



*“We’ve Got A Corner On
The Good Life”*

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SCEDC STAFF
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Local Economy Experiences Encouraging Development

Even in the difficult economic times Steuben County and our country experienced during 2009, there were important economic successes to celebrate as several local manufacturing firms undertook expansions, and three new firms moved into our county.

Firms expanding were Ventra (formerly Meridian Automotive), C&K Tool, Univertical Corporation in Angola, and K-Tech Specialty Coatings located in Ashley. New firms moving into the County were Koester Metals from Ohio, the Kline Group from Michigan, and Industrial Steering Products from Bryan, Ohio which will now be known as Triton Metal Products.”

This firm was announced at the SCEDC’s annual dinner in December by guest speaker Mitch Roob, Indiana Secretary of Commerce; additional details on the project were provided by John Freudenberger Jr., Triton’s Manager and members of the Freudenberger family, owners of the company. The company manufactures parts for the heavy truck, medical, military, aerial lift, food processing and motor home industries, and is investing approximately \$5 million to bring its manufacturing and headquarters facilities to the Town of Hamilton.

“Despite difficult economic times, Indiana’s position as a low-cost, low-tax state for business continues to yield new jobs and investment for Hoosiers,” said Governor Mitch Daniels, “I know the team at Triton metal Products will find a talented, energetic workforce in northeast Indiana and I am happy to welcome them to our state.”

In his presentation, Mitch Roob, stressed that Indiana experienced the addition of nearly 19,000 new jobs in 2009 compared to approximately 17,000 jobs in 2008. However, the jobs were paying less in 2009, a reflection of the down economy showing that people were willing to work for less money. Gary Nielander, director of economic development for Steuben County said, “The cooperative teamwork between the SCEDC, the Town of Hamilton and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation and Triton Metal



Triton Metal representatives and local economic development officials after announcement

Products were all critical factors in bringing this project to fruition.” According to John Freudenberger, Triton’s job target is to hire 111 employees prior to the year 2014.

ITW Ransburg

Staying Competitive in a Global Economy

ITW Ransburg has several challenges in remaining competitive in a global economy. Responding to that challenge several initiatives have been initiated. Recently, we focused on our electrical usage and our general waste disposal.

First, we focused on reducing our electrical usage since it was determined to be aged and newer technology has been proven to be more efficient and effective. An audit of the plant was performed to determine where the electrical demand was coming from. It was determined that lighting alone contributed 45% of the electrical load. Three companies were asked to submit quotes to supply new electronic ballasts and T8 bulbs for the general lighting in the manufacturing and office areas. We ended up awarding the bid to WW Grainger since ITW has a corporate account with WW Grainger. When they submitted their quote it was significantly lower than any of the previously received quotes. All office lights and the task lighting in the work cells were able to be replaced. It was also determined during the installation that the overhead lighting could be reduced from a double light bulb row to a single light bulb row. The Capitol Expense Request was \$22,358. The "CER" consisted of only the lighting supplies, as the labor was performed by ITW personnel.

Another aspect of the project was having an EPACT (Energy Policy Act) Audit performed. This audit would determine if ITW Ransburg would meet the requirements to achieve a tax credit for a portion or all of the equipment purchased for the project. ITW Ransburg qualified for 100% of the cost of equipment installed. The completion of the project allows for an annual savings of \$16,330. The pay-back on the project without the EPACT Tax Credit would have been 1.36 years. The EPACT Tax Credit for the project was for the total amount paid in materials of \$22,358. This made the payback immediate.

The lighting project also solved two other pending issues that the Angola Facility. There were areas in the facility where the lighting was not satisfactory. The new lighting system increased the lighting levels in the work cells and the offices from 75 to 105 foot candles. The general overhead lighting increased from 113 to an average of 160 foot candles. This increased light output allowed ITW Ransburg to comply with OSHA's standard on lighting requirements.

The second issue was that electrical circuits were nearly overloaded due to the old ballasts and bulbs drawing so much amperage. Our risk insurer had previously noted this concern and our premiums reflected this risk. Installing the new lighting fixtures provided a reduction in the amperage by 60%. ITW Ransburg was then re-audited and found to be in total compliance with the insurance company's expectations and ITW Ransburg is now considered a "Risk Free" facility.

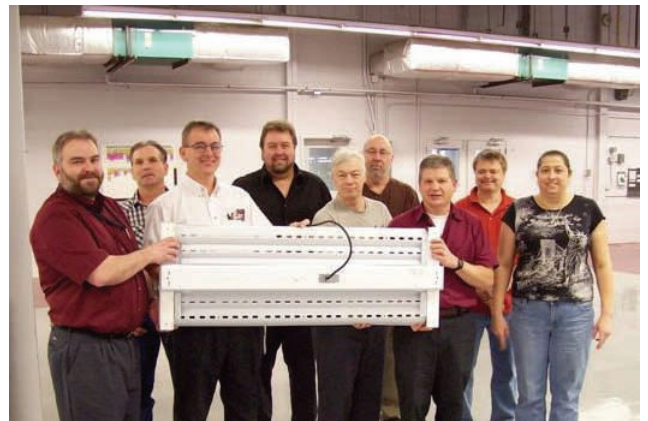
In conclusion, the project increased the foot candles throughout the facility to meet/exceed the safety requirements, reduced the electrical demand by a conservative 60%, reducing our insurance premium, and most significantly lowered the electrical costs by an incredible \$16,330 annually.

