



Iowa Falls Innovative Newspaper Company Receives Iowa Farm Bureau's Renew Rural Iowa Entrepreneur of Month Award

When is a newspaper company more than just a newspaper? How about when it's also a printing company, radio station, advertising sales company and niche publisher serving 11 states? This diversification has allowed the Iowa Falls-based Times-Citizen to flourish in a time of newspaper decline and also be honored as the Iowa Farm Bureau Renew Rural Iowa entrepreneur of the month.

The business is owned by Mark Hamilton and Jo Martin. Since 1983, the company has grown to hire 90 employees and a business plan that includes running the local radio station, printing news for Iowa Falls and another local community. The company also handles the printing and advertising sales for the Iowa Farm Bureau Spokesman newspaper, including several other ag publications.

"We needed to diversify to survive," explains Hamilton. "We diversified to businesses that are all related to communications. We plotted a course to take advantage of our communication skill sets and technology."

The company's growth outside of Hardin County has helped them become stronger supporters of the local community, including efforts such as building a new library and hospital, to bringing more job opportunities to Iowa Falls.

"They've grown the traditional boundaries of what a newspaper company does and they've been innovative in how they've continued to grow their business," said Angie Nelson, Iowa Farm Bureau regional manager.

Renew Rural Iowa (RRI) is an Iowa Farm Bureau Federation initiative supporting new and existing businesses through education, mentoring and financial resources. RRI will sponsor an upcoming business success seminar on Tuesday, June 26, at Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon. To register, go to <http://www.renewruraliowa.com/register.aspx?LocID=19>.