



Business Matters

NEWS FROM THE AGAWAM SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER • FALL 2007

Agawam Small Business Assistance Center continues to assist area entrepreneurs and small businesses

The Agawam Small Business Assistance Center (ASBAC) was launched in January 2002 through the combined effort of the Town of Agawam and Springfield Technical Community College Enterprise Center. Funded only by donations and staffed primarily by volunteers, the Center fosters economic growth and client education by providing free professional counseling, workshops and other supportive services to area entrepreneurs who want to start or improve their businesses in Agawam and the surrounding communities.

Originally operating from donated office space in Feeding Hills, the Center later moved to the Town Hall, enabling it to centralize its resources. During its five-and-a-half years of operation, the Center has received over 275 requests for counseling on such subjects as starting up; business loans; marketing and sales; accounting; tax; human resources; inventory control; employee training; technology and computer systems and business planning. Counseling is provided by SCORE, and is held on an appointment basis.

ASBAC has earned a reputation for its business-friendly seminars and workshops, and plans are now under way to present more workshops of special interest and value to the small business operator throughout the remainder of 2007, and into 2008.

The Agawam Small Business Assistance Center does not charge for its services or workshops, and is supported entirely by financial help from local businesses and organizations.

The Agawam Small Business Assistance Center

is located at 36 Main Street, Agawam in the lower level of the Agawam Town Hall.

Office hours are 9am to 12 noon Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and we can be reached at 413-786-0172 or on the internet at www.asbac.net.



The Center is located in the lower level of the Agawam Town Hall on Main Street.

Sunny skies prevail at Business Center's Second Annual Golf Tournament

The Agawam Small Business Assistance Center held its second annual golf tournament at St. Anne's Country Club on Wednesday, June 13. Unlike last year's tournament which took place under torrential rain, this year's event was held under sunny skies. A full card of golfers came out to enjoy the nine-hole shot-gun start tournament which was held to help fund the free counseling services and workshops that the Small Business Center provides to area businesses throughout the year.

Gold Sponsor for the event was BNI Destination Success, with additional



The BGM Electrical Contractors team pose on the green before teeing off. From left to right: Jeff Botta, Melinda Mitton, Bill Kemple, and Bruce Mitton.

sponsorships from Canary Blomstrom Insurance Agency, E.B.'s Restaurant, BGM Electrical Contractors, Jill Messick, United Bank, American Home Mortgage, and Ayre Real Estate.

"We appreciate the commitment of the golfers, and their support of our efforts," commented the Center's President Gina Fusick. After the golf tournament, players and guests attended a dinner in the St. Anne's Banquet Room. A raffle was held with prizes donated from area retailers and businesses.

The Center also presented certificates of recognition to those businesses that have contributed to the center over the past year. The Agawam Chamber of Commerce, TD Banknorth, United Bank, and Western Massachusetts Electric Company were among those with representatives who attended to receive their awards. Special recognition was given to the Agawam Public Library for the help provided in enabling the Center to hold its workshop series in the Community Room.

Plans are underway for the Third Annual Tournament which will be held next June.



Board of Directors:

Richard Cohen
Mayor, Town of Agawam

President:
Gina Fusick
United Bank

Vice-President:
Milly Parzychowski
American Home Mortgage

Secretary:
Lisa Lemon
Canary Blomstrom Insurance Agency

Treasurer:
Bonnie Massoia
Canary Blomstrom Insurance Agency

Past President:
Cynthia Ayre
Ayre Real Estate Co., Inc.

Deborah Dachos
Director, Agawam Office of Planning & Community Development

Jim Jenks
Volunteer

Abbe W. McLane
Attorney

Pat Roberts
Volunteer

Josephine Tessier
Mary Kay Cosmetics

Derek Jarvis
Facilitator

Website design & Maintenance:
Jim Powers
Technigraphics

Business Matters

NEWS FROM THE AGAWAM SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER • FALL 2007

WMECO and Bay State Gas support the mission of the Agawam Small Business Assistance Center

The Agawam Small Business Assistance Center (ASBAC) is pleased to acknowledge the recent awarding of grants from Bay State Gas Company and Western Massachusetts Electric Company. In making the announcement, Gina Fusick, President of ASBAC, explained that it will enable the Center to continue to provide free services and workshops to new and recently-started businesses in the region.

Mayor Cohen commented that the Business Center has enjoyed a great

working relationship with Western Massachusetts Electric Company over the years, and that the funding will enable the Center to offer a new computer training program early next year.

Sheila Doiron, Director of Communications for Bay State Gas Company stated "the company values the community contributions of small business owners and is proud to partner with the Agawam Small Business Assistance Center. The work accomplished at the Center is very exciting and vital to the economic health of the community."



LISTENING TO THE EXPERTS!

Pictured on the left, a large number of local entrepreneurs attended the January 2007 workshop on the preparation of taxes hosted by Walter Drenan and Freda Brown of Drenan Financial Service of Southwick.

See what we can do to help you

The Agawam Small Business Assistance Center (ASBAC) is an organization that serves the business community in Agawam and the surrounding area.

The Center fosters economic growth and client education by providing free professional counseling, workshops and other support services to area entrepreneurs who plan to start a

business, or improve their existing business. Our counselors and consultants are working (or retired) business people, highly-experienced and willing to share their expertise in financing, marketing, management, strategy, and more.

You can call us at 413-786-0172 and leave a message and one of our volunteers will call you back.

Volunteers wanted!

Volunteers are the backbone of the Agawam Small Business Assistance Center. We are located in the Agawam Town Hall, and are looking for volunteers to work in our office to answer phone inquiries. If you can spare a few hours a month we would love to hear from you. Please call Pat Roberts at 786-8580 for more information, or email us at info@asbac.net