

# The Buckeye Beacon

Today & Tomorrow, Buckeye Community Bank is Your Partner for Growth

Vol 4 • Issue 1

**F**or Donald Meuser, one of the true advantages any company can gain in a competitive marketplace is how it treats its clients.

Competitors might be larger or do more volume, but the fact that Cleveland Door Controls treats everyone — big or small — right is a main ingredient in its success. With the company celebrating its 60th year, the results demonstrate Meuser's strategy has worked well.



Vietnam War and moving to the area, Meuser joined Cleveland Door in 1973 as a salesman. Diligent work and making many sacrifices allowed Meuser to purchase the company in 1978. The Veteran-owned Westlake company continues to grow today under his leadership. Its automatic entrance, sliding, revolving and other doors can be found in hundreds of commercial and retail sites, including Cleveland Hopkins International Airport.

By Meuser's side during the past 25 years has been his wife, Debbie, who adds guiding leadership and solid marketing skills.

Meuser joined Buckeye Community Bank after learning the bank shared his commitment to customer service.

"We're old fashioned in the belief that service to the client is essential,"

said Meuser, who mentioned a "long and fantastic" working relationship with both Buckeye President and CEO Bruce E. Stevens and Senior Vice President and Commercial Lending Officer Susan M. Grachanin.

"Buckeye believes this too and it shows by how they listen and really try to understand your business needs and solve your problem, no matter the size of your account."

"A hallmark of Buckeye Community Bank is its relationships with clients," said Stevens. "Buckeye, unlike other institutions, is based here and makes decisions here. We have a greater ability to listen, be personal and professional, and deliver an unmatched level of customer service that helps us serve as a partner to our clients."



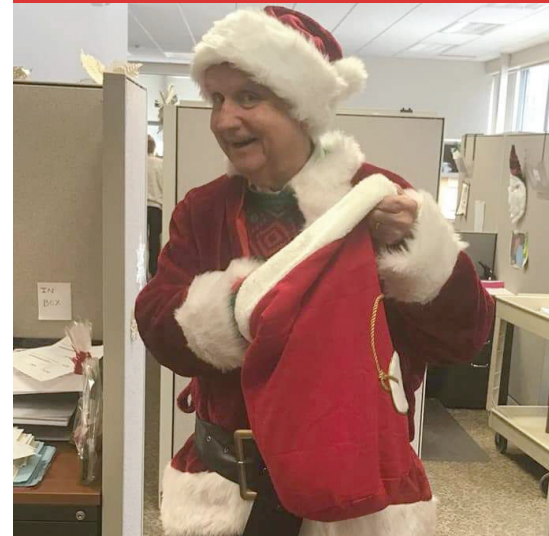
"Every day we focus on being incredibly service-oriented," said Meuser. "We treat every customer like they are the only one. It's a simple concept that has been lost for many."

"What makes Cleveland Door great is the team we have here," Meuser added. "Everyone steps up and goes the extra mile to keep our customers happy."

Meuser learned the value of treating people right at a young age. As a kid growing up in Pittsburgh, he learned the value of a dollar and hard work as his family operated an auto service station.

After serving in the U.S. Army during the

## SHARE THE SPIRIT



Buckeye Community Bank teamed up with Neighborhood Alliance in December to support "Christmas is Caring." With generous participation from the bank's employees, more than 50 stockings were filled meaning that every child at the shelter received their own stocking. Among the collected items were small toys, toothbrushes and toothpaste, coloring books, crafts kits, candy and soaps. Since the bank's team exceeded its initial goal of filling 35 stockings, Buckeye President and CEO Bruce Stevens dressed up as Santa Claus and passed out candy canes to the staff.





