



Your ED... Our Partners

A year in review...

From the Executive Director Annual Meeting: 2007

As I begin this report on the work of the FEDC in 2006, I want to thank you all for this exciting opportunity. As you know, I joined the FEDC in October of 2006. From the day I first walked through the door the pipeline of potential projects has been excellent. This is a tribute to the hard work of the previous Executive Director Tony Allen, interim Executive Director Denny Studrawa and Assistant Director Joan Reinhard, as well as to the guidance provided by the FEDC Executive Board and the support City of Fostoria officials and the entire FEDC membership. As we move forward in 2007 this close collaboration should continue to provide many positive benefits to the Fostoria community.

And now I would like to highlight some of the successes that we have had in 2006 and the first part of 2007. In the logistics and distribution industry we continued to see growth in employment at both Ohio Logistics and Arnold Logistics. Ohio Logistics added 30 jobs in a 2006 expansion and Arnold Logistics

added 38 jobs. FEDC continues to support efforts to fill the two high-quality warehouse and distribution facilities on Sterns Road and will continue to market Fostoria as a prime site for logistics and distribution operations.

2006 saw the construction of the new 30,000 square foot Spring Valley USA seed and fertilizer operation, a welcome addition to the Fostoria business community. In November of 2006 Kroger opened its new store in downtown Fostoria. This important project was the culmination of years of hard work and collaboration between the City of Fostoria, the FEDC and Kroger that will anchor our downtown for years to come. The \$8.5 million dollar investment retained over 50 jobs and added 30 new jobs. Projects such as this are vital to the well-being of the entire Fostoria community and we will continue to promote these types of investments.

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Our Keynote Speaker...

*Kay Frances, MBA—Ohio's Funny Lady
Motivational Humorist*

Our keynote speaker for the Annual Meeting has presented in 38 states and Canada since 1984. As a professional stand up comedian, she lived in New York City for 4 years, appearing in the nation's top showcase comedy clubs.

Kay also appeared on over a dozen network and cable

comedy programs including Lifetime Cable's "Girl's Night Out" and NBC's "America's Funniest People."

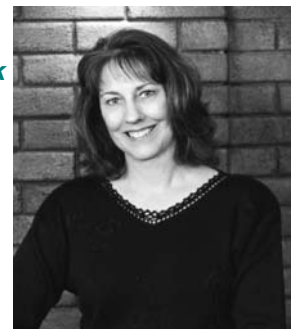
Kay is a health and wellness advocate with a degree in Physical Education from EKU and an MBA.

Kay reminded us all of the importance of humor for stress relief and the power of

a positive attitude. Her presentation for the annual event: "Laugh...Just For The Health Of It".

I believe the participants (Bob Green) were entertained as well as enlightened.

Thank you Kay!



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The FEDC and the City of Fostoria continued to make use of its Revolving Loan Fund to support job creation and retention in Fostoria. The RLF committee worked with A & L Compaction, assisting them with their expansion and creating 3 new jobs. In December of 2006 Bowling Transportation purchased the vacant ENL Transport building and brought 35 jobs into Fostoria with the help of an RLF loan. Finally, the committee worked with Jim Kenyon and OK Industries to move his operation into Corporate 23 Business Park, leveraging a \$5 million investment and bringing 55 jobs to Fostoria. The FEDC looks forward to working with these businesses in the coming years as they continue to grow their operations here in Fostoria. I also need to mention that the hard work of the City of Fostoria working with the staff of Hancock Regional Planning paid off when they received state funding for a new revolving loan fund that went to Dick Kiser to support his purchase of Machine Tool & Fabrication. We congratulate Dick and look forward to supporting his efforts to grow his business.

Finally, throughout 2006 and 2007 the FEDC has worked with Poet Energy to make the Fostoria Ethanol,

LLC project a reality. The planned investment of \$130 million and creation of 40 new jobs will benefit the City of Fostoria, local schools and local farmers and has required a substantial degree of collaboration among all parties involved. We look forward to the finalization of this exciting project and a ground breaking in the not to distant future.

The FEDC has also been involved in community and infrastructure projects in Fostoria. First is the Loop Road project that received its initial funding through the support and efforts of Congressman Paul Gillmor. With that funding, the Ohio Department of Transportation is now working with the city on an initial study to determine need, impact and potential corridors for the road. This is a vital project for Fostoria and we will continue to do all we can to make this project a reality.

The second ongoing undertaking is the Downtown Revitalization Plan. Working with the steering committee and Danielle Steinhauser, a consultant with Poggemeyer Design Group, a revitalization plan has been produced. This is the first step in the process that will allow the city to seek state grant funding to move the

project forward and do the real work outlined in the plan. This project is not only important for the overall health of our community; it supports the efforts of the FEDC as we seek to attract new industry and jobs to Fostoria. The Downtown area is often the first and last impression of the community for visitors that the FEDC hosts. A vibrant and well maintained downtown is an important indication of the vitality of the community. The FEDC will continue to support this effort; together with Fostoria officials, we believe that the positive impacts of these community and infrastructure projects are extremely important and will be felt for many years to come.

