

# The Business News

May 2005

A Monthly Publication of the Jersey County Business Association

Jerseyville, Illinois

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## THE BEAR FACTS

A Message from Larry Bear, Chairperson

In the 1976 movie, Network, an angry newscaster connects with his audience when he yells, "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not taking it anymore!" Lots of Illinois businesses must feel this way, as our state has taxed and spent its way to 47th place as a business-friendly climate (Forbes.)

The newscaster's tirade seemed to be the voice of the voters in the Illinois Supreme Court District race last fall, too. In an unprecedented campaign, Gordon Magg not only lost the High Court race in every county of the 5th Judicial District, he also lost his seat on the Appellate Court.

That campaign centered on the malpractice crisis in our state. It was a contest between "change" and "business as usual." This judicial battle is going on around the country, and it's a high priority fight for business which eventually pays the tab for run-away liability costs. Fortunately, change has been winning in other states, too. Over the last two years, stiff legal reforms have been passed in Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Texas, South Carolina, and two reform bills sit on the Governor's desk in Georgia.

"Change" won the battle here last November, but now seems to be losing the war. State Rep. Jim Watson joined a crowd of JCBA members for breakfast at Lauren Abigail's last Monday. He did an excellent job discussing the State's mismanagement of our economy and had some good remedies. But, he also reluctantly brought the news that the voters still haven't convinced the good ol' boys who run the Legislature of the need for judicial reform. Majority leaders have maneuvered needed legislation into a hostile committee, and it's not likely to see the light of day this session. Meanwhile, Doctors are still leaving Illinois in droves, heading for states like Wisconsin and Indiana who long ago cleaned house.

In about 40 AD, Cicero said, "The national budget must be balanced. The public debt must be reduced; the arrogance of the authorities must be moderated and controlled." I guess the problem isn't new, but I'm mad as hell about it....

According to a very recent poll taken by the Illinois Hospital Association, 83% of the voters believe that we are in a state of medical crisis. 73% favor caps on non-economic damages. And the leaders in Springfield fiddle while the State's medical infrastructure burns. I pray that the State of Illinois will someday return to a "business friendly" climate, but that can happen only when arrogance is moderated and the people are heard!

Larry Bear



## Women in Business Committee Formed

On Thursday, May 12th, the first meeting of the "Women in Business" Committee will meet at 518 South Restaurant at noon. The initial meeting will be to set up the ground rules for the new committee and begin to set an agenda for each of the once a month meetings that will be held. Meetings are scheduled for the 2nd Thursday of each month and will alternate between 518 South Restaurant and Lauren Abigail's Tea Room.

We are pleased to announce that the first chairperson for this committee is Jerseyville Mayor Yvonne Hartmann. Mayor Hartmann has been a part of the Jersey County working community for many years and will bring business experience to the committee.

Anyone interested in being a part of this committee, please call the JCBA office at 639-JCBA and give Ann your name. A head count each month will be necessary in order to ensure that enough lunches will be available for those who attend. The committee members will choose their own programs each month.

## WELCOME NEW JCBA MEMBERS!

### Tri-County Antique Club

Elizabeth Schwab  
23496 State Highway 3  
Jerseyville, IL 62052  
618/639-4192

### Carla's Catering

Carla Murphy  
1007 W. County Road  
Jerseyville, IL 62052  
618/498-7590

## GOLF TOURNEY DELAYED

At the past board meeting, the JCBA Board of Directors voted this year to host our annual golf tournament this fall rather than in the traditional June. Several reasons given but at this juncture it would appear that the timing for a fall tourney is much better. There will be more information forthcoming in the next couple of months, but for those of you who have always participated, it will be held in either August, September or October of this year.



## State Street Music Festival scheduled for June 11th

Time is getting closer for the 2nd Annual State Street Music Festival that will be held in the Jerseyville Banking Center Parking Lot at the corner of Exchange and Washington Street on Saturday, June 11th.

Bands have been selected, member food vendors have been solicited and will soon be ready to begin serving food and beverage. One important change this year will be the availability of food vendors to begin serving food at 3:00 pm, two hours before the start of the music festival.

Once again, back by popular demand, the headline band will be the Blues Brothers Other Brothers. However five other very quality bands will lead up to closing act.

The other bands that will be playing that evening will be: Blues Project, Resurgent, Free Corndogs, The Jazz Experience, and Eclipse. There will also be at least one more food vendor this year as well.

