamber, and online at www.ProFootballHOFEF.com/Queen Pageant.

At the conclusion of the Pageant, a Queen and five Royal Ambassadors will have been selected on the basis of personality, poise, beauty, communication skills, academic achievement and service to community and will almost immediately begin their tenure as goodwill ambassadors and role models throughout the community.

For more information regarding applications, tickets or sponsorship opportunities, contact Kathy Lindenberger at (330) 458-2056 or visit the Enshrinement Festival Web site at www.ProFootballHOFEF.com.
Non-profit Board Member Training

BUILDING BETTER BOARDS SEMINAR

Thursday, February 27
8:00-11:30 a.m.
Aultman North Canton Medical Group
Cost: $35 per person, $105 for 4 from same agency
Register Now at CantonChamber.org

The Building Better Boards seminar is excellent for anyone who works or volunteers for Stark County non-profit organizations, government entities, schools, or community organizations. Energize your non-profit organization with the latest trends, best practices, and techniques. Want to get more done, run more efficient meetings, and think strategically?

You get all three sessions:
Role of the Board Member: Sara Strattan, past executive director, Community Legal Aid; Legal Responsibilities of Board Service: Randy Snow, of-counsel, Black McCuskey Souers & Arbaugh; Hope Is Not a Strategy - Helping Non-Profits Succeed Through Strategic Board Leadership: Jeff Daffler, Founder & Chief Strategist, The Daffler Company.

Attend the Building Better Boards seminar and start 2020 moving smoothly toward your organizational goals. Members of local non-profit boards, agency staff, and interested community members are encouraged to attend. The seminar is being offered to ensure that non-profit agencies and their board members have access to best practices and current trends.

Register on-line at LeadershipStarkCounty.org or call 330-458-2095 for more information.

Sponsored by:

BLACK McCUSKEY SOUERS & ARBAUGH
A Legal Professional Association

STARK COUNTY SAFETY COUNCIL
FEBRUARY LUNCHEON
SAFETY LEADERSHIP AND MULTIGENERATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Join us for the February Stark County Safety Council Luncheon. Speakers are Bronwyn Weaver - President/Vision and Strategy and Ami Gignac - Executive Vice President, Q4 Impact Group, LLC. They will be discussing Safety Leadership and Multigenerational Communication.

Statistics prove that companies that shift from a conditions-based safety culture to a behavior-based safety culture have lower accident rates, improved morale, and improved profitability.

This session will explore the four keys to shifting culture developed from our experiences working with numerous heavy industry leaders. Effective communication is the foundation to making this shift, and every generation has different communication preferences.

We will discuss how to most effectively reach workers from all generations to promote commitment, engagement, and safety leadership.

Thursday, Feb. 13
11:30 am-1:00 pm
Alex D. Krassas Event Center
Cost: $17 per person
Register at www.CantonChamber.org

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Fast, Reliable & Affordable
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- Brush Hog Work
ystark! is currently seeking nominees for the 13th ANNUAL TWENTY UNDER 40! These awards recognize 20 incredible young leaders who are actively making a positive impact in the county across various sectors of the business, civic, government, arts, education and non-profit communities.

Nominees are selected based on career acumen, community service and trusteeship, and personal and professional achievements. The Twenty under 40! selection committee is comprised of diverse business and community leaders representing a range of industry sectors from around Stark County.

Eligible young professionals are between 21 and 40 years old, who work in all career industries, and live or work in Stark County. Full eligibility information is available at https://www.cantonchamber.org/twenty-under-40

Online submissions due by 11:59 p.m. on March 6, 2020; no exceptions. Winners of the 2020 award will be toasted at the 13th Annual Twenty Under 40! Gala this summer – stay tuned for more details coming soon.

NOMINATE A YOUNG PROFESSIONAL TODAY AT WWW.YSTARK.ORG!

ystark! is currently seeking nominees for the 13th ANNUAL TWENTY UNDER 40! These awards recognize 20 incredible young leaders who are actively making a positive impact in the county across various sectors of the business, civic, government, arts, education and non-profit communities.

Nominees are selected based on career acumen, community service and trusteeship, and personal and professional achievements. The Twenty under 40! selection committee is comprised of diverse business and community leaders representing a range of industry sectors from around Stark County.

