



# 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)

Summer 2010



### Note from the Executive Director

During the Great Recession, the United States lost approximately 8.5 million jobs. Although job creation, especially during the second quarter of this year, has been positive, even in manufacturing, jobs are not being created at a pace sufficient to make a major dent in that 8.5 million number. Where will new job creation come from? Many predict that alternative

energy and other “green” aspects of the economy will be a major job creator over the next decade. It’s good to see that our local economy is generating significant “buzz” in this sector. See the articles on Evatran and the Lumenhaus for additional details.

*A lan Hawthorne*



*Lt. Governor Bill Bolling and Evatran's Tom Hough arrive in electric vehicle.*

system based on inductive technology, Evatran’s Plugless Power™ streamlines the process of charging electric vehicles by eliminating the nuisance of the cord and plug. The result is a system that is convenient, universal, and reliable.

Governor McDonnell approved a \$150,000 grant from the Governor’s Opportunity Fund and the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission approved a \$235,000 grant through the Tobacco Region Opportunity Fund to assist with the project. The Virginia Department of Business Assistance will provide training assistance through the Virginia Jobs Investment Program. Thanks to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) and Virginia’s aCorridor for all their assistance in securing this project. A full press release is available at [www.yesvirginia.org/about\\_us/NewsArticle.aspx?newsid=1062](http://www.yesvirginia.org/about_us/NewsArticle.aspx?newsid=1062).

### In this issue . . .

Note from the Executive Director . . . . .	1
Evatran Charges Forward . . . . .	1
Manufacturers Celebrate Safety Milestones . . . . .	1
New Wythe-Bland SBDC Office . . . . .	2
Labor & Employment Law Seminar . . . . .	2
VT Lumenhaus Wins Solar Decathlon Europe . . . . .	2
Regional Unemployment Rates . . . . .	2

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

### Evatran Charges Forward

Governor Bob McDonnell announced on June 29, 2010, that Evatran LLC, a spin-off of MTC Transformers, will invest \$3.5 million in a new facility in Wytheville that will manufacture Plugless Power™ charging technology for electric vehicles. The expansion is projected to create 84 new jobs within three years. Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling joined company officials and local business and government leaders to announce the project at the Wytheville Meeting Center on the afternoon of June 29.

MTC Transformers, a manufacturer of specialized electrical transformers focusing on niche market segments, was founded in Wytheville in 1985. Recently, MTC Transformers was included on the Fantastic Fifty list of Virginia’s fastest growing companies for the third consecutive year. The company started Evatran in April 2009. Utilizing a unique dual-component

### Quadrant, Mid-Atlantic Celebrate Safety Milestones

Two Wythe manufacturers recently celebrated major achievements in workplace safety. Quadrant Engineering Plastic Products’ Wytheville plant marked two years worked without injuries to any of the facility’s employees. Mid-Atlantic Manufacturing & Hydraulics, Inc., in Rural Retreat, recently completed two years without a lost time accident. Management at both companies credited success to employee involvement, commitment, and dedication to safety. Both companies held appreciation celebrations for employees and their families in late July. Congratulations to the teams at Quadrant and Mid-Atlantic on a job *safely* done!

## New SBDC Office to Serve Wythe and Bland Counties

In June, the Radford University Small Business Development Center (SBDC) announced that an entrepreneurship and business counseling office was being established to serve Wythe and Bland Counties. Mike Forrest was named as business analyst/counselor to lead the new Wythe-Bland SBDC office. His duties include providing business management counseling and guidance to existing businesses, as well as providing technical assistance with business and financial planning to entrepreneurs interested in starting new businesses. To establish this new office, the SBDC partnered with the Southwest Regional Enterprise Center, which serves the City of Galax and the Counties of Bland, Carroll, Wythe, and Grayson.

Certified in *Methods Time Management* and *Modular Manufacturing* and as a facilitator for the Kauffman Foundation's *First Step Fast Trac* entrepreneurial program, Mike Forrest brings over 30 years of experience in manufacturing management to his new role. Most recently, Mike worked with Pulaski's Beans and Rice Micro Solutions Program, which provides technical and business planning assistance to entrepreneurs in the start-up of small businesses.

Mike Forrest's office is temporarily located in the Joint IDA office. He will move to his permanent location at Wytheville Community College after construction and renovations are completed there later in the year. Mike can be reached at 434-489-3441 or [forrest3@radford.edu](mailto:forrest3@radford.edu).

## Labor & Employment Law Seminar

This year's seminar will be held on September 2, 2010, at Hungry Mother State Park near Marion. The Wythe Manufacturing Council (WMC) is a co-sponsor of this event. WMC members are eligible for a \$25 discount off the full registration cost of \$125 for the seminar. If you need additional information or if you would like to register for the seminar, please contact Laralee Harkleroad of the Baker Donelson law firm at 423-928-0181.

## Virginia Tech Lumenhaus Wins Solar Decathlon Europe

**Background:** Some readers may recall that our Winter 2010 newsletter included an interesting item about Virginia Tech's solar-powered house, known as Lumenhaus, and its entry into solar design competitions. Acrylife, Inc., a Wytheville roofing manufacturer, played a major role in development of the Venturi Vent Technology (V2T), which is incorporated in the roof of the Lumenhaus. The V2T system helps to hold membrane roofing more securely in place in high-wind conditions. Acrylife also assisted the Lumenhaus team with a flexible membrane roof that would adhere to a curved surface and, at the same time, offer a way to seal around the support posts for the solar panels. This unique design allowed the team to maximize the placement of solar panels on the roof of the Lumenhaus.

The Lumenhaus and its team of students and faculty advisors traveled to Madrid, Spain, in June to compete in the prestigious Solar Decathlon Europe. Teams representing 17 research universities from around the world gathered to demonstrate their solar-powered houses to the public. Each team constructed a sustainable, self-sufficient, and comfortable house, powered exclusively by solar energy. The houses were evaluated in 10 categories.

After nine days of competition and judging, the Virginia Tech Lumenhaus was declared overall winner of the event. In addition to first place overall, the Lumenhaus team placed first in the architecture category. The Lumenhaus received recognition in other categories as well: communication and social awareness; industrialization and market viability; comfort conditions; usage; and lighting design.

Congratulations to Acrylife and to the Lumenhaus team! Additional information is available at [www.archdesign.vt.edu/news/2009-10/1007](http://www.archdesign.vt.edu/news/2009-10/1007).

## Regional Unemployment Rates

Location	Apr-09	Apr-10	May-09	May-10	Jun-09	Jun-10
Wythe	11.4%	9.9%	11.4%	9.7%	11.1%	9.8%
Bland	7.5%	6.9%	7.7%	6.8%	8.3%	7.0%
Smyth	11.9%	10.5%	12.3%	10.7%	12.7%	11.6%
Carroll	10.3%	11.2%	10.7%	10.7%	11.0%	11.5%
Grayson	10.4%	11.6%	11.2%	11.9%	11.2%	11.4%
Pulaski	10.5%	8.9%	11.6%	9.4%	11.9%	9.6%
Galax	9.7%	10.4%	9.2%	10.7%	9.6%	10.8%
Region*	10.7%	10.1%	11.2%	10.1%	11.4%	10.5%
Virginia	6.3%	6.7%	6.7%	6.9%	7.1%	7.1%
US	8.6%	9.5%	9.1%	9.3%	9.7%	9.6%

\* Overall rate for the region including the Counties of Wythe, Bland, Smyth, Carroll, Grayson, and Pulaski, and the City of Galax.

**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.