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All in the Family

'The Cornerstone of Our Economy'

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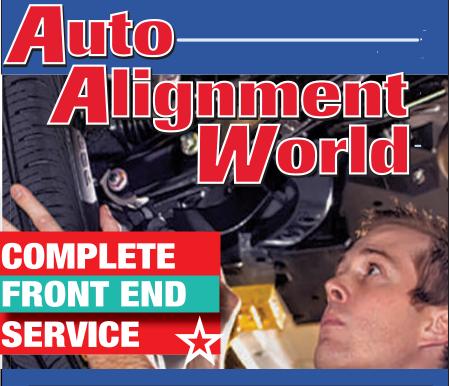
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ohler Lumber is the epitome of a family-owned business. Founded in 1907 by William Kohler, it was run by his son, Percy Kohler, until he sold the company to a young couple, namely Henry and Anna Kubenik, 50 years ago.

The year was 1975 and Henry Sr. and his wife Anna were joined by sons Henry and Eric, who have now taken over the business.

Henry and Anna, both in their 90s, will be celebrating their 77th wedding anniversary this year.

They have retired to warmer climates to enjoy a well-deserved rest, but have left sons Henry and Eric and grandson Jared to keep the business operating in tip-top fashion.

The Kubeniks take pride in offering a wide array of lumber, hardware and building supplies and credit their knowledge of the products and great customer service with their 50 years of success.

"It was my parents who bought the business from the last generation of Kohlers in 1975," said Henry. Now the president of the

company, Henry says that he loves living in Jeffersonville – "it's beautiful and a great place to raise kids."

He should know.

Henry and his late wife, Liz, raised their son, Jared, in Jeff and he went off to college and world of work before returning home to join the family business.

Today Jared and his wife, Dr. Melissa Kubenik, have two children of their own.

Jared is now the Office Manager and one of the first faces customers see when they walk in the door.

Vice-President of the company, Eric, who is Henry's brother, is also a hometown boy who raised his family locally and now helps to make sure that Kohler's many customers are well taken care of.

Family friend Pat Hammett is also a part of the team, and a foreman with the company.

Secretary Valerie DeVieze rounds out the staff and helps keeps things running smoothly in the office.

"We have a little bit of everything," Eric said.

Henry agreed.

"People don't realize how much we have until they walk in," he said.

The list of products is almost endless, from all your lumber needs, to trusses, doors, windows, paint, stain, masonry, nails, plumbing, heating, shingles, kitchen and bath accessories, carpet, vinyl, wood flooring, fiber, and cement siding, Kohler Lumber is ready for you.

Located at 5023 NY-52, Jeffersonville, Kohler Lumber is open 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to Noon on Saturdays, and closed Sundays.

The Kubeniks have long been dedicated to helping their community, often doing things at night and after work to help a neighbor or their church – St. George's Church in Jeffersonville.

And even though the Kubenik family like to work hard, they also make time for fun and family.

Avid golfers, the Kubeniks can be seen on the course as well as enjoying themselves in the community.



The Kohler Lumber team is,





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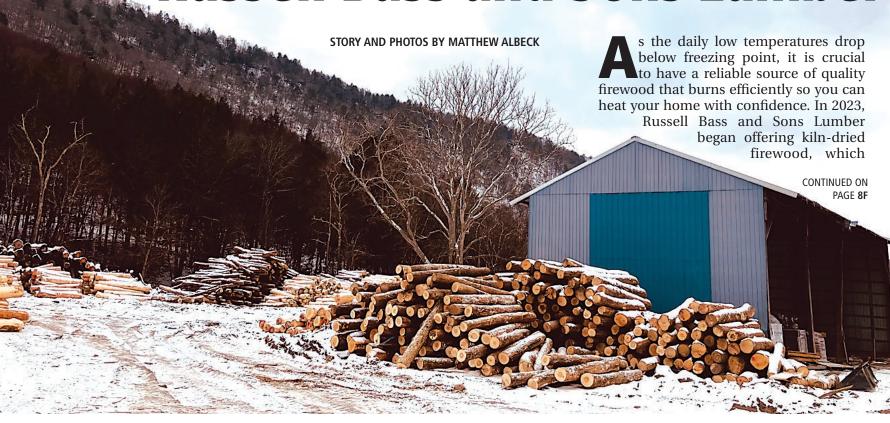
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Russell Bass and Sons Lumber STORY AND PHOTOS BY MATTHEW ALBECK s the daily low temperatures drop below freezing point, it is crucial





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Lane Bass, left, and Evan Bass pose in front of wood conveyer.

