



WYTHE Economic Development News

**JOINT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OF WYTHE COUNTY, WYTHEVILLE, AND RURAL RETREAT**

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Note from the Executive Director

Time has a way of flying by, doesn't it? It only seems a short while ago that Dr. William F. "Bill" Snyder assumed the chairmanship of the Joint IDA, yet it's been nearly three years. One of the resources I've valued most in my role as Joint IDA executive director has been to have a supportive, consultative board chair, previously with Steve

Irvin then Joe Freeman and most recently with Bill Snyder. Thank you, Bill, for always being there when I needed to bounce a new idea off of you, to soothe wounds from a lost prospect, or, perhaps, to vent a little when bureaucracies seemed a bit slower than desired.

I look forward to working with Linda DiYorio, our new board chair, who I know will be just as capable and valuable to the organization and to me as have been her predecessors. Here's to thanking her in advance.

A lan Hawthorne

Wythe County Responds to Japanese Disasters

One of the important lessons our young students need to learn is that we live in a global economy and that what happens on the other side of the world can affect us locally. Spiller Elementary School students had an opportunity learn about connections between Wythe County and Japan this spring and at the same time extend a hand of caring to their counterparts in northern Japan. Individual classes within Spiller competed to see which class could raise the most funds to contribute to the Red Cross to aid in the multiple disasters that struck northern Japan following this spring's large earthquake.

Spiller students raised over \$1,700. This amount plus some other local contributions was matched with a donation from a local accounting firm (Jones, Adams, & Delp) and a contribution of nearly \$4,300 made to the Red Cross. Students from the winning class were hosted for a pizza lunch and tour by Somic America, a Japanese auto parts manufacturer in Progress Park.



Mrs. Morrison's fourth grade class from Spiller Elementary School visits Somic America plant.

ARC Provides Access Road Funding

Additional funding has been secured to assist in constructing off-site infrastructure to serve Progress Park's large rail-served Lot 24. An Appalachian Regional Commission grant of \$500,000 will help fund extension of E. Lee Trinkle Drive from its current termination at Gator Lane to Lot 24.

Additional off-site infrastructure that will be constructed in the next year includes extension of the Progress Park rail spur, extension of a 12" water line along the new access road, and construction of the southern waste water transmission system.

Local Manufacturers Reach Safety Milestones

Mid-Atlantic Manufacturing and Hydraulics recently had an extra special reason to celebrate its 10 years of operation in Rural Retreat. This year also marked three years without a "Lost Time Accident."

Quadrant Engineered Plastic Products also recently reached a special safety milestone as it celebrated three years without an injury requiring medical treatment, an even higher standard.

Congratulations to both of these companies for exceptional records.

In this issue . . .

Note from the Executive Director	1
Wythe County Responds to Japanese Disasters	1
ARC Provides Funding . . .	1
Local Manufacturers Reach Safety Milestones	1
Rural Retreat Celebrates 100th Anniversary	2
Enterprise Zone Developments	2
WCC Receives Recognition	2
Joint IDA Elects Officers . .	2
Regional Unemployment Rates	2

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Rural Retreat Celebrates 100th Anniversary

Congratulations to the Town of Rural Retreat on its recent celebration of 100 years as an incorporated town.



Former Mayor R. D. "Doc" Humphrey, Jr., was awarded Citizen of the Century.

Enterprise Zone Developments

Several recent developments have occurred that strengthened the attractiveness of state Enterprise Zone grants. During the last General Assembly, Enterprise Zone funding was increased by \$2.5 M to \$15.65 M, the highest level in recent years. Due to various factors, both Job Creation Grant (JCG) and Real Property Improvement Grant (RPIG) applications were fully funded this year, a contrast to recent years when pay outs have often been 60% or less due to funding limitations.

JCGs are now prioritized over RPIGs so that JCGs will pay out at 100% and any required proration will be in the RPIGs if there is a short-fall in required grant funding to meet the application demand.

Finally, firms that have fewer than 100 permanent full-time positions in their base year AND 25 or fewer permanent net-new positions in a grant year are not required to have a CPA attestation for a JCG, thus making the program more attractive to those firms creating a smaller number of jobs.

Progress Park, located in an Enterprise Zone, provides both state and local Enterprise Zone incentive programs for companies locating in the park. State Enterprise Zone grant pay outs for firms in Progress Park was nearly \$300,000 this year. Additional local incentives related to discounted water and waste water usage rates were also provided.

Wytheville Community College Receives National Recognition for Growth and Affordability

Wytheville Community College, a key partner in providing training and education of the local workforce, recently received two significant recognitions. The Aspen Institute ranked the nation's 1,200 community colleges based on publicly available data on student outcomes, including performance (retention and graduation rates), improvement of student outcomes over time, and equity (outcomes for disadvantaged students). WCC was one of the Top 120 selected to compete for a \$1 M Aspen prize and was the only Virginia community college on the list.

In another recognition, the National Center for Education Statistics has named WCC as the twelfth most affordable two-year college in the US. Rankings were based on in-state tuition after application of scholarships and grants. Key factors helping keep WCC affordable are the Wythe-Bland Foundation's funding of tuition scholarships for all Wythe and Bland high school graduates and scholarship funding by the Tobacco Commission.

Congratulations to WCC for these significant recognitions. Such strong community college workforce training presence provides Wythe County with a competitive workforce advantage.

Joint IDA Board Elects New Officers

At its annual meeting in July, the Joint IDA board of directors elected Linda DiYorio as Chair, Dave Elmore as Vice-Chair, Jennifer Atwell as Treasurer, and Virginia Goodwin as Secretary for the 2011-2012 term. Dr. William Snyder, who has served as board chair during the past three years, will be completing his two-term limit on the board this fall.

Regional Unemployment Rates

Location	Apr-10	Apr-11	May-10	May-11	Jun-10	Jun-11
Wythe	9.5%	6.9%	9.2%	7.5%	9.2%	7.5%
Bland	6.6%	5.1%	6.5%	5.5%	6.7%	5.9%
Smyth	9.9%	8.7%	9.7%	9.2%	10.4%	9.4%
Carroll	10.8%	8.3%	10.1%	8.0%	10.7%	8.8%
Grayson	11.2%	9.6%	11.3%	9.8%	10.7%	9.4%
Pulaski	9.1%	6.7%	9.5%	7.1%	9.7%	7.5%
Galax	9.9%	8.4%	10.0%	7.8%	10.1%	10.0%
Region*	9.8%	7.7%	9.6%	8.0%	9.9%	8.3%
Virginia	6.7%	5.8%	6.8%	5.9%	7.0%	6.3%
US	9.5%	8.7%	9.3%	8.7%	9.6%	9.3%

* Overall rate for the region including the Counties of Wythe, Bland, Smyth, Carroll, Grayson, and Pulaski, and the City of Galax.

Presentations Available

If your civic or other community group would like to have a presentation on Progress Park or on Wythe County economic development in general, please contact the Joint IDA office to schedule a presentation for your organization.

Wythe Economic Development News is published quarterly by the Joint Industrial Development Authority of Wythe County to inform interested parties of industrial development activities in the county and its incorporated towns. If you are not on the distribution list and would like to be added, please let us know at JointIDA@wytheville.org or call (276) 223-3370.