

North Brevard Business Review



*A quarterly review of business news in Mims, Port St. John, Scottsmeer, and Titusville
Published by the North Brevard Economic Development Zone (NBEDZ) • Brevard County, Florida*

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NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS

Warburton Music Products, a local manufacturing company that has developed a world-wide reputation for making mouthpieces and components for musical instruments, has announced plans to move into an existing 12,000 sq. ft. industrial building, as part of an ongoing expansion project. The Mims-based firm, which began operations more than forty years ago in central Florida, relocated to Brevard County in 2010 and currently occupies a 7,600 sq. ft. building on US Highway 1. Now employing approximately 15 people – many of whom have been with the business for more than ten years – owner Terry Warburton expects the new facility to provide the company with more space for its machining shop and retail desk. Using precision-guided CNC machining to make complete lines of mouthpieces for instruments such as the trombone, tuba, and French horn, Warburton is also known in music circles for its technology and artisan craft in making woodwind instruments, including its famed “Woody Mute,” a device that fits inside a trumpet or trombone to give the instrument a unique sound.

For more information on the company, visit www.warburton-usa.com.

Paragon Plastics, a manufacturer of plastic thermoformed parts, has announced plans to purchase four acres of adjoining property to its six-acre lot in Titusville’s Spaceport Commerce Park in Titusville and construct a new 22,000 sq. ft. facility on the site. According to company president David Trout, the company anticipates spending approximately \$1.1 million on the new building, which will provide additional space for manufacturing and warehousing of product. Paragon Plastics sells manufactured plastic parts and packaging products to the marine, automotive, aviation, and aerospace industries. The expansion project is expected to add 18 new jobs over the next few years; the company currently employs 52 people.

For more information on the company, visit www.paragonplastics.net. For information on the Spaceport Commerce Park, go to www.SpaceportCommercePark.org.

Construction continues on the new, state-of-the-art 640,000 sq. ft. **Walmart** distribution center and refrigerated warehouse at Exit No. 202 of Interstate 95 in nearby Cocoa, a project that is expected to cost more than \$133 million, as reported in the national economic development publication, Area

Development. The company also expects to install approximately \$15 million in new capital equipment. Once fully operational, the facility will employ close to 450 people. The property for the project was purchased in 2014 by Port Canaveral, which envisioned the creation at the site of a light industrial and distribution business park to support its commercial cargo activities. With this project, the North Brevard area increases its stake in the central Florida distribution and warehousing sector, positioning itself as an alternative to existing distribution facilities in Orlando and Volusia County, and advancing the feasibility of North Brevard as a site for other distribution operations. That, in turn, should help the region's overall economic diversification strategy, as it attempts to become less dependent upon the aerospace industry as a sole source of jobs and capital investment.

The Walmart project has already produced spinoffs for the area: soon after the public announcement of the project, work on a new ***Flying J Travel Center*** (expected to create 130 part-time and full-time positions) began at the exit, to serve the freight haulers that the distribution park will attract.

For more information on this project, visit www.areadevelopment.com.

SPOTLIGHT ON: Aero Electronics and Titusville's "HUB Zone"

Located within downtown Titusville's Small Business Administration (SBA) designated "HUB Zone," ***Aero Electronics*** is a manufacturer of military and aerospace cables, harnesses, and electronic assemblies. The company is AS/ED/JISQ 9100:2009 and ISO 9001:2008 certified. Started more than thirteen years ago by Joanne Griffin (CEO and president) and her brothers, the company prides itself on designing and creating complex harness and electromechanical assemblies. It currently employs more than 20 people, each of whom has experience in machining, metal work, and electronics – skills that reflect the unique labor pool that exists in North Brevard.

For more information on the company, visit www.AeroElectronics.net.

The SBA's HUB Zone (Historically Under-utilized Businesses) program assists companies with access to Federal procurement opportunities if the firms are located within a certain, SBA-designated geographic area. Created in 1998 under the Clinton Administration, the HUB Zone program mandates that participating firms be at least 51% owned by a U.S. citizen, and have 35% of the company's total workforce residing within the geography of the HUB Zone.

The SBA maintains a directory listing of all HUB Zone small businesses to help Federal agencies locate qualified vendors, thereby providing sole source contracting. Currently, the SBA has a goal of awarding three percent (3%) of all dollars for Federal prime contractors to HUB Zone-certified firms.

A map of Titusville's HUB Zone – which lies essentially east of Park Avenue and west of the Flagler East Coast rail line in downtown Titusville – is available for viewing at the offices of the NBEDZ (400 South Street, Suite 1A, in Titusville) and the Economic Development Department of the City of Titusville (second floor, City Hall).

For more information on the HUB Zone program, visit www.sba.gov/hubzone.

