

WHERE MORGAN COUNTY BUSINESS COMES FIRST

# BUSINESS LEADER

MORGAN COUNTY

September 2016



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## STRENGTH AND SAFETY

*TOA-USA focuses on building quality products and quality jobs in Mooresville*

Bob Whyte  
Vice President Operations and Quality



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# We're all in this together

One of the themes that continually seems to come up in many of our stories is that small businesses are all well aware that they are just one part of something much bigger than themselves. What they do in their business and how they involve their peers in their business makes a real difference to the community.

In the TOA-USA story, Bob Whyte explains how TOA is dedicated to building a better and stronger community by providing people the opportunity for good jobs and then the training to move into even better jobs.

Toni Ford talks about the commitment to patronizing fellow businesses in the running of the café and catering at Ralph and Ava's. Whether it is banking on the corner, getting uniforms or sourcing cakes, pies, produce or beer and wine, you can find the local touch in every meal they serve.

Two businesses, one that has expanded into being one of, if not the, largest employer in the County and the other that is still growing, but has added employees since it opened in 2013. Two ends of the spectrum, but with much the same philosophy: we're all in this together.

Take the time to look around to see how businesses partner up to work together: Monthly Mooresville Chamber gatherings at Bran 'N' Shorts, or Carlisle-Branson Funeral



**JIM HESS**  
From the Publisher

Service and Crematory and Showtime Cinema offering movies for seniors the first Wednesday of every month, or the Martinsville Chamber support for Entrepreneurial starts.

You don't have to look far to see that small business in Morgan County works together to build a stronger community and healthier economy for all who live, visit, work and play here.

It's our mission – and pleasure – to bring stories that highlight the good things happening locally. If you know of a business that exemplifies the positive momentum of Morgan County, share that information with us. Even though we try to connect with businesses in every corner of the county, so many business owners have their heads down working hard and we have yet to discover them.

Have a productive and prosperous month!

## How they involve their peers in their business makes a real difference to the community.

### BUSINESS LEADER<sup>®</sup> MORGAN COUNTY

*"Declaring the good works being done"*

*For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works*  
Ephesians 2:10

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# A Wiser Investment

## Ralph and Ava's Café and Catering

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Paul and Toni Ford  
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**Web:** ralphandavas.com  
**Hours:** Tues. - Thurs. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Fri - Sat 11 a.m. - 10 p.m.; Closed Sunday and Monday

### By Elaine Whitesides

Morgan County Business Leader

What do you do when you're faced with time on your hands? If you are Brian Wiser, you look close to home for something to do that means something to you. Close to home for Wiser is Mooresville and the something to do he has found is Ralph and Ava's Café and Catering.

Wiser has lived in Mooresville for 51 of his 57 years. He and his wife, Julie, brought up their daughters in the community. Wiser has been, and still is, an active member of the community and organizations like Kiwanis, the Mooresville Police Commission and the Mooresville High School Athletic Hall of Fame. In March, 2014 he became the Executive Director of the League of Miracles.

The busy man was widowed in Jan., 2015 and scheduled to retire in June, 2016. For 30 years Wiser has been an air traffic controller at Indianapolis International Airport. However, he graduated from Indiana University in 1982 with a degree in business marketing and he's had a desire to brush the dust off this latent interest.

### Stepping into a new role

Since it opened in 2013, Wiser has been a frequent patron of Ralph and Ava's. "I was looking for some other things to do and invest in," Wiser said. "(Toni and Paul) are friends and I want to see Ralph and Ava's run and grow. It's unique and special, something Mooresville needs. I want the downtown area to grow and their doing well will help everything else."

Wiser stepping in as an active partner will help to bridge a gap for the Fords. "Toni's heart is in catering," Wiser said. "I am able to come in on the restaurant side physically being here and even bartending so she can devote more to the catering side of Ralph and Ava's."

Wiser organizes and manages the music. Ralph and Ava's has become a local hotspot for Open Mic on Friday nights between



Paul and Toni Ford, Brian Wiser

7 and 10 p.m. Because they can offer a full bar as well as a family area, performers as young as 15 have a place to share their talents, either instrumentally or vocally. Wiser himself plays the guitar, mandolin and the ukulele and steps onstage occasionally. He schedules bands and performers for every Saturday night from 7 to 10 p.m. "I like to get in as much local Morgan County talent as I can, but we have had artists perform from all over the area."

### "His heart is bigger than Mooresville."

"The first night we moved into Mooresville over 20 years," Toni said, "I heard Brian sitting on his front porch playing the guitar and singing. It's a very fond memory for me. It made me feel like this was the town, the place; that was really going to be home."

