

the Business

Growth & development in and around your community **EDGE**

Volume 6

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Annual Dinner Recognizes Outstanding Volunteers and Local Business

The River Bend Growth Association's Annual Dinner for 2008 was a celebration. Members got together to kick off the new year of growth for the River Bend Community and celebrate with businesses and individuals who were acknowledged for their leadership in the community.

The success of this event lies within the River Bend Growth Association membership. Over 420 members and guests enjoyed a fabulous dinner provided by Lewis & Clark Community College. The beverages were provided by Tony's Restaurant. Both of these member businesses worked hard to ensure the evening was enjoyable. Ambassadors greeted guests as they entered the Commons, showed them to their tables and answered questions about the evening's agenda. The River Bend Growth Association staff was a tremendous help in all of the preparations for the evening. Thank you to each and every member for their contributions to the 2008 Annual Dinner.

The Ambassador of the Year award is an annual award that is presented to one of the 36 members of the Ambassador Committee. Each Ambassador earns points throughout the year for their volunteer efforts at all the Association's functions such as ribbon cuttings and ground breakings, networking events, and for their help in recruitment and retention of members.

Gary Hoggatt, Jr. of National Bank at Edwardsville was awarded the

2007 Ambassador of the Year. In addition to being an Ambassador, he is also chairman of the Promotions Committee. Congratulations, Gary!

The Small Business of the Year is an annual award that is presented to one of our 12 monthly Small Business of the Month recipients. At year end, the monthly winner with the highest score is named Small Business of the Year. Imo's Pizza in Alton and Bethalto was awarded the 2007 Small Business of the Year. Shelli Armanees, Annette Wilson and Charlie Downs are the owners of this franchise. Imo's Pizza is a generous, community-minded business who understands the importance giving back and participating in their community. Congratulations Imo's Pizza!

Three other Chairman Awards were presented at the Annual Dinner. Harold Johnson received an award for his service to the organization through his volunteer efforts at SCORE. Dwight Werts of Werts Welding and Tank Service, Inc. and Kevin Hamilton of Carpenters Local 377 received awards for their long service on the Board of Directors. Chairman of the Board, Melissa Erker of ConocoPhillips, passed the gavel to Kent Scheffel, Assistant Vice President for Community Services at Lewis & Clark Community College, as our 2008 Chairman of the Board.

For more information regarding the River Bend Growth Association, please contact Joell Aguirre at 618-467-2280.



Pictured from left to right: 2008 River Bend Growth Association Chairman Kent Scheffel, Harold Johnson, Dwight Werts, Gary Hoggatt, Jr., Annette Wilson, Charlie Downs, Shelli Armanees and Melissa Erker.



2007 Chairman, Melissa Erker, hands the gavel over to our 2008 Chairman, Kent Scheffel.

Growth Association adopts new name and logo. Read more on page 2.

*A monthly publication of the River Bend Growth Association.....
Your Regional Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Agency*



RiverBend

GROWTH ASSOCIATION

Serving Business, Encouraging Growth in Southwestern Illinois

The Growth Association Has a New Name

In addition to presenting its Chairman's Awards at its annual dinner, the Growth Association of Southwestern Illinois announced that it has changed the name of the organization and unveiled its new logo and tagline.

Six years ago, the organization changed its name from River Bend Growth Association to Growth Association of Southwestern Illinois to help in better identifying its geographical location when marketing to national and regional economic development prospects. While the name served its purpose well in marketing to prospects, it caused confusion among local business leaders, prompting the organization to change its name back to River Bend Growth Association.

"People throughout the St. Louis region know us as the River Bend area and we are proud of that designation and decided that we would go back to the old name and find another way to develop and identify to those outside the St. Louis region," said Monica Bristow, president of River Bend Growth Association.

To address the need for a geographical indicator when communicating with national economic development prospects, the organization will include with its logo and correspondence, the tagline "Serving Business, Encouraging Growth in Southwestern Illinois."

