



WYTHE Economic Development News

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

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Spring 2006



Note from the Executive Director

The month of May has certainly been busy in Wythe County. Both the Virginia and West Virginia governors joined American Electric Power officials and others to celebrate completion of the 765 kV transmission line from West Virginia to Wythe County. Later that week, Amcor PET Packaging kicked off construction of

its new facility on Lot 18 in Progress Park with a ground breaking celebration. Although threatened by rain, both events remained dry—one of the top tenants of economic development remains “Luck sometimes gets better results than hard work.” Business Appreciation Week events rounded out the busy month with a well-attended Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce Business Expo at the community center and New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board executive committee and economic development representatives meeting with Secretary Gottschalk, who also toured Progress Park. Hopefully this busy month sets the stage for a busy and productive summer.

Alan Hawthorne



Governor Kaine and Governor Manchin join CEO Morris for Wythe County ceremony dedicating AEP’s \$305 M 765 kV transmission line.

AEP Dedicates 765 kV Transmission Line

Governors of Virginia and West Virginia joined guests and company and community officials on May 8 near a transmission tower on a Wythe County farm to make the final splice and celebrate the completion of the 765 kV transmission line from the Wyoming, West Virginia, substation to the Jacksons Ferry substation in Wythe County. This important infrastructure has taken over 15 years from the project’s start to its planned activation in June 2006. This infrastructure represents one more piece of exceptional infrastructure supporting business and industry in Wythe County.

PBG Plant Honored as Plant of the Year

Congratulations to Pepsi Bottling Group’s New River Valley facility, located in Wytheville, for being named *Beverage World’s* Plant of the Year. The plant is PBG’s first greenfield production facility in nearly a decade. Emphasis on product quality, operational excellence, and innovation led to this prestigious recognition in only the second year of the plant’s operation. Rodney Coleman and his team are truly world class.

Coalfield Services Expands to Progress Park

Coalfield Services will become the first small business to locate in Progress Park. The company acquired the 5.2-acre Lot 6, part of Progress Park’s “mini-park” for smaller industries. Coalfield Services plans to construct an approximately 8,000 sq ft facility to house its fabrication shop. This project will create ten jobs and represent an approximately \$650,000 investment.

Founded locally by Scott Aker in 1977, Coalfield Services provides contracting services to the coal industry and crane moving services. The company will continue to operate its existing facility on Peppers Ferry Road near Progress Park. The Virginia Department of Business Assistance’s Workforce Services Division is expected to provide training assistance. The full press release is at www.WytheIDA.org/pressrelease.htm.

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Amcor Holds Ground Breaking

Amcor PET Packaging officials joined state and local officials on May 11 to break ground on the new 710,000 sq ft PET bottle manufacturing and distribution facility to be located on Lot 18 in Progress Park.



Amcor officials are joined by Deputy Secretary Siger, Senator Reynolds, and BOS Chair Crigger to break ground on new facility.

Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament

Thanks to strong support from our local business community, the 2006 Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament was a huge success. Twenty-four teams participated in this year's event and the reception that followed the tournament. The tournament was held in conjunction with state wide Business Appreciation Week (BAW) activities. The theme for this year's BAW was "Navigating Virginia's Future." A healthy local economy ensures a high quality of life for Wythe County's residents. Our local businesses are indeed helping to navigate our future. Thank you to all our industries for their impact on the local economy. Also a thank you to those who provided sponsorships and donated prizes. Your generosity makes the industry appreciation golf tournament possible.



One of the many golf teams that played in the annual Industry Appreciation Tournament.

Regional Marketing Group Announces New Executive Director

Virginia's aCorridor recently announced the selection of Tom Elliott as its new executive director. Mr. Elliott was previously executive director of the Carroll-Grayson-Galax Economic Development Authority. He replaces Andrew Hall, who accepted a job in Tennessee after nearly five years with the organization. We look forward to working closely with Tom to accomplish the economic development goals of the Joint IDA and the regional group. The aCorridor is a regional economic development marketing organization serving the Mount Rogers Planning District area and is based in Marion. Visit Virginia's aCorridor at www.acorridor.com.

Exporting 101: Introduction to Export Readiness

On June 7 from 9:00 until 3:00 at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center in Abingdon, the Division of International Trade of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership will be conducting a workshop on export readiness and the basics of exporting sales, marketing, shipping, and payment. If your company is relatively new to exporting, or if you have received foreign inquiries and are just not sure how to respond, this workshop could be what you're looking for. The registration fee is \$95 and lunch is included. For more information and an agenda, visit www.ExportVirginia.org/events.htm or call or e-mail Beth Davis at (804) 545-5758 (Edavis@yesvirginia.org), Diane Thomas at (276) 623-1536 (Dthomas@yesvirginia.org), or the Joint IDA at 223-3370.

Regional Unemployment Rates

Location	Jan-05	Jan-06	Feb-05	Feb-06	Mar-05	Mar-06
Wythe	5.4%	4.5%	4.2%	4.7%	5.6%	4.2%
Bland	4.5%	4.0%	3.8%	4.4%	4.9%	4.3%
Smyth	5.5%	4.7%	4.7%	4.3%	4.6%	4.3%
Carroll	5.0%	5.5%	5.6%	6.3%	6.0%	5.7%
Grayson	4.8%	4.7%	4.5%	6.4%	5.0%	5.9%
Pulaski	4.6%	4.6%	4.2%	5.2%	4.8%	4.4%
Galax	4.9%	4.5%	5.1%	8.5%	5.9%	7.0%
Virginia	3.7%	3.3%	3.6%	3.3%	3.6%	3.2%
US	5.7%	5.1%	5.8%	5.1%	5.8%	4.8%

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.