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@CORRIDOR News



VOLUME I, ISSUE 2

MAY 2003

Quarterly News & Updates of Mount Rogers Development Partnership, Inc.

Virginia's aCORRIDOR welcomes AFG

Virginia's aCORRIDOR started the year 2003 with two economic development announcements, beginning with AFG Industries' early February decision to locate a new \$30 million glass coating plant in Abingdon.

The new 150,000 sq. ft. facility will be built in Washington County's Oak Park Center for Business and Industry. AFG, the second largest flat glass manufacturer in North America, with its headquarters in Kingsport, TN, will employ 80 at this new facility slated to be completed in mid-2004.

Gov. Mark Warner, who made the AFG announcement Feb. 5, said Virginia competed with Tennessee, Kentucky and North Carolina for the plant. "I applaud the aggressive efforts of the county, region and state economic development



Pointing to the site in Oak Park where AFG will locate its new coating plant are, from left, Christianne Parker, economic development director for Washington County; Sam Kiser, representing Thompson & Litton; Andy Hall, aCORRIDOR executive director; and Ed Wegener, AFG plant manager.

groups for making this valuable project and 80 new jobs a reality," he said.

Virginia's aCORRIDOR, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP)

and Washington County assisted AFG with its decision. The Virginia Department of Business Assistance will provide workforce training services.

Grayson County attracts pharmaceutical company



Virginia Governor Mark R. Warner presents a GOF check to Shirley Gordon, chairman of the Grayson County Board of Supervisors.

Gov. Mark Warner came to Grayson County March 3 to announce that Harvest Pharmaceuticals, Inc., a newly formed pharmaceutical sales and distribution company, will locate a marketing call center and warehouse/distribution center in the county, bringing 30 new jobs over the next 30 months. The specialty pharmaceutical sales company plans to locate a \$3.3 million

investment in the Parsons and Rives Building in Independence. Operations are expected to begin in July. Initial employees will include telephone sales, customer service agents, information technology support and warehouse/order fulfillment staff. Randal Kirk, chairman of Harvest Pharmaceuticals, praised the quality and customer service orientation of the workforce.

From My Perspective....



Andy Hall
Executive Director

Any organization can put out a press release announcing a new company's decision to come to the area. We joyously participated in the announcements of not one, but two such events in the aCORRIDOR in the first quarter. Sometimes all the team effort to attract a new business goes unnoticed and does not get the proper recognition it deserves. Not this time. The CEOs of both AFG Industries and Harvest Pharmaceuti-

cals acknowledged in the news media the hard-working, professional team efforts to recruit them.

D. Roger Kennedy, president and CEO of AFG Industries, was quoted: "While Washington County was competi-

tive, the real key in our decision was the interest, professionalism and aggressiveness of the team from the community and the state." He also said the team made AFG feel "exceptionally welcome" and "provided the confidence that this major capital investment had found a home that would be very successful."



Harvest Pharmaceuticals, Inc. Chairman **Randal Kirk** has experienced success in Southwest Virginia in the past, and he shared his

thoughts in the media as well. "From our prior experience in the founding and development of General Injectables & Vaccines, Inc., in



Bland County, Virginia, we know the quality and customer service orientation of the workforce in Southwest Virginia."

As an entrepreneur with ties to the region, Kirk knew he could find a home for his new, growing company in Grayson County, and we worked as a strong local-regional team to assure his experience in the aCORRIDOR is positive for his company and his employees.

These are great 'pats on the back' for our aCORRIDOR team. It's nice to get noticed, but more importantly I think it points out that we are *working as a team* and we're seeing results. By working together—gathering and sharing information, answering prospects' questions, providing transportation, taking prospects out to dinner, hosting tours, attending trade shows—we are strengthening the aCORRIDOR marketing team.

Marketing Activity

**aCORRIDOR
WILL HOST THE
VEDA REGIONAL
ROUNDTABLE
MAY 23 AT THE
SOUTHWEST
HIGHER ED
CENTER IN
ABINGDON**

Andy Hall teamed up with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) and visited 16 companies in New England during a marketing mission April 7-11. Companies visited ranged from light manufacturing and distribution to foods. A possible prospect resulting from this mission is a manufacturer looking for an expansion site who is currently located in Rhode Island.

Hall also will represent the aCORRIDOR at the National Plastics Expo in Chicago June 23-27.

Existing business expansion dominates 2002

Last year in the aCORRIDOR existing business expansions dominated the economic development news. Total investment of \$171.3 million and creation of nearly 1,200 jobs in the Mount Rogers Development Partnership region were reported by the Virginia Employment Commission. The region, hard hit last year with plant closures and layoffs, reported a net loss of 150 jobs.

