

BRN helps businesses thrive

By **AMY GAREIS**
News-Herald Staff Writer

CADIZ - New and ongoing businesses have another avenue to help them thrive with the formation of a local Business Resource Network.

An introductory meeting was held at Puskarich Public Library on Tuesday featuring more than a dozen business, organization and government agency representatives, such as the Harrison County Regional Chamber of Commerce, Cadiz Business Association, Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth, Ohio Mid-East Governments Association, Ohio Bureau of Worker Compensation, Workforce Investment Board Area 16 and Harrison County Community Improvement Corp. and the county Department of Job and Family Services. Angie Peters, manager for Harrison, Jefferson, Belmont and Carroll counties, serves out of the Steubenville office and said the group was a grassroots effort to assist businesses, both large and small, at no cost.

"Each of your organizations has something to offer local and regional businesses," Peters said. "We are taking a strategic approach to help businesses survive, succeed and grow."

She added the BRN operated under a different name since 2008 but has fresh and innovative ideas. The Ohio organization is located in five areas comprised of 16 counties. The original site began in Mahoning and Trumbull counties and the group received a \$6.2 million grant through the U.S. Department of Labor to expand. It is now found in Columbiana, Mahoning and Trumbull; Ashtabula, Geauga and Portage; Belmont, Carroll, Harrison and Jefferson; Tuscarawas and Stark; and Adams, Brown, Pike and Scioto. The grant also provides for five managers and administrative assistants while

account representatives should be hired by July 1 to work with the business clientele.

"We're not new; we're just new to this area and the way of thinking," she said. "Think of businesses in dire need or new businesses with new ideas. [This] helps them move forward with their dream."

A video shown at the session described how BRN sites are located in Ohio and Pennsylvania and involve a collection of 40 organizations. It includes chambers of commerce, economic and workforce development organizations, schools, colleges and universities and government agencies and the mission is to help identify, understand and access services, from loans, grants and tax incentives to technical and worker training, market development and government problem-solving. The BRN identifies, prioritizes and targets regional businesses for support, then an account executive contacts and interview the operator. The business owner completes an extensive Synchronist Business Information System survey to obtain a sense of the challenges and opportunities it faces. Network partners from the four counties next collaborate on ideas in a comprehensive proposal package in response to the consultation, while the account rep manages, coordinates and link clients to the services they seek.

"The whole basis of the BRN is to do this with as little red tape as possible," Peters added, saying the clients would have access to one contact person to make things simple. "There are many things each and every one of your organizations have that others may not know about, and we deliver comprehensive solutions."

A roundtable of network "partners" meets each month to discuss the needs and brainstorm effective ways to



NH Photo/AMY GAREIS

A grassroots effort is forming to help new and existing businesses thrive. Members of the Business Resource Network held an introductory session in Cadiz on Monday to discuss its purpose, which is to create a roundtable of workforce, economic development, government, business and other entities to provide business clientele with ideas to improve their facilities. Angie Peters, BRN manager for Harrison, Jefferson, Belmont and Carroll counties, said roundtable meetings would be held monthly at Harrison Community Hospital with an upcoming session on April 29.

solve problems. Peters said issues are confidential, but in the end the goal is for businesses to help each other.

"The whole concept is customer service and to provide whatever they may need to help them survive," she continued. "It also helps you [as network members] survive because we are using your services. Being a partner will also give you an education and the BRN offers access to a one-stop shop."

Dave Wheeler, a WIB board subcommittee representative overseeing the network program, said the program is currently funded through the Workforce Investment Act but he hoped to see private funds could help offset the federal subsidy.

"It holds people accountable for helping businesses," he added. "It's like having someone paid...to look after the business's interests."

Upcoming roundtable sessions kick off April 29 and will be held the last Monday of each month at 9 a.m. at Harrison Community Hospital. Peters said the site was centrally located to all four areas and may include speakers on a series of topics. For more information, contact Peters or Administrative Assistant Carrie Fodor respectively at 740-282-0971, Ext. 141 and 188, by cell at 740-457-3128 or 740-457-3137 or email apeters_brn@hotmail.com or cfodor_brn@hotmail.com.



Adam:

Cadiz Le

CADIZ - T American Legion 93rd Anniversary and Dinner on M the post home. A many award continuous serv Legion, two spec were presented.

Charles Moorehead was r as the 2013 Legio the Year and Sa received the Mem Year Award.

Moorehead is member of the Legion and has h offices. He is cur Post 34 Veteran Officer (VSO)

Chase rep

BOWERSTON investigation rema way after author a New Philadelph led deputies on a March 26. Christina 36, of 169 Fairview was cited for spe more potential c being reviewed. Ac reports, a sheriff's on patrol near U. County Road 8 a.m. when he observed a vehicl eastbound at 80 hour in a 55-mph deputy attempted t traffic stop and th vehicle pulled over side of the road b entered the road began to road pursuit ensued,

THIS WEEK'S SPECIALS

Gallon Vitamin D, 2%, 1%, Skim or Ultra Skim

Assorted Varieties

USDA Choice Beef Loin

Imported, Sweet

Banquet

T-Bone or

White