



RURAL ROUTES

The North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center, Inc.

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Summit spurs discussion, new agenda on behalf of North Carolina's dislocated workers

On September 2 the Rural Center and its partners held a day-long summit to focus attention on North Carolina's 'dislocated' workers — men and women who have been laid off through plant closings and downsizings and are not likely to find new jobs in the industry they are experienced in. More than 150 people attended the event at the North Raleigh Hilton, including state leaders, workforce development experts and community assistance officials who likened the experience of losing a long-term job to surviving a natural disaster.

"When those 4,800 people lost their jobs at Pillowtex, they didn't care about global trade policies — their only concerns were food, clothing, survival," said Louise Mack, executive director of Prosperity Unlimited, a non-profit housing agency in Kannapolis. "If a hurricane or some other natural disaster had been declared in Cabarrus County, there would have been help there for them. Well, 4,800 people's quality of life was destroyed, and it wasn't from wind and rain, but from foreclosure on their homes."

Unlike other out-of-work people, dislocated workers have generally spent their entire adult lives working in a single, low-skill industrial job. When the industry declines and eventually closes or moves operations outside the U.S., workers and their families are faced with losing the only life they've ever known, often overnight. One workforce expert addressed the need to debunk the oft-asked question: why don't these workers move and get a job somewhere else?

"To lose your job is pretty devastating, and to leave the only home you've ever known at the same time is a really hard thing to do," said Leslie Boney, senior associate at MDC., a nonprofit community and economic development policy organization

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Project *New Start* participant Dorothy Johnson (right) on the job at Guardian Care of Henderson. A manufacturing worker for 32 years, Johnson was unemployed after the J.P. Taylor plant closed in 2001. Shown with Johnson is her new supervisor, Mary Reid.

Project *New Start* offers return to normalcy for dislocated workers

'Lost' is often the word used by dislocated workers to describe the feeling of being without a job for the first time in many years. Later, they say, is when fear and frustration set in. Where do you go to look for a job, in a community where jobs were already scarce? What do you say when a prospective employer asks about skills and education, when you thought the factory would sustain you until retirement? And how do you hold on to the life you've worked so hard for once the unemployment checks stop coming?

"Thirty-two years just gone, and what was I going to do?" said Dorothy Johnson, a former J.P. Taylor employee laid off along with most of her family in 2001. "I needed to be led, and I found someone to lead me, to take me by the hand and show me what I could do."

The 58-year-old Henderson grandmother was contacted by the Franklin-Vance-Warren Opportunity, Inc., a community action agency that is working with area dislocated workers to get them the educa-

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Speakers at the center's Rural Dislocated Worker Summit on Sept. 2 included, from left, Secretary of Labor Harry Payne, Community College President Martin Lancaster, MDC, Inc. Senior Associate Leslie Boney, and Workforce Development Commission Director Roger Shackelford.

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in Chapel Hill. "It's not a choice you'd want to make."

Presenting the latest data on how large-scale manufacturing layoffs have affected rural workers, Rural Center President Billy Ray Hall set the stage for discussions on new ideas for helping dislocated workers get back to work, as well as how to improve the state's economy and prepare its workers for future economic downturns and industry shifts.

A look at the data shows that a disproportionate number of the workers who were displaced between 2000 and 2002 were black, Hall said. More women than men lost their jobs, and middle-aged and older workers had a higher chance of losing their jobs. Those that went back to work within one year of being laid off in 2000 returned to jobs making just 63.5 percent of their former salaries. By 2002, reemployment salaries went down to 49 percent of former earnings for the average dislocated worker.

Education is a central, critical issue for these workers, many of whom lack a high school diploma and haven't seen the inside of a classroom in decades, said N.C. Community College President Martin Lancaster. Dislocated workers who come to their local community college to enroll in classes face unique challenges and often require special services, the very programs that have been cut from the community college budget over the last few years, he said.

"These out-of-work people need particular services at the community college level,

From the Summit . . .

"No matter what programs we offer, it can't compete with an unemployed person's house payment, or their food bill. They will take any job that pays when they are desperate, so we've got to address financial issues as well as re-employment. We also need to look at how to address the functional literacy of people who, though they are very intelligent, aren't literate enough to go in search of the jobs they are qualified for."

