

St Croix EDC Banquet Honors Top Businesses for 2010



2010 Business of the Year winners (l to r): Steve Weinzierl and Michael Fuchs of Engineered Propulsion Systems, Inc.; Director's Award recipient John D. Soderberg; Greg Mitsch, of GaMra Composites, Inc.; and Todd and Jerry Gilbert of Valley Cartage, Inc.

On February 17th, St. Croix EDC honored its 2010 business of the year winners at a banquet in New Richmond, Wisconsin. The 2010 winners include Engineered Propulsion Systems, Inc. (New Richmond) as Emerging Business of the Year, GaMra Composites, Inc. (Hudson) as Small Business of the Year, and Valley Cartage, Inc. (Hudson) as Business of the Year.

In announcing the three winners last month, EDC president Tom Schumacher said, "This year's award winners reflect the business factors that will impact the economic recovery in St. Croix County and the economy as a whole. Economic recovery will require a combination of small innovative businesses and established businesses that are able to modify their business model to adapt to changes in their industry and economic conditions locally, nationally and worldwide." He added, "Engineered Propulsion Systems is moving forward based on sophisticated engineering experience of its owners and employees gained while working as consultants for major auto companies and the department of defense. GaMra reflects the importance of supporting existing businesses as they grow and expand. Valley Cartage, celebrating its 75th anniversary, is an example of longevity and transitioning a closely held family business from one generation to the next."

John D. Soderberg, a New Richmond banker and civic leader, received the EDC Director's Award. The EDC board created this award to honor an individual or organization that has championed economic development through innovative actions, making

St. Croix County a better place to live, work, play, learn, and grow.

"The success of any business is dependent upon the support of its financial partners," said Schumacher. "Community banks have played a key role for businesses in St. Croix County. John Soderberg has led not only his bank, but also the New Richmond area and St. Croix County. The bank's expansion to Somerset and Hudson reflects the interrelationship of all the communities within St. Croix County."

Each of the winners received a plaque from the EDC as well as a Legislative Citation from Madison and congratulatory letters from U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, U.S. Senators Herb Kohl and Ron Johnson, Wisconsin Secretary of Commerce Paul Jadin, and County Board Chair Daryl Standafer.

Previous winners from 1994 to 2009 were introduced during the program. Certificates were presented to EDC members in appreciation of their financial support over the last ten consecutive years.

The 17th annual awards banquet was sponsored by First Bank of Baldwin, First National Community Bank, WESTconsin Credit Union, Wipfli CPAs and Consultants, Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation, and Xcel Energy. It was attended by just over 175 people.

Entertainment was provided by comedian C. Willi Myles who is billed as America's Everyday Comedian.