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Sandwich Mayor Rick Olson said the opening of the new Meadowvale plant at 1305 E. Sixth St. was one of the community's highlights for 2018.

SANDWICH

Industrial growth among city's successes in 2018

By LYLE R. ROLFE
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SANDWICH – Mayor Rick Olson can name several positive developments in his city in 2018, although he admits that the delay in building a new police station was a disappointment.

Olson, who was first elected mayor in 2013 after ousting longtime leader Tom Thomas, said all City Council members are aware of the need for a new police station. But a \$4.6 million plan to convert a vacant industrial building at 1251 E. Sixth St. into a new police station were derailed this year by financial concerns.

“We will get the new station, but the council needs to get its financial situation in order for things to improve,” Olson said. “This was a challenge for some time, but we’re getting this taken care of so we can move forward in the new year.”

This year, the city completed upgrades to water mains, sewers and sidewalks on Sixth, Lisbon and Main streets, near the Willow Crest Nursing Rehabilitation Center at 515 N. Main St.

“This was a problem area even for the previous administration,” he said.

Olson said a new tourism committee will improve communication between several groups to promote the various events as citywide events. The city this year joined the DeKalb County Convention and Visitors Bureau. It hopes to attract more visi-

tors to town and to the city’s main hotel and convention center, the Timber Creek Inn & Suites, 3300 Drew St.

“This means the city, Park District, school district, Chamber of Commerce, churches and other agencies are now working together,” he said.

Olson said the city was happy to welcome Meadowvale, a manufacturer of dairy desserts, which moved to the city after it outgrew its previous location in Yorkville. He said Jim Teckenbrock, executive director of the Sandwich Economic Development Corp., helped Meadowvale find the new location.

Northwestern Medicine’s acquisition of KishHealth System and its Valley West Hospital also was a positive for the community, Olson said.

“This is not something we did, but it is part of the community, and I think it should be recognized because we now have a full 24-hour hospital,” Olson said. “... For a town of 7,500 people, I think this is quite remarkable.”

Olson noted that Sandwich has developed a reputation as a place to visit if you are interested in antiques, collectibles and specialty items.

“We have about 20 of these businesses, and that’s remarkable for a town this size,” he said. “People come here for the weekend from other states to visit these shops. When they’re here, they are visiting all of our other businesses. It’s kind of like the Field of Dreams – if you build it, they will come. Well, in Sandwich, it’s already built and they are already coming.”

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