Join us for a ystark! CEO Meet & Eat on Feb. 26 as we reimagine retail in Stark County. With the changing retail and hospitality landscape nationwide, YPs from all industries will learn how two of the areas leaders are reimaging what it takes to be successful in their respective retail niches.

The ystark! CEO Meet & Eat series is a professional development opportunity for YPs to learn from community leaders across diverse industries. Hear what it takes to be successful, what CEOs with they knew in their 20s and 30s, and advice for thriving personally and professionally today.

This month’s CEO speakers:
Jennifer Conley, General Manager, Burntwood Tavern
Mike Walsh, General Manager, Belden Village Mall

Wednesday, Feb 26
Noon-1:30 pm
Burntwood Tavern
4320 Everhard Rd NW
Canton, OH 44718
Cost: $20 (lunch provided)
Register at www.CantonChamber.org

NOMINATE A YOUNG PROFESSIONAL TODAY AT WWW.YSTARK.ORG!
Get to know the young professionals who will shape the future of Canton/Stark County! Each month, we’ll introduce you to a YP who is living or working, but most importantly, thriving in Stark County!

Name: Brielle Loughney
Occupation/Title/Place of work: Marketing Assistant, Kent State University at Stark
Age: 24

Why are you interested in Stark County’s Young Professionals initiative?
As a young professional, I yearn to make new connections. I want to network with those who have been in the business for years, as well as those who, like myself, are just starting out. I have lived in Stark County for a majority of my life. I live here, I work here, I photograph here, my church family is here, my husband and I got married here. I am impressed by the community growth I’ve seen, but know there is room for improvement - improvement that I would like to have a hand in bringing. I want to be a representative of the Stark County community.

What would you share to encourage other people to join?
Personal testimonies go a long way. When I go to Mugswigz and take a photo of my friends and I enjoying delicious coffee and tea, it’s not only a personal life documentation, it is a chance to shine a light on a treasured Stark County coffee shop through my perspective. I like to think of myself as a subtle influencer. Word of mouth is one of the best marketing tools!

Did you grow up in Stark? If so, where? If not, where did you move from and why?
For a majority of my life, I lived in Uniontown, Ohio. I graduated from Lake High School in Uniontown and graduated from Kent State University at Stark. My husband and I now live in North Canton.

Why do you stay in Stark County, from both a personal and professional point of view?
I think Stark County has plenty to offer in terms of things to do and see. I can go to Downtown Canton for the “city” feel and then travel 15 miles down the road to the rural magic of Maize Valley.
On a professional level, I feel there are constantly opportunities for professional development and growth. Working at Kent State University at Stark, Stark County’s only public university, I am lucky enough to see this every single day. In Stark County, people want to see you grow. They want to see you succeed and reach your full potential. Just last year, I was part of Leadership Stark County. I grew immensely as a professional, and made so many contacts - some of which I still reach out to!

What do you do in the evenings or on the weekends for fun in Stark County or NE Ohio?
I like to take walks at the local parks (ex. Price Park, Hoover Trail, etc.) I am often in various Stark County locations for shoots (ex. Quail Hollow State Park, Downtown Canton, Downtown Hartville, etc.). At least one Saturday a month, my husband and I like to go to Deli Ohio or Taggarts for lunch, and then we like to stop at some of the area antique shops (ex. Arrowhead, Aunt Teaks, Avenue Antiques, etc.).

Could you see yourself spending your lifetime in Stark County and if not, what would cause you to leave?
Honestly, I could see myself spending a lifetime in Stark County. Some of my fondest memories have been made in this place, and it holds such a special part of my heart. Stark County has a small town-big city vibe that I haven’t really found anywhere else.

What would attract more YPs to Stark County?
Young professionals like to see the success of other YPs. Young people are looking for places where they can have unique experiences. Stark County’s coffee shops are definitely some of those experience destinations. I think the upgrading of Downtown Canton (i.e. addition of new restaurants, hip shops, etc.), as well as the addition of area-specific events like Downtown Canton Flea Market, First Friday, etc. are a huge YP draw. YPs want to live and play where things are happening, and I already see parts of Stark County moving in that direction.

What do you like MOST about Stark County?
Taking a note from Kent State Stark’s recent insert in “About” magazine, Stark County is truly a place for “dreamers and doers.” People here know that success comes from hard work. It also comes from the support of the community that surrounds you. If Stark County should be known for anything, it should be known for it’s people. I like that in Stark County, if you have a dream, there is likely an avenue for you to make it happen. I immediately think of Sara Heckert and the recent incredibly successful grand opening of GiGi’s Playhouse Canton. Ideas aren’t immediately shot down, they are thought through and put into motion. Dreams thrive here.

