



Volume 11, Issue 1  
March 2003

# FAMILY BUSINESS NEWSLETTER

A publication of the Delaware Valley Family Business Center, LLC



**Dale and Sadie High**  
High Industries, Inc.  
Lancaster, PA

“My way or the highway” has a whole different meaning at High Industries Inc. of Lancaster.

With a chuckle, S. Dale High, chairman of the board and president of High Industries, says, “We want to make sure ‘my way’ is the High way.” High and his wife, Sadie, will be the featured Forum speakers Thursday, March 20, at the Indian Valley Country Club. His topic: **“Best Practices for the Family and the Business.”**

The High way (also the title of a company co-worker training video) started with Dale’s father, Sanford High, in 1931 when he borrowed \$7,500 to purchase a welding repair shop in downtown Lancaster. The son of a Mennonite farmer/lay preacher, Sanford High told his workers, “Lay down a good weld and give good measure.”

From that modest beginning, High Industries has grown to a 15-entity, 2,600-co-worker company, centering on the U.S. Eastern Seaboard. Its business strategy is a “three-legged stool” consisting of heavy manufacturing, real estate and construction, and business services.

At the March 20 Forum, Dale, 60, the third son of Sanford, plans to give the lowdown on the way High Industries does business – and leave ample time for questions and interaction. Joining her husband at the podium will be Sadie H. High, a consultant in organizational development and management training; she also chairs the Board of Trustees of the High Foundation. Among their topics will be the **two key elements of the High philosophy:**

- (1) building trustworthy relationships
- (2) being innovative leaders.

Dale High has been with the company for 40 years; he has been in charge for the past 25 years, which is when the firm’s strongest growth has taken place. But High Industries isn’t finished yet. While operating company sales are about \$500 million per year, the goal is to double annual sales to \$1 billion by 2012. Real estate assets managed total \$500 million currently, with a goal to increase to \$1 billion by 2012.

Helping to keep the company firmly grounded during the next growth phase will be another three-legged stool – its governance groups.

The governance groups, which Dale High plans to describe March 20, are:

- **High Family Council** (made up of Dale; Sadie; his two sons, Steven and Gregory; and his daughter, Suzanne).
- **Executive Committee** (a seven-member senior professional/management team, of which Dale is the only family member).
- **Board of Directors** (five of the eight members are from outside the family). The board has the final say in any company matters. “It’s a pretty clear-cut system,” says Dale High.

In recognition of High Industries’ excellence, the company received the prestigious 2002 Family

Business of the Year award (firms with more than 250 workers) by the Wharton Enterprising Families Initiative.

Is running a successful family business g “old hat” for Dale High? Not at all. “Every day I get up and can’t wait to get started,” he says. “I love interacting with people. I’ve found it very rewarding to develop the High team and meet the challenges, including the challenge of letting go as my role keeps changing. Each phase is interesting.”

The March 20 Forum also promises to be interesting for listeners as they learn about the High way of doing business – and as Dale and Sadie High interact with them.



Doing Business the High Way:

## Best Practices for the Family and the Business

Thursday, March 20, 2003

7:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

Indian Valley Country Club, Telford, PA  
(breakfast buffet included)

### Family Business Highlight at March 20 Forum

#### When You Least Expect It: the Importance of Crisis Planning

Frances Grubb recalls that things moved very quickly in the spring and summer of 1992.

In May her best friend, Jane Reckner, who suffered from Marfan’s syndrome (the same illness that afflicted Abraham Lincoln) had a coronary event. In July, at age 53, she died. And in September of ‘92 Grubb agreed to become president of the company Reckner had bought less than a year earlier.

It’s an old maxim that the only constant in life is change. Grubb will discuss this dynamic – and her tenure the past 10 years as president of J. Reckner Associates, Inc. – at the Forum on March 20.

Based in Montgomeryville, J. Reckner Associates, Inc. specializes in marketing and sensory research. When Grubb left The Vanderveer Group, Fort Washington, Reckner’s firm had five full-time and 40 part-time employees. Now those numbers are 100 and 300, respectively.

“There were no contingency plans if anything happened to her,” says Grubb. “She didn’t live long enough to resolve all the financial issues after purchasing the company, which was still in the start-up phase.” If hiring Grubb hadn’t been successful, the company could have folded, leaving the four Reckner children swimming in red ink.

Soon after Jane Reckner’s death the bank recalled the large loan she had taken out. Two to three years of financial turmoil followed. Finally, in 1995 the firm turned a profit.

