

# Area Industries Using Center To Train Their New Employees

BY TERRY POPE

Classes are just a short walk away. Each Wednesday, employees of Exide Electronics and Victaulic Inc. in the Leland Industrial Park train to help save lives.

They are taking a first responders safety course that their employers have arranged through Brunswick Community College. The Industrial Training Center, completed at the park in August, is starting to book up with programs aimed at helping new and expanding businesses train their workers, in this case, what to do should an accident occur at the plant.

"It's helpful for away from the plant too," said Bernard McKoy Jr. of Leland, a member of Exide's safety team who is taking the course along with nine other employees from the two companies.

The class has received CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) training and has studied patient assessment and hemorrhage control techniques. Students meet four hours each Wednesday with instructor John Bellamy, who is also training officer and chief of Town Creek Volunteer Rescue Squad.

"A first responder is the first person on the scene of an accident," Bellamy said. "This course is designed so that they'll know what to do to sustain someone's life until rescue help arrives."

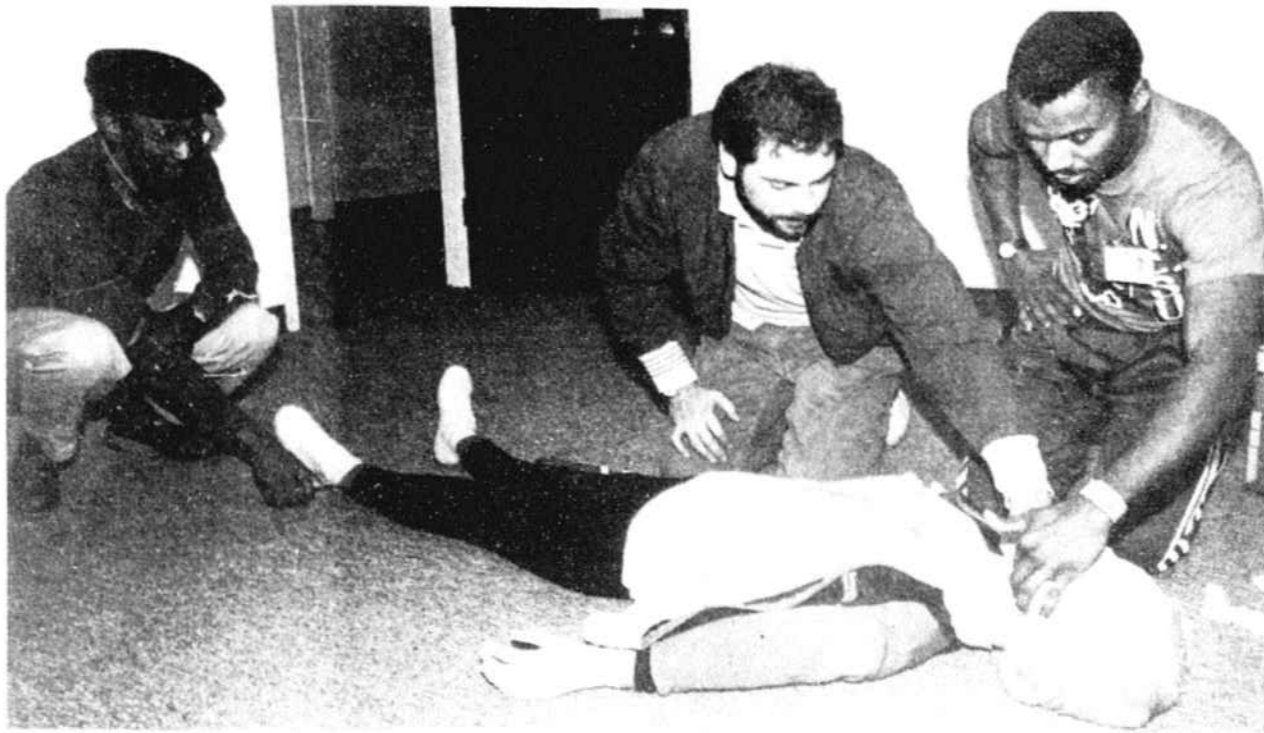
Exide employees also received training in "policy and procedures and actual hands-on applications" at the facility before being hired by the company this fall, said Exide employee Chet Harvey.

