



FALLS CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH ENTERPRISE
VOLUME II ■ 2016

Our mission is to encourage economic development and growth and improve the business conditions of the Falls City

FAST Global Solutions Expansion Underway



FAST Global Solutions is contributing to growth this construction season with a 46' x 76' office addition and expanded parking. They are investing in the facility because they are employing more people than ever before and need the room to accommodate such large scale growth. The new office space will house current office personnel while adding space for company foreman. This move will allow for area leads to move into the center office area, located on the shop floor, to more effectively perform their supervisory duties.

The addition will also include a conference room and training area as well as the opportunity to

the break room to accommodate their 130+ employees. The final stage of the project will include an updated façade along the north side of the building as well as new company and directional signage.

Donnie Stevens of Triple S Construction has been busy with the initial dirt work which prepared for the asphalt phase that is underway this week. The building addition construction is scheduled to begin this fall. The hope is that the project will be complete after the first of the year in early 2017. This investment will streamline processes and improve the flow of company operations.

This investment goes hand in hand with additional job growth. FAST is looking to add employees to their workforce and they invite everyone out to their Job Fair on July 17th between 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM. They are partnering with Staffing Services to bring this event to Falls City so please stop by to learn more about the opportunities available. You can also visit their website <http://www.waspinc.com/careers/>.



FAST JOB FAIR
Thursday, July 21st
Noon – 5:00 PM
1301 E 4th Street, Falls City

edge

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Community Medical Center Groundbreaking

Community Medical Center celebrated the groundbreaking of their expansion and renovation project in May and many community members, business owners and government officials made it out for the special event.

Senator Dan Watermeier spoke on Falls City's continuous efforts to improve and grow. "This happens down in Falls City so many times, it's really incredible. I always say the same story, in the fact that, Falls City doesn't take anything for granted. If they need it – they go out and get it. They go out and fundraise for it, they get around the government regulations, they work with the government agencies – they get it done! But this is something, to me, that is a shining example of the government staying out of the way and allowing the private parties and community to do what needs to be done. Recognizing what needs to be done!"

The Tanner Shelby Merz Foundation was also in attendance. Their non-profit organization focuses on raising awareness and understanding of TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury).

CEO Ryan Larsen says, "We have representing the Tanner Shelby Merz Foundation, Marc and Sally Merz. We've been working with them for the last year or so about how we can improve access to neurological and brain injury services in our community and they were hopeful that this project would further some of those things."

The new primary care clinic as well as half of the new surgical unit will be completed by March of 2017. The final stages of the project are expected to be completed the following spring.



Ryan Larsen, CMC Administrator

Check out this *Quality of Life* video on our Facebook page that received over 8,000 views!

<https://www.facebook.com/Falls-City-Economic-Development-and-Growth-Enterprise-EDGE-315142223145/>



Quote of the Quarter:

Thank you so much for the receipt of your great publication---it is very informative news on the progress of Falls City---I get back to my hometown every couple of years and this info helps me to gain knowledge of the ongoing activities and business news. The new housing build information is especially interesting.

-Gary Ingram

Join the EDGE team and invest in the future of Falls City/Richardson County!

Investment levels range from \$5,000 for Visionary to \$100 for Supporters

To learn more about EDGE's program of work and how you can join us in shaping the future of Falls City, visit the [EDGE website](#) or contact Beckie Cromer, Executive Director, at 402.245.2105 or email director@fallscityedge.com.

GRAND OPENING RKFC, LLC

It was a soggy, wet and rain filled Monday during the annual EDGE Business and Industry week BBQ but the Investor and Community Relations team of volunteers brightened up everyone's day with a Grand Opening celebration at RKFC that included lunch and facility tours. The weather didn't stop the nearly 150 guests from partaking in locally made products cooked up by Executive Chef Bart Keller who always shares his cooking expertise so generously each year.

This annual event gives us an opportunity to educate the public about the jobs available and the skills needed to successfully compete for the openings in the food processing, agriculture, metal manufacturing, plastics and service repair industry clusters. It also gives us the chance to thank the businesses for the



contributions they make to the area. The BBQ was open to the public and included a group of students from Falls City High School.

