

January 15, 2010

TOP DEALS OF 2009

Appetite for acquisitions picks up as market stabilizes

By James Dornbrook – Staff Writer

Merger and acquisition activity in the Kansas City area was mired by economic uncertainty for much of 2009 but began picking up at year's end...

The Kansas City-based investment bank reported 115 deals completed in 2009 that involved either a buyer or seller based in the Kansas City area. Activity picked up steadily throughout the year, with 23 deals in the first quarter, 27 in the second, 31 in the third and 34 in the fourth.

The 115-deal total for 2009 is down from 130 in 2008 and the five-year high of 181 in 2007, but it was higher than 112 in 2006 and 101 in 2005.

Many of the deals completed in 2009 were smaller than in years past, said Pat Trysla, managing partner of Frontier Investment Banking Corp. Frontier normally is involved more on the sell side of a deal or finding growth capital, but 2009 was different, he said. Frontier was focused more on refinancings for companies struggling with their banks and helping a few clients interested in making opportunistic acquisitions.

Trysla said that although the economy may have slowed deal flow, it wasn't a driving factor behind every deal completed in the Kansas City area in 2009.