

Belknap Matters

November 2007

Welcome

The Belknap County Economic Development Council is proud to welcome these new members:

AutoServ of Tilton
Coldwell Banker Commercial Weeks Associates
Granite Media Center
Laconia Gilford Economic Advisory Committee
Lakeside Restaurant
Leadership Development Services
Patrick Wood Law Office, PLLC
TicketsFromTheWeb.com

The BCEDC serves the businesses and organizations of the 11 municipalities in Belknap County. The Council offers a range of support and technical services, in addition to a Revolving Loan Fund. For more information, please contact:

Belknap County Economic Development Council

Lakes Venture Resource Center
Southern NH University – Laconia Center
2 Airport Road, Gilford, NH 03249
603-524-3057
www.bcedc.org
www.liveworkandplaynh.com



New Look for Laconia Eye

Laconia Eye Associates, P.A. has broken ground for the construction of a new state-of-the-art medical facility at the Laconia Gilford Business and Industrial Park. The 11,000 square foot building will eventually include an ambulatory surgery center. When the building is completed in the spring of 2008, Laconia Eye Associates plans to relocate from its current office suite on Spring Street, adjacent to LRGHealthcare, to 8,000 square feet of the new facility, leasing the remaining portion. The firm of Bonnette, Page, and Stone is leading construction.

Laconia Eye Associates, P.A. is the largest eye care practice north of Concord. Board Certified Ophthalmic surgeons, Douglas Scott, M.D., and Andrew Garfinkle, M.D., perform the latest in small incision cataract surgery, glaucoma surgery and laser vision correction, with equipment that is onsite for all treatments. Laconia Eye Associates is a comprehensive practice that includes an optometrist and optician, and offers eye examinations, glasses sales and contact lens fitting for people of all ages in its own optical shop.

"The practice has grown in the 56 years since Dr. Edward Wolston came to the Laconia Clinic in 1951," explains Dr. Scott. "This represents the third move over that time. Dr. Wolston and Dr. Max Rothemond outgrew their space at the Laconia Clinic and were the first tenants at the new medical office building at 85 Spring Street in

1986. Over the years, as technology blossomed, LEA has worked to remain a state-of-the-art eyecare practice. The move to the new facility will allow LEA to expand its capability to provide primary and specialty eye care for the Lakes Region community. Laser eye surgery, computerized ophthalmic scanners, and ultrasonic imaging will join the established techniques of comprehensive eye examination in this new facility dedicated to eyecare at 368 Hounsell Avenue."



Laconia Eye Associates has received primary financing from Northway Bank under the SBA 504 program; Belknap County Economic Development Council has assisted in the financing of this project.

Dr. Scott and his associates invite interested and curious members of the community to drive by and watch this exciting addition to the medical community as it rises on the hill overlooking Piche's in Gilford.

Where Credit Is Due

A big **THANK YOU** to Northway Bank for continuing its support of the Belknap County Economic Development Council over the years and for recently purchasing Tax Credits the Council is offering for sale. The Council is fortunate to be able to participate in the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority's Community Development Investment Program (NHCDFA/CDIP) as it provides the BCEDC with an alternative funding source. The program offers New Hampshire businesses a unique opportunity to invest in worthwhile economic development projects while receiving a 75% state tax credit through CDIP. The credit may be used at any time during a period of five consecutive years and may be applied against the New Hampshire business profits tax, business enterprise tax, and/or insurance premium taxes.

By purchasing these tax credits, Northway Bank has directed tax dollars it would otherwise pay to the state and federal government to supporting the economic vitality of Belknap County.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

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Loan Fund Manager
Lyn O'Callaghan
Program Coordinator



Adaptive Reuse Benefits All

BCEDC assistance to businesses often spans several years, especially if the project involves adaptive reuse. The former Allen-Rogers mill in Laconia has been transformed by Chinburg Builders, and the company recently celebrated the grand opening and occupancy of Phase 1 of Beacon Street West, a 48-unit residential condominium on the site. Additional housing, commercial and retail stores, and a restaurant are planned for the remaining space. This project greatly enhances redevelopment efforts in downtown Laconia.

