

Newsletter

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Kossuth and Palo Alto County Economic Development Corporation Support the Blue Appreciation Lunches



K/PACEDC staff and Board of Directors served an appreciation lunch to local law enforcements in Kossuth and Palo Alto Counties to show gratitude and support. Thank you so much for your service; we truly appreciate everything that you do!

Kossuth/Palo Alto County Economic Development Corp. Receives Excellence in Economic Development Award from the International Economic Development Council

Washington, DC – Kossuth/Palo Alto County Economic Development Corp. won a silver category award for its Summer Intern Program, a project in the Talent Development and Retention category of the International Economic Development Council's 2020 Excellence in Economic Development Awards Program. The honor was presented this week at an awards ceremony during the IEDC Annual Conference, which is currently underway.

IEDC's Excellence in Economic Development Awards recognize the world's best economic development programs and partnerships, marketing materials, and the year's most influential leaders. 35 award categories honor organizations and individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

Awards are judged by a diverse panel of economic and community developers from around the world, following a nomination process held earlier this year. IEDC received over 500 submissions.

"The winners of IEDC's Excellence in Economic Development awards represent the very best of economic development and exemplify the ingenuity, integrity, and leadership that our profession strives for each and every day," said 2020 IEDC Board Chair and One Columbus CEO Kenny McDonald. "We're honored to recognize the more than 100 communities whose marketing campaigns, projects and partnerships have measurably improved regional quality of life."



Maureen Elbert, Executive Director, Kossuth/Palo Alto Economic Development Corporation



America's SBDC Iowa Mobile Initiative



Brianna Hall, SBDC answering questions from a local business owner.

America's SBDC Iowa team of small business experts have been visiting different communities around Iowa. On Tuesday, October 20th the team visited the communities of Algona and Bancroft. The small business team of experts in marketing, accounting, and operations offered resources regarding e-commerce, QuickBooks, shipping and business operations.

SBDC started with a chance for business owners to speak with small business experts in person from 8:00 am to 11:00 am and have their questions answered. America's SBDC Iowa is also excited to help promote and educate business on the e-commerce platform; Shop Iowa. Then offered in the afternoon were appointments to walk businesses through setting up their online shop on ShopIowa.com, stage products and answer general questions.

Lisa Shimkat, State Director said, "We are extremely excited to get out there in these communities and talk with businesses directly about ways we can help them. We are also ready to keep promoting the online platform, Shop Iowa, and get businesses registered on the site so that they can start generating more revenue immediately.

Aureon Charity Grants Awarded to PACEDC

Palo Alto County Economic Development Corporation wants to extend a special thank you to the Aureon Charity Grant Program and River Valley Telecommunications for sponsoring our organization! The Aureon Charity Grant Committee approved an application from PACEDC for their Human Resource Program for a total of \$250.00 awarded. Each quarter, Aureon reviews applications and awards funds.



Emmetsburg City Hall Gets a Facelift



The exterior renovation of City Hall is nearly complete! The multi-year project, consisting of new façade treatment, windows, lights, signage, and ADA access to Council Chambers, was a much-needed functional and aesthetic improvement to the City's administrative building.

The building that now houses City of Emmetsburg and Emmetsburg Municipal Utilities was originally an implement building. While the inside of the building was remodeled to better accommodate City and EMU staff offices, the outside of the building hadn't been touched for years. The old windows and worn mortar were inefficient, making the building costly to heat and cool, and also caused issues with pests and rodents. Holes in and between the bricks made it impossible to keep bats and other uninvited guests out. It was not only time to make improvements for health and safety reasons, but also to

invest in our community and downtown district.

Rather than constructing a new building and leaving a vacant space downtown, the decision was made to fix the issues with the building and give it a fresh, clean look. City Administrator Kim Kibbie said, "The City and EMU both felt that it was important to serve as an example for other property owners by keeping up the appearance of our building and making necessary improvements. The best way to lead is to lead by example."

