

The Business News

December 2004

A Monthly Publication of the Jersey County Business Association

Jerseyville, Illinois

2004

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LOOKING THROUGH ROSE COLORED GLASSES

A Message from Anita Rose, Chairperson

The holiday season is upon us. Businesses in Jerseyville as well as Jersey County have much to be thankful for. We live in a beautiful part of the state. I truly believe the prettiest in the entire State of Illinois. We live very close to a major metropolitan city. Within an hour we can take advantage of all St. Louis has to offer but we do not have to grapple with their contentious problems.

We have excellent schools, both public and parochial, as well as one of the finest small regional hospitals anywhere in the central part of the United States. The school district, hospital as well as the cities and county governments operate in the black.

We are a part of a rapidly growing economy. Our sales tax continues each year to rise. We are promised an improved highway system on Highway 67 in the near future and over the past three years, our job base in Jersey County has grown substantially.

We have seen the coming of a new bank as well as new credit unions, new retail establishments, and we have seen our industrial job base grow as well. Grafton has seen the rebirth of a river boat ferry business and soon a 300-slip harbor/marina will become a reality.

New housing of all kinds has either started in Jersey County or will soon start. On almost every road within Jersey County, there seems to be new single-family housing developments. A new apartment complex will soon begin in Jerseyville. A luxury condominium complex is now under construction in Grafton. There is a good possibility of another condo project soon to be started in Grafton as well. And of the approximately 140 lots available in Grafton Hills immediately after the 1993 Flood, only 35 remain unsold.

Yes, we have much to be thankful for. One of the things I am most thankful for is the support you have given me as President of the Jersey County Economic Development Corporation and now the Chairwomen of the Board of the new Jersey County Business Association. At the end of December, I will step down as chair. A new chair will take over. I have served in the capacity of president or chairwoman for two years. We have accomplished much in that time. However, it could not have been done without many of you who have stepped up and volunteered your time in some way or toward some project.

We have challenges ahead of us but they are positive challenges. They are challenges because of our growth. While these challenges can sometimes be difficult to solve, I would rather have these than problems dealing with a deteriorating tax base or population decline.

It is my hopes that you will continue to give of your time and support to the next JCBA Chairperson. Stay involved and keep up with the issues as they present themselves. We are a wonderful county with a bright future. It is up to all of us to stay informed and take an active role.



JCBA Gift Certificates in Time for Holidays

JCBA Gift Certificates are now available at the JCBA Office! The purpose of the gift certificates is to encourage spending within our member businesses and to keep money turning over at home. We are pleased to announce that the program is currently responsible for keeping \$8,000 within our community.

The current list of JCBA member (sponsors) who are accepting the JCBA Gift Certificates are Jerseyville Wal-Mart Supercenter, Linn's Shoes, Rudolph's, Droegge & Associates, CPA, Winnelson Plumbing Supply, The Wood Shop, Christian Science Reading Room, Sunshine Kids, The Works Hair & Tanning Salon, Grafton Technologies, James Briggs, D.C., JCH Wellness Center, Jersey Community Hospital Gift Shop, Jerseyville Distributing, Inc., Jerseyville Gas Service, Lake Westside Bar & Grill, Landreth Lumber Company, Steven K. Dawson, DDS, West 708, Keller's Too Restaurant & Bar (Grafton), The Loading Dock (Grafton), Williams Office Supply, Pere Marquette State Lodge (Grafton), Bray Drug, Prescription Shop, Tri-County Bowl, 518 South Restaurant, Sinclair Foods, Hansen Packing, Home Instead Senior Care and Mulligans.

This program can create a unique gift for businesses that are looking at rewarding their employees during the holiday season or anytime during the year. It will also create a distinctive gift for an individual who is looking for a family member or close friend.

The JCBA Gift Certificate by the above merchants will be treated as cash. Each certificate is good for 12 months before expiring. Each certificate, however, must be spent in total at a participating merchant's business. They cannot be cashed out. Merchandise must be purchased with the gift certificates. No change can be given.

For more information, call Ann at the JCBA office at 639-JCBA.



