

The Liaison

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DRUM COUNTRY BUSINESS - Regional Marketing Initiative

Focus is on North Central New York

The proverbial cork was popped, the handshakes were sincere and congratulations were shared all around as the new marketing initiative, www.DrumCountryBusiness.com, was launched.

After months of hard work by a group of committed individuals from the region, a new brand and a regional identity economic development website, Drum Country Business.com, were unveiled on Friday morning, March 4th at Jefferson Community College.

"The new logo and regional descriptor **North Central New York** are intended to focus national attention on our location, a location readily recognized because Fort Drum and the 10th Mountain Division are here. Nationally many people don't recognize *Upstate* or *Northern New York* as descriptive of our location," said Kevin Jordan, Director of Project Development, Development Authority of the North Country. "**North Central New York**, where Fort Drum is located, identifies a more specific location for those less familiar with our geography."

Jordan continued, "The character and economy of the region is deeply enmeshed with the post and its culture. The installation provides employment for more than 4,700 area residents and generates \$1.5 billion in annual economic impact. Soldiers and their families stationed at Fort Drum, many of whom live in the communities surrounding Fort Drum, are a driving force to continued economic growth and development in the region. In Drum Country, it's no wonder we say, "You see a soldier—we see a workforce."



"Drum Country Business is a regional marketing initiative. The partners are marketing Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties as one region," explained Beth Fipps, FDRLO's chair. "Fort Drum and the 10th Mountain Division are nationally recognized. This joint initiative will appeal to site selectors and CEO's by its touting our region's assets and proximity to Fort Drum."

Representative Bill Owens agreed. "Fort Drum plays a significant role in Northern New York's economy and will help determine the continued success of the region. The cooperative effort will allow local stakeholders in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties to take advantage of their strengths and assets to recruit new business to the area," said Owens. "This new initiative holds great potential for economic development in the North Country, and I look forward to helping in any way that I can. The more we work to create jobs, the faster we can return to positive growth and a brighter future for Upstate New York."

The Drum Country Business partnership stems from the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization's economic development task force. The FDRLO commissioned a gap analysis that identified businesses and industries that would traditionally locate near military installations. The

(Continued on page 5)

Inside this issue:

Planning Mode	2
Drum Country Welcome	3
Housing Updates	4-5
Carl's Perspective	6
Why FDRLO?	7
Transit Needs	8



DRUM COUNTRY BUSINESS
is a partnership of:
*Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization
Development Authority of the North Country
Jefferson County Job Development Corporation
St. Lawrence County Industrial Development Agency
Lewis County Office of Economic Development and Planning
and National Grid*

Planning: a word that strikes fear in the hearts of many a board member.

I often find a thesaurus rather than the dictionary helps me to better understand the meaning of words. Suggestions for the noun "plan" included *preparation, scheduling, forecast, strategy, design, diagram, map, chart* - all words that hint of predicting the future, facing tomorrow, addressing the unknown.

Planning helps an organization to remain relevant and allows it to be responsive to the needs of the community and people it serves. It also strengthens the governance of an organization as it guides and determines the program emphasis and direction of the organization.

Over the twenty plus years of its existence, the FDRLO board has on several occasions spent time examining and reaffirming our mission, vision and goals. These strategic planning sessions enabled FDRLO leaders, members, staff and stakeholders (government and military) to focus attention on long and short term goals and measurable objectives to support achievement of our vision for our community. At our last session near the end of 2009, we considered future funding needs, enhanced strategic alliances, and the importance of planning for both staff and board succession.

It is time to revisit these issues among others.

At its February meeting, FDRLO Board authorized the formation of a Strategic Planning Committee to shepherd this process. Initially, the committee chaired by Dr. John Deans, a former chair of FDRLO, is tasked with developing a Request for Proposal to solicit for professional assistance with this process. The timeline will be kept short. Your officers have identified this as a priority. If you are interested in serving on this committee or have comments to share on the existing Mission, Vision and Goals, please contact Dr. Deans through the FDRLO office or call me at 785-3456. An active and involved membership is crucial to our success.

Beth Fipps

Chair's Corner

Elizabeth C. Fipps, Chair



OUR MISSION:

- To foster effective communication, understanding and mutual support by serving as the primary point of coordination for resolution of those issues which transcend the specific interests of the military and civilian communities of the Fort Drum region.

OUR VISION:

Through the leadership efforts and activities of the FDRLO, the Fort Drum region is recognized as:

- The Army's, soldier's and family's first choice
- An attractive, healthy and vibrant community widely seen as the place to which to move, thrive and stay
- A region which fulfills the needs and dreams of all who call the North Country "home"

OUR GOALS:

- Ensure the long-term viability of Fort Drum.
- Continue to improve understanding between the military and community leaders in solving problems of mutual concern.
- Secure full participation by military and community leaders in solving problems of mutual concern.
- Provide continuity in community relations to bridge the frequent changes in military and community leaders in carrying out their mutual responsibilities.
- Establish a communication network that will assist the military and community leaders in carrying out their mutual responsibilities.

