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Upcoming Events

Talent for Today & Tomorrow Breakfast —Up-Training Existing Workforce

Wednesday, April 15th 7:30 — 8:30 am at Lake Cooper Event Center, Keokuk Register to attend by clicking here.

Young Professionals Mega Mixer Social Night

Attend the YP Mega Mixer Tuesday, April 28th 5:15 pm at The Palms Restaurant & Bar in Fort Madison. Free hors d'oeuvers!

SE Iowa STEM Festival

Saturday, April 25th 10:00 am—2:00 pm at the SCC West Burlington Campus. Exhibitors are still needed! Register to be an exhibitor today by **clicking here!**

Leadercast Live

Friday, May 8th 8:30 am—3:30 pm at The Crossings in Keokuk. **Get tickets here**

Lee County ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP *Newsletter*

Key Happenings with Key Players:

Steffensmeier Welding—More than farm repair

STEM Fest 2015 April 25th!

Local students compete at Tater Toss Catapult Competition

Lee County ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Working Together for Lee County

Students from area high schools participated in first ever Tater Toss competition. Competing on furthest distance, accuracy, most innovative and most creative.

Independent Can and Case New Holland compete in professional division of Tater Toss competition, getting their catapults within inches of the target.

Steffensmeier Welding & Machine

Steffensmeier Welding and Manufacturing Inc. always strives to meet their customers' needs and exceed expectations for performance and quality. Historically the company has been a job shop focused on farm repairs, demonstrating their ability to fix most of the farm repair projects brought to their facility. Farm repair has been the foundation of their business, but by no means are they limited to just that.

Steffensmeier Welding and Manufacturing now has demonstrated competencies to deliver low to high volume parts fabrication and machining. They have laser cutters, shears, saws, mills (NC and manual), lathes, (NC and manual), press brakes, rolls, tubing benders, and robotic and manual welders to join steel, stainless and aluminum.

Recently they added a new HAAS NC Mill with a pallet changer and added a new bar feeder to one of their NC lathes and will soon be adding a new robot welder. This is in addition to Steffensmeier Welding's recently added new powder coat painting capabilities. Their GEMA powder coating system and manual wet spray painting capabilities have been a nice addition to their growing business.

The company's mission is to deliver cost effective solutions to meet or exceed customer expectations with quality services and fabricated components. Steffensmeier Welding is also upgrading their computer systems to include a new Materials Requirements Planning system. A group of their employees have also been working together with Southeastern Community College's CBIZ program and are being trained in 5-S for Lean Manufacturing.

Owner Jenny Steffensmeier stated, "As we expand Steffensmeier's involvement with the Lee County Economic Development Group, we will help grow the economy of Southeast Iowa. The changes in our business are exciting and we look forward to what the future will bring and the new employment opportunities our business will create in Lee County."

STEM Fest is Back!

The 2nd Annual Southeast Iowa STEM Festival is coming up fast! The festival will be held on Saturday, April 25th from 10am—2pm at the SCC West Burlington Campus.

The goal of the Southeast Iowa STEM Festival is to nurture interests of children and families in the exciting fields of STEM. Organized like a street festival or county fair, visitors stroll from activity to activity to see compelling, educational and entertaining activities to boost their interest in STEM.

Careers in the STEM fields are growing in Southeast Iowa. Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds, emphasized the importance of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programs and activities at the Regional Workforce Summit in March stating "STEM careers are growing significantly faster than non-STEM jobs, growing 17% and STEM professionals earn higher wages than non-STEM related workers."

Industry participation in events such as this allows students of all ages to explore skills in a variety of career paths. "These festivals are a great opportunity for family and students to see what opportunities are in their local communities." Said Kristine Bullock, Manager of the Southeast Iowa STEM Hub.

Bring the family and get free stuff and win prizes! There is also funding available if an organization or school would like to bring a bus, to request transportation assistance click here.

Exhibitors: Now's your chance to secure your booth!

STEMFest
Southeast Iowa Regional STEM Festival

Tater Toss Competition Demonstrates Innovation

The competition was flying at the first Tater Toss Catapult Competition Wednesday, April 8th in the SCC gym. Thirty-three students from schools throughout Southeast Iowa designed and built working catapults to compete. Catapults earned points for accuracy, distance and design. SCC Work-Based Learning Specialist, Leanne Krogmeier, says the event is a fun way for students to showcase their imagination and represent their schools. "There's a lot of talented kids out there who were busy building some pretty clever contraptions." Krogmeier says the event allows students to learn more about the fields of science, architecture, construction and engineering.

The Central Lee Crouching Eagles.

Lee County schools were heavily represented at this regional event with over half of the students (58%) representing a Lee County school. The Keokuk Bionikats focused their efforts on longest distance, winning first place in this category. Team coach Matt Hodges stated their practice shots were in the 170 ft. range. The Central Lee Crouching Eagles also scored well in distance, getting 2nd place in the category.

