

Martin Guitar Continues Its Tradition of Investment in Lehigh Valley

By Colin McEvoy

NAZARETH - Martin Guitar has been part of Lehigh Valley's business community for more than 180 years. Now they are continuing that tradition, further investing in the region with plans for what will be the biggest capital investment in the company's history.

C. F. Martin & Company, more commonly known as Martin Guitar, has announced plans to build a new 200,000 square-foot facility in the Chrin Commerce Centre off Route 33, on land that includes portions of Palmer Township and Tatamy.

The project will let the company consolidate existing storage and distribution facilities into a new modern, climate-controlled operation in a building close to its main manufacturing facility in Upper Nazareth Township, reducing the amount of time needed for moving guitars and wood back and forth between its various sites.

"The reason Martin Guitar is continuing to invest in the Lehigh Valley are really the same reasons that drew its founders to the Lehigh

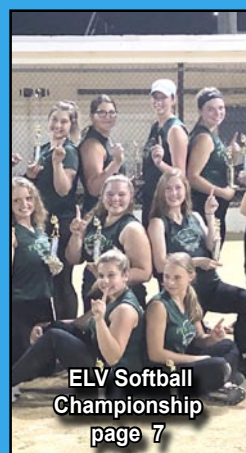
Continued on page 6



HBBA Car Shoe Winners
page 3



Secret Model Train Collection
page 7



ELV Softball Championship
page 7



Helping Wildlife Withstand Climate Change
page 13



Salvation Army's First Pen Argyl Graduate Tracy Hull

By Michael Ortoski

PEN ARGYL - The Salvation Army's Pathway of Hope initiative graduated its first Pen Argyl student Tracy Hull. She is a single mother of three and has worked with the program to better herself financially. The program has also helped her kids. The program helps with needs assessment, action planning, referrals, provision of emergency support, and follow-up on progress and problems. This helps families address the issues that often keep them in poverty.

Her graduation was long in the making, like most high school or college graduations. The 46-year-old single mother of three had overcome years of bumps in the road to reach the finish line that would mark her as the first Pen Argyl graduate from the Salvation Army Pathway of Hope initiative and the 40th graduate since the program started in 2015.

Pathway of Hope helps families that struggle with generation after generation of crisis and vulnerability. With 199 participants in eastern Pennsylvania and Delaware, it aims to address the root causes of poverty and break that cycle.

Yet Hull is far from finished. The 15 months she spent in the program were only the beginning of a future helping others who face similar difficulties. One of her goals was to become a certified recovery specialist. With the help of the Recovery Revolution Clean Slate program in Bangor and The Pen Argyl Salvation Army Corps, which sponsored her exam, Hull recently passed with flying colors.

"I just want to be the one to help other people that are in situations that they can't handle and they just need the help and assistance to get the recovery that they need,"

Continued on page 6

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2019 BHS Salutatorian Hannah Bledsoe

Hannah Bledsoe received the Salutatorian award at Bangor High School Graduation ceremony. She is the daughter of Lisa Bledsoe. Her picture in the hard copy of the Blue Valley Times issue 6/18 was of another student by mistake, all digital versions were corrected.

“Slate Belt Rising Announces Scholarship Recipients”

By Steve Reider

BANGOR - As part of their commitment to engaging and helping local youth, Slate Belt Rising created a scholarship program as part of their 2018-2019 projects. These scholarships are to help graduating seniors living in the Bangor Area and Pen Argyl Area School Districts defray the cost of furthering their education at a four-year college or university, community college, or trade school. Additionally, for seniors that may be going directly into the workforce for a skilled-trade, scholarship funds can be used to purchase tools.

This year's Slate Belt Rising Scholarship recipients are Erin Firestone; Erin, a graduate of Pen Argyl Area High School, will be furthering her education at Arizona State University studying Sports Business. Rachel Kromer; Rachel, a graduate of Bangor Area High School will be furthering her education at Delaware Valley University studying Animal Science. Angelica Liberto; Angelica, a graduate of Pen Argyl Area High School, will be furthering her education at Northampton Community College studying Early Childhood Education.

Slate Belt Rising would like to congratulate their scholarship recipients and wish all recent graduates success in their future endeavors!

State Budget Controls Spending, Saves and Invests in Our Future

By Rep. Joe Emrick (R-Nazareth)

NAZARETH - On Tuesday 6/25/19, I voted in favor of a \$33.9 billion budget that does not raise taxes or borrow for the future, demonstrating how responsible state budgeting pays off for hard-working Pennsylvanians. The budget also makes record investments in education funding, as well as funding increases to combat Lyme Disease and address problems created by the spotted lanternfly.

The state has seen significant economic growth, in part because of responsible budget practices over the last eight years. It has resulted in an increase to the sales tax collection, which is up 7.6% over last year. Personal income tax collections are up 5.3%, and the Corporate Net Income Tax is up just shy of 22%.

Those favorable conditions yielded the opportunity to invest more than \$250 million in the state's Rainy Day Fund, adding to last year's \$22 million investment.

Because of our responsible budgeting practices, the state's revenues are up, and we added more money to the Rainy Day Fund. This is what happens when government functions like a business in the private sector and financially responsible families all across the Commonwealth. Surpluses are being saved for tougher times, which protect taxpayers from tax increases during an economic downturn.

The budget also makes record investments for school districts in the 137th District, which will be driven out via the new educational funding formula. The funding for basic and special education helps to mitigate property tax increases, and our area school districts will receive the following funding increases:

- Bangor Area: \$421,480
- Easton Area: \$1,576,441
- Nazareth Area: \$858,270

The Senate has also approved the bill, and it now moves to the governor for his consideration.

Results of 2019 Bangor Elks Lodge Golf Tournament

By Pete Nell

BANGOR - The Bangor Elks Lodge #1106 held its 19th annual Memorial Golf Tournament on June 24th at Whitetail Golf Course in Bath with a total of 124 golfers. The lodge would like to extend a sincere thank you to the golfers, over 60 hole sponsors, and the many businesses and individuals who donated prizes. A special thank you to Dotta Auto Sales for their hole-in-one sponsorship of a 2019 Jeep Compass on the 11th hole.

First flight winners on a match of cards were Rick Anke, Bill Bisci, Pete Nell, and Kevin Vough. First flight runnersup were Joe Dellaba, Joe DePue, Bob Curtolo, and Ron Sandt. First flight third place winners were Darren Casey, Brad Cerino, Steve Houloose, and Gary Miller. Second flight winners were Drew Eberz, George Eberz, Will Eberz, and Kevin Lewis. Third flight winners were Norm Chimelweski, Ron Miller, Al Kearney, and Charlie Nutaitis. Paul Farnan won for the best dressed golfer.

Please mark your calendars for the 20th Annual Bangor Elks Memorial Tournament on June 29, 2020.

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