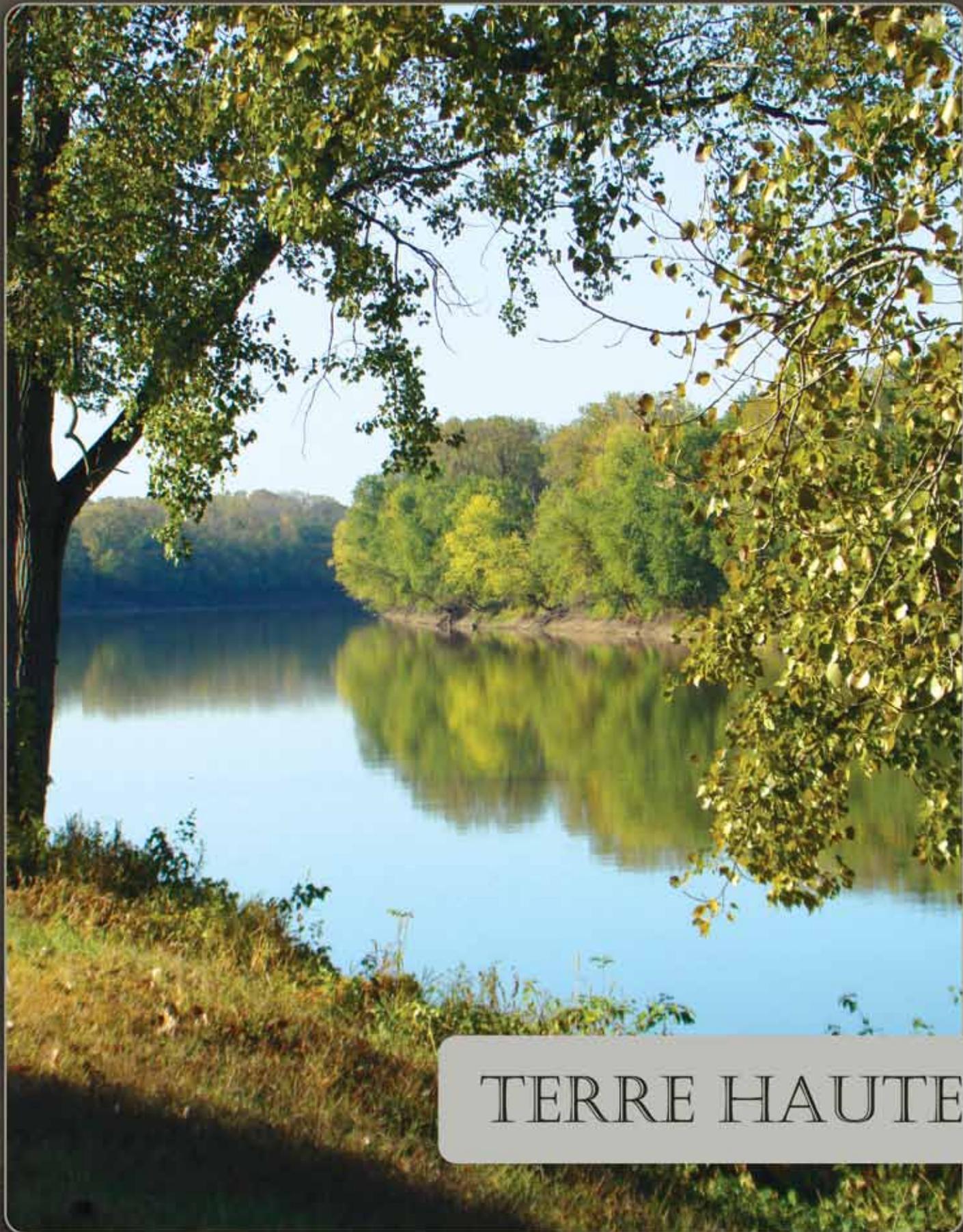


COMMUNITY *of the* YEAR



TERRE HAUTE

Terre Haute: A Level Above isn't merely the motto for the Vigo County community. It's a philosophy indicative of the economic and cultural transformation that has occurred.

"About 10 years ago I saw a change, where people were kind of tired of the old labels – of being stagnant, no real activity going on, where are we going, what does the future hold," recalls first-term Terre Haute Mayor Duke Bennett.

