

forwardTHINKING

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» AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

**Champion Homes
is Harnett County's**

Industry of the Year



ABOVE: Congratulations to our Industry of the Year! Pictured receiving the award are Champion employees Garland Norris, Elizabeth Carter, Jennifer Hayes, and Tony Webb.

(Daily Record Photo)

Champion Home Builders Company of Lillington has been named the 2008 Harnett County Industry of the Year. The Harnett County Economic Development Commission (Harnett EDC) presents this award to one outstanding industry every year.

Champion first chose Lillington for an expansion from their Michigan headquarters nearly 40 years ago.

"In the first year, Champion built one or two homes a week," said Angie Stewart, Existing Industry Manager with the Harnett EDC. "The company is now the largest

modular home builder in North America."

As proof of its quality management, Champion employs 150 people, who average over 20 years of service. It has also maintained a turnover rate of less than 1 percent for the past three years.

"That's certainly one reason they are this year's winner," Stewart said.

Champion was honored as part of the annual Harnett County Industry Appreciation Day golf tournament and banquet held October 23 at Chicora Country Club in Erwin.

» HFTC DONATES LAND IN SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY PARK County Leaders Kick Off Construction of New Hospital

On October 22, hundreds gathered at the new Brightwater Science and Technology Park in Lillington for a celebration. The event: the kick-off of construction for the new Harnett Health Systems hospital.

Earlier this year, HFTC board members voted to transfer 20 acres of the 130-acre Brightwater campus to Harnett Health Systems for this new hospital. The large crowd at the kick off included area leaders and representatives from

Central Carolina Community College, Campbell University, and the Campbell School of Pharmacy, which have campuses nearby. Also on hand were residents of Lillington, Dunn, Erwin, Coats, and Angier



» HFTC ANNUAL BANQUET Taking the Long-view

On November 24, HFTC held its annual membership meeting and dinner at Howard's Banquet Facility in Lillington. Members conducted board elections and were presented with an annual report, which highlighted

employment figures, job gains and losses, new grants for county initiatives, and encouraging activity at our industrial parks.

"We've been here before," said Lee Anne Nance, Director of the Harnett County Economic Development Commission, speaking of the slow economy. "But we make economic development decisions for the long-term, even for those not born yet. That's what works."

If you're a member of HFTC, watch the mail for your copy of the report.





Our new HFTC Web site, www.HarnettForward.org, now boasts more than 2,000 hits between its September 16 launch and October 31. An average of 50 people visit us “virtually” each day.

Progress continues on the first of two spec buildings at the Western Harnett Industrial Park, or WHIP, on Hwy. 87 between Ft. Bragg and the Research Triangle Park. Footings have been poured for the 10,800 square foot “flex space” building, which should be ready

for occupancy in early 2009.

HFTC welcomes Bryan Thompson, Erwin’s new town manager. Previously, Thompson served as town manager for Mt. Gilead, NC.

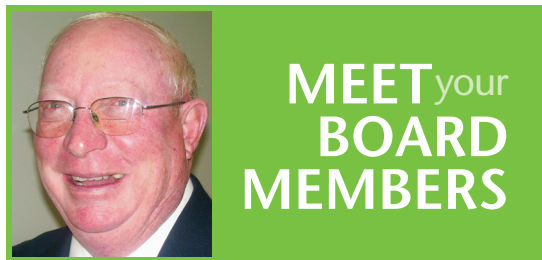
Welcome new HFTC members: Gary Steimle, Michael R. Jackson, Robert P. Cameron, and Bobby Womble.

We also welcome Theresa Thompson as Lillington’s new Planning and Zoning Director.



HFTC BOARD of DIRECTORS

District 1: George Womble David Avrette	Ex Officio: Harnett County Manager
District 2: Johnson Tilghman Bobby Wellons	Dr. Bud Marchant, Central Carolina Community College
District 3: Bill Pope Steve Wicker	Lee Anne Nance, Harnett Co. Economic Development Commission
District 4: Bob McCune R.H. Ellington	Dr. Jack Britt, Campbell University
District 5: Jimmy McCormick Jim Randolph	
At Large: Dan Andrews, County Commissioner	



Jimmy McCormick is just entering his second decade of economic development volunteerism in Harnett County. Today, he’s HFTC’s Secretary-Treasurer and a board member of the Western Harnett Industrial Park, Inc., or WHIP.

Interests merge: A retired vocational and agriculture teacher, McCormick has been with HFTC since its beginning. He’s also an elected member of the Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors and an eighth generation grain and cattle farmer.

Western Harnett: “Even though we have no incorporated towns in this part of the county, we have about half the county’s population,” he says. “It’s been great to see that our leadership—including HFTC—looks after the

interests of the entire county.”

Upcoming challenges: “Of course, our most immediate concern is the economy. The Western Harnett Industrial Park holds promise for serving the expansions at Ft. Bragg (due to the federal Base Re-Alignment And Closure Act, or BRAC).”

Exciting progress: “The new hospital in Lillington is going to be a tremendous asset—not only to serving existing businesses but in recruiting new industry, as well.”

State Offers Incentives for Harnett Business

This is the first of an occasional series on tax credits for businesses in and coming into Harnett County, N.C.

Did you know that you might qualify for a tax credit program set up in 2006 by the NC General Assembly? If you’re in or coming to Harnett County, our Economic Development office will be happy

to get you started in the application process.

Here’s a quick summary of requirements for the state’s “Article 3J” credit.

- » The average wage, the new jobs, and the workers trained must meet/exceed the applicable wage standard of the county.
- » You must provide health insurance for fulltime positions and pay at least 50 percent of premiums.

- » You must have no significant environmental violations within the prior five years.
- » You must have no serious OSHA violations within the prior three years.
- » You must be current on taxes.

For more details, Google “[Harnett County incentives](#),” or contact Harnett County Economic Development: (910) 893-7524, business@harnett.org.