

# New River Valley News & Views



NEW RIVER VALLEY PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

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## “Transportation Equipment Manufacturing Competitiveness Initiative (TEMCI)” in the Spotlight

An Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant has been awarded to the New River Valley Planning District Commission (PDC) who will partner with the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission, and the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission with the service expanding from Botetourt County to Washington County (see TEMCI Project Region map). This multi-PDC effort is a public-private partnership funded by the EDA’s Trade Adjustment Assistance program and aimed at benefiting the region’s transportation equipment manufacturers and their suppliers. The EDA grant totals approximately \$1.5 million and will provide technical assistance to private companies through Virginia Tech’s Center for High Performance Manufacturing as well as GENEDGE ALLIANCE. Volvo Trucks North America has also pledged \$175,000 in matching funds which brings the project total to over \$1.67 million.

The New River Valley Planning District Commission will work on

the project as the project coordinator as well as the fiscal agent. Kevin Byrd, Executive Director of the New River Valley PDC, will co-chair the TEMCI Regional Leadership Team alongside Ivan Mitchell of Volvo Trucks North America. The Regional Leadership Team consists of Virginia Tech faculty and staff as well as public and private sector representatives.

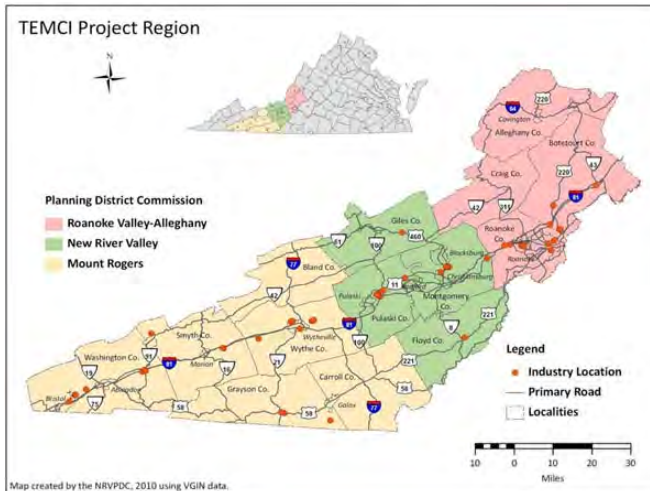
The money will be used to sponsor several projects in the three planning district geographies. Technical assistance projects can be summarized into three categories: 1) Product Development; 2) Process Improvement; and 3) Green Technologies. The search for eligible companies is underway and three meetings have

already taken place to promote the project at each of the PDC offices.

Efforts are still underway to ensure all eligible companies are informed of the unique opportunity and have the chance to apply for project funding. The ultimate project outcome includes the preservation of high wage manufacturing jobs, building relationships between public and private sectors, and promoting private sector investment. TEMCI will allow transportation companies to be more competitive in an increasingly global marketplace.

Transportation companies and suppliers can find more information at [www.econdev.vt.edu](http://www.econdev.vt.edu).

For further information, please contact [Brad Mecham](mailto:Brad.Mecham) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 206.



Virginia Tech will play a significant role in the TEMCI project. Virginia Tech’s Office of Economic Development will be responsible for coordinating sub-grants to transportation equipment manufacturing companies. These companies will then be matched with Virginia Tech professors to work on grant applications and provide technical assistance throughout the duration of the project.

## NRVPDC Commissioners

- **FLOYD COUNTY**  
FRED GERALD  
EVELYN JANNEY
- **GILES COUNTY**  
RICHARD MCCOY  
VACANT
- **MONTGOMERY COUNTY**  
MIKE HARVEY  
ANNETTE PERKINS
- **PULASKI COUNTY**  
CHARLES BOPP  
JOSEPH SHEFFEY  
DOUG WARREN
- **CITY OF RADFORD**  
HELEN HARVEY  
TIM COX
- **TOWN OF BLACKSBURG**  
DON LANGREHR  
HOLLY LESKO, CHAIR
- **TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG**  
HENRY SHOWALTER  
SCOTT WEAVER, TREASURER
- **TOWN OF FLOYD**  
MIKE PATTON, VICE CHAIR
- **TOWN OF NARROWS**  
TOM GARRETT
- **TOWN OF PEARISBURG**  
VACANT
- **TOWN OF PULASKI**  
LARRY CLEVINGER  
MORGAN WELKER
- **TOWN OF RICH CREEK**  
VACANT
- **RADFORD UNIVERSITY**  
VACANT
- **VIRGINIA TECH**  
DAVID DENT  
KEVIN SULLIVAN

