

Oswego County Could Have Fourth Nuclear Power Plant

OSWEGO COUNTY

February / March 2008

\$3.50

BUSINESS

OswegoCountyBusiness.com

SPECIAL PROGRESS ISSUE

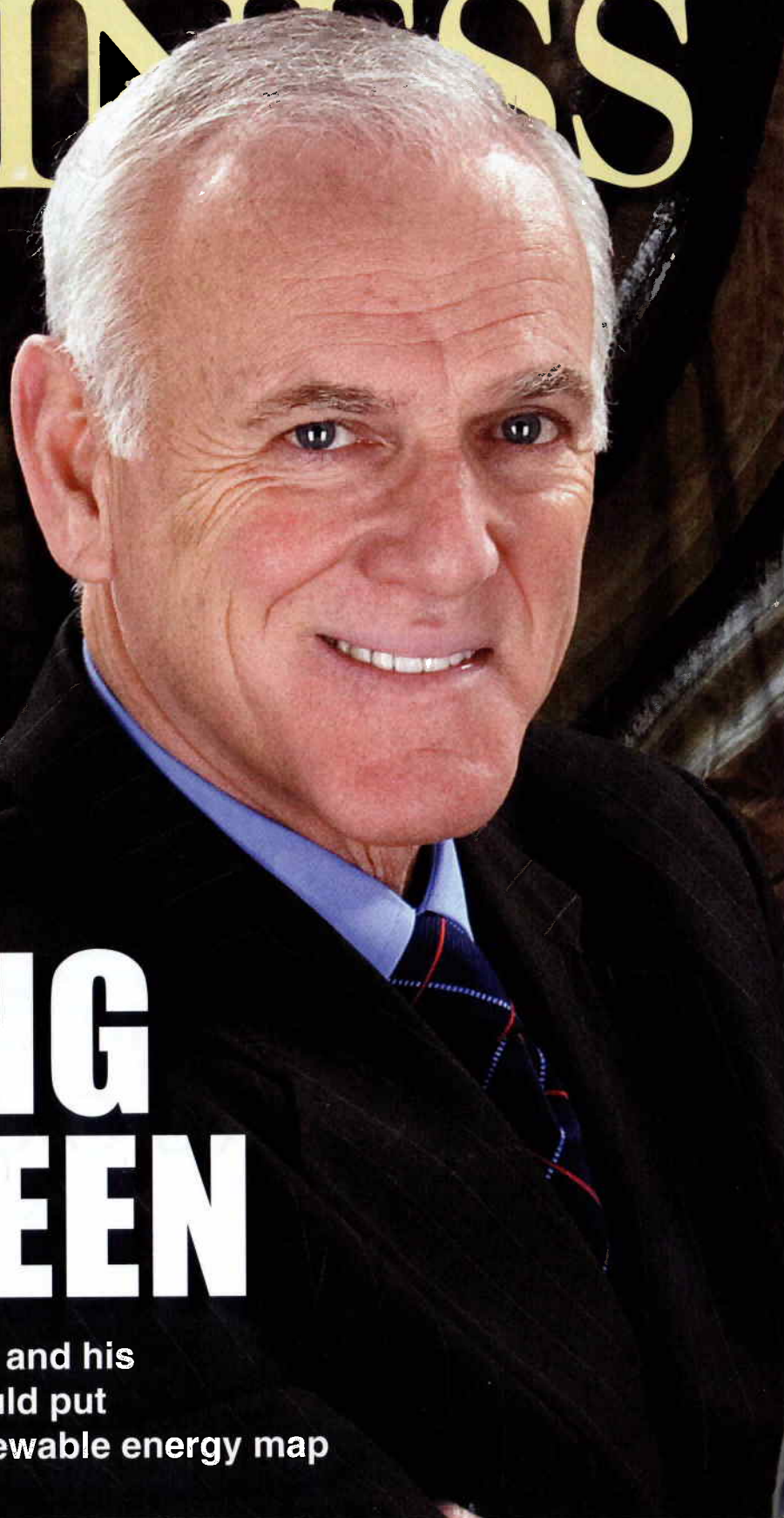
TOP PROJECTS TO
WATCH

DAN GUNDERSON ON
THE LOCAL ECONOMY

WORKPLACE
DISTRACTIONS
COSTING YOU BIG
BUCKS

BETTING ON GREEN

How a Manlius businessman and his
Riverview Business Park could put
Central New York on the renewable energy map



What's Distracting Your Employees

Birthday Parties, Web Surfing...

• OVERCOMMUNICATION

There are fewer and fewer moments these days when one isn't being instant-messaged, e-mailed, called or being dropped in on. Employees face constant interruptions by co-workers and clients by way of voicemail, instant messages, and drop-in visits. Requests from co-workers, orders from the boss and work-related e-mails top the list of distractions compiled by NFI Research, which surveys senior executives and managers.

• E-MAIL

Many experts say e-mail is the prime offender, especially at large organizations. Experts recommend checking e-mail at scheduled intervals and saving non-urgent matters for the end of the day.

• WEB SURFING

More than a quarter of managers and 15 percent of senior executives rate Web surfing as the top workplace distraction, according to NFI Research.

• LOUD COWORKERS

At some point in every career someone has had to sit next to the office loudmouth. Chances are this took a toll on productivity.