"We feel our new tagline

helps explain that our organization is both a Chamber of Commerce and an economic development organization," said Bristow. "The tagline is incorporated into our new logo, which is simply an update to our old logo that utilizes artwork that represents both economic development and commerce, and the tourism and business growth aspects of our organization's mission. Our logo will continue to include artwork of the Clark Bridge and the Mississippi River with a flying eagle."

The announcement of the new name, logo and tagline occurred at the end of the Annual Dinner event, at which the organization presented its Chairman Awards and celebrated the many successes of 2007 that were shared by the organization and its members.

The River Bend Growth Association serves as the Chamber of Commerce and economic development organization for communities in the River Bend. It actively promotes the development of new employment opportunities and encourages activity between its member businesses. The Growth Association works with both private and public sectors, ensuring that developments are in the best interest of the community. For more information about the River Bend Growth Association and its programs, please visit www.growthassociation.com or call (618) 467-2280.

Upcoming Meetings

- 2/6 New Member Orientation, 12:00, Growth Association
- 2/7 Promotions Committee, 8:30, Sgt. Peppers Café
- 2/11 Membership Committee, 11:00, Alfie's
- 2/12 Ambassador Committee, 11:45
- 2/14 Young Adults Committee, 8:15
- 2/19 "Let's Talk" on WBGZ, 10:00
- 2/20 Education Committee, Liberty Bank, 10:00
- 2/20 Breakfast Connection, 8:00, Sgt. Peppers Café
- 2/21 Business After Hours, Holiday Inn Alton, 5:00
- 2/28 Board Meeting, 8:00

Thank You!

Ambassador of the Month December 2007

Karen McAtee of TheBANK of Edwardsville



My name is Karen McAtee and I work for TheBANK of Edwardsville as Vice President and Manager of the Alton Centers. I have been in banking since 1963.

I have been active with the Growth Association since 1989 and currently am an ambassador, serve on the For Women By Women committee and many other various committees for special events. I feel that my association with the Growth Association and its committees has afforded me many business opportunities that I may not have had without the Growth Association. Volunteer work is very rewarding for me personally and my business.

I live in Godfrey with my husband Frank and have 6 wonderful children and many grandchildren. I enjoy reading, traveling and being with my grandchildren. My mother lives in the area and I enjoy taking day trips with her too.

I am an active member of SS Peter and Paul Church in Alton where I am a greeter, Eucharistic minister and Treasurer of the Altar Society.

I enjoy working with the public in my volunteer efforts and assisting customers with their banking needs.

SAVE THE DATE!

River Bend Golf Classic
Friday, June 20, 2008
Lockhaven Country Club
11 a.m. Registration
12:00 noon Shotgun Start

Call the River Bend Growth Association at 618-467-2280 for details.

January 2008 Small Business of the Month Winner Moonlight Restaurant

Congratulations to Mike Castelli and his staff at Moonlight Restaurant, located at 3400 Fosterburg Road in Alton! They are the River Bend Growth Association's Small Business of the Month winner for January 2008!

Moonlight Restaurant will receive a \$2400 promotional package for being selected Small Business of the Month: the opportunity to attend The River Bend Growth Association's monthly show on WBGZ talk radio, be our guest at The River Bend Growth Association's networking breakfast or luncheon where they will be recognized and awarded with a plaque, a 2-sided yard sign to display at their business, a featured story in The Telegraph newspaper, recognition in The River Bend Growth Association's Business Edge, displayed on The River Bend Growth Association's board that travels to Business After Hours and become eligible to win the annual Small Business of the Year award.



Nomination submitted by (optional) _____

Pictured from left to right are Josh Hull, Amanda Castelli, Owner Mike Castelli and Awards Chairperson Amy Schaake of The Telegraph.

Congratulations to Moonlight Restaurant!

If you would like to nominate a business for the River Bend Growth Association's Small Business of the Month, please fill out the form below and mail it to the River Bend Growth Association, 5800 Godfrey Road, Alden Hall, Godfrey, IL 62035 or fax it to 618-466-8289.

For more information regarding Small Business of the Month, please contact Joell Aguirre at 618-467-2280 or jaguirre@growthassociation.com.