Mark your calendar for another very enjoyable evening in the open air listening to quality music and enjoying good food and drink. There will again be no charge to enter but outside food and drink will not be allowed in. Also, this year if you decide that you want to drink an alcoholic beverage, you will need to purchase a \$1 "beverage" band at the JCBA tent and possibly show us some age identification.



## BAH - South of the Border Style

Business After Hours in May will on the first Thursday of the month rather than the usual third Thursday. That is because one of our hosts knows all about Cinco de Mayo. **Los Tres Amigos** and **The Jersey County Star** will be the hosts to the South of the Border celebration. The location will be outside on the north side of Los Tres Amigos Restaurant. Plan to come and join our celebration as we celebrate one of Mexico's most enjoyable holidays.

# Telephone Etiquette Workshop May 25

On Wednesday, May 25th at 9:30 am, the first of two "Telephone Etiquette" sessions will begin in the classroom at Jersey Community Hospital. The second session will begin at 1:30 pm in the same location. Each will run for two hours. Classroom plus role playing will be used to emphasize good telephone etiquette. It is designed for JCBA members and the cost is \$25. For non-members, the cost will be \$40. Any employee from your member business is eligible for the class.



On Thursday evening, April 19th, JCBA along with several other sponsoring organizations, held a town hall meeting for input into the Marquette & Joliet Interpretive Center project at Pere Marquette Lodge. A total of 27 surveys were completed by visitors.

Ruby Lingle, an educator from the University of Illinois Extension in Springfield will be the instructor. She has taught this program for several years and brings experience to the program.

A maximum of 20 people per session or 40 people total will be allowed and currently we have over 20 people enrolled. The places will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. If you are interested or if one or more of your employees are interested, please enroll by calling JCBA at 639-JCBA as soon as possible.

## What can you do to keep Illinois physicians?

Here is what you can do. Log on to [www.ihatoday.org](http://www.ihatoday.org) to get more facts. You can also e-mail Representative Jim Watson or Senator Deanna Demuzio from that site. The phone number is 217/782-2000. Maybe they can help the legislative leaders realize that Illinois Business is "paying the tab" for a bad legal environment!



27 JCBA members attended the Eggs 'N Issues Legislative Breakfast scheduled on Tuesday, April 19th at Lauren Abagails Tea Room. Representative Jim Watson gave the group a rundown on the State of Illinois Budget issue as well as discussion related to business issues in front of the General Assembly this session.

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# ECONOMICALLY SPEAKING

by Brent Thompson

JCBA is mounting another effort to gain a spot back on the Illinois transportation radar screen. Not since I arrived in the middle of 2000 has the need arisen to create a firestorm of communications about our need to complete Highway 67 in and around the Jerseyville area. Just after I got here, there was an announcement made in Jerseyville by then Senator Vince Demuzio and Representative Tom Ryder about the successful funding through the "Illinois First" program that would complete the 12-mile stretch of Highway 67 between Godfrey and Jerseyville. At that time, construction was predicted to start in 2004. Monies had been allocated and we were in the State of Illinois 5-Year Highway Plan.

However, since the beginning of Governor Rod Blagojevich term in office in 2003, more than \$2,000,000,000 has been diverted from gas tax funds to use for other purposes. Because of this, highway projects such as Highway 67 are in jeopardy of not being completed as promised. In 2004 alone, \$783,000,000 was siphoned off from gas tax and license plate fees and has been used for other general fund purposes. That figures out to be 30% of state user fee revenues. That amount is equivalent to 13 cents of the 19 cent-a-gallon state gas tax.

We are hearing that Highway 67 (Godfrey to Jerseyville), while possibly still in the 7-Year Illinois Road Plan (which used to be 5-Years), is now unfunded.

We are on the verge of an Illinois "road crisis." At the current rate of investment, according to the White Paper, published by the Transportation for Illinois Coalition:

- Roads will be repaired on a 50-year cycle, although they are expected to last only 20 years.
- Bridges will be repaired on a 92-year cycle, although they are expected to last only 50 years.

Illinois' annual investment in highway construction has dropped dramatically, from \$2.3 billion in FY03 to \$1.5 billion in FY05.....and that translates to 38,000 fewer jobs.

What must we do to get back on the state's transportation radar screen? First JCBA is mounting a letter writing campaign to Governor Blagojevich asking him to please recognize the importance of Highway 67, not only to us but to Western Illinois.

We are going to ask you, business people both current and retired, to take the time to write key members of the legislature about our transportation needs. It is imperative that we stress that the economy of Jersey County is too important to do nothing. The Governor and legislators understand votes. They also understand that an outpouring of letters relates directly to re-election. Letters from enough Jersey County people must reach the desks of our politicians over an extended period of time so that we get their attention.

