

SECOND FRONT

Courier-Record

Lt. Gov. in Blackstone: "VA leading the way" Bolling hails Reiss expansion

Planned expansion at Reiss Manufacturing in Blackstone is a sign that perhaps the national recession is dissipating. Lt. Governor Bill Bolling told an upbeat crowd of workers and local officials last Wednesday morning here.

"We've been through a tough time," Bolling said while announcing that 40 new jobs will be created at Reiss. "And that's particularly true here in southern Virginia. But I believe we're on our way back, and that Virginia is leading the way."

Last Wednesday marked the Lt. Governor's 3rd trip to Blackstone since last Spring. He addressed Kenston Forest's Class of 2010 in May, and last September spoke to a Chamber of Commerce legislative breakfast. Many observers believe Bolling (R) is preparing to run for Governor in 2013.

Bolling, who is serving as Gov. Bob McDonnell's "Jobs Creation Officer," announced that Reiss Manufacturing has partnered with Newport News Industrial Corporation, a part of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, to support the manufacture and sale of an environmentally-friendly, radiation-shielding material.

Bolling says the news is pleasing in several ways.

"Reiss is a MANUFACTURING company. We think it's important that we be a state that makes things--not just consume things. In the past decade or so, we've seen



Good News!

Employees of Reiss Manufacturing in Blackstone are happy that the firm has increased orders, is adding 40 workers, and will be buying new equipment. Shown from left last Wednesday: Carol Anello, Shalonn Johnson, Edna Daniel, and JoAnn Jones, who has 22 years of service. Shown in left background is Tony Brown, a 14-year Reiss veteran.



CARL REISS

manufacturing jobs go overseas. This is a company that's always understood the value of keeping jobs in America.

Bolling, a former Hanover County Supervisor, also said that Reiss' partnership with Newport News Shipbuilding "is directly supporting the brave men and women who serve in the U. S. military. When you can come to a job and make something, that's a great thing...but it's even better when you know it's having such a tremendous positive impact."

Bolling said the state has been working behind-the-scenes on the Reiss deal for about a year.

"We were able to 'grease the skids' to make this venture possible." He did not elaborate.

Reiss executive Carl Reiss said that company sales "have surged in the past several months, and that's great for Reiss, Nottoway County, and Blackstone."

Reiss added, "This will require hiring additional people and buying additional machines. This will mean



She's Done This Before

Helen Epes, a Reiss Manufacturing extrusion operator for 16 years, shows some of her work to Lt. Gov. Bill Bolling, who was in town last Wednesday to announce the planned creation of 40 new jobs at the North West Avenue plant. In background is Reiss worker Marcus Hill.

more and better jobs for all."

And Reiss told local employees: "We couldn't do this without you. That's why we're in Southside Virginia."

Although "only" 23-years-old in Blackstone, Reiss Manufacturing today is one of Blackstone's longest-running industries.

During Reiss Manufacturing's time here (it originally opened here as "North American Reiss Corporation"), a number of other industries have arrived, received Governor's Opportunity Funds, made lofty promises, and left.

Reiss has been a steady contributor to the local economy for nearly a quarter century "and has never

asked for a dime," one employee proudly pointed out during a tour last Wednesday.

Some locals--though they are fewer in number--still manage to incorrectly pronounce the company's name "Reese," but the proper pronunciation is "Rice."

Rhymes with "Nice."

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Reiss speaks highly of Virginia's policies

NJ executive sings praises of Old Dominion state

Might Reiss Manufacturing one day move all of its operations to Blackstone?

The company was founded in 1896 in Chicago.

"I remember it very well," joked long-time Reiss executive Ted Reiss last Wednesday morning, March 16th in Blackstone.

Reiss, the man who oversaw the opening of Reiss' Blackstone plant in 1988, has been with the company for 57 years. "And they're still trying to get rid of me!"

Lt. Gov. Bill Bolling pointed out to the crowd of employees and local officials that after being founded in Chicago, the company later moved to New York, and then to New Jersey.

"They're heading in the right direction," Bolling smiled.

The company, which today is based in Englishtown, New Jersey, built its Blackstone plant in 1988.

Blackstone today is home to two of Reiss' three divisions: Silicene Rubber and Thermoplastic Extrusion.

Reiss executive Carl Reiss, son of Ted Reiss, spoke fondly last Wednesday of the Old Dominion.

"Virginia is an excellent state in which to operate. It has a business-friendly environment, low taxes, investment in education, and they're giving us all the tools we need as a company to grow in the 21st Century."

Carl Reiss also pointed out that Virginia's statewide unemployment rate is 6.5%, about three points better than the national average. "Your policies do make a difference. Virginia's corporate income tax rate hasn't increased since 1972. You have my personal commitment that we'll do our best to make the Lt. Governor's job easier--creating more jobs in Virginia."

Reiss praised the Blackstone work force and called plant manager Harry Newton, who's overseen the North West Avenue facility since 1989, "an excellent chemist."

Newton has managed the Blackstone plant since 1989.

Reiss Manufacturing's Blackstone facility sits on about 40 acres of real estate and has plenty of room to grow.

Carl Reiss told workers here last week, "This is a big deal for Reiss and for Blackstone. This will help us grow this factory out."

After the remarks, Blackstone and Nottoway County officials were invited by Reiss for tours and lunch, which included subs and other treats, all bought locally.

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