The former Scott and Williams mill in Laconia now serves the needs of the community in its conversion to 60 rental apartments, a health care clinic, a wellness clinic, and a new facility for Lakes Region Child Care, which BCEDC was able to help with \$600,000 in bridge financing. Laconia Housing and Redevelopment Authority orchestrated the project with Rural Development, Meredith Village Savings Bank, NH Community Development Finance Authority, Brox Industries, and City of Laconia.

Residents of Belknap County now enjoy the fruits of several innovative projects in adaptive reuse...

In Tilton, Riverfront Place, once an eyesore with significant environmental issues, has been transformed by developer James Cropsey with assistance from BCEDC into attractive commercial and professional office space. Also in Tilton, in a converted barn and manufacturing plant, the Granite Media Center offers a state-of-the-art, multi-tenant facility for sound, film and media production; in 2006, the BCEDC was awarded a \$90,000 Rural Business Enterprise Grant from USDA/Rural Development to assist developer Bob Callahan with this project.

Members of the BCEDC can look with pride upon numerous projects in adaptive reuse of mills, commercial businesses, barns, and other spaces all around Belknap County where together we have made a difference. In our business of helping business, the Council offers free, confidential business development assistance to established, new or prospective businesses.

SMART Growth

The Smart Growth Program Series is an initiative designed to raise awareness and understanding of many issues facing communities as they struggle to best accommodate growth and development while maintaining a true community character. Each program in the series has been facilitated by leaders in the field of Smart Growth and Sustainable Development. The programs were held in the impressive, energy-efficient, "green" Prescott Farm Audubon Center, set amidst 160 beautiful acres of conserved farm and woodlands on White Oaks Road in Laconia.

Among the topics presented in the 2007 series were: Innovative Zoning for Smart Growth; Climate Change and the Northern New Hampshire Economy; The Dollars and Sense of Saving Special Places: Conservation, Heritage and Land Use Economics; Green Buildings: Conservation at the Heart of Development; Natural Services Network; Changing Demographics in the Lakes Region; Keeping Up Appearances: Considering Viewscapes and Viewsheds in Community Planning; Natural Shorelines and Your Lakefront Property; and The Nubanusit Neighborhood and Farm, a co-housing project in Peterborough.

The Belknap County Economic Development Council has been proud to join with the Samuel P. Pardoe Foundation, the Prescott Conservancy, Inc., and the New Hampshire Audubon Society to provide The Smart Growth Program Series free of charge to interested residents of the Lakes Region. The law firm of Normandin, Cheney & O'Neil served as a program underwriter for this year's series.

Eliza Retires

Eliza receives congratulations from Governor John Lynch



After 15 years of accomplished leadership, Eliza Leadbeater retired in April 2007 as Executive Director of the Belknap County Economic Development Council. Officially incorporated in April 1992, the BCEDC hired Leadbeater to raise operational funds and develop services to assist businesses and organizations throughout the county. Early years were spent refinancing existing businesses and stemming the flow of jobs from the region. In 1994, to enhance the availability of credit and finance for businesses, Leadbeater structured the Belknap County Revolving Loan Fund. She secured a half-million dollar loan from USDA-Rural Development and established the first Intermediary Relending Program based in New Hampshire. The dollars borrowed from Rural Development were lent to local businesses. Leadbeater worked diligently to further capitalize the fund through grants, additional loans, and program revenues. She also broadened the types of lending so that assistance could be provided to non-profit organizations as well as to sole proprietorships and publicly traded businesses. A strong advocate for rural communities, higher education, and employment opportunities, especially for New Hampshire's high school and college graduates, Eliza's passion for the re-use of existing buildings and love for textile mills is evident throughout the region.

Under her leadership, the BCEDC garnered numerous national and state recognitions including the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development Award for Excellence in Community Economic Development, NH Small Business Administration's Financial Advocate of the Year (2000) Award, numerous awards from National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for innovative programs, the International Economic Development Association's prestigious Program Award, and, most recently, Rural Development's Partner of the Year (2006) Award. The accomplishments of the BCEDC have also been cited in the Congressional Record for both the US Senate and House of Representatives. In her own right, Leadbeater was recognized in 2000 by IAPES (International Association of Professionals in Employment Security) for her work with youth and employers in New Hampshire. In 2004, she received the Excellence in Business Award for Public Service from *New Hampshire Business Review* and, in February 2007, this statewide business journal also recognized her as a 2007 Outstanding Woman in Business. Since retiring, Eliza is as busy as ever, nurturing unfinished projects and serving as a resource to many.

