



Annual Dinner - Winter Wonderland

Make plans now to join your fellow members at the Mason Point Max J. Knight Building on Saturday, January 30, 2010 for our annual dinner. We are planning a night full of looking back at 2009.

Part of this celebration will again be the awarding of the 2009 Citizen of the Year, 2009 Business of the Year, and 2009 Small Business of the Year. Along with this newsletter, you will find nomination forms and information to nominate individuals, groups, or a business that would be a worthy recipient.

The SCED Citizen of the Year Award honors an outstanding citizen who has served the community of Sullivan above and beyond the call of duty.



The SCED Business of the Year & Small Business of the Year Award honors an outstanding business that has made a significant contribution to the local community and economy.

A wonderful meal and entertainment is being planned so mark your calendar and come share in our winter wonderland celebration. Watch your mail for your invitation and reply early! We hope to see you there!

Submitted By: Stephanie Finney

Fun Times for 2010

SCED is busy compiling committees for events planned in 2010. If you would like to join a committee for a SCED event, please let us know.

Events include:

- Annual Dinner
- Golf Outing,
- 4th of July Jackpot
- Oktoberfest/Chili Cook-Off,
- Safe Trick or Treat
- Christmas Holiday Celebration.

For additional details call Stephanie Finney at 728-4223 or info@sullivanchamber.com.



Submitted By: Stephanie Finney

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The Sullivan Chamber & Economic Development office will be closed the following:

Thursday, December 24

Friday, December 25th

In observance of Christmas

Energy Efficiency Incentives Now Available to City of Sullivan Commercial/Industrial Customers

Commercial and industrial customers of the City of Sullivan can now access monetary incentives to make energy conservation and efficiency improvements to their facilities.

These funds are available to the customers of the City of Sullivan electric system on a first-come, first-served basis through the City of Sullivan and its wholesale power supplier, the Illinois Municipal Electric Agency (IMEA).

These incentives are part of a comprehensive program of energy efficiency and conservation initiatives undertaken by Sullivan and by IMEA.

Access to the application forms for the monetary incentives is available for viewing on the IMEA website.

Customers can view the information by going to www.imea.org, clicking on the

“Energy Efficiency” tab on the left-hand side of the home page, then choosing either “IMEA Electric Efficiency Program Application Forms” or “Spreadsheets Accompanying the IMEA Energy Efficiency Application Forms” links listed at the top of the page.

The forms show each type of equipment for which an incentive is available (lights, pumps, motors, HVAC equipment and the like) as well as the dollar amount for each.

“These monies will help pay a portion of the purchase and installation costs for a wide variety of lower energy use technologies,” said Mike Kirk.

“The customer identifies what they would like to do by examining the program components in the applications, then fills out the forms and sends them to IMEA for initial review.

After review the forms will be forwarded to the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO) for final review and the customer will then be informed if the application has been approved. Payment is made upon project completion.”

“IMEA is extremely pleased to be able to offer this opportunity to the citizens of our member communities,” said IMEA President & CEO Ronald D. Earl.

“We’ve been selling wholesale power to municipal electric systems for a quarter century and we want to make certain that all our members have the tools they need to use that electricity wisely and efficiently.”

Questions about the incentives referenced in this press release can be directed to Mike Genin of IMEA at 217-789-4632.

Submitted By: Stepheny McMahon

What is SCORE?

SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business", is a non-profit association dedicated to educating entrepreneurs and the formation, growth and success of small business nationwide.

SCORE volunteers are both working and retired executives and business owners, who have been in your shoes. They want to share their knowledge with you, so you can succeed as well.

SCORE offers free and confidential advice to small businesses through face to face counseling, on-line counseling and workshops via the web and more.

You can talk to your SCORE counselor again and again.



There's no limit on mentoring. Long term mentoring is great help and specialty experts are on hand if you have specific questions.

To get free, online counseling 24/7 www.score.com, input keywords to find a counselor who matches your business needs. Or meet in person through the SCED by contacting Stepheny McMahon at 728-2684.

Submitted By: Stephanie Finney

FREE help from Smart Energy Design Assistance Center

This week at the Utility Roundtable discussion attended by 18 people, Adrian Gurga of the Smart Energy Design Assistance Center presented information on his organization and how they can help businesses. SEDAC is a government funded program, which helps businesses to assess where they are wasting energy and suggest solutions for fixing the problem and saving money.

