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Connellsville Bed & Breakfast crystallizes above La Bohème

The Progress Fund helps entrepreneurs to form second new business

Connellsville, PA – August 31, 2009 – For John and Lucy King, bringing one business to Connellsville isn't enough. The owners of La Bohème, an importer of Czech crystal, are busy working on the Connellsville Bed & Breakfast, which promises to combine elegance, adventure and history.

The Connellsville Bed & Breakfast will be located above La Bohème, in a century-old European-style building with original tin ceilings and restored arch windows. It will have four guest rooms, each honoring one of the ethnic groups that settled the area.

The goal is to give guests "a flavor of the history of the town, because there's a lot of history here," says Lucy. Sometimes guests will literally get a taste of history with ethnic-themed breakfasts.

The Kings moved the seven-year-old La Bohème to Connellsville in May. "It's a town that has a lot of potential," Lucy says. "The people are very friendly here."

Another benefit of their site, at 316 West Crawford Ave., is its proximity to the Great Allegheny Passage, just a block away. That's what led the Kings to add the Connellsville Bed & Breakfast to their plans.

They got business planning help from Duquesne University's Small Business Development Center. For financing, they turned to The Progress Fund, whose Trail Town Program helps entrepreneurs and communities to cater to cyclists and hikers.

The Progress Fund loaned the Kings \$65,000, and arranged a \$100,000 loan from the state First Industries Tourism Program.

The Connellsville Bed & Breakfast will feature rooms with private baths, and one deluxe suite with a bedroom fireplace, sitting room, and Jacuzzi. One guest room will have a private

balcony. Guests will share a kitchen, a living room with a television, a dining area with a fireplace, and a porch. A locked garage will be available for bikes and other equipment. The Kings will create four full-time jobs, but hope that's just the start of their impact on the area. "What I'm hoping that the B & B will do is attract people to find the value of Connellsville," says Lucy. She'll direct guests to attractions like the Coal and Coke Heritage Center, Frank Lloyd Wright houses, historical train rides, skiing and other outdoor activities. For directions or interviews, call Lucy King at (724) 628-4808 or e-mail to Lucia602010@yahoo.com.

For further information on The Progress Fund, call (724) 216-9160, or visit www.progressfund.org.

The Progress Fund is a vigorous non-profit loan fund that creates jobs and improves communities by providing entrepreneurial coaching and capital to small businesses in the travel & tourism industry. The Progress Fund serves 39 counties in Pennsylvania, Appalachian Ohio and West Virginia. The Progress Fund was founded in 1997, and has made 275 loans totaling more than \$28.8 million to 173 enterprises, creating or preserving more than 2,047 jobs.

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