

DAUPHIN COUNTY

Stretching the limo business

Premiere #1 setting new course for luxury transportation

BY JASON SCOTT
jasons@cpbj.com

When Doug Rydbom bought Premiere #1 Limousine Service LLC in March 2009, the company had five vehicles in its fleet.

It booked 32 reservations that first month, said Jonathan Snavelly, the company's vice president of marketing and business development.

"We thought it was good because we were able to make payroll and payments on a couple of vehicles," he said.

The luxury ground transportation company, based in Londonderry Township, added seven more vehicles that first year and reached triple digits for monthly reservations by March 2010.

Known more today for its leisure and social business, the company's early focus was on the corporate side, Snavelly said.

"The hard part was keeping the Monday through Friday business for chauffeurs," he said.

But the economy was tanking back then, forcing many limo companies to diversify their fleets and service offerings. Premiere #1 adapted quickly to demands for higher-capacity vehicles and 24/7 customer service.

"We didn't know anything different," Snavelly said.

Fleet evolution

Today, the company averages about 750 reservations per month. And its fleet, which is now pushing 50 vehicles, continues to evolve. Last year, Premiere #1 added a 56-passenger motorcoach to meet growing demand from regional tour groups and to provide alternative transportation for area college students looking to get home over academic breaks.

The latter business involves picking up students at schools such as Bucknell University and transporting them to big cities such as Boston. It is expected to be a steady revenue stream as many colleges restrict vehicles on campus and fewer students opt to get their driver's licenses or buy cars.

"It works well for us," said Steve Rhoads, president of the Philadelphia Regional Limousine Association.

With growing competition from ride-sharing services such as Uber, Rhoads said he expects his peers also will look to add more group services to drive revenue.

His company, which also has a school bus service, recently added a 40-passenger coach bus.

Harrisburg-based Unique Limousine Service Inc. added a shuttle service to Pittsburgh to generate additional revenue. The corporate-focused transportation company also picked up more leisure business while it weathered the recession, owner Jim Salinger said.

please see **LIMO**, page 7



The newest addition to Premiere #1 Limousine Service LLC's fleet is a 56-passenger Volvo motorcoach. Jonathan Snavelly, left, vice president of marketing and business development, with CEO Doug Rydbom, says this vehicle offers a more comfortable option for long trips. PHOTO/AMY SPANGLER

THE CULTURAL ENRICHMENT FUND PRESENTS...

THE RED CARPET SOIRÉE

ARTS GALA & SHOWCASE EXPERIENCE

FEBRUARY 27, 2016

It's a night of glitz, glamour and good fun as the Cultural Enrichment Fund presents its signature event -- The Red Carpet Soiree. This year's soiree will take place at a never before used mystery venue. The event will feature delectable food, cocktails and wine, an auction of unique experiences and pop up performances by local arts organizations. It's your chance to walk the red carpet in support of the capital region's united fund for the arts!

Sponsorships, full tables and half tables are currently available for purchase. Invitations and more information are available online at: culturalenrichmentfund.org/red-carpet-soiree.php. Please contact CEF at 717.233.1694 with any event questions.



PRESENTING SPONSOR



TIME IS MONEY

WASTE NEITHER.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

HOME OR OFFICE DELIVERY

717-236-4300

www.CPBJ.com

CENTRAL PENN BUSINESS JOURNAL

WILLETS

continued from page 1

the Ephrata Area School District.

She also attended the annual chamber dinner, which WellSpan sponsored.

WellSpan Ephrata Community Hospital is one of the Ephrata chamber's 275 members, and it has a representative on the board of directors.

Matching goals

In addition to her interest in community involvement, Willetts is passionate about patient safety and quality of care. After all, that's why hospitals exist, she said.

Willetts elaborated that her goal is to make WellSpan Ephrata the safest hospital in the country, "as all hospitals should, because they take care of people in their most vulnerable state."

WellSpan shares that goal, and it's what attracted her to the health system.

