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Recycling Works

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Recycling is Alive and Well

by **Ben Rogers, Industrial Development Representative**

Although Kim Markham, president and owner of Asheboro Recycling Center, drives a hearse, recycling in the Piedmont is anything but dead. Not only is it alive and well, it's also growing!

After a successful career with Energizer Holdings Inc., Markham took advantage of a company restructuring to start his own business, a hauling and roll-off container service. From that moment, like the bunny, his ability to start successful businesses keeps going and going while maintaining a working relationship with Energizer as a service provider.

With the sale of that first business, Markham sought new, underserved and undervalued markets to break into, leading to the "birth" of ARC. In December 2006, recognizing the current and future value of untapped local markets, ARC announced plans to partner with the city of

Asheboro and expand its current operations to include municipal recycling commodities.

Markham recognized the opportunity to strike into the vein of the copper, aluminum and ferrous metals recycling supply chain. With a dedicated work force, honest business practices and timely markets, in a few short years ARC drove revenues to more than \$4 million in 2006, impressive performance for a facility no larger than 10,000 square feet. Or, in Markham's words, "it's an encouraging mess that has taught us to be efficient with our time, energy and resources; we have no choice." As commodity prices soared in the second quarter of 2006, so did ARC's business. For ARC, this made "the decision to expand an easy one."

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"Recycling Never Dies" is painted on ARC's company hearses to help promote recycling in the Asheboro area.

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N.C. Microenterprise Loan Program

by Sherry Yarkosky, Recycling Business Development Specialist

In operation since 1989, the Rural Center's nationally award-winning Microenterprise Loan Program provides funds up to \$25,000 in combination with business planning and technical assistance. Technical assistance is offered in partnership with small business centers located at area community colleges and small business technology development centers.

The Microenterprise Loan Program works with individuals who have sound ideas for starting or expanding a small business but do not qualify for bank loans. These individuals may include women, members of minority groups, people with low incomes and limited assets and people who live in one of the 85 designated rural counties (see map below).

From 1992 through December 2006, almost 1,270 loans have been made totaling \$6.6 million. The average loan was around \$5,250. The Microenterprise Loan Program funds all types of service-oriented businesses including home daycares, hair salons, photography studios, catering businesses, respiratory therapists, mortgage brokers, trucking companies and retail clothing stores, to name a few.

Eligibility

While special emphasis is placed on serving rural, low-income, female and minority borrowers, anyone wishing to start or expand a small business in one of the 85 rural counties of North Carolina and who meets the following minimum criteria may apply:

- 💰 Must be a U.S. citizen/permanent resident and resident of North Carolina,
- 💰 Must be at least 18 years old, and
- 💰 Either owns and operates a business with 10 or fewer employees in North Carolina or has definite plans to do so.

Loan Types

The center operates two types of loan programs: 1) group

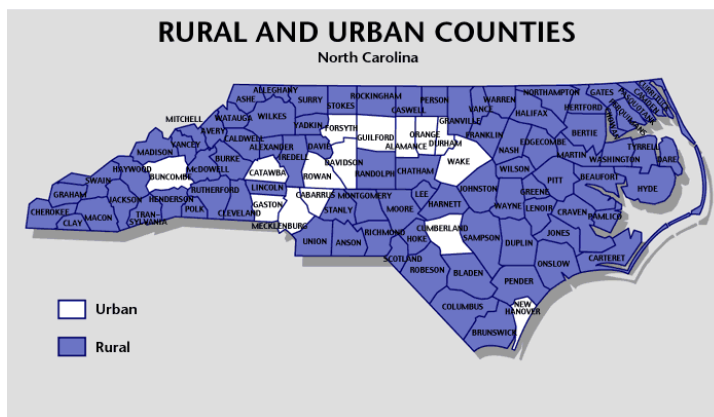
lending available in selected counties, and 2) individual lending available in the 85 counties.

Group Lending

This program is especially good for entrepreneurs in business for less than two years or those needing more support to develop a business. Individuals work with a group of five to seven small business owners. Each group participates in an intensive training, business plan development and certification process.

