

## Windhaven Bed and Breakfast

Rose and George Kaseeska are proprietors of Windhaven Bed and Breakfast, a new Victorian-style country inn located in Freeport Illinois, in the Northern state line area of Illinois. After raising their five children, Mr. and Mrs. Kaseeska retired and decided to devote their time to establishing a warm and welcoming country inn.



Windhaven Bed and Breakfast is located on top of a hill on five acres of land. The couple had been talking about opening a bed and breakfast inn for over ten years, and spent several weekends each year looking at possible locations or visiting existing inns that were for sale. None seemed quite right. They wanted a peaceful site in the country and on several acres so that their guests could have a quiet respite. Finally, after a fruitless search, they realized that they would have to build their ideal bed and breakfast themselves using George's expert carpentry skills from his many years as a union carpenter. But first they needed to find the perfect location

The Kaseeska's found their location by accident, while on a visit to see Mr. Kaseeska's sister. They stumbled upon the five acre hill top property, and noticed a for sale sign. After looking at the site, they realized that it was the right location for their bed and breakfast. Because Mr. Kaseeska's sister lived nearby, they asked her if she knew who owned the land. To their

surprise, they found out that she did! A deal was struck, and Kaseeska's bought the property in late 1998. By building the inn themselves, the couple has been able to lavish attention on the 5,000 square foot property. Most of the guest rooms are furnished with antiques. There is a large eat-in kitchen and a formal dining room used for the traditional full breakfasts at Windhaven.

Another favorite guest feature is the long, wide front porch with rocking chairs overlooking the countryside. One large suite and three large bedrooms are now available to guests and two more are almost completed. The facility has also been used for wedding and baby showers, engagement parties and other small events where up to 55 participants receive a warm and homey welcome. "I always liked cooking and serving my family, so I guessed I could handle cooking for a larger group too" said Mrs. Kaseeska "we strive for a home-like atmosphere." According to the inn's web site "Windhaven was created as a place where people can come and relax from the everyday fast paced life of the city."

Michele Miller is the SBDC Coordinator of the Sauk Valley Community College Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and she has been involved with the Windhaven Bed and Breakfast project since the beginning says Mrs. Kaseeska. The Sauk Valley Community College Small Business Development Center is supported by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. "Michele has helped us with our marketing, organization and management of the inn. She suggested what our brochure should look like. I feel lucky to have Michele work with us, as she is always right on the spot. She has given us so much assistance" said Mrs. Kaseeska.

Right now there are several other owners planning or in the process of building bed and breakfast inns in the area, and Mrs. Kaseeska reports that they are hoping to collaborate to jointly market themselves to travelers. Windhaven Bed and Breakfast is listed with the local convention and visitors bureau. So far most of the catering and event rentals have come from Freeport area people, seeking a welcoming and special location for an event. Mrs. Kaseeska plans to increase her marketing in the coming year, by expanding her web site, and possibly doing more advertising.

The Sauk Valley Community College Small Business Development Center is a member of the Illinois Small Business Development Center Network working in partnership with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and the US Small Business Administration.