

forwardTHINKING

MAR 10~
APR 10

To help you decide if and where you might want to dive into social networking to support your business, we've created this overview. Businesses can benefit from the new buzz, "social networking" and "social media." These terms basically refer to networking via the internet. Instead of networking with colleagues at chamber or other professional events, you network with them online.

TOP WEBSITES: Today for business, Facebook and LinkedIn are worth checking out. Both are free to join and allow you to make contacts within particular companies and industries, seek expert advice, and find leads on customers, collaborations and even jobs. If you try these, take the time to review default features (like whether someone can write comments about you or



your company directly on your online page, or "account.")

⇒ **LinkedIn** is mainly for networking with professional colleagues and clients.

⇒ **Facebook** is especially good for connecting with retail customers.

A **BLOG**, short for "web log," is a collection of one person's or company's thoughts and information. Businesses use them to share details about products and services and to receive comments from customers and colleagues.

With **TWITTER**, you write short bits of information (about as long as this sentence) on any topic. You can also "follow" others, which mean you sign up to receive their "tweets," or comments.

NEXT ISSUE: What do YouTube and iTunes have to do with business?

LOANS ENCOURAGE SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH

Emerging small businesses in Harnett County might qualify for a low-interest loan from the Harnett Forward Together Committee. Your business could be eligible if you employ fewer than 50 people, generate \$1 million or less annually, and establish and preserve jobs in the county. With some exceptions, HFTC can advance companies between \$25,000 and \$75,000.

Funds from the USDA's Rural Business Enterprise Grant support the HFTC's loan program. When business owners pay off their loans, HFTC puts the money toward advances for other entrepreneurs.

For more information, visit www.harnettforward.org or our offices at 907 South Main Street in Lillington. Or call us: (910) 893-7524.

WESTERN HARNETT LIBRARY UPDATE

Harnett County has applied for a loan of nearly \$3 million from the USDA to finance the construction of the Western Harnett Library, to be located in Western Harnett Industrial Park (WHIP). This is the first time a Harnett County library will be located in a state-certified industrial park and near a community college—Central Carolina's West Harnett Center campus at WHIP. This is welcome news for western Harnett County residents, who have not previously had access to a library in their area of the county.

"Prospects appear good for receiving the funds, and library construction could begin in midsummer this year," says Phyllis Owens, director of the Harnett County Economic Development Commission.

Meet the BOARD

Cecil Edgerton is a member of the board of directors of Edgerton Industrial Properties. He is also owner of Edgerton Memorials, a monument company in Dunn, NC, that has provided gravestones for many noted North Carolinians, including Charles Kuralt, Ava Gardner and Jesse Helms. He represents the fourth generation in the business, which is over 100 years old.

When Cecil isn't devoting time to the family business or the board, he teaches flying at the Harnett County Jetport and serves on the jetport's volunteer committee.

Over the past 25 years, county economic

development programs have fostered significant growth in the jetport—new extensions, more hangars, and more airplanes, he says, and he's proud to have been a part of this expansion. Cecil is equally proud of HFTC's positive impact on Harnett County.

"The county is very fortunate to have HFTC," he says. "These community leaders offer a wealth of experience that will benefit our citizens in recovering from these rough times."



ABOVE: Harnett County Jetport, an excellent economic tool.

HFTC's INDUSTRIAL BUILDING IN ERWIN

In Good Hands With Hart Corporation

Hart Corporation, an international industrial real estate firm, is now overseeing the sale of HFTC's vacant industrial building in Erwin, NC. When the 300,000+ square foot facility went on the market recently after a leasing agreement ended, Hart and the Harnett County EDC hosted a kick-off luncheon attended by important economic development allies in the area. The corporation has since been canvassing for buyers locally and nationally, personally contacting businesses and distributors with a need for the space.

"We're excited to have Hart Corporation on board," says Harnett County EDC director Phyllis Owens. "The company takes great care in marketing its properties, so we're hopeful that the HFTC can soon find a new tenant for the building."



► HFTC welcomes new members Charles Bryan, CPA, Angier (www.charlesbryancpa.com); Construction Systems, Inc., Fayetteville (www.csio.com); Samet Corporation, Greensboro (www.sametcorp.com); and Brookfield Retirement Center, Lillington (www.brookfieldassisted.com).

► HFTC supports the 3rd Annual Harnett Environmental Field Day on April 22 at Anderson Creek Park. At last year's event, more than 200 fifth graders visited 16 learning stations sponsored by county agencies. We're hosting three schools this year—Johnsonville, Highland and Benhaven Elementary schools.

► Erwin hosts its Earth Day Celebration again this year at the Cape Fear River Trail Park in Erwin, near the grounds of HFTC's available industrial building.

► Harnett County EDC Director Phyllis Owens will join 21 area leaders for Leadership Harnett 2010. This program helps local leaders become well versed in local quality of life issues plus commercial, educational, governmental, and medical matters.

► The Research Triangle Regional Partnership (RTRP) will hold its annual State of the Research Triangle Region 2010 on Thursday, May 27. For registration information, contact RTRP: (919) 840-7372, rtrp@researchtriangle.org.

HFTC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 1:
George Womble
David Avrette

DISTRICT 3:
Bill Pope
Steve Wicker

DISTRICT 5:
Jimmy McCormick
Jim Randolph

EX OFFICIO:
Scott Sauer, Harnett County Manager
Dr. Bud Marchant, Central Carolina Community College

DISTRICT 2:
Johnson Tilghman
Bobby Wellons

DISTRICT 4:
Bob McCune
R.H. Ellington

AT LARGE:
Dan Andrews, County Commissioner

Phyllis Owens, Harnett County Economic Development Commission
Dr. Jack Britt, Campbell University