"I was looking for other things to do and I believed in this place," said Wiser. "I saw how much time and work they put into it and I thought I could take some of the pressure off. I wanted to be a part of it. I wasn't concerned about getting in an unwise investment," Paul said, "because I know where their hearts are."

"We weren't actively looking for a partner," Toni said. "We were very surprised when he approached us. He's very well respected and when he said he believed in us, it renewed our spirits. It made us

feel like we were doing something right."

"Toni and I only had each other," Paul said. "We have sought out advice from other restaurant owners. But with Brian here, it's nice to have that third voice."

"Yes," Toni added, "He's a good sounding board. We are on the same page because he's very adamant about customer service. He's not going to just say what we want to hear, either. He's a voice of reason."

### Ralph and Ava's Catering expands to The Sycamore

Wiser's involvement came at an optimal time for Ralph and Ava's Catering. In addition to their current catering schedule, they have just become a preferred caterer for the Sycamore, an event facility at the Mallow Run Winery in Bargersville. Most of the catering in the Winery's wine tasting room is also supplied by Ralph and Ava's.

"We feel it is just as much our responsibility to make their venue a success," Toni said. "I feel like we are all in it together and we need to help each other. We promote Ralph and Ava's as a small business and urge everyone to shop local and stay local; keep the money in our community."

They team up with several other small businesses, offering products from various local wineries and micro-breweries, Sugar Mamas, Value Market, Bran 'N' Shorts and Anderson Orchards. "We would be really remiss not to support the other local businesses when we are asking the community to support us," Toni said.

"I still feel new here and am learning so much," Wiser said, "but being a longtime customer, I knew a lot about how it was running already. I have always felt comfortable here," Wiser said. "It's unique and there's nothing else like it around here. To me, it feels like an extension of home."

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# Three steps to reduce misunderstandings



**JACK KLEMEYER**  
Business Coach

Nearly every prospect and client I talk with has experienced a situation where they were certain that they had communicated something clearly, only to discover, at the wrong time, that the reality was that they hadn't communicated what they intended to at all. Perhaps this has happened to you, too. If it has, you know how frustrating it is.

Just so you know, the person you attempted to communicate with is just as frustrated, if not more so. After all, miscommunications can potentially put their job or position at risk.

### How miscommunication happens

When we begin to tell someone something, we have no idea what that person is dealing with in their job, their family life and all other aspects of their life. That is the point from which they take in information.

**Be intentional about communication, and remember that it's highly probable that what you're saying may not be what is being heard.**

In his book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey tells about a young father who clamors aboard a subway car in the early morning hours when the train is packed with commuters. The young father has with him several rambunctious children. After a short time, a fellow passenger tells the father to control his children. The father, as if wakened from a trance, explains that they have just come from the hospital where his wife and the children's mother has just died. He further explained that neither he nor the children knows quite how to behave.

Scenarios (albeit not as emotionally packed as the man and his children on the train) play out every day in people's lives; that includes at home, in the workplace, and other public venues. The point is that we never know what the person standing next to us is dealing with in life.

### How to prevent miscommunication

What we can do, to mitigate miscommunication, is to follow these three steps:

1. Make sure now is a good time to talk.
2. Engage as many senses (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, gustatory and olfactory) as possible as you share your request.

3. Have the person you are talking with recap the communication to check for efficacy.

Be intentional about communication, and remember that it's highly probable that what you're saying may not be what is being heard. It's your responsibility to make sure communication happens. Like George Bernard Shaw once said, "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place."

Grow Your Business™ Coaching founder Jack Klemeyer is recognized as a preeminent resource for business professionals. As a John Maxwell Certified coach, speaker, trainer and facilitator of Mastermind groups for business owners and professionals, his results-driven philosophy calls for action and accountability. He and his Grow Your Business™ team are dedicated to taking businesses and their owners to the next level. Jack can be reached at Jack@GYBCoaching.com or at 317-755-6963. Learn more at GYBCoaching.com.

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# What, Me Worry?

I've written before in this column about the "fear gauge" that is the VIX or CBOE Volatility Index. Back on August 9th the VIX hit an extremely low 11.18. That low level of "fear" indicates a remarkable lack of worry in investors' minds. To be frank with you, I don't know what the future holds. But here are a few of my thoughts.

This market is CRAZY!

When the Brexit vote took place on 23 June 2016, world markets understandably promptly plummeted. But within a few weeks, most had all but recovered with the US markets (DOW Jones Industrial Average DJIU) on July 12th even eclipsing its previous 2015 high of 18,209 to close at 18,347. Then two days later closed even higher at 18,506. And the "Footsie" (FTSE 100 or the British index similar to our DJIU) recently just set a 14 month high as well. All this exuberance after the 40-year-long proverbial rug of European economic partnership was pulled out from under the EEC/EU nations. It just doesn't make a lot of sense. Markets are supposed to HATE it when "rugs" get pulled out from under 40 year multi-country partnerships. Yet they keep chugging higher.