**KEVIN R. BYRD, AICP**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
[kbyrd@nrvpdc.org](mailto:kbyrd@nrvpdc.org)

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## NRVPDC Updates

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### Floyd County Comprehensive Plan Update

Floyd County is nearing completion of a draft plan for Planning Commission review. After the Planning Commission review in February, the Board of Supervisors will review the transportation chapter prior to submission to VDOT for review. Comments are due back from VDOT within 100 days following submission, so further review by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors may extend into spring. Both the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors will host public hearings to gather community feedback on the draft plan before adoption. For further information, please contact [Kevin Byrd](mailto:Kevin.Byrd@floydva.gov) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 212.

### Town of Floyd Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Floyd is also nearing completion of a draft plan for their Planning Commission and Town Council to review. The draft plan contains the Town's first Future Land Use Map, a valuable tool in making informed land use decisions. The PDC will discuss the draft plan with Town Council at their second meeting in February. Following the February meeting, the transportation chapter will be submitted to VDOT for review. The Town's Planning Commission and Town Council will host public hearings in the spring following the VDOT review. For further information, please contact [Kevin Byrd](mailto:Kevin.Byrd@floydva.gov) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 212.

### Mobility Management

The Mobility Management project closed out in December 2010, with a finalized draft of its Mobility Resource Manual, complete with contact information, background, route/service area maps, and other pertinent mobility information for travelers in the New River Valley. This final draft manual has been printed and distributed to all locality administrators and service providers. As a living document, this manual will be continually updated for usability, accuracy, and thoroughness. The Mobility Management project was funded by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT). For further information, please contact [Jennifer Wilsie](mailto:Jennifer.Wilsie@floydva.gov) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 204.

### Pulaski Adult Day Care and Fall Prevention Center

The Management Team tasked with guiding the Adult Day Care project has decided to move forward with a CDBG application, to be submitted in the March 2012 grant cycle. The County submitted a summary of its first round of Planning Grant activities to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) back in early fall and has since been assessing different options for moving forward. Under DHCD regulations, the project needs to serve predominantly low-to-moderate income families and show a documented need for the service in the area. The County will continue to work with DHCD in order to prepare a strong application for next spring. For further information, please contact [Jennifer Wilsie](mailto:Jennifer.Wilsie@floydva.gov) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 204.

### Baskerville Neighborhood Rehabilitation Project

Neighborhood interest for the Baskerville rehab project has been strong since the beginning of the project. Pulaski County is under contract for 12 housing rehabs and six substantial reconstructions (or the rebuilding of a house that is too costly to simply repair) for a total of 18 household rehabilitations. Already, the project has taken 17 applications from residents interested in participating in the program. Each household must be eligible on the basis of income and need in order for work to be done, but the County is very optimistic at the interest shown thus far.

Applications will be taken on a continual basis until all 18 eligible households have been identified. Walkthroughs to document work scope and costs will be conducted beginning in February and continuing throughout the winter, with the first round of construction slated to begin in the spring. The Baskerville Neighborhood Rehab project was funded through the Department of Housing and Community Development's Community Development Block Grant Program and was leveraged with HOME Consortium funds and other funding sources to total \$1,324,445. For further information, please contact [Jennifer Wilsie](mailto:Jennifer.Wilsie@floydva.gov) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 204.

### HOME

Montgomery County is pursuing a HOME-assisted project in the Town of Blacksburg, partnering with nationally acclaimed nonprofit real estate developer for the arts, Artspace. Artspace's mission is to create, foster, and preserve affordable space for artists and arts organizations.

The organization pursues this mission through development projects, asset management activities, consulting services, and community-building activities that serve artists and arts organizations of all disciplines, cultures, and economic circumstances.