The second targeted area was the reduction of our general waste disposal. We did a review of what waste we were putting into our waste container. We discovered that over one half of



Guest Columnist:

Todd Austin,
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Angola Plant



Energy efficient lighting installation significantly lowered energy costs, increased the light in the facility making it safer, which in turn reduced insurance premiums.

the waste was cardboard. After speaking with Waste Management we had various options. Based on those options we renegotiated our contract and included a container for cardboard that sits inside the building. Eliminating the cardboard from the waste stream reduced our compactor container from a 6 week to a 22 week pickup frequency. Eliminating the cardboard from the waste stream and renegotiating our contract allowed ITW Ransburg to see an annual \$2,200 reduction in waste disposal costs. We are also proud of the fact that we reduced the amount of waste going to the landfill. These two initiatives combined for an annual saving of \$18,530.



Count Me Out!

Many are bowing out of the recession

You know, the past few weeks have been rather interesting. Like many of you I go to numerous meetings, but something has changed. During the fourth quarter of 2009 there were hints of new economic activity, but 2010 seems to be different. Over and over, I hear the same thing. Activity is up – significantly!

My construction industry friends are talking about increases in the number of RFP's, new funding for tabled work, and a flurry of new prospects. Architects, on the front line of new work, are even talking about a sudden new buzz. On the economic development front, things are heating up. The fresh rush of activity has ED folks jumping through hoops, chasing new opportunities. And, attitudes are better. People are optimistic and they're beginning to have fun again.

What happened?

That's the big question, isn't it? The answer is always the same. "I don't know!" If you watch the news, they're still talking gloom and doom, but on the front lines good things are beginning to happen.

Bowing out!

Since there's absolutely no clue as to what has changed, the common response is that the American public has just decided to bow out of the recession. They're done! They're tired of it! They quit! Everyone I talk with believes that the only reason for the rush of business activity is because people have had it with the malaise and have decided to move on with life.

They're saying, "We quit!"

Businesses, tired of waiting, are saying, "Let's get back to work!" They are beginning to build again and there are indications that furloughed workers are being called back. They're making things happen.

Anger turns to hope.

Another interesting part of the economic discussion is that it almost always turns to politics. People are exhausted and angry. Overwhelmingly, blame for the bad economy is being heaped on Washington, and the ripple is being felt in state and local elections across the country. It appears that as elections draw near, Americans are optimistic that major changes are about to happen. Their anger and the opportunity to open up a can of you-know-what, are giving them hope. Regardless of political persuasion, voters are ready for change and it looks like big ones are coming.

Let's get it on!

I'm always amazed by the resiliency of the American people. We can be beaten, battered, lose everything and still fight our way back with a vengeance. Given the freedom to do so, Americans will change the world. Throw in a little economic turmoil and some political anger and they'll do just that.

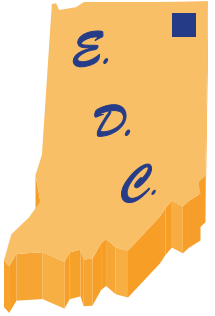
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This article reprinted courtesy of the author, Mr. Jim Walton
regular columnist for Gerry Dick's Inside Indiana Business e-newsletter.





"We've got a corner on the good life"

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

I hope you have taken the time to read the article by Jim Walton entitled "Count Me Out!" I feel it hits the nail on the head. During these difficult economic times, the temptation is to complain, accuse, and gripe about the economy rather than taking a positive approach with an attitude of wanting to help improve the economy. It is always the goal of your SCEDC to assist local industries to remain here and remain stable, and to encourage new companies to move into Steuben County. As mentioned in the lead article of this newsletter, 2009 did have some positive growth with local firms expanding, and new firms moving to our community, two from Ohio and one from Michigan.

We are also in process of developing a new strategic plan for the growth of our towns, the City of Angola and the County. Community feedback sessions will soon be conducted to obtain input from our citizens, and I hope the attendance at these events will be large and enthusiastic.

I continue to stress that all of us as Steuben County residents can be ambassadors promoting our county and stressing the many positive attributes that we have. Criticism is only beneficial when it is positive and leads to solutions. It is always good to ask ourselves from time to time, am I contributing to the solution, or am I contributing to the problem? We are all in this together. Let's work together to bring about positive economic growth for our county. The community feedback sessions will start in the near future. The sessions will be announced by our local media outlets. The Steuben County Economic Development Corporation looks forward to your assistance, and we would like to say thank you to the Steuben County government and our communities for supporting this important project.

As always, if you have questions about economic development activities, please contact me. I will be happy to speak with you by phone, or meet with you personally.

Gary