



Chemetall and Grand River Marketplace receive Jackson chamber's Brick Awards for state-of-the-art facilities

Tarryl Jackson | tjackso1@mlive.com By Tarryl Jackson | tjackso1@mlive.com

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on January 23, 2014 at 6:30 PM

JACKSON, MI – A \$25-million chemical plant on I-94 in Blackman Township and a new brewery in downtown Jackson have been lauded for their state-of-the art facilities and improving the landscape of the Jackson County area.

Chemetall and **Grand River Marketplace** both received the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce's Brick Award, which goes to local businesses or institutions that improve the appearance of their buildings and surrounding neighborhoods.

The two businesses received the award at the chamber's 105th annual meeting Thursday evening, Jan. 23 at Jackson College's Potter Center.

Barry Martin, vice president of manufacturing for Chemetall US, said the company is pleased to be a Brick Award winner and thanked O'Harrow Construction in Leoni Township for designing and building a facility that enhances its global image.

"Our investment in this facility is part of our long term commitment to the surface treatment industry, and Chemetall is pleased to be part of a strengthening manufacturing base in Michigan," Martin said. "We are pleased to see that the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce recognizes this accomplishment and we are proud to be part of the Jackson community."



Open house goes walk out of Chemetall, 1100 Technology Dr. in Blackman Twp., Wednesday. The company held an open house for employees of Chemetall US Inc. (Mike Mulholland | MLive.com)

Chemetall, 1100 Technology Drive, held a grand opening for its state-of-the-art facility in October 2012 in Blackman Township's SmartZone along I-94. Local business and government officials helped break ground for Chemetall in May 2011.

The 200,000-square-foot facility, which employs about 80 people, houses manufacturing, warehousing and administrative operations and a physical testing laboratory.

Several local companies, including Hurst Electric and Comtronics, were been involved with the Chemetall project, which created about 200 construction jobs.

"Chemetall is proud to be part of the community and provide opportunities for employment and growth within our company," Martin said. "We care about all of our employees and the community in which we work and live and are pleased to be in Blackman Township."

Chemetall US Inc., a subsidiary of New Jersey-based Rockwood Holdings, is a specialty chemical company that supplies industrial products used in the manufacturing of durable goods.

Chemetall acquired the former Nalco Co. in Jackson in 2008, and the new Blackman Township plant resulted in the closing of that site and plants in Romulus and California. However, officials have said the new plant is a big win for the community.

"Chemetall not only remained in Jackson but they constructed a new, modern 200,000-square-foot building which is highly visible from I-94," said Mindy Bradish-Orta, president and CEO of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce. "This building helps showcase Jackson to thousands of motorists daily."

Grand River Marketplace, 117 W. Louis Glick Highway, opened its doors in late June.

John Burtka, who owns Cherry Creek Winery in Brooklyn with wife Denise, brought the former Kuhl's Bell Tower Market in October 2012.



The Grand River Marketplace in downtown Jackson opened to the public on Monday, July 1, 2013. (J. Scott Park | MLive.com)

Burtka then transformed the 12,500-square-foot building to include a delicatessen, an atrium brewpub, a large banquet room and a U-shaped wine tasting bar. Customers can also see the brewing system behind glass walls.

Some of the renovation work included cutting new windows into the walls, putting in new flooring and installing new heating, air conditioning and plumbing.

"We took an old, classic building that had a lot of good components to it and rehabbed it," Burtka said. "I think it's a good example of what people can do with some of the great buildings we have in Jackson."

Grand River Marketplace offers craft ales, porters, stouts and lagers. It also offers live entertainment and serves a lunch and dinner menu that includes soups, salads, appetizers, hot and cold deli sandwiches and pizzas.

Grand River Marketplace was part of **MLive's Best Brewery in Michigan search** in September and made a good impression on statewide entertainment writer John "Gonzo" Gonzalez and Amy Sherman, host of the "Great American Brew Trail."

"John and Denise significantly improved both the exterior and interior of what was Kuhl's Bell Tower and created a vibrant, destination spot in downtown Jackson," Bradish-Orta said. "This new establishment is a significant part of downtown Jackson's revitalization, creating a buzz and energy throughout town."

Burtka said he was thrilled that his business received a Brick Award this year.

"We've had tremendous support," he said. "I really appreciated how the community has embraced us."

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