Loan approval is based on the confidence fellow group members have in each other's commitment, resourcefulness and ability to repay. Few of the traditional requirements to secure the loan are needed. Group members also work together to support the growth and development of one another's businesses. Loans are available in three stages: from

an initial stage of up to \$1,650, a second stage of up to \$5,000, and a third stage of up to \$8,000. All loans must be current in order for the group to consider making additional loans. The group lending program is operated through three local lending offices which can be found at: www.ncruralcenter.org/loans/microlending.htm.



Individual-based Lending

The individual lending program is similar to getting a loan through a traditional bank. The maximum loan available is \$25,000. It's a good choice for people with more business experience and greater financial needs than the group lending program. Individuals can apply directly to the Rural Center or through the local lending network office in their area. A listing of the local lending network offices can be found at: www.ncruralcenter.org/loans/microlending.htm#individual.

How to apply

To apply for a loan or for more information about the Microenterprise Loan Program, go to www.ncruralcenter.org/loans/micro.htm or contact Carolyn Perry, director of the Microenterprise Loan Program, at (919) 250-4314 or by e-mail, cperry@ncruralcenter.org.

ARC, from page 1

Now, the only thing six feet under at ARC is the footings for its 30,000 square foot expansion currently under construction. The new facility will process municipal recycling commodities, industrial manufacturing byproducts and ferrous/non-ferrous metals.

With assistance from veteran architects, Raleigh's Paper Stock Dealers, MRF Engineers, the Recycling Business Assistance Center and personal experience, the finalized plan yields exceptional transportation flow, material processing flexibility, focus on individual customers and seamless expansion opportunity. It will also create an estimated 10-15 jobs over the next two years; a notable return for the state's investment of \$10,000 in the form of a 2005 Recycling Business Development Grant.

Markham is a civic leader involved in several organizations and takes pride in his community. So why is the community-minded president of ARC driving a hearse?

In the spring of 2006, Markham wanted to build momentum and get people excited about the future recycling services coming to Asheboro. Seizing upon the opportunity to purchase an old hearse sparked an idea in Markham's mind.

Decked out in new chrome rims, custom paint job and professional stereo, people quickly took notice of ARC's slogan "Recycling Never Dies!" painted on the hearse's side. Several months and an additional "company car" later, the hearses are a hit and can be seen in parades, recycling events and the other community gatherings.

If you would like to contact ARC or have further questions regarding its expansion, call (800) 948-1280. Or, if in the Asheboro area, the current facility can be found at 125 Lanier Ave. The future facility will be located at 1075 South Mont Rd.



LOANS FOR RECYCLING COMPANIES

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N.C. Environmental Loan Fund: Self-Help established the N.C. Environmental Loan Fund to provide financing to small businesses and other organizations that preserve our natural resources. Projects that are targeted for financing include recycling firms, land conservancies, environmental consulting and services, environmental equipment firms, and sustainable development products and services. Self-Help has extended more than \$6 million in financing to this growing and important segment of our economy.

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The Green Workplace: An Investment in Higher Productivity

by Fred Broadwell

Labor is businesses' most expensive operational cost. For the typical business, the cost of human assets is 10 times the capital and operational building costs. Nothing is more important to your enterprise than retaining good employees, keeping them healthy and motivating them to higher levels of productivity.

So, how does this translate into an investment strategy? Increasing evidence shows that greener workplaces lead to higher productivity from workers. How? Green buildings make workers happier and more productive through better ventilation and temperature control, better artificial lighting and careful use of daylighting (natural light). Two of many examples are the Lockheed factory in California and Wisconsin's West Bend insurance headquarters. These facilities saw a 15 percent increase in productivity after installing daylighting and other green upgrades.

Green building techniques have matured greatly in recent years. For example, "cool daylighting" is a new way to bring in natural light that avoids glare and heat build-up. Light is brought in from the north through high-set windows called clerestories. Task lighting (small focused lights, not generalized overhead lighting) has improved in quality and not only saves energy, but also reduces worker eyestrain and mistakes.