At left: The sawmill yard in Fishs Eddy.



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has been seasoned to reduce moisture content. Once it is dried in the kiln, the wood becomes quick to light, burns with high heat, and produces less smoke and soot, making it a perfect choice for your wood stove. In addition to firewood, Russell Bass and Sons Lumber, located at 59 Sawmill Road in Fishs Eddy, NY has been supplying the region with high quality lumber for over 75 years.

Philo Bass started his lumber company in the 1940s, and it's been in the Bass family ever since. In 1984 Russell Bass took the reins of leadership and later partnered with his sons, Todd and Shane. Today, the Bass famsafety of a heated cab, which is a far cry from the dangers of logging practices in past generations. He said winter months were perfect for harvesting because the ground is frozen and their efforts are not thwarted by mud or insects. His cousin Evan also gave a glowing account of the role he plays in the family business. Lane and Evan, who were born 11 days apart and both graduated from Hancock High School in 2017, both enjoy being outside and love the variety of their work.

in 2017, both enjoy being outside and Lane Bass, left, and Evan Bass stand atop their CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE Multitek wood conveyer. FWC - 30

ily team includes Todd's son, Lane, and Shane's son, Evan. Over the last 80 years, the business has greatly expanded in scope from a small lumber and logging outfit to a multi-faceted company that provides excellent green hardwood lumber for contracting and finishing products, kiln-dried firewood, and timber exports on the global market.

The idea of a multigenerational family business might sound like it is fraught with personal challenges, but Philo's great-great-grandson says just the opposite. Lane Bass, who works in the woods everyday with the logging crew, is grateful to be involved in his family's business. "There must be something in our blood," Lane said; "we all get along really well."

Lane's team works with foresters to select optimal trees for harvesting. Operating a feller buncher, Lane cuts and gathers trees from the comfort and



Lane Bass points to massive kilns used to season firewood.

processor, and a skid steer. In the last decade, the company began exporting their timber products overseas to meet the demands of the global market under the direction of Todd and Shane.

Russell Bass and Sons Lumber provides the region and the world with a variety of wood products, including wholesale green hardwood lumber, pallets, bark, kilndried firewood, log-length firewood, and cut and split firewood. They have built a multigenerational reputation of integrity and diligent work, and should be your first stop in acquiring wood products in the Hancock area and beyond.

Russell Bass and Sons can be found at 59 Sawmill Road, Fishs Eddy, NY 13774. Give them a call at 607-637-5253, or email them at basslumber@hancock.net.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Evan Bass runs a wheel loader

and supervises operations at the sawmill, which produces 15,000 cord feet of lumber a day. After a slow season for firewood last year, Evan was happy that activity has increased significantly this winter and shared a personal account of work... what it's like to work at the mill, saying, "it's always moving."

Today the property in Long

Eddy contains three several wood sheds, and over a dozen large machines, including five skidders, four bulldozers, two landing loaders, two feller bunchers, four wheel loaders, a grapple

buildings, They have built a multigenerational reputation of integrity and diligent front-end



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Scaffold

BY VINCENT KURZROCK

f your outdoor project requires a lot of time spent on scaffolding, who better to assist than Service Scaffold Company?

Located at 29 Railroad Plaza in South Fallsburg, Service Scaffolding is a third-generation business. Four brothers Cory, Josh, Sam, and Zach Ingber who took over the company about six years ago. While they didn't start the business, Sam believes their efforts have been key in elevating it to new

"In my opinion, we're a different company than we ever were," Sam

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12F ALL IN THE FAMILY SULLIVAN COUNTY DEMOCRAT JANUARY 2025



The lot owned by Service Scaffold is constantly circulating with different types of materials going in and out.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

The Ingber family's roots trace back to Poland, before their grandfather settled in Brooklyn. The family later moved to the Catskill Mountains when his parents fell ill. In 1956, founder Mac Ingber launched Modern Scaffold Company. The company began as a small scaffold rental business and quickly expanded to become the leading scaffold supplier for the Catskills resort hotel area.

For over 60 years, Service Scaffold has built a solid reputation, with notable contracts such as the original Concord Resort and the scaffold supply for the first Woodstock festival in 1969. In 1970, the company's name was officially changed to Service Scaffold Company Inc., marking a new chapter. Today, under the leadership of the four brothers, the company has grown into one of the most respected scaffolding firms in the Tri-state area.