The project was initiated three years ago and was included in the 19-20 and 20-21 City budgets. The project cost was split 50/50 between the City of Emmetsburg and Emmetsburg Municipal Utilities. The City portion was paid for entirely by grant funds through Palo Alto County Gaming Development Commission (PACGDC).

Construction work started last fall on the back and

east sides of the building. After the DOT sidewalk project was completed this spring, Dan Cooper Builders Inc. was able to complete façade work on the front and west side of the building. New windows, brick and commercial paneling, and goose-neck lighting were installed. The last piece of the project is exterior signage. This semester high school Industrial Technology students are using a laser cutter to create a custom steel sign for the building. Superintendent Darren Hanna said, "We are excited about this opportunity. Connecting learning inside of school to real-life applications outside of school is key in preparing our students for life past high school. This is another great example of the benefits that can be realized when we work together as a community."

Story and photo by: City of Emmetsburg



Emmetsburg Carwash Opens with New Owners

Congratulations to Washaway Bay on opening their new businesses in Emmetsburg!

Pictured left to right: Melanie Monson, owner of Washaway Bay, Maureen Elbert, Executive Director of K/PACEDC, Tom Monson, owner of Washaway Bay.

*Bottom Picture:
Car wash located right off Hwy 18 in Emmetsburg.*



Palo Alto County Sheriff and Emmetsburg Police Receive Products from Project Hope



The Kossuth and Palo Alto County Economic Development Corporation has been providing hope and relief to children, teens, and adults who have been removed from their homes or in need of assistance through their annual project called "Project Hope".

This year's Project Hope Weeks were declared from June 22 to July 3 by both the Kossuth and Palo Alto County Board of Supervisors.

The personal hygiene items collected were delivered to the local departments and organizations working with people in need of help. Because of this, Project Hope is able to provide an even greater sense of relief to people in need, and the community. On behalf of K/PACEDC Board of Directors and staff, thank you to Dollar General, Iowa Trust and Savings Bank, Iowa Lakes Electric, Central Financial Group, Erpelding, Voigt & Co., Farmers State Bank, Pharmacists Mutual and Smithfield Hog Production for your continued support and generosity to help provide to those in need by supporting Project Hope.

Story and photo by: City of Emmetsburg

Graettinger Grill

Passion! You've seen people passionate about wrestling, football, and cars but how about food? I don't mean the guy who can't wait to sink his teeth into a thick T-bone or someone who loves cookies to the extreme, I'm talking about the guy who loves to make the steak or bake the cookies. Bill Walrath is that guy! Bill loves to make food, talk about food, watch TV about food and has gone to school on food preparation. He gets really excited talking about food.

He got started as kind of challenge from his kids. He had always liked to cook but when the need arose he took up the challenge. Bill started watching food network to see what they were making and to see what he could do. Walrath would see foods that looked good but couldn't find in his area so he would try making it. All his experiments didn't turn out - his potato pancakes ended up at the bottom of a pool.

Maybe stop in and ask him about that. He recently opened up the old Drive In and has renamed it the Graettinger Grill. He wants to pay tribute to all things Graettinger. And yes he has been inspected and has the certification to prove it! Bill says he's not here for the quick buck. He wants to make really good food and have great customer service. Walrath wants to have a lunch special so he can have a quick turn around for the working folks in town.

He tries to make everything from scratch as much as possible. He knows what he wants and if his suppliers send something he doesn't want, he won't accept it. Bill tries to listen to his customers and do what they want. That is why he has a limited menu now, starting with basics like hot beef, lasagna, burgers and BBQ and building up his menu. One of his favorite quotes is "Do you want it to be good or to go by the recipe," as he likes to add his own flare and

make food taste its best. Bill seems to be one of those people whose recipe for success varies quite a lot from the original.

He's still watching Food Network and his goal is to be on Guy's Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives. He said he is a "food nerd" and would love to see Guy in Graettinger. Walrath is "happy to be here" and can also customize food for families on the go or just for a special couples meal. Call in and ask him about the many options available.

