

The Business News

April 2006

A Monthly Publication of the Jersey County Business Association

Jerseyville, Illinois

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COLLINS' COLUMN



A Message from Chris Collins, Chairperson

By the time this article is published, the Jersey County Primary Election will be over and the results tabulated. Our official candidates for the November General Election will be determined and the campaigning will really begin. I'm certain that we will all be flooded with advertisements, endorsements, and hand-shaking candidates knocking on our door. For all of the nuances that campaigning creates, voting remains one of the few great privileges of our society.

There are still many who believe that their vote doesn't matter, or that they are unable to change anything by voting. A close look at local races will prove these folks wrong. Many elections at the city and county level are decided by fewer than 50 votes. In an election that close, if you don't believe your vote counts, ask those candidates.

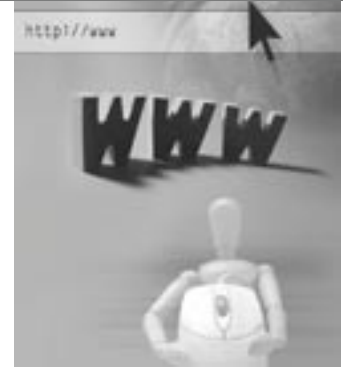
On the other side of the coin, it's disappointing to see so few competitive races at the local and state level. Looking at both party's primary ballots, the democratic ballot held 21 vacancies and the republican ballot displayed 15 vacancies. In some instances, the same position was vacant on both ballots. Competitive, open campaigns help keep the issues important to local citizens in front of our candidates. Hopefully, the Leadership Jersey County program being started by the JCBA will help us fill many of these ballot vacancies and raise the standard of leadership in Jersey County.

Taking the time to vote (usually amounting to no more than 10 minutes) is every person's primary role as a citizen in the United States of America. If you do not believe that voting is an indispensable right, watch the first ten minutes of tonight's World news. Many wars are fought to attain and quash the voting rights of citizens. As Isaiah Bowman said, "Citizenship comes first today in our crowded world...No man can enjoy the privileges of education and thereafter with a clear conscience break his contract with society. To respect that contract is to be mature, to strengthen it is to be a good citizen, to do more than your share under it is noble." The first step everyone can take to fulfill his or her contract is vote.

Chris Collins



Construction of the Grafton Harbor is progressing nicely. Pictured above is a photo of the completely framed "F" dock taken from the new sidewalk. Crews are currently roofing the structure, along with the "B" dock. Water and electrical services will be connecting this over the first weekend of April.



Second Talking Points Workshop in April

The second Talking Points Workshop in the series of four is scheduled for Thursday, April 20th from 1:30 to 3:30 pm in the Lewis & Clark Community Education Center Computer Lab located 100 Lincoln. The workshop entitled, "Webpage Design for Beginners" is one of three webpage design workshops. The second is entitled, "Webpage Design for Intermediates" and the third is "Webpage Design for Advanced." They are scheduled for May 18 and June 15 respectively. All three workshops will take place in the computer lab from 1:30 to 3:30 pm.

The individual cost per registrant per workshop is \$35. If you desire to take all three workshops, the cost is \$90 total per registrant.

If you would like to enroll for one, two or all of them, mail your registration to the Lewis & Clark Community Education Center at 100 Lincoln in Jerseyville. Or if you would like to pay your registration by Visa or MasterCard, call them at 498-2083.

If you are one of the sponsors of the Talking Points series, you are entitled to two complimentary spots at each workshop. Those sponsors are: AgriSolutions, The Job Center, Frontier Communications, Outlines & Designs, Jersey Community Hospital, Jersey State Bank, TriCounty FS, Inc., Jersey Community Unit School District #100 and Wal-Mart.

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH



Jersey Calhoun Veterinary Clinic

The April, 2006 Business of the Month is the Jersey Calhoun Veterinary Clinic located at 1201 S. State Street in Jerseyville. They can be reached at 498-2413. The vet clinic employs 25 people and offers numerous services such as pet grooming, companion and food services, equine services, complex (comprehensive) surgical services, in-house laboratory (blood), nuclear medicine and acupuncture. According to Dr. VanWalleghen, the clinic is one of a very few in southern Illinois that offer after-hours medical services. However, the after-hour service is restricted to active clients only. The Jersey Calhoun Veterinary Clinic is a member of the Illinois State Veterinarian Medical Association, American Veterinarian Medical Association and the Equine Veterinarian Medical Association.

