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#### Our Investors

Thanks to many great businesses and organizations who help make our work possible.

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July 2010

## West Central Iowa Development Bulletin



### President's Report

By: Mike Underwood

Thank you for supporting our work to create economic development opportunities in west central Iowa. Each month, when we send out our newsletter, we highlight some of the projects happening throughout the region. This time, I want to mention a few ways in which economic development brings value to an area, as highlighted by a group called EDCD Consulting. In EDCD's words, here are some of the ways that economic development helps communities, and specifically Midwest Partnership EDC communities:

- **Increased Tax Base** - the additional revenue created by economic development supports, maintains and improves local infrastructure.
- **Business Retention** - up to 80% of job creation is from the existing business base. When economic development organizations effectively partner with local businesses they are more likely to stay in the community and contribute to the economy.
- **Economic Diversification** - a diversified economic base helps expand the local economy and reduces a community's vulnerability and dependence on a single industry sector.
- **Job Development** - economic development provides better wages, benefits and opportunities for advancement. It can help create a career path within the community.
- **Self-sufficiency** - a stronger economic base means public services are less dependent on intergovernmental influences and alliances, which can change with each election.
- **Land Value and Use** - land and property is used for its highest and best use to maximize its value.
- **Recognition of Local Products and Services** - successful economic development occurs when locally produced goods and services are consumed in the local market to a greater degree.
- **Quality of Life** - more local dollars and jobs increase economic stability for the entire community, including the overall standard of living for the residents.

If you would like to learn more, click [here](#) to visit EDCD online.

### Connect and Follow!

Connect to Midwest Partnership EDC on social networks.



### Become a Member

Support area economic development by becoming an investor-member of Midwest Partnership! Email [info@midwestpartnership.com](mailto:info@midwestpartnership.com) for more information.

### Upcoming Events

7/21/2010 - 7/25/2010 - [Adair County Fair](#)

7/21/2010 - 7/25/2010 - [Audubon County Fair](#)

7/24/2010 - [Jefferson Farmers Market](#)

7/24/2010 - [Chad Elliot at Dale Valley Vineyard](#)

7/27/2010 - [Jefferson Farmers Market](#)

7/28/2010 - [Stuart Farmers Market](#)

7/29/2010 - [PRIDE 7th Annual Development Forum](#)

7/31/2010 - [White Pole Road Tractor Ride](#)

7/31/2010 - [Grand Junction Annual Fun Days](#)

7/31/2010 - [Scranton Annual Summer Fun Night](#)

8/5/2010 - 8/7/2010 - [Merchant "Smokin' Bull Sale"](#)

8/5/2010 - 8/6/2010 - [Free Family Writers Class](#)

8/6/2010 - 8/8/2010 - [60th Annual](#)

## Sun Shines on Partners at Golf Outing

### Record-breaking 36 teams participate

After two years of wet weather for the Midwest Partnership Annual Golf Outing, Mother Nature finally showed mercy on the event this year! A total of 36 four-person [teams](#) representing businesses and organizations from all four of our counties gathered at [Lake Panorama National Resort and Conference Center](#) for a day of fun in the sun that included 18 holes of golf with a meal and program following. In all, more than 50 businesses and organizations helped make the event a success. Thank you! By the way, mark your calendars for next year's event - **Thursday, June 30th, 2011.**



## Existing Business & Industry

### Local agricultural companies continue growth



Local pet food manufacturer [Great Plains Protein](#) of Bagley is a major economic engine in the area, according to a recent economic impact study. The study was sponsored by [Alliant Energy Economic Development and Community Relations](#) and shows Great Plains Protein has an impact of \$5.3 million a year and accounts for more than 30 jobs in the region - both directly and indirectly. See the full report [here](#).

In Grand Junction, [Louis Dreyfus](#)

[Commodities](#) celebrated the company's one-year anniversary of their ethanol plant located there. The public was invited to a meal, program and tours of the facility. Several plant

management staff and corporate officers also held a ribbon cutting to commemorate the occasion.



