

# Northwest Business

**Tuesday:** Family  
**Wednesday:** Schools  
**Thursday:** Entertainment  
**Friday:** Religion

## ELK GROVE VILLAGE Developer grows with community he fosters

By John Maes

SPECIAL TO THE TRIBUNE

Giovanni Gullo may be one of the largest industrial developers and landlords in the O'Hare International Airport area, but he is not one to rest on laurels.

There is still too much demand for industrial and commercial development in the northwest suburbs, he says.

An entrepreneurial spirit nurtured as a youngster in Sicily—where, he says, you almost had to be in business for yourself to earn a living—still drives the 56-year-old, soft-spoken Gullo.

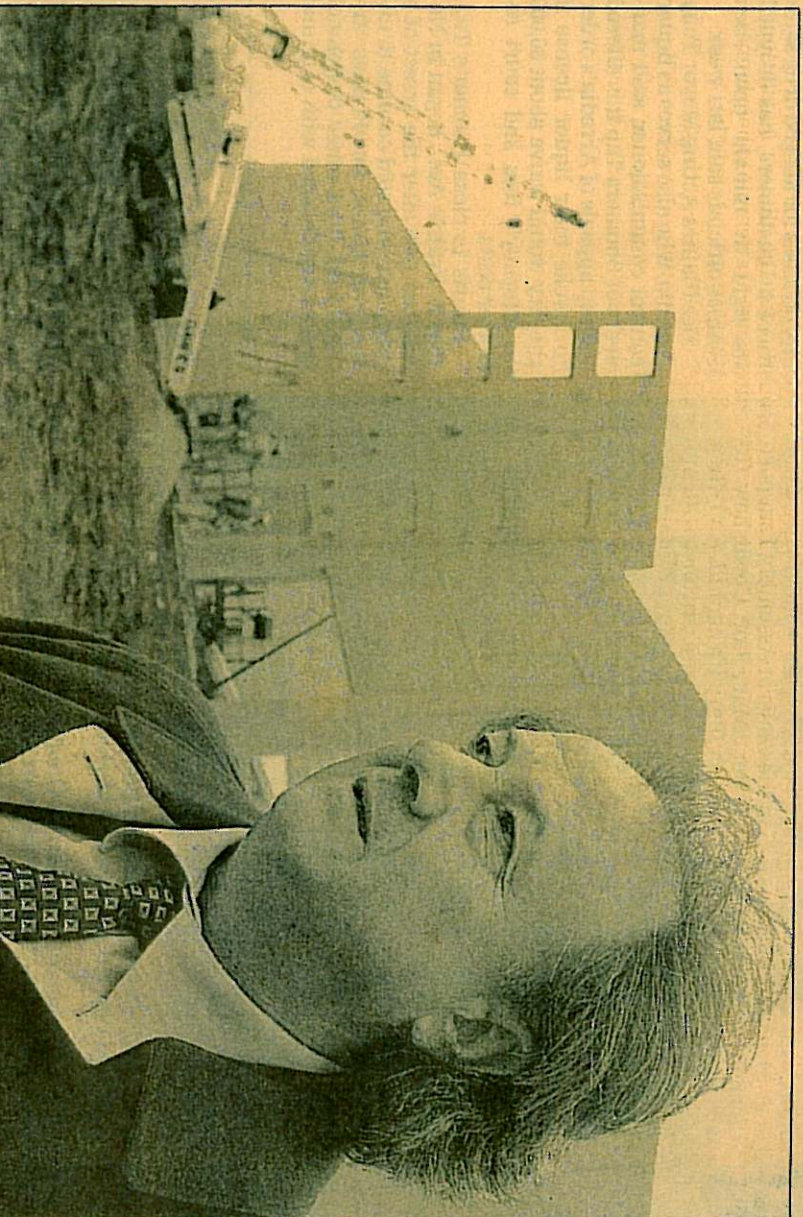
"I like to see growth. To make a company bigger is enjoyable," said Gullo, whose corporate holdings are worth an estimated \$70 million. "And if one enjoys what he's doing, why not continue doing it?"

When he came to the United States at 17, Gullo worked for \$50 per week as a busboy while attending school to learn English. He later worked as an auto mechanic for about three years. He turned from the grime of repair shops and joined a brother in the decorating business.

He later struck out on his own in that business and landed major accounts, such as the Arlington Heights post office and what was then the fledgling Centex industrial park in Elk Grove Village.

Seeing the potential of industrial development, Gullo bought land at Oakton and Lively Boulevards, built on it, swiftly found a tenant and was on his way as an industrial developer.

Since the early 1970s, Gullo has developed some 10 million square feet of commercial and industrial



Giovanni Gullo, president of Gullo International Development Corp., surveys his latest industrial park project in Elk Grove Village. Gullo says Internet companies continue to snap up space.

Tribune photo by George Thompson

space and currently holds leases on 1.2 million square feet, most in the Elk Grove Village Business Park.

His holdings now include Gullo International Development Corp., along with a realty group and Gullo Worldwide, a business development corporation. He also owns Three Point Construction Co., which does most of his building construction, Euro Glass Corp. and Papyrus Group Ltd., a book bindery and finishing company. Alliance Law Group LLC, is also controlled by Gullo.

His current industrial park project locally is seven buildings of 25,000 to 75,000 square feet each on 14 acres at Landmeier and Higgins Roads in Elk Grove Village. Leases with prospective occupants are being negotiated.

The overall market for commercial space in Elk Grove Village will remain strong, even if a much talked about third airport is built near Peotone, he predicted.

"We'll still do a lot of business out here," Gullo said. "There's tremen-

dous demand for property in this area by Internet companies."

When he was ready to lease a 100,000-square-foot facility just completed at Devon and Wood Dale Roads, four Internet-related companies engaged in an intense round of competition to get the lease.

Data Centers Now is spending millions to add its own infrastructure to the building, Gullo said. In fact, it would come as no surprise to Gullo if Internet companies leap at the chance to lease space in a new 100,000 square foot facility he intends to build this year on one of his properties at Illinois Highway 83 and Landmeier Road.

Gullo has also developed commercial sites in neighboring Wood Dale, Itasca and Bensenville. Another project is the 52-acre Woodfield Business Center in Schaumburg, just south of Interstate Highway 90 between Plum Grove and Roselle Roads. St. James on the Park, a 47-unit condominium project in downtown Arlington Heights slated for completion this year, repre-

sents Gullo's first foray into residential development. Elsewhere, Gullo is negotiating a joint venture to rehab rundown commercial properties and condominiums in South Miami Beach, Fla. Another venture to build condos and industrial sites in Termini Immerse, Sicily, is also being discussed, he said.

Elk Grove Village Mayor Craig Johnson particularly likes Gullo's dedication to maintaining the appearance of the business park.

"John is acutely aware of appearance," Johnson said. "His buildings are all extremely attractive."

By next year, Gullo will begin development of about 52 acres in the 160-acre Woodfield Business Center site between Roselle and Plum Grove Roads.

"He's done some pretty nice buildings in Elk Grove Village and adjoining communities," said Paul Evans, Schaumburg community development planner. "And if what he's done there is any indication, he should do some good-looking buildings in Schaumburg too."