Small Business of the Month Nomination

Business Name _____

Owner or Manager _____

Reason for nomination _____

Welcome our newest members who joined during the month of December 2007

FGM Architects

Timothy Kwiatkowski AIA, Vice President
1177 N Greenmount Road, Suite 200
O'Fallon IL 62269
(618) 624-3364
www.fgmarchitects.com

FGM Architects is a mid-size architectural firm founded in 1945 with offices located in O'Fallon, Mt Vernon, Peoria and Oak Brook, Illinois. FGM offers design expertise with a staff of 100 professionals, including architects, planners and support staff. For over 62 years, we have been serving the needs of municipal, county, state and federal government agencies. Projects include village halls, police and fire stations, public works and park and recreation facilities throughout the area. FGM is a regional leader in the educational design arena, servicing over 70 elementary and secondary school districts, as well as colleges and universities across the state. FGM has established itself as a community based architectural firm, serving the needs of communities throughout the River Bend and greater metropolitan St. Louis area.

Geno's 140 Club, Inc.

Dennis Cooper, President
120 West Bethalto Drive
Bethalto IL 62010
(618) 377-0201
Geno's 140 Club in Bethalto is a great place to have lunch or dinner. The original owners were the Florini's who began Geno's in 1942. The same traditions of excellent food and friendly service were begun on their opening day, and have continued after the Coopers purchased the restaurant in 1983. Famous for their steaks, stromboli and salads, Geno's 140 Club has a wide menu that has something for everyone. Pasta and sandwiches are offered alongside steak and chicken entrees, with generous portions to satisfy the appetite.

Current Economic Indicators

- Illinois Unemployment Rate: Seasonally adjusted Illinois unemployment rate increased to 5.3 % in October, up 0.2 point from 5.1 % in September
- National Unemployment Rate: Nonfarm payroll employment continued to trend up in November (94,000), and the unemployment rate held at 4.7%
- Consumer Price Index (CPI): increased 0.6% in November before seasonal adjustment; November level of 210.177 was 4.3% higher than in November 2006
- Producer Price Index (PPI): rose 3.2% in November
- Import/Export Price Index: Import Index increased 2.7% in November, Export Index rose 0.9%
- Conference Board - Consumer Confidence Index declined further in November; now stands at 87.3 (1985=100), down from 95.2 in October
- Conference Board - Help Wanted Index now stands at 23; it was 29 one year ago.

Chairman's Message

Kent Scheffel, Lewis & Clark Community College



How many restaurants are located within one mile of the Route 140 and Homer Adams Parkway intersection? What sites in the River Bend are available for development?

How many people live within one-half mile of the Route 143 and Route 111 intersection?

These are the types of questions relocation experts ask every day. They want accurate information, delivered quickly, and in an easy to use format. Their recommendations for business locations, manufacturing sites and distribution centers can mean new opportunities for a community.

Fortunately, the Growth Association is taking steps to sell the River Bend to relocation experts. A new geographic information system (GIS) being implemented by the Growth Association will answer business and demographic questions in a matter of seconds. The software will provide written and graphical information, making it easy for site selectors to work with locations in the River Bend.

The new system, which is expected to be operational in April, is an example of how the Growth Association is working to stay abreast of the latest trends in economic development. It's easy to go online and find a community's attractions and services. The Growth Association's GIS takes online information to the next level, and provides site selectors with the same ease when they're looking for River Bend business locations and demographic information.

Association members, community leaders and residents of our region should be pleased with the Growth Association's proactive approach in working with site selectors. Relocation firms could play a vital role in our future, and projects such as the new GIS effort offer potential for all of us and future generations.

The system is one of many examples of how the Growth Association is working to enhance our region. We have many assets to offer individuals and businesses, and I'm pleased to have the opportunity to work with Association employees, members and volunteers who are working continuously to build the River Bend.