Audubon County manufacturer [Puck Custom Enterprises](#) (PCE), located south of Manning, held an open house for their new building in June. The company makes manure applicator systems, both for their use and to sell to others through worldwide markets. A total of 15 employees occupy the new 15,000 square foot facility. The Iowa Area

[Operation T-Bone](#)

8/6/2010 - [Adair County Health Foundation Wine Event](#)

8/7/2010 - [Beta Tau Delta Hole-in-One Golf Classic](#)

8/14/2010 - [Trails and Trills](#)

**List Your Event!**

To have your event listed on our website and in this monthly newsletter, email:

[info@midwestpartnership.com](mailto:info@midwestpartnership.com)

**Links**

[Midwest Partnership Development Corporation](#)

[Western Iowa Advantage](#)

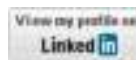
[Professional Developers of Iowa](#)

[Iowa Department of Economic Development](#)

**Midwest Partnership EDC Staff**

The people behind it all!

[Jason White](#),  
Executive Director



[Michael Cooley](#),  
Economic  
Development Coordinator



[Sarah Gomez](#), Office Manager

**Board of Directors****Executive Committee:**

Mike Underood, *President*,  
Guthrie County

Sid Jones, *Vice-President*,  
Greene County

Warren Varley, *Secretary*, Adair  
County

Brett Irlmeier, *Treasurer*,  
Audubon County

Development Group, Region 12 revolving loan fund, USDA, the rural electric cooperative, and area lenders helped arrange financing for PCE's latest project.

**Panora Development Forum**

Registration closes July 27th

The Panora Area Development Group's 7th annual forum on July 29th is great fun each year, offering visitors the chances to see both the Panora area and Midwest Partnership EDC region.



The schedule is a busy one for next Thursday. An official welcome will happen at 8:30, followed by a community tour at 9:15. Then, at 10:45, Ric Jurgens, Chairman & CEO of Hy-Vee, will address all guests. Lunch will follow at the Port Restaurant overlooking beautiful Lake Panorama.

The afternoon features many options to choose from, including 9 holes of golf, Lake Panorama boat tour, biking on the Raccoon River Valley Trail, or a guided historical, recreational, shopping tour. Those interested in attending the forum should call (641) 755-3300 or email [pride@panora.org](mailto:pride@panora.org) by July 27th.

**Best Place to Work**

Panora-based company again claims a top spot in survey



[Brokers International Ltd.](#) for the fourth year in a row has made it into the top three of the [Best Places To Work Survey](#) by the Des Moines Business Record.

Brokers International provides their associates with fresh fruit to complement an on-site gym and the business's efforts to promote physical well-being by hiring a trainer who leads workout classes throughout the week. The fitness initiative is important for the nearly 100 employees, because a majority of their time is spent on the phone training and helping the more than 35,000 licensed insurance professionals the company works with nationwide.

**Adair Gains New Manufacturer**

Company will aim to produce bioplastic products

Plastics manufacturer [Schafer Solutions](#) recently began operations in Adair, looking to create sustainable products by utilizing bioplastics, biopolymers, and recycling



Mike Carey, *Immediate Past President*, Guthrie County

Scott Homan, Adair County

Troy Wessel, Audubon County

Norm Fandel, Greene County

Eric Tiernan, Guthrie County

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**Guthrie County:**

Steve Bireline

Mike Dickson

John Rutledge

Forrest Schnobrich

Jack Smith

options. The company is a spawn of [Owner Revolution](#) of Adair, which operates several different manufacturing divisions of plastics, including [Schafer Systems](#), also of Adair (see photo), which has a 90% market share in producing plastic lottery dispensers in Iowa.

Business manager Bud Karachwala is Schafer Solutions' only employee at this point; however, as the company develops and creates product prototypes that reach the marketplace, he anticipates needing to hire several more.

Bud says he's working with ad agencies to promote the company's products to retail and convenience stores in Iowa and nationwide. He also applauds Adair's quick and easy access to the Des Moines metro for conducting business.

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## Bridgewater Celebrates 125 Years

Quasiquicentennial event was big hit in small town



There was much to do and see at Bridgewater's quasiquicentennial celebration in June! The town's Round Up Day supper saw huge lines, and the parade was a major hit as well. Other events included a vintage tractor ride, as well as various games and displays. A

fireworks display at [Mormon Trail Lake](#) ended the evening on Saturday, with a community church service and breakfast held Sunday morning. Several participants say it was certainly a weekend to remember!

