



HOME NEWS SPORTS DAYBREAK WEATHER LOCAL ENTERTAINMENT

Local News

Resource Fair, A First Step



The business community of Shelton and Mason County showed great support of the soon to be displaced workers of Simpson Lumber and Olympic Panel Products with their attendance at Wednesday's Community Resource Fair. The fair was led jointly by Peninsula Credit Union, Our Community Credit Union, Shelton-Mason County Chamber of Commerce, Melanie Bakala - State Farm Agent, Mason County EDC, Simpson Lumber Company and Olympic Panel Products.

At the event, there were basic services/utility companies, financial institutions, mortgage resources, employment assistance, and other community resources to answer potential questions. The banking booths presented tools and help with basic home accounting (monthly budgets) and bills and financial services in how to manage various retirement programs to maximize their benefits. Community support groups were on board to help assist in resources available to help manage the stress and anxiety associated with this life changing event.

When talking with the people caught in the midst of the upcoming lay off and plant closures, they were optimistic and thankful for the resource fair and learning of the resources available within the community. Simpson employees stated Simpson has held some meetings with similar information and more scheduled to help employees filling out job applications and filing for unemployment benefits. At first the news of the closure was hard to take, as "Simpson had been in existence for 125 years, we never thought we weren't secure". All were hopeful this experience would be a new beginning.... "An exchange for something bigger".

Other workers were looking toward employing the TAA (trade adjustment assistance); a federal program for those employees with job loss affected by the foreign trade agreements qualify for assistance to go back to school and extended unemployment benefits.



Economic Development Director Lynn Longan introduced US Representative for Washington's 10th Congressional district, Denny Heck, as he has continually extended support and a helping hand wherever he can. He reminded the event goers of an upcoming job fair on June 10, 2015 which already has 40 companies (the goal is to have at least 60) registered to attend. For a company to be at this job fair, they must have a minimum of three job openings.

Community outreach was clearly demonstrated through this event, connecting those in need of assistance with potential resources and answers. As Mike Olsen said in support of saving the pool, the same can be said here. "Never underestimate the power of community".

Community Correspondent, Jerry Eckenrode - KMAS Newsradio, May 28, 2015

< Prev
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**Held at Transit-Community Center*