No Smoking Signs Available

As you know, the Smoke Free Illinois law took effective January 1, 2008. The law requires that all businesses post signs at all entrances and exits of the building (including emergency and employee entrances/exits). The signs must:

- be no smaller than 5" x 7"
- include the website www.smoke-free.illinois.gov to file complaints
- include the phone number 866-973-4646 to file complaints
- include the international "No Smoking" symbol or the words "No Smoking"
- have letters, numbers and symbols of sufficient size to be clearly legible to an individual of normal vision from a distance of 5 feet

To help with implementation of the law, the American Lung Association printed window clings for businesses to post that meet these requirements. The ALA has supplied us with several hundred window clings and has asked us to distribute them to our members. If you need window clings, please call us at 618/467-2280, send an e-mail to receptionist@growthassociation.com, or stop by the office to some up.

Frequently asked questions can be found at www.smokefreeillinois.org.

Welcome our newest board members for River Bend Growth Association

Dale Blachford joined Liberty Bank as President/CEO in 2005. His experience includes serving as President of banks in Belvidere and Roscoe, Illinois. He is currently on the Board of Directors of the Illinois Bankers Association, Chairman of the Stewardship Board at Faith Lutheran Church in Godfrey, and a member of the Alton/Godfrey Rotary Club. Blachford serves on the RiverBend Development Foundation. He moved to the Alton area from Rockford, Illinois in 2005 with his wife Janice and three of their six children.

David Braasch began working for Alton Memorial Hospital in 1990 as the Director of Pharmacy and held positions of increasing responsibility including Director of Clinical Services, Director of Pharmacy for BJC Health Systems, Assistant Administrator of Support Services, Vice President of Professional Services and Business Development. He was appointed to the position of President of Alton Memorial Hospital, BJC Health Care in April 2007. He graduated from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana and has a BS in Pharmacy from the St. Louis College of Pharmacy. He earned his MBA from SIU-Edwardsville. He is the president of the American Diabetes Association, Madison County Council. Braasch is a member of the American Society of Health System Pharmacists and the American Academy of Medical Administrators. He resides in Dorsey.

Tobie Grover joined Ameren Corporation as manager of AmerenCIPS in Alton, Illinois in 2003, when Ameren acquired Decatur-based Illinois Power Company. He now serves as manager of the Ameren Illinois utilities' Division V, which serves customers in the St. Louis Metro East and surrounding communities. Grover is responsible for managing the electric and natural gas operations in those areas. He began his career at Illinois Power in 1979, where he worked in Forestry Operations. In 1986 he was promoted to assistant superintendent of Electric Operations and in 1991 became division forester in Edwardsville. In 1995 Grover became

manager of operations in Maryville, and in 2000 began working at Illinois Power's Decatur Headquarters on special projects. He returned to manager, Division operations in 2003 and after the merger with Ameren Corp., Grover became manager of the Alton area of Ameren CIPS. Grover belongs to the Goshen Rotary and is active member of Trinity Lutheran Church. He is also a member of the International Society of Arboriculture and is a Certified Arborist. He and his wife, Alison, have four grown children.

Mark Hamlin is president of Albrecht-Hamlin Chevrolet in Wood River. He graduated from Illinois State University and began his career with Albrecht-Hamlin in 1975. A resident of Edwardsville, he has been involved with state, national and St. Louis automotive boards, as well as other local organizations. His son attends the University of Missouri.

Pam Heepke has been married to Fred for 30 years and has three sons, two daughters-in-law, and two granddaughters. Pam lives and works on the family farm and has a partnership with her sisters in Raifort Properties that develops land for commercial and industrial purposes. She is president of the Board of Directors at Eden Village Retirement Community and is active in Eden United Church of Christ. She is a board member of Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois and has previously served as a member of the Growth Association board, serving as chairman in 2004.

