

IN DOWN ECONOMY, YORKVILLE NOTES POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

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YORKVILLE — In a year when Kendall County hit its highest unemployment rate in recent history, and banks have taken over residential developments, the Yorkville area has seen some spurts of growth.

Ice cream manufacturer Meadowvale has expanded, a car care shop and childcare businesses have opened, and a grocery store has renovated its space — all in the past year.

Such businesses were recognized recently by the Yorkville Economic Development Council at its ninth annual meeting.

■ Meadowvale increased its cooler and warehouse capacity, and doubled its

space.

■ The new car care shop is a Merlin's located at the entrance of Fox Industrial Park on the south side of town.

■ The newest educational childcare facility is Children of America on Prairie Pointe Drive, which uses a state-of-the-art security system that requires a PIN to enter the building.

■ Aldi, at Route 47 and Countryside Parkway, opened a renovated 16,300-square-foot store in September, its first major remodel since opening in 1990.

Mayor Valerie Burd added a few more successes to the list, including the development of Hampton Inn hotel going up behind the Aldi, a car collision shop

being built on Yorkville's south side, and a Buffalo Wild Wings restaurant arriving in the spring.

But then there are the downfalls of 2009.

Fees collected from developments fell from nearly \$1 million to \$100,000 "within a very short time," Burd said Monday. "So that was a crash," she said.

The city's major retail development, Kendall Marketplace, has also struggled to enlist new tenants in a timely fashion, Burd said, adding that the developer had hoped to be signing on restaurants by now. Eateries are expected to fill space closer to its entrance off Route 34.

Another retail development, Countryside Center, an outdoor shopping dis-

trict, has come to a standstill because the retailers the developer hoped to attract are not expanding, Burd said.

As for the coming year, the YEDC plans to focus on strengthening private-public partnerships, said Lynn Dubajic, executive director of the commission.

Burd added that the city will work on finding new revenue streams, and will research grants available through state and federal sources. Burd also wants to see the city attract more commercial businesses, especially companies to fill the city's industrial parks.

YEDC receives about \$45,000 annually from the city to attract and retain business and development.