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1321 Technology Drive
Barnwell, S.C. 29812
(803) 541-0023
(803) 541-3322 fax

www.southern-carolina.org

New Industry Has Regional Impact

Most of the residents of the Southern Carolina region have heard by now about the world's largest oriented strand board manufacturing facility being constructed in Fairfax; many have driven by the construction site on Hwy. 321 just to see if the rumors are true that the Canadians are coming to town.

It's true. Grant Forest Products of Canada will soon begin operation of their first American plant, Grant Allendale. The modern white facility sporting the sleek red stripe anchors the 470-acre site, which is marked by a simple sign bearing Grant's signature red "G" logo. Just down the road from downtown Fairfax, the site has employed over 1,000 in construction over the last few months. In the coming months, about 120 others will find permanent jobs with Grant Allendale.

What some of our local residents may not realize is that while the company is Canadian, the Grant Forest Products team is comprised of a lot of familiar faces from around the region, and many of our local businesses are already benefiting from the new industry as well.

"This is what we call regionalism at work," said Southern Carolina Alliance Chairman Carl Gooding. "People from all four counties are getting jobs at Grant, our local retailers and business owners are doing business with the new industry, and the member counties will share the tax revenue from this multi-county project."

"The plant is also bringing new families into the region to make their homes here in Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, and Hampton Counties," Gooding added.

Chuck Emanuelli is one of them. He recently moved his family from Huntsville, Alabama, to accept the position of Environmental and Safety Manager for Grant Allendale. Chuck, his wife, and two children have settled into Bamberg, where they purchased a home.

"It's an opportunity to make a mark on a new facility," said Emanuelli, "and now we're closer to family in North Carolina. Bamberg is similar to where we lived before, and we are excited about the possibilities here with Grant."

Manny Smart of Fairfax is among the many local residents who



Chuck Emanuelli of Bamberg, Manny Smart of Fairfax, and Jeff Conder of Estill are all proud to be a part of the Allendale team.



Spann Brabham (left) and Fletcher Brabham (right) of Brabham Sharpening Service meet with SCA Chairman Carl Gooding, who was in Bamberg recently speaking to the Quarterback Club. Brabham Sharpening Service is one of the many local industries benefiting from the multi-county project, Grant Allendale.

have been hired by Grant. A familiar face in the Southern Carolina region, Manny, who is married with five children, feels fortunate that the opportunity with Grant emerged as EFCO was closing their plant.

"I live in Fairfax and drove to Barnwell for years," said Manny, who has been hired as a Team Leader at Grant. "Now I'll be working right here in Fairfax."

"I have never seen such a positive company," added Smart, who also served in the U.S. Army. "I just enjoy the team atmosphere here at work."

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Alliance Acquires Holland Hitch Annex

Southern Carolina Alliance has acquired the former Holland Hitch Annex building, located on U.S. Highway 78 near Denmark, South Carolina. The 18,000 square-foot building is located on a 7.5 acre lot, adjacent to the former Holland Hitch facility and site.

"Over the last year, industrial prospects, both locally and from around the country, have visited this site and have been

interested in operating in the building," said SCA Vice Chairman Johnny Williamson. "We were fortunate to be able to acquire the building as an addition to our inventory in Bamberg County."



Julian Wilson of Grubb & Ellis congratulates General Jasper Varn, SCA Board Member, on the purchase of the former Holland Hitch Annex building, as Denmark Mayor Carrie Simmons looks on. Pictured Left to Right: Denmark City Councilman Gerald Wright; Dr. Johnny Dalton, Bamberg County Economic Development Commission Chairman; Denmark City Councilwoman Bonnie Love; Julian Wilson, Mayor Simmons, General Varn; Bamberg County Councilwoman Dot Tatum; Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce President Ronny Maxwell of SCB&T; (back row) SCA Project Manager for Bamberg County Alex Boykin; Bamberg County Councilman Clint Carter; and Denmark City Administrator Heyward Robinson.

New Production Line at Allied Air, Inc.

BLACKVILLE PLANT ADDS 35 JOBS

Allied Air, Inc., has announced the addition of a new production line at their Blackville facility, which will create 35 jobs at their current site. The new production line will occupy 80,000 square feet and have two turrets and four presses at their Blackville plant, which currently employs over 400.