“We raised our babies together and became best friends,” remembers Grubb. Two of those children, coincidentally, were named Peter – one Reckner, one Grubb. Both are now involved in the family business. Peter Reckner is information technology specialist; Peter Grubb is operations manager.



**Frances Grubb**  
President  
J. Reckner Associates  
Montgomeryville, PA

# Scenes from Our November 21, 2002, Family Business Forum

## The Secret: Tools and Choices for the Leaders of Today and Tomorrow

Walter Sutton, Seattle, WA



**Walter Sutton** shares his secret – a collection of tools to empower executives in both their work and their life. Sutton's practical presentation was rooted in his own personal and business stories.



**James Clements,**  
U-th Fitness, Sellersville.

**Dave Cornelison,**  
M&C Specialties  
Company,  
Southampton, PA,  
shares how TEC's  
Key Executive  
Program has been  
helpful to him as a  
key non-family  
executive in a  
family-owned  
business.



**Charles Nunan,**  
Serv-Pro of  
Delaware Valley,  
Toughkenamon.



**Duval Denlinger,** Heacock Lumber,  
Plumsteaville, and **Glen Nemath,**  
Nemath Construction, Inc., Lansdale.

### Member Comments About the November Forum

Walt Sutton's real life experiences hit home with me. His business life trials were credible and very educational. I liked the mix of Walt's business and personal experiences that shaped the overall direction of his life. I loved every minute of it!

**Mark Berlinger,** ASI Technologies, Horsham

Walt was very direct. I felt he was speaking directly to me and addressing my issues. A very worthwhile investment of my time!

**Phil Herman, Jr.,** PH Tool, New Britain



(Left to right) **William Covey, Jr.,** and **Mabel Covey,**  
**Sharon Griffith,** **Marjorie** and **William Covey, Sr.,**  
Hair Systems, Inc., Englishtown, New Jersey.



**Robert Boyd,**  
Boyd Machine  
Company, Inc.,  
Quakertown.



(Left to right)  
**Brad, Becka** and **Gerald Meyers,**  
Meyers Restaurant, Quakertown.

### "Best Practices Awards" at November 21 Forum

As part of our Forum's 10th Anniversary Celebration, we presented seven member firms with "Best Practices" awards. Congratulations to the following firms!

(Not pictured:)

Management Succession Award:  
**Sealstrip Corporation, Boyertown**

Ownership Succession Award:  
**L. D. Davis Industries, Huntingdon Valley**



Strategic Business Award:  
**Worthington Associates, Bristol**



Shareholder Development Award:  
**M&C Specialties Company, Southampton**



Family Meetings/Policies Award:  
**Laboratory Testing, Inc., Hatfield**



Family Business Education Award:  
**Landis Supermarket, Inc., Telford**



Board of Directors Award:  
**Ateeco, Inc., Shenandoah**

### Welcome to NEW Forum Members



**Diane Kropf**  
Kropf Construction, Inc.  
Harleysville



**Debby, Deirdre, and Ted Flint**  
Polymeric Systems, Inc.  
Phoenixville

We also welcome (not pictured) ...

**Connell Funeral Home, Inc., Bethlehem**

**Keystone Custom Homes, Inc., Lancaster**

### News & Notes from Our Director

As we begin our second decade of service to business families, I'm looking forward to the launch of our **2003 Forum Program**. We developed this year's program in direct response to the feedback received from our annual survey ... thank you! The program features renowned business experts and best practices of successful family firms which promise to bring value to all family members and key executives. Please mark your calendars now ... and spread the word! Invite other business families to learn along with us. One comment we often hear from new members: "I wish we knew about your programs and services earlier!"

In addition to these quarterly Forum programs, take advantage of the many **other benefits your membership offers** (highlighted on page 3).

We're planning a variety of other programs and services of interest to business families, including our first **Executive Marriage Valentine's Dinner**. We're also eager to introduce our **Next-Generation Assessment Service** following the Forum on March 20 (see *President's Corner*, page 4). Please continue to share your ideas so we can better serve you.

I look forward to seeing you on March 20!



**Sally Derstine**  
Forum Director

### Unable to Attend the November 21, 2002, Forum?

\_\_\_\_ Please send me the audio tapes (set of 2) and booklet from the November Forum featuring Walter Sutton: "The Secret: Tools and Choices for the Leaders of Today and Tomorrow." (\$20)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please add 6% sales tax and \$3 shipping to the total and make your check payable to Delaware Valley Family Business Center, LLC, 1011 Cathill Road, Sellersville, PA 18960, (215) 723-8413.

