

BUSINESS PROFILE

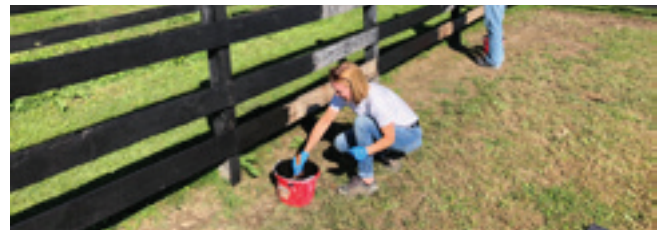


MetzWood Insurance

11 Central Sq. | Chatham
5 Chatham St. | Kinderhook



Supporting the Community 52 Weeks a Year



Jonathan Ment
For Columbia-Greene Media

“A policy of doing more” is far more than a slogan to the partners at MetzWood Insurance. It’s a way of life. They know that when their neighbors do well, everyone benefits.

This helps explain why community involvement above and beyond insurance is ingrained in the culture here. The story of Matthew Wood’s family does too.

“Community is very much at the center of what we do,” says Wood, now company president, whose great-grandfather George Metz founded the firm in 1913.

Metz also donated Chatham’s Jones Avenue tennis court for community use, in a spirit of giving that has continued ever since.

Wood’s grandfather, Marcus, joined the firm after serving in World War II where he met and married his grandmother - who served in the women’s auxiliary.

Wood’s father, Scott, also honed his sense of community in the Army before joining the firm following a cross-country bicycle ride from San Francisco to Chatham in 1976.

“We’re very much a community-based busi-

ness from the companies we support through proper insurance and risk management to those we support through donations and volunteerism,” says Wood, adding “We’re positively aligned and make community involvement part of what we do as a community-based organization.”

Every six months MetzWood selects a not-for-profit organization to support through its “Help Our Community” referral program. MetzWood donates \$10 for every program who calls to review their insurance needs, “whether we sell a policy or not,” says Wood. The company even donates a dollar for each new “Like” on their Facebook page.

The team at MetzWood also gives of itself through a multitude of independent volunteer efforts and as a whole through company volunteer days. One recent outing was the Friday afternoon in October when the staff helped paint fences and handle other tasks at Equine Advocates, the referral program recipient for the second half of 2018.

“It was a very good day,” says Wood.

“People who have been aware of the referral program, if they’re a non-profit organization, will ask to be considered,” he says, adding, “As the current recipient is about to expire we

choose the next one going forward.”

Wood says the people at those organizations appreciate the support, while MetzWood’s clients and customers appreciate that dollars spent on insurance programs go back into the community “almost to the effect of a community dividend.”

“When you spend your insurance dollars with a big company with no local footprint those dollars are gone,” he says, adding, “Throughout the year we support a lot of charity events for nonprofits as they come up looking for ... sponsorships, donations or for auction items.”

“We try to take a broad approach to our philanthropy. There are a lot of worthy organizations locally,” he says, adding, “Local hospitals, arts organizations, childhood sports, military and veterans groups, educational opportunities from the local community college to libraries and more all benefit.”

And the giving doesn’t stop there. Some years ago the staff at MetzWood even made the decision to forgo their annual holiday parties in favor of supporting local food pantries. While the annual event eventually returned, the food pantries are now also regular beneficiaries of the company’s support.

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