



## ***TTI in the News***

### **FOR REFERENCE**

## **Small-town hero**

### **Scottsdale businessman sparks rural revival**

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With Scottsdale businessman Bill Bonnstetter's help, Corwith, Iowa, has become a town that refuses to die.

Using all the business and marketing skills he's acquired over his lifetime, Bonnstetter is giving new life to his hometown of about 350 residents.

He's donating money to renovate some of the town's existing buildings and helping to launch an advertising campaign to recruit new business. His company, Target Training International Ltd., will provide mentors and outsourced work to budding entrepreneurs.

"When I left for college at Northern Iowa in 1956, Corwith had more than 40 businesses," Bonnstetter says. "Now there are six. With its small-town virtues and quality way of life, it's an ideal place for entrepreneurs to establish their businesses."

Target Training International specializes in human resources assessment products. The company has a 33-person staff and a worldwide network of about 4,000 distributors that deliver TTI's products to more than 50 countries.

Like its owner, TTI has roots in America's heartland. Bonnstetter launched the company in Mason City, Iowa, about 50 miles from Corwith. The company relocated to Scottsdale in 1988.

He and Corwith town leaders will market the rural lifestyle to business owners who are starting small Internet and technology companies.

Jay Gourley, the mayor of Corwith, says his friend of 64 years also is working with Corwith businesspeople to get more private donations that can be used as incentives for startups with jobs in tow.

"We would provide \$5,000 for entrepreneurs starting a company or relocating here," Gourley says. "We are looking for somebody to come in who is going to make a commitment."



# Target Training International

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Like small cities in many rural areas across the country, Corwith was in danger of becoming a ghost town. The area has suffered a 78 percent decline in population since the mid-1950s, Gourley says.

Once the heartland region was prosperous farmland that supplied soy beans and corn to the surrounding states. By the 1970s, the area's economic backbone was broken by falling crop prices and rising expenses.

Today the community is a mix of old-timers who dream of days gone by and young people who think only of moving away to pursue their own dreams.

"The kids go to college, then leave for larger cities to find employment," Gourley says. "This area is agriculturally oriented, without technology or manufacturing."

Two years ago, Bonnstetter purchased the former bank building in Corwith. The one-story brick building, formerly People's State Bank, was built in 1919 by his grandfather, J.J. Bonnstetter.

Bonnstetter says he has donated about \$100,000 to have the building renovated and turned into the Corwith Community Center.

A new city hall and library also are in the works, as well as plans for more housing.

On Sept. 11, Bonnstetter was in Corwith for a ribbon-cutting ceremony that celebrated the community's past and its future.

The Corwith native son says he won't be going home any time soon because his family is firmly established in Scottsdale.

"I did it because the people living there are friends of my parents, and friends of mine. They needed some help."

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