What would you change about Stark County if you could?
It may seem somewhat arbitrary, but I think Stark County needs more sidewalks - specifically in the commercial shopping areas of North Canton. If we want people to stay and we want people to visit Stark County, safety and travel has to be a top priority.

What do you see as valuable opportunities for YPs in Stark County when it comes to career opportunities, cultural access, leadership or community involvement opportunities?
I think YPs should take better advantage of the professional development opportunities provided to them. For example, my office works closely with Kent State Stark’s Corporate University. The Corporate University offers so many professional and corporate development courses year round. YPs should be the ones getting involved on area boards. Their opinions are fresh and valuable and their voices deserve to be heard.

BRIELLE LOUGHNEY

WorkPlayStay is sponsored by:

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BUSINESS EXPO EXHIBITORS {TO DATE}

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AFLAC - Pamela Simpson
Alliance Country Club
Ambit Energy
American Cancer Society of Stark County
AultComp MCO
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Burntwood Tavern
C. Massouh Printing
Canton Aluminum & Vinyl
Canton Charge
Canton Christian Home
SCORE - Canton Regional Chapter 580
Cartridge World
Certified Professional Restoration
Cherry Blend Coffee Roasters Ltd.
Chick-fil-A
Cintas
Clay’s Park Resort
Commercial & Savings Bank
Community Hospice
Community One Credit Union
Consumers National Bank
Crystal Clinic Orthopedic Center
Cutler Homes
DataCom Technologies, LLC

David YMCA (Jackson Township)
DeVille Apartments and Builders, Inc.
Edge Branding Solutions/Cutco Closing Gifts
deck hair design & spa
Edward Jones - Paul Frey
Excel ENT, Allergy and Hearing Solutions
Farmers National Bank
Farsight Management, Inc.
First Commonwealth Bank
Five Arrows Technology
Forquer Heating and Air Conditioning, Inc.
Gervasi Vineyard
Giordano’s Italian Restaurant
Glenmoor Country Club
Go Shred Secure Document Destruction, LLC
Grandview Roofing Systems
Grass Master, Inc.
Grifols, Inc.
Habitat for Humanity East Central Ohio
Hanna Commercial Real Estate
Heath Business Solutions
Henderson Roofing & Construction, Inc.
Holiday Inn Canton Twenty/20 Taphouse
Hudec Dental
Huntington National Bank
Jackson Township Fire Dept.
Jackson Township Police Dept.
Jackson Township Rotary Club
Johnson Controls Hall of Fame Village
KeyBank
Koala Kruizers
LED Transportation - Luxury - Executive
-Disability
LoVET Video Productions
MAGNET
Mann Marketing
Medical Mutual of Ohio
Mercy Medical Center
Miller’s Party Rental Center
Minuteman Press
Mission BBQ
Nothing bundt Cakes
Old School Pizza
Pro Football Hall of Fame Marathon
ProTech Security, Inc
Pure Water Technology
R & J Ballroom Dance Instruction
Renewal by Anderson
Restoration 1 of Northeast Ohio
Seifert Technologies, Inc.
Shady Hollow Country Club
Sheetz
Sluggers & Putters Amusement Park
St. Luke Lutheran Community
Stark Library
StarkJobs.com
Sully’s Tool & Party Rentals
Sunset Hills Burial Park/Karlo Libby Funeral
Home/Forest Hill Cemetery
Synchrony Financial
The Massillon Plaque Company
TL Worldwide Transportation
Trane Tech
The Workshops, Inc. (TWi)
UB Advertising LLC
Vitalant
Wayne Savings Community Bank
Western & Southern Life
Westfield Bank, FSB
Woodside Terrace Apartments
Xpress Payment, Credit Card Processing
Your Home Court Advantage

SAVE THE DATE! Go to www.ystark.org for more information!
February Calendar

13
Stark County Safety Council Luncheon
www.cantonchamber.org
Join us for the February Safety Council luncheon featuring Bronwyn Weaver - President/ Vision and Strategy; Ami Gignac - Executive Vice President, Q4 Impact Group, LLC.
Thursday, Feb. 13
11:30 am – 1:00 pm
Alex D. Krassas Event Center
$17 per person

