

# Crawfordsville

## After three years of going it alone, city rejoins county development effort.

by Susan Hayhurst

"THE MOST IMPORTANT event that occurred in Montgomery County this year was the reunification of the city of Crawfordsville and Montgomery County Economic Development," says William Henderson, executive director of the MCED.

Difficulties arose in 2004 when Crawfordsville's new city administration decided to shoulder economic development efforts itself rather than rely on the MCED. "Several city administrative personnel thought it better to go our own path for economic development," explains John Zumer, mayor of Crawfordsville. "Through the upside and downside of that decision we understand that though the city is to work with and support economic development efforts it is not our sole job to stump for such opportunity. It is Bill Henderson and his organization's responsibility. We've wiped the slate clean and are working together once again."

The city and county both are contracting with MCED for economic development services this year. "This contracting will allow MCED to design a comprehensive



development strategy for the entire community and allow us to be a better participant in the new regional development initiatives."

Community leadership has also joined forces to unveil the site of and attract business to a new commerce park. Located in the northern part of Crawfordsville just east of U.S. 231 and south of I-74, the 100-acre park already features infrastructure of electric, sewer, water and natural gas and nearby rail access. "We plan on targeting companies geared to technology, knowledge creation and light manufacturing. We're also working with the Crawfordsville Redevelop-

### Shake on it

Mayor John Zumer (left) contracts for the services of Montgomery County Economic Development, headed by Bill Henderson.

ment Commission to attain shovel ready designation this year for the park," says Henderson.

The Crawfordsville Commerce Park can't only enhance the city's already well-established industrial corridor. This artery is home to the county's largest single employer and publishing giant. RR Donnelley, which

most recently rolled out the new Harry Potter book. The publisher employs 1,400. Proud of its ever growing steel cluster, Montgomery County boasts five companies employing 1,000 collectively which process or manufacture steel in various forms. Dubose Manufacturing's 30 employees process steel strapping, Heidtman Steel's 120 workers slit and pickle steel, Whitesville Mill processes aggregate and steel slag with 45 people, steel slitting is also accomplished with Performance Master Coil's 35 employees and rolled steel is the final product of Nucor, which employs 750.

The county's stable industries also include Acuity Brands Lighting with 700 workers, Raybestos Products at 500 and St. Clair Medical Center, along U.S. 231, payrollling 470

"Both Nucor and RR Donnelley are investing in technology upgrades that are key to the long-term growth of our community," says Henderson. "Alcoa CSI, employing 420, also continues to invest locally retaining our position as the largest manufacturer of plastic bottle caps in the world."