## A Letter from the President

Bruce E. Stevens  
President

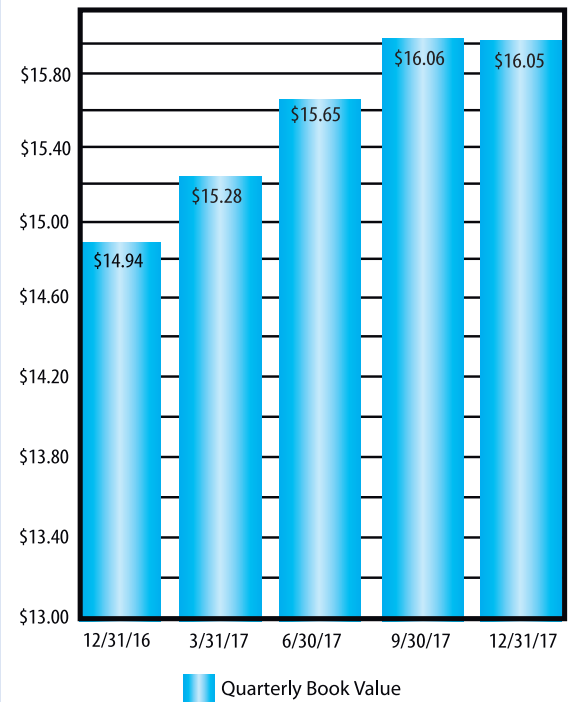
In this issue of the Buckeye Beacon, we acknowledge the impact of Billy Rowland. In addition to founding the bank, Billy and the founding board members instilled the element of hard work along with his belief that “To build real value in a person and a business, it is the building of character and integrity to go on and really grow.” The value proposition of our bank remains a client-focused business serviced by people of character and integrity. The interests of clients, community and shareholders are aligned. The success of the bank requires a commitment to that covenant.

Through the adherence to these principles, the bank is honored to be of service to Don Meuser and Cleveland Door Controls, Inc. The culture and approach of the bank was a significant contributor to Don’s primary account officer Susan Grachanin’s decision to join Buckeye Community Bank. The bank targets individuals and companies who share our value approach, such as Susan and Don.

As we enter our 19th year of existence, we enter a period of transitioning key directors and employees. In previous editions of the Buckeye Beacon, we announced the retirements of key individuals along with additions of key new staff and directors. All the moves have been well planned and communicated to Buckeye’s stakeholders. There will be no loss of momentum. The reason there will be continued positive results for the bank will be in large part to the principles of its founding. We have an obligation to carry on the spirit of a life well lived of the founder Billy Rowland.

The recently passed tax reform of 2017 had an impact on certain asset valuations at year end but, more importantly, the lower corporate tax rate will result in a permanently higher base translating to growth of book value and earnings per share. As measured by a specific financial matrix, we remain on a path to be a high performing bank. The execution of our value proposition produces positive results for our shareholders. Buckeye’s earnings per share decreased from \$1.40 in the fourth quarter of 2016 to \$1.21 in the current fourth quarter due to the tax rate change which equated to \$0.28 per share. The book value per share went from \$14.94 to \$16.05 for an increase of 7.43%.

## FINANCIAL POSITION



Buckeye Bancshares, Inc. stock may be available for sale in the near future.

If you are interested, please contact Bruce Stevens at 440-233-8806 or [bestevens@buckeyebank.com](mailto:bestevens@buckeyebank.com).

This is the increase in book value of Buckeye Bancshares, Inc. Due to the limited availability and inactive market of any community bank stock, market value may differ. This is a reflection of past performance of Buckeye Bancshares, Inc. and should not be considered a projection of future performance. Funds held in corporate stock are not insured by the FDIC or any other government agency. Investments involve varying degrees of risk, including loss of principal.





## Remembrance:

### 🌀 BILLY S. ROWLAND 🌀

companies drew attention and acclaim for their success in retail and commercial development, investing, transportation and other fields.

“Buckeye Community Bank lost a visionary leader committed to excellence who also was a great friend,” said Buckeye President and CEO Bruce Stevens. “Lorain County lost a devoted pillar of the community who generously supported numerous causes and individuals over the years. He was a brilliant businessman and a completely decent, caring man.”

In 1998, Rowland led a group of community business leaders in the task of creating Buckeye Community Bank to provide the resources needed to fuel the local economy. Several years later during an interview, Rowland said “We (Buckeye) take care of the small business people – that’s just what we do, that’s just what we are. We are here to stay. I think we’ve made a tremendous impact on this market area.”

A life-long resident of Lorain County, Rowland was born during the Great Depression. He once said that his father’s words had a tremendous impact on the person, and professional, he became. “He told me if you could do two days’ worth of work every day, you’d get ahead quicker,” Rowland said with a smile.