19
AultCare QuickConnect Luncheon
www.cantonchamber.org
At the next QuickConnect meet Dr. Ajay Seth, Canton Orthopaedic Surgeon, and his patient Melissa Loomis “The Most Advanced Amputee in the World.”
Wednesday, Feb. 19
11:30 am-1:00 pm
La Pizzaria
$18/members, $25/non-members

26
CEO Meet & Eat
www.ystark.org
Learn from community leaders and hear what it takes to be successful. This month’s CEO guests: Jennifer Conley, General Manager, Burntwood Tavern Mike Walsh, General Manager, Belden Village Mall
Wednesday, Feb. 27
Noon - 1:30 pm
Burntwood Tavern
Cost: $20 (lunch provided)

27
Building Better Boards Seminar
www.leadershipstarkcounty.org
Energize your non-profit organization with the latest trends, best practices, and techniques. Start 2020 moving smoothly toward your organizational goals.
Thursday, Feb. 27
8:00-11:30 am
Aultman North Canton Medical Center
$35 per person or $105 for groups of 4+

27
2020 Business Expo
presented by AultCare
www.cantonchamber.org
One hundred businesses will be on hand to share info on their products and services!
Thursday, Feb. 27
4:00-8:00 pm
Kent State University at Stark Conference Center
Free to attend!

AultWorks Occupational Medicine specializes in treating work-related injuries and illnesses. We are certified by the Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation.

Our services include:
• Injury Care
• Drug and Alcohol Screenings
• DOT and Pre-placement Physicals
• Pre-placement Physicals
• Random Management Programs
• Mobile Medical Unit

