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Monday, July 26, 2010

Business digest

Financial planning firm opens in Salem

Partners in Financial Planning LLC, a new fee-only financial planning firm, has opened in Salem.

The firm was founded by James Pearman Jr. and Pam Poldiak, who have a combined 60 years of financial services experience.

The firm also has launched a new website at partnersinfinancialplanning.com.

CHP teams with AmeriCorps for summer efforts

Community Housing Partners in Christiansburg will employ eight people from the AmeriCorps VISTA program this summer to help with community stabilization efforts.

AmeriCorps VISTA is a national service program designed to fight poverty.

Members will work on projects such as presenting programs that help low- to moderate-income families with money management and financial literacy. Others will oversee the rehabilitation of three CHP rental housing communities under the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program.

The AmeriCorps members include Jonathan Givens of Blacksburg and Terri Kendrick of Lynchburg.

TMEIC-GE earns trade certification

TMEIC-GE, a joint venture between Toshiba, Mitsubishi Electric and General Electric based in Roanoke, has received a Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism certification.

C-TPAT is a partnership between U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the private sector to improve international supply chain and U.S. border security. The certification will allow TMEIC-GE to have priority processing and a reduced number of Customs inspections, with the goal of creating fewer border delays.

TMEIC-GE had to provide a detailed report of procedures already in place to enhance supply chain security in order to receive the certification.

Customer support center brings 250 jobs to Altavista

Virginia-based Intersections Inc. is establishing a customer care center in Altavista.

The company says the operation will bring 250 new jobs to Campbell County.

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The Chantilly-based company provides consumer and corporate identity theft protection.

New name, location for Martin Bros.

After 98 years in the Roanoke Valley, Martin Bros. Contractors is changing its name to MB Contractors and launching a new website -- mbcontractors.com -- as part of a strategic plan to strengthen brand awareness.

The company also has opened a new office in Richmond. Carthan Currin III will join the new office as director of business development.

Regitex expands in Mecklenburg

Regitex USA LLC is investing \$1.5 million to open a textile manufacturing plant in Southern Virginia.

The company is acquiring and upgrading an existing plant in Mecklenburg County for the operation, which it says will create 60 new jobs.

Regitex USA is a subsidiary of Regitex Inc., headquartered in Quebec. The company produces yarns for the industrial, protective apparel, high-performance and home furnishing markets.

Virginia Tech wins science education grant

Virginia Tech is one of 50 research universities nationwide to receive a science education award from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

The \$1.4 million grant will be used to encourage faculty to create innovative ways to teach science and research to undergraduates.

HHMI awarded \$70 million in grants this summer. This is Tech's first award

Tech has already started to develop a "sciencering" minor, uniting science and engineering students and allowing them to take classes outside their major. Biology majors will need to perform research in an engineering lab, and engineers will need to go to a chemistry, biology or physics lab.

This program is the first step toward developing an undergraduate biomedical engineering program, in addition to the graduate program already on campus.

WLNI wins broadcasting awards

WLNI (News-Talk 105.9) in Lynchburg was recognized with three first place awards in the large market category at the 73rd Virginia Broadcasting Awards.

Mari White and Brian Weigan, co-hosts of The MorningLine, received first place awards for best morning show, best documentary or public affairs program for "Camille Remembered" and best human interest series for "Surviving Summer With Your Kids."

White and Weigan are on air weekday mornings from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.

New restaurant opens in Bedford

The Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for Fat Daddy's, a new barbeque restaurant, on July 14. Keith Burnette owns the Hull Street restaurant, which also offers catering services.

Date set for annual 'Politic'n & Pig Pick'n'

The annual Politic'n & Pig Pick'n, which brings together business leaders and state and local politicians, will be held Sept. 9 at the Virginia Museum of Transportation.

The event is sponsored by the Business Leadership Fund. Cost is \$69 per person. For information, call (540) 983-0700 ext. 221.

U.S. Cellular moves to new Salem location

U.S. Cellular has moved its retail store to West Main Street in Salem, across from Spartan Square.

The 2,600-square-foot store includes a showroom and a service center with an on-site technician.

Governor announces Transportation Safety Awards

Companies and agencies from across Southwest and Central Virginia were among the winners of the 2010 Governor's Transportation Safety Awards.

Among the winners:

Employer safety: Kevin Jones and Bee Line Towing of Lynchburg provided cars for safety demonstrations, displays and education programs, and vehicles and associated towing services for crash reconstruction classes.