NASA CONTRACT AWARDED TO FIRM AT KENNEDY SPACE CENTER

According to the [Florida SPACErePORT](#), the firm **A-P-T Research** has been awarded a contract valued at \$52 million from NASA under its Safety and Mission Assurance Support Services II (SMASH II) program. Services contracted for under this arrangement include safety and risk assessments, inspections and investigations, a broad range of engineering analyses, and appraisals of work performed by other NASA contractors and support organizations. Included within that review scope are NASA's Commercial Crew program (designed to take astronauts to the International Space Station, or ISS), Launch Services, and programs conducted aboard the ISS. A-P-T Research has offices in Huntsville, Alabama and Washington, D.C.

For other space-related developments impacting Florida and the Space Coast, register for free delivery of the weekly [Florida SPACErePORT](#) by following this link: [Blogspot - Florida SPACErePORT](#)

BERMAN HOPKINS EXPANDS INTO AREA THROUGH MERGER

Melbourne-based accounting firm **Berman Hopkins** recently merged with Titusville's **Retz Baker, PA**, one of North Brevard's most prominent CPA firms. Berman Hopkins, which also has offices in Orlando, was attracted to the merger due to the north region's recent economic successes, according to Phillip Hayes, managing partner with the firm. The two principals of the Titusville firm, Stan Retz and Doug Baker, have been partners for more than 35 years, building over that time a strong client list of contractors, manufacturing firms, and service sector companies. Read more about the merger in the December issue of [Brevard Business News](#), at www.brevardbusinessnews.com.

ECONOMIC DASHBOARD

In October, 2017, the city of Titusville's unemployment rate dipped below the 4% mark for the first time since the period before the 2009-2011 Great Recession. According to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), the city's unemployment rate fell to 3.7%, for a civilian labor force totaling 20,810. For Brevard County, the rate fell to 3.5% (for a civilian labor force numbering 268,516). For the same period, the **Space Coast Board of Realtors** noted that pending sales of homes rose 33.2% from over a year ago, and that the median sales price for a Brevard single-family home was up 2.6% from a year ago, to \$195,000.

AVAILABLE INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

29,750 sq. ft. metal industrial building on U.S. Highway 1, south of State Highway 50 (Cheney Highway). Ceiling heights of 21' on eaves. Approximately 20-25 parking spaces in building rear. Building features 3-phase power; front & rear loading docks. For lease. [Listing agent](#): Michael Moss (Lightle Beckner Robison) at 321-722-0707.

25,505 sq. ft. metal industrial building, also on U.S. Highway 1, next to Ecklers' Industries corporate headquarters building. 15' eave height. Approximately 20-25 parking spaces. Building has 3-phase power and front & rear loading docks. For lease. [Listing agent](#): Michael Moss (Lightle Beckner Robison) at 321-722-0707.

An App for That: Nearby Orlando Firm Lets You Visit Mars

As NASA and the commercial space industry focus on getting humans to Mars, are you curious what the surface of Mars is really like? **ACME AtronOmatic**, an Orlando-based tech company that achieved notoriety for its weather application MyRadar, recently partnered with another tech firm known for video game designs (**Star Citizen**) to use data visualizations that let a user/gamer explore virtual moons, along with the famed red canyons of Mars. The firm, which currently has 10 employees, also provides flight tracking to the aviation industry. ACME began operations in 1999, and maintains offices in both Orlando and Portland, Oregon.

More information about this tech-sector company is available at: www.acmeaom.com.

ABOUT NORTH BREVARD AND THE ZONE

Located in coastal, east central Florida, the region known as North Brevard is an approximately 200-square mile area of Brevard County that includes the communities of Mims, Port St. John, Scottsmeer, and the City of Titusville. Bordered by the St. John's River to the west and the Indian River Lagoon and Atlantic Ocean to the east, the region has a population of more than 145,000. With an economy based upon a mixture of aerospace, manufacturing, healthcare, boating, and tourism, the region is the home to **NASA's** famed **Kennedy Space Center** and to world-class firms such as **Boeing, Barn Light Electric, Blue Origin, Embraer S.A., VectorWorks, and Gold Tones Musical Instruments**. Information about the region's "quality of life" is available at www.greatertitusville.com.

The **North Brevard Economic Development Zone (NBEDZ)**, created in July 2011 by the Brevard County (Florida) Board of County Commissioners, is a Special Dependent District under Florida Statutes, Chapters 125 and 189. The Zone was formed with the goal of facilitating job growth and economic development in the northern part of Brevard County following the end of NASA's Space Shuttle program. In that regard, the Zone seeks to provide assistance to businesses prepared to make a substantial capital investment in the area and create a significant number of new jobs. To view the Zone's written Economic Development Plan and eligibility criteria for program participation, visit www.NBEDZ.com.

THE NORTH BREVARD BUSINESS REVIEW is published quarterly by the North Brevard Economic Development Zone. All information provided is deemed reliable, but not guaranteed. Please address any comments or questions to Troy Post, CECD, CBE, at 321-960-1458, or electronically via troy.post@brevardcounty.us, and Roll Tide, baby! Yes, another (ho-hum) national title, though I'd really like to see a Bama vs. UCF game now ...



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