Joint Reception Fetes New Fort Drum Leaders and Spouses of Deployed Soldiers

January can be a little depressing in the North Country. The Holiday season that seems to extend from Halloween through New Year's Day is over. The wintry cold and dark evening skies can make one want to close the drapes and stay right at home.

More than 150 North Country residents and guests had other thoughts on Thursday, January 20th as they gathered at the Best Western Carriage House. It was the perfect time to demonstrate the veracity of our Drum Country Slogan: "The warmest place you'll ever live".

The FDRLO and the Northern New York Fort Drum Chapter of the Association of the United States Army gathered at a co-sponsored reception, "Ushering in 2011: Welcoming New Friends", to

recognize and introduce BG Harry E. Miller, Jr., Senior Rear Commander (below center with Al and Pat Taylor), and COL Noel Nicolle, Fort Drum's Garrison Commander (below right).

FDRLO's chair Beth Fipps and AUSA Vice President Tina Wildhaber (below left) addressed the assembly sharing remarks on each organization's role in developing and supporting the unique military - community relationship demonstrated in the "warmth of Drum Country."

In addition, the event afforded AUSA and FDRLO members an opportunity to visit with spouses of deployed commanders and with leaders of the 3rd Brigade who will deploy to Afghanistan in March.



Jefferson County Housing Construction Indicators

Post Construction: Certificates of Occupancy Issued.

Jefferson County Housing Units	2010 Total Year	2009 Total Year	2008 Total Year	2007 Total Year	2006 Total Year	2005 Total Year
New Single Family Homes	179	231	253	265	306	295
New Mobile Homes	67	59	68	87	121	94
New Multi-family	162	256	298	103	24	22
Rehab resulting in new units	36	3	7	17	18	39
Total	444	549	626	472	469	452

This chart represents only those units added to the housing stock and certified for occupancy, as reported by Jefferson County and local building code enforcement officials.

Accuracy is limited by the percentage of surveys returned by local officials each quarter. All information is exclusive of any housing construction activity on Fort Drum. Data is collected on a quarterly basis. Data may have been adjusted from earlier reports, as necessary, to reflect clarifications/adjustments from local officials. Compiled by the Jefferson County Planning Department

Units Sold by Price Range	Year 2010	Year 2009	Year 2008	Year 2007	Year 2006
Below \$69,999	193	163	189	229	314
\$70,000-\$139,999	380	386	481	640	581
\$140,000 to \$199,999	283	271	273	320	230
Over \$200,000	199	125	164	194	164
Total	1055	945	1107	1383	1289

The chart to the left breaks down home sales in Jefferson County by price category for the period 2006 to 2010 as reported by Lance Evans, Executive Director of Jefferson County Board of Realtors

- On average the houses sold after being on the market between 100-130 days.
- On January 1, 2011 there were 968 homes listed. These units have been on the market an average of 241 days.
- On average 33.8% of the homes sold have been financed conventionally; 30.8% through VA; 13.6% with cash; 9.8% through FHA.
- The percentage of VA loans has been trending upward.

Projected Housing Production

Projected Housing Production	By Dec 2010	Jan thru Jun 2011	Jul thru Dec 2011	Jan thru Jun 2012	Jul thru Dec 2012	Total
Projects Under Construction	212	92				304
Projects Ready for Construction Pending Final Funding Commitments		20	100	80		200
Projects Designed with Approvals Pending Financing				100	35	135
Totals	212	112	100	180	35	639

Drum Country Housing Market Supply - Finding the Key



In the September 2010 edition of *The Liaison*, Kevin Jordan's lead article addressed the local housing issue related to market need. The conclusion in the article was additional housing is necessary, but just how much was a very grey area. In September, we were in a very "tight" market with a vacancy rate of less than 1%. Today the vacancy rate is 7%. What happened in that 5 month period?

This continues to be a difficult story to tell. Certainly more housing has been added both on post and off. Two major projects, RCI and Eagle Ridge, account for many additional units. These additional units may have changed the vacancy rate somewhat, but they cannot account for all the change.

What does a one percentage point change in the vacancy rate mean anyway? In rough terms from the monthly survey of available housing each one percent change up or down, equates to roughly 43 units among the units surveyed. Only the larger projects, those with 20 or more units, are surveyed for the monthly report. Currently a total of 4260 units of off Post rental housing are surveyed. Many rentals in smaller "mom and pop" type operations are available and are not part of the survey.

