



WYTHE Economic Development News

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

190 South First Street :: P.O. Box 569

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

Fax (276) 223-3427 :: E-mail JointIDA@wytheville.org

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Note from the Executive Director

Following the economic downturn at the beginning of this decade, many companies, especially manufacturers, were slow to add new employees. This reluctance was in reaction to a new economic reality marked by strong global competition combined with improved productivity, which was often driven by new technology.

Consequently, companies saw little need to attract significant numbers of applicants for mainline positions.

Happily, most manufacturing sectors are continuing their recovery. And as the excess of workforce supply over demand declines, companies are increasingly facing challenges in meeting the need for qualified applicants for many positions.

To help both candidates and employers, several agencies, including the Joint IDA, are organizing a job fair. The event will be at Wytheville Community College from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. on January 27 and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on January 28. Intensive advertising will draw candidates from Wythe and all contiguous counties.

Exhibitors will include both manufacturing and non-manufacturing employers as well as various support organizations. To learn more about the Wytheville Job Fair and to sign up for an employer booth, visit online at www.WytheIDA.org/JobFair.htm or contact the Joint IDA office.

Alan Hawthorne

Longwood Industries Expands in Fairview

Longwood Industries is adding production capacity in Wytheville. The company, which has a long presence in Wytheville, is moving production from other locations to the former PowerShot facility on George James Drive in Fairview Industrial Park. The expansion is expected to create 35 new jobs and result in the addition of over \$1.2 M of production equipment to its Wytheville operations. Longwood Elastomers, a division of Longwood Industries,

operates a facility on Fairview Road adjacent to the industrial park. Founded in 1989, Longwood Industries operates eight plants in the United States serving a variety of markets. Company products include airbrake diaphragms, seals, bladders, couplings, custom-molded products, extruded products, coated fabrics, and composite materials. The Virginia Department of Business Assistance is assisting the expansion through its Workforce Services program. The press release is available online at www.WytheIDA.org/pressrelease.htm

Happy Holidays from the staff of the Joint IDA

Mount Rogers IDC Expands Wytheville Operations in Fairview

The Mount Rogers Community Services Board has acquired the 42,000 sq. ft. building in Fairview Industrial Park formerly occupied by Simply Home for its Wythe/Bland Industrial and Developmental Center (IDC). In addition to providing a dependable outsourcing service of local industries, the IDC has contracts with several military supply centers providing such items as helmet covers, personal effects bags, and even cleaning cloths for nuclear submarines. The IDC also operates centers in the Mountain Empire Industrial Park in Atkins and the Carroll Industrial Park in Hillsville. The IDC serves more than three hundred persons with disabilities each day in its three locations. You can read the full press release online at www.WytheIDA.org/pressrelease.htm.

In this issue . . .

Note from the Executive Director	1
Longwood Industries Expands in Fairview	1
Mount Rogers IDC Expands Wytheville Operations	1
Annual Industry Awards	2
Progress Park Designated as an Enterprise Zone	2
Online Business Information	2
Regional Unemployment Rates	2

www.WytheIDA.org

Annual Industry Awards

The Joint IDA's annual industry tenure and special recognition awards were recently presented in conjunction with the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce's annual membership dinner. Congratulations to this year's honorees, especially to Wytheville Technologies, this year's special recognition recipient.

TENURE AWARDS

10 years

*Camrett Logistics
Kentucky Derby Hosiery
Southwest Specialty Heat Treat*

15 years

*American Tire Distributors
Marshall Concrete*

20 years

*Johnson Screens
Magnetic Technologies Corporation*

25 years

Coperion Corporation

30 years

Umberger Contractors

45 years

Farmers Milling and Supply Company

55 years

Boart Longyear

75 years

Reed Creek Milling Company

105 years

Rural Retreat Mills, Inc.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

Wytheville Technologies

NEW INDUSTRY RECOGNITION

Quaker-Tropicana-Gatorade



Wytheville Technologies received the 2005 Special Recognition Award.



Local managers accept tenure awards from Joint IDA during annual dinner.

Progress Park Designated as an Enterprise Zone

Governor Mark Warner announced that Wythe County was one of six communities to receive an inaugural Virginia Enterprise Zone designation under the newly revised program. The Virginia Enterprise Zone program started in 1982 to allow designation of zones in which special state and local incentives were offered to qualifying businesses within the zone boundaries. The original program expired in 2004, and a new program (with some modifications to the original) went into effect this year with new designations effective January 1, 2005. State incentives for companies in the new zone that meet minimum requirements include grants for qualified job creation and for real estate improvements. Local incentives for companies meeting minimum job creation and investment requirements include a discount on the land purchase price, reduced water and waste water usage fees, rebated water and sewer connection fees, partial waiver of building permit fees, and fast-track permitting. Small businesses in the zone may qualify for a half-point reduction on the Joint IDA Revolving Loan Fund. For more information, contact the Joint IDA at (276) 223-3370 or visit the Enterprise Zone section of the Joint IDA website.

Online Business Information

Governor Warner recently announced the creation of a new Internet portal to provide a single focus for businesses seeking information on doing business in Virginia. The site, found at www.Business.Virginia.gov, provides a wealth of resources for Virginia businesses. Material includes information on startup, permits, taxes, workforce training, and assistance programs. The site also contains valuable links to regulatory agencies and has information on becoming a state vendor.

Regional Unemployment Rates

Location	July-04	July-05	Aug-04	Aug-05	Sep-04	Sep-05
Wythe	5.7%	5.3%	4.4%	3.9%	4.0%	3.7%
Bland	4.8%	4.2%	4.6%	3.9%	3.7%	3.7%
Smyth	5.4%	4.8%	4.9%	4.8%	4.6%	4.8%
Carroll	5.6%	5.4%	4.9%	5.3%	4.3%	5.2%
Grayson	6.5%	4.7%	5.4%	4.8%	4.9%	4.5%
Pulaski	6.3%	5.3%	5.8%	4.4%	4.9%	4.0%
Galax	8.3%	4.6%	6.5%	4.9%	6.0%	3.7%
Virginia	3.8%	3.5%	3.7%	3.7%	3.4%	3.5%
US	5.7%	5.2%	5.4%	4.9%	5.1%	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.