

## Economic Development



The new business incubator, on the right, is located in downtown Barry.

### Economic Development in Our Service Area

#### Pike County Economic Development Corporation

The Pike County Economic Development Corporation is a non-profit organization that was started in 1999 by local stakeholders in need of representation for economic development in and around Pike County. In a partnership with the University of Illinois Extension, a director was provided working half-time for the corporation.

This past year brought a reorganization of the University of Illinois Extension. Through the reorganization, Pike County was annexed with four other counties. This meant that time allocated to Pike County would be drastically cut, no longer having an executive director dedicated to the county half-time. In order to have better representation, the PCEDC teamed up with Two Rivers R C & D to hire a new full-time economic

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**For the first time in many years, one of Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative's directors is not standing for re-election. There will not be an incumbent running in District 7 which is in Morgan County since Alan Heaton has decided to retire. See last month's Illinois Country Living for information on becoming a director. Call the office and, we'll send you a copy if you no longer have yours and a copy of the Bylaws, too.**

**In the past fifteen years, there have been nine new directors on the eleven member board of directors.**

**Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative 1-800-468-4732 [www.e-co-op.com](http://www.e-co-op.com)**



PCEDC Director, Shawn Rennecker in his new office in Barry.

development director. Shawn Rennecker, former Barry City Administrator, was chosen for this new position. The lifelong Barry native brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience. Rennecker graduated from Blackburn College with a bachelor's degree in political science and completed his master's degree in Public Administration at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville. He has also managed three non-profit organizations in the past and served as a planner for the City of Quincy.

"The PCEDC is looking to expand its offerings to members and communities in the county with the transition to a full-time director," Rennecker said. The goals of the PCEDC are developing a business retention and expansion program for the county, assisting rural communities with planning, developing a marketing strategy to attract new business and industry to the county, and working with other organizations to further promote tourism opportunities for Pike County. Furthermore, the group hopes to improve "Pike County Pride" through community awareness programs and positive public relations, and coordinating and building partnerships among public and private organizations in Pike County.

Rennecker will be working on the forefront with local people and businesses to find out the exact needs for economic development around Pike County. Rennecker hopes to help future entrepreneurs also. He will be working to help

obtain funding through various forms such as grants and loans for projects.

Rennecker's office will be located in the Barry Business Incubator. The incubator will help accelerate the successful development of new businesses through specialized support and services. Even with his new office however, Rennecker will be very mobile with his work. Other places he will be working out of include various city halls in other communities and the Pike County Farm Bureau.

Two Rivers R C & D / Access Illinois Coordinator, Brenda Middendorf hopes to have the membership support that the PCEDC has seen in the past. A membership drive to bring in new members is something the group will be doing in the coming months. Middendorf said that a lot of planning went into creating the new full-time director position. This planning process included looking at other counties who have self-sustaining economic development groups and patterning theirs after them.

Middendorf is also excited about the new public transportation in Pike County that the PCEDC helped bring about. West Central Mass Transit District is providing door-to-door transportation to anywhere in Pike County for people of all ages. Along with transportation around Pike County, there will be transportation to neighboring cities such as Quincy, Jacksonville, and Springfield.

The PCEDC is committed to supporting and expanding business and employment in Pike County. Visit them on the web at: [www.pikeedc.org](http://www.pikeedc.org)

## **GREENE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

The Greene County Economic Development Group started in November of 2005. Their primary goal is to promote community development, new business, and encourage entrepreneurial endeavors in Greene County. The group strives to provide tools to their members for economic and community

development. The non-profit group consists of 30 members including the board and officers in which all are volunteers. The group can always use new volunteers who are looking to help their county grow.

In 2010 the group purchased a business park located between White Hall and Roodhouse. They are currently marketing the business park for development and for sale. Along with the purchase of the business park, the group also acquired a storage facility business near the park location.

The group will be making major upgrades to their website as well as launching a Facebook page in the near future.

Visit them on the web at: [www.gcedg.org](http://www.gcedg.org) or by e-mail at [gcedginc@gmail.com](mailto:gcedginc@gmail.com). Their office is located at 424 Main St. Greenfield, IL 62044 (217) 883-3671

## SCOTT COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

For over 40 years, Scott County Development Corporation has been a driving force for economic development in Scott County and its communities. The non-profit group provides opportunities for business and industry that includes low-interest loans for start up and expansion projects, financing seminars for business and industry leaders, and the fostering of a strong pro-business partnership with local government.



The group often helps with "gap" financing. This involves finding additional financing for any new business or existing business looking to expand in Scott County. The Scott County Development Corporation has a partnership with the Jacksonville Regional Economic Development Corporation which enables them to offer access to a trained and professional economic development staff.

Scott County Development Corporation can be reached by mail at: P.O. Box 137 Winchester, IL 62694

## JACKSONVILLE REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Jacksonville Regional Development Corporation works to retain, expand, create, and recruit job opportunities for Morgan and Scott Counties. The group also works with entrepreneurs in the area looking to start their own business by offering multiple services and support. They recently were granted a 10 year enterprise zone extension for Jacksonville and Morgan County. Also in 2010, the JREDC revamped their website by developing it further. When it comes to economic development, a website is of huge importance. Executive Director Terry Denison stated that a good website can be the difference in people deciding to work with your group or not.

In 2011, the JREDC will be working diligently to improve their workforce. They are conducting a strategic assessment to find the areas that need improvement.

Illinois Rural Electric Cooperative believes that our participation in and support of economic development is very important to the economy in our service area. Senior Engineer Ron Coultas (pictured left) along with General Manager Bruce Giffin and Manager of Finance Seth Bushnell are proud to work with these various organizations and programs to provide support to their efforts to improve the economy in their area.

Future Gen is another major project the group has put countless hours into. Morgan County is in the running for the underground storage of CO<sub>2</sub>. The CO<sub>2</sub> would be liquidized and transported through a pipeline a mile underground. Future Gen would also include retrofitting the Meredosia power plant. This project could bring 1,000 construction jobs and 200 permanent jobs. In all, this would be a 1.2 billion dollar investment in the community and surrounding area.

Visit them on the web at: [www.jredc.org](http://www.jredc.org)

## **CALHOUN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

The Calhoun Economic Development Committee is part of the Calhoun Community Foundation. The group works with businesses and members of the community on preserving the agricultural heritage through tourism. For the past five years, the group has helped organize the Quilt and Church Tour that is held throughout Calhoun County in October.

The tour started with four barn quilts in 2008 and now boasts 62 barn quilts. Along with the barn quilts, local churches in four different villages display quilts during the October tour. Throughout the year, local businesses sell books for \$10 that includes a history of the barns and or farms along with the quilts. An individual driving map is available for purchase as well for a dollar. The map allows anyone to take the quilt tour of the barns year round. Photographed note cards of the barn quilts are available for purchase as well.

The 5th Annual Quilt and Church Tour will be held October 21 and 22, 2011.



One of the many barn quilts that can be seen on the tour.

## **PIKE COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

The Pike County Chamber of Commerce works to be an advocate for their members, but are also a voice for all businesses in Pike County. A few years ago the board of directors set out to find the five most important areas for the chamber of commerce. They did this by following a strategic process, including surveying people of the county. After analyzing their data, they found the five most important goals were promoting the county, tourism and recreation, chamber communication and branding, increasing membership value, and fund development to continue operating.

The chamber is the central place for information for visitors, businesses, and residents. This year the group updated their website to include new features such as a community calendar. Kaye Iftner knows that if they can get people to Pike County, they will fall in love with it and come back or maybe even stay there.

Visit them on the web on Facebook or at: [www.pikeil.org](http://www.pikeil.org)