



November 2008

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Business and Industry Tour Over 35 Businesses and 300 Students Participate

On November 18th over 35 Dawson County businesses and approximately 300 Dawson County students participated in the 3rd annual ABLE Business and Industry Tour. Students from Eustis-Farnam, Gothenburg, Cozad, Elwood, Lexington, Overton and SEM participated in the event visited employers throughout the county.



Lyle Davis (above) presents to Dawson County students interested in careers in health care.

High School students could sign up for one of ten tours that are developed to specifically give the student exposure to careers within a specific career field.

[Click here to finish story.](#)

FEATURE: Eilers Machine and Welding Inc. Celebrating 25 Years

On April 18, 1983, Brian & Anne Eilers purchased Deeter Machine & Welding which was a 35 year old on-going business in Lexington. Eilers Machine and Welding began with a 5,000 square foot facility, two employees, and sales under \$200,000. One of those employees, Wesley Houser is still employed by Eilers. At that time the business was primarily dependent on the local agricultural economy and was centered on farm machinery repair.

Due to the negative status in the farm economy at the time, Brian realized he had to diversify the business. In 1985, he chose to pursue Government contracting in which he received his first contract in 1985 for 927 bracket swivels.

In 1986 the Sperry-New Holland plant closed and devastated the local economy while also creating an opportunity for Eilers to purchase various Sperry-New Holland shop machinery. Eilers also hired former New Holland employees that had the first hand knowledge to run the purchased equipment. Brian also purchased some new equipment and added 9,000 square feet to the facility. At this time, Eilers had five employees plus Brian and Anne. Through this phase of expansion, Brian added a total of seventeen pieces of equipment to the shop.

By 1989, with 11 employees and sales over \$1,000,000 it was clear that Eilers Machine had outgrown the facility. The City of Lexington was trying to promote business and wanted to develop an industrial site. Eilers became the first occupant of the Greater Lexington Industrial Park, located off Interstate 80 and Hwy. 283. The original building was a 25,000 square foot convex Behlen building completed in July of 1990.

In 1996 Eilers added 18,000 square foot bringing the total building to 43,000 square feet and a total workforce of 25. Later on, an office building was also added. In 1999, the shop area was expanded 11,640 sq. ft. and in 2005 another 840 sq. ft were added to the office building. The most recent addition was in 2005 in which 22,192 sq. ft. were added and referred to as the south wing.


Today, Eilers Machine & Welding, Inc. supplies a wide variety of fabricated metal parts to the U.S.

Government. Nearly 96% of its business comes from Department of Defense related contracts and includes a wide assortment of new and replacement parts for land, sea and air military applications. In 2007 the company was awarded and completed 872 projects for the government, and earned over \$8.7 million gross revenue with 60 employees.



The company has a proven track record in servicing a broad range of machining, fabrication, welding and finishing needs and ensures total compliance with customer specification and tolerances.

Our history is rich with talented people who have built and brought together quality service to our customers. Eilers Machine & Welding, Inc. has always attributed their success to having a winning attitude. We are proud to continue producing high-quality products and being the preferred supplier to our customers. We will continue to uphold this kind of reputation as we work together to provide excellence in every aspect of our company's business.

In January of this year, Chase Eilers joined the company business after graduating from Milford Southeast Technical School. Chase is the son of Brian and Anne Eilers. Chase brings with him an interest and desire to carry on the family owned business. 



Brian (above left) often provides area students with tours of his business to better educate them on the various technical aspects of the company.


(Cozad) Tenneco Discussions Continue

For Immediate Release
November 4, 2008
by Robyn Geiser


Cozad Development Corporation and Dawson Area Development on behalf of the City of Cozad continue to work with Tenneco officials regarding the announcement of pending closures. The Tenneco Ride Control Plant in Cozad could be affected either through restructuring or closure.

The State of Nebraska is currently working with Cozad and the Tenneco officials to identify resources available to assist in the efforts to retain the Cozad facility.



Tenneco is a vital part of this community and we are working to provide information to the company the will ensure our plant will remain open. 

CROWN Home Project Breaks Ground

Ground for all fifteen (15) homes of the CROWN Project, namely Dawson Estates, has been broken. Five homes will be built by the developer in each of the three communities of Gothenburg, Cozad, and Lexington. These three-bedroom, two-bathroom homes will be available to residents to rent on an income-qualified basis. Certain conditions will apply in renting one of the homes. Upon completion, the developer/owner will be advertising for tenants. Watch for updates in the coming months. 