www.aultman.org/aultworks
1-844-285-9675

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canton</th>
<th>Alliance</th>
<th>Orrville</th>
<th>Carrollton</th>
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<tr>
<td>NEW MEMBERS</td>
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</table>
| **5 Star Protective Services**  
(SECURITY GUARD SERVICE)  
Robert Hartman  
6937 Promway Ave.  
North Canton, OH 44720  
330-357-4425  
www.5starprotective.com |
| **Aman’s Collision Center**  
(AUTO BODY REPAIRING & PAINTING)  
Denise Roush  
5130 Cleveland Ave. S.  
Canton, OH 44707  
330-484-4301 |
| **Anstine Machine Corp.**  
Michael Anstine  
15835 Armour St. NE  
Alliance, OH 44601  
330-821-4365  
www.anstine.net |
| **Brains Riding in Tanks, LLC**  
(BUSINESS CONSULTING)  
Chad Kapper  
8861 Day Ave. SW  
Navarre, OH 44662  
330-705-4701  
www.brittllc.com |
| **Cantoni Oil Well Service Inc.**  
(OIL & GAS SERVICES)  
Robert Hutcheson  
7793 Pittsburg Ave. NW  
North Canton, OH 44720  
330-494-1221 |
| **Captive Radiology**  
(MRI MANAGEMENT)  
David Kelly  
6272 Frank Ave. NW  
North Canton, OH 44720  
330-966-0506  
www.captiveradiology.com |
| **Carrabba’s Italian Grill**  
(RESTAURANTS)  
Alexis Crask  
6560 Strip Ave. NW  
North Canton, OH 44720  
330-966-2426  
www.carrabbas.com |
| **Caveney Inc. / Servpro of Stark County, BSM**  
(RESTORATION SERVICES)  
Mary Keister-Whitmyer  
3317 Orion St. NW  
North Canton, OH 44720  
330-497-1773  
www.servpro8059.com |
| **Central Ohio Recovery Inc.**  
(TOWING)  
Sharon Nicewander  
5375 Navarre Rd. SW  
Canton, OH 44706  
330-477-1112  
www.tomethere.com |
| **Community Building Partnership of Stark County, Inc.**  
(NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION)  
Maureen Austin  
400 Market Ave. N  
Canton, OH 44702  
330-458-0953  
www.communitybuildingpartnership.org |
| **Dave & Busters**  
(RESTAURANTS)  
Jason Patton  
4110 Belden Village St. NW  
Canton, OH 44718  
330-280-9530  
www.daveandbusters.com |
| **Fitzpatrick, Zimmerman & Rose Co. LPA**  
(ATTORNEYS)  
Steve A. Anderson  
140 Fair Ave. NW  
New Philadelphia, OH 44663  
330-364-1614  
www.fzarlaw.com |
| **Fleming, Wise and Scherer Orthodontics**  
(ORTHODONTICS)  
Samuel Wise  
6529 Frank Ave. NW  
North Canton, OH 44720  
330-433-1000  
www.fwsorthodontics.com |
| **Gospel Book Store**  
(BOOK STORE)  
Merv Stoltzfus  
4900 Oak Street  
Berlin, OH 44610  
330-893-2523  
www.mygospelbookstore.com |
| **Heath Business Solutions**  
(ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT)  
Laurel E. O. Heath  
2469 Bowers St. NW  
Uniontown, OH 44685  
330-687-8169  
www.heathbizsolutions.com |
| **Hein Construction, Inc.**  
(CONTRACTORS - GENERAL)  
Julie A. Spadone  
3840 Greentree Ave. SW Ste. 1  
Canton, OH 44706  
330-484-2970  
www.heininc.com |
| **Jackson Living**  
(ADVERTISING - MARKETING)  
Karl Schmidt  
1250 Sanders Ave. SW  
Massillon, OH 44647  
330-353-0116  
www.bestversionmedia.com |
| **Laubacher Upholstery Inc.**  
(UPHOLSTERY)  
K.C. Laubacher  
814 Cleveland Ave. NW  
Canton, OH 44702  
330-456-4351  
www.laubacherupholstery.com |
| **Lorrie E. Fuchs, Attorney at Law**  
(ATTORNEYS)  
Lorrie E. Fuchs  
3974 Wales Ave. NW  
Massillon, OH 44646  
330-830-4044 |
| **Matalco Inc.**  
(MANUFACTURERS)  
Clayton Morris  
4420 Louisville St. NE  
Canton, OH 44705  
330-451-9244  
www.matalco.com |
| **Maximovich IT Consulting LLC**  
(COMPUTERS - SOFTWARE & SERVICES TECHNOLOGY SERVICE & SOLUTIONS)  
Jason Maximovich  
650 S. Prospect Ave. Ste. 108  
Hartville, OH 44632  
330-315-4994  
www.maxitpro.com |
WELCOME to our newest members, who joined Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce in December. We encourage you to patronize their businesses. If you know of other businesses that would benefit from Chamber membership, please contact the Membership Department at (330) 458-2051.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orion Construction</td>
<td>RESTORATION SERVICES</td>
<td>7801 Cleveland Ave., North Canton, OH 44720</td>
<td>330-244-9708</td>
<td><a href="http://www.orionohio.com">www.orionohio.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print Potpourri, LLC</td>
<td>PRINTING COMPANIES</td>
<td>PO Box 8591, Canton, OH 44711</td>
<td>330-754-6777</td>
<td><a href="http://www.printpotpourri.com">www.printpotpourri.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raisin Rack Natural Food Market</td>
<td>GROCERS - RETAIL</td>
<td>4629 Cleveland Ave. NW, Canton, OH 44709</td>
<td>614-882-5886</td>
<td><a href="http://www.raisinrack.com">www.raisinrack.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Lobster</td>
<td>RESTAURANTS</td>
<td>4629 Cleveland Ave. NW, Canton, OH 44709</td>
<td>614-882-5886</td>
<td><a href="http://www.raisinrack.com">www.raisinrack.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reed Law Offices</td>
<td>ATTORNEYS</td>
<td>401 Tuscarawas St. W Ste. 201, Canton, OH 44702</td>
<td>330-492-0458</td>
<td><a href="http://www.reedlaw.com">www.reedlaw.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoepnner Tile &amp; Construction, LLC</td>
<td>CONSTRUCTION INTERIOR &amp; EXTERIOR - COMMERCIAL &amp; RESIDENTIAL</td>
<td>8128 Wayneburg Dr. SE, Wayneburg, OH 44688</td>
<td>330-904-9689</td>
<td><a href="http://www.schoepnnerite.com">www.schoepnnerite.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stark Metal Sales, Inc.</td>
<td>MANUFACTURERS</td>
<td>432 E. Keystone St., PO Box 2881, Alliance, OH 44601</td>
<td>330-823-7383</td>
<td><a href="http://www.starkmetal.com">www.starkmetal.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Edge Learning Inc.</td>
<td>SCHOOLS - CHARTER</td>
<td>92 North Union St., Akron, OH 44304</td>
<td>330-374-6704</td>
<td><a href="http://www.edge4kids.org">www.edge4kids.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Maintenance Company</td>
<td>MAINTAINENCE - COMMERCIAL</td>
<td>8286 Cleveland Ave. NW, North Canton, OH 44720</td>
<td>800-309-8857</td>
<td><a href="http://www.themaintco.com">www.themaintco.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail Battery &amp; Solar</td>
<td>ENERGY SERVICES</td>
<td>5977 OH 515, Millersburg, OH 44654</td>
<td>330-893-7033</td>
<td><a href="http://www.trailbatterysolar.com">www.trailbatterysolar.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village of Cadiz</td>
<td>GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS - CITY - COUNTY - STATE</td>
<td>128 Court Street, Cadiz, OH 43907</td>
<td>740-942-8844</td>
<td><a href="http://www.villageofcadiz.com">www.villageofcadiz.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waynesburg Carriage Co.</td>
<td>AUTO DEALERS - CARS, TRUCKS, NEW/USED, LEASE, SERVICES, PARTS BODY</td>
<td>173 Mill St., Wayneburg, OH 44688</td>
<td>330-866-0493</td>
<td><a href="http://www.waynesburccarriageco.com">www.waynesburccarriageco.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoder's Produce Inc.</td>
<td>PRODUCE</td>
<td>9599 S. Applecreek Rd., Fredericksburg, OH 44627</td>
<td>330-695-5900</td>
<td><a href="http://www.yodersproduce.com">www.yodersproduce.com</a></td>
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**CANTON REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**
The Ohio Small Business Development Center at Kent State University is sponsoring an information session for individuals interested in starting a small business or those who are in the early stages of business formation. The information session will be held on Monday, February 3, 2020, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Kent State University at Stark Conference Center, 6000 Frank Ave. NW.

