

Lending program helps Marshfield startup

By Dee Dee Nilsen - 2/6/2007

Springfield Business Journal Staff

A new company in Marshfield is receiving some help from a gap-financing program available to startups and other small businesses in the Ozarks.

Ironhorse Custom Interiors LLC, which opened in October, will receive a \$50,000 working capital loan through the **Ozarks Regional Community Development Corp.**, a for-profit lending program in collaboration with the Ozarks Regional Economic Partnership and the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce.

Ironhorse creates high-end living quarters inside trailers and toter-home trucks, many of which are used while transporting horses in the rodeo industry. The financing will help the company increase its production and design capabilities to meet a demand that owner Bonni Bellingroehr says is growing in Missouri. She cited a Missouri Department of Agriculture study that ranks the state's horse inventory as about the third-highest in the United States.

Since opening, Ironhorse has completed two trailers. The company also offers repair services for trailers and RVs, and Ironhorse has done some local work in that capacity.

A custom design can range from \$40,000 to \$70,000 and can be "as elaborate as they want," Bellingroehr said. That can mean anything from new cabinetry to expanded floor space, added beds and bathroom enhancements.

"They're living in these trailers six, seven, eight months out of the year, so they want something comfortable and something that's like home," she said.

Ironhorse operates out of an 8,500-square-foot facility that can hold up to five trailers at a time. Projects on average take between two weeks and three weeks to finish.

The Ozarks Regional Community Development Corp. offers loans up to \$50,000 in a 10-county region. Previous loan recipients include Jordan Cash Register and Downhill Bikes in Branson.

The interest rate for financing is about one-quarter point below the prime rate.

To apply for funding through the program, call the chamber at (417) 862-5567.