Pictured from left:
Gary Peters
Vicki Halligan
Jessie McCoy

2008-09 DAD Leadership Class Finishes November Session

November 5th found the DAD Leadership Class in Lexington. The day began with Senators Wightman and Carlson and insights on getting elected to the Legislature, along with current issues facing the Unicameral in 2009. Energy issues with NPPD and environmental information from NE Department of Environmental Quality rounded out the morning session.




Rick Nelson of NPPD presents to the class on NPPD's role in providing energy to the Dawson area.

Local city and Dawson County officials explained their forms of government to the class. The final activity was a tour and informational briefing at Cornhusker Energy Lexington, LLC, the local ethanol plant.



The class also participated in a tour of the local ethanol plant, Cornhusker Energy Lexington, LLC.

The class is busy beginning their class project. They have chosen to be the group that leads a fund raising effort to send local Dawson and Gosper county WWII Veterans to Washington DC to view monuments and memorials in their honor. 


Lexington Selected for "New Neighborhoods II" Initiative

Lexington has been selected as one of three cities to participate in the Nebraska Department of Economic Development's (DED) \$3 million "New Neighborhoods II" Initiative.

"If Nebraska is to remain competitive in its pursuit of new business start-ups and expansions, we must do everything in our power to ensure that affordable housing is readily available to meet the needs of employees relocating for these better job opportunities," said Richard Baier, DED director. "Along this line, our communities also must continue to pursue other projects, such as downtown revitalization and infrastructure improvements...projects that all factor heavily into people's reasons for ultimately choosing to live in one location or another."

The Department will invest up to \$3 million total from the Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Funds and the Community Development Block Grant Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund depending on the nature of the cities' projects.

The projects are designed to recruit and retain local workforces through new planned unit development subdivisions, including mixed income housing and mixed uses (such as commercial development).


The goal of the "New Neighborhoods II" Initiative is to develop models for communities lacking all necessary components to meet the demand for workforce housing, which in turn, stalls business recruitment and expansion efforts. This Initiative includes planning, community development and housing components, and projects may be multi-phased and span several years. 



BCDM Hired to Complete Feasibility Study for Former Wal-Mart Building

DAD has entered into an agreement with BCDM to perform a Planning and Feasibility Study for the former Wal-Mart building as a regional educational resource center. As part of the study a Kick-Off meeting will be held in January to discuss how the process will work, and how the stakeholders in the outcome will take on leadership roles during the planning. The planning study will involve assessing the demand potential for the businesses, school

districts, technical colleges, and communities regarding the types of training and space needed to improve our local labor force, and expand educational opportunities for our region.

Anyone interested in being a part of the steering committee is encouraged to contact the DAD office. 




www.bcdm.net

Downtown Revitalization Plans Continue in Cozad and Gothenburg

The professional planning firm, JEO Consulting Group, Inc., is busy putting the finishing touches on downtown revitalization plans in both Cozad and Gothenburg. This firm was contracted by both Dawson County cities to gather, analyze and present information relating to downtown needs to the City Councils in both communities. From this plan, Gothenburg and Cozad will have a blueprint with which to implement projects and strategies to improve and promote the downtown areas.

Focus group meetings were held in early November to gather information from various groups (City councils, economic development corporations and downtown business/building owners) and see what each group felt was needed for or in their downtown areas.

After each plan is approved by the local City Councils of Gothenburg and Cozad, they will be forwarded to the NE Department of Economic Development for use in Phase II of the Downtown Revitalization Projects. 



8th Street - Downtown Cozad



9th and Lake - Downtown Gothenburg


DAD Applies for Funds to Demolish Vacant Housing

HUD's new Neighborhood Stabilization Program will provide emergency assistance to state and local governments to acquire and redevelop foreclosed properties that might otherwise become sources of abandonment and blight within their communities.

The Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) provides grants to every state and certain local communities to purchase foreclosed or abandoned homes and to rehabilitate, resell, or redevelop these homes in order to stabilize neighborhoods and stem the decline of house values of neighboring homes. The program is authorized under Title III of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008.


In 2008, all the communities that are members of Dawson Area Development were participants in an area-wide housing study. One piece of the housing puzzle is to demolish housing units that are vacant, abandoned, unable to be rehabbed and unsafe for residents to live in. Over a future five-year time period, the professional housing study firm determined that 119 units scattered throughout the communities need to be removed. Setting a goal for a two year time period, it is estimated that 48 housing units should be demolished at a total cost of \$720,000.

This program would allow for cleanup of unsafe housing units in our area and pave the way for the original owner or someone else to redevelop the property and provide safer, healthier and affordable housing unit(s). DAD's program has been included in the NDED Annual Action Plan, and was scored according to need and demographic criteria of the area. The DAD demolition project scored very well compared to other projects across the state.