The Small Business Orientation will provide a general overview of issues related to starting a business, such as business planning, determining market demand, financing options and available community resources. Register online at www.cantonsbdc.org.

The Pro Football Hall of Fame has teamed up with iHeartMedia Canton to host the first-ever Hall of Fame Fan Fest on Saturday, March 21, 2020 and Sunday, March 22, 2020. Museum guests will have the opportunity to interact with Pro Football Hall of Famers and NFL Legends while visiting "The Most Inspiring Place on Earth!" Additionally, guests can learn even more about the history of the game from the Hall’s trained Museum Docents who will share historical tidbits and facts beyond the artifacts on display in the Museum.

The following NFL greats are scheduled to be on hand to walk throughout the Museum and engage with fans.

Saturday, March 21: Cris Carter, Kevin Greene and Charles Haley, Sunday, March 22: Clay Matthews, Jr., Warren Moon and Warren Sapp. Tickets can be purchased in advance online or on the day of the event at the Hall’s Ticket Office.

415 Group, a certified public accounting and business firm, today announced the promotions of seven associates to leadership positions. “We’re excited to elevate these individuals as they continue to demonstrate outstanding capabilities and leadership at our firm and for our clients,” said 415 Group Managing Partner Frank Monaco.

The promotions include: Nate Arps, senior manager; Dominic Reolfi, senior manager; Mikaela Ferguson, supervisor; Austin Webb, supervisor; Amanda Dalpiaz, senior associate; Morgan Giebel Cannon, senior associate and Quaid Kloha, senior associate.

Consumers Bancorp, Inc. today announced it has completed its acquisition of Peoples Bancorp of Mt. Pleasant, Inc. and is now operating as one company. The transaction brings Consumers total assets to approximately $625 million, based on information as of September 30, 2019. The Peoples National Bank of Mount Pleasant, a national banking association and a wholly-owned subsidiary of Peoples, merged with Consumers National Bank, a national banking association and a wholly-owned subsidiary of Consumers ("Consumers Bank"), with Consumers Bank being the surviving banking subsidiary of Consumers.

The Consumers Board of Directors has also named John W. Parkinson, CFP, to the Board of Directors of Consumers and Consumers National Bank, its wholly-owned subsidiary. Parkinson (55), who has served as a member of the Peoples Board since 2005, is the President and founder of Appalachian Capital Management Ltd., a St. Clairsville, Ohio based money management firm.

