

## **Economic Development Insight**

### **We Still Had a Harvest**

By Joan Bethell

As I was driving in Greene County recently, I saw a church marquee that said something like “We had a drought, we had a flood and we still had a harvest. Praise God.” Although the U.S. economy is in dire straits, here in Greene County we have so much to be thankful for.

We don’t have to drive in bumper-to-bumper traffic twice a day, just to get back and forth to work. Even our busiest highways aren’t that busy or noisy. We have fresh air, unpolluted by auto exhaust fumes.

We have wonderful exposure to the expanse of starry skies every night.

We enjoy seeing familiar faces everywhere we go around the county and ‘family’ (natural and ‘adopted’) are always close by and there when you need them.

We have great local cooks, who make delicious fares, such as huge cinnamon rolls, lemon shake-ups, apple dumplings, fish ‘frys’, etc.

Unlike some communities, we have many resources to work with to build our local economy.

We have thousands of acres of farmland and timberland that provide tremendous opportunities for developing ‘green business’, including value-added manufacturing and niche product marketing.

We have multiple local artisans, who create products that range from heritage quilts, costume jewelry, pottery, basket weaving, sculptures, art work, just to name a few.

We have an abundance of natural resources that include lakes for boating and fishing, plus opportunities for hunting, bird watching, camping.

We have NSWC Crane, one of the largest employers in Southwest Indiana providing over 4,000 jobs, situated on our doorstep.

We have WestGate@Crane Technology Park with the potential to provide another 3,000 jobs.

We have Interstate 69 scheduled to dissect the southeast quadrant of our county, bringing with it many more opportunities for commercial development – and thousands more jobs.

We’re encompassed within the service areas of a number of colleges and universities that provide ready access to quality education.

We have a county hospital and a medical support network, so that we don’t have to travel to the ‘big city’ for quality medical care.

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We have choices in everything – food, clothing, housing, transportation, work, education, entertainment, recreation... the list is endless.

Even the poorest of our poor are wealthy by comparison to the majority of the world's population. We have a roof over our head and a meal on our plate.

All of these, and everything else in Greene County that gives us the wonderful quality of life that we cherish and want to maintain, give me reason to be grateful and thankful.

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