"So people started forming some ideas and opinions, and some groups started to spring up that wanted to make things happen. It's been kind of a snowball effect of ideas and projects since. Once one was completed, people thought, 'You know, we pulled that one off, I think we can do another one – let's try something even a little bit bigger.'

"Today we are seeing the results of all that thinking, all that energy and all the people coming to the table to say we can make a difference in our community," he states.

Night and day

While Terre Haute didn't turn itself into an economic destination with a snap of the fingers, the depth of change is readily apparent to long-time residents.

"The appearance is so dramatically different that it's difficult to appreciate if you haven't been here for all of it. The change in the business environment is that hard to comprehend," asserts Gary Morris, president and chief operating officer of Clabber Girl, a local icon.

"We did not have a LEDO (local economic development organization) like we do now. Our economic development has one point of contact. That was never the case; it was all over the place. Years ago you had to go to the county, then the city and so on.

"Now, those types of deals that would apply to the county and to the city are merging to the point where there is consistency there when it happens."

David Wulf, a vice president with the Templeton Coal Company, arrived in 1991 to abandoned factories and, in general, some tough times for the area.

"I'm involved in HR recruiting and trying to bring executives into that climate got a little difficult. We've got – and had – a fairly skilled, good labor workforce, but we could not attract executives," he declares.

"Now the quality of life has risen so much. You drive down Wabash Avenue and see all that's going on. When the mayor would come to talk to us at the Rotary, my stock question was, 'When are you going to do something about the blight on Seventh Street between ISU (Indiana State University) and Union Hospital.' I don't ask that question anymore because it's happening and getting taken care of."

Adds Morris, "The campus-university connection on Seventh Street is a huge impact in a city that's never before had a lot of residential development of old spaces that have been deteriorating.

Mayor Duke Bennett is pleased with the economic progress the city has made, but believes that foundation is just the beginning.



Terre Haute was once perceived as simply a place to pass through, but today is an economic and recreation destination.



And now there's more of a concentration of that."

For his part, Mayor Bennett says he's "tried to keep the taxes low, keep the city clean, fight crime – do all the things that I've got direct control over. And then partner with the local chamber, the ISU Foundation and others to start doing the community-wide things."

He points to getting private sector investment to the table as the key turning point for the city's revitalization. To date, Terre Haute has attracted in excess of \$1 billion in public and private funding.

"We needed that public-private partnership to make things a reality. There have been several projects that have occurred downtown that the city was kind of either in control of the property or in control of the ability to help with infrastructure needs that made the difference in the projects," he contends.

"You can look at the new Children's Museum, the new Barnes & Noble bookstore downtown; those are two great examples. Also, the two new hotels (Hilton Garden Inn and Candlewood Suites) we have. Those are all partnerships with the city contributing something and then the private investors coming in with the majority of the investment."

Education concentration

When it comes to institutions of higher education, Terre Haute enjoys a unique advantage for its size. There's Indiana State University (ISU), Ivy Tech Community College and Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in the city, and nearby is Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

Bennett can't say enough about how fortunate the area is to have such a contingent. "You kind of take it for granted, but when you step back and look that Terre Haute offers all of these and the diversity of all these schools, it's amazing.

"ISU's enrollment is up; Ivy Tech's enrollment is up. It's hard to even capture all the positive things that are happening, and they're all feeding off of each other."

But Bennett says it goes beyond the universities' core mission to what they offer in assistance to his office and to the

community in general. "Together they bring a lot of different strengths that we can benefit from."

Rose-Hulman, for example, annually ranked number one by *US News & World Report* for its undergraduate engineering program, "is a hub of intellectual and cultural activity in this part of Indiana and in Terre Haute in particular," believes President Matt Branam.

"The net result for this community has been that Rose-Hulman is combating brain drain and is, instead, really instigating brain gain. We are importing more net jobs now to Indiana in the form of our graduates taking jobs in Indiana than we have students coming from Indiana to Rose-Hulman to begin with."

Meanwhile, ISU has embarked on a dozen major construction and renovation projects in 2010, with more groundbreaking slated for 2011. The total investment for these projects is estimated at just under \$40 million.

President Dan Bradley points out the student recreation center and University Hall as "two cornerstones" and cites the new residence halls; one is already opened and another under construction.

"At the same time, we've been involved in a lot of infrastructure upgrades that are continuing," he notes.