The hours of operation are still coming together as he finds food servers and cooks. Right now he is serving breakfast and lunch and some suppers but check his Facebook for times or give him a call at 712-859-3000.

By Kandi Terwilleger, staff writer - Graettinger Times

Accent Studio Opens in Graettinger

Kathy Jackson has been a business owner most of her life. She recently opened a store downtown, in the old Happy Hour, after moving to Graettinger.

The name Accents Studio may sound familiar as it was in Emmetsburg, but after buying a house in town she moved the shop. Many of the vendors are "makers" but some are direct sales. She will have quite a variety of items including Chalk Couture, jewelry, vintage wares, clothing, handmade cards, knit/crochet accessories plus Color Street Nails, 31 bags, Lula Rose and bath and body items. And a really fun idea are the classes she will be having in jewelry and cards, to name a few. She will be open Wed

and Friday 10-5 and every other Thursday 10-5 and the opposite Saturday 9-2. Kathy says, "its a work in progress so check back often."

She is also looking for interested vendors so contact her at 712-298-0326 and she's on Facebook under Accent Studio. Welcome to Graettinger!



Honoring Becky Larson, former Mallard City Clerk

K/PACEDC is deeply saddened for the loss of Becky. She was a great city clerk, representative of her community, and dear friend. May our faith be a source of strength and our memories a comfort.



By Kandi Terwilleger, staff writer - Graettinger Times

Congratulations to the following businesses celebrating milestone anniversaries this year:



125 years - Farmers State Bank



100 years - Snap On



50 years in Algona - Hormel Foods

Hormel Foods delivered pepperoni pizza to local business that have contributed by helping and supporting Hormel for the last 50 years in Algona. Thank you so much for sharing the delicious pizza!



Farming Is More Than Just Cows & Plows

Construction is underway on a new Farm Lab Facility at the Iowa Lakes Community College's 360-acre college-owned farm. The Iowa Lakes farm is located five miles west of Emmetsburg. The new Farm Lab Facility moves beyond cows and plows by housing advanced agriculture technology systems designed to teach Iowa Lakes' students cutting edge farming techniques in any season. The new one-story, 7,600 square foot building will house a sizeable

heated classroom designed for up to 50 students, a machinery repair area, and a 75 x 75 ft. lab for advanced technology simulation. Simulations will specialize in crop production, including sprayer and electronic control equipment. "Most of our training can occur in the offseason, meaning we now have a heated large space with modern simulation systems to provide training before students start internships in the spring," explained Neal Williamson, Iowa Lakes' Director of Agricultural Technology. The Farm Lab Facility worksite uses

ACE funding to pay for the construction, and the advanced technology systems have been purchased through a Title III grant.

As technology continues to evolve, workers need as much specialized training as possible to prepare for a career in the agricultural industry. The new Farm Lab Facility is another step Iowa Lakes is taking to ensure our students are acquainted with today's technologies and ready to be successful in the industry. Rendering of the building to be built is below.



*Iowa Lakes
Director of
Agricultural Technology,
Neal Williamson*

Photo and caption by: ILCC Marketing



Furry Clients Help Students Master Skills in Professional Dog Grooming Program at Iowa Lakes Community College

The Dog Grooming Program at Iowa Lakes Community College allows students to practice grooming skills on live clients in Laker Paws, a grooming salon located on the Emmetsburg campus. Besides grooming techniques, students learn the day-to-day operations of running a grooming salon, performing canine breed standard cuts, communicating with the human parents, and managing the retail space.

Additionally, each student can take an online business module, where a personalized dog grooming business plan can help facilitate their independent dog grooming business.

"Many students in our Professional Dog Grooming program go from not knowing anything about dog grooming to becoming a confident dog groomer in only eight weeks," explains Sierra Elbert, Iowa Lakes' Professional Dog Grooming Instructor/Programmer and International Certified Pet Groomer.