The new production line has produced a significant need for welders, and Allied Air is working closely with Denmark Technical College's welding program to assist in filling the positions. The Blackville facility team has heavily invested in the 5S Continuous Improvement Process program, and the plant has an excellent reputation with Lennox International for quality of product and product delivery.

According to Barnwell Economic Development Commission Director Marty Martin, "Allied Air has been extremely pleased with our labor force. Their turnover rate is 2% and the absentee rate has been 4%."

Martin added, "The people of our communities are grateful that Allied Air has added the production line with 35 new jobs, and we look forward to their continued success."

Senator DeMint Tours Fairfax Facility

U.S. Senator Jim DeMint recently met with local community leaders and the employees at the new Grant Allendale facility to tour the plant and to thank Grant Forest Products for their investment and job creation in Allendale County. Senator DeMint toured the facility with plant manager Van Chatraw before speaking to the group about national issues, including the war on terrorism and the economy. Senator DeMint congratulated local officials and SouthernCarolina Alliance Chairman Carl Gooding on landing the largest economic development project in the state in 2005.



Allendale County leaders welcome Senator DeMint during his visit to the Grant Allendale facility. (Left to right, front row: Dr. Ann Carmichael, Dean of USC-Salk; Senator DeMint; Allendale Co. Economic Development Director and County Councilman Bill Robinson; and J.W. Wall, Chairman of Allendale County Council; Left to right, back row: Moses Cohen, Mayor of Fairfax; Bobby Thomas, Allendale County EDC Chairman; Art Williams, County Administrator, and Carl Gooding, SCA Chairman.)



U.S. Senator Jim Demint (center) with SCA Chairman Carl Gooding (left) and Grant Allendale plant manager Van Chatraw (right) during the Senator's recent visit to the Grant Allendale site.

Scotsman named Best Plant by *INDUSTRYWEEK*

Scotsman Ice Systems' Fairfax, South Carolina, operation has been named one of the ten Best Plants in North America by *IndustryWeek*. The awards program has been recognizing top manufacturers for the past 17 years, with a panel of judges scoring the nominees in the areas of competitive edge, customer satisfaction, and employee retention and workplace environment. The Fairfax plant employs 290 people and produces commercial ice-making units and luxury consumer ice machines for Scotsman, a global leader in advanced-technology ice systems.

"We're extremely proud of our Fairfax facility, its leadership and the people who make our customers happy every day," says Randy Rossi, president of the North American Ice Group for Enodis, Scotsman's parent company. "This is one of the most prestigious awards in manufacturing and is testament to our commitment to excellence, not only in Fairfax, but in every Scotsman facility nationwide. It was an honor to be a finalist twice in the past five years, but even sweeter to win. This represents a victory for our customers, the ones for whom these innovations and quality-control systems were designed."

Best Plant winners for 2006 are best-in-class examples of manufacturing excellence. The ten winning companies combined have reduced manufacturing cycle times a median of 26 percent over the past three years. Order-to-shipment lead times declined a median 24 percent and on-time delivery approached 99 percent for the same time period.

Specific plant achievements contributing to Scotsman's win were reducing scrap by 46 percent since 2000, improving first-pass yield by 53 percent since 1999 and improving productivity by 41 percent since 2001. According to *IndustryWeek*, the Fairfax facility has a plethora of processes in place to reduce waste and increase output. The magazine also credits the plant's leadership and constant evaluation and

improvement of process and products for achieving Best Plant recognition.

Criteria used by *IndustryWeek* to qualify Best Plants includes quality performance, on-time delivery, productivity improvements and profitability, management tools and strategies that include customer-focused organizational structures, empowered work teams, shrewd application of new technology, implementation of lean manufacturing concepts and other approaches that lay the groundwork for continuous improvement.

Scotsman Ice Systems, an Enodis company, is a full-line manufacturer of ice systems offering a wide variety of ice forms, machine sizes (more than 100 different models), storage bin sizes, icemaker dispensers and ice-only dispensers—including the new Prodigy™ cuber, one of the most technologically advanced, energy-efficient machines on the market today. Just launched in late 2006, Prodigy is already garnering industry accolades. It is the recipient of the Best New Equipment Award at the Western Food Expo in Los Angeles and a top 10 finalist for most innovative product from the Foodservice Consultants Society International (FCSI). Scotsman's Fairfax facility is another multi-award winner, recognized earlier this year by the College of Business at Utah State University as a 2006 Shingo Prize finalist.

