

BUSINESS

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GRETCHEN
METZ

**College renters
shouldn't forget
the insurance**

Welcome back, college students.

If there isn't enough stress already, I'm about to add some more.

Living off campus may be cool but it means you no longer have the protection of your parents' homeowners

This business wants you to walk all over them

Miller Flooring moves to Chester County from nearby Delaware

By BRIAN MCCULLOUGH
Staff Writer

WEST GOSHEN - If you're a gym rat and live in this area, chances are you've walked all over Bill and Rich Miller's handiwork.

If not, you've probably seen it on TV.

Bill Miller has been installing floors, tracks and artificial turf for 20 years, recently moving Miller Flooring from Clifton Heights in Delaware

County to the outskirts of West Chester.

Brother Rich joined the company four years ago after the credit card company he worked for, MBNA, was bought by Bank of America, and expanded Miller into the residential arena.

On the sports side of the business, Miller Flooring has installed floors for the likes of Penn State, Immaculata, Millersville, the University of Maryland and The Naval

Academy at the college level. On the high school level, Cardinal O'Hara and the Haverford School have floors from Miller, which also helped Unionville High School recover from a recent fire in its gym. The West Chester YMCA, ACAC in West Goshen, St. Simon and Jude, Boathouse Row and the Philadelphia Racquet Club also sport Miller floors.



Staff photo by Larry McDewitt

From left, Rick and Bill Miller stand in a display room for Mondoturf at the Miller Flooring offices in West Goshen.

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Walk

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It also is an authorized dealer of Mondo, which has provided the tracks for every Summer Olympics since 1976

The company's surprisingly roomy headquarters include a gymnasium that serves to demonstrate the company's basketball and volleyball offerings - Miller provides the extras like bleachers and scoreboards as well as flooring.

The headquarters also has an indoor turf field that serves as a second home for Parisi Speed School franchise owner Eric Mitchell, who runs the school to improve athletic ability from the United Sports Training Center in West Bradford.

"We're the number one training center for the NFL," Mitchell said of Parisi, which has 49 franchises across the country. "It's not just speed and agility skills we're interested in, but also self confidence and injury prevention."

The emphasis on sports on the commercial side comes naturally to the Millers.

Bill Miller, 46, played on the Widener University football team that won the NCAA D-III championship in 1981 and was also an All American javelin thrower.

His interest in flooring also came while attending the university.

"I was married and had a child and a (flooring company) was looking for helpers," he recalled. "I wanted to go into the FBI originally ... You never know what way your



Staff photo by Larry McDevitt

Rick Miller, left, and Bill Miller stand in the retail showroom of Miller Flooring in West Goshen.

path is going to go."

Bill Miller said the commercial flooring gave him a way to keep his hand in sports while satisfying his artistic side.

"The artwork on the gym floors is really something," he said.

The passion has paid off. The business has grown from humble beginnings in Bill Miller's basement - "we used

to have to hand the equipment out through the window" - to the new headquarters. Revenue has followed, going from \$100,000 a year when the company started in 1989 to \$10 million last year.

Bringing in the residential component and moving to West Chester was a natural fit, Bill Miller said, since many of the commercial flooring customers live in the

area. It also didn't hurt that both Millers now live in Birmingham Township.

"This is an ideal location," said Rich Miller, 37, of the headquarters in a business park off of Lincoln Avenue. "Everybody knows West Chester. It's very accessible."

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