Grand Opening Ceremonies for Atlas Credit Union held on Friday, November 5th. Attending on behalf of the JCBA was our JCBA Ambassadors as well as Mayor Yvonne Hartmann who is also an Ambassador.

Illinois Business Journal & JCBA



The Illinois Business Journal has offered to extend to JCBA the opportunity to subscribe to their monthly business newspaper and offer half of the subscription price to our organization. This is good only for new subscriptions and not renewals. If you have thought about subscribing to the Illinois Business Journal, which is the only business newspaper dedicated to the business community on the Illinois side of the St. Metro East area, write a check for \$20 to JCBA. Place on the memo of your check, "IBJ subscription" along with your mailing address and telephone number. We will then send to them \$10 for your subscription and we get to keep \$10.

Members in the News

Thomas Graham, CEO of **AgriSolutions, Inc.** recently announced that **Amanda Schaaf** of Jerseyville and **Mandy Bayless** of Greenfield have been named Sales Service Coordinator and Support Assistant to Centralized Accounting and Support Departments respectively. Amanda has been with AgriSolutions since 2000 and Mandy has been with AgriSolutions for over 15 years. **Mr. Eric Wagener** was recently hired to work as a Tax Specialist/Service Provider in their Greenville and Brighton offices. He will receive a Bachelor of Science degree from SIU-E in December, 2004.

Congratulations to Branch Manager **Susan Istringhausen** and **Atlas Community Credit Union** on their recent move into their new offices at 300 Commerce Boulevard in Jerseyville. Atlas Credit Union opened up their business in Jerseyville in May, 2003 on County Road and moved into their new offices on October 12th, 2004. A Grand Opening celebration was held recently by JCBA and their Ambassadors including Mayor Hartmann. A picture is included in this edition of the JCBA Business News.

NO JCBA COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN DECEMBER

There will be no JCBA committee meetings during the month of December. We will begin again in January, 2005 with our regular schedule.

Remember, all committee meetings will now be held at Noon instead of 3:00 p.m. Also, the Small Business/Ag Committee is now meeting on the 2nd Tuesday each month rather than the 3rd Tuesday.



On Friday, November 22nd, Ben and Trudi Allen broke ground on the Windriver Condominiums in Grafton at the confluence of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. This statue, named Windriver Esprit or the "Spirit of the Wind" will greet everyone who enters the condominium development.



On Friday, October 29th, Edie Koch, Southwest Region Manager for Opportunity Returns, along with Jersey County Board Chairman Howard Landon tour Hardwood International with company owner Joe Adams and Chief Financial Officer Jim Lang. Hardwood International recently expanded its operations and will soon double its employment figures. It is located south of Jerseyville on Highway 67. Opportunity Returns is a new program instituted by Governor Rod Blagojevich within the Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity.

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ECONOMICALLY SPEAKING

by Brent Thompson

This is the last week of the '04 Veto Session of the Illinois Legislature. As of yet, no agreement has been made on either the budget compromise between the Governor and the leaders of the legislature or the Medical Malpractice Insurance Crisis.

For people who live in Southwest Illinois, these are probably the most critical issues for us.

There has been lots written and talked about regarding the medical malpractice insurance but the budget and what is wrapped up in the budget, for us, has been relatively quiet.

Earlier this year, Governor Blagojevich made a trip to Southwestern Illinois and made some announcements regarding his "Opportunity Returns" program. Part of those announcements was \$25,000,000 worth of funding for the Jerseyville Bypass. At that time, the conversation was that because of these funds, it was highly probable that the bypass as well as the 12-mile stretch of new expressway construction on Highway 67 between Godfrey and Jerseyville would start in the 2006 construction year.

Because of the financial posturing between the Governor and the appointed leaders of the Illinois House and Senate, those programs announced within the Governor's Opportunity Returns are currently at a stalemate. Even if the differences were worked out, the absolute earliest possible construction date would be the construction season of 2007.

Political pundits are even now saying that this highway construction might even be as late as 2010. As usual, when our political leaders argue over issues like these, we are the ones who are the biggest losers. The growth and economy of Jersey County continues to take a hit.