Advertising in the Newsletter?

Ad renewals will be coming up in the next month for July 2006 through June 2007. You will be contacted by Mike Davenport. If you're currently advertising and want to reserve your spot in advance or to get on a waiting list for an opening - call 618-946-3520 or email michael@mikedesigns.com.

LEGISLATIVE RECAP SCHEDULED

JCBA has a legislative luncheon scheduled for Wednesday, April 12th at Westlake Country Club beginning at 11:30 to recap the 2006 legislative session.

Rob Carney, the Director of Legislative Relations for the Illinois State Chamber, is scheduled to attend to recap this year's events. Mr. Carney has been employed by the Illinois State Chamber as a lobbyist working on behalf of Illinois business interests for 5 years.

Rob promotes the Chamber's pro-business agenda with members of the General Assembly through direct lobbying. In addition, Rob provides technical support for Chamber members in developing and organizing local political involvement to encourage a health business climate in Illinois. He also assists the Chamber's Vice President of Government Affairs in implementing the Chamber's political action program. Rob has 14 years of campaign experience and has successfully managed several political campaigns through Illinois. He has been involved in working on behalf of Illinois business on issues such as opposition of prevailing wage expansion, ex-offenders human rights, hospital charity care, employer gag law, and 4% health insurance tax. Some of the issues he has worked on in support of are: prompt payment by government, consumer health care choice, and venue reform (common sense requirements for where lawsuits can be heard).

Mr. Carney will not only recap this year but will inform us as to important issues that may be held over or will be brought up again for the 2007 legislative session.

The cost of the luncheon will be \$12 which not only covers the cost of the meal but also materials. If you would like to attend, please contact the JCBA office at 639-5222.

RADIO DISNEY ADDED TO MUSIC FESTIVAL

Along with music for the adults, the State Street Music Festival has now added some entertainment for children. From 4:00 to 6:00 pm, RADIO Disney will present a two-hour show filled with music, games and prizes. It is an interactive live show that gets children involved.

The RADIO Disney addition to the music festival is sponsored by Grafton Technologies, Inc. (GTI). JCBA wants to thank GTI for their sponsorship. It will add a name of one of the legends in the entertainment business.

This, along with our normal musical features will begin at 3:00 pm with the first of many bands that will play up until 11:00 pm. The State Street Music Festival is scheduled for Saturday, June 10th in the Jerseyville Banking Center parking lot between the bank and across the street from the Jersey County Business Association office.

JCBA member food vendors will be on site to sell both food and drink. Again this year, outside food and drink will not be allowed to be brought in from the outside.

Because of the rain this past year, Robert "Chick" Fritz Distributing will be allowing us to use a tent to put the bandstand and most of the audience under the tent. It is our hope that this will allow us to continue the music in the event of inclement weather.

This year, which will be the 3rd year for this musical extravaganza is shaping up to bigger and better than the past two years.

Be sure to mark your calendars for Saturday, June 10. Come join us for an evening of good food and drink and especially for great music entertainment.



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LENDER



ECONOMICALLY SPEAKING

by Brent Thompson

On Tuesday, March 7th, I attended a Legislative Business Summit sponsored by the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce in Springfield. The purpose of the conference was to give a highlight into this year's legislative session and what bills had come down the pipeline that affected business positively and negatively.

During the course of that conference, a report was given called, The State of the State, How Is Illinois Really Doing?

It began by talking about the accomplishments during the tenure of Governor Blagojevich. The report stated that he has 1) provided healthcare to 300,000 more citizens. 2) Initiated "All Kids", providing affordable health insurance for all uninsured children in Illinois. 3) Raised funding for education by over \$2 billion. 4) Streamlined government. 5) Managed through the worst fiscal crisis in Illinois history, and 6) accomplished all of this without raising the income or sales tax. The report went to on to show how this administration had accomplished these feats. The report stated that to accomplish this, billions of dollars had been siphoned off from the pension systems. By borrowing money, the state had doubled its debt and heavily back-loaded the repayment schedule, deferring repayment costs to future generations. Hundreds of millions of dollars had been raised from new taxes and fees on Illinois employers and over \$1 billion had been raided from dedicated funds. This administration had not reduced overall government spending in any of the three budgets. It had not balanced the budget. Each year the state (we) faced a new deficit. It had not implemented any major cost saving reforms in government programs. It had not kept pace with the rest of the nation in job creation. Illinois ranks 45th out of 50 states in job creation.