Gene Klosterman, Vice President of Manufacturing for Scotsman Ice Systems and plant manager of the Fairfax facility, shared the news of the awards with other regional industry leaders and plant managers during the recent SouthernCarolina Alliance Existing Industry Council meeting, which Scotsman hosted.

"We are fortunate to have Scotsman, which is recognized worldwide for their excellence in manufacturing, operating here in Allendale County," said SCA Economic Development Director Bill Robinson. "They play a critical role in our local economy, while leading their industry."

ALLIANCE NAMES NEW PROJECT MANAGER

Alex Boykin of Bamberg joined the Alliance team as Project Manager for Bamberg County this summer. The announcement was made at SouthernCarolina Alliance's Board of Directors meeting on June 27. Boykin assumed the project manager duties previously assigned to Bob Clary, who recently retired.

As SCA Project Manager, Boykin coordinates economic development efforts for Bamberg County, which entails working with the county economic development commission, county council, all city councils, industry and community leaders, the S.C. Department of Commerce and the regional alliance board.

According to SCA President Danny Black, "As our Bamberg County Project Manager, Alex is involved in all aspects of economic development for the county, including industrial product development and community development."

Boykin, a Bamberg native, is a graduate of Bamberg Ehrhardt High School and the University of South Carolina, where he earned his Bachelor of Arts in 2004. Prior to accepting the position with SouthernCarolina Alliance, Boykin worked as a project manager with Schwarting Builders and is the owner of Boykin Electric. He can be reached at the Alliance office at 803.541.0023 or by email at aboykin@southerncarolina.org.



Towns in SCA Region Awarded Community Development Block Grants

The South Carolina Department of Commerce has awarded the Town of Hilda a \$257,600 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to replace an inoperable well. With the installation of a new well, this project will benefit low to moderate income households, assure a backup source of water, and eliminate a potential health hazard.

The Department of Commerce also awarded the Town of Hampton a \$135,170 Community Development Block Grant to upgrade the Elm Street pump station to handle waste more efficiently, eliminating potential overflows into the surrounding neighborhood and Sanders Branch.

The Town of Varnville was awarded a \$314,950 CDBG to upgrade the Pepper Street pump station, thereby eliminating health hazards due to overflows.

Commerce administers the Community Development Block Grant Program for the state. The program assists communities in providing housing, a suitable living environment and expanded economic opportunities. Grants are awarded to local governments to carry out a wide range of activities addressing housing and community development needs. Local governments are responsible for providing matching funds in an amount of at least 10 percent.



The team at American Machining and Manufacturing Co. in Varnville with President Angus "Gator" Alberson on the back row, far right.

Jeff Conder of Estill shares Manny Smart's enthusiasm. Jeff, who has lived in Estill for 22 years and worked at Nevamar, is now a Team Leader at Grant.

"The management team of this company has been the best organized and most willing to work with employees," said Jeff. "We're so glad that Grant is here. I'm especially pleased with the benefits package and the ability to find a good job so close to home."

Even though Angus "Gator" Alberson of Varnville isn't employed at the plant, he's enjoying the benefits of having the new facility in neighboring Allendale County.

Alberson owns American Machining & Manufacturing Co. on Yemassee Highway in Varnville, where he's hired two additional employees to accommodate the work he's handling from the Grant Allendale plant. Alberson attributes a 10 to 15 percent increase in business directly to the Grant facility and estimates his own additional capital investment in the business at over \$87,000 in the last year.

According to Alberson, "Not only have I added employees, increased my business sales and made capital investment in new machinery, the work we've done for the Grant facility has enabled me to diversify my manufacturing operation. We're improving our skills and manufactured products, thereby making our business more marketable in the future."