Black McCuskey Souers & Arbaugh, LPA is pleased to announce that Attorney Ray Meiers has been named a partner of the firm. Meiers has engineering degrees in both mechanical engineering and electrical engineering from the University of Toledo and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Cincinnati, College of Law. He is registered as a Patent Attorney with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Meiers began his practice in 2000, after having spent five years working as an engineer. Over the years, he has obtained hundreds of patents and trademarks on behalf of clients and has conducted numerous investigations into the value, validity, and scope of patents in various areas of technology and business. Meiers is a frequent lecturer on IP topics.

Bruce Soares, Managing Partner of the firm, commented, “Ray is an integral team member of the intellectual property practice group advising clients in the firm’s Toledo market. We are very pleased to name him as a partner of Black McCuskey.”


The Karcher Group (TKG) announced the acquisition of NetTrack Marketing, a leading digital marketing group with a keen focus on providing internet marketing for manufacturing companies and providers of B2B services. Based out of Cleveland, Ohio, NetTrack Marketing was recognized as a leading provider of website marketing and search engine optimization services. This acquisition enhances TKG’s manufacturing client portfolio and continues to strengthen the agency’s presence in Northeastern Ohio through both organic growth and acquisitions.

Following the acquisition, NetTrack’s Owner and President, Rick Brown, has been named Vice President of Digital Marketing at TKG. Joining Brown in transitioning from NetTrack is long-time team member Brian Kall. Kall has more than 10 years of experience in industry-based business-to-business digital marketing and will continue executing client strategy as Digital Marketing Director at TKG.

Cherry Blend Coffee Roasters, located at 1003 Cherry Ave. NE in Canton, supplies wholesale and retail roasted coffee to their clients. Stop in during store hours or order online. They even offer home delivery! Roast options include Ethiopia, Guatemala, Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia, Papua New Guinea and blended options. Their goal is to provide fresh roasted coffee and deliver it within a couple of days to clients. For more information on all we offer check out www.cherryblendcoffeeroasters.com

Have business news you’d like to share via Biz Bitz? Send your news release to Collyn Floyd, director of marketing, at collynf@cantonchamber.org.
M. Conley, a 110 year old company, celebrates entrepreneurs who will make the next 100 years exciting.

One nominee per month. One winner per year. Twelve reasons to believe in the future of northeast Ohio.

TO NOMINATE A COMPANY VISIT: WWW.NEOBRIGHTESTLIGHTS.COM

The 2019 M. Conley Entrepreneur-Of-The-Year Award: NOMINEE #7

QUONSET HUT
Canton, Ohio

For two years Kratzer and his friends worked virtually free as precious few paychecks cleared. They cleaned and built The Barn with their bare hands. It was a hippie mall just north of the sparkling new Belden Village Mall. While Belden’s new tenants sold nationally-advertised products, The Barn rented space to youth-oriented sellers of music, beads, hippie clothing, pipes and more. The tenants were long on dreams, short on the kind of money to pay the kids who actually did all the work. Kratzer subsisted on meager Social Security payments from two parents who died before he left high school.

As The Barn crumbled, the owners set up shop in an old quonset hut on Cleveland Ave. near 30th St., taking their young worker bees with them. They soon moved to a small house down the street, but the name Quonset Hut stuck. As the business took shape, a new accountant told the owners they had to do something to make up for all the bounced paychecks and, suddenly the kids were partners with small equity stakes and yearly profit sharing checks. The store became the first Stark County outlet for Levis jeans and business began to boom. When the owner of the record store downstairs failed, the Quonset Hut found itself in the record business and succeeded beyond all expectations.

Soon there were five Quonset Hut locations scattered across northeastern Ohio and over $9 million a year was pouring into the company’s coffers. Kratzer was finally cashing in on all his hard work. Then the quintessential counter-culture business found itself in a traditional business conundrum. All the owners wanted to retire, except Kratzer. In a series of meetings the partners worked out a deal whereby Kratzer and wife Robin would buy the name Quonset Hut, all the merchandise at the five stores would be liquidated and millions of dollars worth of real estate sold. The Kratzer’s took control of all merchandise that didn’t sell at liquidation and paid the partners a percentage of whatever they were able to finally sell. After over 30 years of work, Mark Kratzer fully owned the Quonset Hut, a Canton institution with virtually no assets. Thank goodness they had Robin’s Canton teacher salary to fall back on.