Another thought I have is how in Sam Hill are companies still reporting earnings that are in line with or beating expectations? Especially when you peel back the onion a little and see that these earnings are coming from DECLINING REVENUES? Apple, McDonald's, Disney, Verizon, Walmart have all reported declining revenues. Yet the market shrugs it off.

And just today (August 9, 2016) the US La-



**JEFF BINKLEY**  
 Finance

bor Dept. announced that U.S. Productivity has fallen now for three quarters in a row. And the market? It's just "Ho de do de do" humming higher.

I don't understand it at all! Except maybe I do.

That low VIX indicates we have an extraordinarily complacent investing public. As long as the market goes higher, we just don't care! Fundamentals like "massaged" earnings, declining revenues and deteriorating productivity be darned.

I'm not a Chicken Little, there is no indication that the sky is about to fall. And that's the rub.

We never see that the sky is about to fall until well after it lies in bloody pools around us.

Never mind. "Ho de do de do!"

None of what I have written above should be construed as buy or sell recommendations for any investor without thoroughly discussing your specific situation with a professional advisor. The Binkley Wealth Management Group LLC is a FEE-ONLY Independent Indiana Registered Investment Advisory Firm and is not compensated by commissions in any way. Mr. Binkley can be contacted via email at [Jeff@thebinkleygroup.com](mailto:Jeff@thebinkleygroup.com) or phone 317.697.1618

## Create an operating plan that leads to greater profits

Inspire Results Business Advising Offers "Growth Plan Business Planning Workshop," Thursday, Sept. 29, 2016, Hilton Garden Inn, 8910 Hatfield Dr., Indpls, 46231, 9-4:00 pm. Hot lunch included.



Engelau

In this fast-paced session, business owners discover the potential in their business by completing a 1-Page Strategic Plan. Then, they break it into quarterly, monthly, weekly, and daily goals, getting a line-of-sight from daily tasks to their 10-30 year purpose. Led by local Business Coach Roger Engelau, business owners step out of the day-to-day business for just 1 day, get



organized, complete a prescribed planning process, and walk away with an action plan that leads to greater profits and free time back.

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# Emergency vs. Urgent Care

## How to know where to go

We have all been in a situation similar to these scenarios:

- It's the weekend and you stumble while playing ball with the kids, now your ankle is swollen.
- You've had a head cold for a week and the over-the-counter medication isn't working, in fact you feel worse.
- One of the kids has had the sniffles and now, 6 p.m. on a Friday a fever spikes.

Do you jump in the car and head to the Emergency Department? In all of these cases, you can go an Urgent Care; these facilities are prepared to handle minor sprains, head congestion, fever and much more.

Indiana University Health Morgan will open a new Urgent Care in October. An urgent care center is a valuable addition to our community's health-care offerings, in addition to our newly renovated emergency department.

According to a Becker's Hospital Review article, there was an almost 20 percent growth in existing urgent care clinics in the past four years, with the total number of urgent care clinics exceeding 9,000. The expansion is expected to continue with some estimates predicting \$18 billion in consumer spending at more than 12,000 clinics in 2017.

Urgent Care is for injury or illness when you can't get in to see your family physician. Rule of thumb – if the condition is not life threatening you can go to Urgent Care. Emergency Department wait times are sometimes longer and visits may cost more depending on your insurance.



**LARRY BAILEY**  
Wellness

H. Rocky Singh, MD, an emergency room physician at IU Health Morgan tells me that he regularly encourages patients to consider urgent care centers for non-life or limb threatening conditions.

The Emergency Department is for life threatening illness and injury. When life or limb are in question get to the Emergency Department. This includes calling 911 for help and/or ambulance transport.

IU Health Morgan urgent care hours will be 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Monday – Friday and 8 a.m. – Noon on Saturday. You can tour the facility at our Open House Monday, October 3 from 5 – 7 p.m. For more information, visit [iuhealth.org/morgan](http://iuhealth.org/morgan)

Larry Bailey has been a member of Indiana University Health's staff since 1992 and currently serves as President of both IU Health Morgan and IU Health Paoli Hospital. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business from Indiana University and completed his MBA through Morehead State University. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the American College of Healthcare Executives.

