

Message from the Director

Spring is always more than welcome this time of year, and with it comes increased activity, fresh perspective, and often change.

Boone County Development Agency has seen many changes in the past year, including changes in leadership. Timothy Brazeal has resigned from Boone County Development Agency, and I have chosen to accept the Executive Director position. The BCDA Human Resources Committee will be looking for qualified applicants to apply for the part time Secretary position. Those interested should contact the BCDA office.

Change is a very important part of growth and development. Working in Economic Development for over two years has shown me that change can happen rapidly, or over a longer period of time. It is important to be prepared for changes that are brought on intentionally, as well as those we can not control. Since last March, the five communities in Boone County have taken steps necessary to strengthen themselves and bring about growth. There is often

discussion at the local and state level regarding decreasing population in rural communities. Boone County Development Agency realizes the importance of recruiting new families to the area, as well as maintaining the population base that we have.

In an effort to promote Boone County, steps have been taken to make regular contacts with alumni, as well as beginning conversation with our youth to encourage them to consider coming back to Boone County after completing their secondary education.

Having grown up in this area, I can't think of a better place to raise my young family. I want them to experience many of the things that I enjoyed as a child, and that is the message that is important to get out to those who have left Boone County and are now starting families of their own.

I encourage you to speak with those you know what are beginning their families, and invite them to make Boone County home.

-Shannon Landauer



POSTAL PATRON

Planning for Retirement? Business for Sale?
Contact Shannon at: (402) 395-3356

What's Inside...

Upcoming Events

- ★ **Youth Entrepreneurs in Boone County**-Cedar Rapids Students participate in CCC Entrepreneur program, Boone Central Students attend Marketplace Conference in Columbus
- ★ **Business Succession**-What business succession means to our small communities
- ★ **Cedar Rapids Firehall Update**-Construction has begun!
- ★ **Vote to Continue Funding for Economic Development**-May 12 Albion voters go to the polls to vote on continuing funding economic development
- ★ **Albion Business moving into New Building**-Albion Family Chiropractic will soon be moving to a new facility
- ★ **USDA Energy Grants, Loans Available**-Loan guarantees, grants available to businesses and agriculture for energy saving, renewable projects.

May

31-Custom Rods in Albion (AM hours)

June

6&7-Cattlemen's Ball
(www.cattlemensball.com/index/html)

11-14-Hole in 1-Albion

12-BRAN in Petersburg

24-26-Petersburg Carnival Days

July

19-23-Boone County Fair
(www.boonecountyfair.net)

Dates to be Determined:

- Cedar Rapids Community Picnic
- Beaver Valley Days, St. Edward

Cedar Rapids Firehall Update

The contractor for the Cedar Rapids firehall, Greenland Construction, and all of his sub-contractors have been very busy since the bid was accepted in October, 2007. Early in November site development was completed. Then the weather slowed it down by putting a snow cover over the entire area. Late December finally saw the footings trenched in and concrete being poured in them. The building material arrived in January along with some bitterly cold weather. By the first part of February the frame work was going up and the facility was enclosed by the first week of March.

Work continues on the outside with the walk-in and overhead doors to be installed this month, and work on the interior electrical and plumbing proceeding. The floor of the meeting room area was poured last month. The floor of the bay area will be poured within the next month.

The finish date is still on track for mid-May with any final walk through items to be corrected/completed by the first of June. The amount spent so far on the project is \$303,621.

Expenses include: lot purchase, planning study, grant administration, department of roads permits, engineering fees and survey, soil survey, builders risk insurance, and construction to date. The entire project with all of the additional costs will be between \$675,000 and \$700,000 total.



Cedar Rapids Firehall 3-11-08

The CDBG grant is for \$250,000; USDA Rural Development planning grant was \$5,500; Volunteer firemen have donated \$50,000; Village of Cedar Rapids has contributed \$48,000. The Rural Board passed a bond issue to help fund the balance as needed up to \$300,000 in case future donations do not cover remaining expenses. The Village Board will continue to pay on the bond issue as needed in the future.

Fundraising is still being done and all donations are greatly appreciated. Donations can be left at the Cedar Rapids State Bank or Cedar Rapids City Hall. Donations can also be mailed to Cedar Rapids Volunteer Fire Department, PO Box 345, Cedar Rapids, NE 68627. Please indicate on your check that the donation is for the firehall fund.

Young Entrepreneurs at Work in Cedar Rapids

On March 11, I had a chance to sit down with the three young Entrepreneurs in Cedar Rapids and their instructor, Joan Novacek. I talked with Bryanne Yosten and Keri Novacek of Mainstreet Meats, and Joey Zwiener of J to Z Care.

These three students participated in a class at Central Community College, committing one Saturday morning a month since September. April marks the conclusion of the class for this year.

Activities in the class included writing a business plan, developing a mission statement, designing business cards, and creating a brochure or flyer.

Mainstreet Meats has processed 4000 brats so far. They are sold at Albion Thriftyway, Rae Valley Market and Knotty Pine in Petersburg, New Frontier in Belgrade, and the Cedar's Rapids Stop in Cedar Rapids. The girls have acquired their catering license and have catered several events, including the Polar Dip in Cedar Rapids and Kate Sullivan's Campaign Kick-off. Kate served as a mentor for Bryanne and Keri.



J to Z Care throughout the summer, as well as working his current job. When asked if he would consider returning to Boone County after college, Joey stated that it is a possibility.

Bryanne and Keri spent Monday, March 10 in Lincoln. The girls had an opportunity to speak to a group of Senators to promote the ESI program and continued funding.

