



Seymour native and former CEO of Bridgestone Americas Mark Emkes was the keynote speaker.

JCIDC CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF SERVING JACKSON COUNTY

JCIDC's 40th anniversary celebration event was Oct. 29 at The Copper Top in downtown Seymour.

The event included social hour, dinner by First Class Catering and a program featuring keynote speaker Mark Emkes, a Seymour native and former CEO of Bridgestone Americas. JCIDC Executive Director Jim Plump and board President Kevin Gabbard also spoke.

Also during the program, Plump, JCIDC's only executive director in its 40-year existence, was presented the Distinguished Hoosier Award by District 44 Sen. Eric Koch on behalf of Gov. Eric Holcomb.

Plus, the inaugural class receiving the JCIDC Lifetime Achievement Award was recognized. They are Mike Tormoehlen, Carl Shake and Gerald Armstrong.

Tormoehlen also was presented the Elmore-Kilgas Award.

The event sponsors were Duke Energy, First Financial Bank, Goecker Construction Inc., Jackson County Visitor Center, JCBank, Kocolene Development Corp., Old National Bank, Royalty Companies, Schneck Medical Center, SIHO and Vincennes University.

(See related story, Page 2)



CUMMINS, GUARDIAN BIKES ANNOUNCE INVESTMENTS



During the Nov. 11 Seymour Common Council meeting, two local companies received unanimous approval of two 10-year tax abatements for personal property.

A tax abatement occurs over a 10-year period in which companies pay 10% more on taxes each consecutive year. Companies do not pay any property taxes on the improvements in the first year of a tax abatement.

Guardian Bikes, located at 2230 D Ave. East and 845 A Ave. East in Seymour's Freeman Field Industrial Park, is investing \$15 million toward equipment that will allow the company to manufacture bike frames, which are currently being imported from China.

Sam Markel, vice president of operations and manufacturing for Guardian Bikes, said the company has been importing bike frames since 2022, and with tariffs likely to increase within the next year, he wants to focus on bringing frame production to the United States.

"In 2023, we manufactured 96,000 bikes. In 2024, we will end with 385,000, and we are projected to manufacture 500,000 bikes in the next year," he said in a story written by Erika Malone, a reporter for The Tribune..

This project began Dec. 1 of this year and will continue to the end of 2025, creating 40 new jobs with a \$4.3 million payroll. The company will retain its current workforce of 204.

Cummins Inc., located at 800 E. Third St., is projecting a new investment of \$8,296,032 during the fourth quarter for capacity expansion of the Hedgehog line. This project dates to 2010 and has continued to grow over the past 14 years.

While no new jobs are promised, Cummins will maintain its current workforce of 881 with a payroll of more than \$71 million. Along with a \$5.8 million investment from earlier this year, the total investment for the project in 2024 is more than \$14 million.

A FAREWELL TO INDIANA GOV. ERIC HOLCOMB

Jim Plump, executive director of JCIDC, and Scott Turpin, president of Aisin World Corp. of America, were among board members of the Japan-America Society of Indiana who visited with Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb at the Governor's Residence on Dec. 5 to present him with JASI's Bridge of Friendship Award.

Joining in the presentation were, in the photo from left, Harold Force (Force Construction), Turpin, Plump, Rachel Hazaray (Subaru of Indiana Automotive), Governor Holcomb, Theresa Kulczak (JASI), Adilet-Sultan Meimanaliev (Eli Lilly and Company), Cindy Madrick (Cornerstone Environmental, Health and Safety), Harold Gutzwiller (Hoosier Energy) and Jeremiah Maxwell (JASI).



In a recent editorial penned by Nate Feltman, publisher of the Indianapolis Business Journal, Holcomb was applauded for his "efforts to take Indiana to the world. Foreign direct investment injects new capital and ideas into our economy and brings diversity to our communities and new technologies from around the world to Indiana. And of course, thousands of Hoosiers are employed, taxes are paid and community organizations benefit as a result of foreign investment in our state."

JCIDC wholeheartedly agrees with Feltman's thoughts and congratulates Governor Holcomb on an outstanding eight years in office.

AN OPEN LETTER FROM MIKE TORMOEHLEN

During the 40th anniversary celebration of JCIDC, Mike Tormoehlen was one of three former board members announced as part of the first JCIDC Lifetime Achievement Award class. Tormoehlen, a former Jackson County commissioner, is widely credited as the founder of JCIDC and served as the organization's first president (1984-1986). Tormoehlen, who served on the JCIDC board of directors from 1984 until 1995 and again 2003-2009, also was honored by receiving the Elmore-Kilgas Award, which was named after former Jackson County industrial leaders Dick Elmore and Delbert Kilgas.

Joining Tormoehlen in the inaugural class are Gerald Armstrong and Carl Shake. Armstrong served on the board from 1990 until 2004 (and as president from 1995 until 2004) and Shake served two terms on the board (1986-1988 and 1982-1996).

Following the anniversary celebration, Tormoehlen wrote the following letter and granted permission for JCIDC to use excerpts from it.

Thank you very much for the recognition and awards. I am truly honored and grateful. The recognition is wonderful, but the greatest reward is to see the JCIDC success over the years.

I was a bit taken aback by the recognition and probably did not thank everyone. Please thank everyone who was involved on staff or on the board who had anything to do with it.

Some ramblings, much of which I have told you (Jim Plump) before:

I clearly remember when I knew for certain we had the right guy. You, Bill Bailey and I made a trip to an industrial showcase in Louisville early in the life of JCIDC. When we hit the door, you disappeared and we didn't see you again until it was time to leave. Bill and I mostly spent the time talking among ourselves while you worked the room and came away with a list of contacts of the companies looking to locate.