Spann Brabham of Brabham's Sharpening Services in Bamberg has also felt the impact of having a new industry in the region. Because of the services Brabham's Sharpening Services will be providing to the Grant facility, Spann Brabham and his son, Fletcher, who works in the business with him, have already added another full-time employee to the payroll and invested another \$85,000 in machinery to their operation. The business now employs 4 full-time employees and one part-time employee.

"We feel that the Grant facility will have a positive impact on the local economy," says Spann Brabham. "We're just one of the many small, local businesses providing services to this industry, and we believe the community will benefit in many ways."

In Allendale County, David Mixon of Mixon Oil Co. has also enjoyed the opportunities provided by the new facility in town.

Michael Strait of Computer Solutions/Radio Shack in Barnwell points to a 10% increase in business over the last year due to sales and service to Grant Allendale for computer hardware, information technology service and cellular service, which helped their bottom line over the last year.

"We're definitely supportive of what you all are doing at Southern Carolina Alliance," said Strait. "The new industry has definitely made our business more profitable."



Gator Alberson of American Machining and Manufacturing Co., Inc., smiles as he sends another truckload of finished parts made at his Varnville site over to the Grant Forest Products facility in Fairfax.

Fairfax Operation is Finalist for 2006 Shingo Prize

Scotsman Ice Systems' Fairfax Operation in South Carolina has been named a finalist for the prestigious 2006 Shingo Prize. The award is administered by the College of Business at Utah State University and rewards manufacturing excellence in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. It has been called the "Nobel prize of manufacturing" by *BusinessWeek* and is recognized as the premier manufacturing award in North America. The mission of the Shingo Prize is to honor companies that maximize productivity and profitability. Scotsman's Fairfax Operation demonstrated excellence in Lean Manufacturing, also known as the Toyota Production System.

"We're thrilled to be recognized for our lean process and continuous pursuit of world-class performance," said Randy Rossi, president of Scotsman Ice Systems in Vernon Hills, Ill. "Our methods deliver world-class quality, eliminate waste, shorten the manufacturing cycle, maximize human resources and increase our capacity. It's a win-win situation for our employees, customers and the industry." The Fairfax Operation produces a variety of ice machines, storage bins and dispensers for Scotsman, one of the world's leading ice system companies.

According to Ross Robson, Shingo Prize executive director, "World-class excellence in manufacturing is the hallmark of the ten recipients and four finalists of the 2006 Shingo Prize. All have clearly achieved exemplary lean manufacturing excellence." Finalists in addition to Scotsman included Freudenberg-NOK, John Deere and Rockwell Collins.

In 2002, Scotsman was named one of the Top 25 Best Plants in the U.S. by *IndustryWeek* and was the first ice machine manufacturer to obtain ISO9001:2000 certification. To learn more about Scotsman, visit www.scotsman-ice.com.

LE CREUSET ANNOUNCES EXPANSION

Le Creuset has announced that the company will expand its operation in Early Branch by adding 50,000 square feet to its distribution center. The expansion will bring a capital investment of \$2.5 million and 25 new jobs to Hampton County.

"Our company is looking forward to the expansion of our Lowcountry distribution center," said Troy Shearouse, Director of Operations at Le Creuset. "We are pleased to be providing additional jobs and investment in Hampton County while providing better service to our customers."

Currently, Le Creuset employs 90 at its Early Branch Distribution Center, which opened for customer service in 1997. The total wholesale and retail sales supported through the distribution center from 1997 to 2004 has increased by more than 250%.

Because of this tremendous sales increase, Le Creuset has fully maximized the space at the 56,025 square foot distribution center during peak business periods.

The expansion of the distribution center will be comprised of a \$2 million capital investment in the building and a \$500,000 investment in machinery and equipment. The Le Creuset facility will almost double in size with a 50,000 square foot addition to the warehouse and 5,000 square feet of additional office space. The expansion plans also include additional truck parking for the distribution center.

According to Troy Shearouse of Le Creuset, the expansion will facilitate the flow of inventory and will be constructed in such a way that the customer service operations of the building will not be interrupted.

Hampton County Administrator Sabrena Graham said that Hampton County has assisted in the expansion plans by granting 12 acres of land for the building, providing for mitigation of wetlands, assisting in activating the Free Trade Zone at the industrial park, and serving as a conduit for state incentives.