And not to be overlooked in the area is the local school corporation.

"Our public school system is phenomenal," praises Terre Haute Regional Hospital CEO Brian Bauer. "Mr. or Ms. Math and Science (for the state) have come from here four out of six times. That's a testament to the education they're receiving."

Improved health

Quality and progress have also been at the forefront of another of the city's strengths: its health care corridor.

In January, Union Hospital opened a 500,000-square foot, \$185 million facility called Union Hospital East. The building process took two years; it was paid for thanks to \$176.5 million in 40-year bonds as well as some \$8 million in funds donated by hospital employees and the local community.



A dozen construction/renovation projects totaling almost \$40 million are taking place this year and next at Indiana State University. Rose-Hulman (right) and the area's other institutions of higher education all bring something unique to the community.



The new Union Hospital East design offers comfort, quiet and plenty of natural sunlight for patients and visitors.

Since the health care facilities in Terre Haute serve the entire Wabash Valley – including Illinois – the need for additional service was great.

“Prior to that, we were busting at the seams; the hospital was fully occupied and cramped. We were able to go to an all private-room environment. That’s been a positive experience for the healing care of our patients and for our workers,” offers Lorrie Heber, system director, marketing public relations for Union Hospital Health Group.

The new hospital’s 236 private room beds bring the total bed count up to 380 for the complex.

Across town, Terre Haute Regional Hospital had its own expansion in the spring with the opening of the Hope Center for cancer treatment.

Also pressing forward: the Rural Health Innovative Collaborative (RHIC), formed to address the anticipated shortage of physicians the state will soon face. It involves the hospitals, various colleges, the city and economic development groups.

“We define rural health very broadly: not Indianapolis health, not Gary health but cities the size of Terre Haute are really rural when it comes to health care,” Bradley explains.

ISU and Union Hospital have joined forces to revitalize a two-mile stretch on Seventh Street between their campuses to attract health care and life science companies.

“It’s a work in progress and we’ve been at it a little over two years now, and we’ll continue to work on it,” says David Doerr, the former CEO of Union Hospital who retired September 1.

He believes the most specific and significant near-term outcome of the RHIC will be the simulation (SIM) center.

“The SIM center brings together the opportunity to employ technology in the education of students, young health professionals. There are mannequins, if you will, that are highly computerized that mimic the physiological functions of a human,” Doerr offers. “Our medical students, respiratory students train on the mannequins, which are very lifelike. By way of example, Clarian/Methodist (in Indianapolis) has a huge simulation center on its campus.”

For Bradley, the most exciting part of the SIM center is “we’re going to have a very wide range of health care professionals – technicians, nurses, physical therapists and, hopefully, doctors – training together and helping to train each other. That’s the concept.”

The mighty river

Talk to anyone in Terre Haute for five minutes and ask what they are most excited about and chances are that the Riverscape project will be the most popular answer.

That venture designed to attract business and tourism reached a milestone in 2010. The

Downtown Terre Haute has seen a revitalization the past decade. Two new hotels (right) have opened their doors recently.





2010 milestone: The development phase of the 7,000 acres along the west side of the Wabash River was completed after a decade of work.

development phase of the 7,000 acres along the west side of the Wabash River was completed after a decade of work. This includes all the land acquisition and the creation of the Wabashiki wetlands.

Previously, much of this area was marginal farmland that was frequently flooded. Now there's a fish and wildlife area, trails and other nature activities in the works. The stretch will also serve as outdoor education facilities for the area's four colleges as well as K-12 classes. Development and transformation of the east bank is also now underway.

The vision of transforming the Wabash River area goes back to the early 1990s and eventually started to gain traction, says Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Rod Henry.

"A special committee was formed; that has now become a corporation (the Wabash River Development and Beautification Corporation) – with leaders from the city and county, from education, for-profit, non-profit and the state; the head of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources is also now part of it," he describes.

"In fact, it (the Wasbashiki Fish and Wildlife Area) spurred the governor to develop the Wabash River corridor, which is another 44,000 acres."

Terre Haute is at the epicenter of this 90-mile riverfront makeover.

Max Miller, a long-time proponent of the Riverscape, can't wait for the impact in the coming years.

"It really is going to change the face of Terre Haute, the county and West Central Indiana ... it really is a global change to the area. It's so exciting to see all of this come together and all the

Continued on page 48

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cooperation taking place.”