Harry Payne, Chairman
Employment Security Commission

"If we don't build broad-based partnerships to get these dislocated workers back to work in good paying jobs, we are looking at having a lost generation of workers out there that we'll pay for in some way sooner or later."

Roger Shackelford, Executive Director
N.C. Commission on Workforce Development

and I don't think state policy leaders always recognize that," Lancaster said.

Dorothy Johnson understands how intimidating it is for a person to return to school in their 40s, 50s or even 60s, having done just that in 2002 after losing the job she held at the J.P. Taylor plant in Henderson for more than 32 years.

"That place was all we knew," Johnson said during the summit's luncheon address. "My aunts worked there, my sister, my daughter, husband and granddaughter. Three generations, out the door."

With help from Franklin-Vance-Warren Opportunity, Inc., Johnson received her GED along with job training skills. A few months ago she turned another corner in her life when she was offered a job at a local nursing home after taking part in the Rural Center's Project *New Start*, a jobs assistance program focused on dislocated tobacco workers.

The mass layoffs North Carolina has experienced over the last four years are not a manufacturing phenomenon and nor are they limited to the South, according to Howard Rosen, director of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Coalition, who cited figures showing at least a quarter of the U.S. labor market is in transition each year. Rather, the problem is that certain industries are less well prepared to deal with these inevitable transitions than others, Rosen said, combined with a lack of preemptive planning on the state or federal level to head off the devastating effects of mass layoffs.

"The U.S. labor market is probably the most flexible market in the world, yet we spend the least of any developed nation on these transitions," Rosen said. "We need a system in place that aids transitions, that focuses more on reemployment rather than solely on temporary assistance."

The summit concluded with the initiation of a planning process for development of a rural dislocated worker action agenda to be unveiled in January 2005 as part of a comprehensive, multi-organization effort. The event was presented in partnership with the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission, N.C. Employment Security Commission, N.C. Department of Commerce, N.C. Community College System, N.C. Commission on Workforce Development, N.C. Community Foundation, and the Michael and Laura Brader-Araje Foundation.

A closer look at rural North Carolina's dislocated workers

Excerpts from "Facts About Dislocated Workers," released by the Rural Center at the Dislocated Worker Summit on September 2, 2004.

- From 2000 to 2004, mass layoffs affected rural and urban workers almost equally, but fewer rural workers have gone back to work.
- Women accounted for more than 55 percent of rural dislocated workers in 2003, although women make up less than half of the rural workforce.
- Rural women are also less likely to be rehired a year after being dislocated than their male counterparts, 46 to 52 percent, respectively.
- Black men and women accounted for 42 percent of the dislocated workers in 2003, even though blacks comprise only 21 percent of the rural population.
- Workers over age 45 are most at risk. Though they make up just 34 percent of the state's labor force, older workers accounted for nearly half of the dislocated workers in 2003.
- A dislocated worker's chance of being rehired within one year has fallen significantly since 2000, when 64 percent went back to work soon after losing their job. That number fell to 49 percent in 2002.
- Reemployment wages for rural dislocated workers tend to be significantly lower than their pre-layoff wages. 31 percent can expect to earn only 50 to 84 percent of their former wages after finding a new job.
- In 2002, reemployment wages were less for women than men, 69 to 74 percent, and dropped significantly for workers over age 45.
- In 2002, a 30-year-old rural dislocated worker could expect to be rehired at 77 percent of his/her former salary, compared with 60 percent for a 55-year-old.

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tion and job training they need to find a new job. Johnson enrolled in school, got her GED and today is working full-time at a local nursing home while taking classes in business management. She credits the organization, one of three funded as part of the Rural Center's Project *New Start*, with helping return normalcy to her life.

A jobs assistance and training program for dislocated workers in tobacco-dependent counties, Project *New Start* was initiated last January with the goal of serving a minimum of 400 workers — 300 of them former tobacco workers — in a one-year period. The program is funded by a \$350,000 grant from the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission and a \$30,000 contribution from the Rural Center.

Partner organizations in Vance, Wilson, and Transylvania counties have put 123 people back to work, helped 249 map out job transition plans, delivered employability and job search training to more than 200, and supported more than 130 with emergency services, to date. The program's eventual goal is to get at least 75 percent of program participants back to work within six months of receiving services.

Wilson County demonstration director Montress Green, who works with participants through the local Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC), said it's the totality of the services offered under the program that is responsible for its success in Wilson. The program recognizes that each person's needs are as diverse as the people themselves, she said. Some may just need help in putting together a resume, while others that have been out of work longer may need food, clothing, or help with their rent or mortgage.