Second, we must encourage Senator Demuzio and Representative Watson to assist in the fight to stop the practice of diverting monies from our gas tax and license plate fees from transportation projects to budget shortfall problems. Whether it takes passage of a bill through the General Assembly or a constitutional amendment, something needs to be done. Tax dollars that we pay for a specific purpose should be used only for that purpose.

You must remember, this situation is more than just a highway issue. It is an economic development issue. Good highways and highway systems are the strongest foundation for a good economy. Our economy is too important to remain apathetic. Please join with JCBA and write our Senator Demuzio and Representative Watson, Governor Rod Blagojevich and the leadership of the Illinois General Assembly.

Sample letters will be published in the Jersey County Journal and Jersey County Star. Please feel free to use them to write your letter. Do not feel obligated to use this sample letter. Write your own but write!

## BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

### The Loading Dock



The May Business of the Month is The Loading Dock

located in Grafton on the east edge of town along the confluence of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. The Loading Dock, owned by Ben and Trudi Allen and managed by daughter, Betsy Puent, serves food and beverages in April on Thursdays through Sundays. Starting Memorial Day weekend, it will be open 7 days a week until the end of Labor Day weekend. They have both canned and live music (on the weekends) as well as sporting events on TV screens located around the bar. For more information, you may go to [www.graftonloadingdock.com](http://www.graftonloadingdock.com). The Loading Dock employs 55 employees. As Betsy says, "The river is the deal!" It has a very unique setting.

## TRANSPORTATION CRISIS

Enclosed in this newsletter is a "sample" letter that we are reproviding our members to possibly use in writing to Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich and several key Illinois legislators. Information as to why this letter should be written is provided in the Economically Speaking article contained in this newsletter. Below are the addresses of the Governor and the legislators copied in the "sample" letter. Understanding that this exercise will take a little time, it could pay huge dividends in our future. Please take the time in the next few days and write a letter emphasizing the importance of Highway 67 and its economic impact on Jerseyville and Jersey County.

**Governor - Rod Blagojevich**, 207 State Street, Springfield, IL 62706; **Senators - Deanna Demuzio**, 140 Carlinville Plaza, Carlinville, IL 62626; **Dale E. Risinger**, 5415 N. University, Ste. 105, Peoria, IL 61614; **Mike Jacobs**, 606 19th St., Moline, IL 61265; **John M. Sullivan**, 926 Broadway, Ste. 6, Quincy, IL 62301; **House of Representatives - Jiw Watson**, 220 W. State St., Jacksonville, IL 62651, **Donald L. Moffit**, 64 S. Prairied St., Ste. 5, Galesburg, IL 61401; **Richard P. "Rich" Myers**, 331 N. Lafayette St., Macomb, IL 61455; **Art Tenhouse**, 640 Maine St., Quincy, IL 62306 and **Patrick Verschoore**, 303 18th St., Rock Island, IL 61201.

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# MAY IN JERSEY COUNTY

- May 2** - Mon, Illinois House in Session
- May 3-5** - Tues - Fri, Illinois Legislature in Session
- May 5** - Thu, BAH - Cinco De Mayo, 5:00 p.m., Los Tres Amigo
- May 6** - Fri, Illinois House in Session
- May 10-12** - Tues - Fri, Illinois Legislature in Session
- May 10** - Tues, Small Business/Ag Comm. Meeting, Noon, JCBA Office
- May 10** - Tues, Jville City Commission Meeting, 6:00 p.m., City Hall
- May 10** - Tues, Grafton City Council, 6:30 p.m., Grafton City Hall
- May 10** - Tues, Jersey County Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m., County Admin. Building
- May 12** - Thu, Women in Business Comm., Noon, 518 South Restaurant
- May 13** - Fri, Illinois House in Session
- May 16-27** - Mon, Illinois Legislature in Session
- May 17** - Tues, JCBA Board Meeting, Noon, JCBA Office
- May 24** - Tues, Membership Committee, Noon, JCBA Office
- May 24** - J'ville City Commission, 6:00 p.m., City Hall
- May 24** - Tues, Grafton City Council, 6:30 p.m., Grafton City Hall
- May 25** - Wed, Telephone Etiquette Workshop, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m., Jersey Community Hospital Classroom
- May 25** - Wed, Economic Development Committee, Noon, JCBA Office
- May 27** - Fri, Illinois Legislature Adjourns
- May 30** - Mon, MEMORIAL DAY, JCBA OFFICE CLOSED

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