Mayor Bennett agrees, “The Wabash River development is probably where you’re going to see the next big change over the next 15 years or so for Terre Haute.”

On the horizon

Through the efforts of various groups, the city of Terre Haute has enhanced its economic future and elevated its quality of life for residents and those in the surrounding region – but there’s more work to be done.

“While the things we’ve got are great, we are only really getting the ball rolling today. Now we’ve got something to showcase and be able to bring people to town – kind of show them what our plan is,” Bennett begins.

“People are starting to see Terre Haute as a place to come to and do business, attend school. We’re going to develop the Riverscape, our downtown is revitalized – we still have a ways to go, but it has new life. We’re working on railroad relocation in our community to help us with the issues with that. And there are just so many big, exciting things happening that I think it’s going to make it easier to sell,” the mayor concludes.

Wulf echoes that belief with his story of a recent vacation with his son, who is attending Purdue University. “We were sitting in a canoe and talking about Terre Haute and my son said he could see himself coming back to work there after graduation. I never envisioned any of my three kids coming back to Terre Haute to live.

“Yes, it was a sentiment shared in a canoe but the point is that it is even a possibility now. It’s not something I would have ever envisioned 15 to 20 years ago – that Terre Haute would be an attractive option for my children,” he confesses.

The arts are one reason, believes Bauer, who cites the symphony and performing arts center as a real boost to the community. “We have a real arts presence that doesn’t exist in many other parts of the state.”

Surmises Morris, “We have the big city conveniences but still have that small town feel where you know your neighbors, the universities and connections to the city.

“All the groups talk together. Everybody’s communicating and working together. Now, it’s not perfect. If things were, I would be 6-foot-5 and have a full head of hair,” he quips.

“So you work with what you got, and what we have here in Terre Haute is terrific.”

Recent Annual Awards Honorees

Business Leader of the Year

- 2009: John Swisher, JBS United, Sheridan
- 2008: Tony George, Indianapolis Motor Speedway
- 2007: Niel Ellerbrook, Vectren Corporation, Evansville
- 2006: Mac McCormick, Bestway Express, Inc., Vincennes
- 2005: David Frick, Anthem Blue Cross & Blue Shield, Indianapolis
- 2004: Jerry Semler, OneAmerica Financial Partners, Indianapolis
- 2003: Doug Bawel, Jasper Engines & Transmissions Exchange, Jasper

Government Leader of the Year

- 2009: Stan Jones, former Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education
- 2008: Former Gov. Joseph Kernan & Chief Justice Randall Shepard
- 2007: Fort Wayne Mayor Graham Richard
- 2006: Gov. Mitch Daniels
- 2005: Sen. Earline Rogers & Rep. Jerry Torr
- 2004: Sen. David Ford & Rep. Brian Hasler
- 2003: Rep. B. Patrick Bauer & Rep. Brian Bosma

Community of the Year

- 2009: Valparaiso
- 2008: Noblesville
- 2007: Anderson
- 2006: Evansville
- 2005: LaPorte
- 2004: Muncie
- 2003: Warsaw

U.S. Postal Service

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

Publication title: *BizVoice*[®]
 Publication number: 1521-0146
 Filing date: September 27, 2010
 Issue frequency: Bimonthly
 Annual issues: 6
 Annual subscription: \$25.20
 Mailing address: 115 W. Washington St., Suite 850S, PO Box 44926
 Indianapolis, IN 46244-0926 (Marion County)
 Publisher: Kevin M. Brinegar (above address)
 Editor: Tom Schuman (above address)
 Owner: Indiana Chamber of Commerce (above address)

Extent and Nature of Circulation

	Avg. no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months	Avg. no. copies of single issue published nearest to filing date (Sept/Oct 2009)
Total no. of copies	15,500	16,000
Paid/requested distribution		
Outside county	13,374	13,306
In county	0	0
Dealers, carriers, vendors	630	1,425
Other mail classes	0	0
Total	14,004	14,731
Nonrequested distribution		
Outside county	0	0
In county	0	0
Other classes of mail	0	0
Outside mail	1,117	920
Total nonrequested distribution	1,117	920
Total distribution	15,121	15,651
Copies not distributed	379	349
Total (2 lines above)	15,500	16,000
Percent paid/requested circulation	92.6%	94.1%

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 Tom Schuman, Editor