### When to go to Urgent Care\*:

- Minor sprains
- Minor cut
- Mild fever with no rash
- Sore throat
- Ear pain
- Reoccurring conditions - minor infections

### When to go to the Emergency Department\*:

- Fever with rash
- Head or eye injury
- Trouble breathing
- Heart palpitations
- Broken bones (bone visible)
- Serious burns
- Severe pain
- Unstoppable bleeding
- Loss of consciousness

\*the list is not comprehensive

**Rule of thumb – if the condition is not life threatening you can go to Urgent Care.**



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# STRENGTH AND SAFETY

*TOA-USA focuses on building quality products and quality jobs in Mooresville*

**By Elaine Whitesides**

*Morgan County Business Leader*

When you shipped 19,888,398 pieces to Subaru and 13,113,628 pieces to Toyota in 2015, have more than 1,200 employees, and operate a plant with more than a million square feet under roof, keeping it simple takes on a whole new meaning – and importance. Based on the success and growth TOA-USA has experienced since first coming to Mooresville in the year 2000, Owner Shinichi Iizuka and President Junichiro Kondo and their management team have orchestrated simplicity into a symphony.

TOA-USA, LLC is a supplier of body structure and suspension components to the automotive industry. Those components are produced through three processes: Stamping, Welding, and Electro Deposition Coating. Sounds simple enough, but to produce the high quality parts to meet the defined specifications of the customers takes a tremendous number of qualified people and well-maintained machines, presses, and robots working cooperatively in harmony with each other.

To achieve that, company management is based on LEAN Manufacturing philosophies through Total Productive Maintenance (TPM). Continual improvement and refinement of work is achieved through the reduction and elimination of waste in materials, processes and even the number of steps between work stations, called cells in the facility. “If associates think they have a better process (called Kaizen),” said Vice President of Operations and Quality Bob Whyte, “we review that and may or may not implement. If it’s more efficient and does not adversely affect quality or safety, then it’s a good move.”

Associates are recognized and rewarded for positive contributions and for identifying defects on the floor before they are shipped. The philosophy is that every employee contributes to quality and efficiency.

## **Quality products manufactured by quality employees**

Like many other businesses, TOA-USA employees are very important to the success of the company. Not only does the business bring jobs, but they bring opportunity to residents of the community. When TOA-USA first located in Mooresville, they offered 220 jobs to the county. Now, after eleven expansions, tripling the square footage of the plants, TOA employs more than 1,200 workers and they are building to a workforce of 1,300. The majority of jobs available are for skilled positions like machine, die and facilities maintenance, which are a challenge to fill here as well as it is nationally.

To meet the challenge, TOA works with local staffing agencies Staffmark and Energeo. “We carry a temporary workforce,” Whyte said, “but we want to fill every position, which are all full-time, permanent jobs.”

“We are in a factory situation,” Whyte explained. “Manufacturing is repetitive work. We rotate associates to change up some of the routine and some of the heavier, more physical work.”

Another aspect of TOA employment is that TOA promotes from within and trains employees, which are called associates. TOA maintains that “our basic philosophy of personnel training is to foster growth among all employees together, or in other words, ‘mutual growth.’”

Upon hire, all associates attend TOA School, a five-day pro-



**District 60 Representative Peggy Mayfield, TOA CEO Shinichi Iizuka, Governor Mike Pence at expansion ground breaking ceremony**

gram, where, in addition to exposure to the TOA Basics – 9 Rules to Live and Work By, associates are schooled about safety on the floor, processes and standard operating procedures for quality. Associates are provided with hands-on training that simulates exactly the work they will be doing on the floor in their work center and where that fits in the larger picture. This allows them to get answers to any questions they have as well as being familiar with the work processes prior to actually beginning to work in the production area.

“It’s important that we have processes,” said Whyte, “and that each process is followed exactly because it is a proven process. If associates deviate, they can make defects and not realize it. We want to make sure that the customer is provided with a quality product.”

“We team up with associates with talent and desire to give them formal training to get them on the same level with experienced workers,” said Whyte. “Right now we have five machine maintenance people going to classes at Vincennes University for 12 to

15-week courses.”

Whyte himself is a product of the philosophy of promoting from within. He was the fourth employee hired by Iizuka when TOA-USA was still an empty field. He had graduated from the University of Michigan and gone into the automotive industry specializing in information management systems and quality control. He located to Indiana in 1988 and moved to Mooresville in 1994. In 2001 he joined TOA-USA. Over the next 15 years he moved up into his current position.

Working at TOA in management is like working at many other companies in that there is a strong connection with the company headquarters. However, in this instance, headquarters is a world away. Communication is a challenge; not just because of the differences in language and culture, but in time. The company employs several translators and interpreters in both Japan and Mooresville to facilitate conversation, but Japan is in another time zone. When it is morning in Mooresville, it is late night there. So Whyte says he works a lot of early mornings with meetings at 6

## **TOA (USA), LLC**

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a.m., which is 7 p.m. there. It's the best time for everyone.

Iizuka has a home in Mooresville where his wife and family lived with him during the first years of TOA-USA. Both his daughters attended Mooresville High School. Whyte explained what an important part Iizuka played in developing the culture and standards at TOA-USA. "He was working here every day from the beginning. He did a lot of the training with the core members of the original team. We met daily and he taught the TOA Basics and how he wanted the plant run."

