

Local Business



Pencil pushers

The United Way of Greater Kansas City is seeking organizations to host back-to-school supply collection drives to help needy families. Interested? Call 816-559-4667.

For your information

Notables on Computerworld's list of "Best Places to Work in IT 2009" include HCA at No. 56 and Cerner Corp. at No. 61.

NOTEWORTHY

This week

The 2009 Power of Diversity Celebration today will recognize businesses from the Herman A. Johnson business mentorship program. See Business Calendar, C19.

Summer promos

Through Aug. 31, the Kansas City Convention & Visitors Association is accepting votes for its annual Visitors' Choice Awards at www.visitkc.com/this-is-kansas-city/visitors-choice-awards/index.aspx. Only votes from outside the five-county metro area will be counted.

Also through Aug. 31, the Merriam Visitors Bureau is running a "Cache in on Merriam Tourism" contest. The promotion features five hidden outdoor containers — known as geo-caches — placed by the bureau throughout the city. Each cache contains a secret code that can be logged at www.exploremerriam.com, which then enters the individual into a contest for a Garmin GPS device.

No. 1 in real estate

Real estate executive Mike Phillips tops the national Real Estate Top 400 list compiled by Real Trends. Phillips, who owns Parkville-based Century 21 All-Pro, in 2008 recorded 1,148 transaction sides — buying or selling of a property.

SMARTPOST | 71 jobs will be created

FedEx to open Olathe facility

By KEVIN COLLISON
The Kansas City Star

FedEx SmartPost, a new subsidiary that uses the U.S. Postal Service for final delivery, is opening a facility in Olathe that's expected to generate 71 full- and part-time jobs.

The operation has leased 126,000 square feet in a distribution center at 22161 W. 167th St. in Olathe. FedEx SmartPost will be the first tenant in the 602,000-square-foot building developed by Kessinger/Hunter & Co. The owner is Sun Life Assurance Co. of Canada.

Erin Truxal, a spokeswoman for FedEx, said the new SmartPost facility is expected to open in late September. She said 29 full-time and 42 part-time workers will be hired. SmartPost was started in 2004 and has been expanding quickly nationwide.

For employment information, go to the company Web site at FedEx.com/careers.

The SmartPost subsidiary specializes in delivery of low-weight, less-time-sensitive consumer packages for Internet businesses and catalog companies. Through its network of 16 distribution hubs, FedEx SmartPost provides delivery Monday through Saturday to all residential ad-



BLOOMBERG NEWS FILE PHOTO

FedEx SmartPost will open a facility in a distribution center at 167th Street and Lone Elm Road in Olathe.



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resses in the country, including post office boxes and military destinations.

Dan Jensen of Kessinger/Hunter said the SmartPost lease is an important first step toward filling the building.

"This was a little smaller than we'd like to split the building for its first user," he said, "but FedEx brings credibility, and we felt this

was the right deal to start with."

The new distribution center is about seven miles from where BNSF Railway wants to build an intermodal transportation complex in Gardner, a development that is expected to dramatically increase the amount of cargo moving through the area.

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RECOVERY TO WAIT TILL 2012

That's the forecast for KC's job market, but some metro areas are expected to fare worse.

Staff and wire reports

Kansas City's job market won't regain its pre-recession heights till 2012, according to the economic forecaster IHS Global Insight.

That makes the area average to above average in the IHS forecast, which sees 286 of 325 metropolitan areas recovering in 2012 or even later. And the worst of those — 112, mainly in the Rust Belt or hurricane-ravaged Gulf areas — won't make it back till 2014 or even later, IHS estimated.

Only six of 325 metropolitan areas in the study — one being Columbia, Mo. — are expected to have recovered fully by the end of this year, and five others in 2010.

In the Kansas City metro area, Frank Lenk, chief economist at the Mid-America Regional Council, has predicted a 50,000-job loss, from a first-quarter 2008 peak to a second-quarter 2010 trough. So far, he said, 23,000 jobs have disappeared from the metro area.



Lenk

"If jobs rebound at the rate they went down, the (IHS) prediction of regaining lost jobs by 2012 is a reasonable estimate," Lenk said. "If jobs rebound more slowly — and the recovery could well be more sluggish — it could drag beyond 2012."

Lenk noted that it took 4½ years after the

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