

BRADLEY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Economic Impact of Tourism and The Pink Tomato Festival

David King, Executive Director of the Bradley County Chamber of Commerce presented a program on the economic impact of the Pink Tomato Festival and other tourism in Warren and Bradley County at the BCEDC April Board Meeting. David King stated that, "tourism is one of the driving forces of the state of Arkansas". In 2014, Arkansas was visited by 25,885,046 people. These visitors contributed \$6.6 billion in travel expenses, \$334 million in state taxes, and \$126 million in local taxes. He further explained that the way to attract visitors has changed, print media is no longer a person's first choice. Most visitor information comes from TV (63.8 %), online research, and only three magazines rank high in AR. These magazines are AARP, Southern Living, and AAA Tour book. Research shows that the largest number of AR tourist comes from Texas, Missouri, Louisiana, Illinois, and Oklahoma.

Mr. King explained that the state has 12 tourism regions. Bradley County is located in the Arkansas' South region with Ashley, Columbia, Calhoun, Dallas, Union and Ouachita Counties. The state of Arkansas provides advertising money to these 12 regions. He explained that Arkansas' South receives funding from the state, which is matching money. The region has to match the amount received from the state. If the amount is not matched, the state funds cannot be accessed.

David King explained that the Arkansas Flower and Garden Show invited 3 agricultural based festivals to this year's show and provided a free \$1,200.00 booth. The Pink Tomato Festival was chosen as a recipient of a free booth. Mr. King passed out Bradley County Pink Tomato Seed Packets that the Chamber created to be passed out at the Flower and Garden Show. He discussed the success of the show. The seed packets were a big success and were requested at the AR Flower and Garden Show by several restaurants, the Governor's Mansion, Farm Bureau, and several magazines. Since the Chamber first began passing out seed packets in February, they have passed out about 6,500 packets.

David King explained that the total tourism

travel expenditures for Bradley County are \$12,042,415. The travel generated payroll in Bradley County is \$1,819,227. The travel Generated jobs are 84. The travel generated state tax dollars are \$746,803. The travel generated local taxes are \$335,263. The visitors to Bradley County are estimated at 43,381. Mr. King advised that currently, the largest tourism draws are historical sites and festivals. The tomato industry and Moro Bay are the two largest draws for Bradley County.

Mr. King advised that there are 8 tomato festivals in the United States, one in Italy, and one in Canada. The Pink Tomato Festival is the Fourth largest festival in Arkansas behind Walkarusa, Riverfest, and El Dorado Music Festival. The Pink Tomato Festival draws between 22,000 and 25,000 people during the week of the festival. The Festival will bring in between \$4.3 and \$4.5 million into the region's economy. Mr. King explained that the economic impact spills over to Monticello and El Dorado with visitors staying in their hotels and eating in their restaurants. Dr. Smalling asked what the Pink Tomato Festival's budget for entertainment is. Mr. King explained that the total Pink Tomato Festival budget is \$80,000 to \$82,000 and the entertainment budget is around \$32,000. Greg Reep stated that the entertainment budget was increased this year so that bigger names can be brought in on Friday and Saturday nights. Mr. King discussed the list of entertainers for Friday and Saturday. He explained how they obtain the entertainment. A booking agent is essential to obtaining entertainment. The Pink Tomato Festival utilizes 87 year old, booking agent Barbara Hubbard, known as "Mother Hubbard". Her booking fee is a fraction of others and her fee is paid to her scholarship fund at New Mexico State University. Mr. King explained how the artist's routing, aids in booking talent for the festival.

Mr. King advised that the current top sponsors to the PTF are Ryburn Motor Company, Ozark Mountain Poultry, and Super Valu. Dr. Pennington asked if the Festival seeks sponsorship from large companies like Coke or Pepsi. Mr. King advised they do, but none (Cont.)

HOW CAN BCEDC HELP LOCAL BUSINESSES?

BCEDC can help your business in such areas as:

- Land and building acquisitions
- Financial packaging
- Demographic and economic data
- Incentive packaging
- Workforce training
- Plant expansions
- Entrepreneurial and small business development

BCEDC Is Affiliated With:

- Southeast Arkansas Cornerstone Coalition
- Southeast Arkansas Regional Intermodal Authority
- Arkansas Heavy Equipment Training Program
- Southeast Arkansas Community Based Education Center
- Arkansas Small Business and Technology Dev. Ctr. @UAM
- Bradley County Chamber of Commerce