“Falls City EDGE recognizes a business or industry each year during Business and Industry Week. This is our third consecutive year for the BBQ and we were happy to host the event at RKFC because it doubled as their grand opening celebration. All in attendance appreciated the investment RKFC has made in Falls City!” said Keller.



Nebraska Business & Industries Celebrated

Nebraska Diplomats gathered on May 4th to recognize the state's leading businesses and industries for their major contributions to the state's economy. The Nebraska Diplomats, which sponsor the annual event, is the largest economic development organization in the state of Nebraska. The Diplomats join with other economic development organizations statewide to promote Nebraska's business climate and quality of life.

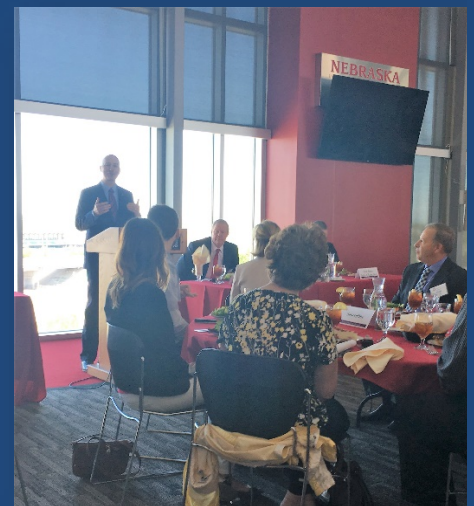
Governor Pete Ricketts welcomed guests during lunch at Memorial Stadium and proclaimed May 4, 2016 as Business and Industry Recognition Day.

Business and Industry attendees also chose to attend one of two tours offered by Lincoln Industries or the Lincoln Public Schools and Southeast Community College Career Academy partnership.

Falls City EDGE Director, Beckie Cromer was pleased to be a part of the LPS and SCC Career Academy tour. “The new Career Academy located

at 84th and “O” St. in Lincoln is a shining example of high tech education focused on the demand careers available in Nebraska. It exposes high school students to the jobs available in our great state while, at the same time, giving them the skills to successfully compete for those jobs. It's a great partnership that should be implemented in other areas within SCC's service territory in order to meet the needs of employers from across the region. It's exciting to think about the future of education and the partnerships that can make it happen,” Cromer stated.

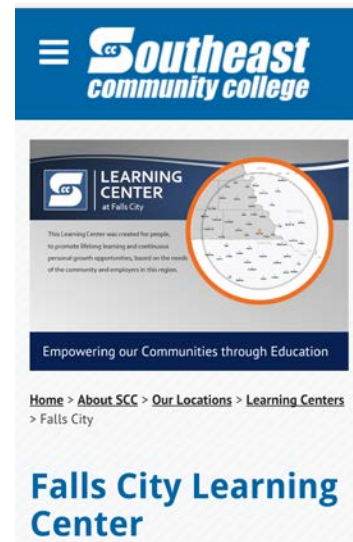
A golf outing at Firethorn Golf Club was offered and an evening reception at the Club closed out the day's events.



Governor Pete Ricketts

SCC Learning Center

Falls City EDGE and Southeast Community College are still in the process of finding proper classroom space for the regional learning center that will be located in Falls City. Mayor Jerry Oliver, who has aided in the site location process, says “Falls City wants to make sure the space allows for proper equipment and training that meets the needs of regional employers, including the industries. The model they have been using in other communities would not meet the needs of our businesses so it’s been a more challenging task to accomplish but we continue to keep on top of the site selection process.” In addition to the school’s main campuses in Beatrice, Milford and Lincoln, the college has been working tirelessly to open learning centers in several communities throughout Southeast Nebraska but each community has its own specific training needs so the center needs to be tailored to each locale. As for the Falls City location, “At this time, we are awaiting a CAD drawing from SCC’s Physical Plant Manager on a potential site but nothing is certain. We will continue to work together until a suitable site has been identified,” said EDGE Executive Director, Beckie Cromer. For more information about the project please see Dr. Paul Illich’s open letter which provides a more detailed update on page 5.



