

## Year in Review 2011: Southwestern Illinois

### Commerce Bank awarded #1 SBA Lender, 1 of Moody's 3 highest-rated banks in 2011

By KERRY L. BEISER

Commerce Bank had a number of highlights during 2011. Locally, Harlan "Skip" Ferry hosted an Economic Outlook Breakfast at St. Clair Country Club in September. The keynote speaker was Scott Colbert, The Commerce Trust Co.'s senior vice president and director of fixed income management.

Commerce Bank also received recognition and a number of awards during 2011, including the following:

- Commerce was the #1 Small Business

Administration lender in the St. Louis metropolitan area for the second year in a row, ranked by SBA loan production, in fiscal 2011.

- Commerce Bancshares Inc. is among the three highest-rated banks in the country, according to Moody's Investors Service Inc.'s U.S. Bank Ratings List as of Sept. 22, 2011.
- For the second year in a row, Commerce Bank was ranked among the top 10 on *Forbes'* list of America's Best Banks, reported in

December 2010.

- Commerce Bank is number seven on *Bank Director* magazine's 2011 Top 150 Bank Performance Scorecard.
- Commerce Bank is the recipient of the 2011 Kevin O'Brien ACH Quality Award from NACHA, The Electronic Payments Association. NACHA represents nearly 11,000 financial institutions. The Payments System Awards recognize outstanding individuals and organizations for their superior leadership, innovation

and excellence in the development, implementation or advancement of electronic payments.

- The Commerce Trust Co. is ranked number 27 nationally, based on assets under management, and is number 18 on *Bloomberg Markets Magazine's* list of the top 50 Family Offices in the World.

Commerce Bank has 54 locations in the St. Louis metropolitan area, of which six are located in St. Clair, Madison and Monroe counties in Illinois.

### Contegra celebrates profitable 2011, increase in staff, solid project workload

By KERRY L. BEISER

Contegra Construction Co. in Edwardsville, Ill. and Chesterfield, Mo. reported a healthy year in 2011, contrary to the bleak picture for the construction industry overall.

Contegra, which began in 2003, has grown to a total of 20 staff between the Illinois and Missouri offices and approximately 50 professionals in the field. Eric Gowin, the company's president, says the construction company will remember 2011 as a positive year in several ways; despite the recession, Contegra did well enough to be able to add people to its team. The firm recently hired Jim Dearduff, an executive with a specialization in school construction management, as well as two additional administrative personnel and four project superintendents.

Besides the distinction of being able to hire during a rough economic period for many in the industry, Contegra also reported a big increase in revenue for calendar 2011. Gowin says 2011 volume was over \$40 million for the year,

compared to \$25 million in 2010.

Gowin and his partner Russ Henke also added two new partners in 2011, Brad Barnard and Bobby Klucker. Barnard has been with Contegra for two years and previously spent nearly 16 years at St. Louis-based S.M. Wilson, the past 10 as a project executive. He brings with him an operations and competitive bid background. Klucker has been with Contegra for six years and previously was a project manager with The Korte Co. for nine years. Klucker is in charge of Contegra's field superintendents and manages design-build projects.

One of the factors behind Contegra's success during 2011, says Gowin, is that the construction company was able to complete a number of competitively bid projects profitably in addition to the negotiated work that has been a staple from the company's inception.

Another factor behind Contegra's success last year, he points out, is that Contegra traveled beyond its traditional geographical boundaries when the relationship-based opportunity presented



Contegra completed a \$10.5 million renovation of Hatheway Hall at Lewis & Clark Community College in 2011.

itself. An example of this, Gowin says, was a \$10 million project that the firm is completing in Kansas City, Mo. at KCI Airport. It's a 350,000-square-foot, build-to-suit distribution center for Blount International and Trammell Crow.

Staying active in the bi-state region and building relationships to keep pace with projects being planned is essential in order to remain competitive, Gowin says. It's a challenge that Contegra enjoys, he says.