BCEDC Staff Changes

JENNIFER BOULANGER is the new Executive Director of the Belknap County Economic Development Council. She began her new responsibilities in April



2007, following the retirement of Eliza Leadbeater.

In 2006, Jennifer joined the BCEDC as Finance Manager, bringing to the position an extensive financial background with more than 10 years in commercial

banking and finance. Prior to joining the Council, she was Vice President Commercial Lending at Ocean National Bank in Concord. From 2001-2003 Jennifer was on loan from Citizens Bank to the BCEDC as an underwriter. As BCEDC Executive Director, Jennifer is responsible for the development and delivery of programs and services of both a short- and long-range nature designed to increase and facilitate sustainable business growth in all sectors of Belknap County's economy.

She received both her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of

New Hampshire. A graduate of the Concord Chamber's Leadership class, Jen is a current member of the Leadership Lakes Region class, a Rotarian, and volunteers in many civic and educational organizations. Jen and her husband, Jeff, are the parents of two children.

LYN O'CALLAGHAN began the new year as the Council's Program Coordinator, to manage marketing, communications, and outreach, maintain the organization's websites, coordinate member services, and support membership recruitment, services, programs, and special events. She works closely with the Smart Growth Lecture Series to raise community awareness and understanding of how best to accommodate growth and development while sustaining community character.

A native of the Lakes Region, Lyn brings to the job three decades of experience in public relations, publishing, and organizational outreach, having most recently served New Hampton School for 11 years as its Director of Communications. A graduate of the University System of New Hampshire, Lyn resides in New Hampton with her husband, Ron. She is a longtime member of the New Hampton Historical Society Executive Board.

MARIA DEL RIO joined the Council as Loan Fund Manager in September 2007. Maria assumes day-to-day responsibility for the organization's budgets, grant administration, and Revolving Loan Fund (RLF).

Prior to joining the BCEDC, she was the principal of Real Solutions, a real estate portfolio management firm in Concord. She has an extensive assets management background with more than 10 years in finance in both the non-profit and private sectors. Her experience also includes legal counseling. She is a volunteer with the Capital Center for the Arts and is a volunteer arbitrator for the Better Business



Bureau. For six years, she served on the Board of Directors of the Concord Cooperative Market.

Maria earned her bachelor's degree in Latin American Studies and Economics at Smith College and furthered her studies

at Brooklyn Law School from which she holds a Juris Doctor degree. A published author, she resides in Concord.

TRAINING FOR TOMORROW'S LEADERS

Leadership Lakes Region is designed to educate and inform area individuals about numerous issues at work in the Lakes Region and to foster a climate of greater volunteerism among its graduates.

Eight day-long programs are offered once a month from October to May, offering first-hand information from, and discussion with, businesses, organizations, government and civic leaders. Using surrounding towns and Lake Winnepesaukee as the classroom, topics include history, culture, social issues, education, economics, politics, and health. Graduates of Leadership Lakes Region gain knowledge and insights into our region as well as a network of others eager to volunteer and work together to improve our communities.

For more information about Leadership Lakes Region, visit www.leadershiplakesregion.org or call 603-524-6791.

SCORE

Since its inception in 2003, with the support of BCEDC and Laconia Savings Bank, SCORE Lakes Region branch has aggressively recruited volunteer counselors from all parts of the Lakes Region. The 12 men and women of SCORE Lakes Region possess industry experience ranging from advertising to wholesale operations and possess a wide variety of management skills, from accounting to utilities management. Since 2004, counselors have provided business advice to more than 200 citizens. Cases have ranged from start-up ventures to companies wishing to expand or to resolve business issues.

In addition to providing free advice in confidential meetings with clients, SCORE Lakes Region counselors attend business conferences or forums and are currently scheduling informative workshops for the fall. An *Ask SCORE* column, providing tips on managing a modern business, appears periodically in *The Citizen*.

To better serve the Lakes Region and accomplish the chapter's initiative, the branch must recruit additional members. Actively employed or retired executives with banking and/or legal experience are encouraged to join. Help us create an organization of talented and dedicated members equal to any chapter in New Hampshire. Contact SCORE Lakes Region at 603-524-3057.

Together we make a difference

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BELKNAP COUNTY

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Lakes Venture Resource Center at SNHU - Laconia Center
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