The Town has already arranged a Prefeasibility Meeting with Artspace, scheduled for March 30-31; this meeting will bring in Artspace staff to meet with local stakeholders and assess the viability of such a project in the Town. The Town hopes that this project will provide much needed housing not only to local artists wishing to live and work in the area, but to also attract artists from outside the area. For further information, please contact [Jennifer Wilsie](mailto:Jennifer.Wilsie@floydva.gov) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 204.

### Water Supply Planning

The New River Valley Regional Water Supply Plan is currently being considered by several of the participating localities. Both the Town of Dublin and the Town of Pulaski have adopted the plan to date. Public hearings have been held in the City of Radford, Floyd County, and the Towns of Pembroke and Rich Creek. The NRVPDC is working with the remaining localities to get the public hearings on their agendas and assisting as the plan and associated drought ordinance works through their process. The draft plan is available at: [www.nrvpdc.org/watersupply.html](http://www.nrvpdc.org/watersupply.html). For more information, please contact [Kevin Byrd](mailto:Kevin.Byrd@floydva.gov) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 212.

### Hazard Mitigation

Drafting of the New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan has been completed and is now available at: [www.nrvpdc.org/HazardMitigation/2010Draftplan.html](http://www.nrvpdc.org/HazardMitigation/2010Draftplan.html). The NRVPDC is currently seeking comments on the plan from participating localities, as well as citizens, adjacent Planning District Commissions and the business community. In February, the NRVPDC will host a series of public meetings throughout the region to introduce the plan to the public and solicit feedback. Once those meetings are complete, the plan will be sent to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and then on to FEMA for approval. Following FEMA approval, the plan will be ready for adoption by the participating localities. The NRVPDC anticipates starting the plan adoption process in mid-spring. For more information, please contact [Christy Straight](mailto:Christy.Straight@floydva.gov) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 209.

**New River/Mount Rogers  
Workforce Investment Board (WIB)**

The Western Virginia HITE (Health Information Technology Education) initiative is a regional partnership funded through a U.S. Department of Labor "Community-Based Jobs Training" grant to provide training opportunities for medical records specialists/health information technicians, medical assistants, pharmacy technicians, licensed practical nursing (LPN) and registered nursing (RN) occupations (award total \$4.7 million). This collaborative partnership includes Mountain Empire Community College, Southwest Virginia Community College, New River Community College, Virginia Western Community College, and grant recipient & fiscal agent Virginia Highlands Community College, Southwest Virginia Workforce Board, New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board, Western Virginia Workforce Development Board, Virginia Tech, University of Virginia's College at Wise, Carilion Clinic, Montgomery Regional Hospital (HCA), Pulaski Community Hospital (HCA), Clinch Valley Medical Center (Lifepoint), Holston Medical Group, Buchanan General Hospital and select locations of Mountain States Health Alliance. The partnership covers 29 jurisdictions in Southwest Virginia (the counties of Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Tazewell, Wise, Bland, Carroll, Floyd, Giles, Grayson, Montgomery, Pulaski, Smyth, Washington, Wythe, Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Roanoke, and Franklin and the cities of Norton, Bristol, Galax, Radford, Salem, Roanoke, and Covington). This grant was awarded July 1, 2010 and ends June 30, 2013. The HITE initiative will provide training to incumbent workers, unemployed and underemployed in electronic medical records management through five community colleges. Through December 31, 2010, 145 participants have received training under this grant through the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board with all participants currently active. Daily Board staff contact with current and new applicants by phone or e-mail averages 50 contacts per day. Interest in program offerings continues to increase daily. It is projected that a minimum of 250 individuals will be served under this grant by the WIB prior to June 30, 2013. For further information, please contact Ronnie Martin at (540) 633-6764 or email [rmartin@nrwvc.org](mailto:rmartin@nrwvc.org).