TOA is a third-generation company, having been established by Iizuka's grandfather in 1942 and starting production after the war in 1947. Iizuka was called back to Japan to take over the entire TOA operation on both sides of the world, but still maintains a home here and continues to spend at least one week every month in Mooresville. It's not uncommon for him to be on the floor meeting and shaking hands with associates, thanking them for their efforts and contributions.

Whyte meets with all staff and associates every Monday to keep the entire plant apprised of what's happening. He said, "We discuss what happened the previous day, the economy. We talk about everything." In addition, Whyte says it is his time to reinforce the TOA Basics and connect with people personally. "When you can keep it simple, it works. The other thing we try to do is keep it visual. We do have different cultures, a diverse workforce, and pictures explain a lot that perhaps words cannot. Pictures are understood. We do it so people understand better."

Speaking of understanding, it is common for people in the local community to think TOA stands for 'Toyota of America,' which is incorrect. Part of the confusion is that TOA provides components to Toyota in Indiana and Kentucky as well as other plants in North America. But TOA, in Japanese, actually means 'east of Asia.'

### Quality products in a quality location

TOA provides a lot of the safety and crash protection parts such as the passenger cabins, parts of the roof, bumper beams, and the doghouse (engine compartment) for the Subaru Legacy and Outback to protect the passengers of the vehicle. Both vehicles have high safety ratings from the Insurance Institute of Highway Testing. TOA is proud of the part they play in developing materials that result in greater strength for safety and are lighter to improve gas mileage. Their engineers are part of the development team regarding suspension and chassis parts, which are integral components to the comfort and handling of the vehicles, too.

Not only is there great pride in the products manufactured in the plant, there is a great fondness for the place TOA-USA calls home. Iizuka and Kondo traveled the Midwest looking for a site to build that was within a certain radius of miles from Subaru in Lafayette, Ind. They settled on three good options.

Whyte related the story Iizuka tells about a trip he made to Kroger in Mooresville. All the shopping carts were put away. That demonstrated to him that Mooresville was a good community to live in. He liked the way people treated him at the store and how he was treated by the community leaders showing him properties that were available for the plant. Those experiences, the financial viability, along with the fact that the area reminded him of Ota City, Japan, home of the other TOA plant in Japan, convinced him Mooresville was the best choice.

TOA has been a strong community supporter of Morgan County organizations since their arrival on the scene in 2000. A scholarship is awarded to a Mooresville High School student annually and, Whyte said, "Where we see a need and it works in our budget, we do it. Sometimes it's not a financial donation, like last year we were able to provide 150 turkeys to Churches in Mission."

In addition to contributions, TOA has sponsored a teacher trade program during which three teachers from Mooresville Community schools visit Japan and its schools for about a week to see how education is delivered in Japan as well as the sites and cultures of the home place of TOA.

TOA has been a quiet neighbor for most of its residence in Morgan County. However, Whyte says he is excited to share the TOA story with the community. He said, "There are many opportunities to grow in the facility to make a good living and life. We are bringing up our associates and teach them skilled trades. There is a lot of opportunity.

"We are proud to be investing in employees and the community."



Bob Whyte

# Simplicity of franchising helps pizza business succeed

## Little Caesars Pizza

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**Email:** sharon@smkpizza.com  
**Web:** www.smkpizza.com

### By Ariane Cagle

Morgan County Business Leader

Owning a franchise business can provide an owner with many advantages, such as brand name recognition, proven products, and a pre-sold customer base. However, what franchisee Sharon Turley likes best is the simplicity of the Little Caesars concept.

In 2011, Sharon and her husband Brian, along with business partners Tom and Kayla Edwards Jr. and Tom and Monica Edwards Sr., were looking for a franchise restaurant opportunity. After researching several franchisors, they decided on Little Caesars, because they liked the company concept.

“For a franchise restaurant, we really liked the concept of simplicity,” said Sharon, who oversees store operations, in addition to handling accounting tasks. “You know what you’re making. You don’t have a thousand different items to know and make. We just liked the Hot-N-Ready® concept and the simplicity of it.”

“Being a franchisee to me is simpler than doing your own business and having to come up with your own brand and product list,” Sharon added. “Corporate tells the franchisee what your products are going to be. Since they do all of the testing, they know what’s going to work or not work. Then they train you on the products.”

Little Caesars even helped simplify the site selection process when the Turleys and their business partners were deciding where to locate their stores. A company representative toured potential locations with them and told them which locations would be best, based on demographics, visibility, availability and other factors.