Students also had the chance to talk to instructors at SCC, as well as local business professionals who build and design on a daily basis. All students participating will be eligible to apply for a $500 scholarship to SCC in one of the following programs: Advanced Manufacturing Technology, Construction Technology, Drafting Technology, Electronics Technology, Industrial Maintenance Technology, or Welding.

The Independent Canapults with their catapult for the professional league.

The event also included a professional division for area businesses to enter their machines. Independent Can out of Fort Madison participated in the professional division. The Independent Can-apults were able to throw their ball of clay within 4 inches of the target, with the average accuracy rate of the high school division being 33 inches from target.

"It encourages students to work together and use skills and concepts from the classroom in a real-life context. They get to find practical solutions to solve a fun problem," Krogmeier explains.

Teams, high school and professional are invited to display their catapults at the Southeast Iowa Regional STEMFest on Saturday, April 25.

Talent for Today & Tomorrow Breakfast Series

You're invited to attend the next installment of Lee County EDG's Workforce Breakfast Series on **Wednesday, April 15th at the Lake Cooper Event Center in Keokuk from 7:30 am - 8:30 am.**

This breakfast will focus primarily on one of our Grow Lee initiatives: **Up-training our Existing Workforce.**

Register Today!

Lee County EDG, with the assistance of the group, would like to discuss ideas that will lead to the development of a measurable action plan to assist in up-training our existing workers to meet the needs of our industries.

Leadercast Live 2015

Be a leader worth following—Positively change the way the world thinks about leadership!

Learn what it means to lead is such a way that creates bold cultures, builds faithful employees and produces high achievement. Leave equipped to take on your next leadership challenge.

- Speakers include: Andy Stanley, Seth Goldin, Paton Manning, Rudy Guliani, Anja Brown and More!

Friday, May 8th
8:00 am —3:30 pm
1 day, $49
Simulcast at The Crossing
610 Tiema Street, Keokuk

Purchase your tickets today!
Questions: Contact Dominique Palermani
dpalermani11@gmail.com

YPMM

Young Professionals Mega Mixer

Are you in your 20's or 30's? live or work in the greater Fort Madison or Keokuk Area? Want to be part of a dynamic young professional group?

Bring a friend and join us for a Young Professional Mega Mixer **Tuesday, April 28th starting at 5:15 pm at the Palms Restaurant & Bar in Fort Madison!**

Working Together for Lee County

Lee County EDG has declared 2015 the year of action, we should add to that "the year of collaboration." Throughout the past year Lee County EDG has been collaborating and listening to our partners and stakeholders to ensure that we are doing the best job possible to serve the citizens of Lee County. Our mantra had been and is, what is best for Lee County?

These collaborations have led to the creation of our exciting workforce initiative called Grow Lee. This multifaceted program has the ambitious goal of touching all of the citizens of Lee County. Starting with the Lego Robotics programs in our Lee County libraries, Grow Lee will continue to expand and evolve over the next several years.

Collaboration has set us on a path to help increase opportunities and transform the lives of the citizens of Lee County. To quote Bachman Turner Overdrive – "You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet." Lee County EDG is just getting warmed up. Over the next several months we will be holding roundtable listening and discussion sessions with the plant managers and industrial leaders from Lee County, as well as human resource professionals from our leading employers. Lee County EDG will be bringing all of the Lee County school districts together in conjunction with our partners in Keokuk, Fort Madison and SCC to discuss ways to work together.

Lee County EDG will also be working to bring together the youth of our county to have an honest dialogue about Lee County and the opportunities that exist for young people. We are going to have to ask ourselves some hard questions and be willing to look at long-term proactive solutions to ensure a vibrant future for Lee County, solutions that will require a collaborative approach.

Iowa currently ranks fourth among states in percentage of population that is 65 and over. The impending retirement of baby boomers is going to create what some are calling a silver tsunami that is going to have a very real impact on Lee County. The decisions that we will make today are going to go a long way towards deciding what the Lee County of the future will look like.

There was a time when Lee County was considered a shining star of economic development and opportunity within Iowa. As happens with the ebb and flow of time; that has not always been the case over the past several decades. Lee County EDG believes that we are at the beginning of a new economic renaissance in Lee County, one that will combine our tremendous core of existing companies with new opportunities.

This path will not be easy and will require a bold vision of Lee County and our future. A vision that is predicated on a spirit of cooperation and working together. A vision that unites Lee County and challenges us to reach our full potential. The stakes are simply too high for us to ignore and consequences of failure are simply unacceptable.

We ask you to join with us to create a vision of success and cooperation for Lee County. We're listening and your opinion matters.

- Lee County EDG Operations Director, Dennis Fraise

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