Occupant protection: During the 2009 Child Passenger Safety week, the Bedford Police Department partnered with local day care centers to conduct safety seat checks. The department also sponsored a safety day, where safety seat checks were conducted and the department's airbag sled was demonstrated, and partnered with Liberty High School to conduct a safety event for 300 driver education students.

Public transportation: Blacksburg Transit instituted a bus driving simulator for hiring, training and crash re-creation.

Rail safety: Sgt. Kassi Allen from the Liberty University Police Department met with Norfolk Southern employees to gather safety information and with students to distribute rail safety literature. She assisted Norfolk Southern police officers at a nearby rail crossing in apprehending violators and distributing safety literature to motorists as they crossed the tracks.

Youth traffic safety: The New River Valley Driving School in Christiansburg presented and coordinated "Shattered Dreams," a mock DUI crash drama presented to more than 400 students, faculty and parents at Auburn High School.

The awards are given annually by the Virginia Board of Transportation Safety, a 12-member group that advises the governor, secretary of transportation and Department of Motor Vehicles commissioner.

Governor makes board appointments

Gov. Bob McDonnell appointed or reappointed three dozen Virginia residents to state boards this month, including six people from Southwest and Central Virginia:

Auctioneers Board: William "Bill" Bryant III, president of the Counts Realty & Auction Group of Lynchburg.

Board for Contractors: E.C. Pace III of Roanoke, consultant for E.C. Pace Co. Inc.

Board of Counseling: William Scott of Radford, assistant professor, Radford University.

Virginia Manufactured Housing Board: Walter Hughes of Franklin County, retired; William Moody of Covington, president of Moody Homes Inc.; Earl Satterwhite of Franklin County, general manager of Fleetwood Homes Inc.

Bedford shop celebrates new location

Gilded Era shop owner Fay Harris has moved her business from North Bridge Street in Bedford to Forest Road in Forest. Gilded Era sells jewelry, handbags and home decor.

The Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce celebrated the relocation of the shop with a ribbon cutting on July 16.

Tech online magazine wins awards

The Virginia Tech College of Architecture and Urban Studies online magazine has won gold and silver 2010 Magnus Opus Awards.

The gold award was for best telecommunication publication and the silver award was for best school/university publication. The contest is conducted by ContentWise magazine and the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

The online magazine was designed by the college's former communication manager Heather Riley Chadwick, marketing and communications director for the Center of the Arts at Virginia, and features videos and slideshows.

3 museums receive grants

The Institute of Museum and Library Services has awarded three Central Virginia museums more than \$240,000 in grants.

Amazement Square, a children's museum in Lynchburg, received a community engagement grant of \$71,138 to fund the CityArts Mosaic Mural project. The program pairs at-risk students with professional artists to turn a wall in downtown Lynchburg into a work of art.

Thomas Jefferson's retreat home in Bedford County, Popular Forest, was awarded \$149,064 to launch the first phase of a landscape project to investigate and restore plantings to the Jefferson era.

The Sweet Briar Art Gallery received a \$23,791 collections stewardship grant to overhaul data management of the college's permanent art collection.

Technical institute gets new funding

The Virginia Technical Institute in Altavista has received an additional federal grant of \$99,500 to cover operating costs as it prepares to open this fall.

VTI will prepare workers in plumbing, masonry, electrical, HVAC and other fields. The school received accreditation in May and plans to begin classes Sept. 7.

The grant comes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Business Enterprise Grant program. The school has received \$350,000 in federal grants so far.

Visiting volunteers help out at Douthat

Volunteers from Royal Canin, an international pet food company, teamed up with Douthat State Park to install a walking track and playground at Whispering Pines Campground this month.

The company was attending a conference at The Homestead and wanted to contribute to a service project in the area. Two hundred volunteers from Royal Canin helped to install signs, picnic pods, a walking track, fitness stations, benches, swing sets and mulching at the campground.

VSBC seeks veteran of the year nominations

The Virginia Small Business Development Center is calling for nominations for the Small Business Veteran of the Year award.

The award is presented each year to someone who has served in the military and is a current

or former small business owner. The award is open to all ages and military services.

For more information visit www.smallbizvetaward.org. The deadline for nomination is Aug. 7.

SiteVision to develop firefighters website

SiteVision of Roanoke has been selected to develop a new website for the Virginia State Firefighters Association.

SiteVision will develop an online version of VSFA's Fire Safety Operational Guideline, giving the public greater access to fire safety tips and instructions.

The website will include data collection and analysis tools, downloadable forms and templates, an interactive calendar, videos and a teaching tutorial.

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