Brenda Walker McCain is the eighth President and Chief Executive Officer of the Madison County Urban League, serving southern Illinois and the St. Louis metropolitan east area. A 35 year veteran of the Urban League movement, McCain has served in various administrative positions during her tenure. She has officially represented the Urban League in the community in numerous and varied capacities. A native of Alton, community service has been an important part of McCain's life. She began working for

youth development with the YWCA and Concerned Citizens of Alton/Godfrey during the 1970's. She supports and is a member of many organizations including the NAACP and NCNW. She served with "Riverbend in the 90's" and with various committees supporting the cities of Alton, Madison and Venice, IL. Ms. McCain has been actively involved in the Madison County community serving on several committees, boards and professional/civic organizations. McCain is presently serving her second six year term on Lewis & Clark Community College's Board of Trustees. She is the first African American female elected as a trustee and is currently holding the office of vice chair. She has received numerous awards and honors from local educational, civic, and public service organizations. McCain has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Organizational Leadership, Greenville College, Greenville, IL. She is the proud parent of one son, a pre-med student in his senior year at Pepperdine University in Malibu, CA.

Rich Mersinger has been the Zoning Administrator for the Village of Bethalto since September 2007. He also serves as an Assistant Fire Chief for the Village of Bethalto Volunteer Fire Department. Prior to working for the village, Rich worked for Madison County Planning and Development since June of 1999. He has lived in Bethalto since 2004 with his wife Lisa. Rich attended Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and Lewis and Clark Community College.

Rob Schwartz was born and raised in Cahokia, Illinois. Rob graduated from Bradley University with a B.S. Degree in Business Management and Radio/Television. Shortly after graduation, Rob joined Norwest Financial (later merged with Wells Fargo Financial) as a Credit Manager. He stayed with Wells Fargo Financial for 15 years, moving from Branch Manager and ultimately District Manager. The last assignment took him to Jackson, Mississippi, where he spent 5 years supervising 10 branches in central Mississippi. Rob moved back to the area in 2000, settling in Godfrey with his wife Suzanne and his two children,

Elizabeth and Joe. He joined Union Planters Bank (Regions Bank) in 2001 as a Branch Manager and was named Area Sales Manager in 2003. In 2005, Rob joined TheBANK of Edwardsville as Vice President of Retail Banking. He is active in coaching youth sports and is involved with The Chamber of Commerce of Southwestern Madison County and the United Way, serving Campaign Chair for the Tri-Cities (Granite City) United Way campaign in 2005.

Jack W. Tueth began his career with the IBEW in 1974 as an apprentice wireman after graduating from SIUE with a Bachelor of Science degree. He earned journeyman status in 1979. He was selected as an office to Local 649 in 1980 and appointed to a full time position in 1990. In 1994 he was elected as Business Manager/Financial Secretary. He serves on the Executive Board of the Illinois IBEW Council, is Chairman of the South Central Illinois Telecommunications Councils and is the Sixth District Representative to the Council of Industrial Relations. He served as Co-chairman of the Community Investment Committee of the United Way of Greater St. Louis. He is a lifelong resident of the River Bend and has been married to his wife, Charla, for 35 years. They have three children.

LEADERSHIP... IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT.



Kent Scheffel
Chairman
LCCC



Melissa Erker
Past Chairman
ConocoPhillips



David Miller
Chair-Elect
St. Louis Regional Airport



Mike Fitzgerald
Treasurer
Scheffel & Company



Dale Blachford
Liberty Bank



Tobie Grover
Ameren



Cathy Hamilton
BarberMurphy Group



Mark Hamlin
Albrecht-Hamlin Chevrolet



Pam Heepke
Raifort Properties



John Keller
Carrollton Bank



Bill St. Peters
Safety Partners Ltd.



Mayor Don Sandidge
City of Alton



Rob Schwartz
TheBANK of Edwardsville



Jim Shrader
The Telegraph



Cindy Smalley
Cope Plastics Inc.

MEET OUR RIVER BEND LEADERS FOR 2008.



David Braasch
*Alton Memorial
Hospital*



Mayor Michael Campion
Village of Godfrey



Karen Cooper
American Water



Jeff Davis
Phone Masters Ltd.



Larry Franklin
*Cornerstone Bank
& Trust, N.A.*



Terry Gibbs
Regions Bank



Jeannine Kelly
Alton Steel, Inc.