As I listened to the presentation yesterday, I wondered how many businesses look for ways to cut back on expenses by decreasing marketing, cutting staff or by carrying less inventory and never

even consider the small measures that could be taken to reduce utility usage for monthly savings. Here is where SEDAC can help.

Adrian explained that a business owner who has questions can call SEDAC for **FREE** advice. If a business is interested in taking more initiative, an application to SEDAC will start the process of a full energy audit. A series of questions and answers with a SEDAC rep is followed by an on-site review of the property. SEDAC will then assess where energy is being lost on the property and develop a plan for

reducing the waste.

The plan may include an investment in new light bulbs, windows, HVAC, ventilation or any number of items, but SEDAC will also include a cost/benefit analysis so the business owner will know how long it will take to recoup the investment and start saving. This type of service is invaluable to any size business and it's **FREE!!**

SEDAC is located in Champaign, IL and can be reached by calling 1-800-214-7954 or by visiting their website at www.sedac.org

*Submitted By:
Stephany McMahon*

Strategic Consulting Clients Wanted!

Dr. Michael E. Dobbs, Assistant Professor of Management at Eastern Illinois University, is currently looking for small businesses, nonprofits and organizations of all types that are willing to partner with MBA students in the spring semester of 2010 to conduct strategic analysis projects. Students will be asked to act as consultants to the client organizations with the goal of making new strategic initiative recommendations based on the analysis of the organization's external environment, internal operations, and current strategies. Client organizations must be willing to be available to students during the semester and also willing to share financial information about the organization.

What You Provide	What You Get in Return
Access to the organization	In-depth analysis of your organization & environment
Information about the organization	A different perspective on your situation
Patience with inquiring student minds	Infusion of new ideas and strategies

If interested, please contact Dr. Michael Dobbs at 581-6925 or medobbs@eiu.edu.

Submitted By: Stephany McMahon

Lake Shelbyville Update

On November 5th, the Army Corp of Engineers held a water control meeting here in Sullivan at Mason Point. The attendance included people from both Shelby and Moultrie Counties. Dave Busse, Chief of the Engineering and Construction Division for the St. Louis District of the Corp, spoke about what encompasses the St. Louis District of the Corp and the current Water Control Plan.

The St. Louis District, to which we belong, is responsible for maintaining the waterways that flow through a large part of Eastern Missouri and Southwestern Illinois. Located within the District's boundaries are 300 miles of the Mississippi River, including its four most southerly Lock and Dams and its confluence with the Missouri and Illinois Rivers. Also included are several tributary rivers, dozens of other small streams and five multi-purpose reservoirs – Lake Shelbyville, Carlyle Lake, Rend Lake, Mark Twain Lake and Lake Wappapello. These waterways must continually be monitored and regulated to facilitate a number of purposes.

The Water Control Plan is researched and prepared by the District with the intent of making the wisest choices on when, where and why water will be held or released. As mentioned above, many things must be considered when writing this plan such as recreation on the lakes, farming, flood control, the marinas, and much more.

Unfortunately for Sullivan, this year we were once again at high water with the beaches and low water ramps closed. The effect of fewer lake visitors was felt throughout the region as sales tax dollars decreased. The frustration of not having any control over the water levels was experienced by many, as well as, a feeling of helplessness that we are at the mercy of the Corp, who may or may not have our best interest at heart.

Dave Busse explained that it is possible to change the Water Control Plan, but in order for this to happen, the Corp must receive a funding allocation that would allow them to begin a study of the whole watershed. We would need to lobby our politicians for said funding. Dave added that the Corp. would be more than willing to do another study as it ensures job security for them as the whole process would cost millions of dollars and take several years to complete. Dave also pointed out that a new study could work in our favor or against us, but once finished, we would have to live with the results until we wanted to start the whole process over again.

I specifically asked Dave about the Sullivan Country Club and township roads which have flooded several times in the past few years. According to Dave, when the lake was built, the Army Corp purchased the rights to flood areas located in the flood plain which included the

golf course and certain roads. I have not seen either of the contracts mentioned but was told by others that when signed, a promise was made that the land would only be underwater during a 100 year flood, whether this promise is in writing or not, I have yet to confirm.

So in the meantime, what are we going to do? Ricky Raymond, Operations Manager for Lake Shelbyville, announced that the Corp is looking for two sites on the lake to build high water beaches that would remain open when the lake waters rise above average. The Corp also intends to widen the high water ramps and make them safer so that it is easier to launch boats onto the lake in high water. These improvements would definitely help since visitors assume everything is closed if the beaches are underwater.

