

COMING ATTRACTIONS

NEWS FROM THE CASS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

EDC to sponsor Small Business Class, April 30



Photo Courtesy of Central Lakes College

Simply put, financial statements are a snapshot of your business' health and that's why Jay Bock from the Central Lakes College Small Business Development Center, will be presenting a seminar on Financial Statement Analysis on April 30. The class is sponsored by the Cass County EDC. Jay is an energetic speaker that understands the ins and outs of the everyday financial statement. Jay will guide small business owners through the ticklish task of implementing the document into everyday business management.

"Financial records produced during the course of business are sometimes difficult to understand and use properly," Jay said. "This class will review both the balance sheet and the profit and loss to explain in greater detail figures represented on them and give a brief analysis of the use of the numbers in everyday business management."

Join us on April 30 in Backus at the Cass County Land Office. Cost for the seminar is \$25. If you would like to register for the class contact Gail Leverson at (218)-947-7522 or at 218-640-3448.

News from the Minnesota Legislature

Renewable energy seems to be the big seller at the capital this year. The EDC keeps involved and informed with legislative activity through state economic development groups. A couple of bills that we are watching closely in 2007 are: \$7.5 million would be appropriated in each of FY 2008 and 2009 for renewable energy. It is proposed that \$5 million of the funding would go for zero interest matching loans to support renewable energy related businesses development during each year.

JOBZ Tax benefits extensions would be available to ethanol plants executing a business subsidy agreement after 4.30.06. The incentives would be extended for three additional years (12.30.18). **Also, of interest is the continued financial support of the Greater MN Business Development Infrastructure Program introduced in SF1123 and HF1257. This bill will appropriate \$5 million for industrial park infrastructure from bonding money. Call your legislators in support of this bill.**



EDC sets Strategic Goals for 2007

The Cass County EDC Board of Directors met on Feb. 5 with Dr. Kathie Allen to plan the organizations strategic goals for this year. The meeting was sponsored in part by the Initiative Foundation. Goals set for 2007 are:

1. Sponsor six educational events, including one that is Chamber related.
2. Complete at least six business projects.
3. Increase private membership by \$10,000.



4. Secure five year commitments from 3 or more existing members.
5. Increase EDC staffing to 1.5 FTE.
6. Adopt committee structure for marketing, membership and personnel.
7. Board members to visit each city/township member twice per year.
8. Distribute quarterly newsletter.
9. Distribute monthly activity report with news flash update to key partners.
10. Develop new marketing materials to aid in business recruitment.

Cass County, Harness your inner "Entrepreneur"

Whether you are selling retail or come out swinging with a brand new product that will go to wholesalers or even a service that nobody can live with out entrepreneurs starting your own business can be overwhelming. If you think that you want to go into business have a good business plan and be ready to work hard. Also plan to need about 10 to 20% down to start a business.

Local entrepreneur, Tom Kuhn, president of North Country Foods in Walker has some suggestions for the green entrepreneur. "Have accurate information and knowledge about your potential customer and your competition, if your business is retail have a good location," Kuhn said. "Know your market, know your customers and know your competition." In addition Kuhn offered this bit of advice. "Find your USP (Unique Selling Proposition)," Kuhn said. "Why should they buy your product or service."

More than half of all business start-ups struggle within the first five years of business because they don't implement necessary life-saving strategies for success like readily available financial information, or they do not formalize and implement planned marketing strategies. According to U.S. Census statistics there are 463,000 small businesses in Minnesota and an infinite number of entrepreneurs.

While there is lots of valuable advice out there make sure you take advantage of the resources available to you in Cass County like the EDC and SBDC for help in creating a solid business plan. For instance the class on April 30 at the Cass County Land Office in Backus.



Whatever Happened to.....

In the past year the Cass County EDC has worked with many businesses. Here are updates on a few:

Heritage Frame has expanded their framing business to include frames that



Joel Moesch makes by hand that include embedded stones. The works of art are each unique. The business is located in downtown Walker. Moesch said he is looking forward to the summer season and

increased traffic.

Universal Templates is busy producing their new hard board templates for poured concrete and with six employees they are excited about the upcoming season.

Sheryl Engler owner of **Triple B Convenience Store** in Hackensack said that the business has seven employees and now offers homemade hot lunches and pies.

Eveland's Inc. is back at full production since December after a fire destroyed the plant in January 2006. Kent Eveland said because of the new facility the process is much improved. The business has 43 full-time and eight part-time employees.

CavCom Inc. moved into their new facility February 26. "It's going great and we are amazed at the growth," said owner Jeff Morrill. The business has 6 full-time employees and will soon be operating a new ear lab and production of a new electronic product in June.

Craig Anderson at **Trussworthy Components, LLC** in Pine River is working with the Bemidji Center for Research and Innovation for a couple of sessions to fine tune the business processes. They have 24 employees and summer sales are looking to be twice what they were in 2006.



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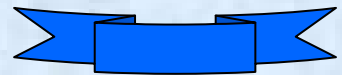
HOME SWEET HOME

The Cass County EDC has a new home at the C.C. Land Office in Backus.

Call to make an appointment at 218-947-7522 and please visit!!!

Thank you new EDC members!

- ⇒ Pine River/Backus School
- ⇒ Pike Bay Township



Mark your calendars!!!

- April 23—Business Basics—6 to 9 p.m. at the Cass Lake City Hall (FREE)
- April 30—Small Business class on reading financial statements. Class is at the Cass County Land office in Backus. Cost is \$25 per person. Hosted by the EDC.
- June 11—Business Basics—6 to 9 p.m. at the Remer Depot (FREE)



P.O. Box 142
Backus, MN 56435
Phone: 218-947-7522

April 23: Business Basics Class in Cass Lake 6-9 p.m.!!

The Cass County EDC office is open three days per week, call for an appointment, 218-947-7522.