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Chairman's Column

By HEDC Chairman Roger Lehmann



Keeping Pedigree Ovens in Harvard was an important victory for Harvard and for Illinois. Wisconsin has an aggressive business attraction program which targets growing companies in other nearby states. It is very difficult to compete with such a well-funded program. In this case, teamwork, creative thinking and access to Harvard's quality workforce won out. Working to help local companies stay and grow in town has always been an important part of the HEDC's mission.

The HEDC website is being rebuilt from the ground up. The sale of the former Motorola facility has captured the world's attention. Our website is attracting an increasing number of visitors each month and it is important that we make the best possible first impression. Our online Land and Sites database will also be getting a fresh look and we will be adding information on the Enterprise Zone and on other developing projects in Harvard. Watch for the new site to debut in September.

The HEDC and the City of Harvard are working with ComEd to install lighting at the Welcome to Harvard sign on Route 14. Our community's southern gateway will soon be a little brighter.

Join us! Become an HEDC Member

You can learn more about the benefits of HEDC membership and to find out how you can play a role in Harvard's future at www.harvardedc.com, or call (815) 943-1036 to receive a membership kit by email or regular mail.



KEEPING IT LOCAL: PEDIGREE OVENS WILL EXPAND IN HARVARD

A homegrown Harvard company is celebrating its 20th anniversary with a major expansion project in a new phase of Arrowhead Industrial Park.

Pedigree Ovens will break ground this month on a 210,000 square foot building on 22 acres north of its current site on Comanche Circle. According to company owner **Kurt Stricker**, the facility will become the home of a significantly expanded Pedigree Ovens operation, thanks to continued growth and the recent acquisition of a California pet treat company.

Pedigree Ovens manufactures private label all-natural gourmet pet treats in a human-grade environment and distributes them to companies and consumers across North America through its Harvard-based sales operation, **The Pound Bakery** (www.thepoundbakery.com). Stricker plans to merge the newly acquired company, PetDine – which includes a related retail operation, AquaDine – with Pedigree Ovens and house the entire operation under one roof.

The new building will house additional production and packaging lines. "More lines



will enable us to tackle larger projects," noted Stricker. "It will also give us better control of sanitation and inventory."

Stricker also plans to create 75 new jobs over the next five years, more than doubling the existing workforce. Currently, 56 employees work in production bakery operations, packaging, warehousing and sales in Harvard.

Pedigree Ovens' existing 49,000 square foot facility may be converted to warehouse space for one or more companies. The goal is to complete construction and make the move into the new facility by June of 2017. "I wish we could be there right now," he said.

This is the fifth (and largest) expansion for the company, which was founded in 1996 in the former Bowman Dairy Building on Jefferson Street. Twenty years later, Pedigree Ovens is committed to staying in Harvard.

Wisconsin economic development officials aggressively lobbied Stricker to move his company over the border and into Delavan. **Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner** caught wind of Wisconsin's efforts and contacted Stricker to make the case for staying in Illinois. The **City of Harvard, Harvard Economic Development Corporation (HEDC)** and county economic development officials worked with state agencies to produce a successful business retention outcome.

The result is also good news for Harvard. The new Pedigree Ovens facility will be built on a parcel which was not previously accessible by road. Once completed, the plant will anchor a new road which will create a gateway into a third phase of Arrowhead Industrial Park.

"A lot of people worked very hard to make this come together," said Stricker, who knew that Harvard was his best bet to continue building a quality workforce. "We have a lot of exceptional local people working for us. This company has done very well in Harvard and it is going to continue growing in Harvard in the years ahead."

Mayor's Column

By Mayor Jay Nolan



Progress can be seen at the former Motorola facility, following its sale in May. The City has turned the water back on at the facility, the sprinklers

have been tested and the grounds are being cleaned up. These are all good signs.

The new owners have told us that they intend to put the property back into productive use. They are happy to be coming to Harvard. They are not ready to share details of their plans with the public yet and we are respecting their wishes.

The sale has put new attention on Harvard, from all parts of the country and from around the world. It is also encouraging to see that we are keeping local businesses in our community at the same time that new companies are coming to town. This is a good time to be in Harvard – a time that we have all been working toward for a very long time. We expect to see continued new development and expansion in the years ahead.

Harvard Company Grows as Bakery Sales Rise Worldwide

Another local company is finding success in baked goods – this time for human consumption.

Harvard-based **Practical Baker** manufacturers specialty bakery equipment, including pastry and donut cutters, cookie machines and machinery for gluten-free products.

The company, which was founded in 1996, also owns the **Kook-E-King** equipment brand (established in 1946) and the **Bakery.com** website, which serves as an online community for the worldwide baking industry.

Owner **John Stricker** bought an existing 9,600 square foot building at 600 Chippewa in 2014 in order to 'spread out, add more equipment, increase efficiencies and create the capacity to do more custom work'. The move more than doubled his former space. Sales of custom equipment increased accordingly.

Building inventory was another goal. "We have learned that if you don't have it in stock, you aren't going to sell it," explained Stricker. "People want it now, and that includes custom equipment. You have to be able to deliver in a timely fashion, at a lower cost than the competition."

The company now ships to as many as 25 different countries each year. "This has been a very cool cultural exchange experience for us," he noted. "Cookies have global appeal." Bakery sales also seem to stay strong, regardless of the economy. "Donuts and cookies are little things that make you happy," he explained. "People do not give them up easily."

Opportunities...

Ready For Quick Move In

FOR LEASE: 4,000 sft. in newer building features 18' ceilings, loading dock, 400 amp power. Affordable, fast move-in: \$4/sft NNN. Call (815) 943-8788 for details.

Bank-Owned Site

FOR SALE: Vacant 8.458 acres on McGuire Road, across from Walmart. Two parcels, zoned B-2, M-2. Ideal for grocery, retail, multi-use. In city. Access to McGuire Rd. and Frisco Dr. Call Verne Sisson at Harvard Savings Bank for details: (815) 943-8611.

Fast-Track, Shovel-Ready Sites

Arrowhead Industrial Park has fully improved sites at highly competitive costs. Call (815) 943-8788 for details. Site plan online at www.harvardedc.com

Incubator Space for Growing Companies

FOR LEASE: 1,800 or 3,600 sft. Ideal for office, light industrial/assembly or distribution-based businesses. Each unit has separate entrance, 12' overhead door and private bathroom. Units can be reconfigured to meet specific needs. Call (815) 943-8788.

Mercy Harvard Hospital Gains Certification

Mercy Harvard Hospital is the first hospital in Illinois to become certified as an **Acute Stroke Ready Hospital**. The certification recognizes hospitals equipped to treat stroke patients with timely, evidence-based care prior to transferring them to a primary or comprehensive stroke center.

The hospital underwent a rigorous onsite review to earn certification for its dedicated stroke-focused program, which features on-site staff trained in stroke care and 24/7 diagnostic and lab testing.

Harvard is very fortunate to have such a facility in town. Nearly half of Americans live at least 60 miles away from a primary or comprehensive stroke center.

