

P E N N S Y L V A N I A
BUSINESS CENTRAL'S

Choosing "The Top 100" — Some of the region's best

by **HARRY ZIMBLER, Editor**

Welcome to the Top 100 People of 2009. *Pennsylvania Business Central's* annual list is designed to capture the breadth of experience and wealth of entrepreneurial spirit found in our 16-county region.

In compiling the list, we sought to include people who stood out in 2009. Some are familiar names. Others are sole proprietors that operate small companies. Some were recognized for their business acumen, while we chose to honor others for their contributions to their communities. We

sought a diversity of people across the entire spectrum of business and industry, from large corporations to one-person operations to non-profit institutions.

The process for selecting the list was as objective as it could be made. Happily, we received more nominations from the business and economic development communities than ever before. In addition, we reviewed the year's top news stories published in *Business Central*, and selected those individuals who made a real

difference in 2009.

Creating the Top 100 People list is never easy, but it is always interesting and revealing. If nothing else, it demonstrates that central Pennsylvania is home to a host of world-class business leaders and scrappy entrepreneurs.

We hope you enjoy reading the brief

profiles as much as we enjoyed writing them. We think you'll agree that this is an impressive group.

Wishing you all the best in business for 2010,
Harry Zimble, Editor & Cliff White, Assistant Editor



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TOP 100 PEOPLE



Chris Ryan

President, Geo-Solutions Inc., Westmoreland County

Chris Ryan and his New Kensington-based company Geo-Services are breaking new ground in construction services. Providing technical supervision, specialized personnel and equipment on soil and groundwater engineering projects, Geo-Services, which was founded in 1996, logged its best year ever in 2008, and followed that up with an almost equally profitable 2009. The company was ranked 322nd on the most recent Inc. 5,000 list of fastest growing companies in the U.S.

"We're in a niche market that's not really being affected by general economic conditions," Ryan said. "We're in a segment that has been busy."

Geo-Solutions has successfully completed projects across the U.S. and on five continents. Starting off 2010 on another high note, Ryan just inked a five-year deal with a major Chinese construction company to provide environmental service technology for soil and groundwater contamination sites.

"We have the biggest backlog ever coming into a year," Ryan said. "Things are looking good for the future."

Vell Holcombe

President of Milton Steel, Northumberland County

Vell Holcombe has been with Milton Steel for 36 years. He began his career as a design engineer and became president of the company in 1983.

Milton Steel employs 170 people and none were laid off last year despite increases in oil prices and utility costs and the fall off in demand for the company's distribution warehouse storage racks and structural steel for buildings.

"Milton has some niche products that have protected us from the recession, chiefly our components for temporary bridges," said Holcombe.

In the US, Milton's steel components for temporary bridges are used during highway construction and for more permanent structures in Third World countries. They have also been used for disasters such as Hurricane Katrina. Milton's parts also went into building the temporary bridge that was used by rescue workers to reach inside the pit at ground zero in NYC after 9/11.



Ray Bowersox

President of Milton Transportation Inc., Milton, Northumberland County

Milton Transportation is an irregular route, common carrier general commodities, utilizing van, flatbed, and "covered way" trailers. The company's service area reaches from Maine to North Carolina and as far west as Illinois.

When the news came last year that I-80 might be become a road, Ray Bowersox was up in arms about the possible increase in costs for the company. He took action.

"The hills and curves on alternative routes aren't made for trucks, and there isn't much room in our profit margin to absorb toll," said Bowersox.

He would need to pass on the increased cost to customers, who would in turn pass it to their customers.

"The federal government footed 90 percent of the bill for construction," said Bowersox. "They made the right decision in refusing the state to toll the road and I hope they stick with that decision."

This is an issue that is sure to come up again soon, early in 2010. We're certain that Bowersox will voice strong opposition once again.

Betsy Lauber

Executive Director, Downtown Indiana Inc., Indiana County

Betsy Lauber champions her organization's mission to promote, develop, and enhance the vitality of downtown Indiana.

Last year, Lauber introduced a comprehensive plan for creating an economically vibrant downtown with restored traditional residential neighborhoods, all connected by pedestrian-friendly transportation networks.

Downtown Indiana Inc., together with its community partners, is currently moving forward with a series of main street, neighborhood, and pedestrian/vehicular thoroughfare concepts that will vastly improve the safety and livability of the community.

"We celebrated the first phase of the Downtown Indiana Inc's Capital Campaign last February when 49 businesses were recognized for their financial support, and the list has grown since then," said Lauber.

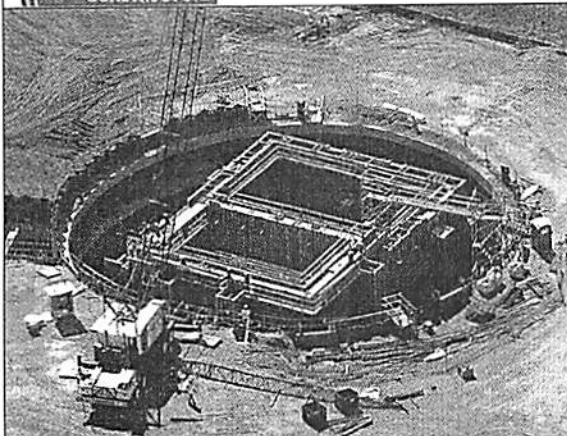
"We're now completing the second phase, which allows community members to become a lasting part of Indiana's future through Legacy Gifts used for street lights, decorative benches, street trees, trash receptacles, and bricks."

Photo not available.

Congratulations to Bob Leahy, President of G. M. McCrossin, on being named one of the Top 100 People of 2009!



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David Woodle

Chairman & CEO of NanoHorizons, Inc., Centre County

David Woodle has high hopes for NanoHorizons, Inc. First he expects the company to be able to finalize the launch of its antimicrobial product—called SmartSilver—into a number of global brands in 2010. NanoHorizons took a big step toward doing so by completing the company's move into a new facility at Pinnacle Park at the end of last October.

Before moving to its new location, NanoHorizons was located in three different locations. Woodle said the consolidation of company into one central location will help improve efficiency.

"Last year we launched several new products to allow us to address new markets, and now have everyone under one roof in our new facility with upgraded labs and everything else," he said. "This is going to give us growth capabilities for the future that we hope will allow us to address new products and get a couple of major global brands this year, which is key for us."

Jake Corman

PA Senator, 34th District, Bellefonte, Region

State Senator Corman continues to be a strong champion of small business and the entrepreneurial spirit.

As chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Jake Corman led the fight for a state budget that cut spending and had no new taxes. He also helped protect the natural gas industry from being taxed because it's one of the new areas of job growth in the state.

"With the tough economic times here in Pennsylvania and across the nation, we must be pragmatic and responsible in spending now and in the future," said Corman. "We must not look for short-term solutions that could have serious long-term ramifications on the Commonwealth and its citizens."

