Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce

“Small Town, BIG Living”

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MEET&GREET

- **Who:** Lisa Fox
- **What:** Owner, Kimpel’s Jewelers Inc.
- **Chamber position:** Board member, past president
- **How I serve the chamber:** On the Marketing Committee, the Employee Appreciation Luncheon Committee, and as chair of annual dinner and Christmas party.
- **Why I volunteer to promote the Ellwood City Area through the Chamber of Commerce:** I volunteer because: to help promote local business. I have learned so much about our community and want to share that with others. I also enjoy the camaraderie.
- **What I love mostly about the Ellwood City area:** The people and pride they have in our community and the proximity to “everywhere.”
- **What I do when I am not volunteering on behalf of the chamber or working at my job:** I like to do lots of things to keep my hands and mind busy. My favorite is knitting.

**“IT’S UNBELIEVABLE, THE CROWD WE HAVE HERE”**

By William V. Foley
For The Chamber

ELLWOOD CITY — When Brad Ovial closes his eyes and sees the future of Ellwood City’s Community Plaza, 1,100 music fans are seated in a parking lot across adjacent Beaver Avenue.

Lights affixed to triangular arches cast a warm glow on an even warmer night across the stage and venue, whose popularity and extended seasons prompt nearby restaurants and shops to remain open late into the evening to cater to the crowd.

Entertaining on that 40-foot stage, in Brad Ovial’s mind, could be national bands from yesteryear, such as “Peter, Paul and Mary.”

“There are these old bands from when...”

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Good libations!

Spirits high at arches fund-raiser: Bring in the stars under the stars!

Visitors to Ellwood City Revitalization’s Winter Wine and Beer Fest are shown Jan. 28 at the Sons of Italy Lodge 608 in Ellwood City.

A preliminary architectural design shows proposed arches over the Community Plaza.
Chamber lauds 58% spike in members

By William V. Foley
For The Chamber

NORTH SEWICKLEY TOWNSHIP – Jillian D’Amico, who studied environmental science at Allegheny College, knows all about the importance of roots, root systems.

After a year in Charlotte, N.C., she’s returned to her own roots, Ellwood City, and is about to help the Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce continue to flower.

The chamber’s newest member and incoming coordinator of the 2017 Earth Day was among 100 guests who gathered Dec. 5 at the organization’s Christmas dinner and annual meeting at the Connoquenessing Country Club.

That’s where the association celebrated an extraordinary 2016 under first-year Executive Director Raymond Santillo:

- A Top 25 ranking in the Pittsburgh Business Times’ list of Western Pennsylvania chambers, above those in Pittsburgh’s Penn Hills, South Hills, North Shore and in Canonsburg; a 58 percent increase in membership; a Fall Festival that doubled in attendance to 4,400 visitors; and the launch of a December “Let There Be Lights” video viewed 64,000 times within days on the organization’s Facebook page.

“There is a resurgence,” Santillo says.

“You look at what our events are doing and how they are doing it. We have some great things going on.”

Dr. Nick Neupauer – president of Butler County Community College, an Ellwood City native and the evening’s keynote speaker – suggests the chamber develop an economic plan to attract more millennials – those born between 1977 and 1999.

Agreed, says D’Amico, 26.

“More young people are joining the chamber,” she says. “It’s great to get back to the town you grew up in.”

And spearhead projects, Santillo says.

“Many want to be the helpers and don’t want to be in charge.”

Santillo says. “When you have people like Jillian, and Scott and Caroline Golmic, who want to lead, that means a lot more to me.”

As does the spike in membership. The chamber added 127 in 2016 – alphabetically, from Al Geniviva to Ziegler’s Auto Body – bringing its total to 327.

“It’s just so exciting”

“We are very impressed with the community, the Ellwood City area, which is right in the middle of Beaver, Butler and Lawrence counties,” says Santillo, hired in January as executive director. “We’re getting members from all directions. I think it is the excitement of the board of directors. And people who are volunteering to help us grow. It’s just so exciting.”

That excitement, says Caroline Golmic, is contagious.

“It starts with Raymond, who’s been pounding the pavement,” says Caroline Golmic, who will serve as chamber president in 2017.

127 join 200 in progress!

Monthly membership total at a glance:
Caroline Golmic loves the sense of community, Stacy Court? That small-town feel. Agreed, says Deborah Sudano. Dan Swartz says it’s all the amenities that are available. And what Daniel Franus loves best about the Ellwood City area is all the friendly people. Meet your 2017 Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce executive board of directors!

- **President:** Caroline Golmic  
  **Where I work:** I am nearing my eighth year working for Aflac. I have a storefront on Fifth Street in Ellwood City. I love being able to provide benefits that help families in a time of need. I also love the freedom and flexibility the position provides so that I am able to serve the community.  
  **Where I live:** Ellwood City!  
  **Why I volunteer to promote the Ellwood City area through the Chamber of Commerce:** I love Ellwood City and I want others to see what we have to offer and the potential we have for growth and development.  
  **What I love most about the Ellwood City area:** The sense of community. The willingness of people to help. Ewing Park. We have parades! My family is here.  
  **What I do when not volunteering on behalf of the chamber or working at my job:** Those times seem to be far and few between, but it’s usually spent with my husband and family!

