



WYTHE Economic Development News

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

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Note from the Executive Director

Over the years Southwest Virginia and Wythe County have often lagged Virginia, and sometimes the U.S., in key economic indicators. One of the primary drivers for over a decade of Virginia's economic engine has been the Northern Virginia and the Hampton Roads economies with their major infusions of federal budget dollars.

This has helped place the overall Virginia economic metrics well ahead of the nationwide performance, and certainly ahead of the more rural parts of the Commonwealth. However, a recent review of various indicators finds Wythe County in a relatively envious position for rural performance. Having reached a Great Recession high of nearly 12% unemployment in early 2010, the local unemployment rate has dropped to under 6% over the past three years. Employment is now about 6% higher than before the Great Recession (compared to about 7% for Virginia while the U.S. is still about 1% below pre-recession employment levels.) From 2002 to 2012, Wythe manufacturing employment grew by 36% (and 28% in Bland) while declining by 27% in the New River/Mt. Rogers Workforce Investment Area and also by 27% statewide. Let's hope the local momentum continues even as the dynamic engines of Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads are threatened with significant challenges due to tightening federal budgets.

Alan Hawthorne

Industry Tenure Awards Presented at Luncheon

Mike Lehmkuhler, Vice President of Business Attraction at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, was the keynote speaker at the Joint IDA's Industry Tenure Award Luncheon on February 28 at the Wytheville Meeting Center. Mr. Lehmkuhler spoke about the marketing efforts of VEDP's Business Attraction and Business Expansion groups. He also answered questions from attendees concerning the marketing of Wythe County's Progress Park.



Tenure Award Recipients recognized at luncheon

The following companies were recognized for their contributions to the community over extended periods of time: A&I Mechanical, Inc., Boxley Concrete, Center Manufacturing, Crisp Manufacturing, Horizon Healthcare Management, Klöckner Pentaplast, Longwood Elastomers, and Pepsi Beverages Company. The Joint IDA extends its appreciation to Wytheville Office Supply for sponsoring the luncheon.

Local Companies Change Ownership

Three Wytheville companies changed ownership in the final months of 2012. All local jobs were retained in the acquisitions and potential exists for future growth.

Center Manufacturing was acquired by Mayville Engineering Company, Inc., an employee-owned manufacturing company headquartered in Wisconsin.

Coperion was acquired by Hillenbrand, Inc., a diversified industrial company based in Indiana. Coperion is now the largest company in Hillenbrand's Process Equipment Group.

Horizon Healthcare Management was purchased by Southern Pharmacy Services of North Carolina in partnership with Guardian Pharmacy LLC.

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Engineering Program To Offer Internships

Wytheville Community College is enhancing the pre-engineering specialization to the Associate of Sciences degree by launching an on-site Summer Internship Program. For students, especially those that plan to transfer into engineering programs at four-year institutions, these internships add to their existing formal engineering classes by providing hands-on opportunities that bring insight to the topics taught in the curriculum. For employers, the internships are a way to grow their own well-trained future employees.

WCC is looking for employers to partner with the college to bring together students, faculty, and a number of different institutions, industries, and agencies for help in providing experiences that are not available in the traditional classroom. For more information, please contact Deanna Mabe, Experiential Learning and Job Placement Coordinator, at (276) 223-4102 or by email at dmabe@wcc.vcccs.edu.

Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament

May 16 at Wytheville Golf Club

With the cold weather making us dream of spring, the Joint IDA's Golf Tournament Committee is preparing for another enjoyable golf tournament in 2013. The event will be held on the afternoon of May 16 at the Wytheville Golf Club. The outing provides a relaxing day of golf and fellowship in recognition of the important role of industry in our community.

Sponsorships are available through the Joint IDA. Local business and industry leaders are urged to participate. For further information, please contact the Joint IDA office at 276-223-3370.

New Joint IDA Board Member

William Dixon is the Town of Wytheville's new appointee to the Joint IDA Board of Directors. Mr. Dixon, who is retired from Wytheville Community College, replaces Dave Elmore, who served as a board member for eight years and as vice chairman for the past six years. While at WCC, Dixon served as Dean of Financial and Administrative Services and then as Vice President of Finance and Administration. Prior to his tenure at WCC, Dixon worked with several manufacturing companies filling the roles of Vice President, Division Manager, and Plant Manager. He is a graduate of Georgetown College and Xavier University.



New board member Bill Dixon

Welcome to the Board, Bill. We look forward to working with you to improve opportunities for our citizens.

Teed Named New MTC Executive Director

The Manufacturing Technology Council at Wytheville Community College named Nelson J. Teed to the position of Executive Director, effective February 10, 2013. Teed has been employed by Wytheville Community College and MTC since 2001 as a Project Engineer and has served as Interim Director. He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology from Old Dominion University, is a Six Sigma Black Belt, Professional Energy Manager, and a Certified Manufacturing Engineer. Teed will continue to be located in Grayson Hall on the WCC Wytheville Campus.

Regional Unemployment Rates

Location	Oct-11	Oct-12	Nov-11	Nov-12	Dec-11	Dec-12
Wythe	7.2%	6.1%	7.5%	5.9%	7.1%	6.0%
Bland	5.4%	5.3%	5.5%	5.3%	5.5%	5.3%
Smyth	9.3%	8.1%	9.3%	8.0%	9.2%	8.1%
Carroll	8.9%	7.7%	8.8%	7.8%	8.4%	7.6%
Grayson	9.0%	8.3%	9.1%	7.6%	9.7%	9.2%
Pulaski	6.1%	5.8%	5.7%	5.4%	6.0%	5.4%
Galax	10.3%	8.2%	9.4%	8.4%	10.4%	8.6%
Region*	7.9%	6.9%	7.8%	6.8%	7.8%	6.9%
Virginia	6.0%	5.4%	5.8%	5.3%	5.9%	5.4%
US	8.5%	7.5%	8.2%	7.4%	8.3%	7.6%

* 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.