Contegra's list of major projects completed during 2011 includes the following: Lewis and Clark College's Hatheway Hall renovation/addition; PNC Bank Fairview Heights branch; Mitre Corp. office building; Jersey Community Hospital emergency room expansion; Becker Iron & Metal recycling center; Arnette Pattern metal fabrication facility expansion; SIUE Vadalabene Center expansion; Metro East forensics lab; Central Illinois Trucks dealership.

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# Year in Review 2011: Southwestern Illinois

## FGM completes state-of-the-art Mascoutah High School, renovates USTRANSCOM building in 2011

By **KERRY L. BEISER**

FGM Architects, a mid-sized company of 90 architects, interior designers and landscape architects, specializes in public buildings including schools, colleges, universities, municipal buildings and government projects. With offices located in O'Fallon, Oak Brook and Chicago, FGM has enjoyed continued success by blending traditional values with practical expertise and award-winning design credentials, says Vice President and Southern Region Manager Tim Kwiatkowski. What began 66 years ago as a predominantly Southern Illinois firm has today grown into an organization with a more regional reach.

2011 celebrated the completion of several signature design projects that exemplify the firm's four core market focus groups: PreK-12 Education, Higher Education, Federal and Municipal.

Last year saw the grand opening of Mascoutah CUSD #19's new state-of-the-art high school, a 280,000-square-foot facility with two gyms, a first-class 813-seat auditorium/performing arts center and technologically advanced teaching spaces. This facility accommodates 1,200 students with expansion to 1,600, according to Kwiatkowski. It is a major example of the type of work FGM does in the PreK-12 market.

FGM's Higher Education Group is currently working on a highly-specialized, technology-driven facility at Southern Illinois University Carbondale: the \$62 million Transportation Education Center. Scheduled to begin classes in Fall 2012, the 230,000-square-foot, three-

building campus at Southern Illinois Airport in Murphysboro will support the needs of SIU's automotive and aviation programs, which Kwiatkowski says are consistently rated as the top programs in the nation.

In September, FGM's Federal Group completed a \$6.3 million, three-phase renovation and addition to the original United States Transportation Command building at Scott Air Force Base. The first phase included expanding the existing lobby to include a display space of museum-quality exhibits which tell the story of the USTRANSCOM. The second and third phases included renovation of all three floors.

The firm's Municipal Group has been involved in design and construction for the Pattonville Fire Protection District's \$11.5 million facility upgrades. In early 2012, the district will occupy two new fire stations. Plans are also being prepared to renovate one of its current fire stations into a district administration and regional training facility.

FGM's business philosophy is simple, Kwiatkowski says: be a good listener, be knowledgeable about your core markets and offer quality based on solid expertise. This ethic has earned FGM many repeat customers and has helped the firm develop solid relationships with clients throughout the region. FGM has enjoyed steady growth over the year.

In December 2011, FGM combined with the suburban Chicago firm SRBL. SRBL is well known for its work in the public sector, including planning and designing police facilities. Carol Sente, State Rep. from Illinois' 59th District,

and Ray Lee, both principals of SRBL, will join the firm. FGM Company President John Ochoa says SRBL's expertise fits well with FGM's strategic plan and brings tremendous resources to the firm. Ochoa says FGM is looking forward to welcoming SRBL's staff to FGM.



FGM Architects' design of the state-of-the-art Mascoutah High School (interior of the room shown in photo) is a major example of the type of work the firm does in the PreK-12 market.



The lobby of Building 1900 at Scott Air Force Base shows how design can bring history to life. In September, FGM's Federal Group completed a three-phase renovation of the original USTRANSCOM headquarters.

## Holland Construction Services celebrates 25th anniversary in 2011 with full slate of work



One of HCS' projects in the healthcare sector that reached completion in late 2011 was the Orthopedic and Neurosciences Center at Memorial Hospital in Belleville.