The FEDC continues to work hard on behalf of all its members and partners. Over the coming year we will continue our efforts to create new opportunities for Fostoria's businesses and citizens and do everything we can to promote Fostoria as a premier business location.

Respectfully submitted,

James Bischof,
Executive Director

A New Look for FEDC Web Site



We are pleased to announce that the Web Site for the Fostoria Economic Development Corporation is up and running. One of the goals set by our board was to have an interactive tool that could be quickly updated for our members, as well as prospective clients who use the site as a resource for their attraction, expansion or relocation needs.

This is a work in progress so... when navigating through the site, if you notice something that needs to be changed, have suggestions or comments - we encourage you to pass them along.

The web address: www.FostoriaED.org

Enjoy ;-)

Best Regards,

Joan Reinhard

Our 2007 – 2008 Program of Work & Business Plan

Economic Development Priorities:

Strengthen/solidify relationships with existing **Public** investors in the community and promote sustained local growth among these investors

- Continued cooperating role with **City Administration** and **City Council**
- Improve relationships and solidify cooperating role with **Counties and Townships**.

Strengthen/solidify relationships with existing **Private** investors in the community and promote sustained local growth among these investors

- Annual visits to select employers in the industrial and commercial sectors

Community Revitalization

- Continue to plan for and promote the revitalization efforts in Downtown Fostoria using the [Four Point Approach](#) Using the Main Street Philosophy, act on the [Eight Principles of Success](#) to bring commercial corridors back to life by Continually work to promote the vibrancy of all Fostoria's Businesses and Main
- Remediation of vacant sites with primary focus being the Downtown and main thoroughfares
- Support efforts of Framework for Progress: Vision 2020

Industrial / Manufacturing

- Retention / Expansion of existing businesses
 - Annual Meetings with employers of Fostoria
- New Industrial / Manufacturing
 - Select and pursue "Target" companies
 - Participate in Regional marketing efforts
 - Improve Web page listings of available sites
 - New Industrial Park / developable Private Lands.

Commercial / Service Industries

- Retention / Expansion of existing businesses
 - Annual Meetings with all employers of Fostoria
- New Commercial / Service Industries
 - Select and pursue "Target" companies
 - Improve Web page listings of available sites.

Improve Community weaknesses that will hamper "Targeted Businesses"

- Develop marketable properties
 - Such as the former Kroger store
- Continue with Transportation Improvements
 - Loop Road Project Development, Overpass grade separations
- Pursue additional Brown Field Clean-up grants
 - Concludes in September, re-apply.

Investigate establishing a link with / or creation of a Port Authority. Establish fee-based U.S. Foreign Trade Zone 151.

Solidify cooperating role in regional economic development effort with strong emphasis on Hancock, Seneca, and Wood Counties.

Maintain and strengthen the community's workforce status through cooperation with Fostoria Community Schools and area Technical Colleges

- FEDC Mentoring Program,
- Workforce Development Issues.
- Promote a graduate retention program bringing the schools and Seneca One Stop together for student to learn about local employment opportunities.

A successful economic development strategy must focus on improving the skills of the area's workforce, reducing the cost of doing business and making available the resources business needs to compete and thrive in today's global economy.

- Rod Blagojevich

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We're on the web!

www.FostoriaED.org

Together, we grow—
Together, we make a difference.



Industry Visits:

Jim continues to schedule Industry Retention & Expansion visits with local businesses. So far, he's met with half a dozen firms and while no earth shattering news, overall the businesses have been pretty open and easy to work with.

Some of the major areas of concern that will be addressed as a result of these visits include:

- + Improving basic education and workforce training. This is the single largest issue identified by employers as a detriment to their continued growth and prosperity in the community.
- + Building a community that is attractive to professional workers. Fostoria suffers somewhat from a perceived lack of amenities such as entertainment options; shopping and housing that attract executives and highly skilled workers. Fostoria can begin to improve its housing stock. Fostoria should also work to attract more retail and commercial business to the community.
- + Training, recruiting and retaining highly skilled, technical workers. Many firms remarked on the difficulty in finding and keeping highly skilled labor. A stronger collaboration with secondary and higher education to share information between business and the school systems may strengthen the education programs offered.
- + Providing assistance with expansions. Firms that are considering expansions should be contacted early. As many details of the firm's plans as can be revealed should be collected. Each individual firm needs should be assessed in terms of building space, land, financial assistance and employee training assistance.
- + Working with existing firms to be more competitive globally. Export assistance is available from the state government. Firms that are interested in entering foreign markets or increasing their exposure to foreign markets can be provided with information, contacts and even direct counseling.