Classes covered shop knowledge of tools and machinery and 40 hours of hands-on assembly line production work. Once completing the program, trainees are then certified as Exide associates.

As a member of the plant's safety team, Harvey's job will be to "assess the scene and keep pedestrians away and prepare the victim for the EMTs (Emergency Medical Technicians). We do a lot of CPR, stop the major bleeding. Then the EMTs will take care of the rest," he added.

The \$1.1 million facility was built by Brunswick County to convince new industries to locate here so that people like McKoy, a county native, could have a job. Exide was the center's first customer and actually helped design the building.

About 70 employees have already trained at the facility and have been hired by Exide, which manufactures uninterrupted power sources, units that keep



INSTRUCTOR JOHN BELLAMY (left) leads a first responders course at the Brunswick County Industrial Training Center for Exide and Victaulic employees. Practicing lifesaving techniques are, at center, Chet Harvey and Bernard McKoy Jr.

supplying electricity to computers during a power outage. Out of 30 who initially trained in July, 28 were placed as permanent employees. In October, 40 of 45 people trained were hired.

Training Center Manager Sherwood Peacock believes Exide and Victaulic are only the first of a long line of companies which will benefit from the training center in the future. In three weeks, another cycle of 40 potential Exide employees will train at the center followed by a program in basic electronics for the plant's newly-hired workers.

Within the next five years, Exide plans to hire more than 500 local people, each of whom will go through some type of training at the center. In September, a class was given at the plant to teach supervisors how to

train workers.

"They're already way ahead of their schedule," Peacock said.

A general education course for teachers is held at the center on Saturdays. Teachers can receive college transfer or renewal credits for the "Teacher, School and Society" class. During winter quarter, classes in math, English and business taxes are also scheduled at the center.

"Our plans are, by next fall, to add additional classes of that nature but to concentrate on industrial training," Peacock said. "I envision by next September, we'll be fully occupied in this building. A big thrust of programs will probably be offered here in the fall."

The industrial training courses are funded through grants by the N.C. Department of Community Colleges,

Peacock said. Plans must be submitted to the state for prior approval.

"These must be new or expanding businesses," said Peacock. "Expanding means hiring for new positions, not the replacement of employees."

Peacock, who served as head of vocational and evening programs at Sampson Community College, was hired in October to manage the facility. He said the center was the main factor in Exide's decision to locate in Brunswick County. When choosing a place to build, industries are "looking for this kind of support," he added.

It's a unique situation, said Peacock, a county training center operating on community college funding designed to train workers for private industry. The added jobs and the boost to the local economy are its benefits.

"It's not a typical situation, probably one of a kind," Peacock said. "To my knowledge there's not another one like this in North Carolina. I think it's good for the community and the industries."

Other industries provide training centers, such as in Nash County where Cummings Diesel built a separate training center to train workers for jobs there, Peacock said.

The college will not schedule avocational classes, such as hobby classes or arts and crafts programs, in the center. Those will still be offered by BCC but not at the training center.

"We hope to work closely with the public school system," Peacock said. "But our top priority is with the industries."

The center has a 10,000-square-foot production assembly area that can accommodate more than one industry at a time. It has a large 3,600-square-foot classroom with a seating capacity for 450 people. That room can also be divided with partitions. The center also houses two conference rooms or study areas, a media center, three smaller classrooms and a break area.

Employees now involved in the first responders class are just two weeks away from completing the course. They'll return to their jobs with new titles and responsibilities.

"I think they're all capable of giving CPR," Bellamy said. "I'm confident they can do it."

The center has provided a convenient classroom for 10 workers who have spent 40 hours of on-the-job training which one day may help save the life of a fellow employee.