"If an unemployed person doesn't have groceries in the house, if they don't have decent clothes to wear to an interview, they aren't going to be able to think about a new

job," Green said. "Our job is to be there every step along the way and listen to their needs," she said. Another important part of the program is keeping an open dialogue with area employers, according to Green, who said effectively matching up skills and personalities between employee and employer is essential to establishing a good working relationship on both ends. One Wilson County business is apparently very satisfied with the program — it has hired 12 Project *New Start* participants so far and plans to hire more in the near future.

"Listening to these people is essential, because initially many of them will say, 'I don't have any skills,' but over the course of asking them about their life we find out that they do have marketable skills," said Green, who keeps tabs on New Start participants through a database and by making frequent follow-up calls.

Howard Jones, executive director of the Wilson OIC, has been helping out-of-work people in the county for more than 30 years, and says despite the recent spike in manufacturing layoffs, his organization has not found it necessary to change its strategies on job training and placement.

"We don't have a magic wand that makes people want to get up every morning and go look for a job," said Jones, executive director of the OIC. "We have to build their self-esteem at one of the most difficult times in their lives, and we have to establish a sense of trust. Having been in this community a long time, they know they can trust us to help them."

The program is currently slated to end in December 2004, though the Rural Center is exploring the possibility of additional funding in order to continue the program into a second year.

For more information on Project New Start, contact Anne Scharff, Rural Center senior associate for workforce development, 919-250-4314.



Keeping the family tradition alive: Alex, left, and A.J. Willis, right, are third and fourth-generation boat builders on Harkers Island in Carteret County.

Grants program has community approach to entrepreneurship

Alex Willis has spent his life building boats on Harkers Island, just like his father and grandfather before him. For 80 years the Willis men have turned out some of the most magnificent hand-crafted boats made in the eastern U.S., each one passing down a painstaking technique from father to son so intricate it takes years to perfect. These days it's 18-year-old A.J.'s turn to watch and learn, while Willis wonders if maybe his only son wouldn't be better off doing something else. Building boats is what we love, he says. The business of building boats is something else altogether.

"This is a hard life, you get torn up and jerked around," Willis said. "I'd like for him to go to college."

But it is clear A.J.'s heart is in the family business. Told he and other boat builders on the island will soon be invited to take part in business and technical assistance training as part of a community-based entrepreneurship effort led by the Rural Center and the state Department of Commerce, father and son agree it would be a positive step. Easing the strains of running the operation day-to-day could very well help keep the family tradition alive, they say.

The Marine & Aquaculture Resource & Training (MART) grant is one of 11 awarded to groups in 27 communities across the state this summer as part of a \$660,000 program to create jobs and jump start small business growth in North Carolina. In addition to helping get new businesses off the

ground, the funding, which includes \$500,000 from the N.C. Department of Commerce and \$160,000 from the Rural Center, will help form the partnerships in rural communities that are essential to creating an environment that allows entrepreneurs to grow, thrive and ultimately contribute to their local economy.

"This program is much bigger than the initial jobs that will be created with the grant funds," said Rural Center President Billy Ray Hall. "It's about establishing a culture of entrepreneurship that will sustain small business development in rural communities for years to come."

In addition to helping Carteret County boat builders enhance their business skills through a series of training and technical assistance workshops, the \$66,000 MART grant will also help fund Carteret Community College's aquaculture program. Skip Kemp, program director, believes with the right training and adequate investment, aspiring aquaculture entrepreneurs can build successful businesses using the abundant marine resources around Carteret and Brunswick counties.

"With shrimp for example, much of the shrimp we eat is imported from overseas, and with the demand for shrimp as high as it is, there is no reason we can't farm and harvest good-quality shrimp domestically."

Kemp said the 22 students currently enrolled in the program have business interests that range from growing marine invertebrates for harvesting pharmaceutical

products to flounder and shellfish production. A portion of the grant funds may be used to organize an aquaculture expo next spring, giving students a much-needed opportunity to network within the industry and meet with potential investors.

Each of the 11 grants in the program — announced at the Rural Center's 2003 Rural Partners Forum as part of its Homegrown Jobs Initiative — are as unique in scope as the communities they will serve, covering a range of services for the entrepreneur including business incubators, mentoring, marketing assistance, and access to business loans.