After serving four years in the U.S. Air Force following high school, he began his career at B.F. Goodrich. In 1957, he quit his

job and took a risk in his first residential project. At the time, he had a small growing family at home.

“You must have a hard work ethic, honesty and integrity in character and business practices,” Rowland once said. “To build real value in a person and a business, it is the building of character and integrity to go on and really grow. It takes time and risk ... but there is risk in everything we do.”

To become a successful entrepreneur, according to Rowland, “you take the knowledge and the skills you’ve learned ...and keep multiplying those and using sound business and financial principles and there is no limit to what a person can do from an entrepreneurial spirit.”

Throughout his life, Rowland gave of his time and talents to numerous organizations, including serving as chair of the Echoing Hills Foundation, which serves a mission to provide quality of life for mentally challenged and disabled individuals. Additionally, he served the Y.M.C.A. of Lorain, City of Lorain Planning Commission, City of Lorain Board of Appeals, Lorain Metropolitan Housing Authority, Lorain County Community College Board of Trustees, Salvation Army, Lorain County Community College Foundation, Lorain County Airport Authority, Lorain Rotary Club, Amherst Hospital Board, and Community Foundation of Lorain County.

The region lost a titan in January when local entrepreneur and philanthropist Billy S. Rowland, who led the founding of Buckeye Community Bank, died after a battle with Alzheimer’s Disease.

Rowland, who was 86 at the time of his death, was one of Lorain County’s most influential figures in recent history. Starting from humble beginnings, his

## Using Your Home to Get the Cash You Need

Spring is just around the corner. Are you ready? Do your plans include looking to spruce up your home, buying a new car or getting ready to send a young adult to college in the fall? If so, Buckeye Community Bank’s Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC) offers a solution that is right for you.

By using the equity you have built up in your home, the Buckeye HELOC is flexible and can be used when paying for a significant expense or if you merely need quick access to funds. The Buckeye HELOC

gives you the ability to tap your home’s value in just the amount you need and withdraw when you need it. With several payment options, you choose how you want to pay with options including interest-only payments or combined interest and principal payments. The HELOC features a variable interest rate.

If you prefer to have a one-time loan for a specific purchase, a Buckeye Second Mortgage Loan may be the option. By using the equity in your home, a Buckeye loan

provides a consistent monthly payment with either a fixed or a variable interest rate.

The interest you pay on either one of the Buckeye options may be tax deductible. Contact your accountant or tax preparer for complete details.

The Buckeye professionals can guide you through the options that make sense for you. Call us at 440-233-8800 for more information on accessing your home’s equity.



# Buckeye

COMMUNITY BANK

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## The Circle of Digital Trust

Even as the business world moves toward digital platforms, an overwhelming majority of people still feel more comfortable sharing their personal data in face-to-face interactions. According to a recent survey conducted by digital commerce company Infosys, nearly 3-out-of-4 consumers are used to the sharing their information online but 95% would prefer to share it face-to-face with companies, retailers and financial institutions.

The study presents an interesting “catch-22” for companies that are striving to make digital buying and promotions more personalized at a time when consumer seem still to be very hesitant to provide information.

For all organizations, great customer relationships in the physical and digital worlds are accomplished by building trust. In addition to being extremely good at what you do, here are a few tips to help you grow your businesses and be successful:

### Deliver Great Service

- When meeting face to face, a warm greeting should welcome your customers

- Regardless of your business type, saying thank you after all transactions goes far
- Ensure that all your employees are trained to treat customers well and solve any problems

### Practice Consistency

- Work on making sure each employee provides the same level of service to all clients
- Using training to ensure the sales team is answering questions with the same information
- Use meaningful measurement to determine whether a product or service is meeting your clients’ needs, rather than shifting gears to try new tactics or initiatives

### Transparency Is Clear

- Customers are smart, so admit a mistake rather than offering mistruths or avoiding fixing an error
- As a leader, show employees what you do and what you expect from them – and make it clear that transparency applies to everyone

- Honestly communicate with your staff and address any questions or misconceptions to avoid others from speculating and gossiping

Best of all, according to a study by Intensions Consulting, when people trust a company, more than 80% of them will be repeat customers and nearly 85% will strongly recommend that their friends and colleagues do business with you.

