

FALLS CITY NEBRASKA

Strategically Positioned. Building for the Future.



FALLS CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH ENTERPRISE

VOLUME II ■ 2015

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

Business and Industry Week Celebrated with a BBQ at AirLanco

edge



AirLanco BBQ Celebration

EDGE President Bart Keller serves in many capacities throughout the year but one of his favorite events is EDGE's annual Business and Industry day celebration which coincides with the Nebraska Diplomat's Business and Industry week each year. This year we recognized AirLanco for their economic contributions to Falls City and the surrounding areas. This event gives us the opportunity to spotlight AirLanco's local accomplishments which include the addition of a 17,700 square feet of Research and Development campus, employment growth to 80+ employees and the installation of high tech robotic equipment. This year's event, held on May 8th, drew nearly 300 company, community, and government officials who gathered for a delicious BBQ with all the fixins',

prepared by Master Chef Keller, and served by the dedicated volunteers of the EDGE Investor and Community Relations team. Students from Falls City High School, Humboldt Table Rock Steinauer, and Sacred Heart attended the event as well. The crew worked like a well-oiled machine and served lunch to a never ending line of guests who enjoyed a great meal followed by facility tours conducted by AirLanco employees. The tours ran continuously with knowledgeable guides leading groups through the entire shop. The high school students who participated in the tours were surprised to learn of the many types of jobs offered at AirLanco including Engineers, Drafters, Welders, Accountants, Human Resources, as well as Supervisors and Managers. Tour guides also explained that the Aeration Systems are custom built at AirLanco and specifically designed to provide optimal storage conditions from farm storage to major terminals and ports.

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Nebraska Department of Economic Development Staff Visits

Falls City was host to visitors from Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) staff on June 29th with Nebraska Diplomat's Kevin Malone and Steve Kottich and EDGE Executive Director Beckie Cromer welcoming our guests. The visit included NDED's newly appointed Director, Brenda Hicks-Sorenson, who was chosen by Governor Pete Ricketts after a national search that began in December. Hicks-Sorenson previously held a position as a Wisconsin business recruiter and, in his announcement, Governor Ricketts praised her as an innovative leader who stood out because of her successful recruiting record. Lynn Kohout, NDED Field Representative, and Kate Ellingson, Director of Marketing and Public Relations rounded out the team of visitors from Lincoln



Beckie Cromer, Jeff Minard, and DED Director Brenda Sorenson-Hicks

The visit included a community tour with stops at Vantec, WASP, and Consolidated Grain and Barge. The day concluded with lunch and roundtable discussions with the EDGE Board of Directors. Kottich noted, "It was a great opportunity that allowed us to showcase our community's success and we appreciated the opportunity to share our plans for future initiatives."

Gold Star Sausage --- Facility Update ...

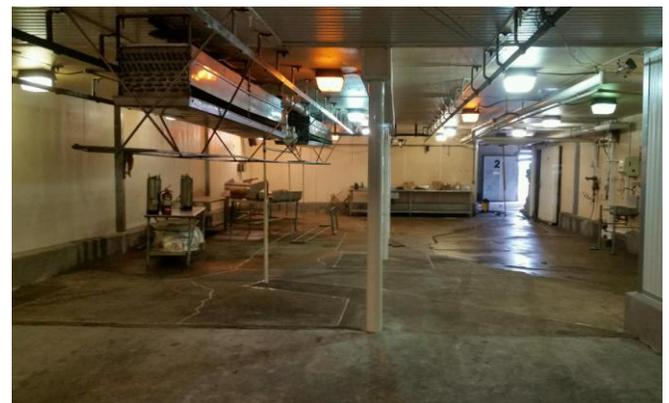


Ovens

Paul Meyer is leading the crew tasked with getting our newest industry up and running and we continue to see improvements' being made to the building's interior and exterior. The plant is being designed to segregate the raw materials from the finished ready to eat (RTE) product which means they are constructing 2 of everything including offices, bathrooms, and break rooms. The improvements also include dedicated office space for the U.S. Department of Agriculture which will be on-site monitoring 8 hours per day, 40 hours per week. The team is also looking to expand the building on the south side where new freezer space will be erected. Construction on this phase of the project began June 22nd. A large part of the building will be refrigerated and will maintain a temperature between 32- 50 degrees.

Meyer noted, "At this time, we do not have a grand opening date on the calendar but I hope to run raw product samples in the near future. Opening this facility will be an exciting event for the community and we hope to have things up and running as soon as possible."