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**PDC Welcomes  
New Staff Member and  
Says Farewell to Another**

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The PDC welcomes **Bradley (Brad) Mecham** to its staff. Brad was born in Bismarck, North Dakota but grew up in the small town of Annville,

Pennsylvania. Brad graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Geography: Travel and Tourism Emphasis from Brigham Young University in April of 2008. He then continued on to the University of Arizona where he completed a Master of Science in Planning: Land Use and Community Development Emphasis in May of 2010. He and his wife, Dani, and daughter moved across the country in December from Arizona and have been enjoying the "warm" weather here in the New River Valley. Brad completed an internship in Chandler, Arizona's Economic Development Department in the summer of 2009 and will be working on a variety of economic development projects in the New River Valley, including the Transportation Equipment Manufacturing Competitiveness Initiative (TEMCI). He can be reached at (540) 639-9313, ext. 206 or [bmecham@nrwvdc.org](mailto:bmecham@nrwvdc.org). The PDC would also like to say farewell to **Jack Whitmore**. Jack's last day with the Commission was on January 14, 2011. We wish him the best in all of his future endeavors and appreciate his service to the Commission and the region.

**NRVPDC Commission meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of every month, 6:00 p.m., at the New River Valley Competitiveness Center in Fairlawn. All meetings are open to the public.**

**NRVPDC Commission  
Meeting Summary**

January 27, 2011

**Bus Bridge to Rail**

- Amtrak Bus Connector from Lynchburg to Roanoke and Blacksburg
- Roanoke to Lynchburg Connector:
  - Generate estimated 3,600 passengers
  - Public Transit Agency cost for service: \$152,106 per yr
  - Private third party cost contractor for service \$329,200 per yr
- Connector service to Blacksburg:
  - Generate estimated 800 passengers
  - Public Transit Agency cost for service: \$274,571 per yr
  - Private third party cost for service: \$568,700 per yr

**Rt. 114 Bridge and Rt. 61 Bridge**

- PDC coordinated meeting between VDOT, Pulaski County, City of Radford, Montgomery County, Giles County, Town of Narrows, and the outdoor recreation businesses; Discuss river access issues during construction; Resolution appears possible, alternate access on either side of river

**VAPDC**

- Winter Conference February 3-4, 2011; Partnering with VML/VACO

**Rich Creek School Reuse**

- PDC providing assistance to determine reuse for vacant school wing; Working with Community Design Assistance Center at VT on community meeting; Community meeting on Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>—40+ in attendance

**TEMCI - Transportation Equipment Manufacturing Competitiveness Initiative**

- Hosted 4 marketing meetings to inform businesses; Developing a financing seminar for businesses in sector to learn about capital funding

**Chesapeake Bay TMDL/Watershed Implementation Plan**

- VAPDC provided response to the proposed Chesapeake Bay TMDL/Watershed Implementation Plan; Fairness in regulatory measures across entire geography; Necessary resources should be made available in technical and financial means; Regional strategies should be promoted

**Congressman Griffith Meeting**

- 4 of 5 southwest PDC directors met with Congressman on 1/27/11; Discussed importance of federal programs EDA, ARC, Rural Development and CDBG

**Sustainable Communities (Livability Initiative)**

- Nearing contract with HUD, early February; Advertising two positions (3 year project): Project Manager and Community facilitator; \$1 million grant from HUD (EPA, FHWA); Match from EDA, ARC, HOME Consortium, Blacksburg CDBG and PDC; Consortium appointments upcoming



## NRV Economic Indicators

### New Vehicle Registrations

Car registrations decreased throughout the District between the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2010 with Montgomery County showing the largest decrease (138). Truck registrations increased in three jurisdictions in the same time period with Montgomery County showing the largest increase (12).

CAR REGISTRATIONS		
Jurisdiction	3rd Qtr 2010	4th Qtr 2010
Floyd County	81	63
Giles County	92	78
Montgomery County	477	339
Pulaski County	174	154
Radford City	85	66
<b>Total</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>700</b>

Source: Virginia Automobile Dealers Association.

TRUCK REGISTRATIONS		
Jurisdiction	3rd Qtr 2010	4th Qtr 2010
Floyd County	17	28
Giles County	21	23
Montgomery County	66	78
Pulaski County	44	31
Radford City	11	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>169</b>

Source: Virginia Automobile Dealers Association.  
\* There were no Radford numbers listed for 11/27/10-12/31/10.

