



Clarinda Economic Development Corporation

Economic Development Corner:

Competing in a global economy

I recently had the opportunity to travel to Japan with a group of Clarinda businessmen and women to visit the headquarters of two of Southwest Iowa's largest employers---NSK and NSK-AKS. A major purpose of the trip was to express our communities' appreciation of the recently completed NSK expansion project, which added 120 jobs to Clarinda's economy. Secondly, we were also eager to offer assistance for any future needs.

The 10-day trip included visits to Tokyo and Osaka and pertinent meetings with NSK/NSK-AKS company executives. Discussions included important topics ranging from manufacturing to discussions relating to the great times shared with Clarinda residents at the Glenn Miller Festival. Many friendships have been formed between the Japanese and the Clarinda people over the years.

Too often we think businesses or manufacturing plants looking for locations are choosing between two or three communities. This is not the case. Today's manufacturing and business environments are global. Large manufacturing businesses in the U.S. face many competitive challenges. Countries, such as China, have low labor costs and minimal environmental regulations. Legacy costs, such as pensions and health care costs can hinder profitability, as we have seen in the auto industry.

So, how can Clarinda compete in the global economy? Traveling to Japan and visiting with NSK/NSK-AKS officials gave us the answer. Clarinda, being a small community, still has many advantages in today's global economy. We have a quality employment base with honest people who have a great work ethic. Management in our manufacturing facilities strive to be creative and continually look for new ways to be efficient and profitable. Finally, the city of Clarinda offers a quality life and community support that businesses are hard pressed to find... anywhere in the global market. In a global economy focusing on cost reduction, businesses do not overlook the value of quality work, quality management, quality relationships and the support of the local community.

We are proud to be partners with NSK/NSK-AKS, and we look forward to many more years of continued successes and friendships.

I look forward to hearing from you!

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