



Economic Development Group of Wabash County

April 2010

Dedicated to Creating Economic and Employment Opportunities for the People and Businesses of Wabash County.

EDG's 2010 Annual Meeting Helps "Breed Optimism"

"Wabash County's efforts to attract 21st Century businesses are being watched by officials around the state.", stated Richard E. Mourdock, treasurer of the State of Indiana and guest speaker at the annual meeting of the Economic Development Group of Wabash County Wednesday, March 31, at the Honeywell Center here. "Two neighboring counties, Wabash and Grant, are getting a lot of attention around the state," Mourdock commented after the meeting. "They say imitation is the highest form of flattery, and a lot of counties need the kind of leadership that you have here.

"I sensed a lot of optimism in the room today," he continued. "Optimism breeds optimism and success breeds success. Wabash County has had a lot of both."

Mourdock, 58, making his second appearance at an EDG annual meeting in the past 23 months, told the 90 or so EDG members, government leaders and politicians in the audience, "We don't very often see the kind of cooperation you have here. That cooperation explains in part why you've had the success you've had. What everybody needs to do is come in like you did here and erase the lines on the map," he said. "As a result you have gotten your brand out there, and that's what it's all about."



Indiana State Treasurer Richard Mourdock at EDG 2010 Annual Meeting

Mourdock also stressed the importance of taking a regional approach to economic development. "Having a regional sense is more productive because you get more bang for your bucks." EDG is a member of the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership.

The Ohio native has a Master's Degree in geology from Ball State University and spent 30 years in the Hoosier energy (coal and oil), construction and environmental industries before taking his present office in 2007. He served two terms as a Vanderburgh County commissioner between 1995 and 2002, and lives with his wife, Marilyn, in Darmstadt, north of Evansville. He serves as the state's chief investment officer and is president of the Indiana Bond Bank, one of 13 commissions and boards he serves on in his official position. Bill Konyha, president and CEO of EDG, was appointed to the Indiana Bond Bank board in 2009.

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EDG Board of Directors

Skip Daughtry, Chair

Ken Perkins, Vice Chair

Dan Hannaford, Secretary

Ralph Naragon, Treasurer

Robert Vanlandingham

Jeff Kellam

Rob Pearson

Ron Kerby

Brian Hauptert

Actions Of The Board

EDG Board of Directors Meetings was held on April 8, 2010 in the EDG Office at 7:30 am. During this meeting March's financial statements, loan portfolios, website data sheets, membership sheets, minutes and President's Report were presented and approved by the board. There was one New Business Item (NBI)

NBI 04-10-01 pertained to making an amendment to the 2010 budget to recognize the income and expense related to the Novae Corp. attraction project. The staff recommended that as the income and expense are both project related and are not related to operations the budget should be adjusted. A motion was made and unanimously approved.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 am.

EDG's 2010 Annual Meeting Helps "Breed Optimism" (cont.)

Konyha described 2009 as "challenging" for EDG officials. "Our local, regional and state economies were battered by our reliance on 20th Century manufacturing and our dependence upon the automobile industry," he said in his annual report. "We had downsizing and layoffs as our businesses did their best to manage through this horrible economy. We had plant closures as some plants were consolidated within operations elsewhere in Indiana (Dexter Axle) or a neighboring state (Wabash Magnetics)," he continued. "A number of Wabash County businesses fought the downturn by seeking the protection of bankruptcy (Aleris/Wabash Alloys, G&S Metals)."

However, there were successes mixed in throughout the year, he added:

- Visionary Web started rather bleakly due to losses suffered as another county business sought bankruptcy protection. By the end of the year, this 21st Century business was back in growth mode and 2010 began with record numbers.
- Living Essentials (makers of the 5-Hour Energy Drink) opened a 200,000-square-foot warehouse and national distribution center. Logistics and distribution are among EDG's target industries as the Hoosier Heartland Industrial Corridor is once again under construction. Living Essentials now has a 350,000-square-foot "footprint" in Wabash with its new distribution center in the Wabash North Industrial Park and its manufacturing facility in the old MarkHon factory.
- The Ford Meter Box Co. acquired new equipment and technology with the assistance of EDG, a move to protect market share and jobs. EDG led efforts to make Tax Increment Financing (TIF) available to assist in the purchase of the new equipment and allow one of Wabash's oldest industries to manufacture products from new alloys.
- Cinergy MetroNet began installing fiber-optic cable -- 21st Century infrastructure -- in Wabash and North Manchester that will facilitate EDG's efforts to attract more 21st Century businesses.



A crowd of approximately 90 attend the EDG's 2010 Annual Meeting.