## What Do YOU Need from a Marketing and Creative Services Consultant?

by Pat and Peg Walsh, The Walsh Group

Since partnering with the Family Business Forum last spring, we have valued the exceptional Forum programs and meeting some of you at the events. Now it's our turn to contribute. In 2003, we want to have a positive impact on the way YOU do business. We have two ideas:

1. **"Executive Marketing Brainstorming" session** with your family business. We will meet with your team for an hour or so and facilitate a brainstorming session on the topic of your choice. Attendees will be sent a summary of the session.

We've asked current clients what they like most about our company?

The answer: "You LISTEN". We have an "Ask First" marketing philosophy that focuses on making sure we ask our client's customers what THEY need and want before we start any program.

Our strength in Business-to-Business marketing helps us understand manufacturing and distribution communications, with input on everything from a sales presentation or a tradeshow booth to password-protected areas on a Web site and proper use of trademarks.

2. **Workshops.** Would you find value in any of the following workshops?

- Marketing measurements
- Competitive "positioning"
- Budgeting and implementing a marketing plan
- Web marketing

In response to member feedback over the past decade, *marketing and sales* has consistently rated in the top 5% on our member surveys. So when one of our members, Dave Thompson, President of Laminators, nominated **The Walsh Group** as a Forum Partner, we took it seriously. Please take a minute to read Laminator's experience with The Walsh Group (*see box on left*).



Peg and Pat Walsh have been partners in marriage and in business for over 20 years. Their team at The Walsh Group—a comprehensive marketing communications strategy company—includes experienced professionals in Account Service, Marketing, Creative and Technical Support.

**Forum membership now offers you a complimentary "Executive Marketing Brainstorming" session with Pat and Peg Walsh.** Call Sally Derstine today at (215) 723-8413 to schedule!

"The Walsh Group helped us double our business over the last eight years. But the best indicator is what our business is doing in a down economic cycle. We have grown our sales every year since we started to work with The Walsh Group! They provide very strong marketing input on strategic branding and promotions to support sales goals. From strategic consulting, meeting facilitation, web, and literature concept and design, sales and customer service platform research and implementation (Goldmine), public relations, press releases, and general problem solving—they have the staff whose expertise encompasses years of business experience that they deliver with a practical flare. The synergy and chemistry has been right since the first day they came to help us design an ad."



David Thompson, Jr., and David Thompson, Sr. Laminators, Inc., Hatfield

If you can enlighten us as to what YOU need, we'll develop a program to fit. E-mail us with your interests: [Pat@thewalshgroup.com](mailto:Pat@thewalshgroup.com), or call (215) 491-3448.

### Welcome to Our NEW Forum Partners...



**Mario Vicari**  
Kreischer Miller & Co.  
*One of the largest regional certified public accounting and business advisory firms serving family-owned businesses in the Delaware Valley*



**Sam, Katie and Mike Iorio**  
Dale Carnegie

*Is the performance of your people in line with your company's strategy? Strengthen your people, and create successful organizations.*



## How Can Family Business Forum Membership Help MY Business Family Thrive?

1. **Quarterly Forum Meetings.** Learn from successful business families and experienced family business advisors. **Member companies receive one FREE registration to EACH Forum.**

2. **Policy Handbook for Business Families.** A practical, how-to handbook designed to educate and help business families meet together to develop their OWN family business policies and plans. **Members receive new Handbook inserts at each meeting!**

3. **Introduction to the Family Meeting Process.** An **individual** meeting with your family to introduce the family meeting process, how to use the **Policy Handbook** and other resources.

**NEW!** 4. **Learning Labs.** Unique opportunities to focus on specific issues in a smaller learning environment, i.e., Next-Generation, Leading Generation, Women in Family Business, Key Non-Family Managers, Spouses of CEOs.



5. **Family Business magazine annual subscription.** Written exclusively for owners and managers of family companies focusing on the tough issues virtually all business families must face (\$95 value).

6. **Get instant answers** to almost 100 family business topics through an exclusive on-line library housing hundreds of articles ([www.dvfambus.com](http://www.dvfambus.com)).

7. **Estate Planning Fire Drill.** A quick, concise process designed to identify and resolve problems associated with your untimely death, culminating in a valuable written report (\$500 value).



8. **Management Development Review with CEO.** **NEW!** Is the performance of your people in line with your company's strategy? A one-hour consultation to identify your organization's strengths and determine opportunities for improvement.

9. **Philanthropy Review.** A quick review to determine if your legacy plan adequately reflects your values and desires.

