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## Chamber members hear how to boost others and selves

By DENNIS J. WRIGHT , [dwright@phoenixvillenews.com](mailto:dwright@phoenixvillenews.com)

PHOENIXVILLE - Attendees of the Phoenixville Regional Chamber of Commerce Membership Breakfast were asked "Are You Ready To Be Quicker, Better & Wiser?" by guest speaker Gene Marks of The Marks Group Tuesday morning.

Prior to Marks' speech, Kim Cooley, executive director, Phoenixville Regional Chamber of Commerce, welcomed everyone to the breakfast, thanked the breakfast sponsor, Big Brothers Big Sisters Southeastern Pennsylvania, and introduced Betty Thierry as the master of ceremonies for the breakfast.

Thierry asked Yvonne McPeak, Director, Partnership Development, to the podium to talk about the Big Brothers Big Sisters School-Based Mentoring at Barkley Elementary.

"These mentoring programs add to a child's life by spending one-on-one time with them during the school day," said McPeak. "We are building partnerships with companies throughout the region and match their employees with children from local elementary schools."

McPeak said that volunteers meet with the children 2 to 4 times a month at lunchtime during the school year.

"You will do something with them like play games, do a craft project, eat lunch and just spend time together," she said. "Young people in the program show an increase in academic

performance."

Thierry then invited Chamber President Chuck Benz and Fred Hubler to the podium, and both men spoke about the Phoenixville All-Star Membership Challenge.

Benz, who represents the board, will lead his team of "Benz' Fightin' Phoenies" versus "Hubler's Shortstops," which represents the Membership Committee.

The Challenge is a membership drive that has taken place over the last three years. The group who enrolls the most new members will win a prize to be determined later.

Before Benz could take his seat, Thierry gave Benz several birthday presents in honor of his 42nd birthday on Tuesday. Benz was the recipient of a hearing aid, some monogrammed toilet paper, a cane equipped with horn and rear view mirror, and a birthday button.

Thierry introduced Marks, who told the audience that there is six things that people need to do to succeed in their business.

Marks said the first thing was to delegate someone to collect money for you.

"They aren't emotionally attached to it," said Marks. "It's just a job for them to do, so know your strengths. I [was bad] at it, so I left someone else do it. I decided to just do what I do well."

He spoke about having a vision for your business, to which he said, "It doesn't mean conquering the world."

"I wanted to enjoy all of the clients I work with," he said. "When I love 100 percent of my clients, I'm getting there. So where do you want to be in 20 years? It is completely up to you when you come up with that vision. It should drive all of the decisions you make."

Marks also talked about appreciating your customers and taking care of your employees.

"In times like these, customers are critical," he said. "You need to keep in touch with your customers. Help them with their marketing, and work with small business development centers.

"Taking care of your employees is important. Give them some respect and flexibility. Allow them to work from home."

The last two items Marks spoke about were being a penny pincher but not being a cheapskate, and using technology wisely.

After Marks' speech, Thierry and Cooley presented Benz with a birthday cake and candle, as everyone sang "Happy Birthday" to him.

The next Phoenixville Regional Chamber of Commerce Membership Breakfast is scheduled for Tuesday, August 12, 2008, from 7:15 to 9 a.m. at Robert Ryan's Columbia Station. The breakfast sponsor will be the Phoenixville Hospital, featuring the daVinci Surgical Robotic System.

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