Elbert continues, "Once you complete the 8-week course, we offer Canine Cosmetology Professional Development classes taught by world-renown Mackensie Murphy, a Master Groomer, Groom Team USA member who ranks among the top three competitive groomers in the country. Seasoned salon owners and professional groomers can learn new industry tricks and techniques and investigate new products on the market. Each continuing education session includes a hands-on workshop where attendees can fine-tune the new skills with a Master groomer's instruction."

"We are so honored to have this amazing opportunity. Learning from someone as knowledgeable, well-seasoned competitor as Mackensie

Murphy in this industry is incredible. It is a great way to connect with other people that share our passion in the area!" said Tayler Wineski and Tala Smith, Dog Groomers at the Dirty Dog DSM Grooming Salon located in Des Moines, IA.

Iowa Lakes Dog Grooming student, Cassie Beatty, declared, "The Professional Dog



Photos and caption by: ILCC Marketing

Grooming Program at Iowa Lakes Community College is so much better than I could have imagined! The facility is bright and clean, so the dogs go home happy! I feel with all the hands-on experience I'm receiving, I will have the confidence to start my own dog grooming business!"

"Dog Grooming is my second career by choice. As a Registered Nurse with a bachelor's degree in business administration and a master's degree in Healthcare Administration/Education, I can vouch for the quality of the instruction, curriculum, and valuable practical experiences this course offers. It has been fun! I am so pleased I joined the Iowa Lakes Dog Grooming program and will be proud to "graduate" as a professional dog groomer from Iowa Lakes!" said Jan Yungclas, an Iowa Lakes Professional Dog Grooming Student.

Visit iowalakes.edu/ce to find out more information or register for the eight-week Professional Dog Grooming program or the Advanced Professional Development for Dog Grooming classes.

J&J Custom Meats, It Takes a Village...

We've all heard the common adage that "it takes a village" in reference to raising children, but it is also true in the context of starting a business. Most successful entrepreneurs utilize a startup team of business coaches, mentors, bankers, economic developers, and industry experts to help them navigate the startup process. This was the experience of Joe and JoAnn Harren as they set out to create J & J Custom Meats in Whittemore, Iowa.

J & J Custom Meats launched in December 2019, providing meat processing services for beef, pork, and venison, as well as retail sales of beef sticks, jerky, and other meats. The Harrens recognized a need for this type of business in their community, and they sought out the resources necessary to get started.

One of their early supporters was Maureen Elbert and the team at Kossuth/Palo Alto County Economic Development Corporation. Maureen connected the Harrens with many of the resource partners they would need to know. One of these resources was Michael Wampler, Regional Director of the Northwest Iowa Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Iowa Lakes Community College.

In working with the SBDC, one of the first questions to tackle was whether or not the project was even feasible. The SBDC assisted the Harrens with the question of feasibility and helped prepare them for approaching lenders. Joe Harren said, "Working with the SBDC was great. It was



a free and convenient tool that really helped us put together a plan. The banks were really impressed with the financial projections and it helped us to easily figure out if our project had any chance of success."

The Harrens worked with a number of people as they moved forward with the project. Wampler says,

"What impresses me most about the Harrens is that they were always willing to talk to anyone who might be able to provide guidance. They took every opportunity to learn from as many people as possible."

There have been many key partners instrumental in this project. Bill and Cathie Richter, former owners of the old Whittemore Locker, deserve special mention for all the knowledge they've passed on to Joe and JoAnn. The City of Whittemore was another key partner, and their support was critical for making the project feasible. The Harrens want to thank the many lenders, economic developers, family, and friends who encouraged them throughout the process. The Harrens are particularly grateful for the many customers who have supported them in this new endeavor.

J & J Custom Meats is located at 706 Broad Street in Whittemore, Iowa. They are open from 8 am to 5 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 11 am on Saturday mornings. You can find them on Facebook or call 515-884-1014 for more information. Be sure to check out their smoked meats and watch for new varieties and flavors coming soon!

