

MACOUPIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP IS OFF TO A FAST START



Pictured Left to Right are members of the Macoupin Economic Development Partnership from the Bunker Hill area: Ollie Schwallenstecker (County Board District 2), Francis Wieseman (County Board District 2), Bunker Hill Mayor Raymond Chapman, Julia Watson (Watson Law Office), County Board Chairman Andrew Manar, MEDP Chairman Jenni Alepra (United Community Bank), Pam Monetti (Congressman Phil Hare's Office), and MEDP Executive Director Shari Albrecht.

Macoupin County Board Chairman Andrew Manar invited members from the newly formed Macoupin Economic Development Partnership to a luncheon with the County Board to discuss the public/private partnerships recent successes.

"When the coal mines closed, the County Board took aggressive steps to help form the first countywide public/private partnership to help retain and create jobs in Macoupin County," said Manar. Manar thanked all of the private business owners who attended and who have chosen to invest in the new organization and its goals.

"While County government had to become smarter and more efficient, we invested a significant amount of funds into this organization because we believe in its mission," Manar said.

The formation of the Macoupin Economic Development Partnership is the result of a complete restructuring of economic development efforts by the Macoupin County Board. Following the mine closures in Macoupin County, the County Board voted unanimously in October 2008 to expand economic development efforts to include private businesses, municipalities and education institutions through a public/private partnership.

Manar said that by involving the private sector, the partnership can tap into the talents, energy and expertise of small business owners.

"We have an incredibly dedicated group of individuals from across Macoupin County that have devoted their time, efforts and expertise to making this organization work. This is truly a groundbreaking partnership

between our local governments, private businesses and educational institutions,” said Jenni Alepra, Chairman of the MEDP Board of Directors.

Current member municipalities include Carlinville, Staunton, Gillespie, Bunker Hill, Mt. Olive and Modesto.

The MEDP will be conducting a membership drive during January 2010.

For more information, contact MEDP Executive Director Shari Albrecht at slalbrecht1979@yahoo.com or (217) 556-8696.