

Oetlinger, Sweettrio get Chamber nods

Written by MARK JAEGER
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Grafton businesses lauded for commitment to community causes

Making a good first impression is important, but being able to sustain that impression is what earned the winners of this year's Grafton Area Chamber of Commerce awards special recognition.

Businessman Frank Oetlinger will receive of the Outstanding Business Person Award during the Chamber's May 22 annual meeting and awards dinner.

Also getting special recognition will be the candy shop Sweettrio.



Oetlinger is being recognized for his commitment to the community as well as his business diversity.

He is the owner of Oetlinger Precision Manufacturing as well as the Heart of Grafton Family Restaurant and the Grafton Pub and Bowl.

Oetlinger started the manufacturing company in 1979, as a small tool-and-die shop in the basement of his home.

After relocating into an empty Milwaukee warehouse, the company moved to north side of Grafton in 1990.

Oetlinger Precision Manufacturing produces custom machine parts for companies in the heavy equipment, aerospace, marine and print industries.

Frank Oetlinger was nominated for the Chamber honor by Michael Cibulka, assistant vice president of US Bank's Grafton branch.

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“Frank has been extremely active within our community for as long as I can remember,” Cibulka said.

“In just the past year, he has been instrumental in helping our Grafton High School enhance the manufacturing and engineering education curriculum by becoming a member of a newly formed ad-hoc committee, the Manufacturers Alliance, that includes teachers, School Board members, school administration, Chamber of Commerce and local manufacturing leaders.”

Cibulka said Oetlinger has embraced the group’s mission of “to completely renovate the educational curriculum and elevate the skill level of our high school and middle school students who choose an engineering and manufacturing path.”

Cibulka said Oetlinger has put his intention into action by donating computer hardware and software to the industrial arts program.

Oetlinger purchased the Heart of Grafton restaurant and the adjacent bowling alley several years ago, and directed major remodeling.

“He has taken it upon himself to completely renovate the bowling alley to make it more inviting for the Grafton community, particularly young people, to come and enjoy a modern and safe place to be with friends and family,” the nomination form said.

“Although Frank will tell you he just did some updating, he is too modest to state the real reason, which was to have an opportunity to give back to the community.”

Oetlinger was also singled out for helping finance appearances by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Marching Band in the Holiday and Grafton Christmas parades.

“For the time I have had the privilege to know Frank, I have known him to be absolutely committed to help make Grafton the best place live, work, and raise a family. He is one who puts his passion for Grafton into action every day,” Cibulka said.

Although opened just five years ago, the nomination for Sweettrio submitted by Roberta Campbell of Port Washington State Bank said the business has already left its mark on the community.

The shop is owned by Christine Steeno and Nedra Clague.

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