

FILLMORE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Established in 1989, the Fillmore County Development Corporation is a non-profit corporation that fosters economic development within the county and local communities.

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A STRONG AG ECONOMY BOOSTS FILLMORE COUNTY



Sales tax collections have increased, local business sales have risen, and it is a time of business growth for Fillmore County. According to Dr. David Kohl, Professor Emeritus, Agricultural and Applied Economics from Virginia Tech, right now there is a Swiss cheese economy. Nebraska and other Midwest States are the islands of prosperity while some other parts of the world are in the dungeon of doom. As long as the world demands more food, fiber and fuel Nebraska is sitting pretty good. Unusual events can change the scenario,

however.

Dr. Kohl was the speaker for the first program of 2011-2012 *Farmers & Ranchers College* series. The Farmers & Ranchers College is in its 11th year of providing high quality education to farmers and ranchers in the area. The collaborators and sponsors for the college are agribusinesses, agriculture industry representatives, University of Nebraska Extension and the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, other institutions of higher learning, and agricultural commodity organizations.

Robby Nunns New Pharmacist at Weaver Pharmacy in Geneva

Robby Nunns, a native of Geneva, has joined the Weaver Pharmacy staff as a full-time pharmacist. Robby graduated from Nebraska Wesleyan with a BS degree in biology in 2007. Then in June of 2011 he graduated with honors from South University School of Pharmacy in Savannah, Georgia. The School of Pharmacy program at South University is a fast-paced, full-time 12 quarter schedule which allows students to complete the program in three calendar years.

Robby is looking forward to serving and giving back to his home town community.

For information about the other 2011-2012 workshops contact the Fillmore County Extension office at 402-759-3712.

Inside this issue:

Strong Ag Economy Boosts FC	1
Nunns New Pharmacist	1
Hospital Near Completion	1
Exeter Arms on Main Street	2
Reverse Trade Mission in Sept	2
Grain Shuttle at Fairmont	2
Brown Bag Workshop	2
Purchasing A Business	3
BR & E Surveys	3
Up-Coming Events	3
FCDC Director's Notes	3



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New Fillmore County Hospital Set to Open in March

According to Paul Utemark, FC Hospital Administrator, all indicators point to the new Fillmore County Hospital being operational by March 1, 2012.

Large crews have been working on the facility and it is expected that 98% of the work will be done by January. Moving equipment and furniture will start in February.

The ground breaking for the \$18.5 million project was in October of 2010. Favorable conditions and few complications have allowed the facility to be completed earlier than first expected.

Exeter-Arms Opens Retail Outlet

Rob and Hope Androyna have opened a full line gun store in Exeter. The store offers everything from hand guns, long guns and hunting rifles to T-shirts and a complete line of accessories. They also have a gunsmith on site to repair guns.



In addition to the retail side of the gun business they will offer training for many of the arms they sell. They also teach the Nebraska Concealed weapon carrying course .

The Androyna's spent most the summer remodeling the two buildings on the south edge of downtown Exeter where the new store is located. The property is zoned for commercial and manufacturing as they plan to build their own model of gun as well.

Throughout the process the Androyna's have noted "the great support from the community of Exeter and their regular customers. "

Exeter Arms is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9-5 and until 8 p.m. on Wednesdays.

FCDC Participates in Governor's Reverse Trade Mission

The second Governor's Reverse Trade Mission was held September 7-10 in conjunction with the Nebraska Diplomats Passport to Nebraska Weekend. The theme for the event was "Bringing the World to Nebraska" and offered trade representatives and international business leaders the opportunity to see firsthand the benefits of doing business in Nebraska. Representatives from 15 countries, including Argentina, Canada, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Spain, United Arab Emirates and Vietnam were among those participating.

A main feature of the Reverse Trade Mission was the benefit of the Nebraska Advantage.

FCDC Executive Director Patt Lentfer participated in the Lincoln Area Development Partnership (LADP) sponsored breakfast on Friday morning. Lentfer said "It was great to be part of the economic development team welcoming international business leaders to Nebraska and extending an invitation to learn more about business investment opportunities in the LADP area, which includes Fillmore County."

Mr. F. Xavier Vila-Pahlí, a Bioiberica officer from Spain, attended the Reverse Trade Mission. Lentfer joined him at the breakfast and at the Nebraska Diplomats' banquet in the evening.

Grain Shuttle to be Built by Fairmont

A partnership of Cooperative Producers, Inc and Lansing Trade Group, LLC. is planning a BNSF Railway grain-loop shuttle and elevator west of Fairmont along Highway 6.

The company contacted local landowners in late spring and found a site that would work for the project. They have worked with state and local authorities to secure permits. Dirt work was started in December.

The 2.1 million bushel grain elevator will be able to load 110-car trains. The loop will be long enough to get an entire grain train off the main track onto the loop. After loading, the train then moves by switch onto the main railroad line. Workers will be able to load the train in eight hours.

The elevator will take about 50% soybeans and 50% corn. Most of the grain will be shipped to the Pacific NW and then sent to China and other Pacific Rim countries.