All, however, are required to use partnerships within the region or community that will enable a network of services to be built around the needs of area entrepreneurs.

Just one month after receiving their \$50,000 grant, the Entrepreneur Development Partnership in Watauga County is preparing to host the first of a series of workshops aimed at helping entrepreneurs identify promising markets and put together a sensible business plan. Chilton Rogers, assistant director of the Appalachian Regional Development Institute, says the workshops will also help establish a support group for entrepreneurs who will likely find it beneficial to share experiences with those going through the same trials and tribulations of starting a new business.



Skip Kemp, director of the aquaculture program at Carteret Community College, and student Matt Penny inspect clams harvested in special tanks at the school's marine laboratory.

"By the end of the third workshop our entrepreneurs will have a business plan," Rogers said. "Talking to people and networking is the biggest thing, getting people together so the ideas and resources start flowing."

Following is a summary of the 11 entrepreneurship demonstration projects awarded funding.

E3 (Encapsulated Entrepreneurial Enterprises) - \$100,000

E³ is a regional partnership among Bryson City and Swain, Jackson, Macon, Clay, Cherokee and Graham counties and the Qualla Boundary. This project provides local entrepreneurs with comprehensive technical resources, access to capital and experienced mentors.

Capitalizing on Our Resources: Natural Enterprise Development in Northeast N.C. - \$100,000

A partnership among Tyrrell, Washington, Hyde, Dare and Beaufort counties, this project will make use of the region's natural resources-based infrastructure as an economic development tool. One feature will be a summer youth entrepreneurship camp offered by 4-H and NC real.

Marine & Aquaculture Resource & Training (MART) - \$66,000

The MART program will enable Carteret County to provide economic development and technical assistance to the budding industries of boat building and aquaculture. The county will work with the Carteret Community College's Micro-enterprise Development Program to provide these services.

Kerr-Tar Business Enhancement, Acceleration and Mentoring (BEAM) Center - \$60,000

This partnership, comprised of Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance and Warren counties, will provide a business support system to teach local businesses best practices. The Small Business Technology Development Center is a key partner in this project.

Stimulating the 'Mom and Pop Economy' - \$60,000

Columbus County is partnering with Southeastern Community College (SCC) to provide a stronger support system for the 'Mom and Pop Economy' in the county. This project will be used to assist potential entrepreneurs by mapping the county's available resources, creating a small business resource guide and hosting entre-



Joe Miller is a retired Boone pharmacist who turned his love of watercolor painting into a successful art supply business. Miller is ready to begin mentoring Watauga County entrepreneurs as part of the Entrepreneur Development Partnership, one of 11 programs awarded funding by the Rural Center and the N.C. Department of Commerce.

preneurship networking forums.

Grassroots Minority Business Development - \$60,000

This project is aimed at boosting entrepreneurship in five northeastern counties - Bertie, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, and Northampton. The local electric membership cooperative is focused on making small entrepreneurs successful while also providing benefits to communities that help achieve specific employment and economic goals. A newly-hired business and community development coordinator will work closely with Roanoke-Chowan Community College's Small Business Center to provide training, business plan development and one-on-one counseling to aspiring and existing entrepreneurs in the region.

Growing Entrepreneurs - \$55,000

Growing Entrepreneurs is a project with the Town of Elkin and N.C. Division of Travel and Tourism that will focus on promoting growth in the local tourism industry. It will also create partnerships between local entrepreneurs and the town and county.

Entrepreneur Development Partnership - \$50,000

The partnership is comprised of the Economic Development Department of Watauga County and Appalachian State University. This partnership will create a support group for budding entrepreneurs, help to identify growing markets and future business leaders, and host business planning and preparation workshops.

Entrepreneurial Stimulus Program - \$45,000

This program will allow Burke County to create a staff position that will spearhead entrepreneurial development and activities in the county. This new staff person will extend the capacity of the Small Business Center at Western Piedmont Community College.

Williamston Incubator Project (WIP) - \$34,500

The Town of Williamston will use the WIP program to provide subsidies to attract retail entrepreneurs to the downtown area. A portion of the town's downtown will be renovated for microenterprises. This project will also create a capital formation substitution fund, which will help microenterprises purchase and/or lease equipment such as cash registers, computers, fax machines and copiers.

