

BRADLEY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

ARMSTRONG HARDWOOD FLOORING HOSTED THE BCEDC BOARD MEETING

Armstrong Hardwood Flooring invited BCEDC to hold their regularly scheduled Board Meeting, at their facility. As the meeting began, **John Lipton** thanked Marty Reep and Armstrong Hardwood Flooring for hosting the September BCEDC Board Meeting.

Marty Reep, Armstrong’s Environmental Health and Safety Manager and **Keith Van Dee**, the Human Resources Manager presented an update to the BCEDC Board of Directors and guests. Mr. Reep explained that the Warren, Armstrong Witt Plant is doing very well, business is good. He explained that the meeting room, where the meeting was held, is referred to as the “war room”. This is where all managers meet daily, to discuss business and make plans for the facility. Mr. Reep advised that the Warren facility is very fortunate to have a lot of very talented and experienced managers.

Mr. Reep explained that Armstrong started in 1860 by founder Tom Armstrong. The Company has split the flooring companies away from the other companies. They will both be publicly traded, but they are both still Armstrong. There will be no local changes.

Armstrong is based out of Lancaster, PA. The Corporate Campus in Lancaster, PA is about the size of UAM’s campus. Armstrong has about 9,000 employees globally. There are 34 manufacturing facilities around the world with 20 of those in North America. Mr. Reep explained that all of the wood flooring plants are located in the South Eastern part of the United States. Armstrong’s largest wood flooring plant is in Beverly, West Virginia. He stated that Armstrong is a strong company, which continues to grow.

Mr. Reep advised that the Witt Plant sits on about 90 acres. The lumberyard is about 21 acres with about 16 million board feet capacity. The plant has 21 dry kilns, which includes 5 new kilns built a year or so ago. When they are all running full, they will hold about 2.1 million. The plant has two mill lines and one finish line that produces about a half million square feet of flooring per week. The annual production is about 25 million square feet of flooring. The facility has a 50,000 square foot finished goods warehouse that has the capacity of about three and one-half million square

feet of product. The plant tries to not keep that much product on hand but to ship it to the customer as produced. Mr. Reep explained that the plant spends about \$37 million per year purchasing lumber. The company has about 250 employees and they run 2 shifts. The annual payroll is about \$10 million. Mr. Reep stated that they run flooring that is 2 ¼”, 3 ¼” and some 5” widths. The thickness is always ¾”, solid flooring. Traditionally they only ran red oak, white oak and some ash, but recently they have begun running hickory.

Mr. Reep stated that probably next year they will be installing equipment to produce “Hand Scrapped Flooring”. He stated that for years, the Titusville, PA plant has produced “Hand Scrapped Flooring” by employing a crew of Amish workers to physically hand scrape the flooring. A few years ago someone invented a machine to produce the same effect and Armstrong acquired the patent. Mr. Reep stressed the importance of keeping up with the trends and demands of the market.

It was explained that their employees are drawn from about a 50 mile radius, but the majority come from within Bradley County. There are a variety of job opportunities, both hourly and salary. The facility is non-union. The average wage is about \$14.88 per hour and offers excellent benefits. Mr. Reep stated that applications are taken online or through ESA in Monticello. He explained that all new hires are brought on as temps for a minimum of 45 days.

Gary Harrison asked Keith Van Dee if Armstrong has any problems finding good employees. **Mr. Van Dee** stated that during hot summer months the turnover is higher, but usually it is not a problem. Mr. Van Dee stated that 60 – 70% of their employees have been with the company for more than 10 years.

John Lipton asked for an overview of Armstrong’s “On the Job Training”. **Mr. Van Dee** explained that new employees either go straight to the line or work with an experienced worker for training. He stated that some of the positions require 3 days of classroom training and testing. They will then work with an experienced worker for about a week. (Continued on Page 2)

