

DECEMBER 2009

the pulse

SAULT STE. MARIE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWS

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- Young leaders gather in the Sault
- 2010 Scotties just around the corner
- SSMIC celebrates 10th anniversary
- Job training program established
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DEVELOPMENT New business offers durable, long-lasting decks

The evolution starts . . . now

The average life span of a traditional wooden patio deck: 12 years.

The life span of an EvolutionDECK: about 60 years. And little or no maintenance is required during that time.

Sault Ste. Marie-based Evolutiondeck Inc. is now offering its flagship product: a low-maintenance, long-lasting galvanized steel deck.

To help get started, business representatives first met with the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation.

“They guided us to the various funding sources around,” said Evolutiondeck President John Naccarato. “They were very helpful.”

With this push in the right direction, the firm received a \$475,000 loan from the provin-

cial government’s Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation.

“Evolutiondeck is developing this new technology that will improve their position in the global marketplace while creating jobs in Sault Ste. Marie,” said local MPP David Oraziatti.

Like what you see? Visit www.evolution-deck.com.



OPEN DIALOGUE: Meeting inside Evolutiondeck’s demonstration house on Rossmore Road are (L to R) Sault MPP David Oraziatti, Evolutiondeck Vice-President Joe Severini, Acting Executive Director for Development SSM John Febbraro, and Evolutiondeck President John Naccarato.

DECK THE HALLS (L to R): Joe Severini, John Naccarato, David Oraziatti and John Febbraro at Evolutiondeck’s demonstration house.

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP: EDC takes part in young leaders' conference

Young leaders from across the region gather in Sault Ste. Marie

Several dozen young professionals from across Northern Ontario gathered in Sault Ste. Marie this month.

The youth took part in Global Vision's Junior Team Canada event. The non-profit organization partners with government, businesses, schools and community organizations to teach young Canadians to be future leaders.

A strong supporter of youth and youth entrepreneurship, the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation and its Enterprise Centre Sault Ste. Marie division participated in the event, which took place at Algoma's Water Tower Inn Dec. 8 and 9.

At the conference, the young professionals shared ideas and learned from a variety of established community leaders, including Bruce Strapp, CEO of the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation, Andrew Ross, General Manager of Enterprise Centre SSM, and Tom Vair, Executive Director of the Sault

Ste. Marie Innovation Centre, a longtime partner of the SSMEDC.

Ideas were shared and long-lasting connections made.

Enterprise Centre Sault Ste. Marie provides support to the regional small business community. The division has a full-time staffer who concentrates on youth entrepreneurship.

"Working with youth and helping them develop their small business skills has always been one of our primary objectives," said Ross. "That's why we like to take part in events like the Junior Team Canada conference. It allows us to teach the participants and provide them with some of the tools they need to become better entrepreneurs."

Established in 1991, Global Vision has trained more than 20,000 young Canadians through its various programs.

For more information on Junior Team Canada and its services, visit www.globalvision.ca.

Also online: www.ecssm.ca.



ABOVE: Bruce Strapp, CEO of the SSMEDC, speaks to the young leaders about the importance of teamwork and building partnerships to succeed.



ABOVE: Randy Tallon (left), the SSMEDC's Director of International Relations & Global Logistics, with Amy Giroux and Terry Clifford, Director and President of Global Vision Junior Team Canada.

TOURISM: Canadian Women's Curling Championships invades the Sault Jan. 30 to Feb. 7

2010 Scotties Tournament of Hearts just around the corner

With less than one month to go until the 2010 Scotties Tournament of Hearts invades the Sault, event organizers are in overdrive.

The Canadian Women's Curling Championship will take place at the Essar Centre Jan. 30 to Feb. 7.

Tourism Sault Ste. Marie, a division of the SSM Economic Development Corporation, worked with a group of local volunteers to bid on the

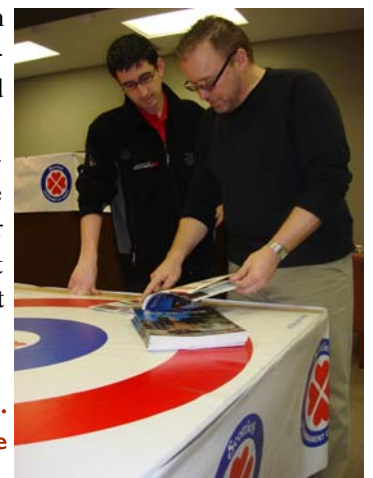
sizeable event. Along with the 2010 Scotties, the city also hosted the 1990 Labatt Brier, the National Men's Curling Championships.

"Our community has built up an impressive track record for hosting world-class events, and the Scotties will add to this reputation" said

Steve Hollingshead, Tourism Sault Ste. Marie's Coordinator of Special Projects and Sport Tourism.

Tickets for the 2010 Scotties are available through the Essar Centre box office. For information on the ticket packages available, visit www.seasonofchampions.ca.

PHOTO: Steve Hollingshead (right) from Tourism Sault Ste. Marie discusses the 2010 Scotties with Andy Henry, the event's Sponsorship and Marketing Coordinator.



