

THE PIONEER NEWS

Sabert celebrates after surviving bumps in road

By The Staff

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HILLVIEW - Admitting that there had been a few bumps in the road over the past four years, Sabert Corp. officially opened its new manufacturing facility in northern Bullitt County on Thursday.



Thomas J. Barr
Gov. Steve Beshear and State Rep. Linda Belcher cut the ribbon at Sabert Corp.

Over four years ago, the New Jersey-based company began looking for a location to build its third manufacturing plant in the United States.

Through a consultant and with a lot of pushing from local officials, such as Bullitt County Industrial Development Authority director Bob Fouts and Hillview mayor Jim Eadens, the 250,000 square foot facility was located off East Blue Lick Road.

"It's an exciting time to be here in Bullitt County and in Hillview," said Gov. Steve Beshear, who joined company and local officials for the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "It is a beautiful place."

The company manufactures containers and items used in the food services industry.

During tough economic times, Beshear said celebrations like Sabert are encouraging.

"Today is the kind of day that gives us all hope," said the governor.

He added Sabert officials had the foresight to invest in the facility prior to the economic crunch and has given 73 employees a quality job.

"Each job will help a family," said Beshear. "Jobs are a top priority."

Albert Salama, president and founder of Sabert, said two production lines from Oregon were moved to the local facility with its opening last June.

He admitted that the company had survived its "fair share of twists and turns throughout this journey."

That has included lawsuits over the rezoning of the property and the purchase of the property from Salt River Electric.

Salama said a lot of people deserve credit for helping the company overcome the speed bumps along the way.

He credited Fouts and Eadens with being very persuasive throughout the process and attorney Eric Farris for his ability to "float like a butterfly and sting like a bee" when needed.

In making the decision to locate off Interstate 65 in Bullitt County, Salama said it is centrally located and reduces travel time to its customers, which would in turn reduce pollution.

By being closer to its customers in the food service world, he said they are able to stock smaller inventory and still have the products they need quickly.

"We continue to believe we will make an important contribution to this community," said Salama.

The company awarded its first college scholarship last spring and that will become an annual ritual.

Gary Ziznewski, CEO and senior vice president for Sabert, said he was proud of the facility and the continued growth experienced over the past 27 years.

He said the growth has come from a strong focus on the customers, the employees and the community.

The company had a recent streak of 419 days without a safety incident and Ziznewski said Sabert provides employees with a challenging job and the hopes of advancement.

State Rep. Linda Belcher said she was proud to have Sabert as a part of the community.

Bullitt County Chamber of Commerce president Lou Ann Moore said she was particularly excited about the festivities during the tough economic times.

"You'll make a great neighbor," said Moore. "Welcome to Bullitt County."