If you are interested in employment opportunities at Gold Star Sausage you can stop by the Falls City EDGE office and fill out an interest sheet that asks for your contact information and what positions you would consider once Gold Star Sausage is up and running. For more information about Gold Star Sausage you can visit their website at www.goldstarsausage.com/



Raw pre-cooked cooler

Business & Industry Week BBQ (con't from page 1)

“We appreciate the company’s commitment to their employees and unwavering support of Falls City and Richardson County. We congratulate this valued local industry and wish them continued growth and success in the future,” said EDGE President, Bart Keller.



EDGE volunteers are ready to serve!

Randy Sailors, Plant Manager, stated, “I feel the open house went very well. We appreciate all that EDGE does for industry and the community, and we thank them for the opportunity to showcase our facility during the BBQ.”

For more information about AirLanco and their product line check out their website <http://www.airlanco.com/>.



Katie Youngquist, HR Representative, greets visitors at the BBQ.

Senator Fischer Staff Holds Local Office Hours

U.S. Senator Deb Fischer’s (R-Neb) staff held local office hours in Nemaha, Richardson, and Pawnee counties on Thursday, June 11, 2015. These office hours served as a convenient opportunity for constituents to meet personally with Senator Fischer’s staff to receive help with casework and other issues at the federal level. Sarah Skinner, Senator Fischer’s constituent services and outreach representative, visited each of these counties to meet with citizens and hear any concerns, ideas, and opinions.



WASP Awarded “Product of the Year” by Ground Support Worldwide Magazine!

Ruben Koopman, Plant Manager of WASP, has big plans----and he likes to refer to them as the path to “World Domination.” WASP certainly dominated the second quarter of 2015 with a couple of big announcements. First of all, they are making room in their trophy case (which includes the “2014 Nebraska Business” of the year trophy) for yet another award bestowed upon them by *Ground Support Worldwide Magazine*. In April, the magazine announced WASP was the recipient of the prestigious “Product of the Year Award”. WASP’s new standard dolly is what the magazine calls, “a 2015 ground support product leader because it replaces multiple dollies with various capacities resulting in greater efficiency for fleets.”

WASP continued to make headlines again in May announcing the acquisition and merger of FAST Manufacturing Inc. of Windom, Minnesota. The merger will join the WASP and FAST teams into market leaders for top of the line Airline Ground Support Equipment/Conveying Systems as well as top of the line Agricultural Sprayers.

Congratulations WASP! We are proud to have you as a vital part of our industrial portfolio.

To learn more about WASP visit their website at www.waspinc.com.



[See full article here](#)

Asset Modernization Grant

Falls City Economic Development and Growth Enterprise, Inc. (EDGE) has established the 2015 Richardson County Asset Modernization Initiative, offering a “modernization” resource to Richardson County manufactures and agricultural/food product processors. The initiative is intended to stimulate modernization of assets by county businesses.

The program offers a direct grant in an amount up to 3% of eligible purchases, not to exceed \$15,000, for new or used (manufactured after 2004) machinery and equipment acquired and placed in service in 2015. Applications are being accepted now and funds will be available on a continuing basis until the year’s budgeted allocation of \$30,000 is exhausted. Applications are available by contacting the Falls City EDGE office at 402.245.2105 or director@fallscityedge.com and should provide sufficient detail as to the project scope and growth expectations of the industry applicant.

AirLanco is the first industry in 2015 to be awarded funds in this program with the addition of an HD Alltra Cutting Machine, 2 Jib Cranes for Centrifugal Fan Lean Cells, and 2 Pulse Welders.

Construction to Begin on Wilderness Falls Phase II

Falls City Economic Development and Growth Enterprise (EDGE), is pleased to announce Excel Development Group plans to begin construction on Wilderness Falls Phase II on West 31st St. Plans are to begin construction shortly with construction taking close to 12 months.



The 14 unit project includes 4-2 bedroom units, 8-3 bedroom units, and 2-4 bedroom units. The design also includes a community garden that can be shared by tenants. Wilderness Falls II housing development will be all one level and include a zero entry design, patio, and attached single car garage. Exterior features will include partial brick, shutters, landscaping, and lawn sprinklers with amenities such as a washer and dryer, dishwasher, refrigerator, and microwave in each unit. Tenants will also enjoy a maintenance free living environment.

“Every community needs choices when it comes to senior living facilities,” notes EDGE Executive Director Beckie Cromer, “Excel Development Group continues to build a waiting list of individuals looking to live in their units and I’m sure this is welcomed news for the many who have been waiting years for the opportunity to live at Wilderness Falls.”