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## New Money for Local Projects

Two recently-announced grants to have major impact

The [Iowa Power Fund](#) board voted July 1st to provide San Francisco-based [SynGest Inc.](#) with \$2.5 million for its planned biomass-to-ammonia plant east of Menlo, Iowa. The money is contingent upon \$3.5 million in matching funds. The bio-ammonia plant will turn 150,000 tons of local corncobs into 50,000 tons of anhydrous ammonia annually, enough to fertilize 500,000 acres of land. Syngest has procured 75 acres for the plant, five of which will be used for the facility itself and the rest for biomass storage. This latest funding is expected to help SynGest leverage other private investment funds.



Meanwhile, a [National Emergency Grant](#) is helping dozens of workers facing layoffs as manufacturer Electrolux looks to close their Jefferson and Webster City facilities at year end or first quarter of 2011. The news has been devastating for the region, with several jobs already cut in preparation for the company's move to Juarez, Mexico. The workers have been receiving services through the Workforce Investment Act program. In addition, [Iowa Central Community College](#) and

[Iowa Workforce Development](#) have partnered under the grant to provide affected workers with hi-tech job matching programs, as well as training programs, including a [National Career Readiness Certificate](#). Read the full story [here](#).

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## Quad/Graphics Acquires World Color

**Greenfield plant may see growth as a result**



Management at the Greenfield ink manufacturer CR\T, a subsidiary of national printer [Quad/Graphics](#), hopes the company's recent acquisition of World Color Press will mean an increase in production in the near future. The acquisition was finalized in early July, and the company began public trading on July 6th to help finance the move. Pictured is Quad/Graphics Chairman, President & CEO Joel Quadracci, joined by board members, company executives, and family members, ringing the opening bell on the New York Stock Exchange the day the company went public (listed as QUAD). The "New Quad" is now the second-largest provider of print and related multichannel solutions in the Americas with annual sales of \$4.8 billion.

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## Summer Development Activity Hot

**Midwest Partnership stays busy amidst several projects**

In the last couple of months, Midwest Partnership EDC was in touch with 20 existing primary companies looking at growing their business in the region, as well as an additional 23 companies considering the region as a destination for a business expansion, consolidation or relocation. Another six small or small startup entrepreneurial businesses were aided by Midwest Partnership EDC staff efforts as well.

The nature of these projects is diverse. Most of the companies looking to grow in the region are manufacturing or agribusiness companies. Companies inquiring about expanding or moving into the area can be described as manufacturers, renewables and biorefineries, and some related to business/financial services and hospitality. Eight leads were received from the [Iowa Department of Economic Development](#) in the last few months, and two from the [Iowa Area Development Group](#).

The region's resurgence is showing as the area's unemployment rate is declining. Fewer people are looking for work now than in any month since November. The collective unemployment rate of the four Midwest Partnership EDC counties stands at 6.2 percent as of May 2010. This rate is lower than the Iowa unemployment rate of 6.8 percent, and the U.S. rate of 9.7 percent.

## Resource of the Month

### Business Tax Credits

Two new tax benefits are now available for employers who hire workers this year that were previously unemployed or only working part time. They're being provided under that Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act.

Businesses that hire unemployed workers for the rest of this year may qualify for a 6.2% payroll tax incentive on their 2010 quarterly employment tax returns to the IRS, which basically exempts them from their share of Social Security taxes on wages paid to these new employees. The incentives will have no effect on the employees' future Social Security benefits.

In addition, for each worker that stays on the payroll for at least a year, businesses may be able to claim a general business tax credit, up to \$1,000, on their 2011 income tax returns.

Family members and other relatives do not qualify through the program, and neither do employees who are filling a position that was not vacated voluntarily or for cause. The new law does require new employees fill out a form attesting they have not been employed full time for the past 60 days.

To find out more information on the program, click [here](#).

## About Us

*Midwest Partnership EDC is the non-profit, collaborative economic development organization formed to strengthen the economic vitality of the communities of Adair, Audubon, Greene and Guthrie counties of west central Iowa.*



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