

Instead of warehouse, former Native Textiles becoming vibrant commercial center

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seasonal workers to meet demand. Sheldon said those can be data entry or production people, and most seasonal employees return each year.

The six-year-old company will keep its sales and administrative offices in Downingtown, outside Philadelphia. The production area at Twin Stacks will occupy about 3,000 square feet, with room for expansion.

RLT sells custom items such as personalized calendars through stores and catalogs. "We sell a whole host of products," Sheldon said, from the calendars to t-shirts to mugs and mouse pads, using photos supplied by the customer. In addition to individuals, the company counts as customers some major corporations, such as Kodak and Fuji.

Quality Industrial Coatings, a specialty painting company, was first to move in. The company, an outgrowth of Quality Collision on Rt. 309 in Dallas, paints the plastic body parts for Pride Health Care's line of scooters. Russ Murphy, who lives in Noxen, is foreman of the operation.

"We outgrew the body shop," Murphy said. "And the body shop was growing, too." About 20 people work in the shop, which runs three shifts five to six days a week.

The largest employer in the complex will be epix, the Internet service arm of Commonwealth Telephone Enterprises. About 55 full-time employees in customer service, accounting, sales and other departments will move, with space available for up to 100 people.

"With a staff of 100, we can grow for five years."

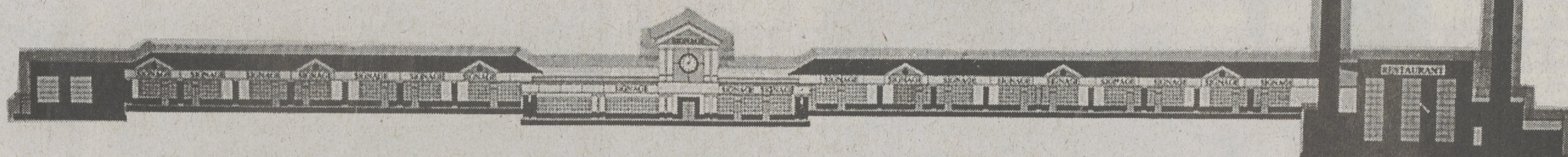
Mike Burnside
Commonwealth Telephone

"Blue sky, we'll be in by August operations manager of epix. The company took possession of the space August 1, and this week is outfitting it with the necessary wiring and fixtures to begin operations.

The internet business has been doubling each year, said Mike Burnside, the director of corporate communications. Technology not only helps their business, it makes epix more efficient. "With a staff of 100, we can grow for five years," Burnside said.

"It's gotten bigger, but better. It's evolving into a business/retail center."

Lynn Banta
Twin Stacks developer



An architect's rendering shows the new facade of the former Native Textiles building. Work on that portion of the building is expected to start in September.



Lynn Banta peeked out from a doorway at the former Native Textiles building. Plans call for a restaurant with an outdoor dining patio on the side of the building.

Sales, customer service, technical support, product development and accounting will make the move from the Commonwealth headquarters building on Rt. 309. Burnside said epix has nearly 40,000 customers in eastern Pennsylvania and upstate New York, and is prepared to expand both geographically and in penetration within existing markets.

In addition to offering access to the Internet, epix produces "content" for customers. "Our web site

development business is growing very rapidly," Burnside said. "As the customer base grows, we have to add technical support as well."

Richard Taub, president of Collection Specialists Inc., said his relationship with Banta and the region's workforce led him to open a branch office. "In the years I've gone there to visit, I've been impressed with the people," Taub said. "We're real excited about it."

Taub's firm will maintain its main office in Lionville, about 20

A survey showed people "overwhelmingly" would prefer to shop in the Back Mountain

miles outside Philadelphia, and link the Twin Stacks Center office computers over telephone lines. He anticipates up to 16 collectors here.

A local manager, Mark Teufel of Kingston, has been hired and will be conducting interviews locally soon. Taub said pay, a combination of salary and commission, should be comparable to what he pays in the Lionville office.

Banta and Haas's own offices will relocate to the back of the building as well, but not until everyone else is settled.

Banta said part of the lease agreement required that the epix space be ready 90 days from the date of signing, and that has required a shift in priorities. Because the "fit out" for offices takes much longer than for warehouse space, work on converting the front portion of the building for retail space has been delayed. She expects renovations to begin in early September.

The first item of business out front will be construction of a clock tower that will rise over the center of the facade. "We think the clock tower will raise interest," Banta said.

Once the work begins, she will actively solicit retail leases, although so far would-be shop owners have approached Twin Stacks. One committed tenant will open a gourmet coffee and pastry shop, and others are in the works, such as a state-of-the-art gym and a computer training and software center. Spaces are available as small as 970 square feet, at rents as low as \$8 per square foot.