Local housing experts continue to struggle to understand the ups and downs of the local rental market. They look to deployments and redeployments as a way to understand current market conditions. They recognize that the military remains highly mobile in terms of assignment. Soldiers change duty stations every 2 or 3 years. That equates to more comings and goings. With over 19,000 Soldiers at Fort Drum, turnover of

personnel is ongoing and constant. The term "churn" is used to describe the phenomena of ups and downs in the housing marketplace.

When Army demographers do a housing market study, they count all Soldiers assigned as present at that moment in time. There are no deployments; there are no changes in duty stations. All Soldiers are counted as here.

Conversely, when housing developers and financiers who back such developments review a market study for demand, they are looking at things quite differently. Basically, what they want to know is *if built, can it be kept fully occupied* despite the "churn" that is part of the modern Army.

These different approaches to the same market are why it is so difficult to determine just how many more rental units are needed. Kevin Jordan's closing recommendation in September's newsletter continues to be spot on:

The key to determining just how much additional housing is needed is an approach that builds units in phases, reassesses the market situation periodically, and builds a few more. This reassessment and build cycle would continue until the community is satisfied it has adequately housed both military and non-military families in the region. Only then can we meet the needs of all housing stakeholders, including renters, landlords, lenders and investors by attaining a balanced supply of quality rental housing in the Fort Drum market area.

Deployments and Redeployments

	By Dec 2010	Jan thru Jun 2011	Jul thru Dec 2011	Jan thru Jun 2012	Jul thru Dec 2012
Deployments (<i>depart</i>)					
Aviation & HQ	(3500)				
2nd Brigade					(3500)
3 rd Brigade		(3500)			
Redeployments (<i>return</i>)					
1 st Brigade		3500			
Aviation & HQ			3500		
3 rd Brigade				3500	

Drum Country Business (Continued from page 1)

consultant's recommendations for direct marketing to these target industries led to the tri-county regional approach. Ady-Voltedge, Madison, WI, was hired to develop the materials and marketing plan for Drum Country Business.

Robert M. Ady, President, Ady International, an internationally recognized site selection consultant, spoke to the

tri-county region leaders gathered at JCC about the importance of regional alliances in today's competitive environment.

The Drum Country Business marketing initiative is funded in part by the three county economic development agencies, the Development Authority of the North Country, and a legislative initiative from then-Assemblywoman Dede Scozzafava with matching funds provided by National Grid.

From Carl's Perspective

As with all of the FDRLO's newsletters, our editor, Kathy Mastellon, has gathered articles and information on the current state of the various Task Forces and Projects being worked on. All of those stories are great. There is much to report and much to make us proud.

While our newsletter is our means to report to and update our members on the work of the organization, we need to stop from time to time to thank those volunteers and supporters who make up this outstanding organization. I'd like to use my space for recognition of just a few of the many volunteers and members who are part of FDRLO. They keep it vital and alive through their participation and support.



The first is Mr. FDRLO himself, Terry Roche. Recently the Greater Watertown Chamber of Commerce chose to honor Terry with the 2010 Israel A. Shapiro Award for Community Service. This award represents the Chamber's and community's way of saying *thank you for your service* to a key player in the development of the new Fort Drum among other things.

Terry's work ensured that Fort Drum would become the premiere installation it currently is, and it truly can be said to have started at the very beginning. His years of service, from his time in the military, at the Steering Council, and continuously with the FDRLO since its September 1990 inception, spanned the incredible development and growth of the post. Never was Terry far from the action in those more than 25 years of history.

Great positive things happened over those years. But lest we forget, in that span of time there were BRAC rounds in 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, and 2005, each one requiring a pause in Fort Drum's development to insure that the installation was "safe", all the while continuing to advocate, promote, and improve the facility. It was the mission of FDRLO to see Fort Drum through those times, and it was Terry who was in the forefront of carrying out that mission.

The Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization salutes and thanks Terry Roche for his past and continuing service and truly looks forward to many more years of his leadership and insight.

Special thanks to these friends
for allowing us to use their photographs:
Photo of Terry Roche - Newzjunky.com
Photo of Mary Parry - Watertown Daily Times
Photo of Tom Williams - Tom via Ron Spooner



USO Fort Drum

Mary Parry, like Terry Roche, is someone who's been around "forever"; but for Mary, the years have been very kind! Mary was recently recognized by the USO as a volunteer who has given of her time and support to Soldiers since the founding of that organization in 1941. Seventy years of service: that is simply incredible and makes me proud that she's one of us.

As Mary shares stories about helping Soldiers, entertaining Soldiers, and seeing that Soldiers had a "home-away-from-home" (really all military personnel, regardless of the branch of service) you feel her passion for the volunteer work she does. She is loyal to her troops, patriotic about their cause, and ever willing to do more.

The last person I would like to thank is Master Sergeant Tom Williams. Tom retired from the Army National Guard in 2006, lives in Theresa, and works for Slack Chemical in Carthage. Tom has done something I think is pretty incredible. He asked if the 10th Mountain Division needed help for the next deployment in 2010. If so, he was their man and he really wanted to serve in a combat zone.