### Employment and Wages

The NRV's 2nd quarter wage data for 2009 and 2010 shows a decrease in average employment of 1,920 (2.9%) persons. The weekly wage increased (\$18) and the number of establishments decreased (33 or .8%).

AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT		
Jurisdiction	2009 2nd Qtr	2010 2nd Qtr
Floyd County	2,912	2,889
Giles County	4,801	4,639
Montgomery County	40,234	39,613
Pulaski County	11,913	10,916
Radford City	6,031	5,914
NRVPDC	65,891	63,971

Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE		
Jurisdiction	2009 2nd Qtr	2010 2nd Qtr
Floyd County	\$475	\$487
Giles County	626	654
Montgomery County	658	664
Pulaski County	579	621
Radford City	739	771
NRVPDC	640	658

Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

AVERAGE ESTABLISHMENTS		
Jurisdiction	2009 2nd Qtr	2010 2nd Qtr
Floyd County	384	387
Giles County	366	361
Montgomery County	2,190	2,151
Pulaski County	729	741
Radford City	348	344
NRVPDC	4,017	3,984

Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

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The U.S. Census Bureau announced in December 2010 that the 2010 Census showed the resident population of the United States on April 1, 2010, was

308,745,538 an increase of 9.7 percent over the 2000 U.S. resident population. The U.S. resident population represents the total number of people in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Virginia's resident population showed a 13% increase over the 2000 Census numbers. As far as apportionment goes Virginia will have the same number of representatives (11) and the average number of people per representative is 730,703. Beginning in February and ending by March 31, 2011, the Census Bureau will release demographic data to the states so their governments can start the redistricting process. For other census data product release dates, please visit: <http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2010/glance/>.

## NRV Transportation News

► The month of December was busy with transportation related activity throughout the Commonwealth. PDC staff attended a special meeting with the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to discuss future planning and funding strategies. Over the course of the next 10-15 years localities will be asked to tailor plans to conform to existing funding scenarios that are intended to constrain vision planning. \$500 million per year has been transferred from the Six-Year Improvement Program into maintenance, reducing the amount of funding available to fund capacity and safety improvements. As funding for maintaining the existing transportation network continues to shift, Virginia will have less funding available to match federal dollars unless additional revenue is generated.

► In mid-December, the Governor's office held a transportation conference in Roanoke to discuss the future of transportation in Virginia. Although Virginia recently ranked high in creating new jobs there were challenges ahead for maintaining and improving the nation's 3<sup>rd</sup> largest transportation network. The governor urged that the timing was appropriate to invest in transportation infrastructure because construction estimates and loan interest rates are currently at an all-time low. The Secretary of Transportation's staff presented numerous revenue generating ideas but were reluctant to endorse a particular strategy.

► In late December, the Virginia Department of Transportation facilitated a roundtable discussion for the communities located along Interstate 81. The meeting was called by the Secretary of Transportation to identify improvements and access to the corridor. Meeting participants identified the need for improvements for the interaction between truck and vehicle traffic by providing additional lanes along I-81 between its intersections with I-77 and I-581. Improvements to substandard interchanges along the route and park and ride locations were also identified.

► The Transportation Technical Advisory Committee and Bikeway Walkway Committee met on January 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Rural Long Range Transportation Plan, rural transportation work program tasks, the Regional Bikeway, Walkway, Blueway Plan and recent transportation news. Furthermore, the committees received news that Bike Virginia began registration in December for the 2011 "Roll Through Time" New River Valley bicycle tour. The event is scheduled for June 24-29 and has had almost double the amount of participants register within the first month as compared to the last couple of years. The event is expected to bring approximately 2,000 cyclists to the NRV. For further information on transportation related issues, please contact [Elijah Sharp](mailto:Elijah.Sharp@vtpdc.com) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 210.