- **Vice president:** Stacy Court  
  **Where I work:** In human resources and as a benefits administrator at INMETCO.  
  **Why I volunteer to promote the Ellwood City area through the Chamber of Commerce:** I want to see the Ellwood City Area thrive again. Being on the chamber allows me to be a part of servicing and promoting this area. I also enjoy working with an enthusiastic group of people exchanging progressive ideas.  
  **What I love most about the Ellwood City area:** This area has a small, hometown friendly atmosphere, with several organizations and people willing to work together to keep it that way.  
  **What I do when not volunteering on behalf of the chamber or working at my job:** I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, gardening, walking, sightseeing, traveling and doing home improvements.

- **Second vice president:** Daniel Franus  
  **Where I work:** President of Franus Architectural Associates Inc.  
  **Where I live:** Ellwood City  
  **Why I volunteer to promote the Ellwood City area through the Chamber of Commerce:** The Ellwood community has been very good to me and my family. The chamber gives me the opportunity to support, and give back, to Ellwood.  
  **What I love most about the Ellwood City area:** This area has the most friendly people in the world.  
  **What I do when not volunteering on behalf of the chamber or working at my job:** I spend much time with my grandkids. I have seven. I love watercolor painting and being outdoors.

- **Treasurer:** Daniel Swartz  
  **Where I work:** Vice president of marketing at WesBanco Bank  
  **Where I live:** Prospect  
  **Why I volunteer to promote the Ellwood City area through the Chamber of Commerce:** It is important to give back to the communities in which I live and work. I want to help move the community forward to be a great place to live, work and play.  
  **What I love most about the Ellwood City area:** The amenities that Ellwood City offers. Some of these include the parks, shopping, restaurants, churches, shopping, healthcare and much, much more.

- **Past president:** Deborah Sudano  
  **Where I work:** General manager of Wampum Underground Commerce Center  
  **Where I live:** Ellwood City  
  **Why I volunteer to promote the Ellwood City area through the Chamber of Commerce:** The chamber is a vital part of Ellwood City. Volunteering to participate in events, board of directors, etc., allows me to help continue the process of growth and excellence in Ellwood City.  
  **What I love most about the Ellwood City area:** The “small town living” allows for more interaction with the community and neighbors. We can truly support each other all the time.  
  **What I do when not volunteering on behalf of the chamber or working at my job:** I have been married to my husband, Bob, for 45 years. We have three married children and five amazing grandchildren. Bob and I enjoy traveling and we typically plan a trip about every six months.
**2017 ELLWOOD CITY WINTER WINE AND BEER FEST**

**Arches fans: Bring in stars under the stars!**

**Cheers to the Sponsors**

Sponsors of the first Ellwood City Winter Wine and Brew Fest:
- **Platinum:** Ellwood Group Inc. and CS McKee Investment Managers.
- **Gold:** Amerikohl Aggregates Inc.
- **Friends of Ellwood City Revitalization:** Aflac-Caroline Golmic; Blank Concrete and Supply Co., Core 3 Group, Frank B. Taylor Engineering, HDH Group, Leymarie Clark Long P.C., and Samuel Teolis Funeral Home.

**Good, From Page 1**

I grew up in the ‘70s,” says Ovial, president of Ellwood City Revitalization. “They go around to places like the Carnegie Library (in Oakland) and The Strand (Theater in Zelienople) and put on concerts for a couple thousand people. They’re groups that you know. They might not be at the apex of their careers, but they go around.”

The apex of the Community Plaza will be those 18-foot high triangular arches, built of the same type of seamless steel tubing first manufactured in the Americas in Ellwood City, and upon which the lights — and hopes of larger nighttime crowds, longer performance seasons and expanded business hours — hang.

“It can only help the businesses”

“Arches with lights on them will allow us to have concerts after dark, and it opens up more months of the year, and actually even longer into the summer,” Ovial says. “It’ll help businesses. It will help retail sales. People may come in earlier before the shows and say, ‘Hey, I’m going to eat in Ellwood City’ as businesses open up and there are more places to eat. It only can help the businesses because people may come in before or after the event and stay.”

That vision was shared by the hundreds of visitors to the Sons of Italy Lodge 608 on Jan. 28, when Ellwood City Revitalization hosted its first Winter Wine and Brew Fest to begin a campaign to raise $90,000 for those triangular arches positioned atop three 12-foot poles.

The variety of suggestions as to which entertainers Ellwood City could host in its four-year-old, $2.2 million plaza was as extensive as the samples of homemade wine and beer.

“I’m a big fan of Journey,” says Jeff Gonzales, of New Castle, who with his brother, Jason Gonzales, offered a taste of his music and to visitors, a taste of their West Coast IPA, their Belgian double-brewed with raspberries, and a bourbon barrel imperial stout from Wigle Whiskey aged on raspberries.

