

Women Founders of Lebanon Businesses

By Jessica Trimble

The entire community benefits when a person identifies a need and uses his or her passions and talents to found a business which satisfies that need. With this in mind, the Lebanon County Commission for Women is reminded of the iconic Stacey L. Pennington and others. Pennington was the founder and 20 year operator of Resource Island, a unique business which supplies local teachers and families with school supplies and educational toys. Pennington also owned and operated The Gretna Emporium and Emporium Too. Additionally, she was a member of the Lebanon Valley Chamber of Commerce. Pennington received the 2005 Leon Hoover Entrepreneurial Spirit Award as a testament to her contributions to the Lebanon community.

A closer look at Lebanon commerce reveals that Pennington is in good company. It is not the goal of the Commission to endorse any businesses. Rather, we aim to highlight the accomplishments of a sampling of our many outstanding women in business. We graciously acknowledge that each of Lebanon's women founders made great sacrifices to get ideas off the ground and into the fabric of our local economy.

These businesses are part of our lifelong memories. Perhaps Tillie Spangler of Tillie's Dress Shop found you a dress for one of the most important days of your life. Maybe the bouquet you tossed was designed by Caitlin Steel of Cait's Flowers. It could be that your "something blue" was procured by Anna Gettler of Main Street Jewelry & Gifts.

Some founders help us so regularly that we take them for granted. Maybe your smile is a little bit brighter thanks to Kathy Kopecky-Groh, DMD. Have you ever waved to Pam Brightbill and Tess Wathen from across the counter before sitting down to a lunch at Timeless Café? Did your daughter learn to dance at Stephanie's or Suzanne's? Did Brittany Holtz find your inner strength at Studio B Yoga. Maybe your family found nutrition at Annville Natural Market founded by Linda Williams-Baird.

Some business women serve our community each day with hidden humility. Maybe you found or provided affordable housing with guidance from Cheryl Paulhus of Paulhus and Associates. It might have been Dr. Tammy Stone of Veterinary Medical Center of Lebanon who nursed your furry friend back to health. You might note with a heavy heart that it was Kathy Grose of Grose Funeral Home who helped you honor a late loved one with dignity.

In continuing with the National Women's History Month theme, the Lebanon County Commission for Women proudly recognizes all of the County's many women business founders through the years. The decision to start a business takes vision, tenacity, and attention to community needs. Women-founded enterprises are staples in our community. Their products and services are a part of our daily lives. We applaud and thank every one of our women business founders for choosing Lebanon as their place to grow and thrive. In next week's installment, we will highlight Women Trailblazers in Family-Owned Businesses.