Nebraska Investment Finance Authority announced its selection of the Falls City project on Friday June 19th and the construction kick-off meeting was held July 1st with Rega Engineering leading the plans for phase II. We will host a ground breaking ceremony in the near future so stay tuned for more information and plan to attend this exciting event. We thank Excel Development Group for their investment in Falls City!

For more information or to obtain a pre-application for Wilderness Falls II please contact Excel Development at 1-800-378-9366 or you can visit their website at <http://exceldg.com/>



NioCorp’s Soil Geotechnical Sampling Rig, November 2014

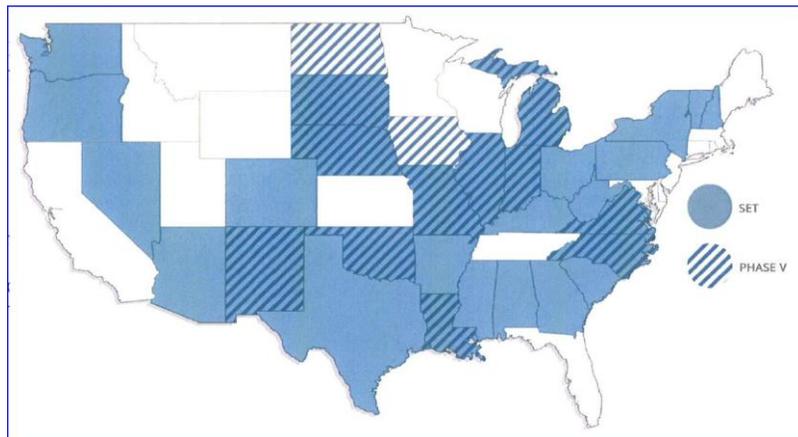
EDGE Hosts Regional Network Meeting

Falls City EDGE hosted the 2nd quarter Southeast Nebraska Resource Network (SERN) meeting on June 24th at the Grand Weaver Hotel. SERN is a professional group of development officials, service providers, and volunteers who are interested in the betterment of Southeast Nebraska. Members meet quarterly to share information about successes, initiatives, resources, and programs happening throughout the 15 county region. These meetings allow local community leaders, volunteers, and municipal staff to be connected with federal, state, and local resources and provide an opportunity to discuss ideas and opportunities for potential projects happening in Southeast Nebraska.

The event was well attended and included approximately 30 guests from throughout the region. The meeting included presentations from Former Senator Mike Flood, owner of fctv1-Falls City’s very own news channel available on SkitterTV and Scott Honan, Vice-President of Business Development for NioCorp which is the company drilling for Niobium and other rare earth elements near Elk, Creek, NE.

Partners 4 Progress Apply for Economic Development Blueprint

Stronger Economies Together (SET) enables communities and counties in rural America to work together in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint for their multi-county region that strategically builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of that region. Creating, attracting, and retaining jobs as a single rural county in isolation from other nearby counties is becoming increasingly ineffective. In today's global marketplace, economic development progress is more likely to be realized when rural and metro counties work together as a region to assess their resources and then design and implement plans that build their assets and comparative economic strengths.



Launched in 2010 by USDA Rural Development and the nation's four Regional Rural Development Centers and their land-grant university partners, this exciting initiative is now in place in more than 50 regions and 28 states.

The Benefits of SET include:

- Step-by-Step coaching to guide the design and implementation of a practical and viable regional economic development plan.
- In-depth data tailored to the region, describing its current and emerging clusters, comparative economic advantages, and detailed demographic and socio-economic information.
- Tools to uncover local assets and resources that can advance the region's economic strategies.
- Technical assistance from Extension educators, USDA RD state staff, the Regional Rural Development Centers, and the Purdue Center for Regional Development to guide the initial stages of implementation of regional goals and strategies.

The Partners 4 Progress group, which is a partnership of five counties in Southeast Nebraska: Nemaha, Richardson, Pawnee, Johnson and Otoe, has submitted their national application. They have participated in step 2, which is an interview and visitation. Announcements are expected August 1st and, if selected, the planning process will take 6-7 months and include the following steps:

- Launching SET through Civic Engagement
- Examining Economic Data for the Region
- Exploring the Region's Unique Economic Opportunities
- Identifying the Region's Assets and Challenges
- Developing Goals, Actions, and Measures Based on Consideration of Region's Unique Advantages
- Tailored Modules

We will be looking for volunteers to participate in the civic engagement, part of the program. If interested please contact Beckie Cromer at 402.245.2105.