Recycling companies operate processing, warehouse and office facilities. Working conditions vary widely and, in some cases, an unpleasant environment is unpreventable. I am not suggesting that every recycling job will be pleasant every day in every season.

But with that reality in mind, take a look around your operation. Are there processing or warehouse areas where daylighting could be installed? Can you liberate some of your workers from a daily life of harsh fluorescent lights? Look at that expense as an investment in higher productivity.

Could your administrative areas be greener, with more daylight, better temperature controls and houseplants? Plants

have been shown to reduce stress and improve air quality in office settings and more than pay for themselves in higher productivity. Since this is probably where your office is located, do it for yourself!



The real no-brainer is for those who are constructing a new building. With new construction, green building techniques have the most power to improve productivity and, of course, reduce operating expenses. Find a builder who knows about the LEED green building standard. Look at the life cycle cost of a new building: the capital cost plus operations plus the impact on worker productivity. The cheaper buildings may stop looking so cheap.

Another investment strategy is to motivate your employees by reminding them that they are a part of the environmental movement. A 2004 study from Norway found that, "morally motivated workers ... exert higher effort for a green than a brown firm." Do your workers see yours as a green firm?

Here are 10 green-ups. Try a few and see what happens.

1. invest in green landscaping with native plants,
2. put up attractive environmental posters,
3. give away compact fluorescent bulbs,
4. install bike racks and encourage carpooling,
5. invite in green speakers,
6. plant an organic vegetable garden,
7. screen "An Inconvenient Truth" or similar eco-videos,
8. put up a few solar panels,
9. give out organic cotton T-shirts, and, of course,
10. recycle.

Put money in strategies like these and higher productivity can make them the wisest investments you ever made.

Fred Broadwell is principal of Sustainable Economies Consulting. The firm uses a 3-Es approach to managing, financing and training for environmental sustainability in businesses, nonprofits and government. (www.sustainable-economies.com)



Barnstar Vintage Reincarnates Buildings

by Sherry Yarkosky, Recycling Business Development Specialist



Barnstar Vintage creates custom indoor and outdoor furniture from wood salvaged from buildings and houses being torn down.

Nestled 15 miles west of Chapel Hill in an old dairy barn is a recycling newcomer, Barnstar Vintage. The company is a family-run architectural salvage and custom furniture business owned by Tom and Heather LaGarde.

Barnstar Vintage was started about two years ago when the LaGardes circled back from New York City to the countryside in Saxapahaw. After helping a friend “take down” a house, the LaGardes saw an opportunity and niche that was not being filled in the marketplace. In addition, both Heather and Tom have roots in the area. Tom played basketball for the UNC-CH Tarheels in the ‘70s. Heather was raised in Chapel Hill and has family in Orange and Chatham counties.

The LaGardes would prefer that old buildings stay up, but if they are coming down because of road widening or development, the couple is committed to preserving what can be salvaged. Individuals and businesses contact the LaGardes for salvage after hearing about their services word-of-mouth or through Barnstar Vintage’s Web site.

For renovation or new construction projects, Barnstar Vintage has a wide range of vintage materials including heartwood pine, oak and wide-plank flooring, hand hewn beams, vintage trim pieces, doors and windows, barnwood siding, claw foot tubs and even complete deconstructed tobacco barns. In addition, Barnstar Vintage makes picture frames and mirrors from vintage woods and antique ceiling tiles, and one-of-a-kind custom indoor and outdoor furniture using barnwood, architectural, beams, porch posts and other vintage wood.

Some of their unique creations and other vintage materials can be seen and purchased on Barnstar Vintage’s Web page, www.barnstarvintage.com as well as on www.etsy.com. Look for Barnstar Vintage at Triangle-area craft fairs and festivals.

For more information about Barnstar Vintage’s architectural, commissioned furniture, frames and mirrors, or to discuss having a structure salvaged, call Tom or Heather LaGarde at (336) 376-5694.



Recovered vintage wood and ceiling tiles are used to make decorative mirrors.

