



# WYTHE Economic Development News

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

**190 South First Street**

**Wytheville, VA 24382 :: Phone (276) 223-3370**

**E-mail [JointIDA@wytheville.org](mailto:JointIDA@wytheville.org)**

**Spring 2010**



## Note from the Executive Director

By most assessments, small businesses are the backbone of both the Commonwealth of Virginia as well as the nation. This is true even in manufacturing, especially in rural areas, and certainly in Wythe County. Whether you accept the often used 500 employee definition or the sometimes used 250 employee definition, most operations in Wythe County, including

manufacturing, fall into the small classification.

Wythe County has been fortunate over the last decade to have had several privately-owned small business enterprises that have received recognition as among the fastest growing companies (based on revenue growth) in the Commonwealth. Earlier in the decade, Musser Lumber and Camrett Logistics were recognized in multiple years as members of the Fantastic Fifty, an annual listing by the Virginia Chamber of Commerce and Virginia Business. This year, MTC Transformers repeats as yet another Wythe County company gaining this rare recognition for a western Virginia company (see below article). Also highlighted in this issue is a new venture, Evatran LLC, that may well make the list during the next ten years.

Let's hope that we continue to see small entrepreneurial companies sprout, develop, grow, and flourish within our communities.

*A Ian Hawthorne*

## MTC Transformers Is Top Manufacturer on Fantastic 50 List

The 2010 Fantastic Fifty list of Virginia's fastest growing companies has been released, and for the third consecutive year, the list includes MTC Transformers of Wytheville. The Fantastic Fifty listing is coordinated by the Virginia Chamber of Commerce and annually recognizes Virginia companies with the highest revenue growth over a four-year period.

In the 2010 listing, MTC Transformers was ranked the 44<sup>th</sup> fastest growing

company in the Commonwealth and, again this year as last year, is the only manufacturing company to make the list.

The company was nominated for this recognition by the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce. A listing of this year's Fantastic Fifty can be found in the May issue of *Virginia Business* magazine, which also includes a highlight article on MTC Transformers as the top-ranked manufacturing company.

## Tobacco Commission Awards R&D Grant for Wytheville's Evatran

At its April meeting, the Virginia Tobacco Commission approved a \$1.25 M grant to the Joint Industrial Development Authority to support applied research leading to commercialization of Evatran's Plugless Power™ electric vehicle charging technology.

The grant was one of three approved under the Commission's new R&D initiative to spur development leading to jobs and investment for southwest and southern Virginia.

Evatran, a spin-off of MTC Transformers, has a field test currently underway in Wytheville to evaluate experiences with its prototype Plugless Power™ charging technology compared to traditional plug-in charging systems.

Field tests will soon begin in other locations across the United States. The market for electric vehicles is expected to grow substantially following the introduction of the Nissan Leaf and Chevy Volt this fall. Many other models are anticipated soon thereafter.

### In this issue . . .

Note from the Executive Director . . . . . 1

MTC Transformers Is Top Manufacturer on Fantastic 50 List . . . . . 1

Tobacco Commission Awards R&D Grant for Wytheville's Evatran . . 1

Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament/Reception . . . 2

Entrepreneur Express Event Held in Wytheville . . 2

On-the-Job Training Support Available . . . . . 2

Regional Unemployment Rates . . . . . 2

[www.WytheIDA.org](http://www.WytheIDA.org)

## Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament/ Reception Held

The 2010 Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament was held at the Wytheville Golf Club on May 12. The tournament enjoyed fantastic support from sponsors and players (26 teams participated!). The golfers enjoyed a delicious meal at the reception following the tournament. Thanks to all who played, sponsored, donated prizes, or helped prepare for this event that resulted in a fun day of golf and fellowship.



Joint IDA Vice-Chair Dave Elmore (left) with winning team from Klöckner.

## Entrepreneur Express Event Held in Wytheville

On April 29 approximately 30 people attended the third annual Wythe/Bland *Entrepreneur Express* workshop designed to connect participants with programs and resources to help move their business enterprises forward. Participants also received practical, hands-on training covering key elements of business practice. The event, held at the Wytheville Meeting Center, was sponsored by the Joint IDA, Bland County EDA, Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber, Wytheville CVB, and the Southwest Regional Enterprise Center. Later that day on the WCC campus, a workshop focused on use of social media as a component of marketing efforts to reach and engage customers.



Delegate Crockett-Stark at EE event.

## On-the-Job Training/Apprenticeship Support Available to Employers and Job Seekers

On-the-Job Training or Apprenticeship Training opportunities are available to businesses and job seekers through the Trade Act Program, a federally funded initiative that provides job search, job preparation, and training assistance for workers laid off as a result of the adverse effects of foreign trade.

This resource provides a wage reimbursement to employers that hire and train a Trade Act-certified worker. Highlights of Trade Act On-the-Job Training include: pre-screened applicants; a 50% wage reimbursement to the employer while an employee is learning new skills on the job; and program payments to the employer every two weeks. Following an On-the-Job Training or Apprenticeship agreement with the Virginia Employment Commission, the Trade Act-certified worker begins employment. The training is customized by the employer based on skills to be learned and the number of weeks/hours required. Up to a maximum of 104 weeks of training time may be supported for On-the-Job Training based on training needs.

If you are an employer interested in learning more about this program, please contact Karen Akers, VEC Regional Trade Representative at 540-831-4025 or [karen.akers@vec.virginia.gov](mailto:karen.akers@vec.virginia.gov). She is available to visit interested employers to explain program details in person.

For prospective employees who are dislocated, but not Trade Act-certified, the One-Stop Workforce Center may be able to qualify these workers for similar on-the-job training assistance under the Dislocated Worker Program. For more information, contact Jim Coen, One-Stop Center Manager, at 276-223-8540 or [jcoen@goodwillvalleys.com](mailto:jcoen@goodwillvalleys.com).

## Regional Unemployment Rates

Location	Jan-09	Jan-10	Feb-09	Feb-10	Mar-09	Mar-10
Wythe	10.2%	11.5%	10.1%	11.9%	11.7%	11.8%
Bland	7.2%	8.2%	7.5%	8.8%	8.5%	8.3%
Smyth	10.0%	12.0%	12.0%	12.2%	12.2%	11.9%
Carroll	10.4%	13.4%	10.9%	13.7%	11.6%	12.9%
Grayson	10.2%	12.7%	10.6%	13.5%	10.7%	13.9%
Pulaski	8.5%	10.8%	9.1%	10.3%	13.4%	12.7%
Galax	10.1%	10.4%	9.8%	10.7%	11.0%	11.3%
Region*	9.7%	11.7%	10.3%	11.9%	11.9%	12.3%
Virginia	6.2%	7.6%	6.6%	7.8%	6.7%	7.6%
US	8.5%	10.6%	8.9%	10.4%	9.0%	10.2%

\* 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](mailto:JointIDA@wytheville.org) or call (276) 223-3370.