JCBA and others continue to write Senator Demuzio and Representative Watson. They know of how important this is for us. They support our desires for the new four-lane express and bypass. We are really very fortunate that we have two people who will cross party lines for the good of our district.

Continued letter writing and phone calls are in order. Write Senator Demuzio and Representative Watson. They need to be able to show the leadership of their respective parties and bodies that it is an issue that we will not allow to go away. There is much at stake for us and our cities and county financial well-being. Stress the safety factor that 20,000 vehicles a day average places on vehicular and foot traffic in downtown Jerseyville with approximately 25% being heavy truck traffic. Also remind them that Eastern Illinois is the only area of the state that has no 4-lane highway that runs north and south and connects major metropolitan areas.

We cannot afford to sit back and do nothing. Many amenities hang in the balance, most of which is the economic well-being of Jerseyville and Jersey County. We must take an active role in keeping this issue alive and in front of the Illinois legislature.

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

Grafton Technologies Inc.

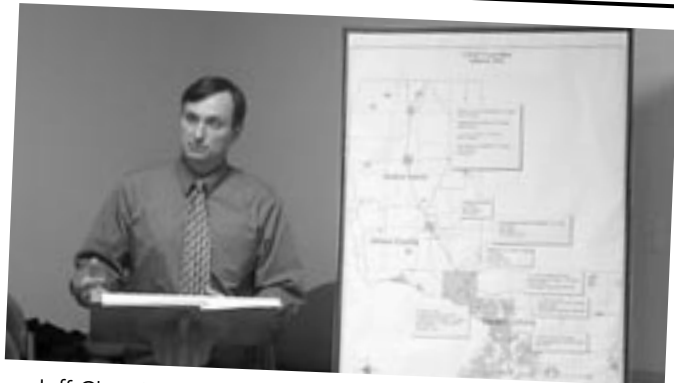


The Business of the Month in December is GTI. They are located at

301 Commerce Boulevard in Jerseyville. Their telephone number is 618/639-4841. They provide communication and long-distance services. They are also an internet service provider. They sell and service computer networking equipment. They employ 16 full-time.

The Arnold family has been in business in Jersey County since 1908 and not only owns GTI but also Grafton Telephone Company. They are a 4th generation family-owned business and are currently employing five generations of family members. They have also been very active in Jersey County as individuals. GTI are members of JCBA and JCED and have served on both boards. Either one or more of the family members have served on the Unit #100 school board, JCH Hospital Board, served Jersey County as flood coordinator, a member of the Grafton Planning Commission, District 100 Foundation Board and a member of the Jerseyville Rotary Club.

For more information regarding GTI, you may e-mail info@gtec.com or go on the website at www.gtec.com.



Jeff Church, Project Implementation Engineer for IDOT, District 8 out of Collinsville was the speaker for the JCBA Transportation Committee Meeting. He talked about the Highway 67 Project with primary emphasis on the portion of Highway 67 that relates directly to Jerseyville and Jersey County. Other questions asked of him were information concerning the Mississippi River Bridge project, and the McKinley River Bridge.

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**EVENTS IN
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DECEMBER 16th -
Thursday, Annual JCBA
Christmas Party 4pm-7pm,
JCBA Office

DECEMBER 22nd -
Wednesday, Beginning of
Christmas Vacation, 2:30pm
Dismissal

**DECEMBER 23rd
- DECEMBER 31st** -
Thursday - Following
Friday, No School
(Christmas Vacation)

JANUARY 13th -
Thursday, JCBA Annual
Meeting, Westlake Country
Club, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m

JCBA
Christmas
Party
Scheduled



JCBA members are cordially invited to the Annual Christmas Party held at the JCBA Office on Thursday, December 16th from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m.

It is on the format of a "Business After Hours." It is the officers, board and staff's way of saying thank you for your tireless work for our organization as well as your financial support.

The officers, board and staff look forward to another successful year in 2005 and hope that the new year will bring you further success in all your endeavors.

**WELCOME NEW
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- Rull Brothers Propane - Stan Rull
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