

Washington's Anthony Forest Products earns national 'safest company' awards

Anthony Forest Products' Washington laminating plant has won the first-ever "Safest Company Award" from APA, the Engineered Wood Association.

"That's an extraordinary success story," said Steve Zylkowski, Vice President of APA-The Engineered Wood Association, "and it says something about both the management team at Anthony Forest and the employees."

"Our team goal is to send our employees home healthy and whole to their families and friends each day and I want to thank all of them for helping the company achieve this award," added Warren Newsome, Plant Manager.

Zylkowski said, "From a management standpoint, these programs can't work without full commitment and support from the CEO on down. It takes vision to see the long-term benefits and it takes leadership to create a culture of safety. But most of all, I think it takes a sense of genuine trust and caring that's recognized by all employees."

The Washington plant was one of only two awarded the Safest



Presenting a national safety award, Steve Zylkowski, VP of APA-The Engineered Wood Association, congratulates Warren Newsome, Plant Manager of Washington's Anthony Forest Products Georgia Laminating plant.

Company Award. Anthony Forest's Georgia Laminating in Washington and Arkansas Laminating Plant in El Dorado, were also recognized in the "Incident Free Honor Society."

"This perfect score of zero incidents for each of our company's wood laminating plants, and to top it off with the 'Safest Company Award' is very rewarding news," said Beryl Anthony, Chairman of the Board. "We are very proud of

this honor from the APA, and we strive to be excellent in the safety and health of our employees and community."

Begun in 1982, the APA awards program honors the managements and employees of companies and mills with the lowest severity-weighted incidence rates. For 2008, Anthony Forest competed against 49 other eligible mills for the Safest Company Award, which encourages and recognizes operational excellence with the goal of reducing injury and illness rates year over year.

The APA is a nonprofit trade association representing North American manufacturers of plywood, oriented strand board, glued laminated timber, wood I-Joist, laminated veneer lumber, and other structural engineered wood products. Its primary functions are quality auditing and testing, applied research, and market support and development.

Anthony Forest Products Company is an integrated forest products business incorporated in 1965. The company owns approximately 91,000 acres of timberland in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. In addition to its Washington laminating plant, it operates southern pine lumber producing mills in Urbana, Ark., and Atlanta, Tex.; and wood chips mills in Plain Dealing, Louisiana, and Troup, Texas, along with another engineered wood laminating plant in El Dorado, Ark. Anthony Forest Products Company and Domtar, Inc. of Montreal, Canada jointly own and operate an I-Joist manufacturing plant in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.



Children's Playhouse opens next week

The Wizard (Billy Creel) casts a spell over sleeping Aladdin (Scott Lewis) in rehearsals for the Washington Little Theater's The Children's Playhouse upcoming performances. Students from Wilkes County and Lincoln County schools will experience live theater all next week starring actors Creel and Lewis, along with Paula Stevens and Tara Townsend. The Children's Playhouse began in 2004 to provide the experience of live theatrical performances for area schoolchildren, many of whom have never seen live theater.

Public hearing set to consider grant to bring factory jobs here

A public hearing has been set to inform citizens of a potential economic development grant that could bring a number of industrial jobs to Washington.

The public hearing will be held at the Washington City Hall, in the City Council chambers, on Thursday, September 10, at 5 p.m.

The City of Washington is applying to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for grant of up to \$500,000 to help build a factory building to lease to a company considering relocation to Washington.

"This particular company

builds commercial building systems," said David Jenkins, "but we're not quite ready to identify the company. Plus we have two other industrial prospects that are interested in relocating here. The City of Washington and the Payroll Development Authority are working constantly to attract jobs here."

The new building would be located off Lexington Avenue near the Pliant Corporation warehouse across from the Wilkes County Stockyard, Jenkins said.

An official notice of the public hearing is published elsewhere in this issue.

Fall ArtFest issues call for artists Nov. 7-8

The Washington-Wilkes Arts Foundation has issued a call for artists to exhibit their works at this year's Fall ArtFest set for November 7 and 8, bringing both new and returning favorite artists for the crowds of art lovers to meet.

As before, there will be special art workshops for children, too.

"This is our sixth annual ArtFest," said Debbie Wells, "and we'll be doing co-op advertising in Augusta, so we expect this event to be very well attended."

The juried art show will see artists in all media competing for more than \$1,000 in cash prizes awarded. This year, the art show on The Square will run both Saturday and Sunday, a format preferred by the artists, who say they see the most sales on Sunday.

Again this year, the ArtFest will



More than 150 children participated in art projects in workshops conducted by Polly Fievet at the 2008 Fall ArtFest.

have special art workshops for children ages 4-12. Kids will be able to work on art projects of their own at art stations under the guidance of Polly Fievet and helpers. "Saturday, we'll have art projects that kids can work on," she said. "We encourage children to come out and explore their artistic side at ArtFest."

for our honored guests," Wells said.