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*for more information, call:
Tom Rhodes, (919) 715-6516*

Financing Information on RBAC's Web Site

by Wendy Worley, Recycling Business Development Specialist

The recently renovated RBAC Web site includes a financing page that provides access to a variety of funding opportunities for North Carolina recycling businesses. To access the RBAC financing information, go to www.p2pays.org/rbac/financing.html.



In addition, the Web site includes information on the North Carolina recycling tax credit program and other recycling business financing sources to help your recycling business grow.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact **Wendy Worley** at (919) 715-6542.

The site includes detailed information about RBAC's Recycling Business Development Grants, including application materials, scoring criteria and examples of previously funded projects. Deadline for the current grant round is Feb. 1, 2007.

While RBAC does not lend money directly, it does provide information on a range of loan types and agencies available to recycling businesses. Loan opportunities include the N.C. Recycling Business Loan Fund, Small Business Administration loans, the N.C. Rural Economic Development Center's Microenterprise Loan Fund (see article on p. 2 of this issue) and the Small Business Enterprise Loan Fund (see article in the next issue of *Recycling Works*).

Recycling Works is published by the N.C. Recycling Business Assistance Center, a program of the Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources. For more information call (919) 715-6500 or (800) 763-0136, or write to DPPEA, 1639 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1639.

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North Carolina Food Waste Task Force

by Brian Rosa, Organic Recycling Specialist

More than 50 people attended a seminar on food waste in Chapel Hill last month sponsored by the N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance and the Carolina Compost Council. The goal of the seminar was to outline the need for increasing food waste diversion and organize a committee to explore options to make it happen. Ten speakers made presentations about such issues as food waste generation, EPA's diversion hierarchy, Orange County's food waste collection program, UNC-Charlotte's on-site composting program and food bank diversion programs.

This zero-waste event was co-sponsored by Whole Foods of Chapel Hill, who donated the lunch, BFS of Bend, Ore.,

who donated the biodegradable utensils, plates and collection bags, and Orange County who transported the waste to be composted.

More than 20 attendees signed up to be on the statewide task force. The next meeting of the N.C. Food Waste Task Force was held on Jan. 16 at the Inter-Faith Food Shuttle facility in Raleigh. For more information about the task force please contact **Brian Rosa** at (919) 715-6524, or visit www.p2pays.org/compost. For a copy of the seminar DVD (\$30), contact the Carolina Compost Council at its Web site: www.carolinascompostingcouncil.org.



The Recycling Business Assistance Center is a program of the North Carolina Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance.

Call (919) 715-6500 or (800) 763-0136 for free technical assistance and information about preventing, reducing and recycling waste.



North Carolina market prices for recyclables

Prices current as of Jan. 12, 2007

| Item | Western Region | Central Region | Eastern Region |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| METALS | | | |
| Aluminum Cans, lb. loose | \$0.905 | \$0.92 | \$0.925 |
| Steel cans, gross ton baled | \$137 | \$110 | \$75 |
| PLASTICS | | | |
| PETE, lb. baled | \$0.15 | \$0.14 | \$0.15 |
| HDPE, lb. baled | Natural | \$0.30 | \$0.305 |
| | Colored | \$0.17 | \$0.17 |
| PAPER | | | |
| Newsprint, ton baled | \$95 | \$85 | \$92.55 |
| Corrugated, ton baled | \$80 | \$70 | \$70 |
| Office, ton baled | \$145 (SOP) | \$135 (SOP) | \$225 (white ledger) |
| Magazines, ton baled | * | \$65 | ** |
| Mixed, ton baled | \$65 | \$40 | \$65 |
| GLASS | | | |
| Eastern Region sells glass F.O.B. origin | | | |
| Brown, ton crushed delivered | \$15 | \$16 | \$21 |
| Clear, ton crushed delivered | \$25 | \$26 | \$17 |
| Green, ton crushed delivered | (\$7) | \$0 | (\$9) |
| *Markets with mixed paper. **Markets with newsprint. Note: Prices listed above are compiled by RBAC and are for reference only. These prices are not firm quotes. RBAC obtained pricing information from processors for each category and developed a pricing range. | | | |

Visit RBAC online at <http://www.p2pays.org/rbac>