



## OHIO'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES CURRENT

June 2016

### Designing Success in Rural Northwest Ohio



Occasionally in the site selection game, the actual location isn't the most critical factor. What matters most is having access to customers, skilled labor, and supportive infrastructure.

Window Creations, LLC, one of the most technologically advanced and vertically integrated stained glass and commercial art glass studios in the country, is located in rural northwest Ohio, 60 miles from the nearest major city and 200 miles from a major urban arts district.

So how do creative entrepreneurs craft success so far from the traditional urban arts scene?

#### Build your business and love your life

Twenty-eight years ago, Reggie and Penny Buehrer chose Penny's childhood community as the home of their creative business endeavor. After having lived in other cities, the Buehrers were determined to develop both the business and family lifestyle they desired. With Penny's artistry and Reggie's craftsmanship, Window Creations provided full-service stained glass design, installation, and restoration from its earliest days.

"With access to every mode of transportation, northwest Ohio offers one of the most ideal locations in the United States for businesses to reach the largest number of customers," states John Recker, JobsOhio liaison and senior regional project manager of Regional Growth Partnership. "Combined with a nationally acclaimed workforce skilled in advanced manufacturing, research, and tech-related industries, as well as having the lowest taxes in the Midwest, northwest Ohio offers the competitive advantages that businesses seek in the regional and global economy."

#### Homegrown, nationally recognized expertise

"We outsource almost nothing," shared Reggie Buehrer, founder and president of Window Creations. "We purchase raw materials—metal, wood, and glass products—from suppliers throughout the U.S., Germany (hand-blown glass), and Honduras (mahogany wood). We design and fabricate window frames, mounting hardware, and glasswork in our manufacturing facilities. We never subcontract the installation of our work. Each piece is truly in our hands, from concept through final installation."





While Window Creations benefits from being in an area with deep roots in skilled trades, fabrication, and manufacturing, extensive on-going training helps keep Window Creations at the forefront of the art glass industry. Buehrer notes, “Employees train at colleges and with industry specialists around the country; trainers are also brought on-site for extended sessions or when new

equipment and technology are installed.”

Window Creations expanded just three years ago, and is already in the midst of another expansion. The newest facility will be entirely dedicated to manufacturing. As Buehrer explains, “The newly installed CNC-equipped production machinery allows Window Creations to machine components with higher precision in less time, so the cost to customers is actually lower than it was years ago.”

## Innovation expands market opportunities

While some of Window Creations’ stained glass creation and restoration techniques are centuries old, their rapidly growing Crystal Creek Glass Inc., sister company is at the forefront of contemporary glass artwork. Dimensional Glass® is a patented product, developed by the Buehrers for use in wall art in modern office, retail, hospitality, educational, and medical facilities.



Each piece of Dimensional Glass® is individually formed while hot (1,400 to 1,600 degrees Fahrenheit) to create a one-of-a-kind piece of art that sparkles and glistens because of its unique shape. When the completed wall art is exposed to changing light patterns throughout the day, the intensity of color and reflected patterns evolve and change appearance.

## Infrastructure that works for business

The new manufacturing space requires three-phase electricity to power the heavier load, an upgrade extended by Paulding Putnam Electric Cooperative, Inc. (PPEC). In addition to capacity expansion, for the past five years, PPEC has focused on reliability improvement strategies that prevent outages or that provide additional options to restore power, if failures occur.

“Adhering to a tree-trimming cycle and using directional pruning methods have made tree related outages rare,” comments George Carter, CEO/general manager of PPEC. “Substation upgrades and upgrades to lines used to back up substations have given us extra capacity that we can use to restore power quicker during transmission-related or failed substation equipment outages. We use our SCADA, AMI, and outage management systems to provide us with information to assist us with restoring outages sooner.”



“These strategies to improve reliability are important to PPEC’s existing members, and especially to businesses considering relocating or expanding in rural communities,” stated Erika K. Willitzer, PPEC marketing & economic development manager. “Having reliable and scalable power levels the playing field between rural sites and those in more densely populated regions.”

Rural Ohio’s roots are in agriculture and as a result people have a remarkable work ethic. “Work ethic combined with Ohio’s world class universities, statewide network of community colleges, and residents with diverse work skills make rural Ohio an especially appealing location for innovative food growers and processors,” noted Darin Thorp, President/CEO of North Western Electric Cooperative.

## You can have it all

Willitzer continued, “Window Creations and Crystal Creek Glass prove that businesses can be innovative, industry leaders, and technologically advanced, while enjoying all the lifestyle benefits of Northwest Ohio’s vibrant countryside.”

Photo credit: *All photos provided by Window Creations*

### **About Window Creations and Crystal Creek Glass**

*Window Creations specializes in stained glass, storm glass, custom aluminum framing and wood tracery repair and restoration and the design, creation and installation of new stained glass artwork. Professional artisans combine centuries-old and new techniques to preserve the past and design, fabricate and install new stained glass projects. Sister company Crystal Creek Glass is dedicated to providing original Dimensional Glass® artwork for office, retail, hospitality, educational, and medical environments. For more information, visit [www.bstudios.net](http://www.bstudios.net) and [www.crystalcreekglass.com](http://www.crystalcreekglass.com)*

### **About Ohio’s Electric Cooperatives**

*Buckeye Power is the wholesale supplier for the 25 distribution cooperatives that serve Ohio; Ohio Rural Electric Cooperatives is the statewide trade association that serves the cooperatives. Today, cooperatives serve more than 380,000 homes and businesses in 77 of Ohio’s 88 counties—guided by the seven principles upon which they were founded. Together, Buckeye Power and Ohio Rural Electric Cooperatives are Ohio’s Electric Cooperatives.*

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**Buckeye Power and Ohio's Electric  
Cooperatives can help with:**

- Comprehensive site and building portfolios
- Preliminary site studies
- Site search tours
- Assistance in identifying financial incentives
- Electric rate analyses
- Community profiles
- State and local government contacts
- Contractor introductions

**Look for Us:**

**The Fourth Industrial Revolution  
Industrial Asset Management Council  
(IAMC) Fall Professional Forum**

October 8 - 12, 2016  
Indianapolis, Indiana



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