Revitalize Yancey! - \$29,500

Yancey County's Revitalize Yancey! project will provide for capital equipment in a handicraft business incubator and training for low-income workers interested in operating a craft-related business. Partners in this project include Mayland Community College and the Yancey County Cultural Resources Commission.

CENTER'S BOARD APPROVES \$10.7 MILLION FOR WATER AND SEWER IMPROVEMENTS

The Rural Center's board of directors voted August 26 to award \$10,740,390 in Clean Water Bond grants to 46 rural communities for water and wastewater system improvements. The board, which meets twice each year to award grants that help plan for, build and improve water and wastewater systems in rural communities, will make one more round of awards before funds from the 1998 Clean Water Bond Act are fully expended in 2005.

"As we enter the sixth and final year of these water and wastewater investments, it is clear what a tremendous impact the bond program has had on rural North Carolina, its residents and businesses," said Rural Center President Billy Ray Hall. "The projects have cleaned up serious environmental problems, created jobs, improved quality of life and for hundreds of rural communities, opened the door to a whole new way of life."

Grants are awarded under two categories: Supplemental grants of up to \$400,000 to match funds already dedicated to a water or sewer project; and Capacity Building grants of up to \$40,000 to conduct the planning phase of water and wastewater projects. The center's board of directors approved the following grants.

County	Recipient	Grant
Bladen	Town of Elizabethtown	\$398,315
Bladen	Town of Bladenboro	\$400,000
Bladen	Town of Clarkton	\$400,000
Brunswick	Town of Calabash	\$110,310
Brunswick	City of Boiling Springs Lake	\$20,000
Brunswick	Brunswick County	\$400,000
Brunswick	Town of Shallotte	\$400,000
Burke	Burke County	\$217,170
Burke	Town of Valdese	\$400,000
Caldwell	Town of Sawmills	\$40,000
Caldwell	Town of Granite Falls	\$40,000
Columbus	Town of Chadbourn	\$400,000
Duplin	Town of Wallace	\$40,000
Edgecombe	Edgecombe County Water and Sewer District 2	\$212,575
Edgecombe	Town of Whitakers	\$300,000
Edgecombe	Edgecombe County Water and Sewer District 5	\$400,000
Greene	Greene County	\$400,000
Halifax	Town of Littleton	\$400,000
Halifax	Roanoke Rapids Sanitary District	\$40,000
Halifax	Town of Scotland Neck	\$40,000
Halifax	Town of Scotland Neck	\$400,000
Harnett	Town of Angier	\$390,190
Harnett	Town of Lillington	\$400,000
Harnett	Town of Lillington	\$40,000
Haywood	Town of Maggie Valley	\$21,000
Hertford	Town of Murfreesboro	\$400,000
Hertford	Town of Ahoskie	\$40,000
Jackson	Tuckaseegee Water and Sewer Authority	\$400,000
Lenoir	Neuse Regional Water and Sewer Authority	\$40,000
Macon	Town of Franklin	\$40,000
Madison	Town of Mars Hill	\$35,600
Mitchell	Town of Spruce Pine	\$400,000
Mitchell	Town of Bakersville	\$35,600
Montgomery	Handy Sanitary District	\$40,000
Northampton	Town of Seaboard	\$400,000
Northampton	Town of Conway	\$40,000
Pitt	Town of Farmville	\$400,000
Pitt	Contentnea Metropolitan Sewer District	\$7,200
Pitt	Town of Ayden	\$15,500
Pitt	Town of Farmville	\$20,000
Polk	Town of Tryon	\$40,000
Robeson	Town of Maxton	\$391,200
Rutherford	Rutherford County	\$400,000
Stanly	Village of Misenheimer	\$40,000
Transylvania	City of Brevard	\$200,000
Wayne	Town of Mount Olive	\$400,000
Wilkes	Town of North Wilkesboro	\$36,130
Wilkes	Town of North Wilkesboro	\$200,000
Yadkin	Town of Yadkinville	\$400,000
Yancey	Town of Burnsville	\$9,600

Concern over small business health insurance prompts lawmakers to create 28-member panel

Rising premiums and fewer insurance carriers are creating a crisis for North Carolina's small businesses, according to state lawmakers who established a special 28-member panel to deal with the issue during the 2004 session. The Health Insurance Innovations Commission, whose membership will include small business employers, health insurers, and health care policy experts, will study the often complicated issues surrounding health insurance in an effort to find workable solutions. The commission will provide a detailed report on their work to the General Assembly in 2006.