Since its founding, Service Scaffold has evolved into a full-service access provider for the region, offering all aspects of vertical access, scaffold construction hoists, mast climbers, stair towers, and more.

"I think one of the biggest statistics out there is that third-generation businesses often fail. We're aware of that," Sam said. "We know how difficult it can be to work with family, but we've seen it our whole lives."

The brothers believe their strong relationships make them unique, and they feel their generation is different from the ones before them.

"Our biggest challenge is working together every day. It can be tough," Sam admitted. "But it's easier because of the strong relationships we share. Not only do we work together all the time, but we also spend most of our free time together."

For Sam, it's not just about being brothers who have to work together, it's about choosing to work together.

His advice to others starting a family business is simple: "Lay your cards out on the table."

"Everyone needs to have clear, open lines of communication, be upfront about your goals and your vision. If everyone isn't aligned, it might not work," Sam said. "And, above all, nurture those family relationships. Your business is a living, breathing thing."

Service Scaffold Company is open Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



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The generational diner dream

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ELI RUIZ

aving recently celebrated their 35th year in business, the Liberty Diner is more than just your regular local business, it's the epitome of a true family run business, and, says Nick Tsicalos, he wouldn't have it any other way.

The story of the Liberty Diner began when Nick was a young boy and he and his father, George, left Greece for New York City. Upon arrival in the US, the elder Tsicalos found employment as a dish washer at a coffee shop in Soho, Manhattan, called Amelia's.

Over time the elder Tsicalos was able to save enough money to purchase Amelia's. After some time, Nick's father sold Amelia's for a good profit.

"Amelia's is still in business to this day," offered Irene Tsicalos.

Fast forward a bit, and Nick scored his first diner gig as a bus-boy with the Seville Diner in Queens, where he got his first taste of diner culture and he was immediately hooked. "The Seville is now a Chinese restaurant," lamented Nick.

Nick would later take a bartender job in Manhattan, where he worked for many years, later on working for his uncles who owned a restaurant in Tribeca. "He was a bartender with a good amount of experience at his previous job," said Irene. "I vividly remember that place when I was little," she added.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Being an avid hunter, Tsicalos would hunt deer througout Sullivan County, and during one of those hunting trips Tsicalos ended up in Liberty, and by chance, Tsicalos found an old lot that was once a gas station. The lot was very old and much of the old gas station was still stood, but Tsicalos remained smitten by the location, which he insisted would make a great diner.

By 1988, Nick Tsicalos realized his dream of owning his own diner.

"If not for those hunting trips to Sullivan County, who knows how things would have turned out," said Tsicalos, adding, "I wanted to get out of Manhattan... I was tired of the back and forth, traveling to Queens and Manhattan and the traffic and all," explained Nick, and he finally decided to move to Sullivan County full-time. "I still miss the City, but wanted a new beginning, and I believed wholeheartedly that we would succeed in Sullivan County."

Tsicalos does admit that busi-



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From left, Delanie Hoffman, Luis Beltran, Eleni Tsicalos, Irene Tsicalos, Nick Tsicalos, Jessica Mevlin and Siera Bias.

ness isn't what it was during the 1990's and early to mid 2000's when the diner was mostly packed most of the time and we were open 24 hours. "We would literally be packed most days but the early Covid epidemic, along with the fact that the younger, educated generation of Sullivan County mostly do not stay in Sullivan County anymore," offered Irene, adding, "They don't don't come

out and hang out anymore... and all the high school kids want to do these days is play video games and the such," she added.

Having asked Nick if he had any plans on retirement, Tsicalos said, "I have absolutely no intentions on retirement at all... It's an art to work with your family, and as I said many times before, I wouldn't want it any other way."



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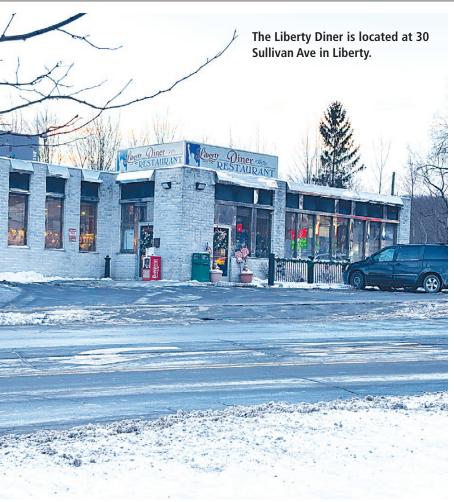
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