



# WYTHE Economic Development News

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

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## Note from the Executive Director

Analysts have a fondness for 10-year assessments. A decade, however, is often too long a period, even for long-term assessments—especially in today’s fast-paced economic climate. The Joint IDA is wrapping up a mid-decade analysis of the Wythe County economy, especially as it relates to employment and wages. A particularly

valuable comparison may be made using data from 2005 and 2000 because both years occurred at mature stages of the business cycle, thus giving a truer indication of long-term growth and not just of recovery from the 2001 recession.

Employment by establishments in Wythe County grew by 6.2% over the five years compared with 4.1% for Virginia and 1.3% for the United States while the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Area lost 1.3% of jobs. When jobs associated with the Gatorade and Amcor projects are included, the growth is 9.8%. That is, of course, the good news. Less encouraging news is that wage growth was quite sluggish in Wythe County. While the region’s wages grew 17.3%, Virginia wages grew 20.4%, and the U.S. wages grew 15.2% over the period, Wythe County’s wages increased only 11.1%. With a local average wage of 61.3% of the average U.S. wage, the challenge over the next five years is to reverse this trend. You may access the full report at [www.WytheIDA.org/whitepaper.pdf](http://www.WytheIDA.org/whitepaper.pdf).

*Alan Hawthorne*

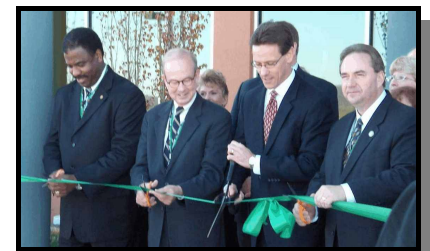
## Mid-Atlantic Expands in Rural Retreat

Wythe County continues to experience good growth from existing industries. Mid-Atlantic Manufacturing and Hydraulics, Inc., a division of Swanson Industries, will expand its Rural Retreat operations by adding 50 jobs and investing \$6 million. The company provides an array of services including manufacturing, remanufacturing, repair, and distribution for mining, construction, off-shore oil, and other sectors. Governor Kaine awarded a \$75,000 grant from the Governor’s Opportunity Fund, and the Virginia Department of

Business Assistance’s Workforce Services will assist with training and hiring needs. Mid-Atlantic will add 45,000 square feet to its facility in the Rural Retreat Industrial Park, which began operations in 2001. Congratulations to Frank McDonald and his team. You can see the full press release at [www.wytheida.org/pressrelease.htm](http://www.wytheida.org/pressrelease.htm).

## Gatorade Dedication

PepsiCo dedicated its Blue Ridge facility in Progress Park on November 3, 2006. Dignitaries present included Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling, Congressman Rick Boucher, and several PepsiCo officials. The Blue Ridge plant began production operations in September 2006.



*Lt. Gov. Bolling congratulates Gatorade on its success (top); Deputy Sec. Smith presents a Virginia Company stock certificate to Gatorade management; and dignitaries participate in ribbon cutting during dedication event (bottom).*

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

## Camrett Acquires Rohm and Haas Building

Camrett Companies recently acquired the 127,000 square foot Rohm and Haas building in Wytheville. Camrett Companies provide warehouse, transportation, and logistics services, and recently opened facilities in Atlanta and Indianapolis. The move of the headquarters to Wytheville brings Camrett's total managed floor space to 650,000 square feet with the potential to expand an additional 500,000 square feet. Founded in 1995 by Collin Peel, Camrett Companies was named to the 2002 and 2003 Fantastic 50 lists by *Virginia Business Magazine* as one of Virginia's fastest growing privately-held businesses. Read the press release at [www.wytheida.org/pressrelease.htm](http://www.wytheida.org/pressrelease.htm).

## Industry Awards

The Joint IDA presented industry awards at the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce Inc.'s annual dinner on November 20, 2006, at the Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre. Governor Kaine provided the keynote address and congratulated the W-W-B Chamber on its 60 years of service.

### Tenure Awards

Mid-Atlantic Manufacturing – 5 years  
 Wytheville Technologies – 5 years  
 Oak Hall Industries – 10 years  
 Acrylife, Inc. – 15 years  
 Shenandoah Designs – 15 years  
 G&W Manufacturing – 20 years  
 Simply Home – 20 years  
 Tectonics – 20 years  
 Austinville Limestone – 25 years  
 SPX Process Equipment – 30 years  
 JAVATEC – 35 years  
 Donnkenny LLC – 45 years

### New Industry Award

Amcor PET Packaging

### Special Recognition Award

Camrett Logistics



*Collin Peel receives Special Recognition Award for Camrett Logistics.*

## Governor Kaine's Economic Development Plan

Governor Timothy Kaine unveiled his administration's economic development plan at the Virginia Economic Developers Association's fall meeting in Roanoke on September 29, 2006. The plan, entitled *Virginia Leading the Way*, presents nine goals for strengthening Virginia's economy. These goals include strategies such as workforce development, promotion of exports and tourism, exploiting Virginia's proximity to the national capital, and enhancing economic development efforts in distressed areas. The plan also provides summaries of Virginia's economy. Virginia code requires each governor to develop a plan during the first year of his or her administration. Governor Kaine's plan is available at [www.commerce.virginia.gov](http://www.commerce.virginia.gov). The Joint IDA looks forward to working with our many partners to continue economic development successes in Wythe County.

## Joint IDA To Launch Redesigned Website

The Joint IDA will soon launch a completely redesigned website that better reflects contemporary economic development technology trends. The new website will provide information commonly sought by companies and location consultants in a format that is easy to analyze and quick to download. A key feature will be an interface with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership's searchable database of available industrial sites and buildings in Wythe County. A grant from the VEDP Virginia's Opportunities Region initiative helped fund the project. Laura Teed, a University of Virginia student, assisted with designing the site. The Joint IDA contracted Infinidev LLC for website programming. The new site will replace the existing one at [www.WytheIDA.org](http://www.WytheIDA.org).

## Regional Unemployment Rates

Location	July-05	July-06	Aug-05	Aug-06	Sept-05	Sept-06
Wythe	5.2%	4.7%	3.7%	4.7%	3.5%	3.7%
Bland	4.4%	4.4%	3.9%	4.3%	3.9%	3.8%
Smyth	4.6%	4.7%	4.4%	4.6%	4.4%	4.5%
Carroll	5.8%	5.0%	5.5%	5.3%	5.4%	5.1%
Grayson	4.8%	6.0%	5.0%	5.9%	4.8%	6.3%
Pulaski	5.2%	3.8%	4.2%	5.8%	3.9%	6.7%
Galax	5.0%	6.8%	5.1%	6.2%	3.8%	4.5%
Virginia	3.5%	3.3%	3.5%	3.2%	3.5%	3.1%
US	5.2%	5.0%	4.9%	4.6%	4.8%	4.4%

## 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.