



## Berks County Commissioners Provide Updates at GRCA Breakfast Event

The Berks County Commissioners gave a community update about the various projects, services and challenges the County has faced in the last two years during a breakfast forum hosted by the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance (GRCA) at the Santander Performing Arts Center on Friday, March 11.

Commissioners Christian Leinbach, Kevin Barnhardt and Michael Rivera told the crowd of nearly 200 business leaders and community members how thankful they were to finally be able to gather in person for the event in more than two

years. The Commissioners acknowledged that many of their projects have been successful due to the ongoing partnership with GRCA, such as the support for the agricultural community, economic development work and the distribution of the Covid Hospitality Industry Recovery Program (CHIRP).

"The relationship between the County of Berks and GRCA has never been stronger, and we appreciate all the work your leadership team does," Leinbach said.

*(Continued on page 20)*



Wolf Run  
Landscapes

610-779-5717

[wolfrunlandscapes.com](http://wolfrunlandscapes.com)

Your beautiful new landscape awaits. Call today!

*Landscape design and installation using mostly native plants to help stabilize the loss of our biodiversity and sustain green naturalized areas.*



- Natural lawn care services from new to renovation.
- Proper pruning and removal of trees and shrubs.
- Hardscapes - natural stone walls and walks, gravel paths, paver patios.
- Water gardens and ponds.

email: [wolfrun@ptd.net](mailto:wolfrun@ptd.net)

29 Klapperthal Road, Reading PA 19606





# MOVE AHEAD

with low-rate loans  
on new and used  
commercial vehicles.



800-451-3477    [RiverfrontFCU.org](http://RiverfrontFCU.org)





RiverfrontFCU



**THE FLEISCHMANN LAW FIRM, P.C.**  
*Focused on Your Business and Protecting Your Estate*



Craig Fleischmann, Esq.



Franqui-Ann Raffaele, Esq.

- Business Law
- Construction Law
- Wills & Estates
- Elder Law/Medicaid Planning and Application
- Creditor Rights
- Contracts
- Referrals & Free Consultations



3900 Skippack Pike, Suite A8  
 Skippack, PA 19474

Telephone: (215) 234-3344  
 office@fleischmannlawfirm.com

[www.fleischmannlawfirm.com](http://www.fleischmannlawfirm.com)



**The Junkluggers of Berks, Chester, & Lancaster Counties**



**Getting junk out of your life, keeping it out of landfills.**

**What we offer:**

- Same and next-day appointments
- Quick, dependable, on-time service
- Fully insured trucks and employees
- Tax deductible receipts for any donations made on your behalf
- We'll take items like furniture, TV's, appliances, clothing, household goods, and much more!

**\$25 OFF**  
 a 1/4 truck or more

Mention when booking to redeem. Only participating locations. Limit one per household. Offer cannot be combined. Tax is not included.

**COUPON CODE: ROUTE422**

**1-800-LUG-JUNK • JUNKLUGGERS.COM**

Call or book a job today for a **FREE**, no-obligation estimate!

**We're Here For All Your Ups & Downs**



**Serving Montgomery, Berks and Chester Counties & Surrounding Areas**

HIC#: PA150881

**25+ Years Experience!**

**Sales - Service - Installation - Residential - Commercial**



**Get a Free Estimate**

**610.220.5168**  
 info@bcgds.com

**BCGARAGEDOORPRO.COM**

**GRCA BREAKFAST**

*(Continued from page 19)*

Barnhardt focused much of his time discussing recent developments with the County's Office of Election Services, including the hiring of Director Paige Riegner, adding more staff positions and the implementation of electronic pollbooks during the upcoming primary. He also highlighted the County's purchase of the former GAI Tronics facility in Mohnton to serve as a South Campus and gives the County about 110,000 square feet of space for election equipment storage, County archives and other services.



**Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt**

"We've made these investments for the improvement of elections here in Berks County," Barnhardt said.

Barnhardt also spoke about the initial steps of the County's correctional facility project, which restarted in January after a hiatus due to COVID-19. He stressed that the project isn't about creating more space for cells, but for important services and updated resources to best serve the community. "This will be the number one financial project this County has ever undertaken," he said. "We need to understand the need for this and the process. When built correctly, this facility will last us for at least 50 to 70 years."

