

SIERRA REGIONAL Economic News

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THE PEAKS, HILLS AND VALLEYS OF THE FRONT RANGE OF THE SIERRA NEVADA

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WHERE THE CLIMATE FOR BUSINESS IS PERFECT

Prosper or crater – This is our choice

We stand at a major crossroad in the Sierra Region. The stressing truth is that the road we take as a region will determine whether our communities will prosper or crater. Let me explain.

In October, the economic development community from all around the world met for the annual conference of the International Economic Development Council. We were honored to have this annual meeting in Reno thanks to the hard work of Chuck Alvey, the executive director of EDAWN, our sister authority representing Washoe County. The conference provided great networking opportunities and numerous educational experiences for economic developers. They say that if you get one major take-away from a conference, it was well worth the investment. I found this benefit in a presentation by Mark Lautman, an economist and consultant from New Mexico.

Mr. Lautman's presentation, Economic Development in a Labor Constrained Market, provided information that changed my view of our present – and struck the alarm bell for our future. It boils down to the fact that in 2007 the whole basis of our economic growth changed. And, if we want to be on the "prosper" side of the curve, we'd better pay attention and make the right choices.

We have all grown up in an economy where there was an abundance of skilled workers; in fact, more skilled workers than jobs, which was an excellent recipe for economic growth. Frequently you hear company owners say "our employees are our greatest asset." Without skilled workers a company could quickly have "0" assets. Good workers are invaluable, as they say. But think about it. What happens when there are not enough skilled workers to drive company growth? What then? It is easy to see the answer: growth slows or stops or even goes in reverse.

The balance between skilled labor and jobs has been slowly and steadily changing. According to economists, the U.S. Census Bureau, and Harvard Business Review, the

number of skilled workers needed to maintain economic growth in the U.S. has declined to dangerous levels. If you compare the number



Rob Hooper
Executive Director NNDA

of skilled workers to the number of jobs available for skilled workers, these two lines crossed in 2007. For the first time in our lifetimes we have more skilled jobs than workers. Consequently, growth is

impaired and companies are forced to look off-shore to get the talent they need. Our economy suffers. Sound familiar?

The prognosis is those communities who understand this and take action will prosper and those communities who don't will crater. I am happy to report that your leadership within the Sierra Region understands this and in an unprecedented way are acting to ensure our mutual success. There are new partnerships and projects underway with Western Nevada College and others within our educational system to tailor skill development to the needs of employers, both present and future. Members of the Manufactures Forum, who are owners and managers of many of our manufacturing companies within the region, are actively preparing skills need assessments and through the support of Nevada Industry Excellence are working with WNC to create the certification and major study programs necessary to ensure the Sierra Region can boast an abundant and qualified workforce.

The Nevada Commission on Economic Development has closely partnered with the Department of Education Training and Rehabilitation to seek federal funds to drive workforce education and development driven by strategic plans targeted on top-notch career-oriented jobs.

NNDA is proud to be a part of this team and process. We are forming a Workforce and Education Action Committee to address these issues and to be the front line promoters of our workforce and the region. We are combining these programs to support our regional industry targets such as the Cleanroom and Controlled

Environment Manufacturers, and the high tech digital industry will be driven by the development of the new learning center, incubator and tech center in downtown Carson City. In addition, the aggressive educational programs in renewable energy technologies already underway with WNC will help prepare our workforce for the future growth this region will experience in green jobs.

NNDA seeks positive growth that will support our culture and lifestyles and provide an attractive workforce for companies desperately seeking regions that can provide the talent necessary for their future expansion. This is how we will prosper. This is how we will avoid "cratering." It's all about our kids, our future... our community!

For more information and to get involved with NNDA, please call 775-883-4413 or email us at nnda@nnda.org. We stand ready to serve you. ■



The Sharpener People

What do knives, tools, scissors, fish hooks and chain saws all have in common? They all can be sharpened with EZE-LAP diamond products.



Using a special patented process, diamond particles are permanently attached to a strong metal backing surface which keeps the diamond in precise alignment for accurate work. Their handheld sharpening products are virtually indestructible and retain their cutting ability and shape during years of use.

There are flat sharpeners for knives and cutting tools and round sharpeners for serrated knives. The company has a patented Diamond Chain Saw Sharpener and Guide which provides a fail-safe tooth sharpener for chainsaw blades that will sharpen faster and more accurately than other tools available with the cutting edge lasting three times longer than edges sharpened by other methods.

Another unique sharpening product has a special groove specifically for sharpening fishhooks – which they claim may increase your chances of making a good catch!

Though many scissor manufacturers recommend returning their product to be sharpened,

with a round or flat EZE-LAP tool most scissors can be satisfactorily sharpened at home because their sharpening tool removes metal rapidly and does not lose its shape with extended use. The company provides specific instructions for scissor sharpening, including special tips for keeping your scissors' point perfect.

The company also makes a wide range of industrial tools and files – all offering the benefit of their diamond patent process. Additionally, EZE-LAP provides a guide on how to sharpen various tools including the best angles to sharpen specific tools. For beginners, the company suggests using what they call the "ink trick" – simply coat the blade edge with ink using a felt-tipped pen (water soluble ink is preferable) so progress can easily be checked by observing how much ink is removed.

Proven to be superior to

conventional stones, EZE-LAP offers a wide range of handheld products in five different diamond grits. The fine (600) grit diamond can perform 98 percent of all sharpening needs; the medium (400) grit diamond is best when a job requires a surface that will sharpen quickly, but still leave a high quality finish (such as for shaving); and the course (250) grit diamond surface lends itself to sharpening axes, shovels, garden tools, industrial shop tools, and de-burring applications.

The care and pride EZE-LAP puts into their products makes these diamond tools the best quality for the lowest possible price.

Established in 1970, EZE-LAP is a family owned Carson City company that pioneered the original diamond sharpener. Its tools are manufactured entirely in the United States. For more information on EZE-LAP products call (775) 888-9500 or visit their website at www.eze-lap.com. ■

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Do you have a business with a tax loss in 2008 or 2009?

Are your tax advisors talking to you about carrying back your losses?

If not, they should be. Contact us—we can help.

In this troubled economy, many businesses are struggling, even those that have long been successful. The advisors with KBCA, LLC Accountants and Advisors work closely with clients to mitigate their losses. They work with all types of businesses and industries, including real estate and development.

If you have a business tax loss in 2008 or 2009, please contact KBCA, LLC Accountants and Advisors at 775-885-8847 to discuss the possibility of carrying back your losses for up to five years and applying for a quick tax refund.



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