Mark Kratschmer
*Wegman Electric
Company*



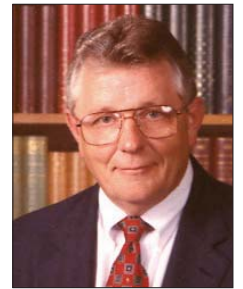
Tom Long
Attorney at Law



Brenda Walker McCain
*Madison County
Urban League*



Rich Mersinger
*Village of
Bethalto*



Don Reedy
*Olin Community
Credit Union*



Jack Tueth
*Int. Brotherhood of
Electrical Workers #649*



Martha Warford
*Beverly Farm
Foundation*



Mark Weber
*Saint Anthony's
Health Center*



Jan Wickenhauser
Argosy Alton



Denise Wolff
Partners Bank



Jess Woodman
*Woodman Collision
Center*

MAYOR'S REPORT – Donald E. Sandidge, City of Alton



In 2007, the seeds of extensive planning and economic development efforts bore considerable fruit. The development cornerstones of this administration, job creation/retention and housing, saw continued growth with measurable impact.

Alton Center Business Park (ACBP) welcomed its second tenant in July of 2007. Imperial Manufacturing relocated its manufacturing and warehousing distribution operations to ACBP. Imperial currently employs nearly 100 employees with additional hires planned through 2008. Clark Properties has maintained recruitment efforts to attract additional tenants to the business park. American Water Works currently employs over 500 employees and recently completed a 16,000 sq. ft. expansion at the business park to meet current and future operational needs.

The retail sector saw continued development along Homer Adams Parkway. Alton Square Mall was sold to Coyote Management, LP of Addison, Texas. Announced plans include immediate upgrades of signage and branding, leasing initiatives, gift card programs, and advertising campaigns. Coyote is currently negotiating with several major retailers to revitalize the mall. Additionally, negotiations are ongoing for a 19,000 sq. ft. expansion of Hayner Library as well as reconfigurations of the planned Kerasotes Theatre. At Oakwood Plaza, Club Fitness, a national fitness club chain, became the final tenant to locate at the 45,000 sq. ft. strip mall. Lastly, the Mungenast automotive complex expanded to include a standalone Toyota dealership. The entire complex now encompasses over 9 acres.

The City of Alton continues to seek the expansion of market rate housing to supplement recent affordable housing developments. Alton Pointe Apartments, an 84 unit development, is near completion and is currently in the leasing phase. Revitalization efforts are also underway to convert former commercial buildings into downtown residential living spaces. Recent developments include the completed renovation of the historic Laura Building, resulting in the Laura Lofts. Mississippi Landing and Lincoln Lofts are currently under construction with a majority of the units currently occupied, pre-sold, or leased. Additionally, various downtown buildings are currently in the architectural design phase for future development.

Key municipal planning projects were completed and will augment ongoing efforts. Phase Six improvements at Riverfront Park including construction of the 4,000 seat amphitheater are underway with scheduled completion in summer 2008. The current \$4 million phase of work also includes pavement staining, retaining wall form liners, and brick paving. The final two phases which will include a pedestrian overpass and plaza, esplanade, and boat landing shall continue through 2009. Additionally, streetscape improvements are also underway in the downtown central business district. Lastly, to the delight of our citizenry and local preservationists, the City of Alton completed the \$3 million renovation of City Hall. The building renovation has greatly improved the delivery of municipal services.

2008 promises to be another year full of challenges and opportunity. As such, I look forward to continuing to serve this community as we collectively redefine the quality of life in Alton.

Meridian Bank Showcases Renovated Office

Meridian Bank, located at 200 West Third Street in downtown Alton, proudly showcased their newly renovated offices on December 14, 2007, after the building sustained a considerable amount of damage due to a water leak in late August 2007.

Meridian Bank is a full service community bank with branches in the following locations: Alton, Eldred, Altamont and Carlyle.



President of Meridian Bank Brad Rench, Branch Manager Martha Morse and Loan Officer Beth Sperry, along with several other Meridian Bank employees and River Bend Growth Association Ambassadors, share in the festivities.