Lane Leadership

Lane Leadership is excited to announce that class #3 will begin this fall and now is the time to apply! The program focuses on developing leadership and board readiness skills; increasing awareness about the community and available resources; networking; exposing stewardship opportunities; and building leaders for the future of the community. Each year, the class participants are exposed to representatives from area businesses, organizations and institutions and to a variety of social and economic issues facing the area. This awareness is developing informed, civic-oriented leaders who are interested in helping direct the future of the community. Contact Falls City Chamber/Main Street Director, David Branch, for more information by calling 402.245.4228.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Falls City EDGE collaborates with many partners throughout the year and hosts many community events. Here are some of the upcoming events:

- July 7th – Job Skills Development Session @ Sac & Fox Community Building
 - July 12th – Nebraska Governors Summit on Economic Development
 - July 23rd – Falls City Aquatic Center Triathlon
 - July 28th-30th – Lemonade Days – Downtown Falls City
 - August 2nd – National Night Out Against Crime – Falls City Aquatic Center
 - August 24th-26th – Nebraska Rural Renaissance Project
 - August 26th-28th - Cobblestone Festival

Dr. Illich, Statement of Commitment

Southeast Community College is committed to a proactive and evidence-based approach that continually assesses and responds to student, community and employer demand for higher education.

SCC developed its 2015-2019 Strategic Plan based on a comprehensive assessment of key external and internal trends throughout its 15-county service area. One of the goals in SCC's new strategic plan is to "expand accessibility of programs and services for all 15 counties of the College's service area based on student, employer and community demand." Six locations were identified based on population, accessibility, connectivity, and geographical spacing. Falls City was one of the selected locations. During the past several months, SCC has worked closely with the Falls City Economic Development and Growth Enterprise (EDGE) group in evaluating potential sites for lease. While the identification of a site continues, SCC has moved forward with programming and logistics.



Dr. Paul Illich,
SCC President

The following is an update on SCC's Falls City Learning Center:

- The Trades & Industry Manufacturing advisory group has identified and programmed non-credit classes for high-demand areas.
- An Electrical Fundamentals class was taught in late May.
- Other courses offered include Nebraska Finishing Technologies and OSHA 10, Welding and Electrical Code.
- A task force for health courses has met, and potential credit and non-credit opportunities have been identified.
- A task force for education is being developed.
- A full-time coordinator is expected to be hired in August.
- Additional information on the Falls City Learning Center can be found at: <https://www.southeast.edu/falls-city-learning-center/>

SCC is committed to serving its entire 15-county area and is very excited about the opportunities that will be created with the Falls City Learning Center. Southeast Nebraska has tremendous attributes, including highly productive agriculture, energy generation infrastructure, the state capital, access to outstanding two- and four-year institutions of higher education, and a thriving economy in health services, finance, insurance, construction, manufacturing, and many other industries. SCC is poised to expedite the area's economic and community development by empowering its employers, students and community members via responsive pathways to career/technical, academic transfer and continuing education programs.

This is a very exciting time for SCC as it establishes a new transformational direction to meet the current and future student, employer, and community needs of southeast Nebraska.

SCC Summer Classes Offered in Falls City

- Gas Metal Arc Welding – July 5-30, 2016
- National Electrical Code Seminar – July 15-16, 2016

[Register on-line](#)



Housing Updates



Work at the Wilderness Falls Site

Now is the time for seniors and families to contact Excel Development Group for rental information at Wilderness Falls!

It's been great construction weather in recent weeks and Wilderness Falls is on target for leasing new units this fall. The first duplex is scheduled for completion the week of July 15th and the construction plans call for the completion of one unit per week through end of August! The project wrap up is scheduled for the end of September

with irrigation and sod being installed. The Wilderness Falls II project includes 7-duplexes that will consist of four 2-bedroom units, eight 3-bedroom units and two 4-bedroom units that will rent for \$475, \$515, and \$560 per month respectively.