Falls City Ranked One of 10 Best Places to Live in Nebraska

On June 13, 2015, Only Nebraska posted '10 Best Places to Live in Nebraska and Why'. Falls City made the elite list coming in at number 10. One of the many great things about Nebraskans is that we all have home-state and hometown pride. We're fiercely loyal to the places we love and we aren't afraid to tell everyone why our hometown is the best. These places were compiled from studies that ranked Nebraska towns and cities on a variety of criteria including cost of living, crime rate, employment rate, and school ratings. Factors like median income, median home value, and access to amenities such as grocery stores, retail shopping, and restaurants also figured into the rankings.

See the full story here <http://www.onlyinyourstate.com/nebraska/best-places-ne/>.

NBDC...Your Expert Business Consultants



In June, Renee Held from the University of Omaha - Nebraska Business Development Center (NBDC) met with area industries to assess their business development needs. NBDC is a valuable resource for Nebraska businesses and their goal is to help businesses grow and create new jobs. They provide consulting and educational services to small and mid-sized businesses and many services are free to the business owner or entrepreneur.

NBDC offers a wide variety of workshops in Applied Leadership, Business Analysis, Project Management, Sustainability, Process Improvement/LEAN, as well as workshops for Entrepreneurs. To learn more about what NBDC has to offer contact Renee Held at rheld@unomaha.edu or by calling 402-564-0105 or 402-960-9843. You can also visit their website at <http://nbdc.unomaha.edu/home.cfm>.

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 10th – Girls State Softball Tournament
- July 10th & 11th – Main Street Sauce & Cycles Event
- July 11th & 12th – Sacred Heart Alumni Reunion
- July 14th -August 15th – Southeast Community College Welding Class
- July 16th – Lemonade Days
- August 22nd & 23rd – Cobblestone
- September 3rd – Vantec Corporate Visit
- September 11th & 12th - Nebraska Diplomats Passport Weekend
- October 21st – UNL Rural Opportunities Fair
- TBA Gold Star Sausage Job Fair

Consolidated Grain and Barge Corporate Visit

Falls City EDGE has an effective industry strategy that includes building strong relationships with all of our industries at the local and corporate levels. The Marketing and Sales team is tasked with creating those relationships with C-Level Executives which aids in the growth and expansion of our industries and helps facilitate businesses investment plans. Our inaugural visit to Consolidated Grain and Barge (CGB) took place in April of 2015 and included EDGE team members of Bart Keller, Kevin Malone, Gary Jorn and Beckie Cromer. This visit gave us the opportunity to thank CGB for choosing Falls City and for giving our agricultural sector a significant boost!



Eric, Bart, Kevin, Gary, Beckie & Kevin at CGB Headquarters

We toured CGB headquarters in Mandeville, LA and heard a presentation about another sector of their business, Consolidated Terminals and Logistics Co. We were also given the opportunity to tour one of the largest Mississippi river barge terminals located in Convent, LA at the Port of New Orleans. This YouTube video highlights the facility we toured, Zen-Noh Grain, and shows you the process our agricultural products take as they enter the ports that carry food to the rest of the world via international waterways. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxRcD5adx7Y>



Barge Terminal in Convent, LA

CGB has made a huge impact on our region and the harvest of 2014 was a great success. It included 9000 trucking customers delivering grain during peak harvest months. That type of traffic creates a ripple effect that can be felt by business and industry throughout the tri-state region. We thanked CGB representatives, including Kevin Adams, President and CEO, Steve Burbrink, Director of Business Development and BioEnergy Services, and Eric Kresin General Manager of the Southwest Region for their commitment to Falls City. CGB is a valuable addition to our industry portfolio and a great asset to our farming community!

Cassey Whalen, Returns!

Cassey Whalen joined EDGE part time in January as Administrative Assistant. Cassey was born in Pender, NE. She has lived and attended school all over the state of Nebraska. Cassey is a graduate of Friend High School in Friend, NE, and Lincoln School of Commerce with a degree in travel and tourism.

She currently works as a flight attendant for Republic Airlines, flying regionally with American Airlines, US Airways and United Airlines. “While I enjoy jet setting around, working at EDGE keeps me grounded and in touch with the community.”

“For the past 20 years I have lived here, Falls City has been wonderful to my family and I”, said Whalen. “We are very fortunate to have such a progressive and family-friendly small town community. It’s exciting to be part of the EDGE team again. I very much enjoy working with Beckie, the board and the community to promote the Falls City area and generate economic development growth opportunities.” You can reach Cassey at the EDGE office, by emailing assistant@fallscityedge.com, or on your next flight to your favorite vacation destination!



Cassey on the Q400 airplane in Denver, CO

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