

## Focus...

## The Center

In the past few months, downtown Alpena has undergone many changes. Residents have seen the "old Gately furniture building" take on a whole new appearance.

The building has been renovated to include retail and office facilities for this area. Ideally, the business has been named **The Center** and 'centers' around generating downtown interest and spirit. It will serve the community as a professional facility to satisfy business needs in the area.

professional, planning, and retail needs in the downtown area. The corporation has combined retail and office facilities in the same space.

The Center has two floors, with space still left for lease/rent on the first. Nine businesses are scheduled to move in, each with its own style to add to The Center.

Two of the businesses offer technological products and services to the public. Michigan Communications Technologies, Inc. will design, sell, install, and

regular offices in Alpena and Marquette, with the firm being based in Traverse City.

The law offices of Wenzel, McGinn, and Papp will soon open their offices to the public as well. Their offices will be added to the second floor.

A business services office, The Business Center, offers many services to the occupants of the building and the community as well. Valerie Stanek, PR Coordinator, stated that The Business Center "does everything a small business

businessman, an office furniture and supplies distributor is located on the first floor. Dynamic Office Supplies, with a home office based in Petoskey, will offer discount rates for bulk items to customers.

Tourists and residents alike will admire the addition of two specialty shops. Helen's Crafts & Gifts offers silk flower arrangements, porcelain dolls, cross-stitch and stenciling supplies to the consumer.

Huron Bay Sheep & Wool Company offers a variety of natural wool

participating businesses are trying to attract tourists from the newly-renovated harbor area as well as attract area residents to downtown. A very impressive, professional atmosphere awaits visitors. They invite everyone to come and see what they have to offer.

by Staci Radke



Alpena's "Welcome to the Sunrise Side" motto once again shows Alpena's growing, expanding community. The addition of The Center to downtown and the new First Federal building are designed to create a combination of charm and professionalism to businessmen as well as tourists.

According to George Weinhagen, GBKB Associates, the idea for The Center actually began 8 years ago. Since the mall opened in this area, more focus needed to be placed on downtown again. A balance between the major shopping area and downtown was needed.

Thus, four businessmen formed a corporation called Impact Enterprises. This corporation purchased the building in late September 1988. An initial concept showed that downtown needed specialty-type needs to service the

service a wide range of products to meet business and consumer communications needs. This firm can provide a custom service with items such as fax equipment, long distance, paging systems, etc.

Thor Computer Systems will be a future addition to The Center. The specialists here assemble and sell computer hardware. As a convenient supplier, they will attempt to supply parts on the spot to the customer on line until his parts have been serviced. Thor Computer Systems will custom-design the clients computer system using quality brand parts and equipment.

Three service-oriented firms occupy the new facility. GBKB & Associates has its office on the second floor of the building. GBKB is Alpena's first full-service architectural firm with

doesn't want to hire a full-time person to do."

They will perform many tasks, as simple as typing a letter to PR consulting or computer programming. Other services include photocopying, faxing, UPS packaging, typing, secretarial and bookkeeping services, etc.

One unique function is The Business Center's rent-a-desk service. It is primarily designed for traveling businessmen who need office space on a short-term basis. The businessman can rent a desk/office for as long as needed on his travels.

For the college student, The Business Center will also do resumes, thesis editing, research paper organization, etc.

If a service that is not listed is needed, Stanek says to feel free to call or stop by The Business Center for more information.

In addition, for the

batting, yarn, mohair, and wood products. It is owned and operated by Marilyn and Marv Thom, who raise their own sheep, angora goats, lambs, and breeding stock. It will be an attraction for gift shoppers, tourists, and those who enjoy working on crafts.

Last, but certainly not least, for those who enjoy deli-style food, the Take Five Delicatessen is for you! It will provide luncheon plates, New York style deli stuffed sandwiches, and catering for office parties, receptions, conferences, etc. Owner Billie Mischley says, "the business will cater to the business lunch on the run." It is styled after the original turn-of-the-century style of the building.

A grand opening was held in late October for The Center. In addition to being an important addition to downtown, the

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