The arts foundation's web site, WashingtonWilkesArts.org, has more information, an online application, and detailed artists' guidelines. For more information, contact Debbie Wells at 706-318-8190 or by email at debbiecwells@yahoo.com.

Several new artists are expected, Wells said, along with returning favorites from previous ArtFests including painters, photographers, jewelry artists, and ceramics artists.

A reception Saturday night will welcome the artists.

"In celebration and appreciation of our artists, the Washington-Wilkes Arts Foundation will host a special evening on Saturday at the beautiful Holly Court Inn

Rusher Street showing sure signs of redevelopment work

Rusher Street is showing definite signs that the multi-year Southwest Washington Redevelopment Plan is moving forward, as the City of Washington has bought a highly visible corner lot at the intersection of Hospital Drive.

"We're about halfway through acquiring properties on Rusher Street," David Jenkins said. "The City is continuing to acquire properties and demolish structures in preparation for the next part of the redevelopment plan, which is building new single-family homes."

The program has already allowed the city to buy up or condemn many of the abandoned structures on the three-block-long Rusher Street, between Whitehall Street and Hospital Drive, which has been the home of a handful of proud homeowners, but also many overgrown lots, dilapidated houses, and abandoned trailers.

Last year, the City of Washington was awarded \$800,000 in federal grants for infrastructure improvements such as new storm water and sewage lines, street paving, and property acquisition, that laid the groundwork for redeveloping the Rusher Street area. A second grant will allow the city to restructure the streetscape with improved utilities, and finally allow for several new owner-occupied homes to be financed and built.

The Rusher Street renovation is

the centerpiece of the multi-year Southwest Washington Redevelopment Plan, which is designed to promote private single-family housing redevelopment, promote commercial investment, and clear dilapidated housing in the Whitehall area.

The redevelopment grants were part of nearly \$36 million in federal grants from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the state's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and Community HOME Investment Program (CHIP).

The CDBG program is administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), which uses funds allocated through HUD to support local initiatives that focus on improving living conditions and economic opportunities throughout the state.



On Rusher Street, tape marks off more property being acquired to turn the blighted area into a neighborhood of privately owned single-family homes.

Despite high number of school absentees, no H1N1 flu cases confirmed yet in Wilkes

Although no cases of H1N1 flu have been confirmed in Wilkes County, a variety of flu-like illnesses may have made as many as 10 percent of the students in Wilkes County schools sick last week, said the Wilkes County Health Department.

"The absentees peaked at 10 percent last week on Thursday," Jennifer W. Jackson, RN, health

department administrator, said. "But it's been a mild flu-like virus and there are a lot fewer out sick this week."

"Things are much better this week," said Dr. Rosemary W. Caddell, Wilkes County Superintendent of Schools. "We've had high numbers of children out sick, but it's been with a variety of sickness, not necessarily flu."

State rules now say that testing for H1N1 flu should be limited to those who are hospitalized with the illness, since there are only two labs in Georgia that can test for it. "By the time the test comes back, the patients have recovered and are back at work or school," Jackson said. "It's a fairly mild flu."

Whether "what's going around" is the usual seasonal flu, H1N1 flu, or just the common cold, both health and school authorities are telling people to take the same preventive actions.

"If your child has a fever or feels like the flu is coming on, keep them home," Caddell said. "That's the key. Keep them home for 24 hours after the fever has gone away without medicine."

Teachers and school nurses are keeping an eye on students and will send home any child with a fever or who is feeling unwell, she said.

The other key to prevention is hand washing. "Wash, wash, wash your hands," Jackson said. "Wash them thoroughly and often, and use hand sanitizer when you can't wash."

"We teach children to sing 'Happy Birthday' all the way through while they wash their hands so they'll

wash long enough to be effective," Caddell said.

Good hand washing, Jackson said,

is absolutely critical and the best way to prevent the spread of germs. "We encourage everyone to wash their hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective," she said. "Everyone should wash their hands before eating, after going to the bathroom and after they cough, sneeze, or blow their nose."

Jackson stresses good hygiene for those who are already ill. "Germs spread when we cough or sneeze, so you should cover coughs and sneezes with your elbows whenever possible. You need to wash your hands after you cough, sneeze, or blow your nose."

She says people should properly dispose of used tissues and avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth.

Staying away from others in the workplace or at school is critical to stopping the spread of the flu. "If you are sick or have a fever, please stay at home and limit your contact with others to keep them from spreading the infection. If you have flu-like symptoms, please contact your health care provider for further guidance."

Dr. Caddell says that she sympathizes with parents who wake up to find themselves with a sick child. "If you haven't arranged for child care in advance, it's tempting to send them on to school so you won't miss work," she said. "But try to set up care for a child ahead of time, so you'll be ready if they get sick and you can't get off work."

To avoid spreading germs:

- If you feel sick or have a fever, stay at home.
- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, before eating, after going to the bathroom and after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with your elbow. Dispose of used tissues and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.