Carrie E. Willetts

Title: Senior vice president for York County-based WellSpan Health System and president of WellSpan Ephrata Community Hospital

Education: Bachelor's degree in health services administration, James Madison University; master's degree in health administration, Virginia Commonwealth University

From: Hampton, Va., where she was vice president of operations at Sentara CarePlex Hospital, a 224-bed facility.

"They truly live their mission throughout the entire organization to work as one and improve the health of the community," Willetts said.

She pointed out that WellSpan is an industry leader when it comes to population health management, and the system is focused on wellness and prevention.

The focus on population health management throughout the health care industry is driven by the fact that health care became too expensive, according to Willetts, and hospitals must try new approaches.

The effort to make health care affordable includes improving processes and communication, using industry best practices and eliminating waste, according to Willetts.

One way WellSpan is hoping to improve processes and communication is through an initiative called Project One.

The goal of Project One is to electronically integrate health records throughout the system, according to spokeswoman Cindy Stauffer.

Project One's operations are based in York, and 148 staff members are working to implement software designed by Wisconsin-based Epic Systems Co. The software is designed for midsize and large medical groups that use electronic health records.

Although the system will be new for WellSpan, Willetts is familiar with it. The hospital she came from had a similar system.

Once electronic health records are operational, the data will improve WellSpan's knowledge of the patients it serves.

"All of this comes back to population health management," Willetts said ■

LIMO

continued from page 6

Snively and Salinger both acknowledged that the days of the stretch limo are coming to a close. Both companies have scaled back in favor of more luxury shuttles and mini-buses.

"We saw that change in the industry at trade shows about two years ago," Snively said.

Premiere #1 is already looking to add a second coach bus.

Unique Limousine, founded in 1982, has grown to about 80 vehicles with locations in Lancaster and York counties. The company acquired Landis Luxury Coaches last April, expanding its Lancaster County footprint.

"I don't want to say the bigger companies will eat the little ones, but it's becoming harder for small operators to become competitive," Salinger said.

Social

Last year, Premiere #1 grew revenue by 19 percent. It's now at more than \$3.5 million in revenue.

Snively said his expectation is double-digit growth each year.

To do that, he continues to look for ways to build on the company's profitable social business — primarily weddings, wine and beer tours, and sporting events — which accounts for about 53 percent of its revenue.

Last year, Premiere #1 worked 600 weddings, up from about 575 the previous year.

"Wedding revenue is still great for us," Snively said.

The company booked nearly 300 wine tours with about 3,000 guests last year. That led to nearly 250 room-nights at area hotels, the company's best year yet for such tours.

With continued growth in the region's alcohol-related attractions, there is more room for growth, Snively said. And tour packages, which include tasting fees and meals, can often help turn non-traditional customers to other limo services.

Further bus and coach expansions could open up other large group opportunities, he added.

Unlike a traditional motorcoach company, where local groups are picked up and transported outside the area, about 90 percent of Premiere #1's trips are inbound or already local.

Premiere #1 will be expanding its home base over the next year to include a new maintenance and detailing facility. That will free up about 10,000 square feet of indoor space to park its fleet. ■



At the *heart* of your good health.

Cardiovascular Surgery

Cardiac Care

Vascular Care

Valve Clinic

Pulmonary and Lung Care

Remarkable innovation & outstanding results for your heart.

With clinical experience and training from the finest metropolitan hospitals in the U.S., our team of interventional cardiologists and cardiovascular surgeons is ranked among the nation's best. Together, they offer a full range of cardiovascular treatments: cardiovascular surgery, cardiac and vascular care, pulmonary and lung care, and coordinated care for patients with heart valve disease at our specialized valve clinic. Visit our website to learn more about this remarkable team offering safe, innovative treatments for the best possible results—close to home.

From L to R: David Loran, MD; Atizazul Mansoor, MD; Hemal Gada, MD; William Bachinsky, MD, FACC, FSCAI; Mubashir Mumtaz, MD, FACS, FACC; Roberto Hodara, MD



Please vote for us as Simply the Best!

pinnaclehealth.org/heart | (717) 731-0101



PINNACLEHEALTH
CardioVascular Institute