Lawmakers said they were prompted to act by research that reveals more than 60 percent of the state's 1.27 million uninsured residents work for a small business or are the dependent of a small business employee. North Carolina is currently ranked 8th in the nation for the number of uninsured people under age 65.

The issue was the focus of a recent Rural Center report that found double-digit premium hikes are leaving some employers with few options other than to scale back benefits or stop offering them altogether. Employers say that is a bitter choice, since their ability to attract quality employees and grow their businesses often depends on offering health insur-

ance as a benefit. And it is an issue that is especially troublesome for rural North Carolina, where the gradual demise of textile and manufacturing plants is pushing more workers into small business jobs that are less likely to offer health care benefits.

In addition to talking with small business employers around the state to hear their concerns, the commission will initiate regional demonstration projects to pilot innovative health care plans and products that address the problem. Early ideas include community-based education programs to boost early detection of some illnesses, and policy incentives that raise demand for health insurance coverage by both employers and employees in targeted areas.

The center's report, Health Insurance in North Carolina, is available on the web at: <http://www.ncruralcenter.org/pubs/healthcarefindings.pdf>. To receive a printed copy, call Kelly Griffin, communications office, at (910) 250-4314.

FUNDER'S CORNER

The Rural Partners Corporate Group supports the work of the center through annual donations. The members of the corporate group are listed below.

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Amendment One supporters urge voters to say 'yes' to self-financing bonds on Nov. 2

North Carolina and Arizona are currently the only states in the nation whose local governments lack the authority to finance public improvement projects with self-financing bonds, an innovative economic development tool. Such projects — including water and sewer systems, commercial and housing development and re-use of abandoned manufacturing plants, to name just a few — leverage private investment and have the potential to create jobs, revitalize blighted areas and boost community development efforts.

North Carolinians for Jobs and Progress, a partnership of state and local political leaders, economic developers, businesses and citizens, has spent the last year getting out the word on the need for self-financing bonds in North Carolina, where large-scale manufacturing losses have shaken the state economy and devastated rural communities in particular. Because it will require a change in the state Constitution, North Carolina voters will be asked to decide the issue in the form of a referendum that will appear on the Nov. 2 ballot as Amendment One.

"Referendums can often be confusing to voters, so it is important that we are

clear in our support for Amendment One," said Rural Center President Billy Ray Hall. "Self-financing bonds will give us the power to generate jobs and bring new opportunities to rural communities that are really struggling right now."

Hall said it was vitally important that voters understand that these bonds carry little risk compared to other bond financing, pointing to the more than 95 percent success rate of self-financing bonds nationwide.

Not to be confused with general obligation bonds, self-financing bonds place the repayment risk on the bondholder, not the taxpayer — so that local governments are not required to raise taxes. They work like this: a local government designates a special development district that the project will be located within, and then submits the plan to the Local Government Commission within the Office of the State Treasurer for approval, which must be satisfied that the project would not proceed on its own without the self-financing bonds. Once given the go-ahead, the local government unit sells the bonds, which are then paid back from the enhanced property tax values. Once the bond is paid off, all

future property taxes from the development district go into the municipality's general fund.

Former Governors Jim Hunt, Jim Martin and Jim Houshouser are honorary co-chairs of the campaign to approve the Amendment One referendum, which has the support of the N.C. League of Municipalities, N.C. Citizens for Business and Industry, N.C. Association of County Commissioners and the N.C. Economic Developers Association. The Rural Center is among many organizations that promote economic and community development lending support to the measure.

The North Carolina Rural Economic

Development Center is a private, non-profit corporation whose mission is to improve the quality of life of rural North Carolinians. The center is governed by a 50-member board of directors. Officers are Tom Lambeth, chair; Valeria Lee, 1st vice chair; Bill Veeder, 2nd vice chair; Sandra Gambill, secretary; Edmund Aycock, treasurer; Billy Ray Hall, president. Editorial staff: Elaine Matthews, editor; Michelle Taylor, writer; Steve Gaj, design; Kelly Tucker, production manager. Inquiries should be directed to: Editor, 4021 Carya Drive, Raleigh, NC 27610: Tel.(919) 250-4314. *RURAL ROUTES* is a quarterly publication with a circulation of 4,500. All rights reserved.

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