**If You're Having A Bad Day, It's Not Your Customer's Fault**

BY SUSANNE D. SARTELLE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT  
South Brunswick Islands Chamber Of Commerce

I recently gave a speech at Toastmasters — an organization that helps me improve my speaking skills — and a chamber member who was visiting the club that day called to comment on my speech saying that I should share the message in my weekly column. Here goes, Jody. Thanks!

It's not my problem if you're having a bad day. What kind of image do you project for your business or the business where you work?

Not too long ago, I went into a business — a local business — to buy some needed supplies. The cashier was in a horrible mood...her feet hurt, she was working overtime, she was mad at the manager. Consequently, she was not nice to me. I was the customer. I told the lady I hoped her day would get better. There was no way, she said, as long as she had to work there. I smiled anyway.

If I didn't believe so strongly in patronizing local businesses, I probably would not have gone back into that business. But I did...only to be treated the same way. Now what kind of image do you think that business is projecting?

Attitude is a very important part of success. And outward attitudes display the image of the business.

Fifty-five percent of our communication is non-verbal...our actions, tone of voice and attitude.

We all have bad days, but if we want to keep customers, we can't show it. I am certainly not excluded from having bad days. And since it is important to practice what you preach, I have been very attentive to how I treat people lately. It's not too much to ask to be nice.

If you're having a bad day, it's not your customer's fault. So don't take it out on the wrong person. Step back, take a deep breath, and smile. That customer could be the one who makes your day better.



SARTELLE




**Barbee Realtor Of Year**

Terry D. Barbee (left) has been chosen 1990 Realtor of the Year by the Brunswick Islands Board of Realtors. Barbee, who is president of Island Realty Co. at Ocean Isle Beach, is pictured with Evelyn Madison, president of the Board of Realtors. Barbee was chosen for his community service and dedication to the Board of Realtors. He serves as an Ocean Isle Beach commissioner, the Ocean Isle Beach fire chief, a director of the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce and will serve as the 1991 president of the Board of Realtors.

**Small Businesses Advised To Prepare, Just In Case**

BY TERRY POPE

A winter workshop designed for small business owners in Brunswick County begins with that "r" word, recession.

While local economic indicators predict Brunswick County will experience growth in the '90s, Brunswick Community College's Small Business Center is hoping that owners of small businesses will approach the future with caution.

"I think a lot of businesses may feel some type of repercussions from the economy," said Velma Jenkins, director of BCC's Small Business Center, "but there are ways businesses can protect themselves from a great impact."

"Recession Proof Your Business" is a three-hour workshop scheduled for Feb. 25 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the college in Supply. It will be taught by Bryan Hamilton, who teaches business administration at Duke University.

The Center for Business and Economic Services at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington recently released its predictions for area economic growth. Economics professor Claude Ferrell said he expects Brunswick County to be the "backbone" of growth in Southeastern North Carolina in the '90s.

The UNC-W Center is anticipating an 8 percent rate of growth for Brunswick County this decade, the result being a doubling of the local economy. That growth is expected to come from increased retirement and tourism development along the coast and with industrial and commercial growth away from the coast.

"Small business is still the backbone of Brunswick County," said Ms. Jenkins. "Tourism has a very positive effect on small businesses.

That's how they survive."

While nationally there is talk of an impending economic recession, the number of small businesses in Brunswick County continues to grow.

"We still have a lot of people who are willing to go into business," Ms. Jenkins said. "I'm still having as many calls as I've always had. That hasn't stopped."

BCC's Small Business Center operates as an information service for residents wishing to open their own small business. The center also coordinates in-depth assistance to business owners and provides limited business counseling. Its hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

The number of service businesses in Brunswick County has seen a rapid increase in recent years, Ms. Jenkins said. These businesses provide a service to residents, such as plumbing or heat and air conditioning repair work. With an increase in county population, there will be a need to provide services for those new residents.

"Service businesses do not have to have an inventory," Ms. Jenkins explained. "When you don't have an inventory, your storefront could be within your home."

The February seminar will discuss what businesses need to do financially to survive a recession.

"Where do you cut back? Should you take out a loan now or wait? When should you do these things? When shouldn't you do them? Those are the questions that will be answered," Ms. Jenkins said.