10. **Executive Marketing Brainstorming** session with Pat and Peg Walsh, The Walsh Group. Group,

11. **2002 Membership Directory**, which facilitates member-to-member learning.



### WHAT is the Family Business Forum?

An **association of about 90 business families** which meets quarterly for educational seminars featuring both renowned business experts/authors and regional family business success stories.

### Our FAMILY BUSINESS CENTER

Since 1989, our clearly defined process helps families beat the odds through **The Succession Zone**. Our team of experienced consultants, educators, and speakers helps business families: **TALK** about the real issues, **WORK TOGETHER** in teams and **PLAN** for the future.

**Annual Membership Fee.** Thanks to the generous support of our partners, the annual membership fee is \$700. Limited to family firms; subject to review by our Membership Committee. **Membership is on an annual basis.**

## Return this Form to Register for the March 20 Forum

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_



Thursday, March 20, 2003

**Best Practices for the Family and the Business - Dale and Sadie High**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Total Registrations (less one FREE) \_\_\_\_\_ X \$75 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Non-members may attend once as a guest at a \$100 registration fee.*

**NEW MEMBER \$ 700**

Draw check and mail to: Delaware Valley Family Business Center, LLC, 1011 Cathill Rd., Sellersville, PA 18960

Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Cancellations must be made two days prior to event. The registration fee cannot be refunded or waived when cancellations are made after that date or when the registrant does not attend.



**Hamburg, Rubin, Mullin, Maxwell & Lupin** is one of the premier Montgomery County law firms, serving the community for more than 30 years. We have helped hundreds of family businesses with succession planning. Our other areas of specialty include business law, estates, family law, real estate and environmental law, commercial litigation, personal injury, and employment law. For further information, contact **Jonathan Samel** at (215) 661-0400, or visit our website at [www.hrmml.com](http://www.hrmml.com).



**The Quakertown National Bank** is an independent community bank which provides a full range of banking services to business organizations and families. Founded in 1877, QNB has seven offices located in Bucks, Montgomery and Lehigh counties. Our vision is to help our clients achieve their goals by providing a financial relationship built upon exceptional personal service and a sincere interest in their success. For further information, contact **Bob Wieand** at (215) 538-5600, ext. 5611, or visit our website at [www.qnb.com](http://www.qnb.com).



**Mennonite Foundation and MMA Trust Company** are dedicated to helping families make a difference in the world by incorporating their goals and values into their estate planning. We assist families with charitable/noncharitable estate planning and trust administration. Contact **Arlin Lapp** or **Steven Hunsberger** at (800) 332-4141 or **Bill Hartman** at (800) 494-6622.



**Walsh & Nicholson Financial Group**, an independent financial planning firm in Bala Cynwyd, tailors financial plans for your cherished family business to support your current success and keep you competitive for future generations. We focus on the dynamics of your unique family and industry, and work with you to create financial harmony and balance based on your family goals and structure. Contact **Brian Walsh** or **Kevin Nicholson** at (800) 433-5532, or on the web at [www.WNFG.com](http://www.WNFG.com).



**Brown Brothers Harriman**, founded in Philadelphia in 1818, is the oldest and largest financial partnership in America. The firm maintains offices across the U.S. and in the world's major money centers. BBH focuses on substantial, privately held companies, and their owner-managers. We help our business clients particularly in the areas of capital formation, mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, wealth management, and the intergenerational transfer of assets. Contact **Thomas J. Saunders** at (215) 864-1869, or on the web at [www.bbh.com](http://www.bbh.com).



**The Walsh Group** is a team of marketing and creative consultants specializing in marketing plans, web design, logo design, graphics design, e-mail marketing, and web site promotion. Our goal is to make sure our customers benefit from the marketing investments they've made. Please contact **Pat Walsh** at (215) 491-3448 or learn more about us on the web at [www.thewalshgroup.com](http://www.thewalshgroup.com).



**Kreischer Miller & Co.** is one of the largest regional certified public accounting and business advisory firms serving family-owned businesses in the Delaware Valley offering a range of value-added services for privately held businesses and their owners. We help clients in the areas of accounting and auditing, taxation, accounting systems, business valuation, and performance improvement. Our goal is to improve our clients' financial performance and the long-term value of their businesses. Contact **Mario Vicari** at (215) 441-4600 or [mvicari@kmco.com](mailto:mvicari@kmco.com). Visit us on the web at [www.kmco.com](http://www.kmco.com).