The \$34 million expansion and 108 jobs at Klockner-Pentaplast in Rural Retreat was the largest existing busi-

ness announcement of the year. The \$65 million Pepsi Bottling Group plant (200 jobs) being constructed in Wytheville topped the list for new industry announcements. Other 2002 announcements: Turman Lumber, Galax, 161 jobs, \$2.5 million; Paxar Corporation in Carroll County, 90 jobs, \$3 million; Kentucky Derby Hosiery, Carroll County, 72 jobs, \$10.7 million; Sure-Wood Dimension, Smyth County, 75 jobs, \$1.4 million; Dorothea Knitting Mills, Washington County, 65 jobs, \$2 million; PowerShot Tool, Wythe, 70 jobs, \$1.2 million.

Partnership welcomes new board members

The Mount Rogers Development Partnership Board of Directors welcomed two new business leaders to the board at its November meeting held in Wytheville.

Larry L. Davis, president and CEO of Royal Mouldings Limited, formerly Marley Mouldings in Marion, a long-time supporter of the Partnership and its mission, said, "I'm glad to be of service to the board and hopefully take advantage of my thirty-plus years of industry experience, most of that in Smyth County, to help bring economic development stability to our region."

E. Will Davis Jr., no relation to Larry Davis, is state economic development manager for American Electric Power. He said AEP is committed to a regional approach to economic development.

"Virginia's aCORRIDOR is a strategic player for economic development in Southwest Virginia, situated between

two other regional groups. It is imperative that this organization remain dynamic in handling prospective business looking at the region," says Will Davis.

The board of directors of the Mount

Rogers Development Partnership is comprised of representatives of the six county and two city governments served by the marketing organization and members of the private business sector.



Two business leaders, unrelated with the same last name, joined the Mount Rogers Development Partnership Board of Directors in late 2002. Left is Larry Davis, president and CEO of Royal Mouldings Limited in Marion, and Will Davis, state economic development manager for American Electric Power.

Around the aCORRIDOR. . .

Lean manufacturing is paying off for one aCORRIDOR existing business. **Merillat Industries** is one of 15 winners of the 2003 Shingo Prize for Excellence in Manufacturing, an award described by *Business Week* magazine as the Nobel Prize of manufacturing.



Nick Hearne, quality assurance manager for the Atkins plant, was quoted in the local press, saying the lean manufacturing processes saved the company more than \$4 million last year and improved quality by 66 percent. Lean manufacturing eliminates waste in the manufacturing process.

Two Wythe County projects are among the top 25 economic development projects in the country (based on job creation), according to a trade

Board of Directors Chairman

Danny Jessee, left, presents a plaque of appreciation to Danny McDaniel, outgoing chairman.

magazine, *Plants, Sites & Parks*. The \$34 million expansion by **Klockner-Pentaplast** of America in Rural Retreat, maker of plastic films (108 jobs), and the \$65 million **Pepsi Bottling Group** plant under construction in Wytheville (200 jobs) were noted by the publication.

Congressman Rick Boucher announced a \$180,000 federal grant in late March to be used for construction of the **Rich Valley Community Center** in Smyth County. Boucher joined with the Rich Valley Fair Association to secure funds to build the center on the site of the old Rich Valley High School. *(continued on page 4)*



VIRGINIA'S aCORRIDOR
 access to markets, technology & transportation

Mount Rogers Development Partnership, Inc.
 P.O. Box 983
 Marion, VA 24354

Phone: 276.783.9474 • 888-810-8343
 Fax: 276.783.7999

VEDA Regional Roundtable

An opportunity for members of the Virginia Economic Developers Association, economic development professionals and local officials to discuss development issues in Southwest Virginia.

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 23

Southwest Virginia Higher Ed Center

Call aCORRIDOR for more information.
 888-810-8343

Around the aCORRIDOR....

(continued from page 3) Total cost of the new **Rich Valley Community Center**, which will include an auditorium with seating for 450, a conference room and a fully equipped kitchen, is approximately \$296,000. The remainder of the cost will be met by private contributions, according to the Rich Valley Fair Association.

Over the next four years nearly 9,400 job openings in emerging occupations could occur in the Mount Rogers and New River planning districts, according to a recently released study. The **Virginia Economic Bridge**, based at Radford University, conducted a year-long community

audit under contract with the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board. The audit found the region has good potential for training and for providing a skilled and technologically competent workforce, but to attract new jobs and technological growth, the region must keep more graduates from area universities and attract others from surrounding localities. **Occupations with the highest projected growth in the region** over the next six years include information technology, health care, sales, education and services, according to the report.

TEDS of Atkins has received two

awards from *Training* magazine in its first Achieving Performance Excellence competition. TEDS, producer of workforce management software for training and human resource departments, was honored for its achievements in enterprise performance support systems and as best vendor in staffing and recruiting.

The aCORRIDOR will host the Virginia Economic Developers Association **Regional Roundtable** from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 23, Room 240 at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center. The meeting is sponsored by Thompson & Litton. **For more information**, contact the aCORRIDOR office at 888-810-8343 or email: ashall@netva.com.