May 2015— Jobs Update		
Bradley Co. Employers	# Emp.	Openings
AR Superior Federal CU	13	0
Armstrong Flooring	246	0+
Ashcraft Wood Products	21	0
Bradley Brand Furniture	5	3
Bradley County	68	0
Bradley Co. Medical Ctr.	260	6*
Chapel Woods Health & Rehab	102	9
City of Hermitage	6	0
City of Warren	43	1
First Presbyterian Childcare Ctr	20	0*
First State Bank of Warren	31	0
Fulghum Fibers	9	0
Hermitage Schools	82	1
New Beginnings, CASA	20	2
Oasis Trading	39	0
OK Foods	17	2
Ouachita Hardwood	41	0*
Ozark Mountain Poultry	272	1
Potlatch	161	2
SE AR Community Action Corp.	88	1
SE AR Human Dev. Ctr.	270	10
Super Valu Foods	49	1**
The Mad Butcher	57	0***
Townsend Flooring	31	0*
UAMS/KIDS FIRST—Warren	19	0
Union Bank	8	0
Warren Bank & Trust	37	0
Warren School Dist.	286	3
TOTAL	2301	42

*Taking Applications **Applications on Thur. ***Applications on Mon., 1-4 pm

Tourism—Continued

have agreed to sponsorships. Dr. Bob Smalling asked if the Festival has ever considered charging to see the entertainment. Mr. King advised that it has been discussed, but they will not charge as long as they do not have to. He explained that this year there will be a charge for VIP seating. John Lipton asked what amount Arkansas' South is contributing to the Festival. Mr. King advised nothing at this time. Mr. Lipton stated that they should have money coming from Parks & Tourism that flows back to the region. Mr. King explained that it is match money and if Arkansas' South can't raise the match, they have to turn back Parks & Tourism's money. Mr. King further discussed the fundraising process. He explained that the Pink Tomato Festival gets a percentage of the money brought in by the carnival and many sponsors have increased their contribution for a sign on the court square from \$150.00 to \$1,500.00. Greg Reep stated that half of the needed funding has been committed.

JOB OPENINGS AT:

Armstrong Flooring: Has ongoing True Temp production worker positions. The positions are typically long term with the possibility of becoming perm. Interested candidates apply at ESA in Monticello. Permanent positions may be found at www.armstrong.com as they become available.

Bradley Co. Medical Center: Currently posted job openings include 5 full-time, 1 part-time and various PRN positions. For open positions, in all departments and to apply go to — www.bradleycountymedicalcenter.com/jobs

Chapel Woods Health & Rehab: Has job openings for 1 LPN position (3 pm to 11 pm), 1 LPN position (7p to 7a), 1 CNA positions (3 pm to 11 pm), 3 CNA position—day, and 3 CNA positions—night. For additional information and to apply call 870-226-6766

City of Warren: Has job opening for 1 Police Officer. Contact the Warren Police Dept. for additional information. 870-226-3701

Hermitage Schools: Has an opening for a School Secretary. For information call 870-463-2246.

New Beginnings: Has 2 job openings. For information and to apply call 226-9970.

OK Foods: Has a job openings for a Clerical position and a Breeder Service Technician. For details and to apply visit <https://career8.successfactors.com/career?company=C0001099501P>

Ozark Mountain Poultry: Has a job opening for a Night Shift Line Supervisor. They are always looking for good production workers. Contact the Arkansas Workforce Center in Monticello, AR at 870-367-7105, for employment information.

AR Heavy Equipment Operators Training Academy Graduating Class

LOOKING FOR TRAINED EMPLOYEES?

AHEOTA has 13 students graduating this summer. These students will graduate with the following certificates and credentials:

- Technical Certificate from UAM
- NCCER Certificates in 3 levels of Heavy Equipment Operations

HOW CAN BCEDC HELP

BCEDC

110 N. Myrtle St.
Warren, AR 71671

Phone: 870-226-3760

Fax: 870-226-3770

websites:

www.bcedc.com

arkansassiteselection.com

E-mail:

bradleycountyidc@sbcglobal.net

Potlatch Corporation: Has openings for a fully qualified electrician and a millwright. Apply at www.potlatchcorp.com. EEO/AA / Veteran employer with competitive wages and benefits.

SE AR Community Action Corp.: Has a job opening for a Family Service Worker Bradley County. Job opening information and applications can be obtained by contacting Personnel at 870-226-2668 ext. 320. **Application will be accepted until May 16, 2015 by close of business.** SEACAC is an Equal Opportunity & Affirmative Action Employer.

SE AR Human Development Ctr.: For job openings information go to www.ark.org/arstatejobs/index.php

Warren School Dist.: For details on job openings and to apply contact the Warren School Dist. at 870-226-6738 or online at www.edline.net/pages/warren_sd

To list your company's job listings, in the BCEDC Newsletter, please call 870-226-3760 or email us at bradleycountyidc@sbcglobal.net.

- NCCER Certificate in the Core Curriculum
- OSHA 10 Hour Training
- American Heart CPR/First Aid Training
- Forklift Certifications
- 8 of the Potential Grads are attempting to obtain their CDL.

For additional information on these graduates, contact David Carter, Jason Davis or Teresa Sandine at 226-2750.