Dave Busse explained to all of us that the amount of recreation realized on Lake Shelbyville has far surpassed the Corps expectations but now that we have realized the benefits, the Corp is doing their best to continue to accommodate the visitors as best they can. The Army Corp of Engineers is our partner and we must continue to seek ways to work with them so that we can all benefit from the lake.

Submitted By: Stepheny McMahon

December 2009 Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BINGO Every Tuesday at the Moultrie County Beacon		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 "Tis the Season" Sullivan Days	9	10 7pm—County Board	11 2 pm & 8 pm - Nuncrakers - The Little Theatre Sullivan Church Of God Live Nativity 6:30pm & 7:30pm - Outdoor Presentation	12 2 pm & 8 pm - Nuncrakers - The Little Theatre
13 2 pm - Nuncrakers - The Little Theatre First United Methodist Church Christmas Walk Church Of God Live Nativity	14 7pm—City Council	15	16 2 pm & 8 pm - Nuncrakers - The Little Theatre	17 7am—Chamber Committee Meeting 8 pm - Nuncrakers - The Little Theatre	18 2 pm & 8 pm - Nuncrakers - The Little Theatre	19 2 pm & 8 pm - Nuncrakers - The Little Theatre
20 2 pm - Nuncrakers - The Little Theatre	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 7pm—City Council	29	30	31	<p>The Sullivan School District is offering many musical programs to get you the holiday spirit!</p> <p>Log onto www.sullivan.k12.il.us for dates and times</p>	

Downtown Parking Needs Extra Consideration from You!

Just a reminder that the highlighted days on the calendar indicate heavy parking demands. Please park accordingly. *Thank you!*

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Tis the Season Sullivan Days

Shop Sullivan on Tuesday, December 8 with Tis The Season Sullivan Days. Participating businesses will be featuring holiday discounts and special offers. See ad for participating businesses in the December 3 issue of the News Progress or call the SCED office at 728-4223 to participate!

Dealing With The Difficult Customer

Dealing with difficult customers is a fact of business life. These "negative" customers can lead to employee burnout, low staff morale, or be responsible for someone leaving the industry entirely.

We've all heard that **one disgruntled customer can lead to the loss of at least six others** by word of mouth alone.

If it's handled correctly, difficult customers can be turned into some the most loyal, long term customers you'll ever see. Here's seven basic steps that will help you turn these "service disconnects" into opportunities.

Step One: Assume the customer is telling the truth.

If you train your employees to always assume the customer is truthful, you have just taken away a major source of stress related to service careers. The employee is not looking for the negative, but listening to what is being told to them without having to be a judge that must rule in favor of the company because of a misplaced loyalty.

Step Two: Let the customer talk.

Let them air out the whole situation. This accomplishes two things. It allows the customer to

tell their story with all the details and emotion that they feel is necessary. This step is vital to let the customer drain some of their emotion and anger. A good idea BEFORE you start the listening / information-gathering step is to delegate all interruptions to someone else so that your entire attention is devoted to the customer. Also remember that listening is the beginning of the information gathering process for yourself, which is vital not only to rectifying the customer's problem, but to avoiding it in the future.



Step Three: Be empathetic.

This is the step to (finally) begin communicating. Express understanding with how they feel or were treated. You're

not admitting guilt. You don't even have to agree with them. You do have to communicate understanding. Your tone of voice and body language both go a long way to reinforce what you are saying. In fact, without the proper tone or body language, your words will sound hollow.

Step Four: Understanding

This is the main step in reaching the customer; this is where you ask any questions that you need to have the complete picture of the negative experience. Ask relevant questions to clarify your

understanding of the facts. Resist jumping to conclusions until you are satisfied that you understand the situation.

Step Five: Solution

Solve the problem. Come to closure that you both feel good about. Remember the customer was telling you the truth. Tell the customer what you will do to rectify the situation. Make the customer feel good about the solution. Do not sound angry yourself or make the customer feel guilty.

A good guideline is to deliver more than you promised. For example, if you said you would refund the customer, add a gift certificate for another meal. That not only solves the original problem, it brings them back again.

Step Six: Follow-up.

If there is any way to follow-up with the customer after the fact, you need to do it. Whether by e-mail, letter or phone, this step is very impressive.