Commissioner Rivera shared about

his first two years in office and the learning opportunity the COVID-19 pandemic provided for him as a new Commissioner and the County overall. "These past few years there's been a lot of changes that we've implemented at the County that will have a long-lasting positive impact on the county and County finances," he said. Rivera shared about the County's overall fiscal situation, highlighting several positive factors, including no tax increases the last two years, a growing tax base and that Berks was one of only five counties in Pennsylvania to have a AAA bond rating that assures the County the lowest



**Tony & Joe's**  
Landscaping Service

**Our Services are Always in Season.**

We are a full service landscape and lawn maintenance company serving the needs of homeowner's landscaping projects large or small.

[tonyandjoeslandscapedesign.com](http://tonyandjoeslandscapedesign.com)  
Ph: 610.775.5380 | E: [toninog1014@aol.com](mailto:toninog1014@aol.com)

financing rates available. Rivera also shared about the formation of the Savings and Efficiencies Team, which meets monthly to discuss ways to reduce costs and improve operations. "We are constantly looking at ways to save money and be more efficient in the way we operate," he said.

Leinbach, who has been answering questions about the return of passenger rail service since his first run for office in 2007, said he is cautiously optimistic about its return to Berks County in the next five years. Following the formation of a Tri-County Committee in 2021 with Chester and Montgomery counties, all three counties are now preparing to consider the formation of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority in April.

Leinbach said creating this authority is a critical next step in the process because it will allow for negotiations with Amtrak, Norfolk Southern and SEPTA and allow for the acceptance and expending of funds. He stressed that this authority would be created with a renewal clause in three years that would allow the counties to evaluate the process and determine if it is still the best path forward. "We're in an exciting place," he said. "But please understand that this is a



Commissioner Christian Leinbach

next step, and we are acting in a way that is fiscally responsible."

Leinbach highlighted that the City has also been involved in the passenger rail initiative and that Mayor Eddie Moran is one of the three authority members proposed for Berks. While some may be skeptical, Leinbach said he's aware of developers who are already looking into purchasing real estate in downtown Reading based on the prospect of passenger rail service.

"Nothing can transform the city of Reading more than the restoration of passenger rail service," he said.

(Continued on page 22)

REFERENCES AVAILABLE

**DE MEDIO'S**  
BUILDING MAINTENANCE

30+ Years of Service!

**A Complete Janitorial Service for Commercial & Office Accounts**

- Owner Supervised Staff
- No Job Too Small or Large
- Affordable Rates/Great Value
- Floor Waxing & Refinishing
- Carpet Cleaning - Upholstery Cleaning
- Weekly-Monthly-Yearly-Contracts

FULLY INSURED • FREE ESTIMATES

**610-454-1450**

Based in Collegetown - Serving the Route 422 Corridor

[www.JDeMedio.com](http://www.JDeMedio.com)



# THE PCTV NETWORK

**Your Hometown Station... We're Home For You!**

**NOW OFFERING:**

- Streaming on Three Channels. 24 / 7
- Unbeatable Pricing for Commercial Productions and Airtime
- Webisode Productions
- Internet Placement
- Live Remote Broadcasts at The Location of Your Choice
- Local Sports Advertising Packages

Powered By: **TellisVision**

**ThePCTVNetwork.com**  
ThePCTVNetwork@gmail.com • 610.327.1866



Goose's Montecristo Cigar Lounge  
is located in the

Goose Pond Center

250 W. Ridge Pike  
Limerick PA

484.902.8770  
www.cigargoose.com



484.902.8770  
www.cigargoose.com



## NEW SIGN & GOOSE LOGO

Come visit us and see our beautiful Retail & Lounge areas!

*Our 2500 sq ft Lounge will be your Home Away from Home!*

## GRCA BREAKFAST

*(Continued from page 21)*



*Retiree Mary Buerer received the "Long-Suffering Award."*

Attendees were given a handout addressing frequently asked questions about the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority, such as the proposed route, who will operate it and how much will it cost.

14 years. "Mary's touched so many lives, so many lives in County government and so many people that called and needed help," he said. "And Mary talked to them. She listened."

In a light-hearted moment at the end the program, Katie Hetherington Cunfer, GRCA's Director of Advocacy and Government Affairs, gave a "Long-Suffering Award" to Mary Buerer, who retired in January after serving as Leinbach's executive assistant for

**About The Greater Reading Chamber Alliance:** Our mission is to be Berks County's leading unified resource for building a healthy, competitive business community. Our vision is to assist companies to retain, expand and grow their operations and employment and attract new businesses to Berks County.

## WE NEUTRALIZE MARKETING PROBLEMS FOR MANUFACTURERS



Let REED design and manage your marketing tools so your busy sales professionals don't have to.

717-517-1727  
www.mfg-mktg.com