More information in the Spring of 2009 will be available regarding the program, and the pending application for funding. Communities in the meantime should be identifying eligible dilapidated and vacant housing units and prioritizing the units that need demolished. 

DAD Approved as a NDO by NE Dept. of Econ. Development

Dawson Area Development received approval of an application to be designated as a non-profit development organization (NDO) by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

A Non-profit Development Organization (NDO) is a non-profit association or corporation organized under State law to engage in community economic development activities. The non-profit enters into an agreement with a community (either local or regional) and the State to act as a sub-recipient of CDBG Economic Development grants. If the repayment of that loan is made to the nonprofit organization and the nonprofit retains the repayments for further use, repayments are not considered program income; subsequent loans by the nonprofit entity using those funds do not have to meet any Federal requirements. The NDO would then administer the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) resulting from those repayments in accordance with the terms of the agreement with the original grantee and the State Department of Economic Development. At this time only three organizations in the state of Nebraska have achieved this designation. 



NE Graduate Outcomes Publication Available Online

The Graduate Outcomes publication is now available at:
www.NebraskaWorkforce.com

Go to Labor Market information and scroll to current releases or click on the logo at the bottom of the story.

This publication provides answers to questions about the employment outcomes of 2005-2006 graduates working in Nebraska in the first quarter of 2007. Those questions include:

- Which fields of study produce graduates most likely to be employed in Nebraska?
- Which majors produce graduates with the highest earnings?
- What industries employ recent graduates?
- In which counties are graduates employed?
- What are the demographic characteristics of graduates?

The Graduate Outcomes project is a partnership among Nebraska Workforce Development - Department of Labor, the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, Central Community College, Metropolitan Community College, Mid-Plains Community College, Northeast Community College, Southeast Community College, Western Nebraska Community College, Chadron State College, Peru State College, Wayne State College and the University of Nebraska - Kearney.

Please feel free to forward this information to other interested parties.

For additional information please contact:
Mary Findlay
mary.findlay@nebraska.gov

Click on the Workforce Development logo below to view the PDF online. 



Business and Industry Tour: Over 35 Businesses and 300 Students Participate CONT.

All 10 busses arrived in Cozad where the students met in the Wellness Center gym and then were given instructions pertaining to their tour of choice. The ten tour busses then departed en route to various Dawson County employers.

Each tour stop through the day was approximately an hour long with the tour guide at each tour stop explaining the variety of careers available to the students within each company. Tours typically consisted of two morning stops and then one stop again after dinner.

Dinner for all of the students, sponsors, and bus drivers was once again this year provided by Paulsen Inc. A sincere thank you is extended from the ABLE program towards Larry Paulsen and his staff as well as the Cozad Ambassadors for their willingness to serve the students again this year. Thank you all very much!



COZAD AMBASSADORS



Students on the Government Tour spent the day within various offices at the County Courthouse in an attempt to re-create County Government Day held in the past.



Students on the Healthcare Tours visited all three hospitals along with Stonehearth Estates and Meadowlark Pointe. Above students visit with residents of Meadowlark Pointe.

The ten tours were coordinated as follows:

1. AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES:
 - Cornhusker Energy
 - Dawson Public Power District
 - Northeast Community College
 - All Points Cooperative
 - Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture
2. ENTREPRENEURSHIP:
 - Eustis Body Shop
 - Colorado Biolabs
 - Designer Craft Woodworking
3. AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY:
 - Plum Creek Motors
 - Wyo Tech
 - Fairbanks International
 - Husker Ag
 - Pony Express Chevrolet
- 4 & 5. MEDICAL (two tours):
 - Gothenburg Memorial Hospital
 - Stonehearth Estates
 - Cozad Community Health System
 - Tri-County Hospital
 - Meadowlark Pointe
6. ENGINEERING:
 - Tenneco Automotive
 - Baldwin Filters
 - Orthman Manufacturing
 - Central Community College
7. TECHNOLOGY:
 - KRVN 880 Rural Radio
 - Wal-Mart
 - Lexington Airport
8. GOVERNMENT:
 - Dawson County Courthouse, Sheriff's Office, County Commissioners, County Clerk, Treasurer, Surveyor, Assessor, and County Court.
9. BUSINESS, MARKETING, AND MANAGEMENT:
 - Gothenburg State Bank
 - First State Bank
 - Clipper-Herald
 - KRVN 880 Rural Radio
10. ARCHITECTURE AND CONSTRUCTION:
 - Paulsen Inc.
 - Designer Craft Woodworking
 - T.L. Sund

The ABLE program would like to thank all of you who were involved with the success of the event. 