# February 2011

## Meetings

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

- Feb. 1-Blacksburg PC-7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 3-MPO Policy Board Meeting-MC Gov't Center-2 p.m.
- Feb.3-4-VAPDC Winter Conf.
- Feb. 8- Pulaski PC-7 p.m.
- Feb. 9-Montgomery PC-7 p.m.; NRV Commerce Park-Noon
- Feb. 14-Pulaski Town PC-6 p.m.
- Feb. 15-Floyd PC-7p.m.
- Feb. 16-Montgomery PC-7 p.m.
- Feb. 17-MPO TAC-MC Gov't Center-10 a.m.
- Feb. 21-Radford PC-7 p.m.
- Feb. 22-Giles PC-6:30 p.m.
- Feb. 24-NRVPDC Commission Mtg.-6:00 p.m.
- Feb. 28-Pearisburg PC-7 p.m.

# March 2011

## Meetings

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

- March 1-Blacksburg PC-7:30 p.m.
- March 3-MPO Policy Board Meeting-MC Gov't Center-2 p.m.
- March 8-Pulaski PC-7 p.m.
- March 9-Montgomery PC-7 p.m.
- March 14-Pulaski Town PC-6 p.m.
- March 15-BWWW Mtg-NRVPDC-11:30 a.m.; TAC Mtg-NRVPDC-1:30 p.m.; Floyd PC-7p.m.
- March 16-Montgomery PC-7 p.m.
- March 17-MPO TAC-MC Gov't Center- 10 a.m.
- March 21-Radford PC-7 p.m.
- March 22-Giles PC-6:30 p.m.
- March 24 - NRVPDC Commission Mtg.-6:00 p.m.
- March 28-Pearisburg PC-7 p.m.

# THE COMPETITIVE EDGE

Official Publication of the New River Valley Competitiveness Center  
A Small Business Incubator

Shawn Utt/Doug Hudson,  
Acting Incubator Managers

February – March 2011

## *Safe Water Inc., Looking on the positive side*

*By: Susan Mirlohi, Vice President, Safe Water, Inc.*

A tenant of the New River Valley Competitiveness Center since 2004, Safe Water Inc. recently completed a successful and comprehensive inspection of its laboratory facilities as conducted by the Commonwealth of Virginia, Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services (DCLS) in October 2010; DCLS accredits laboratories that provide testing for public water supplies under the requirements of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. Providing bacteriological testing services to public and private water supplies since its start-up in 2004, Safe Water Inc. has successfully completed several of such inspections and remains hopeful to continue positively into the future. The administrative costs of accreditation and operation can be significant for a small laboratory, especially during a slow economy; however, what keeps a business going is always remembering its mission, as it is the case for all of us making it through every day life obstacles by having a purpose. For Safe Water, Inc., this mission has always been to provide an important and needed service to the community while informing customers about the nature of their drinking water, quality, maintenance, and safety requirements, regardless of any financial gains. As says Jay Mirlohi, President, "It is our goal to use our gathered knowledge and skills in sciences and engineering for the good of mankind and the environment, to the best of our abilities".



Staff of Safe Water Inc., standing by their office in the NRVCC; from left to right: Soheilla Mirlohi, Susan Mirlohi, and Jay Mirlohi.

In spite of the current slowly recovering economy, walking through the hallways of the New River Valley Competitiveness Center, it is easy not to get discouraged reading the words of wisdom displayed on the walls, upon which Safe Water, Inc. and many other small businesses have been built: "OPPORTUNITY, Where there is an open window, there is limitless opportunity; CHALLENGE, Greatness is achieved in the absence of fear. Courage and effort is not enough without vision; ATTITUDE, What happens to a man is less significant than what lies within; VISION, The best way to see the future is to create it; DETERMINATION, Determination gets you to the top; it takes character to stay there; TEAMWORK, When a team acts as one, sky is the limit; POSSIBILITIES, To discover possibilities is to reach beyond, into the impossible".

As with many other small business owners, Safe Water, Inc.'s endeavor has been less than profitable over the past few years. Nonetheless, the Company takes pride in knowing that it is making a positive contribution to the community by being there; whether it is through providing a needed service to the community, helping two local middle school students complete a science project about drinking water safety, providing timely and exceptional service to a public utility in the midst of a "boil water" alert, or to help ease worries and/or raise awareness of homeowners about the quality and maintenance of their drinking water systems.

