The ties that bind
Baker helps Gardner’s Advanced Cable Ties celebrate big expansion

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Reporter

GARDNER - Advanced Cable Ties is already one of Gardner’s largest employers and is getting even bigger with an expansion set to nearly double its size.

A grand ribbon-cutting ceremony held Thursday attracted Gov. Charlie Baker and a dignified cohort of attendees.

“I can’t think of a better place or a better story to be a part of,” said Baker. “I’m really pleased to have a chance to come out today and help celebrate this.”

The ceremony was hosted by the Greater Gardner Chamber of Commerce and brought out the likes of Mayor Mark Hawke and state Rep. Jon Zlotnik, D-Gardner.

The construction is expected to allow for the creation of 100 new jobs over the next three years, a substantial increase over the current 130 employees.

The ceremony marked the completion of a project that is expanding the company’s 245 Suffolk Lane facility — in the Summit Industrial Park near the Ashburnham border — from 60,000 square feet to 112,000 square feet, going from operating 15 factory machines to 37.

In addition, the expansion creates more warehouse space and new office space, all of it coming together to mean more revenue potential.

President and CEO Ken Tomasetti founded ACT in 1994 with his wife, Donna. Operations initially started in Fitchburg before ultimately settling in the current Gardner location in 1998.

Tomasetti gave an emotional thanks to his staff and wife, who worked as the company’s human resources director before recently retiring.

He spoke about wondering at first how the company would grow and that now, ACT makes over a billion cable ties a year and does business with 1,600 distributors across 25 sectors such as industrial, electronic and HVAC to name a few.

“We make the very best ties in the world,” he said.

Tomasetti said the cable tie ACT makes range from four inches in size to 48 inches. The factory runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week with three shifts per day.

Chamber of Commerce President and CEO James Bellina told the crowd “this is about as good as it gets.”

“Ken approaches everything the right way; he’s probably one of the most beloved bosses. ... In a very difficult economic environment, look at what Ken has accomplished.”

Hawke said the occasion marked a “great day to be in Gardner” and he went on to talk about how the MassWorks Infrastructure Program helped finance the construction of the expansion.

“This is a perfect example of when government can assist,” he said. “They (the Baker administration) recognize good projects.”

Tomasetti said MassWorks loans were used for the project and Gardner provided tax incentives.

“The city has been very good,” he said.

The ribbon cutting ceremony marked a continuation of good things for Tomasetti and ACT: In May, the Chamber of
Commerce awarded him with its Citizen of the Year honor, a tribute to his volunteerism and involvement as a member of the Board of Trustees at Mount Wachusett Community College, and as a member of the Board of Directors at Gardner Visiting Nurses Association.