A company's success depends upon its people. People with the skills and abilities to make better and faster decisions; to run meetings more effectively; to confidently meet challenging situations; and to perform the impossible, everyday. At **Dale Carnegie**, we coach participants to discover their hidden talents and use their potential so they can deliver top performance. Strengthen your people, build stronger families, and improve the quality of life for everyone. Contact **Katie Iorio**, (610) 783-6500, extension 308, or [katie\\_iorio@dalecarnegie.com](mailto:katie_iorio@dalecarnegie.com).

FORUM  
AFFILIATES



Family  
Business  
Magazine

## The President's Corner ... Henry D. Landes

### Finding, Naming & Claiming Your Mission: How Professional Assessment Can Help



can be downright difficult to "find one's footing" in such a situation.

From the perspective of the senior generation or the parents, things can be just as complicated. More than anything – even more than a profitable business – most want what's best for their children. Yes, there's usually healthy pride in the company and a hope to have offspring carry forward the family tradition. But not at the expense of their children's deepest desires and *their* mission in life.

How does all this get sorted out? Too often, it doesn't. Too often inertia and vaguely understood – but nonetheless powerful – expectations carry the next generation along, like twigs on a stream.

Paul and Pat Frishkoff, in a *Family Business* magazine article titled "Asking the right questions about your future", say, "When facing emotional choices involving the family firm, dig deeply for the true answers."

Those of us who have grown up in a family business know that it is a many-splendored thing, a rose of beauty and power and, yes, sometimes pain.

How one experiences a family business is as varied as human nature itself. It's no exaggeration to say that many people – especially young adults – have a love/hate relationship (and every emotion in between) with the family business they grew up in. It

Questions often asked include:

- **Should I join the family business?**
- **Should I remain in the business and, if so, in my present role or in a new one?**

What's important, say the Frishkoffs, is grappling with the real issues *underlying* the questions at hand by asking such gut-level questions of self-assessment as "Who am I?" ... "What do I want?" ... "What do

**Would you like to learn more about our NEW Next-Generation Assessment Service? Individuals at all levels and stages of the family business are invited to a luncheon following the March 20 Forum!**

I really value in my work?" ... "Where do I feel most at home?" ... "What is my mission in life?"

In other words, start by being real with yourself. Sure these are daunting, even haunting, questions, but as the Frishkoffs assert, "Until you have accurately assessed your own abilities and skills, you are rarely in a position to assess your value to the family business or what would be a suitable role for you to play in it."

To be sure, this is not a once-over-lightly process. It requires thoughtful reflection over a period of time; counsel from family, friends and work colleagues; and the "outside" objective perspective of a professionally conducted assessment.

Drawing on our experience with many business families, we are in the process of developing a Next-Generation Assessment Service, which likely will include:

- **A comprehensive, objective assessment of skills, aptitudes and values.**
- **A clear statement of personal aspirations and goals.**
- **A high level of alignment with family goals, management strategy and ownership vision.**

The Next-Generation Assessment Service is being designed to include the expectations and perceptions of the senior leader(s), a Personal and Career Inventory, and the administration of selected assessment instruments with confidential feedback. Building on this foundation, the next step is the development of a long-term (3 to 10 years) Goals and Aspirations Statement. The final step is the formulation of the first annual Development Plan, which may include a variety of individual and group-based learning activities.

Interested? We would like to invite individuals at all levels and stages of the family business to a luncheon meeting following the March 20 Forum. The purpose: to help us shape the Next-Generation Assessment Service.

To receive a copy of the Frishkoff article titled "Asking the right questions about your future" (*Family Business* magazine, Spring 1993), please call us at (215) 723-8413.

### 2003 Program Schedule – Mark Your Calendars!

#### Thursday, March 20

7:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m., Indian Valley Country Club, Telford, PA  
**Best Practices for the Family and the Business**  
Dale High, Chairman of the Board & President  
High Industries, Inc., Lancaster, PA



#### Thursday, May 8

7:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon, Cedarbrook Country Club, Blue Bell, PA  
**Sales and Marketing for Family Firms**  
Max Carey, Jr., Founder & Chairman  
Corporate Resource Development, Atlanta, GA



#### Wednesday, September 17

7:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m., Location TBA  
**Love, Money and Power:  
The Crossroads of Family Business**  
Dean R. Fowler, Ph.D., CMC, Dean Fowler Associates, Inc., Brookfield, WI



#### Thursday, November 20

7:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m., Location TBA  
**Uncovering the Strategic Idea for Your Family Business**  
Lee Delp, Former CEO, Moyer Packing Company, Souderton, PA



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