In December 2011, the Turleys opened their first store in Camby since it is close to their Mooresville residence. Then, in October 2013, they opened their second store in Martinsville. Additionally, the Turleys and their business partners own stores



Sharon Turley

in Brownsburg and Plainfield.

Sharon appreciates being a franchisee because, she says, she always receives extra support from the company. “If I have any issues, I can contact corporate, and they’ll always be there to help me,” she said. “Also, if we feel like we’re not doing something properly, they’ll come in and do a training session with our crew members to make sure that we’re keeping the product the way it needs to be. I like that support.”

Another advantage of being a franchisee is that they receive help from the company with marketing and advertising their business. “All the national marketing that you see is through Little Caesars corporate office,” Sharon said. “However if you see coupons in the mail or other things like that, that is something we purchase directly through the store as advertising. But corporate provides us with different templates for the marketing pieces that we can use.”

It is Little Caesars’ name recognition that helps franchisees get customers. “The whole Hot-N-Ready concept is to bring people in the door,” Sharon said. “We have three types of pizza – pepperoni, cheese or sausage – that are ready all day, every day – along with our crazy bread and

wings. The concept is, you should be able to come in, order one of those, and walk out in a minute. In and out in a minute is the goal we strive for. Additionally, between 4 and 8 p.m., we also have available – a Hot-N-Ready deep dish pizza, a Hot-N-Ready type of cheese bread, and whatever our limited time offer is at the time.”

When the Turleys first opened the Camby and Martinsville stores, one of their biggest challenges was making sure they had enough Hot-N-Ready pizzas available all the time. It was an issue because they didn’t know how many customers they were going to have at various times each day. “We still have that happen occasionally,” she said, “because we can’t predict when someone is going to come in and buy 10 pizzas at one time and wipe us out. You can never predict the unpredictable. Whether you’re a franchisee or a regular business, there will always be challenges. You just have to put your head down, smile and figure it out – whatever it might be.”

Sharon recommends that anyone interested in opening a franchise should do their homework before investing in and opening the business. She also says that it’s important to work with an accountant and an HR person to help stay on top of state laws.

Additionally, Sharon says you should plan on being at your business a lot during the first year. “When I say a lot, I mean 7 days a week, open until close,” she said. “It’s hard work, but it’s also very rewarding.”

The best piece of advice Sharon has ever gotten is from her parents: “Try your hardest, do your best, and you’ll succeed.” Sharon believes this. She also believes owning and running a franchise helps you be more successful, too.



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# Tools of the trade

A client of ours was having issues with her laptop recently. It was a hardware issue and still under warranty, so we had to send the laptop back to manufacturer. When I informed client of this she was a little upset. "I'll tell you what, if this computer is not covered under warranty, and they tell me that it's no good, I'll never buy another \$800 computer again, I'll just buy the cheap ones because they all die anyway so why spend the extra money". I have a feeling that she is not alone in the way that she is thinking. Not saying that I agree with her, and I kind of enlightened her on my take on computers, and what to look for. First of all, she had bought a "Consumer" level computer, opposed to a "Professional" version. And she is a "Power" user, lives her life on it, and her business depends on it. So I had to educate her a little bit. No matter what your profession is, you have your tools of the trade. Have you ever noticed the guys that mow grass, they have these big zero turn beefy mowers that look like small tanks flying across the yard, and throwing grass 6' out? They use those because they are built for the job, and meant to be used (and abused) and keep on going. If you haven't priced one of those you might be shocked at how much one of those costs. If you are a baker, the bakeware that you use probably didn't come from the local dollar store. You spent the money on the professional pans that could be brandished as weapons if needed, but are made to be heated and cooled thousands of times and not warp. I've known several hair dressers, have you ever seen one drop their scissors on the floor and almost start crying. They know that they spent money on those balanced sheers and now they might not work like they were meant to. The same goes towards computers. If you are using your computer, and it's a big part of your "Tool chest" for what you do. Maybe it's time that you view it that way. Instead of just



**JAY ALLEN**  
Technology

a computer. Professional level computers are built with better parts, and most of the time they come with a much longer warranty, most of them 3 years, which can be upgraded. Consumer level warranties are typically just 1 year, and the manufacturer is praying that you don't send it back to them. Am I saying that you need to plan on dropping a couple thousand dollars on a new computer, by all means NO, but maybe it's time to stop looking at the consumer level computers and step it up to a more professional series, it may cost you a couple of hundred dollars more, but the longevity, and quality of machine that you get may more than pay for itself if you are not replacing it as often, and it's working like it was built to do.

Jay Allen is the owner of Techno Advantage, an IT consulting company specializing in the needs of small and medium sized businesses. Jay can be reached at jallen@technotc.com or by phone at 317-857-0150.

