

Kelly Magiera *Entrepreneur & Community Builder*

By Kyle Cummings

Ord, Nebraska

Kelly's hometown is Ord located in Valley County, Nebraska. Ord is rural and located in north central Nebraska. It is a community rooted in ranching and farming.

Ord and Valley County are a good news story about a turnaround after decades of challenges and decline. Challenges remain for every community, including Ord, but Ord is making a come-back. It has a smart development strategy rooted in both entrepreneurship and people attraction. It is committed to investing to make this strategy come alive and realize impacts. Illustrating Ord's comeback the rate of population loss is slowing as economic opportunities are increasing strengthening people attraction.

Ord and Valley County were recognized for the HomeTown Competitiveness work by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The following link will connect you to a video by the Foundation on Ord and its success

www.energizingentrepreneurs.org/elibrary/files/WKKFvideo.wmv

A more recent story was featured by Nebraska Public Radio and access to this update featuring Kelly and her entrepreneur husband can be found at the following link

<http://www.publicbroadcasting.net/netradio/news.newsmain/artic>

Kelly Magiera has always been a small town girl. Being born and raised in Ord, a rural town consisting of about 2100 people in Northern Nebraska, Kelly said she loves the feel of a small town community. Even her husband, Brian, a Scottsdale, Arizona native, whom she met while stationed in Italy, preferred the smaller community to a bigger city.

Now, Kelly wants to give back to the town that she has come to love nearly her entire life. At the end of 2005, Kelly and her husband bought the local movie theatre. But not unlike many small town businesses, clients were hard to attract to the rural area. The Magiera's were pumping more money into the business, than what they were taking in. So just last year, the Magiera's began a total reconstruction on the town cinema – a \$730,000 job to accomplish.

The Magiera's hope construction on the project will be completed by March of 2012. The improved theatre will not only host movies, like originally, but also a variety of other forms of entertainment as well. "It will bring in plays, dinner and a movie, bands, or any kind of entertainment to Ord," Kelly said. "There are so many possibilities. It brings the big city into Ord and surrounding communities."

A complete reconstruction takes a high demand of time and money, though, so challenges are not uncommon. But Kelly said the local residents have been more than accommodating to help the Magiera's push the project forward.

"Everyday there is some kind of challenge," Kelly said, "but there are many positive people along the way. The local people have been great. Probably the biggest challenge has been raising three kids and still trying to (run the business)." Along with raising a family and planning a reconstruction project on her business, Kelly also works as a legal secretary at a law firm in Ord.

Completely reconstructing a business in a small town takes an extreme amount of organization and self-motivation. Committing to a large work load, Kelly said, was a trait she and her husband happened to take naturally. “We don’t like to sit still for very long,” Kelly said with a laugh.

Motivation, on the other hand, was seemingly simple for Kelly. “We wanted to make things better for Ord,” Kelly continued. “It was never about us, it was about the people and community of Ord and we think the theatre is a local attraction that will bring people into town.”

Not only will the revamped theatre bring attraction to the rural town, but it will bring job growth as well. Four full-time jobs have been added to the local entertainment spot downtown.



More pictures about the Magiera’s story can be accessed through NET radio:

<http://www.publicbroadcasting.net/netradio/news.newsmain/article/0/1/1897484/Nebraska.News/Small.town.uses.local.tax.to.create.jobs..slow.population.loss>

Or by visiting their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/valleycinema?sk=photos>

Kyle Cummings, the author of this story, is a sophomore at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. He is studying journalism and works with the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship. Kyle is from Alliance, Nebraska.

We want to recognize and thanks Caleb Pollard for helping to arrange this story. Caleb is the economic developer in Ord and Valley County. For more information about Caleb and Valley County check out <http://www.ordnebraska.com/work/valley-county-economic-development/>.



The Center for Rural Entrepreneurship is the focal point for energizing entrepreneurial communities where entrepreneurs can flourish. Created in 2001 with founding support from the Kauffman Foundation and the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI), the Center is located jointly in Nebraska, North

Carolina, and Missouri. The Center's work to date has been to develop the knowledge base of effective practices and to share that knowledge through training and strategic engagement across rural America. Working with economic development practitioners and researchers, the Center conducts practice-driven research and evaluation that serves as the basis for developing insights into model practices and other learning. The Center is committed to connecting economic development practitioners and policy makers to the resources needed to energize entrepreneurs and implement entrepreneurship as a core economic development strategy. To learn more about the Center, visit www.energizingentrepreneurs.org.



The Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) functions as a national scientific research center, identifying and mobilizing teams of researchers and practitioners across the nation and internationally to investigate complex and emerging issues in rural and regional development. Since its founding in 1990,

*RUPRI's mission has been to provide independent analysis and information on the challenges, needs, and opportunities facing rural places and people. Its activities include research, policy analysis, outreach, and the development of decision support tools. These are conducted through a small core team in Missouri and Washington DC, and through three centers, **including the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship**, and a number of joint initiatives and panels located across the United States. To learn more about RUPRI, visit www.rupri.org.*



About The Center's Entrepreneurial Communities Work

Since its founding, the Center has assisted communities and regions in designing and implementing entrepreneur-focused economic development strategies. Our Entrepreneurial Communities activities include consultation, opportunity and resource analysis, sharing of effective practices, and the development of appropriate and targeted strategies to support entrepreneurs. Our work is always undertaken in partnership with rooted organizations, public and private, and our goal is to assist local and regional leaders in developing the capacity to design and implement sustainable development strategies where the focus is on supporting local entrepreneurial talent. We have a prospectus about our Entrepreneurial Communities' resources that can be shared free of charge upon request.

Questions and Additional Information

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