By **VICKI BENNINGTON**

Despite Holland Construction Service Inc.'s continued success, the company never rests on its laurels. Always on the cutting edge, Holland's management team continues to move forward in terms of controlled growth, construction methods, safety and technology.

Based in Swansea, Holland celebrated its silver anniversary in 2011, providing general contracting services, design/build and construction management with a team of 45 employees, primarily in Southern Illinois and the greater St. Louis area. This year's executive management restructure named Mike Marchal president of the firm, a position previously held by founder Bruce Holland, now chief executive officer. Dave Birk added further responsibilities as chief operating officer to his previous position of executive vice president.

Marchal's expertise is construction and management; Birk concentrates on overall operations, and Holland provides direction while concentrating on business development. All three are active members of the community and other organizations.

HCS has always concentrated on building relationships says Holland, adding that more than 95 percent of the firm's business comes from repeat customers or referrals.

Even through tough economic times, Holland Construction has held its own with a projected gross of \$77.4 million for 2011. Much of its current work lies in education with projects like the \$5 million high school sports complex in Johnston City and completion of the \$1.5 million Lincoln Elementary School addition in Pittsburgh, Ill. The final segment of the \$4.8 million renovations at Central

Elementary School in O'Fallon was completed in August. HCS completed the 85,000-square-foot Orthopedic and Neurosciences Center at Memorial Hospital in Belleville in late fall, and a U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs' Behavioral Medicine Building on the VA Medical Center campus in Marion. The \$20 million, three-story Villas at Crystal Lake in Swansea and Balke Brown's \$22 million Parkway Lakeside Apartments in O'Fallon are further examples of HCS' work in 2011.

Eckert's Country Market project in Belleville earned Holland Construction recognition as the overall Master Builder of the Year by Star Building Systems. The project was also named Best of St. Louis District and Best of Small Commercial Category.

As members of the U.S. Green Building Council, Holland stresses the importance of energy-saving construction practices; incorporating multiple green aspects into its own building remodel was a must, along with an updated contemporary concept bringing all preconstruction staff together in one area.

Staying in tune with new technology, the company added three-dimensional Building Information Modeling to help clients visualize project concepts on site, and gain a feel for size and aesthetic using a "build it before you build it" approach. The tool helps work out details before the job hits the field, increasing productivity in building design and construction, reducing waste and improving overall safety of the project.

HCS' outstanding "no lost-time accidents for four years" safety record has been recognized by the Associated General Contractors of St. Louis and the Southern Illinois Builders Association.

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## IMPACT Strategies forges ahead with full slate of healthcare, senior housing projects

By KERRY L. BEISER

Fairview Heights-based IMPACT Strategies Inc. celebrated the close of 2011 with more than \$30 million in construction work under contract - substantially higher than any year in the company's history.

Another accomplishment for which President Mark Hinrichs says he takes great pride is that IMPACT Strategies was again accident-free during 2011 on all of the company's projects. And since IMPACT's inception, the company has never sustained a recordable accident on its projects.

Hinrichs says the design/build, general contracting and construction management firm is blessed to have a very healthy work program moving into 2012 by any measure, and that much of the company's success stems from strategic planning at least three years out on the horizon.

At the beginning of 2011, IMPACT's senior executive team sat down and identified the strategic objectives necessary for the coming three years in a detailed 36-month plan. Hinrichs credits the expertise, determination and adaptability of his staff in seeing where the industry was headed and in planning and

allocating resources accordingly. A year earlier, when many local construction firms were still reeling as the industry hit rock bottom, IMPACT Strategies retained a consultant to help the firm establish a niche strategy for where its business would come from once the market began to recover. Hinrichs says his company collected the market intelligence on its own, but then the consultant helped IMPACT with a template and oversight. Together the company and its consulting partner landed in the areas of health care and senior housing, where IMPACT Strategies continues to be busy with work in 2012.