Cooperative Producers, Inc and Lansing Trade Group, LLC are changing their name to CPI—Lansing, LLC. They are investing \$21 million to build the facility and will employ eight people.



BROWN BAG One-hour WORKSHOP
Tuesday, January 24, 2012
Heritage Crossings—\$5.00

Keys to Effective Teamwork and Great Customer Service presented by *Carmen Schwab* will be the topic at the Brown Bag Workshop on January 24th. There will be three one-hour sessions: 10:00-11:00, noon-1:00 and 1:30-2:30 p.m.

The \$5 fee includes a brown bag lunch, some great ideas, and lots of fun.

Ms. Schwab knows the keys to effective teamwork and great customer service. She will present the topic in a common-sense style with humor and inspiration.

The workshop will be held in the multipurpose room at Heritage Crossings at 501 N 13th Street in Geneva. Please register by January 17th by calling 759-4910 or email: lentfer.fcfdc@genevemail.com

The *Brown Bag Workshop* is sponsored by the Leadership Committee. of the Fillmore County Development Corporation. with additional funding provided by the Fillmore County Foundation.

Quick Tips for Purchasing a Business Or Selling One

Being an entrepreneur doesn't mean you have to start a brand new business or develop a brand new product or service. It could simply mean you are purchasing an already existing business.

Business transition is another important component of economic development. Keeping store fronts full, offering services people need and producing goods keeps communities strong.

Following are some quick tips for purchasing a business or if you own a business things to think about as you prepare to transition to another owner. Jeff Reynolds at Center for Rural Affairs-REAP www.cfra.org/reap shared this list.

The first and most important thing to consider: Why is the seller selling? If the owner does not want to share detailed information in answering the following question it should raise a RED flag.

1. Ask to review the certified financial states of income, cash flow and balance sheets for the last three years.
2. Ask to see the company's (not the owner's personal) IRS returns for the last three years.
3. Ask for a copy of all documents of all outstanding indebtedness like notes payable, accounts payable, real estate and equipment leases.
4. Has the seller offered to stay around for awhile after the sale to help with transition, and have you discussed some compensation for his/her services during the transition period?
5. Have you been allowed to talk with the employees, or is this sale confidential? If it's confidential, why are employees not being told of the impending sale?
6. Has there been any significant turnover of employees? If so why is that?
7. Have you learned anything about the quality of customer relations at the company?
8. Have you learned anything about the relationship between the company and its vendors?
9. What are the actual conditions of the working environment? Are there any hazardous situations or is this a well-kept workplace?
10. What are the actual conditions of existing fixed assets like office equipment, machinery, vehicles and the like? If existing employees, do they demonstrate good maintenance.

Homegrown. Homemade. Hometown!

Local rural development partners are hosting a series of FREE sessions exploring how food based businesses can increase economic vitality to rural southeast and south central Nebraska.

Three programs entitled **Homegrown. Homemade. Hometown!** will be held at the Davenport Community Center on January 24, February 7 and March 6 from 1-3 p.m. The first session will show how civic agriculture and community kitchens can benefit local producers/gardeners and business partners. The second and third sessions will focus on strategies for potential growers and other partners to create a sustainable food system for the region.

To learn more go to <http://stonesthoreau.wordpress.com> and look at the page titled "A Proposal For A Sustainable Food System", or call Harold Stone at 202-236-8730.

Business Retention & Expansion Surveys in 2011

The FCDC Director, Administrative Assistant and several Board members with help from DED, NPPD and Black Hills Energy economic development staff conducted Business Retention and Expansion surveys in July and November.

Twenty businesses across the County were surveyed. Responses show that businesses were growing and some were planning expansions or capital investments. There are quite a number of employment opportunities among the companies but some require special skills. Over all because of the strong ag economy local businesses are doing well. Cell service continues



Sunflower Marketing

UP-COMING EVENTS

- Strategic Planning—January 18, 2012,
- Brown Bag Workshop—January 24, Geneva
- FCDC Annual Meeting— mid February, Geneva
- Agri/Eco-Tourism Workshop—Jan 31, Feb 1, North Platte
www.VisitNebraska.gov/industry.
- MarketPlace—February 22, Kearney
www.cfra.org/marketplace/home
- Homegrown.Homemade.Hometown! Jan 24, Feb 7, Mar 6
<http://stonesthoreau.wordpress.com> (under Proposal)

FCDC Director's Notes. . .



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If someone asked you why is living in Fillmore County a good thing what would be your answer ?

Being in my position I probably get asked this question more often than most and of course I have my 3-minute elevator speech that lists things such as great highways, easy drive/walk to work, great volunteers, job opportunities., quality schools, excellent health care, service minded businesses, safe communities, and etc.

Maybe you aren't asked the question directly, but you are answering that question everyday whether it is through the emails you send, the messages you post on Facebook or Twitter, a Blog you post or respond to, the phone calls you answer and etc. You can help spread the word that Fillmore County is a GREAT place to call home. Recruiting more citizens is a must as population decline is a threat to all the things that make living in a rural area valuable.

For more information about anything mentioned in this newsletter email lentfer.fcfc@genevaimail.com or phone 402-759-4910.

Happy Holidays

Patt Lentfer