



Brian Nogg, CFO and treasurer, left, with Jeff Nogg, vice president of sales and business development ... Expanding service offerings locally and through United Van Lines as the industry sees an upturn.

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I-Go Van & Storage sees start of upswing in residential, employee relocation moves

by Matrissa Leggett

I-Go Van & Storage Co., headquartered in Omaha with offices in Lincoln and Sioux City, Iowa, has recently begun to see an increase again in residential moves and employee relocation following two years of slower business in these areas.

"I think the industry is coming back," said Jeff Nogg, vice president of sales and business development. "We have started to see a trend this fall and we hope it will be a consistent trend; it seems like homes have started selling and companies are beginning to hire again."

Nogg indicated the slower residential real estate market and fewer relocation benefits offered by companies, along with unemployment and the potential for layoffs, have been factors contributing to the slight business decline.

"People and companies seemed to have a 'wait and see' attitude," he said.

The United Van Lines agent provides residential moving, employee relocation, international moving, office and industrial moving, warehouse storage, special products, hospitality solutions, and government and military moving. Nogg said the company provides moves from any origin to any destination worldwide.

Houses, retail sprouting in Campbell's Village Gardens

Continued from preceding page.

designs — arts and crafts/bungalow; Tudor; colonial; Spanish/mission; cottage; prairie; Queen Anne/Victorian; Italianate; and international — make up the primary styles allowed by the development's architectural standards list.

Attention to the integrity of these building styles isn't just meticulous — it's mandatory. Contractors ultimately approved to build in Village Gardens went through a multi-phase bid and interview process and prospective residents are given a crash course in the nuances of their chosen architectural style.

"Our neighborhood covenants don't say what color your shingles need to be," Campbell said. "But they do dictate according to the style. If someone chooses English Tudor, then there are certain elements that have to be incorporated to stay true to that design."

Village Greens is equally resolute about the natural aesthetic of the neighborhood, and here the developers put their money where their ideals are. In addition to devoting 35 acres to parks, wetlands and paths, homebuilders receive a landscaping allotment of \$3,000 to \$25,000 built into the price of the lot. Other earth-friendly elements include a drainage system that captures runoff for use in irrigating the property's special plantings (which can withstand being under water for up to 48 hours) and minimal grading to preserve the property's natural contours.

"This is a great example of what can be done when you work with the land," Campbell said.

For all of the warmth that such nostalgic

During recent years, according to Nogg, I-Go has concentrated on commercial projects, doing warehousing for companies during site renovations and moving businesses that were relocating to a new space.

Another focus has been adding services such as providing more education for customers through its website at www.igovanandstorage.com.

The company also has a blog and utilizes social media outlets Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Nogg said the information offered ranges from how to choose a reputable mover, packing tips and forms for the moving process.

He said City Point, a real estate agent referral program, is offered through United Van Lines and customers can receive cash back

on buying or selling a home using an agent referred through the program.

"It is another resource to create a benefit by using United," Nogg said.

A third service I-Go incorporates is Straight Talk Advantage, which was designed to make moves easier and less stressful for the customer, according to Nogg. This provides destination debris pickup, personal computer and home theater setup, move-out and move-in cleaning services,

Continued on next page.

and eco-conscious details evoke, Campbell is quick to underscore that Village Gardens' concept is also commercially viable. The development is visually appealing and architecturally diverse, because that's what the family believes the homebuilding public demands. Offering different sized homes helps keep residents within the neighborhood as they outgrow their starter place and look to expand. And adding a foot to the width of the sidewalks makes it easier for residents to move throughout the development, including to the commercial anchor, Marketplace.

"You know you look around and you say 'this is great,' but you have to make money doing it," Campbell said. "Managed correctly, the extra elements provide a better return. It's all pieces of the same circle."

So far, the Marketplace has already gained commercial buy-in from several tenants, which join the center's anchor, the 56th and Pine Lake Road Campbell's Nursery location. Campbell sees a variety of retail opportunities in the Marketplace, despite the center's non-conventional building and signage guidelines.

"National companies have shown that for unique sites around the country, they will adapt their trademark red roof or green roof or signage or whatever. They don't like to, but they will," he said. "Marketplace is unique, it's different and that creates more value."

About 40 houses have been completed during the current phase of the project, which Campbell expects to completely build out to 1,000 over the next decade.

I-Go Van & Storage Co.

Phone: 891-1222 (Omaha); 467-6244 (Lincoln); 712-258-7568 (Sioux City)

Addresses: 9820 S. 142nd St., Omaha 68138; 5021 N. 57th St., Lincoln 68507; 3701 Southgate Drive, Sioux City, Iowa, 51106

Employees: 30 (Omaha), 10 (Lincoln); 10 (Sioux City)

Founded: 1898 in Omaha

Goal: Expand service offerings.