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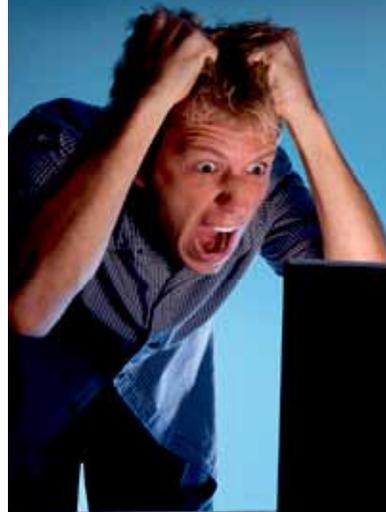
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# Do you encourage vacation time?



**WILL GOTT**  
Employee Well-Being

As a business owner do you encourage your employees to take their allotted vacation time each year? According to a study conducted by Travel Effect, an initiative of the U.S. Travel Association, entitled "Overwhelmed America: Why Don't We Use Our Paid Time Off?" found that 40 percent of American workers will leave paid vacation days unused. Even more revealing in this study are the reasons respondents gave for not using their paid time off. The four reasons cited were:

- 40% dread of returning from a vacation to piles of work
- 35% belief that no one will be able to step in and do their job for them while they're gone
- 33% are not able to afford it
- 22% fear being seen as replaceable

By encouraging your employees to take vacations, you keep them healthy and energized. Vacations allow employees to focus on relaxation, recovery and refreshing both their personal

**40% of workers "feel more productive and better about their job" when returning from vacation.**

and professional lives. When discussing time-off with your employees strongly emphasize the need for vacations and consider these benefits for you, your employee and your company:

According to a recent Gallop survey, on-the-job stress is the top reason for employee dissatisfaction in the American workforce; 35% report that "the source of this stress is their job interfering with their family or personal time.

A CCH Human Resources Management study demonstrated that more than 50% of employees feel more "rested, rejuvenated and reconnected to their personal life" and that nearly 40% of workers "feel more productive and better about their job" when returning from vacation.

The same study reported that nearly 20% of workers have canceled or postponed a vacation because of their job.

GoHealthInsurance.com reported a 200% improvement in productivity when allowing unlimited vacation time for employees; HubSpot has been ranked the #2 fastest growing software company on the Inc. 500 since allowing an unlimited vacation time policy.

Do yourself and your business a favor, and begin encouraging your employees to use all their vacation time in 2016. And, if you don't have a paid time off policy for your business, strongly consider instituting one.

Will Gott is the owner of Magnified Vacations CruiseOne, a locally owned and operated full service Cruise and Leisure Travel Agency. Will, and his wife Nikki, specialize in helping families and couples reconnect by helping create memorable vacations. The Gotts have extensive proficiency in the travel industry as well as business experience. You can email Will at [wgott@cruiseone.com](mailto:wgott@cruiseone.com), or call (317) 451-4232 or via [www.magnifiedvacations.com](http://www.magnifiedvacations.com)

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# Bringing Outdoor Air Indoors

Many people enjoy the opportunity to open the windows and welcome fresh air into their home. This time of year, we are provided with many mild days and cool nights to enjoy the fresh outdoor air in our homes. These mild temperatures also allow us a short break from high cooling and heating bills. Here are a few tips on how to benefit from the mild temperatures and fresh outdoor air:



**Jod Woods**

- **Turn the heating and air conditioning system "OFF"** - The last thing we want to do is pay to heat or cool our homes while the windows are open. Every thermostat has an "OFF" setting. In this position, neither the furnace nor the air conditioning system will run.
- **Set the furnace fan to "ON"** - There are many opinions regarding the fan setting - "ON" or "AUTO" position. (I will save this discussion for a later article.) For

now, the windows are open and we are relying on the breeze to exchange the stale air in our homes with the fresh outdoor air. If the circulation fan is set to the "ON" position at the thermostat, we are pulling this fresh air into the home and circulating it through the ductwork 24 hours a day. Although the FAN is "ON" the SYSTEM is "OFF", so only the circulation fan will operate. This fan uses very little power, and running continually will not damage it.

- **Replace the air filter** - This will remove the odors and allergens that have collected in the filter during the summer. Circulating fresh air through a dirty air filter accomplishes very little.

