

Coyote Moon wins JCJDC award

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Jefferson County's growing wine industry won another award Friday when Coyote Moon Vineyards, Clayton, was named New Business Venture for 2010 by the Jefferson County Job Development Corp. "I'm certainly humbled by the competition we've had this year here," said owner Philip J. Randazzo after the announcement was made at the corporation's annual membership lunch meeting. "We all share one great attribute," he said of the five businesses nominated for the award. "We were all smart enough or not-so-smart enough to start a business in the worse economic climate since the Great Depression." The winery, which opened in July 2009, won more than 40 medals for its wine in its first year of business.

Mr. Randazzo runs the winery with his wife, Mary S., and daughter, Kristina. "This is a retirement business for us, so we did it to be excellent," he said. "Our mission and outlook has been promoting grape-growing, which really started a brand-new industry." The local community, local and state public officials and county agricultural agencies all have played a role in the fast growth of the industry. "We have 50 growers and four, soon to be six, wineries," Mr. Randazzo said. "We're supported by all the other businesses."

Other nominees included:

- Carthage Family Chiropractic Care, owned by Kelli Jo Thesier.
- Instant Imprints, Carthage, owned by Christian M. Lawler.
- North Country Farms LLC, Watertown, run by Kevin L. Richardson.
- North Croghan Outpost, Natural Bridge, run by Teri L. Ellis.

The winner received a \$1,000 prize. "We had entrepreneurs from every part of the county," JCJDC CEO Donald C. Alexander said. "They represent some very great success stories we'll see materialize over the coming years." The corporation also gave Business of Excellence Awards to two businesses that "have proven a commitment to Jefferson County and its economic health." LaClair Family Dental has three dentists, led by Dr. Scott L. LaClair, and 17 support staff at two offices, 775 Graves St., Clayton, and 111 S. Mechanic St., Carthage. "He's put the time and interest in our community," said Manager Della Ramsdell. "I wanted him to be here to get the recognition he deserves." Conley's Rental Management, 451 Arsenal St., has six staff to manage about 218 units around the county, which represents 300 percent growth over the last four years. "It's due to referrals," owner Michael J. Siptrott said. "This award defines not the sole work of just myself — I've got some phenomenal employees. There's no way I could do without them."