



Changing Lives

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Happy Spring!

Spring is here and with it comes a busier pace of life. So much to do, so little time! Whether you're experiencing the busy life of retirement or the commitments of making a living, spring challenges us each to find time to stop and enjoy the beauty and the friendships that surround us!

On the evening of April 21, many of you joined us at the historic Star Theatre in Stuart for our first **Donor Appreciation Reception**. Throughout the evening, our guests shared stories and laughter as they browsed displays and enjoyed a slideshow depicting school days from days gone by in Patrick County. Many found the evening to be a chance for connecting with old friends and making new ones.

Thanks to all who came—Because of you, this was a very special evening! Thanks too to those who so generously shared both photos and memories!

National Literacy Commission Visits

Four representatives of the National Commission on Adult Literacy (NCAL) were in Stuart on Thursday, March 15 for an all-day meeting with Foundation and county adult education leaders to learn about Patrick's success in addressing the area's adult learning challenges. Patrick County was selected as one of the Commission's three national site visits for their study of exemplary adult literacy/adult education initiatives.

NCAL was created in October 2006 by the Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy and the Dollar General Corporation to examine all components of the nation's adult education and literacy enterprise and recommend a future course for comprehensive service. Their goals are to bring about needed legislative change in federal and state policy, build better awareness and involvement by the business and philanthropic communities, and create stronger public support for adult education and literacy. The Commission's members include many nationally recognized authorities in the area of adult education. Among

"Patrick County was selected as one of the Commission's three national site visits for their study of exemplary adult literacy/adult education initiatives."

Please see *National Literacy* on page 3

What's Happening in...Workforce Training

By Sandra Conticelli

“One of the most exciting results of this first Tourism Ambassador class will actually be a product—a first-ever tri-county “Must See” map featuring many of the region’s many attractions.”

We believe Patrick County is one of the Commonwealth’s most beautiful counties! It’s no wonder then that tourism is now seen as an important means of boosting our mountain region’s economy. Two years ago, Foundation Executive Director Jerry Hughes met with Patrick County Director of Tourism Jeannie Frisco to explore the county’s interest in offering a special workforce training course focused on tourism. After receiving an enthusiastic “Yes!” we began laying the groundwork for this new course that was to be designed to enhance the way area businesses serve tourists. Since that first meeting, our new tourism partnership has grown to also include Patrick’s two western neighbors, Carroll and Floyd counties.

With the help of our new regional partners, we launched our latest workforce training program on March 5—the *Blue Ridge Tourism Ambassador Program*. Hosted by Primland Resort, *Tourism Ambassador* met four hours, one day each week for six weeks. Its premise is simple: “Find ways to entice tourists to linger in the region, because the longer they stay, the more money they will spend.”

A different program module was covered each week addressing hospitality, parks and recreation, local attractions, business and industry education and seasonal activities and events. A day-long tri-county bus tour was one of the most popular course activities. Instructors included a faculty member from Radford University’s Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism and representatives from the region’s national and state parks. Several modules included networking exercises to demonstrate the necessity of promoting all three counties for the good of the entire Blue Ridge Plateau. The program’s grand finale, delayed a few days thanks to a recent spring snowfall, was a guided tour of Primland Resort!

One of the most exciting results of this first *Tourism Ambassador* class will actually be a product—a first-ever tri-county “Must See” map featuring many of the region’s key attractions. Tear-off pads of these maps will be available throughout the Blue Ridge Plateau region for free distribution to travelers.

This first *Tourism Ambassador* class began with 31 “students,” but quickly grew to 40!! Participants have been very enthusiastic about the program and have used each class as an opportunity to network and share ideas and experiences with their colleagues. Participants included folks from all of the region’s venues...artisans, wineries, innkeepers, river guides, specialty shops and even alpaca farmers!



Tourism Ambassador Partners.

Please see *What's Happening* on page 4

Changing Lives in Patrick...in pictures



Tourism Ambassador participants work together on an in-class project



PCHS 9th graders learn first-hand about the power of purpose from this year's *College Day* speaker

National Literacy, from page 1

them are Fortune 500 CEOs, former congressional and cabinet members and influential business, education, literacy and public policy leaders.

Objectives for their visit to Patrick were to: observe how the collaboration of civic and government agencies in the county has contributed to rising numbers of GED graduates, students planning to attend college and adults receiving job-skills training; learn how Foundation fundraising efforts have provided the means to transform lives; and determine how the success of our county's efforts can be replicated around the nation.

Making presentations at the March 15 meeting were: Foundation representatives The Honorable Gerald L. Baliles and Jerry Hughes, Patrick County Public Schools adult education representatives Perry Hughes and Mary Scott, Patrick Henry Community College representative Dr. Nolan Browning, New College Institute representative Dr. Leanna Blevins, and Region 17 Workforce Investment Board representative Ann Adams. Participating NCAL commissioners were: Dr. Mark Musick, Karen Narasaki, and Dr. Gail Mellow. Ben Hoak took part as a representative for the Commission's study director Dr. Cheryl King. Several county GED graduates also took part by sharing their experiences in adult education.

"We are honored to be a part of this important national study."

"This Commission's selection of Patrick County as an exemplary adult education initiative and model for adult education and literacy programs clearly underscores the importance of the partnerships we've built in the county and across the region. We are honored to be a part of this important national study," stated Foundation Executive Director Hughes. ◆

What's Happening from page 2

This first *Tourism Ambassador* program got off to a fantastic start. In fact, we've already received inquiries about the next one! The *Blue Ridge Tourism Ambassador Program* has been successful because of the partnerships it has fostered and the excitement it has sparked for the region's many treasures. Its success and that of our other

workforce programs like training for *Personal Care Assistants* and *Certified Nursing Assistants* are quickly moving us toward our goal of creating a more educated and better-trained workforce in Patrick County! ♦

Thoughts on Charitable Giving

Why do YOU make charitable donations? What motivates you to write that check or make that stock transfer? Every donor has his or her own reason for giving but often it focuses on wanting to make a difference, to help create a better world.

When you give to the Patrick County Education Foundation, you are helping fund programs that will be put to work right here. Your gifts play an important role in transforming and improving the lives of people you know and many you don't know. Ultimately, your gifts to this Foundation help build a stronger, better Patrick County.

There are many ways to measure the power of your gifts to this Foundation, but here are just a few:

- **Your Gifts** have helped county students secure over \$3.5 million in college financial aid and provide 153 local high school seniors with \$573,750 in *Last Dollar* scholarship aid.
- **Your Gifts** have helped encourage more than 130 county adults to complete their GED since 2003 by funding over \$130,000

in GED graduate incentives, annual GED graduation celebrations and much more.

- **Your Gifts** have funded the development of 9 workforce training programs through which over 840 county adults have updated their basic job-skills and improved their opportunities for better jobs.

Your Gifts are what make possible ALL THIS AND SO MUCH MORE. While we have been fortunate in the past to receive grants from a variety of sources—federal, state and private—all such programs require that first we demonstrate that we have significant local support. **YOUR GIFTS** provide that important local support! Thank you! ♦

REMINDER

We still have *Neighborhood Assistance Program* (NAP) tax credits available for your cash gifts of \$500 or more. (For businesses, the minimum gift size eligible for NAP credits is \$888 and may include cash, stock or other qualifying gifts.)

Since our 2006-2007 NAP credits expire on June 30, any qualifying gift made before that date may entitle you to receive Virginia state tax credits under the NAP program equal to 45% of your gift's value. Call us at (276) 694-7233 or check with your tax professional for more information on how you can qualify. ♦

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