Pictured are several of the lenders involved in the project. Left to right is Brittany Dickey (Corn Belt Power Cooperative), Brian Kollasch (Farmers State Bank), Jed Skogerboe (Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative), Joe and JoAnn Harren (owners), and Norm Fandel (Midland Power Cooperative).

Photo and caption by: ILCC Marketing



J&J Custom Meats was chosen for Small Business of the Month Award

America's SBDC Iowa was pleased to announce that J&J Custom Meats, of Whittemore, was the winner of the organizations statewide September Small Business of the Month Award.

Joe and JoAnn Harren, of Whittemore, started a meat locker in December 2019. The service they provide has been vital to their community during COVID-19, keeping the meat supply chain moving by processing beef, pork, and venison.

SBDC, Michael Wampler and K/PACEDC Executive Director, Maureen Elbert presenting J&J Custom Meats owner and family with their September Small Business of the Month Award.



Whittemore Clerk Loves to Serve her Hometown: 2020 ADVANCE AWARD Public Servant of the Year Linda Farrell

Photo and caption by: Brad Hicks, Algona Publishing Co.

Business: Whittemore City Clerk
Hobbies: Photography, calligraphy, traveling, reading, counted cross-stitch, golf, spending time with family, and seeking out Iowa's oddities
Schools: St. Michael's Grade School, Whittemore; Bishop Garrigan class of 1976; American Institute of Business, Des Moines
Why Selected: Goes to a Kossuth County resident employed by the government, who has gone above and beyond his or her normal duties to ensure the citizenry is served in a manner it recognizes and appreciates, whether for a single effort, a series of efforts or over a period of time.

Welcoming New Business to Whittemore - Three Doors Down Liquor

Whittemore representatives helped welcome a new business to the downtown district with a plaque presentation by K/PACEDC Executive Director Maureen Elbert. The "Three Doors Down Liquor" store is located at 417 Broad Street and was formerly occupied by "Straub Law Office" and owned by the Joe and Mary Straub Family. Through a generous donation of the property to the City by the Straub Family, it was transferred to T.J. Ricklefs and Shane Zwiefel for their business interests.

Congratulations on your new venture!



Pictured are: (Front row) Courtney Schlegel, Office Manager; Linda K Farrell, City Clerk; Daniel J Elbert, Mayor; Shane "Spike" Zwiefel, Co-Owner; and Maureen Elbert, K/PACEDC Executive Director. (Back row): Tim Schneider, City Council; Tascha Erickson-Wyckoff, Farmers State Bank; Cindy Simonson, Whittemore Community Betterment Club; Stuart Simonson, City Council; and Brian Thul, Thul Business Center. Not pictured: T.J. Ricklefs, Co-Owner. Photo and story by: Alan, VanOrmer, Algona Publishing Co.

Grass Masters receives Revolving Loan Fund for Expansion in Algona



Congratulations to Grass Masters on receiving a revolving loan from Kossuth County Economic Development Corporation to help fund their expansion in Algona!

Pictured left to right: KCEDC Board Members; Nathan Fell, Jeff Knapp, Bob Jennings, Rebecca Gisel, Pat Berte, Craig Meyers, Ryan Nelson and Brian Ernst, Owners of Grass Master, additional KCEDC Board Members; Donnie Loss, Craig Florea, Brooke Winkelhorst, Charlie Kennedy, and Crysti Neuman.

Leadership Training Program

Kossuth / Palo Alto County Economic Development Corp. (K/PACEDC) had great attendance and participation in our Leadership Training Program via Zoom with speaker, Brenda Clark Hamilton. Brenda offered a series of career and personal training sessions that cover team building, communication skills, customer service, building better relationships and careers.

Below are the 4 session titles that were presented this year:

Create a Healthy Work/Life Balance: Participants took the Life Balance Quiz and learned practical, take-home strategies for prioritizing, maximizing, efficiency, delegating, and determining when to say 'yes' and 'no'.

