

## Local cinematographer ready to capture your venture

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**BEDFORD CINEMATOGRAPHER** Rachel Oaks remembers “once upon a time, when I was an awkward middle schooler, my dad let me borrow the family Sony Handycam, and that’s when my love for film and video began.”

She joined the Altoona High School broadcasting crew.

“I thought I wanted to be a news broadcaster,” Rachel says.

After studying film and video at Pennsylvania State University, she interned at WTAJ and thought that was what she wanted to do until the Beltway Sniper story broke.

“They told me I could photograph blood, but only so much,” Rachel says. “Then they told me that if I filmed bodies, the bodies were to be covered. I soon realized that is not what I wanted to do. I did not want to be an ambulance chaser.”

Leaving the broadcasting field, she took a job in sales, which paid the bills but was not her passion. “I wanted to bring value, entertainment and joy to people’s lives,” she says. “I went back to school and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in cinematography from Full Sail University. I was valedictorian of my class.”

The enterprise, Sunny Oaks Studios, got off the ground in January 2020.

“Not a good year to start a business,” she says, laughing, “but maybe it was because businesses and industries were looking for ways to sell their trades or products without being face-to-face.”

Her first jobs centered on real estate. “I filmed the high-end homes and my husband, Brad, who is a Part 107 certified drone pilot, did the aerial shots,” she says. “Our aim was to specialize in telling stories and in



**PICTURE PERFECT:** Cinematographer Rachel Oaks sits at her desk at Sunny Oaks Studios, the business she opened in 2020.



**PURSUIING HER PASSION:** Rachel Oaks is passionate about helping small businesses market their products and services. One of her clients is this logging operation, a member of Bedford REC.



**PARTNERS:** Brad Oaks, Rachel’s husband, is a certified drone pilot and took this photo of the swimming pool at the Longer Vue Golf Club in Verona.

helping companies with their video marketing strategies and social media platforms.”

The Oaks team soon expanded. One job was at a golf club in Pittsburgh. Stormy weather, which downed trees and brought dark clouds, interfered with the planned video shoot. “We had to wait until the next week, when we were rewarded with a beautiful blue-sky, puffy-cloud day,” Rachel remembers.

The “coolest” job, she says, was at Fritz Logging, where she rode in a logging truck while filming. Rachel says she loves finding the story to tell. Sunny Oaks Studios also films weddings, anniversaries and even first-birthday parties. Whenever a story needs to be told, she is there to do it. Most recently, she filmed the awards ceremony at the Bedford Chamber of Commerce’s annual banquet.



**SMALL-BUSINESS HELP:** Another one of Rachel Oaks’s clients sells essential oils.

Her husband’s expertise and drone license is a great benefit since some jobs call for aerial photography. Brad currently works full time at Areox, where he is vice president of products and infrastructure.

“Our aim is to specialize in telling your stories and helping with your video marketing journey every step of the way,” Rachel says. “Whether it’s a website, a product or some special

occasion, we want to capture that special moment.”

To date, Sunny Oaks Studios has been marketed by word of mouth. “We get one satisfied person telling another,” she says. For more information, go to [Sunnyoaksstudios.com](http://Sunnyoaksstudios.com) or look for the business on Facebook.

Rachel and Brad are also kept busy with their two children, Elise, 12, and Graham, 9. ☺