Please let me know if there are any topics that you would enjoy being discussed. I can be reached at 317-831-5279 or Jod\_D\_Woods@EconomyHeatingandAir.com

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# Back to school business edition

As children return to school this Fall, it's time for business owners to start thinking about a fresh perspective on their companies and prepare for the upcoming new year. Here are a few ways that professionals can learn more and achieve more, taking cues from the students they once were:



- **Ask for help when needed.** It's okay not to understand everything about running your business. If there's an area of business that you struggle to manage, ask a colleague or hire an outside expert to help in that area.
- **Pick a major and stick with it.** Stay true to your passions, strengths and aptitudes when choosing your career or job responsibilities. Remember: Life is too short to spend it doing something you don't enjoy.
- **Pace yourself.** Avoid getting overworked by scheduling out your week and giving yourself enough time to finish tasks and projects. Don't try to take on too much work or commit to a project you can't handle, or you won't be able to complete it to your satisfaction.
- **Stay competitive.** Focus on professional development by seeking certification, or reading and attending tradeshow, conferences, webinars and workshops for your industry or profession. Learn the latest ways to market your business, and always keep tabs on competitors and top players in your industry.
- **Dress the part.** For a business, this means having a professional brand image (logo and messaging), print materials, mobile-friendly website and a social media presence. If it's been a while since you've changed your company brand or website, it may be time for a refresh. In addition

to your company's brand, other ways you can improve your image may include employee uniforms, vehicles, store signage or even personal style, which can all reflect positively or negatively on a business.

- **Look to connect.** Never underestimate the importance of continued networking with colleagues in your industry and local area. This helps you and your company to stay visible to potential customers, partners and the media.
- **Upgrade your technology.** With so many businesses relying on technology to run efficiently and stay ahead of the game, make sure you have all the equipment and networking to succeed.

While you may be done with school, as a business owner or professional, you're still not done learning. With continuous improvement, such as upgrading your technology, re-branding or networking, you'll find that you're investing in your business (and yourself) while working on your business.

Susan Young is the owner of AimFire Marketing, a content marketing firm established in 2005. She specializes in website content, blogging and social media management for service-based businesses. To schedule a complimentary marketing phone session, or to subscribe to her marketing tips newsletter, visit her website at [www.aimfiremarketing.com](http://www.aimfiremarketing.com), call (317) 456-BIZ4U (2494), or email [syoung@aimfiremarketing.com](mailto:syoung@aimfiremarketing.com).

**Never underestimate the importance of continued networking with colleagues in your industry and local area.**

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# Networking Opportunities

**Martinsville Chamber of Commerce:** The regular monthly meeting on the third Friday at 11:30 AM at the Morgan County Administration Building, 180 South Main Street. For more info, please contact the Chamber office at (765) 342-8110 or visit its website: [www.MartinsvilleChamber.com](http://www.MartinsvilleChamber.com)

**Rotary Clubs:** Martinsville meets every Tuesday at noon at the First Presbyterian Church, 240 East Washington Street, Martinsville. Mooresville Decatur meets every Wednesday at 7:30 AM at Jones Crossing Banquet Center, S.R. 67 and Allison Road, Camby.

**Business Networking International:** Morgan County Connections meets every Wednesday Morning at the Mooresville Public Library, 220 West Harrison Street, from 8:00am to 9:30am. For more information call Angela Kath at 317-445-9827.

**Mooresville Chamber of Commerce:** The regular monthly meeting on the third Thursday from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM. The meeting location is Jones Crossing Banquet Center at the corner of S.R. 67 and Allison Road. Lunch (\$7 members, \$10 non-members) For more information call the Chamber office at 317/831-6509 or visit its website: [www.MooresvilleChamber.com](http://www.MooresvilleChamber.com).

**Morgan County Toastmasters Club:** Weekly meeting every Thursday evening at 6pm at Franciscan St. Francis Hospital

1st floor Conference Room.

**Business & Professionals Exchange:** This Hendricks County meeting takes place each Tuesday from 8:15-9:45 a.m. at Trine University, 7508 Beechwood Centre, Avon. More information at [www.b-p-e.org](http://www.b-p-e.org).

**Rediscover Martinsville:** An Indiana Main Street U.S.A. Association. For information: PO Box 1123, Martinsville, IN 46151. 765-343-6303 or e-mail: [rediscovermartinsville@gmail.com](mailto:rediscovermartinsville@gmail.com). Follow us on Facebook.

**Morgantown Merchants Association:** The Morgantown Merchants Association meets at the Fire Station on dates to be announced. For more information call Sharon Zimmerman at the Stitchery Mill at 812-597-5997 or on [www.Morgantown-Indiana.com](http://www.Morgantown-Indiana.com).

**Networking Business Women of Morgan County:** NBW of MC meets on the second Thursday at 11:30 AM at the Mooresville School Administration Building next to the Post Office on Carlisle Street. Bring your own lunch. For more information, call Patti Wilson at 317-856-9801.

**Mooresville Chamber of Commerce Networking Breakfast:** Event the 4th Thursday of each month at Bran & Shorts Coffee House at 8:00am, located at 15 W Main Street in Mooresville. Please RSVP to [mindy@mooresvillechamber.com](mailto:mindy@mooresvillechamber.com), public welcome, do not need to be a Chamber member to attend.

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