Say This. Not That: This was an upbeat session that started with basic definition-and several synonyms-of tact: Finesses, Thoughtfulness, Common Sense, and Good Manners.

Generation Z: We identified what is unique about Generation Z in their strengths, experiences, preferences, and discussed how our organizations might best attract, engage, and retain these young workers.

Holding Accountable the Under Performing or Difficult Employee: Learned several strategies for setting clear expectations for staff, and we outlined a step-by-step approach for giving corrective feedback and following through when an employee is not performing up to those standards.



Homestead Country Store in West Bend has Changed Ownership

Homestead Country Store has a new owner! Lisa Schmidt took over the reins on June 1, 2020. Family and friends along with a business opportunity brought Lisa back to her hometown. The products will remain the same for now but watch for exciting changes coming soon! Homestead Country Store is open six days a week. 9 AM to 5 PM Monday - Friday and 9 AM to 1 PM on Saturday. Stop in to welcome Lisa back to West Bend and congratulate her on her newest venture!



Alliant Energy again named a Top Utility in Economic Development

Site Selection magazine ranks Alliant energy in top 20 utilities for the second year running

Alliant Energy has once again been recognized as a Top Utility in Economic Development by Site Selection magazine. The publication bases the ranking on corporate project investment and job creation figures across a utilities service area based on population. In 2019, we partnered with our community and state economic development professionals with 44 industrial and warehouse projects, \$1.198 billion in new capital investment and 2,632 new jobs across our Iowa and Wisconsin service area. Alliant Energy was the only utility in Iowa and Wisconsin acknowledged for this prominent honor.

An estimated 3,300 electric utility companies operate in the United States; around 200 of them provide power to most users. Among our peers also recognized by Site Selection include American Electric Power, Dominion Energy, Duke Energy, NextEra Energy, and PECO – An Exelon Company. They are all among the top 10 largest electric utilities in the United States.

SITE SELECTION MAGAZINE'S
2020
TOP UTILITIES

Your Cooperative Honored with Economic Development Impact Award

During your Cooperative's August board meeting, Rand Fisher, President, Iowa Area Development Group, presented to the board and staff in attendance an IADG Impact Award for our economic development accomplishments and commitment to community.

"We commend Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative for being an active supporter of business development in the service territory they serve," said Fisher. "They provide essential financial and technical assistance that many times is a critical component in successfully securing projects that create jobs and support community vitality."

This year, your Cooperative was specifically recognized for its project support for two businesses. The Cooperative assisted Land Mark Products of Milford with an energy efficiency rebate check of \$11,580 for its new 32,000 sq. ft. expansion of freezer space and installed electric heat and LED lighting. The Cooperative also secured a \$2 million USDA Rural Development pass-through loan to support Godbersen Metal Works of Spencer in purchasing a 115,000 sq. ft. existing building in Spencer.

The Iowa Area Development Group, established in 1985 to promote and strengthen rural Iowa development opportunities, is the marketing and business development office for Iowa's electric cooperatives, select municipal electric utilities, and independent telecommunication companies.



Your online one-stop shop for small retail businesses.



Now more than ever, people across Iowa are looking for more ways to support local businesses. In an effort to help shop local without even leaving your homes, the Shop Iowa site is bringing together brick and mortar retail businesses from across the state into one online marketplace.

As a customer, you can browse and buy online from many local businesses from all across the state. Choose local pickup from a nearby business, or have items shipped directly to your doorstep from a business you haven't yet had the chance to visit. Shop Iowa goes directly to a local business in Iowa.

Visit www.shopiowa.com to see what products you can buy from both Kossuth and Palo Alto counties.



**Kossuth/Palo Alto County Economic
Development Corporation**

2021 COUNTYWIDE BREAKFAST



**Wednesday
July 28**

Time: 7:00 am

**Location: St. Michael's Parish Center
Whittemore**

Cost: \$20.00

Speaker: Terry Rich

Topic: Innovation...Dare to Dream, Dare to Act

**RSVP by July 14th at
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