• TECHNOLOGY GLITCHES

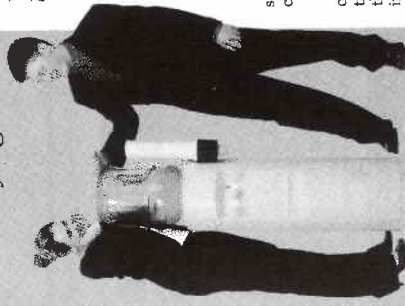
Few work-place disruptions are as frustrating as computer crashes, Internet outages and blackouts.

• BUSINESS LUNCHES

Some experts say they serve to distract employees from their core responsibilities. Mixed with a few extra martinis, that can really render anyone incapable of doing any real work for the rest of the day.

• THE EGOMANIACAL BOSS

Booting a chatty boss is often out of the question. You may not want to hear about his son's baseball game or how he eagled the last hole, but you



can't tell your boss to take a hike.

• FLIRTING

While flirting may start innocently, the behavior can distract both parties involved as well as the colleagues who depend on their focus and attention to complete important projects.

• UNNECESSARY MEETINGS

Setting clear meeting agendas and avoiding ad hoc meetings can reduce distractions.

• INTIMIDATION

Employees who vent their frustrations at every turn can make colleagues feel threatened and reduce productivity.

• BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

While the cake may sound enticing, midday birthday wishes that are too awkward and brief to qualify as parties may be more trouble than they're worth when they come amid so many other daily disruptions.

Source: *BusinessWeek*

How to Decrease Distractions

A few ideas on how to reduce workplace distractions include:

- Teach workers how to create and prioritize to-do lists, and to tackle the major priorities that relate to job goals before addressing the smaller or discretionary items.

- Minimize meetings and keep them short and focused. Some companies only conduct meetings while standing up.

- Suggest that workers open e-mails only a few times a day. Batching distractions can be a good way to deal with them. Some companies program incoming mail so that it is only be delivered to the desktop at certain intervals.

- Give people "do not disturb" signs they can place at their workstations; encourage "quiet periods" or "quiet zones"—times or places in which silence is encouraged.

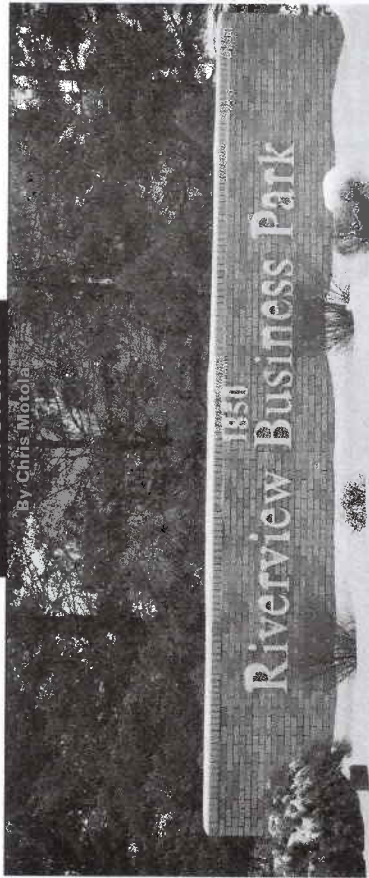
- Consider supplying people with inexpensive personal printers and online fax services to lessen the need for walking to and waiting around central printers and faxes.

- Establish a mandatory visitor check in at a central point. This is not only a good security measure, it also discourages frivolous visits and cuts down on distractions.

- Establish a library for shared work subscriptions and resources. This is not only economical, it will limit distractions and provide a central place for research and professional development.

Source: *BusinessWeek*

By Chris Motola



Manufacturing Renewable Energy

Series of projects transforming former Miller Brewery Co. Site in Volney

In a wing office at O'Brien and Gere's East Syracuse location I'm greeted by a young man.

"Hello," he says, "I'm Eric Will." There's a split second of confusion before I realize I'm speaking to Eric Will III, Eric Will III, whom I'd previously met a few minutes later, both generations of Eric Will are seated across from me in a conference room.

"The Wills go back to 1845 in Syracuse," the elder Will says. In 1855 Will's great-great grandfather founded a candle company, Will & Balmer, in Syracuse. Another ancestor was mayor of Syracuse.

"A lot of people don't know it, but Syracuse was the candle capitol of the

world," says Will.

The company was sold in 1972, before Will had the opportunity to work there full time.

Will's professional background is in equipment leasing and finance, which exposed him to the used equipment market. Today he's located his office to O'Brien and Gere's building since he's been working closely with the company to help develop his acquisition father north. It's also a halfway point between Fulton and his home in Manlius.

Will acquired the former Miller Brewing property in Volney, since re-named Riverview Business Park. The property had been more or less idle since the beer company closed its doors in 1994, costing the county 891 jobs. A

study conducted by Knowledge Systems and Research estimated that the closing had a regional economic impact of \$880 million and may have indirectly led to the loss of 6,317 jobs.

In the context of the Greater Fulton area's economic health, Will is an unlikely savior. He is forthcoming about his original intentions for Riverview Business Park, which were far more modest than his current vision.

"When we acquired the property, the vision was really to sell the equipment," he explains. "It wasn't terribly visionary." The leftover space would be leased to tenant companies like Liberty Resources, which currently uses 5,000 sq. ft.