A willingness to serve and being qualified to serve sometimes come to logger heads. But in Tom's case he did qualify with weapons, physically, and with all the specialty training required for a combat zone. In October he headed out with Headquarters on their joint 26 nation mission in Afghanistan.

As a benefit of his deployment, Tom's interest in his North Country vineyards is being rewarded. In Afghanistan he's stationed near and among local farmers who try to produce grapes in a very similar climate, but under very different circumstances. He expects to learn much from them, and given the opportunity, we believe he'll have much knowledge to offer them.

Terry, Mary, and Tom:

You make us proud that you are members of FDRLO. We look forward to your continued involvement for years to come.

Carl A. McLaughlin
Executive Director, FDRLO

The Who, What and Why of FDRLO

It has been more than 25 years since the announcement of the reactivation and stationing of the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum set this community into the whirl of activity that has yet to stop.

Many of the soldiers who are deployed down range today with the 10th weren't even born yet. But many of the people in this room remember those early days.

Shortly after that celebrated announcement, a community group came together and formed an organization called the Fort Drum Steering Council. This group was charged with working with local governments, New York State, elected officials at all levels, with the Pentagon, with the Army Corps of Engineers, with the first members of the reactivated division command under MG Bill Carpenter (including then COL Mike Plummer) and with the newly created garrison command headed by then Col Terry Roche. The objective: to ensure that the civilian community and the military could come together to discuss needs, issues and problems and find answers and solutions so the entire community could warmly welcome its new neighbors.

We watched as the dust flew, roads were built and troop barracks, homes, mess halls and office buildings began to emerge at Pine Plains (aka Fort Drum) as this new city – though much smaller than it is today - became reality.

COL Roche retired and joined the Steering Council as its Executive Director adding firsthand knowledge of the military needs to the community's planning efforts.

But even more important than the concrete and wood construction of those years were the communication networks and friendships being developed among new military neighbors and North Country residents.

North Country residents have witnessed twelve change of command ceremonies for division CGs and 13 for Garrison Commanders since those early days in the mid 1980s. And the love, respect and admiration continues.

By 1990, that initial build up was completed and the steering council began planning to disband. The continuation of the communication networks and relationship building stood out as important elements in the ongoing expanded military-civilian environment now the norm of the North Country.

Some smart people realized that a follow on organization could serve in this capacity – hence the birth of Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization in September of 1990.

Chair's Remarks at Joint AUSA/FDRLO Ushering in 2011 Welcoming New Friends

Since its creation as a regional membership organization, the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization (FDRLO) has partnered with many local government and economic development entities at the Federal, State, and local level.

Even today, its stated purpose echoes the need recognized some two decades earlier: *to foster effective communication and cooperation between the military and civilian communities of the Fort Drum, New York region by serving as the primary point of coordination for resolving issues of mutual interest and concern.*

FDRLO has played a key role over the years in building strong ties between Fort Drum and the surrounding communities; promoting the North Country region to Army families as an attractive place to live; and leading efforts to support Fort Drum.

This year the FDRLO will continue its work within the region on many different issues:

- Ensuring a stable local housing market,
- Promoting Economic Development,
- Managing growth and working with local communities,
- Exploring regional transportation possibilities,
- Supporting educational opportunities for children and families,
- Expanding child-care services,
- Advocating for Fort Drum and its Soldiers at the local, state and national levels.

We do all of these things with the help of our broad membership base that includes leaders from the business community, from education, from local government, area not-for-profits, economic development agencies, and state government.

Thank you to our members present here tonight and if you are not a member, please consider joining us.



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Transit Study RFP process

- Examine the needs
- Outline the gaps and provide alternatives
- Be cognizant of fiscal ramifications



With these objectives before them, representatives from Fort Drum, NY DOT, tri-county government and social agencies involved in transporting clients gathered in early November to consider seeking a Fort Drum Region Transit Needs Analysis and Assessment. Cognizant of past reports and studies, the presence of the increased population of individuals at and around Fort Drum who are accustomed to the availability of public transportation encouraged FDRLO to raise the need for a review.

The decision was made to develop and advertise a Request for Proposals "to review and evaluate existing and potential fixed and non-fixed (on call) route transportation services."

The study is viewed as a discovery process of **who** currently provides **what** services **when** and **how** and determining the unmet need.



Carl A. McLaughlin, Executive Director, FDRLO, explains, "The consultant must define the needs, how they are being met, and what needs are currently unmet. This "discovery" process would be through personal interviews and survey and on-line surveys of military, military family member and community travel behavior."

The RFP was released in early January. Proposals were accepted through February 4th. The review committee has selected two potential consultants for on site presentations. Anticipating agreement on expectations and financing can be reached, the study should be underway in early April.