Brunswick County hasn't had any businesses to lay off large numbers of employees recently due to a failing economy, she said.

"We still have a better chance to survive a recession than other areas," she predicted.

**BUSINESS BRIEFS**

**Required Vehicle Safety Class Set**

A North Carolina Safety Inspection class will be offered Saturday, Jan. 12, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Brunswick Community College.

The eight-hour course is required, as of Sept. 14, 1990, for state motor vehicle inspectors and mechanics to retain their certification.

The course will be taught by Roy Hornaday, lead automotive instructor, at the BCC automotive shop on the main campus.

A \$25 registration fee must be paid at the class.

To pre-register for the one-day course, call Hornaday or Continuing Education Director Perry Hall at 754-6900, 457-6329 or 343-0203.

**Leaf Producers To Meet**

Gerald Peedin, extension tobacco

**Small Businesses May Enter National Award Competition**

South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce is participating in The Blue Chip Enterprise Initiative, designed to help small businesses succeed in an increasingly competitive environment.

The nationwide initiative, sponsored by Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company and endorsed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and *Nation's Business*, will seek out, learn from and recognize businesses with a proven record of overcoming challenges.

"Statistics suggest that small businesses are the real blue chip companies of America," says Susanne D. Sartelle, executive vice president of the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce. "Just look at their share of job creation, innovation and gross national product over the last decade. Yet most are faced with tough new pressures, ranging from a shrinking pool of qualified labor and rapid technological growth to increased competition. This program will help businesses meet these pressures head on, continue their momentum and grow in a demanding market."

A major part of the initiative is the Blue Chip Enterprise award, a national recognition program for small businesses that have demonstrated exceptional enterprise in meeting today's competitive pressures. All businesses with between five and 300 employees and that have been in continuous operation at least three years, are urged by Sartelle to participate.

Any small business can apply for the Blue Chip Enterprise award by requesting and completing an application from the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce. Companies may also be nominated by others (current or retired employees, community leaders, vendors, customers).

Applicants will be required to submit a case history that demonstrates how their company used available resources to overcome adversity and emerge stronger. A panel of independent judges will review the applications and select up to four outstanding businesses from each state and the District of Columbia. Each of these companies will receive an award and a listing in *Nation's Business*. They will also receive a Blue Chip Enterprise logo for their advertising and signage.

From these companies, 51 state designees (one from each state and D.C.) will be identified and featured on "Nation's Business Today" on ESPN TV network. Ultimately, five independent national judges will select three national designees to represent the nation's small business community. They will attend the U.S. Chamber of Commerce annual meeting in Washington, D.C., in April, 1991, and receive extensive national publicity for their businesses and strategies.

Applications for the award must be submitted by Jan. 31, 1991. For further information about the program, call 1(800)262-1626, or the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce at (919)754-6644.

**County Permits 70 Mobile Homes**

During November the Brunswick County Building Inspection Department issued permits for 70 mobile homes and 13 single-family, stick built homes.

The 129 building permits issued during the month also include two commercial buildings, eight additions, four garages, three decks or porches and one pool, according to the department's monthly report.

Total value of the construction was estimated at \$1,015,623, including \$756,007 for the 13 houses. Also issued were 108 electrical, eight plumbing and 39 mechanical permits.

Since Jan. 1 the department has issued 3,844 permits. Of the 1,701 building permits issued, 1,079 were for mobile homes, 168 for single family units 56 for commercial buildings.

Estimated value for permitted construction of all types was \$21,207,200.

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**Wins \$100**

Dr. Renee Barnes of Shallotte is the latest winner of \$100 in the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce Hometown Holidays giveaway.

This is the chamber's major effort to promote shopping at local businesses during the holiday season. The program is designed to help area merchants as well as shoppers, who can register for a cash prize each week.

Ms. Barnes, who works in the dentist office of Dr. John Madison in Shallotte, won the second drawing last Thursday. Other drawings will be Dec. 13 and 22.



BARNES

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