Our neighboring states, with significantly smaller workforces than Illinois, have all added more jobs over the tenure of this administration. Wisconsin has added 58,000 jobs; Iowa has added 41,000 jobs; Indiana has added 52,000 jobs; Kentucky has added 38,000 jobs and Missouri has added 25,000 jobs. The average state's job growth in the United States is 2.5%. Illinois' job growth is 0.4%. The report went on to say that the jobs that have been added are of lesser quality than in the past. The report quoted a study released by the "Center for Tax & Budget Accountability." The study found out that the Jobs in Illinois are increasingly lower paying jobs.....Illinois lost high-paying manufac-

turing jobs and were replacing them with lower-paying service jobs. It also found that since 1999, the median household income in Illinois has dropped by 12% which is the **second steepest decline in the nation** over that time period. Adjusted for inflation, **the median household income in Illinois today is the same as it was in 1989.**

Policies implemented also have played a role in all of this bad economic news. The following policies have been adopted:

- Raising truck registration fees by 36%.
- Eliminating \$100 million worth of sales tax exemptions for Illinois businesses.
- Eliminating \$60 million worth of income tax exemptions for Illinois businesses including those designed to foster research & development and employee training.
- Instituting large fee increases that require businesses to pay \$300 million more per year to the State of Illinois.
- Implementing a two-phase increase in the minimum wage from \$5.15 per hour to \$5.50 per hour January 1, 2004, and another increase to \$6.50 per hour January 1, 2005 which is 80 cents per hour higher than the next highest neighboring state and \$1.35 per hour higher than the rest of our neighbors creating a huge competitive business disadvantage for Illinois businesses.

• Depleting the Road Fund with diversions resulting in less road-building.

"Adjusted for inflation, the median household income in Illinois today is the same as it was in 1989."

The report showed that this administration has doubled the state's general obligation debt from approximately \$7 billion prior to the start of this administration to over \$20 billion dollars in 2005.

The purpose of this column this month is not to cast aspersions or play partisan politics. It is intended to bring the message that the State of Illinois is in serious financial straits. We do not know if whoever is elected Governor will be better or worse. However, it is incumbent upon each of us to become better stewards of our political system and demand more accountability out of the system. We must study the platforms of the candidates. It is imperative that we communicate better with all of our elected officials. We must all give a little to get Illinois back to where it needs to be.

We are all at fault. Illinois is at a crucial financial crossroads. It is time to be heard and that time and opportunity will be given to each of us in November. Vote and be counted!

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APRIL IN JERSEY COUNTY

April 1-2
Sat-Sun, Illinois House and Senate in Session

April 3
Mon, State Chamber Conference Call, Noon, JCBA Office

April 5
Wed, Illinois House and Senate in Session

April 6
Thu, Membership Committee (Ambassadors), 9:30 a.m., JCBA Office

April 7
Fri, Illinois State Legislative Adjournment

April 11
Tues, Small Business/Ag Committee, Noon, JCBA Office

April 11
Tues, Jerseyville City Council Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Jerseyville City Hall

April 11
Tues, Grafton City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Grafton City Hall

April 12
Wed, Legislative Luncheon, 11:30 a.m., Westlake Country Club

April 13
Thu, Women in Business Committee, Noon, JCH Women's Center

April 14
Fri, Good Friday

April 16
Sun, Easter

April 18
Tues, JCBA Board Meeting, Noon, JCBA Office

April 20
Thu, Webpage Design for Beginners Workshop, 1:30 p.m - 3:30 p.m., LCCC Education Center Computer Lab

April 20
Thu, Business After Hours, 5:00 p.m., Location TBD


April 25
Tues, Employee Business Roundtable Breakfast, 8:00 a.m., The Job Center

April 25
Tues, Jerseyville City Council Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Jerseyville City Hall

April 25
Tues, Grafton City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Grafton City Hall

April 26
Wed, Education Comm. Meeting, 11:30 a.m., Westlake Country Club

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