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## Better shredder wins Business Excellence Award

*By Craig Wolf  
Poughkeepsie Journal*

It was a very simple business plan that led to creating HV Shred.

There was no local document-shredding company, but there was a growing need for the service.

Judith Papo said the idea came from her husband, Jeff, whose Tuminaro Pharmacy in Hopewell Junction tried to find a way to outsource the chore of grinding up confidential data.

"He got a quote," she said. "He wasn't happy about the idea that they were coming from out of town. It seemed really expensive."

So, the Papos and his father, Fran, began to study what the market would be like and how they could serve it. They turned entrepreneur in 2007.

Hudson Valley Shred was born and a bit of enterprise has been kept within the local economy.

The company has been given the Business Excellence Award in the entrepreneur category by the Dutchess County Economic Development Corp. Winners will be feted at an awards event Oct. 18.

Papo believes that one leg under the company's success is that "buy local" is a genuine motivation .

"There is so much support for local businesses," she said. "People in this area look for that."

The same reality helped the pharmacy business, too.

"He opened up his door and people really wanted to patronize the pharmacy because they were local. They were run by the owners."

Despite that, the world of business has become one in which chains are common, both in the drugstore business and in the shredding game. Judith Papo's outfit has competition from big companies such as Iron Mountain and Shred-its.

Papo said her service has been able to take some clients away from bigger companies, but the main stimulus for growth has been the rise in rules affecting firms that deal with confidential personal data.

These include lawyers, doctors, pharmacies, accountants, community banks and the like.

Other clients include manufacturers and other businesses that need occasional shredding.

HV Shred's territory covers Dutchess, Ulster, Orange, Putnam, Westchester and Columbia counties and would go farther if analysis proved that it's cost-effective. Distance is a factor in any business that depends on a truck covering a route, however.

"We're all in the business of trying to have dense routes," she said.

The shredding deal starts with determining whether the service needs to be regular or occasional. If regular, a locked bin is provided that the client fills until the truck comes and does the grinding, usually in the customer's parking lot.

The costs work out to between 10 and 20 cents a pound, but can vary depending on volume and frequency.

What happens to the mass of tiny strips that the shredding produces? That's recycled, Papo said, usually through companies in Newburgh and Peekskill that pack and bale it and sell it to mills that turn it into new products.

"It does get a second life," Papo said.

Donna Morrissey, administrator at the McCabe & Mack law firm in the City of Poughkeepsie, remembers the days before 2008 when they hired HV Shred.

"We did it ourselves," she said. "It was massive."

The annual chore would be "hours and hours and days of work," she said. They still have the big document shredder in the office and use it "once in a blue moon," but the heavy work is left to HV Shred.

"It's now a regular process because of all the government laws," Morrissey said.

And, she likes the fact that it's a local company.

"It makes 100 percent sense. As we always say, local first," Morrissey said.

Sherry Thomaselli, administrator at the accounting firm of Vanacore, DeBenedictus, DiGiovanni & Weddell, said: "I looked at different shredding companies. I learned how committed she was to ensuring how things were done properly and how she started her business ... and how essential confidentiality was to them; I knew we had found the right company."

The verifiability of a truck-based service was what impressed P.J. Walker, president and CEO of Bridgeway Federal Credit Union, based in the Town of Poughkeepsie.

"We had another company," Walker said.

"They would come and pick it up and go we didn't know where. You never knew exactly what was happening to what you wanted shredded."

But with the HV Shred truck grinding away in the parking lot, "it was a guarantee that your items were getting destroyed."

## Additional Facts

If you go

What: The Business Excellence Awards Event

When: 5-9 p.m. Oct. 18

Where: The Grandview, 176 Rinaldi Blvd., Poughkeepsie

Reservations: Required, \$135 per person; \$1,200 for table of 10

Information: Call Mary Kay Vrba at 845-463-4000; email [mkv@dutchesstourism.com](mailto:mkv@dutchesstourism.com)