Step by step, Kratzer and Robin began to rebuild relying on good relationships with vendors Mark had worked with for years. With the music industry in disarray and CD sales plummeting, smoke shop products became their big sellers. They followed the old Quonset Hut formula offering hot products before big box stores grabbed the market. CBD transformed the business. Darts became a big hit, as did skateboards, metaphysicals, high-grade incense, clothing and more. Disc golf illustrated the secret to their success as Dick’s tried to get in the game with 150 discs while Quonset Hut offers over 3,000.

A team of committed, product-educated employees brought a level of service hard to find in modern retail stores. Their knowledge is especially valuable with CBD health-related products. Now in charge, Kratzer insisted on doing everything the right way. Involved in a number of highly-regulated businesses, government inspectors have become some of the stores biggest fans.

Twelve years after hitting “Restart” Mark and Robin Kratzer revitalized Stark County’s most unusual store, in a new, building at the corner of Cleveland and 38th Street. Together they purchased the building and worked with an architect to make sure the design met their businesses’ quixotic needs. Squiggly parking lot space lines perfectly set the mood. In many ways it was a huge risk, but it was really the continuation of the off-beat business path pioneered by a grown man who started his career as a parentless kid with a drawer full of bounced paychecks.

Go to www.neobrightestlights.com to learn about the other nominees!
In 1905 Henry Belden was facing disaster ... again. Debts at his Canton Pressed Brick Company threatened everything he owned. For the fifth or sixth time Belden was flat on his back, looking for a way to bounce back. He only had to look as far as his own family.

There are two kinds of entrepreneurs in America: Those who start a business and those who keep it going. Belden Brick owes its 134 year existence to both. Henry Belden was a restless serial entrepreneur who led five different companies, with mixed success. He once had to visit neighboring towns with suitcases full of money to buy his way out of street lighting contracts that became bad business when John Rockefeller more than tripled the price of gas. Henry's resilience is the reason Belden Brick is one of the few survivors from hundreds of similar companies populating the clay fields of northeast Ohio at the beginning of the 20th century.

However, with Henry again on the brink of failure, son Paul hurried home from his successful sales career down south. He found ways to recapitalize the firm, restart production, improve quality, expand operations, and turn Belden Brick into one of the most successful brick companies in the country. Along the way the Hartung family became part of the ownership structure.

From the time Paul Sr. returned to Canton in 1904 until his death in 1970, there was never a doubt who was the boss. He transformed the ruins of Canton Pressed Brick into one of the most important companies in Canton history by constantly reinvesting in plant modernization through booms and busts. At some point during his leadership, the company went from being merely a business to a family and community treasure.

Henry started the fight. Paul turned it into a successful business. Generations of Belden's made it more than just a business.

Robert Belden, the current CEO is typical. A day before he was to break ground on a new home in Chicago, his cousin Bill called and asked him to join the company. After almost a decade working as a market-maker at the Chicago Options Board, Bob was anxious to start making a more solid contribution to society and bricks are about as solid as things can be.

Bob and Bill Belden ran the company with their eyes as much on heritage as profit. Of course, profit was important, especially with the growing number of family stockholders. All wanted a return, but Bob and Bill both realized the special nature of their positions as leaders of a closely held family business deeply ingrained in the social fabric of their hometown.

Maintaining family ownership as markets changed and the family grew to 132 stockholders, has been a challenge. Inheritance taxes, dividend levels and succession issues are formidable hurdles, but somehow Belden Brick has remained a successful family business. The secret is in lessons learned from the two men who started it all, Henry Belden and his son Paul.

From Henry they learned resilience and the importance of capital. From Paul they learned the value of conservative financial management and civic involvement while constantly investing in plant modernization and product quality.

When Henry Belden faced financial ruin 115 years ago, family saved him. Over a century later, Belden's still make a habit of leaving good jobs elsewhere to return to the family business and keep it running for another generation. Today Belden Brick stands as one of the largest family-owned brick companies in America. It's amazing what a business can accomplish when profit becomes a means rather than an end.

Go to www.neobrightestlights.com to learn about the other nominees!
REQUEST COPIES OF CANTON INC. MAGAZINE

A new issue of Canton Inc., an economic development publication that showcases why Stark County is a great place to do business, is now available. The Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce and Gannett/The Repository produce this magazine twice yearly.

By showcasing the business landscape here in Canton, through rich business features and highlights on education, transportation, health care, quality of life and more, we hope to attract new businesses, increase business growth locally, and change the perception of our region.

Need additional copies? Individuals or businesses can request copies by calling the Canton Regional Chamber at 330.456.7253.