

# Job-losing lag strikes Mankato area

## 2.6 percent loss in a year

By Tim Krohn

[tkrohn@mankatofreepress.com](mailto:tkrohn@mankatofreepress.com)

**MANKATO** — Jonathan Zierdt doesn't dispute state figures showing the greater Mankato area losing 2.6 percent of its jobs in the past year.

"Data doesn't lie," said Zierdt, president and CEO of Greater Mankato Growth.

But, he said, the data — which shows Rochester and St. Cloud gaining jobs — is a reflection of how the recession hit different communities at different times.

"In economies and jobs, there's leading and lagging indicators. We're always going to lag."

That, he said, is because some cities with major corporate employers laid off employees earlier in the recession, while Mankato's more diverse economy had a slower reaction.

"Our big drop was last August and September." In August, the number of jobs in the area dropped to 50,367 from 50,864 the month before. It rebounded to 51,466 in October.

The good news, he said, is that the past four months have shown the Mankato area is steadily gaining in job numbers.

The Department of Employment and Economic Development reported Thursday that the Mankato Metropolitan Statistical Area (all of Blue Earth and Nicollet counties) had a net 1,400 job loss over the past year.

Rochester and St. Cloud showed gains, while Minneapolis and Duluth were flat or down.



Jonathan Zierdt is president and CEO of Greater Mankato Growth.

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