While some may have questioned the wisdom of converting a former fac-

tory into a top-shelf retail center, Banta and Haas didn't go into the project without support. They hired a research firm to find out what people in the Back Mountain wanted, and found some major themes:

- People "overwhelmingly" would prefer to shop in the Back Mountain, rather than travel out of the area.

- There is a qualified, willing work force here, "so we thought we could attract businesses; that was real exciting," Banta said.

- Back Mountain households have high disposable incomes, making the region able to support stores.

- Many services people want are not available here.

Banta is careful to say she hopes to attract new businesses to the Back Mountain, not just offer relocations. "I don't want to steal them from other centers in the Back Mountain," she said.

Some of the possibilities sound logical enough, while others would break new ground. Banta said a children's play center could be opening in the fall, and the building can be adapted for doctors' offices or other professionals not presently represented in the area. Then there's the huge old empty tank in the back of the building that someone has expressed in-

terest in as a training gym for rock climbers.

The largest retail space is reserved for a restaurant that is expected to occupy the former boiler room. One potential operator has already had an architect draw plans that include a large dining area, a bar situated on a lower level and an outdoor eating area to the side of the building. A liquor license application is posted on the property, in the name of BMBC Inc.

The restaurant will have an industrial theme in keeping with the legacy of the building, and could make use of fixtures that were saved, and are again in style.

A space next to the restaurant is being reserved for a community room, where groups could meet or education programs could be held. Banta explained the reasoning behind the space. "I took my son to a photography course at Boscov's, and every time I went, I bought something."

"In the years I've gone there to visit, I've been impressed with the people."

Richard Taub
Collection Specialists Inc.



Lisa Lanning placed finished painted parts on a rack at Quality Industrial Coatings, in the new Twin Stacks Center.

BIRTHS

GEISINGER

TUCK, Daniel and Albina, Shavertown, a son, Sunday, July 19.

SHURITES, Charlie and Shelley, Dallas, a son, Tuesday, July 21.

SMETANA, Brian and Abigail, Dallas, a son, Tuesday, July 21.

ZACHARIAS, Rhonda and Harry IV, Harveys Lake, a son, Friday, July 24.

NESBITT

BORGER, Terry and Jennifer, Harveys Lake, a daughter, July 23.

MOTOVIDLAK, Donna and Thomas Jr., Harveys Lake, a son, Thursday, July 23.

MULDOON, Tim and Cathleen, Harveys Lake, a daughter, Monday, July 27.

SWEENEY, Dan and Bonnie, a son, Wednesday, July 29.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

BACK MOUNTAIN HARVEST ASSEMBLY - 340 Carverton Rd., Trucksville, 696-1128. Pastor, Daniel S. Miller. Christian Education for all ages, 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Wed., 7 p.m., "Genos" youth service. Midweek home groups; call for days and times. Weekday prayer 6:30-7:30 a.m. Visitors welcome.

DALLAS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - 4 Parsonage St., Dallas, 675-0122. Rev. Michael A. Bealla, Pastor. Morning Worship 9:30 a.m.

SHAVERTOWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - 163 N. Pioneer Ave., Shavertown, 675-3616. Pastors: Rev. Douglas and Janet Bryant Clark. Music Dir., John Vaida. SATURDAY: 5:30 p.m., in the Social Hall, casual dress; SUNDAY: 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Visitors expected. PHONE-A-PRAYER 675-4666.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH - 196 N. Main St., Shavertown. Sat. Worship 5:30 p.m.; Summer Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m. Phone 675-3859 or e-mail: stpaul@epix.net for more information. Everyone welcome! Rev. Charles H. Grube, Pastor.

ANNOUNCING

a healthy new addition to the Back Mountain:

Richard Huntington, M.D.

Dallas Family Practice is pleased to announce the new addition of **Dr. Richard Huntington** to its primary care physician team. Dr. Huntington received his medical degree from the Pennsylvania State College of Medicine in Hershey and served as Chief Resident at the Harrisburg Family Practice Residency Program. He brings extensive skills and compassion to his new position. Dr. Richard Huntington: truly a healthy addition to the Back Mountain.

Jane E. Durkin, D.O.
Richard A. Huntington, M.D.
Irvin Jacobs, M.D.
Diane A. Lowe, M.D.

Kurt D. Maas, M.D.
Gary Notthstein, D.O.
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Race Finish - Expo: Penn State W/B Campus, Lehman

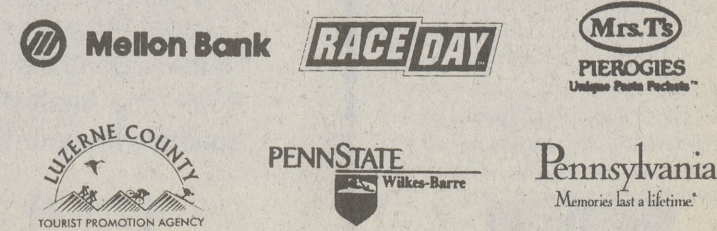
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