For more information about leasing one of the duplexes please contact Excel Development Group at 800-378-9366 or download the application here: <http://www.exceldbg.com/contact-us/pre-application-forms/>



[Apply on-line](http://www.exceldbg.com/contact-us/pre-application-forms/)



Sacred Heart to Open Day Care Center

Quality child care is a key strategy that ensures a community can remain a viable place in which to live, work and prosper. Strong, reliable programs for our youngest children are needed for the same reasons communities strive to have a strong K-12 education system. These children need a reliable foundation where they can learn to grow and become contributing members of society. Adequate childcare is also a major factor in the overall health of the local workforce system.

The Sacred Heart Daycare and Learning Center will be a valuable addition to the Falls City community and will fill a need that has grown over time. Falls City has seen a great deal of change and progress over the last 5 years and, as a result, the demand for quality childcare has increased. Availability of childcare services is a key component in our ability to continue on this path of success as we strive to retain and grow a workforce who greatly rely on daycare services.

The reasons we need additional daycare options in the Falls City community are many and include:

- We have a record number manufacturing companies located in our industrial park and, today, they employ nearly 275 individuals.
- We have a regional unemployment rate between 3% - 4% which means most of the families in the area are employed and in need of daycare services.
- The number of individuals looking for childcare services on social media has drastically increased in the last 1-2 years which validates families are in need of additional options.
- There is a very low vacancy rate in our business district which is another indicator of a healthy economy and retailers need access to flexible daycare facilities.

Community development takes strategy and planning and Sacred Heart has done its due diligence in determining the need for additional services in Falls City. This daycare center will give our business community the confidence that a reliable network of childcare is available. Vicky Froeschl will manage daycare and facility operations and she will be supported by five eager part time helpers who are ready to foster the growth of our next generation. Plans are that the facility will be up and running in August. If you would like more information please contact Sacred Heart School at 402.245.4151.

Gov. Ricketts Announces First Annual Governor’s Summit on Economic Development

Nebraska DED, February 23, 2016-LINCOLN – Governor Pete Ricketts announced that the Governor’s Office and the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) will host a first-of-its-kind “Governor’s Summit on Economic Development” in Lincoln on July 12, 2016. This summit will serve as an annual avenue for Nebraska’s business and economic development community members to share ideas and provide input to state government in key policy areas including workforce development, tax policy, and business attraction.

“The summit will bring together Nebraskans who are dedicated to growing our state,” said Governor Ricketts. “This event will provide an annual opportunity for Nebraska’s business and economic development community members to carry on a conversation about how to attract new businesses, retain existing ones, and create good-paying jobs for the next generation.”

This year, the Governor’s Summit will focus on the results of a study by SRI International regarding the state’s existing economic development programs. “The state is continuously evaluating Nebraska’s business climate in areas that include taxes, regulatory issues, transportation, access to markets, supply chain, roads and infrastructure, and more,” said DED Director Courtney Dentlinger. “We expect that SRI’s research results will help us break these areas down even further and find ways to streamline and perfect delivery systems, and target specific legislation that improves and expands on existing laws.”

At the summit, SRI will conduct several sessions focusing on findings from their study as related to the state’s target industries, housing and community development, and workforce and talent. SRI will also offer an analysis of the state’s innovation ecosystem.

For more information on the Governor’s Summit, Nebraskans can contact Lori Shaal at 402-471-3780 or lori.shaal@nebraska.gov.



Sen. Dan Watermeier; Vaughn Lenard; Sen. Deb Fischer

Senator Deb Fischer visits Falls City

U.S. Senator Deb Fischer (R-Neb.) hosted several community coffee conversations in Nebraska following Memorial Day weekend. The community coffees serve as convenient opportunities for local Nebraskans to hear updates on Senator Fischer’s work and speak with her in a more informal setting. Fischer’s May community coffees were held in **Auburn, Falls City, Fairbury, Hebron, and York.**

**Be sure to like us on Facebook:
Falls City Economic Development and
Growth Enterprise (EDGE)**



**And follow us on Twitter:
@FallsCityEDGE**



**Falls City Economic Development
& Growth Enterprise (EDGE)**

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