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

October 2015— Jobs Update		
Bradley Co. Employers	# Emp.	Openings
AR Superior Federal CU	13	0
Armstrong Flooring	244	9
Ashcraft Wood Products	24	0
Bradley Brand Furniture	5	3
Bradley County	68	0
Bradley Co. Medical Ctr.	266	23
Chapel Woods Health & Rehab	112	3
City of Hermitage	7	0
City of Warren	42	2
First Presbyterian Childcare Ctr	21	0*
First State Bank of Warren	31	0
Fulghum Fibers	10	0
Hermitage Schools	82	2
New Beginnings, CASA	17	3
Oasis Trading	39	0
OK Foods	19	0
Ouachita Hardwood	45	0*
Ozark Mountain Poultry	320	1
Potlatch	169	0
SE AR Community Action Corp.	80	2
SE AR Human Dev. Ctr.	252	30
Super Valu Foods	59	1**
The Mad Butcher	63	2***
Townsend Flooring	31	1*
UAMS/KIDS FIRST—Warren	19	1
Union Bank	8	0
Warren Bank & Trust	36	0
Warren School Dist.	287	8
TOTAL	2369	91

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

ARMSTRONG—Continued

Dr. Bob Smalling asked if the plant is running any overtime hours. **Mr. Van Dee** advised that it is based on the market demand. Dr. Smalling asked who their biggest buyers are. Mr. Van Dee advised that the largest are Lowes and Home Depot.

Mr. Lipton asked if Genesee & Wyoming Railroad has approached them about shipping by rail. **Mr. Reep** advised not that he knows. He stated that the plant has been modified in a way that the use of the existing spur would not be possible without a lot of modification. Mr. Reep stated that all shipping is currently by truck.

Mr. Reep stated that the Witt Plant has the best safety record in the nation. The Witt Plant's slogan is "If you can't work safe you can't work here". The facility is setting safety records, daily. Mr. Reep played a video he had produced to orientate new employees with the facility and to introduce them to the managers and some of the mill workers. Mr. Reep explained that every new em-

JOB OPENINGS AT:

Armstrong Flooring: Has 9-job openings. Interested candidates should apply at ESA in Monticello. Permanent positions may be found at www.armstrong.com as they become available.

Bradley Co. Medical Center: Has employment opportunities for RN, LPN, Nursing Asst, CNA and Medical Records. Employment opportunities are posted online at www.bradleycountymedicalcenter.com for full-time, part-time and PRN positions.

Chapel Woods Health & Rehab: Has job openings for 1-nurse (11-7) and 2-CNA (3-11 & 11-7). For additional information and to apply call 870-226-6766.

City of Warren: Has job openings for 2-Police Officers. Contact the Warren Police Dept. for additional information. 870-226-3701

Hermitage Schools: Has job openings for 1-bus driver & 1-personal care aide. For additional information go to:

www.hermitageschools.org click on Job listings. To apply call the Superintendent's office at 870-463-2246.

New Beginnings, CASA: Has job openings for 1-clinical worker & 2-security positions. Call 870-226-9970 for additional information or to apply.

Ozark Mountain Poultry: Always looking for good production workers with 6-months poultry experience. Contact the Arkansas Workforce Center in Monticello, AR at 870-367-2476 for employment information.

Potlatch Corporation: For employment information go to www.potlatchcorp.com. EEO/AA / Veteran employer with competitive wages and benefits.

ployee is required to watch the video before they can set foot in the facility. The video acquaints new employees with the mill environment and how to work safely in the mill.

Mr. Reep took the group to visit their recently constructed "Quality Room". Mr. Reep explained that this room contains a flooring display made up of finished Armstrong Flooring Products that is changed weekly. The Witt Plant employees are invited to view the display, comment on the quality of the product, and to point out any flaws.

HOW CAN BCEDC HELP

BCEDC

110 N. Myrtle St.
Warren, AR 71671

Phone: 870-226-3760

Fax: 870-226-3770

websites:

www.bcedcar.com

arkansassiteselection.com

E-mail:

bradleycountyidc@sbcglobal.net

SE AR Community Action

Corp. : For details on job openings and to apply call 870-226-2668

SE AR Human Development

Ctr.: Openings of salaried positions are advertised in the Shoppers Guide. For information on all job openings and to apply please go to www.arstatejobs.com

The Mad Butcher: Has 2-part-time positions. Applications taken on Mondays, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm at Mad Butcher.

UAM/KIDS FIRST-Warren:

Has a job opening for an Early Childhood Developmental Specialist (position #50039658). Apply online at www.uams.edu/jobs

Warren School Dist.: For details on job openings and to apply contact the Warren School Dist. at 870-226-6738 or online at www.warensd.org

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

MEET AT MOLLY'S

EVERY MONDAY 7:00 am

This public forum meeting encourages the discussion of topics important to Bradley County residents.

All are invited to meet at Molly's Diner every Monday at 7:00 am