2011 also brought the success of recruiting former Southern Illinois Healthcare Foundation CEO Robert Klutts, who retired in January 2011, to join IMPACT Strategies as a part-time consultant in September. With 17 years' experience at the helm of SIHC, Klutts is now helping IMPACT set its strategy with its health care initiative, says Hinrichs, and Klutts is also assisting the construction company in making valuable contacts within the industry.

Healthcare-specific projects that IMPACT Strategies achieved progress on during 2011



**IMPACT Strategies completed the Cedarhurst of Shiloh senior living community in early 2011. Company President Mark Hinrichs says plans are in the works to build two more Cedarhurst facilities in yet-to-be-announced locations.**

include its second Cedarhurst facility, this one an exclusively memory care environment in Edwardsville. In early 2011, IMPACT completed its first Cedarhurst facility (pictured here) in Shiloh. Hinrichs says plans are in the works to build two more Cedarhurst facilities in yet-to-be-announced locales.

In December, IMPACT Strategies began the first phase of a \$4 million renovation project at

the Granite City location for Chestnut Health Systems. IMPACT and Gray Design have teamed up to create a new facility for CHS that will double its size to 70,000 square feet.

Renovations and expansion to the 31,000-square-foot REA Clinic in Christopher, Ill. is another example of an IMPACT healthcare project that began in 2011 and is expected to reach completion in 2012.

## Madison County poised to capitalize on economic opportunities

By KERRY L. BEISER

County Board Chairman Alan Dunstan says that as 2012 begins, Madison County is effectively poised for growth - and ready to capitalize on economic opportunities that arise as the county gradually emerges from the economic recession that has gripped the nation.

Under Dunstan's direction, the county completed 2011 in solid financial condition and remains virtually debt-free, he says. The county continually operates with a balanced budget. The size of the budget is down, yet revenues - especially sales tax revenue - are increasing. Dunstan says the county has reduced its budget in each of the past four years; it has been the result of leadership making the tough financial decisions and spending reductions as a result of difficult economic times.

Since becoming county board chairman in 2002, Dunstan has reduced the number of

Madison County employees by more than 215. Retiring employees have not been replaced, some employees have been left to pursue opportunities in the private sector and some employees have been laid off.

The county's portion of the tax bill for property owners is now approximately 8 percent, a reduction of more than 6 percent from when Dunstan joined the board.

According to Dunstan, Madison County's leadership has successfully developed a positive, solid foundation for economic development by creating a positive business environment that complements the county's geographic location. The county's efforts in working closely with business leaders has resulted in several major, important projects which not only retained jobs but which generated new positions and enhanced satellite business growth, including the multi-

billion-dollar expansion at ConocoPhillips' Wood River Refinery in Roxana; the extensive renovation and new construction at Granite City Works, an integrated steel facility of U.S. Steel Corp., and the new harbor and rail enhancement at America's Central Port, formerly known as the Tri-City Regional Port District.

Madison County engaged in numerous public-private partnerships during 2011 that have resulted in the creation of a diverse economic base and stable tax environment, Dunstan says. Leadership's efforts to improve the county's infrastructure resulted in the extension of Illinois 255 and ongoing improvements to the regional levee system.

Under Dunstan's leadership, the county has aggressively supported a wide range of projects that generate tax revenue and jobs for Madison County residents. Evidence of this can be seen

in the following projects: The construction of the new Scott Credit Union headquarters in Edwardsville, as well as several projects at Gateway Commerce Center (the Walgreens distribution center and the Procter & Gamble expansion); two key projects in Alton, the Champion Hotel and the relocation and build-out of the Simmons Law Firm headquarters, and numerous others.

Also during 2011, Madison County's economic development team worked to obtain loans for Prairie Farms in Granite City, which not only kept the company in the area but laid the groundwork for future expansion. The county also worked to provide financing for the Southern Illinois Healthcare Foundation's Koch Center in Granite City, a project that will provide primary family care, pediatric, obstetric, behavioral health and internal medicine.

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