Step Seven: Take steps to fix the issue that caused the problem in the first place.

A good idea is to keep a log or journal of customer complaints to enable you to see any trends. Remember that the best managers prevent problems rather than just fix them.

*Submitted By: Laurrie Minor
Mason Point, Community Relations Coordinator*

Membership Dues for 2010

Invoices for the 2010 dues will be mailed the first week in December. After careful deliberation it was decided not to raise our dues in 2010. The SCED will continue to work hard to provide value for you and your business by promoting our community and its business members. A few of the great benefits of belonging to the Sullivan Chamber & Economic Development include:

- Referrals from calls that come into the SCED office
- Your business info is included with new resident packets
- One insert a year can be included in our monthly newsletter
- Listing on the www.sullivanchamber.com website
- Weekly updates of area happenings and specials via email updates

- advance email notice and agenda of City Council meetings
- Representation in regional and state tourism, Chamber and Economic Development organizations
- Invitation to attend monthly Business Roundtable discussions
- Opportunity to help plan community events

We have many exciting things planned for 2010 including a new logo and branding campaign that will be rolled out at the annual dinner and a new Member to Member (M2M) benefit card. The newly revamped Business Roundtable will meet monthly and the Utility Roundtable discussions will continue quarterly.

Now is a great time to get involved. If you have an interest in promoting your business by

helping the community, please give us a call. We would love to help you get more involved by working together with other business professionals.

These are just a few of the great reasons to stay involved with the Sullivan Chamber & Economic Development. We are here to serve and support you and are always open to ideas and sugges-

Submitted By: Stepheny McMahon

First United Methodist Church **Christmas House Walk**

December 13 - 1:30 TO 4:30

Featuring the following houses:

Bob & Theresa Lane
1222 CR 1200 N

Robert & Mary White
34 Kaskaskia Dr.

David & Kristi Sowers
1124 E. Jackson

Steve & Cynda Bonnett
17 Eastlawn Dr.

Lola Horn
415 E Jackson St.

Monthly Business Roundtable

The Sullivan Chamber and Economic Development will restructure the monthly retailer's meetings into a Monthly Business Roundtable.

The roundtable will be open to any and all chamber members and will work in conjunction with the local SCORE Chapter.

Local SCORE counselors are retired professionals with life experience in banking, retail, manufacturing and accounting.

SCORE counselors will be on hand at every roundtable to facilitate a 5-10 minute discussion on hot topics in the business world. If the desire for more discussion and information is present, the topic will be forwarded to the Professional Development action team of the Chamber Committee.

Along with hot topics, best practices, updates on chamber events, shared marketing ideas

and other business concerns will be covered.

The Monthly Business Roundtable will meet the third Monday of each month at the Elizabeth Titus Memorial Library unless otherwise specified

If your business would like to host a roundtable, contact Stephanie Finney at 728-4223.

Submitted By: Stephanie Finney



Presorted Standard

US Postage Paid

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Organized to promote the business, economic and civic well being of the City of Sullivan so that the community may grow and prosper.

SULLIVAN CHAMBER & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

112 West Harrison Street

Phone: 217 728-4223

Fax: 217 728-4064

E-mail: info@sullivanchamber.com

Mailing Prepared by the Moultrie County Beacon, Inc.

New Chamber Business Members

The Kiwanis Club of Sullivan

WE'RE ON THE WEB

WWW.SULLIVANCHAMBER.COM

Save The Date!

Calling All Ladies!

Start your day bright and early at G3 Health Club with ladies only circuit training.

Classes are Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:00 am and 4:45 pm.

Combine cardio and weights with upbeat music!

Members - \$3

Non-Members - \$6

Contact Kali Taylor at 972-2078.



Ahhhhhhh!

Stop by Creative Shears and de-stress with a massage by Erma Hershberger.

During the month of December, Erma is offering 20% off any service!

Call 728-7883 to schedule your hour of bliss!

Creative Shears is located at 3 West Jefferson.



Holiday Blooms!

Buxton's Flower & Garden Shop is offering fresh Christmas trees and greens this holiday season.

Don't forget about their full line of beautiful poinsettias:

6" - 3 blooms - \$13.50

7" - 4 blooms - \$19.50

8.5" - 5 blooms - \$27.50

Buxton's Garden & Flower Shop - 728-7993.



Submitted By: Stephanie Finney