Paramount to EDG's efforts in marketing the county's industrial assets, however, was the cooperation between elected officials in North Manchester, Wabash and Wabash County, Konyha said, "working with one another to enhance our efforts to create economic and employment opportunities in Wabash County." He was referring, of course, to the cooperation between the three taxing entities to help bring Cinergy MetroNet and Novae Corp. to the county. Novae Corp. recently purchased the vacated Dexter Axle plant east of North Manchester and announced plans to move its Sure-Trac Enclosed Trailer Division into the county and employ 50-100 people within the next 18-24 months. He also made mention of two other success stories from recent years: the continuing growth of Living Essentials, maker of the 5-Hour Energy drink, which last month produced 40 million bottles in Wabash and extended its market to England and Ireland, and Poet Energy, the ethanol plant located on In. 13 between Urbana and North Manchester.

As a result of all of these success stories and others, Konyha reported that the county's unemployment rate had gone from being the 12th highest in the state in 2009 to the 40th highest as of the most recent figures. "Last year we were at 14 percent," he said. "We now stand at 11.5 percent."

Konyha also awarded the first EDG Player of the Year Award to Ivy Tech Community College. The award was accepted by Brad Thurmond, executive director of the instructional site at Wabash. "Ivy Tech here is currently training 600 Wabash County people who are either unemployed or underemployed," Konyha said. "For that we are deeply indebted to them, and they are most deserved of this new award."

Skip Daughtry, chairman of the EDG board of directors, praised the EDG staff – Konyha and Abby C. Hoy, his executive assistant – for their untiring efforts and the EDG board, consisting of North Manchester Town Manager Dan Hannaford, secretary, Wabash Mayor Bob Vanlandingham, Jeff Kellam, Ron Kerby, Ken Perkins, Ralph Naragon, treasurer, County Commissioner Brian Hauptert and Rob Pearson. Kellam and Perkins were re-elected for three-year terms during the meeting.

Daughtry also thanked the elected officials of Wabash, North Manchester and Wabash County for their cooperation in the Cinergy MetroNet and Novae projects, and also for "their 20 percent increases in the amount they pay under our service contracts" in response to a plea at last year's meeting for expanded financial support.

He reported individual and corporate memberships up by 217 and 127 percent, respectively, but added that corporate contributions were down by 73 percent. As a result, EDG experienced a \$102,411 operating loss in 2009. "... We supported this operating loss from our balance sheet," Daughtry said, but "we cannot sustain this as a strategy for long. ... **We urge you to support our mission of retention, expansion and attraction of 21st Century economic and employment opportunities.**"

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President's Report April 2010

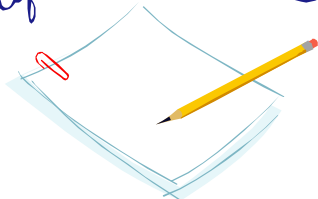
These items were reported on by the President:



William S.
Konyha
President

- **Novae Corp**— A formal announcement was made on March 17th with the Governor and a great deal of publicity. Although the publicity has not translated into significant fundraising for EDG as of yet it has increased traffic to the website significantly and lead to the President being contacted by Herron Consulting from Atlanta, he will schedule a visit with them soon. Novae conducted it's first job fair seeking to hire the first 20 people. It was scheduled for 9:00 am—2:00 pm. They took over 700 applications by noon and more than 1,000 in total.
- **Living Essentials**— Production is at 40 million bottles per month and they expect to reach 50 million within the next 60 days. They are beginning to export to Ireland and England and are nearly out of capacity. They are currently taking bids to add 100,000 s.f. of manufacturing and 100,000 s.f. of additional distribution space. Some bids are in and other pending. We expect they will make an award and begin as soon as they can get foundation releases. They estimate that the building will cost \$7.5 million and that they will create another 50 jobs with additional payroll of \$1.4 million at the minimum.
- **Cinergy MetroNet**— The TIF supporting the investment by Cinergy Metronet is moving in accordance with the schedule. The President has presented the Economic Development Plan and the Declaratory Resolution to the County Plan Commission, the City Plan Commission and to the North Manchester Plan Commission. He has secured resolutions approving the plan and the declaratory resolutions. Once all the proper Commissions have reviewed and approved it, EDG will have London Witte complete the Tax Impact Statements, notify all the overlapping taxing districts and conduct a public hearing. After the hearing he will then convene the City Redevelopment Commission and contemplate the final resolution approving the Redevelopment District (TIF).

*Administrative
Professionals Day*



Don't forget Administrative Professionals Day

April 21, 2010

Take the time to thank the people who
keep your office running smoothly!