Industry outlook: "I think the industry is coming back."

Website: www.igovanandstorage.com

Sempeck perseveres to open new bowling center after fire sets back family business

by Tiffany Gann

Within its 86,000-square-foot facility located off 204th Street in Elkhorn, Sempeck's Bowling & Entertainment is poised to rally community ties while offering a new bowling entertainment concept to the Greater Omaha area.

For Steve Sempeck, opening Sempeck's Bowling & Entertainment earlier this year was a means of perseverance after a failed partnership and a fire nearly took down his 22-year career of bowling alley ownership.

Leaving Elkhorn Lanes, an Elkhorn community staple that he had owned since 1987, Sempeck formed a four-way partnership and opened Thunder Alley.

"When we built the place in 2007, the idea was that the bowling industry was going through a change," Sempeck said.

Traditional bowling alleys were often driven by leagues, which began to decline in the '90s.

Entertainment facilities began popping up throughout the U.S., bringing in revenue from multiple attractions.

"That's why we have a large sports bar and restaurant here that seats 250 people," Sempeck said. "It's why we also included other activities such as a laser tag, go-karts, a large arcade and multiple meeting and party rooms."

Rather than depending on league bowling to keep the business running, the facility is host to corporate events, wedding rehearsal dinners and children's birthday parties.

But just two months after opening Thunder Alley, the partnership soured and Sempeck and his wife, Lori, ended up leaving the bowling establishment in December 2007.

"We really struggled the four of us to really get along," Sempeck said, who was general manager at the time. "We wanted to stay but we felt it was in everybody's best interest if we left."

Encouraged by loyal customers, the Sempeck's reopened Elkhorn Lanes in March of 2008 and received a positive response from the community.

"Our first 12 months was the best finan-

cial year we ever had," he said. "We had a lot of people that came back — business was trending up."

Meanwhile, in the summer of 2009, Thunder Alley's remaining partner filed for bankruptcy and was forced to close the facility.

Continuing on with the success of Elkhorn Lanes, Sempeck had no intention to leave the facility he and his wife raised their five children in.

Elkhorn Lanes was a driving force to Sempeck's strong community ties, but when the bowling alley unexpectedly caught flames on a frigid January night this year, the legacy

he built seemed to be in question.

"On Jan. 6, 2010, my wife and I were in bed asleep and we got a phone call from the Douglas County Sheriff about 1:30 in the morning, saying that Elkhorn Lanes was on fire," Sempeck said.

On one of the coldest nights of the season, the blaze gutted the building that stood nearly 40 years.

"I really didn't get emotional until the bulldozers had the lot cleared," he said. "We were fully intending on rebuilding." But after talking with the family attorney, Sempeck began negotiations to take ownership of the former Thunder Alley facility.

Leasing the building until the previous owner can emerge from bankruptcy, the Sempeck's are currently negotiating to purchase the facility.

"We reopened on Feb. 19 of 2010 — six weeks after the fire," he said. "When we reopened, all that existing league business and all those 22 years of goodwill — everybody followed us up here."

Now renamed Sempeck's Bowling & Entertainment, the refreshed bowling alley sees bowlers drive in from Nebraska towns like Dodge, Tekamah and Fremont.

Although Sempeck's kept the community appeal of Elkhorn Lanes, the business had to adjust to a much larger company.

"We went from 28 employees to 130," Sempeck said. "There's a lot of things that

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I-Go Van & Storage

Continued from preceding page, and identity theft protection.

Nogg said the company plans to continue adding services and is working on new ideas generated locally and through United.

I-Go Van & Storage Co. was founded by the Igoe family in 1898. It was purchased by Nogg's grandfather Ernie Nogg and his brothers, Ralph and Irv, in 1946. Its Omaha location is currently located at 9820 S. 142nd St. The Lincoln office, located at 5021 N. 57th St., was started in 1958, and the Sioux City location, at 3701 Southgate Drive, was opened in 1960. I-Go has 50 employees companywide, with 30 in Omaha and 10 each in Lincoln and Sioux City.

Nogg's father, Steve, joined the family

business in 1973 and became president in 1990. Nogg and his twin brother, Brian, who is chief financial officer and treasurer, each attended college and pursued careers in other cities before returning to the family business. Brian joined in 2004 and Jeff in 2005.

"We both wanted to have experiences elsewhere before coming back," Jeff Nogg said. "During college, Brian developed an interest in finance and I had an interest in sales, so it worked out well together."

Nogg said community involvement is another area of importance to the family company. It is part of the Child Saving Institute's Touch-A-Truck event and participates in United Van Lines' Discover America program that helps fourth-graders learn about geography.



Owner Steve Sempeck ... Aiming to build business by implementing a small-community feel into large entertainment center.

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