



538 W. Market Street

Perkasie, Pennsylvania 18944

Phone (215) 257-5390

Fax (267) 354-6924

June 14, 2011

**A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE PENNRIDGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
AND YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

Dear Member:

As you likely have heard by now, our exploratory efforts to merge with the Upper Bucks Chamber of Commerce and create one Chamber of Commerce for all of Upper Bucks County have ended due to the unexpected vote of rejection by the Upper Bucks Board of Directors. Your board was prepared to join the Upper Bucks board at a joint meeting last week to discuss the opportunity to bring our two organizations together, followed by a formal vote.

After a great deal of study and deliberation, our board favored this merger. Why? Because we think our future as a vibrant, growing Chamber of Commerce will involve a partner that can help us provide still greater opportunities to our members and allow us to do things on a larger, more efficient scale. I'd like to recognize and thank board members Tom Skiffington, Dave Nyman and Chris Fickes for joining me in serving on the Merger Study Team during the past four months. While the end result is disappointing, the Board that leads your Pennridge Chamber is prepared to continue the (almost) 50-year tradition of serving our members and community and to providing value for your membership.

One of the benefits of the merger process was the time taken to focus on our strengths and weaknesses, and pinpointing some areas we can improve on. One is educational opportunities on key topics of business interest for our members. We will soon announce a summer-time educational program, and will have a larger scale offering in September when everyone is back from vacation. And we have recently announced the continuation of our highly regarded ***“Leadership Bucks...Upper County”*** program. It starts in September and it is a great way to provide a unique opportunity for young leaders in our companies to learn more about leadership, communication and teamwork and how they can have a positive impact on the quality of life in Bucks County.

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We also learned that we need more people to join us in our work. Our committees are small, and we would benefit from some fresh eyes to help us keep what we are doing forward looking. And a third step we are taking is by encouraging new volunteers to help bring insights and ideas to our Board and committees. Please volunteer or invite someone from your company to help bring new insights and ideas to our board that will make our business community great.

Financially we, like many businesses, are continuing to adapt to the difficult economy. The Board meets monthly and is working creatively to keep the Chamber's finances on solid footing with an eye to reducing expenses. One of the keys to keeping your Chamber healthy is providing our member companies with true value and growing our membership. WE appreciate your continued support as an active member and welcome your ideas, contacts and support as we continue to serve our Business Community.

Enclosed you will find a membership brochure. We would appreciate your passing this along to one of your contacts encouraging them to join the Pennridge Chamber to help us grow and serve all our members to the level we are planning.

Finally, the two most important words in the English language: "Thank You." Thank You to those who cheered the merger process. Thank You to those members who said they would be with us either way. Thank You to those who joined us for the events we worked on this spring with Upper Bucks. And Thank You for your faith in the leadership and vision of this Board.

Please know that we remain hard at work to serve our members, as we have since 1963. If you have questions or comments, I'd enjoy hearing from you.

Thank You,

*Keith Smith*

Keith Smith  
President  
Pennridge Chamber of Commerce