25 and 250: Embassy Bank and America Celebrate Landmark Anniversaries

By Bryn E. Keeney, Public Relations Coordinator

Two milestones, connected by shared values. As America prepares to celebrate its 250th anniversary, the Lehigh Valley reflects on the principles that have shaped both the nation and the community itself – independence, responsibility and a commitment to one another. On the ArtsQuest Campus at SteelStacks, those values are brought to life through gatherings and traditions that invite neighbors to come together, reflect and celebrate.

This year also marks a significant local milestone: Embassy Bank's 25th anniversary. Founded with a commitment to independence and community-first banking, Embassy Bank has spent the past quarter century growing alongside the people and businesses it serves. That dedication is reflected in the bank's long-standing role as title sponsor of the Lehigh Valley's Patriotic Holiday celebrations at the ArtsQuest Campus at SteelStacks including Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Patriot Day and Veterans Day – a role it has proudly held since 2011.

"When we first became the title sponsor in 2011, we saw the holidays as more than events," said David M. Lobach, Chairman, President and CEO of Embassy Bank for the Lehigh Valley. "They were moments for the Lehigh Valley to pause, come together and reflect on what unites us as Americans and as neighbors.

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Over time, that belief only strengthened. Supporting these holidays is our way of honoring veterans, celebrating freedom and investing in traditions that have become part of the Valley's identity and Embassy culture."

As America marks 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence and Embassy Bank celebrates 25 years of service, both anniversaries underscore a shared foundation rooted in independence, courage and a deep responsibility to community. For Embassy Bank, those ideals are not just historical references, but guiding principles that shape how it serves the Lehigh Valley each day.

Embassy Bank's support of the full series of Patriotic Holiday celebrations at the ArtsQuest Campus at SteelStacks demonstrates its dedication to events that bring community together around remembrance, gratitude and shared tradition.

"Patriotism isn't something we put on display once a year," stated Lobach. "It's something we live every day. It lives in our veterans who served and came home to continue serving their neighbors. It lives in the families who carry the weight of sacrifice quietly and proudly. It lives in the first responders, workers and volunteers who show up without expecting recognition."

This devotion to the Patriotic Holiday celebration has been championed by its Board of Directors including the late Frank Banko, who strongly believed in community engagement. The bank's culture was also shaped by founding chairman Elmer Gates, a Korean War veteran whose service instilled a deep respect for those who have served in uniform and the families who support them.

Like the nation itself, Embassy Bank was founded on the belief that local voices matter. Established in 2001, the bank set out to create a financial institution grounded in independence, local leadership and personalized service. Over the past 25 years, this approach has allowed Embassy Bank to grow alongside the families, entrepreneurs and leaders who place their trust in the organization.

"In the Lehigh Valley, people value relationships," Lobach said. "They want to know who they're

Dave Lobach & Elmer Gates

banking with and that the people on the other side of the desk genuinely care. We've grown by showing up for our customers and our community, listening, helping and doing what's right even when it's not the easiest option."

On campus, the impact of their support comes alive as families return each year to see the "Hometown Heroes" banners honoring those who served. Families, neighbors and friends gather, often across generations, to celebrate courage and sacrifice. These moments serve as a reminder of the pride, service and spirit that define the Lehigh Valley.

As Embassy Bank looks toward the future, its leadership remains focused on continuing the traditions and values that have defined both the institution and the region it serves. The bank plans to continue supporting events, programs and initiatives that foster civic pride, strengthen local businesses and honor those who have dedicated their lives to service.

Celebrating America's 250th anniversary alongside Embassy Bank's 25th anniversary highlights a shared legacy built on independence, courage and trust. While one milestone reflects the birth of a nation and the other marks the growth of a hometown bank, both serve as reminders that lasting success is built through collaboration and a belief in something greater than oneself.

"Celebrating these milestones together is very special," said Lobach. "Two hundred fifty years ago, our Founding Fathers signed the Declaration of Independence. It was a bold, brave move that set our country on a path of freedom and opportunity. Twenty-five years ago, Embassy Bank was inspired by that same spirit, starting out with a simple goal: to serve our neighbors, help dreams come true and be a proud part of this community. Together, we're celebrating two legacies of independence, courage and community. Proving that the spirit that built this nation continues to thrive right here in the Lehigh Valley."

As the Lehigh Valley joins the nation in commemorating this historic moment, Embassy Bank's story stands as an example of how local institutions can help preserve traditions, strengthen neighborhoods and ensure the values that shaped the past continue to guide the future.