Believing in its mission and inspired by these eloquent words of the late Mother Teresa, "We know only too well that what we are doing is nothing more than a drop in the ocean. But if the drop were not there, the ocean would be missing something", Safe Water Inc. continues to look on the positive side as it moves through 2011. They can be reached at 540.633.6739 (office), 6580 Valley Center Drive, Suite 108, online at [www.safewaterinc.com](http://www.safewaterinc.com), or by e-mail: [safewater@nrvc.org](mailto:safewater@nrvc.org) or [mirlohis@vt.edu](mailto:mirlohis@vt.edu) (Susan Mirlohi).



## Business Classes Offered



A series of business classes are being offered through Beans and Rice, Inc. and the Virginia Small Business Development Center at Radford University. They include First Step FastTrac Entrepreneurial Program as well as customer service and business basics programs.

The First Step FastTrac Entrepreneurial Program was first developed by the Kauffman Foundation in Kansas City and is now being offered through a partnership with B&R and the SBDC-RU. This program is conducted nationwide by facilitators trained by the Kauffman Foundation. Web site: <http://fasttrac.org>. The costs are \$52.00 for the First Step Fast Trac notebook and \$35.00 tuition (total \$87.00). Classes will be each Tuesday at the Beans and Rice Inc. office in Pulaski from 6:00pm to 9:00pm beginning Tuesday, February 8 and will continue for 12 weeks. The class has limited enrollment and applicants are accepted on a first come basis. For additional information, contact Eric Bucey with Beans and Rice, Inc. at 540-980-4111 or David Shanks at the Small Business Assistance Center at 540-831-7027.

The Business Basics and the Customer Service Workshops are both being offered through a partnership between B&R, SBDC-RU and People, Inc. (a non-profit organization serving southwest Virginia). These classes will be held at the Competitiveness Center in Fairlawn on February 17<sup>th</sup> with the Business Basics Workshop from 9am to noon and the Customer Service Workshop from 1pm until 3pm. Both workshops are free but advanced registration is required. For more information on the workshop and to register, go to [www.peopleinc.com.eventbrite.com](http://www.peopleinc.com.eventbrite.com) or call Eric Bucey at Beans and Rice, Inc. at 540-980-4111.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

### New River Valley Job Fair Expo

Your company is invited to participate in the New River Valley Job Fair Expo which will be held on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, at New River Community College in Dublin. This is an excellent opportunity for you to engage with potential employees, technically trained entry-level employees, recent college graduates and experienced professionals. Space is limited so the registration deadline for employers is March 24 (or until all available slots have been filled).

There is a registration fee of only \$95 which includes lunch and afternoon snacks for up to two company representatives, an exhibit booth and paid advertising prior to the Expo. Register by February 17 and save \$25. For additional information, contact Patricia Ryan at [pryan@nr.edu](mailto:pryan@nr.edu) or 540-674-3600, Ext. 4352.

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**For Competitiveness Center information contact:**

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Phone: 540.633.6730 Fax: 540.633.6768  
[incubatormanager@nrvc.org](mailto:incubatormanager@nrvc.org) or [www.nrvc.org/nrvcc.html](http://www.nrvc.org/nrvcc.html)



**New River Valley Planning District Commission**  
6580 Valley Center Drive, Suite 124  
Radford, VA 24141

## **New River Valley Regional Open Access Network Environmental Assessment**



In August 2010, Citizens Telephone Cooperative received a \$9.2 million dollar grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to construct the New River Valley Regional Open Access Network. This network consists of approximately 186 miles of fiber running from Wythe County into Botetourt County and throughout the New River Valley. The proposed service area contains 59 public K-12 schools, 2 community college campuses, 2 higher education institutions, 7 medical/healthcare facilities, 14 public libraries, 43 public safety facilities, and 41 other government locations.

In November 2010, Citizens contracted with the NRVPC as staff support for the New River Valley Network Wireless Authority to do the Environmental Assessment required by NTIA to fulfill the requirements set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act. The NRVPC has been working to contact applicable state and federal agencies for comment on the project. Currently, the NRVPC is working through issues with the potential for endangered species within the project area.

The draft of the Environmental Assessment will be completed by early February, barring any extensions necessary to complete consultations with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. For more information, please contact [Kevin Byrd](#) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 212.

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