Mr. Shearouse added, "The expansion will ensure that the Early Branch facility is equipped to manage forecasted sales growth and provide high level customer service from the distribution center in the upcoming peak business season and beyond."

The expansion is expected to be completed by January 2007.

GOVAN AWARDED GRANT FOR WATER SYSTEM

Mayor Johnnie Ganus of Govan was delighted to receive a Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$500,000 from the S.C. Department of Commerce for the Town of Govan for infrastructure improvements. The funds will be used to upgrade the Town of Govan's water system, thereby providing fire protection and allowing the town to eventually have a back-up supply by connecting with the Town of Olar's system. The upgraded lines, new pneumatic tank, and new well will ensure the town has adequate water pressure and storage capacity. Approximately 64 percent of beneficiaries are of low to moderate incomes. The check was presented to the mayor and other Govan elected officials in September at Stillwater Farms in Govan.



Pictured Left to Right are: Martha Whitaker, SC Dept. of Commerce; Alex Boykin, Southern Carolina Alliance; Bonnie Ammons, SC Dept. of Commerce; Willie Cam Nimmons, Govan Community Leader; Margaret Jones, Govan Town Council; Karen Wilson, Govan Town Council; Nora Sanders, Deputy Director of LSCOG; Mary Ganus, wife of Mayor Ganus and Johnnie Ganus, Mayor of Govan.

"The Community Development Block Grant Program is an invaluable resource to revitalize neighborhoods and make South Carolina's poorest communities more competitive," said S.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Joe Taylor. "These investments improve quality of life for South Carolinians by addressing critical infrastructure and planning needs."

The project was selected through a statewide competitive process in which local governments submitted grant applications to the SC Department of Commerce. These grants represent a portion of the money allocated annually to South Carolina from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Mayor Ganus thanked all of the organizations involved in securing the funds for the infrastructure improvements, adding that Congressman Jim Clyburn and Senator Lindsey Graham led the efforts at the federal level to get \$3.5 million in federal funding. He also thanked Nora Sanders, Deputy Director of the Lower Savannah Council of Governments, Southern Carolina Alliance, the Bamberg County Chamber of Commerce, and the S.C. Department of Commerce for their efforts.

"Nora Sanders and her team came through for us," said Mayor Ganus. "We are so thankful for their guidance and support."

According to SCA's Bamberg County Project Manager Alex Boykin, "Adequate infrastructure, such as water and sewer capacity, will be critical in attracting industry, and we applaud Mayor Ganus and his community's efforts to upgrade and link their water systems."

OAKWOOD CHEMICALS TO LOCATE IN HAMPTON COUNTY

Oakwood Products has announced that the company will invest over \$ 1.5 million and provide 40 jobs in Hampton County in the next year as they move their Lexington County operations to the former Valois Food facility in Estill.

Oakwood Products, Inc., a supplier of research chemicals to the pharmaceutical and biotech industries, plans to invest \$1.06 million by August of this year and will invest an additional \$500,000 within the next year. The salaries, exclusive of corporate officers, will average \$18 per hour.

The local workforce was a factor in Oakwood's decision to move the operation to Hampton County.

According to Oakwood Products President Richard S. Tracey, "We are continually making new products because our customer base is in a constant state of change. Our business is labor intensive, but with a skilled workforce, rather than assembly line work. We believe that there is a ready and willing work force in the area to help with our staffing needs."

Tracey also cited the availability of the Estill location as a drawing card for the area.

Tracey added, "We saw an opportunity to acquire a substantial piece of property with an existing building at a very reasonable cost."

Hampton County Administrator Sabrena Graham welcomes the industry to Hampton County, "We are delighted to that Oakwood Products has chosen Hampton County as their new home. The jobs they will provide and the capital investment will be a boon to our local economy."

"Everyone we have worked with in Hampton County has gone out of his or her way to help us," said Tracey, "which is one of the reasons we're here."

"By the end of the year, we expect to have all of our production in Estill," said Tracey. "By mid-Summer of 2007 at the latest, we plan to have the warehouse in the Estill Industrial Park outfitted for our administrative offices and warehouse operation. At that point, we will have completely relocated our operations to Estill and will have about 40 employees."

Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance

1321 Technology Drive
Barnwell, SC 29812