Coffee Cabana Celebrates Grand Opening!

The Coffee Cabana, located at 6133 Humbert Road in Godfrey in the south end of Beverly Farm Foundation's shopping complex, celebrated their grand opening on Friday, January 18 with a ribbon cutting ceremony. Many River Bend businesses and organizations were on hand to share in this event.

Coffee Cabana, with its relaxed, tropical atmosphere, serves Starbucks™ coffee. Their menu features home-baked treats from the resident Buzy Bee Bakery. Their hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 5:30am-3pm, Saturday from 7 am through 3pm and Sunday from 7 am through 1pm. Drive through opens at 5:30 am.

Proceeds from The Coffee Cabana benefit Beverly Farm Foundation directly. Many of the programs that make Beverly Farm Foundation a special place to live are not government funded. Ventures like The Coffee Cabana help offset costs. To get involved or find out more, visit www.beverlyfarm.org or call 618-466-0367.

Beverly Farm Foundation is a residential and training facility for adults



Beverly Farm Foundation Executive Director Martha Warford, Public Relations/Marketing Manager Nancy Baahmann and Assistant Executive Director Vicky Vogt lead the way in the ceremonial first "cut."

with developmental disabilities located on 220 acres in Godfrey, Illinois. Beverly Farm Foundation offers three living arrangements—apartments, group homes, and cottages. Placement is based on an individual's diagnosis and abilities. All residents spend the day at developmental training at which they learn and practice the skills of daily living or work in a sheltered workshop, including a bakery, woodworking, copying, collating and binding.

Argosy Alton Kicks Off 2008 Hosting Business After Hours

Argosy Alton hosted The River Bend Growth Association's first Business After Hours of the year on Thursday, January 10th. Over 350 members and guests enjoyed the hospitality of Argosy Alton with fabulous food and beverages.

Business After Hours is a professional networking opportunity for members of The River Bend Growth Association to develop and expand their business relations. Members can enjoy a relaxed atmosphere after their workday to network with River Bend businesses and organizations to continue to develop their own profession as well as the community at large.

Debra Kannel of Cornerstone Bank & Trust won the \$25 January "Rolling Jackpot" at January's Business After Hours. New for 2008...the Rolling Jackpot is a chance for every member (over 1300 people) of The River Bend Growth Association to win. Each month, The River Bend Growth Association puts \$25 into the jackpot. At January's Business After Hours, Deb Kannel's name was drawn from this pot of 1300+ names. Since she was there, she claimed the jackpot. If she hadn't been present, her name would have gone back into the drawing for next month along with another \$25. That means February's jackpot would have been \$50. The pot will grow \$25 each month if the person drawn is not in attendance. Each month, every River Bend Growth Association member who



pictured left to right: Donna Thornton of Southern Illinois Real Estate Title Center, Dorrie Ball of KevCor Construction Services, and Debra Kannel of Cornerstone Bank & Trust N.A.

attends the monthly Business After Hours will be entered into that barrel of names. Therefore, the more times you attend Business After Hours, the more your chances of winning the "Rolling Jackpot" increases. Congratulations, Debra Kannel of Cornerstone Bank & Trust!

Also new for 2008 at our Business After Hours is our Business Card Board. Every member who is in attendance at that monthly Business After Hours will have their business card posted onto the Business Card Board, therefore, showcasing member businesses and organizations in attendance.

As a reminder, members can bring a guest to a Business After Hours event for a one time opportunity. This is a great opportunity for this guest to see what The River Bend Growth Association is about.

Thank-you, Argosy Alton, for hosting the January 2008 Business After Hours.

Mark your calendars for our next Business After Hours: Thursday, February 21st from 5 -7 pm at the Holiday Inn Alton. Baxter Distributing, Holiday Inn Alton and Logo It @ Langa will be hosting.

Join Logo It @ Langa from 3:30-5 pm at Holiday Inn Alton (prior to the February 21st Business After Hours) for their promotional showcase featuring new products to promote your business. Their guest speaker will present marketing ideas at 4 pm.