



The Partnership for Community Growth & Development hosted its third “Breakfast for Champions” on November 25, 2008. The theme was “Creating the Next Chapter” representing the creation of the next wave of business success in the Liberty area.



Partnership Chairman Tom Cole with Barsto Construction welcomed the **170 attendees**. He thanked and recognized the sponsors including KCPL which provided a gift to each attendee. Table hosts were:

- Akin Gordon Cowger Engineers with Helix Architecture & Design
- Larry Brown Excavating with Lutjen
- Hallmark Cards
- J E Dunn Construction
- KCP&L
- Liberty Area Chamber
- M&I Bank
- WJE Healthcare Architects

Chairman Cole pointed out that the Partnership was founded in January 2004 and officially incorporated in January of 2005. It is a public/private approach to economic development for the Liberty Area whose mission is *to foster economic growth and development for the purpose of enhancing the quality of life in the Liberty, Missouri area.*

Cole highlighted some of the organization’s successes in 2008

- advertising reached about one million people,
- over 7,000 pages on the Partnership website have been viewed by over 2,000 visitors
- participation in tradeshow, presentations and tours,
- hosted several events and participated in marketing events,
- responded to over 60 prospects.

In business retention,

- 37 one-on-one business visits identified expansion opportunities,
- worked with the Missouri Division of Workforce Development to re-employ dislocated workers from the Lear plant.
- worked with the Full Employment Council in its Regional Business Retention Council.

Cole stressed that the bottom line is – in real estate taxes alone, Partnership projects will generate close to one-quarter million NEW dollars to the tax rolls and personal property should be close to that same amount!

The Partnership Board just completed its annual planning session and is preparing its 5th plan of work.

Work Plan Priorities are

1. business attraction including marketing,
2. business retention & expansion
3. organizational improvement and
4. communication.

The most important guiding principle is to serve the greater community by helping to shape its future.

It seems all that’s heard now-days is bad news. So spread this good news these award recipients represent

- **Over 70 million dollars in direct investment in the area,**
- **100 new jobs, and**
- **250 retained jobs through their expansion.**

Previous Partnership chairpersons Larry Wepler with Trophy Properties and Tony Sarver with Realty Executives presented the awards as Chairman Cole & past chairman John Engelmann with KCPL made the announcements.

The Public/Institutional category:

Liberty Hospital administrator Joe Crossett and assistant administrator David Feess represented Liberty Hospital at the awards ceremony. J E Dunn Construction and WJE Healthcare Architects helped complete the addition to the hospital. Liberty Hospital has added the 6th & 7th floors to the south hospital tower. The 30,000 additional square feet will provide space for 40 more patient beds. It will also provide some space flexibility while renovating other areas of the hospital. Liberty Hospital is one of the area's major employers with approximately 1,650 employees.



In the developer category



Terry Bush accepted the developer's award for their project the 291 Business Center, located north of 152 on 291, close to the Liberty Triangle. The project team consisted of architect Scott Olson and engineering by Logan & Associates. The new 30,000 square feet of building space houses A.R.C., McKnight EyeCenter and has more space for lease, the remaining space is divisible.

This project provided jobs to a construction crew of 36.

Individual Business category

Representing Antigen Laboratories and Planet Biopharm at the breakfast was Bill Goldberg. Antigen has been located in Liberty for close to 30 years and has recently partnered with Planet Biopharm. Antigen purchased a building on Main, just south of the downtown square. They completely renovated the building and have expanded their operations. The growth by the company has resulted in 10 new jobs, with total employment of 50 people. It would be great to see yet another expansion of this growing company.





When Brian Gasek decided he wanted a Bed & Breakfast in Liberty, he purchased a Victorian house on West Franklin that was built in 1889. And then he went to work to open Celebration Manor. The project has been a labor of love – using his skills and those of his brothers, sons and neighbors. The woodwork and chandeliers are original. He has completely renovated this 2850 sq ft house into a wonderful venue for small dinner parties, private weddings and a weekend getaway.