INNOVATION: Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre celebrates a decade of operation

10 down, many more to come for Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre

A little more than 10 years ago, community advocates noticed something missing in Sault Ste. Marie.

The IT sector, particularly in geographic information systems (GIS), had a lot of room to grow. With unemployment high in the city, an opportunity was present.

Community organizations, including the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation, took action. With support from all levels of government, the SSM Innovation Centre was born.

Today, the organization has a GIS centre and business incubator, both receiving critical acclaim and awards.

City Councillor Steve Butland, who was Mayor when the SSMIC first formed, couldn't be prouder with its

growth in the past decade.

"It's nice to hear people say that what we have here, no one else has," he said.

Case in point: When Pod Generating Group was looking for a location for its solar energy farm, the company wanted as much geographic information as possible from various cities across North America.

Thanks to the Innovation Centre's GIS database, Pod

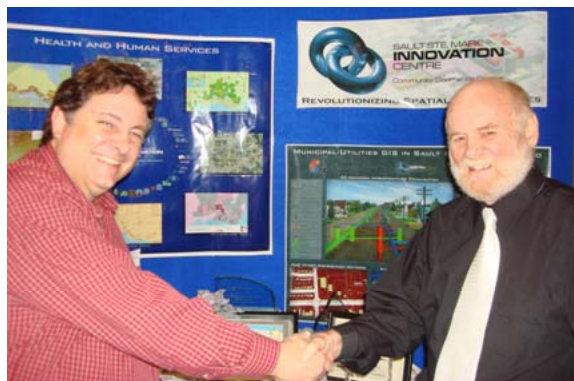
was able to access data on the Sault in a matter of hours, while it took other cities weeks, if not months. This is one of the reasons why Pod is constructing its solar energy farm in Sault Ste. Marie.

Meanwhile, the city's IT sector continues to grow rapidly. The new Sault Area Hospital is taking shape, and funding was recently announced for an Invasive Species Centre. As well, Algoma

the green light for a Convergence Centre, which will be the SSMIC's new home.

"This is an exciting time for the research and innovation sector in (the Sault)," said MPP David Oraziatti.

Of particular importance is that IT jobs are being created, which is allowing youth to remain or return home, he added. "We've always offered unparalleled quality of life, but now we can offer (high-tech) jobs as well. With new and exciting projects, the sky's the limit."



University received

TEAM EFFORT: Taken at the Innovation Centre's 10-year anniversary, SSMEDC CEO Bruce Strapp (left) with Sault College President Ron Common. The three organizations have been strong partners for years and continue to work together on various initiatives.

TRAINING: Sutherland division establishes training program in the Sault

New worker training program comes to town

"Sorry, but you're just not what we're looking for."

For job seekers young and old, this line may sound familiar. The simple reality is that not everyone has the skills needed to find their place in the workforce.

Seeing this gap, and want-

ing to make a difference, Sutherland Global Services is taking action. The company established a division, Innovative Training Solutions, that aims to teach new skills to prospective employees.

"We're looking to improve the employment field in town," said Gordon Nisbet, Manager of Special Projects for ITS.

The division can

teach any number of skills, be it customer service, job interview etiquette or even how to surf the web. Again, the end goal is to make it easier for individuals to enter the workforce, he said.

Allowing people to obtain such skills is especially important during times of economic downturn when jobs may be few and far between.

"That's exactly why we're doing it now," said Nisbet.

"We want to ensure that people who lack cer-

tain skills can find work."

Meanwhile, although Innovative Training Solutions is a fairly new program, Nisbet is working with the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation to get the word out to its clients.

"The EDC works to build a better community, and that's what this training program does, too," he said. "I look forward to working together, as we have many times in the past, to develop and market it throughout the community."

For further details on Innovative Training Solutions, visit www.its-e-learning.com.



PHOTO: Gordon Nisbet poses with a laptop containing a screen shot of an early, room-sized computer, part of an ITS worker training module.

. . . In the Community



TOP: Debbie LaFleur (far right), Manager of Corporate Services for the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation, and fellow Civic Centre employees dish out some hot breakfast to Peter Niro, the City's Manager of Human Resources, at the Civic Centre's first annual Christmas Cheer charity breakfast. The event raised more than \$1,000 for the Christmas Cheer Santa Fund.



TOP: Members of the EDC team with some guests at the organization's annual open house event.



LEFT: Actor David Morse (middle), who has appeared in *The Green Mile* and *Contact*, with the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie crew. TSSM helped attract DViant Films to the Sault, where the production company just finished shooting Long-fellow, featuring Morse.

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Sault Ste. Marie
**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION**

The Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation recognizes the financial support it receives from the City of Sault Ste. Marie. As well, it recognizes the strong backing it receives from the Mayor, Council and City staff team. The SSMEDC also thanks the federal and provincial governments, and its many other partners, for their financial support.

The Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation is a non-profit organization, funded by public and private partners, whose goal is to be the community's leader in supporting and promoting an environment that generates sustainable employment in a healthy, growing and diversified economy.