“I know (lead singer) Steve Perry is not there anymore. But man, if

**Visitors to Ellwood City Revitalization’s Winter Wine and Beer Fest are shown Jan. 28 at the Sons of Italy Lodge 608 in Ellwood City.**

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**MEET THE MAKERS**

Winemakers and their wines at the first Ellwood City Winter Wine and Brew Fest: Frank Carozza Brewer, with “Louisa’s Limoncello;” Vino De Fratella Santillo, with “Heritage Wine;” Kerr Brewing, with “Cabernet Sauvignon,” Hogue’s Skyline Wine, with “White Pear Riesling;” Kid-a-poo Brew and Wine, with “Chilean Syrah 2016;” Three Generations Wine, with “Visciona;” Frank Mazzanti Wine, with “Boscolo” and “Lumbruso;” La Famiglia Barsotti, with a variety of wines; and Petti La Famiglia Vino, with “Lumbrusco.”

Brewers and their beers at the first Ellwood City Winter Wine and Brew Fest: Outta Focus Brewing, with “Seedy Monk” and “Kelbo;” Walleybrau, with “Kolsch,” Scott, with “Nut Brown Ale;” Syobb, with “Mandarina IPA;” X-Spurt Rhino Lining, with “Rich’s Apple Pie;” A3 Brewing, with “Cherry Chocolate Cigar;” Pete’s Uptown Beer and Beverage, with its premium samples; and Culligan, with “H2O.”
“Small Town, Big Living” theme has connected, DeCaria says.

“It’s a great example of that,” he says. “And we do this with the hope that when they experience these things, they’ll take pride in where they live and appreciate it. And maybe some will come back and live here.”

Which is what happened with the Golmics, 29-year-olds who returned to Ellwood City from Pittsburgh two years ago – Caroline to chair the Fall Festival and Scott, the Christmas parade and Christmas in the Park; and with new member Cherina Pelissier, of Pelissier Project Consulting LLC, who had lived in Pittsburgh; and with D’Amico, who came back to Ellwood City from North Carolina.

“I think that is the best-case scenario,” Caroline Golmic says. “To move away, get a chance to see other places and things, how things work, and to be able to come back and appreciate the small-town mentality, the tradition. Even in my age group. And so the more that takes effect, and the more people are looking to save money on housing, to be able to spend it out in the economy, I think they are going to keep moving in to Ellwood City.”

As did D’Amico, who will become coordinator of Ellwood City Community Enrichment, a chamber subsidiary that stages Earth Day, the Storytelling Festival and the Summer Concert Series.

“It’s helpful to bring new thoughts to the town and city planning,” D’Amico says. “Some fresh ideas.”

Fresh ideas that will take root in 2017.

“Small Town, Big Living” resonates

“The video makes Lynn Carter, Samantha Jo and Kim Hood “homesick,” gives Judith Britting Keffer “goosebumps” and, Cynthia Gallacher posts, will encourage “a lot more out-of-towners visit next year to see this.”

Don’t miss these videos on our Facebook page!

MAJESTIC VIDEOS NOW SHOWING!

Wine, Beer Fest

COMING SOON!

Let There Be Lights

Christmas Dinner
2016 SERIES ACTS

- June 18: Brok’n Pic Band
- June 25: Generation II
- July 6: Tim Zimmerman and the King’s Brass
- July 16: Dixie-band
- July 23: Beaver Valley Brass
- July 30: Harmony Zeli Community Band
- Aug. 13: Jeff Wiley and the Coyotes
- Aug. 20: Dante DiThomas Swing Band

**Good, From Page 4**

“small town, big living”

Ron Bowers, of Boardman, Ohio: “One of the first concerts I ever saw was Foreigner, so I got to go with Foreigner.”

Says Jason, of Boardman, Ohio: “One of the first concerts I ever saw was Foreigner, so I got to go with Foreigner.”

“Three Dog Night”

The arches would resemble those baseball fans might see at PNC Park in Pittsburgh, says Daniel Frans, an Ellwood City architect who is second vice president of the Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce and executive director of Ellwood City Revitalization. “We have an open structure with two small arches and one large arch, and they are set up with power so we will be able to have lights for various performances and things like that,” he says. “The open framework is all done with seamless tubing and it is very reminiscent of the arches you might see at PNC Park.”

Even without its lights, the Community Plaza has “brightened up our town,” says Terri Crespo, of Ellwood City. “They have the entertainment in the summer, which is very nice, and I know people take advantage of that.”

The act she’d like to see outdoors in Ellwood City?

“Three Dog Night,” she says.

“Ellwood City hasn’t seen something like this in a while”

Johnny Greco, of Ellwood City, says the Community Plaza has changed the way Ellwood City residents look at their town — and themselves.

“Ellwood City hasn’t seen something like this in a while.”

Nor had it seen a first-time fundraiser like that of the Ellwood City Winter Wine and Brew Fest, Frans said.

“It’s unbelievable, the crowd we have here,” he says. “This is the first of these that we have had. For this to help ECR and the way this is going, this is fantastic. This is going to be a tremendous help for us in moving forward with designs of the next phase of the project.”

“Peter, Paul and Mary” have three concerts scheduled through March 11 in California.

Perhaps one day they will be leaving on a jet plane. For Ellwood City.