Clayview Country Club was established in Liberty in 1958 and 50 years later (this year) had the great opportunity to build a new facility. Clayview Board member Brett Ohlhausen accepted the development award. The project team included contractor McCown & Gordon. Clayview Country Club is now located in the Shoal Creek Valley Development area, just west of Flintlock Road. The 6,000 sq ft clubhouse is home to indoor and outdoor tennis courts, 2 swimming pools and a fitness center. At its new location, Clayview will continue to serve the Liberty High School tennis teams. The area surrounding Clayview Country Club has a water park, townhomes, single family homes and Liberty Oaks Elementary School.



Gary Crossley Ford moved to the west side of I-35 in 2006 and quickly became the #1 Ford dealership in Kansas City. Now they have expanded! Todd Crossley accepted the award. The project team included Teague Construction. Crossley has added an 11,000 sq ft building to expand its service department. The expansion added 10 employees making their total employee count 120.

Jason Milbradt is the general manager of the Fairfield Inn & Suites. When the opportunity arose for renovations, not only did he embrace the new possibilities – he designed and detailed them! The rest of the project team included Environs & Goforth Construction and hotel representatives James Anderson, Ike Lalji and Larry Patel. The hotel was one of the original Fairfield Inn concepts by Marriott in 1991 so it was eager for an update. The 11,000 sq ft addition completely changed the look – nothing is where it was before – even the front door. The interior decor has eye-popping color and rich fabrics and furniture. Fairfield was able to add a meeting room called the Liberty Room. It is remarkable that the hotel stayed open through the entire renovation! The construction project employed close to 200 people.



Harmony Printing is located on old 210 Highway on the way to Fountain Bluffs. They received the award for a huge investment in equipment. This new equipment made it possible for Harmony to be certified as a green printer by the Forestry Stewardship Council – a grueling eight-month process which included an audit. Harmony has been in Liberty since 1977. The new equipment resulted in 12 new jobs for a total employee count of 90.

Northland Family Care was represented by Dr. Steve Nelson. Dr. Nelson and his doctor group used the project team of J. Price Architecture and Purdum Construction to build a 39,000 sq ft healthcare-related facility. Included in the space are an orthopedic practice, physical therapists, Quest diagnostics, Northland Imaging Center and Work-Health Solutions. new jobs have been established bringing the employee total to 40.





Reeves-Wiedeman opened its Liberty location early this year. Ted and Curt Wiedeman, accepted the award.

Reeves Wiedeman is a plumbing supply company working with contractors and the construction industry. The 5,600 sq ft building is located in the Liberty Industrial Park. The Liberty location rounded out the company's geographic coverage of the KC metro. The project team included Akin Gordon Cowger in partnership with Helix Architecture & Design and Wiegel Construction.

Rogers' Plaza is a development owned by the Rogers family including Steve Rogers and his daughter Shannon Piesert. Their project team included Larry Brown Excavating and Lutjen. Rogers Sporting Goods is the anchor tenant and draws customers from all over the region. Rogers IS a destination. When it became necessary for them to find a new location, they considered sites in the entire Liberty area. Liberty has always been their home so they chose the site just north of the 291/I-35 intersection on Church Road, with great visibility! The Rogers family is thrilled with all the new space. Other businesses in the development include Great Guns which will offer firearms training; a hotel is slated to go in the development.



Wear-Concepts is a great success story. Wear-Con manufactures and repairs steel parts for the cement, power, and grain industries. It supplies wear resistant materials, adhesives and sealants for steel fabrication. The company is owned by Dennis & Cindy Todd who live in the Northland. The company facility had been in Riverside but they had no place to grow. When the Partnership first talked to general manager, Gary Babb, about a location at Heartland Meadows it was evident it is a good match for Wear-Con. The site was enough for the 25,000 sq ft building AND had room to expand. Their project leader was Allison & Alexander. A 15,000 sq ft expansion is already underway. Welcome to the neighborhood Wear-Concepts!