Perry and Jodi Myers and Kelly and Gregg Deck accept the JCIDC Lifetime Achievement Award for Carl Shake. Jodi and Kelly are Carl's daughters.

Another vivid memory involved Carl Shake. Early in the '80s, we got wind of a company looking to relocate. Carl and I and a few others tried to put a package together for Brownstown, including available land, census and employment data, etc. We were woefully unprepared. I realized we couldn't let this happen again. If we were going to have any success luring companies to Brownstown, we needed an entity and individual to make a professional presentation for us. Small towns and even Seymour needed an organization to promote any and all of our communities. Thus, the spark of an idea that ended up being JCIDC.

Another pivotal moment was during a trip to a Private Industry Council meeting with Theo Webb of Home Federal. I explained my idea, and he expressed interest and told me I should pursue it. The idea languished for a while, and when I saw him again, he asked if I had done anything with the idea. Bolstered by his interest, I told him I would get to work on it, and I believe at the next commissioners meeting, I proposed it to the others, got consensus and went home and wrote a letter inviting others to meet and discuss the idea. We know where it went from there.

I insisted and it was mutually agreed that this was going to be a countywide effort. Everybody knew Seymour had all the cards and could probably put something together on its own. We also knew that if any of the small towns were going to have any chance of attracting companies, we had to have an organization and spokesperson who represented the entire county. We all had to put aside our provincialism and think of the greater good. Our plan was to pair Seymour's advantages and funds with more funding from the county and were going to have any chance of attracting companies, we had to have an organization and spokesperson who represented the entire county. We all had to put aside our provincialism and think of the greater good. Our plan was to pair Seymour's advantages and funds with more funding from the county and smaller communities and organizations. Thus, the name: JCIDC.

I admired early on how you took to international involvement and association with the many different cultures and ways of doing business around the world. Not an easy task for a boy from the hills of Indiana. A world view such as yours is a wonderful and rare thing.



EVENT PROVIDES A DOSE OF REALITY

More than 600 eighth graders from around Jackson County attended the Reality Fair on Dec. 6 at Seymour Middle School.

A Reality Fair is a simulation of an adult's financial life that allows youth to experience making financial decisions and managing money. They can experience what it is like to manage an account at a financial institution, make money-related decisions, obtain a loan, manage debt and more. For the youth, a Reality Fair can be an eye-opening, exciting and fun way to build financial knowledge and skills.

After being assigned one of 18 different types of jobs, they visited 12 booths: Pets, health care, transportation, housing Part 1, housing Part 2, household spending, the unexpected, credit card, bank, sharing and charitable gifts, children and cellphone.

There were 68 volunteers from the community who manned the booths to help students make decisions. The volunteers included JCIDC board members and contributors and Seymour High School Jobs for America's Graduates students.

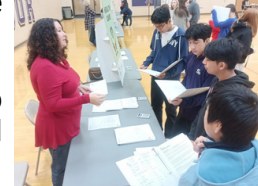
This was the second year for the event. Last year, only SMS students attended during two sessions. This year, a third session was added to include Brownstown Central, Crothersville, Medora, Immanuel Lutheran, St. John's Sauers Lutheran, Lutheran Central and Sandy Creek Christian.



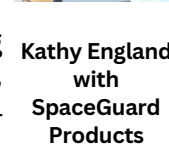
Marnie Dirks with Aisin USA Mfg. Inc. and Kevin Gabbard with Royalty Companies and the JCIDC board president



Seymour Mayor and JCIDC board member Matt Nicholson



Tammy Barker with Pet Supplies Plus



Kathy England with SpaceGuard Products



MAVERICK CHALLENGE JACKSON COUNTY

The Maverick Challenge Jackson County high school business planning competition is in the mentor phase.

There are 10 business volunteers serving as mentors for 25 teams. They are meeting with the teams in December and January. Students from Brownstown Central, Crothersville, Medora and Seymour high schools are participating.

Written business plans and videos are due Feb. 7, 2025. The 10 finalists will be announced in mid-February and give oral presentations March 5 with \$7,000 up for grabs.

New this school year, the winner will be one of the six finalists in the SPARK Tank competition, which awards \$10,000. The winner and potentially others from the Maverick Challenge also can enter the state's Innovate WithIN competition, which has a regional competition in the spring and finals in June with the ultimate winner receiving \$25,000.

Maverick Challenge began in 2008 in Bartholomew County, and Jackson County joined the program in 2011. Last year, Bartholomew County ended the program, but Jackson County leaders kept it going in the county with a partnership between JCIDC, Jackson County Chamber, Seymour Main Street and Brownstown Ewing Main Street and funding partner JCBank.

VEX ROBOTICS

Three local high school robotics teams received awards at VEX Robotics tournaments in November.

On Nov. 2 at Seymour Middle School, Seymour High School's Team 31330D consisting of freshman Kaeden Leonard, sophomores Micah Yee and Noah Chambers and senior Ethan Rubin received the Judges Award.



On Nov. 9 at Concordia Lutheran High School in Fort Wayne, Trinity Lutheran High School's Team 1483D consisting of freshmen Adela Meyer, Naomi McKinley and Belle Kiewit received the Judges Award.



Then on Nov. 23 at Immanuel Lutheran School, Seymour High School's Team 31330C consisting of freshman Matias Barrios and sophomores Leo Holle and Nikita Cox received the Innovate Award.



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