When asked how Cedar Rapids became involved with the Entrepreneurship class and ESI curriculum, Joan stated that she was in the right place at the right time.

According to the three students, the most rewarding pieces of the program were the networking, and experience itself. They would definitely recommend the program, but wanted people to know that it was a lot of work. Bryanne discussed the process

of getting a USDA label in place for their product. Joan added that the program really involved each students family, and brought a lot of excitement.

Bryanne, Keri, and Joey wanted to inform the public that there is a Showcase on April 14 from 6-8 to show and sell their products, and they would like to encourage attendance.



Joey Zwiener of J to Z Care also spent time discussing his business. Joey will assist elderly with indoor and outdoor chores, errands, and will offer companionship as well. Mr. Zwiener plans to operate

Boone Central Students Attend Marketplace Conference

On February 27, several Boone Central Students, along with Instructors Kathy Gladem and Lisa Carder attended the Marketplace Conference in Columbus. Marketplace is a one day conference offering a wide variety of speakers and presentation topics for those that are current, aspiring, or near retiring business owners. The City of Albion received BECA grant funds through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development to offer scholarships for attendance.

The Marketplace Conference offered several sessions throughout the day on topics in the areas of Business Development, Technology, Financing, Community, Marketing, and Agriculture. Students were able to attend sessions of their choice, and also visit booths and displays offered by various businesses and resources.

Students attending from Boone Central Schools were Emily Wells, Michael Meysenburg, Alex Stahlecker, Matthew Cook, Seth Johnson, Andy Brugman, Jordan Temme, Aaron Knust, Tyson Martin, Beau Beckwith, Andy Eickhoff, Kraig Flanagan, Kelly Merten, Derek

Leifeld, Ryan Shotkoski, Brandon Gottier, and Chad Seier.

Students participated in seminars on Product Branding, Wind Energy, Public Policy, and Marketing on a Shoestring Budget.

A wide variety of speakers represented the Center for Rural Affairs, Nebraska Renewable Energy Association, Department of Economic Development, Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District, University of Nebraska, Central Community College, SCORE, and SBA as well as several others.

Kelly Merten, Matthew Cook, and Michael Meysenburg visited the Boone County Development Agency office and discussed the conference, their future plans, potential businesses to bring into Boone County, and the Entrepreneur class at Boone Central.

The next Marketplace Conference will take place in North Platte in February 2009.

New Building for Albion Family Chiropractic

May 1 marks the target completion date of the new building being developed by Randy Hedlund of Albion. The 8600 square foot building consists of 3 bays, housing Albion Family Chiropractic and a dentistry office with the third tenant yet to be determined.

The new facility will nearly double the square footage of Randy's work space. He has plans to increase the number of employees, add and upgrade equipment, and possibly bring in a massage therapist.

Randy looked at several sites before choosing his current location on Highway 14/39 next to the Alco store.

Schmitt Construction out of Elgin is the contractor for the project.

The project has been in the planning stages for approximately one year. Randy stated that the decision to take the first step was the most difficult, but since then the project has run very smoothly. Along with the increasing number of patients, deciding to make Albion a permanent home for his family helped Randy to take that first step.

Albion Family Chiropractic plans to move into the new facility in June. You can reach them at (402) 395-2233.



USDA Energy Program

USDA is currently accepting applications for Renewable Energy Loans and Grants. Loan guarantees and grants are available to agricultural producers and rural small businesses through USDA. Rural Development's Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Improvements Program.

Funds can be utilized for a wide range of projects, such as: irrigation projects, motor upgrades, lighting, windows/doors, insulation, as well as a wide variety of other energy saving projects. Wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, and hydrogen renewable projects are also eligible under the program. Residential improvements are not eligible.

Applicants may seek loan guarantees to cover up to 50% of project cost, and grants are available for up to 25% of a project cost.

The deadline for grant applications is April 15, and loan guarantee application deadline is June 16. For more information on the project, contact Shannon Landauer at Boone County Development Agency or Bill Sheppard with USDA at (402) 371-5350 ext 4.



Albion Voting on LB840

The City of Albion has collected LB 840 funds since 1998. LB 840 is a one cent sales tax in the City of Albion, 75% of which goes to city infrastructure projects and 25% goes to the Albion Economic Development Corp. During the May primary election, Albion residents will vote on two items relating to LB 840; the tax itself, and the development plan. If the voters do not approve the issues as presented, all of the one cent sales tax will go to the City and AEDC's financial resources will be eliminated.

Albion Economic Development Corporation has been involved with many activities, such as:



- ⇒ Housing Projects
- ⇒ Business Recruitment
- ⇒ Business Loans
- ⇒ Cleaning up Downtown Area
- ⇒ Gateway Theater

Most recently, Albion Development has used funds to remove a downtown building to prepare the lot for development. If anyone would like more information about the Albion Economic Development Corporation, please contact Doug Young at 402-395-2151.

Business Succession

Business succession is the transfer of a business to a child, employees, or an outside buyer as the owner moves into retirement. There are several important reasons for a business to have a succession plan. The succession of a business is not only important to the persons involved, but to the community as a whole. Every downtown business is an important part of a thriving community.

When picturing our small communities without some of the familiar mainstreet businesses, it raises many questions. How far will residents have to go for those services, where will the employees find work, will this closing lead to another?

Planning is needed for 5 to 10 years prior to the transition to maximize the companies value. It is very important to plan for the future of any business, no matter what the size or service.

There are many resources available to help with developing a succession plan for your business. Boone County Development Agency is ready to assist small businesses with the connections they need to prepare for a smooth business transition in the future.