

Ground Broken in Senoia

By Latina Emerson

Winpak Films Inc. in Senoia Thursday held its groundbreaking for the company's "Barrier Shrink Bag" expansion project.

The "Barrier Shrink Bag" project is considered phase I of future expansion developments at the company. The project was a long-awaited victory, after having been in discussion since spring 2005. Winpak Films Inc. manufactures and distributes packaging materials.

Kevin Byers, president of Winpak Films Inc., greeted local, state and international guests with words of appreciation.

"This is an exciting time for Winpak and the community," said Byers.

"Your support was a tremendous factor in the decision to locate Winpak in Senoia," he said.

He commended the assistance Winpak has received from Bill Harrison, executive director of the Coweta County Development Authority.

He also complimented the service of Winpak Films Inc. employees.

"The employees are the company and they are what makes the company great," he said.

"This truly is the most talented group of managers that I've ever worked with," he said.

Byers told the group that Winpak's board of directors has expectations the project will provide positive future growth for the company.

Among those present was Bruce Berry, president and CEO of Winpak Ltd., the parent company for Winpak Films Inc.

Winpak Films Inc. in Senoia is one of nine Winpak manufacturing plants in North America. Winpak operates four facilities in Canada and five facilities in the United States. The Winpak Ltd. corporate office is headquartered in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in Canada.

Berry said, "The management of each one of these facilities and their respective communities lobbied very aggressively to have this significant expansion take place in their hometown. I am happy to be here today to celebrate the fact that the city of Senoia, the state of Georgia, Coweta County and the team at Winpak Films were awarded this exciting opportunity."

"This victory, over some extreme competition, was the result of sincere and relentless determination."

Berry offered words of thanks to the city of Senoia, which provided the land to accommodate the initial expansion and to Mayor Robert Belisle for spearheading the commitment.

He also thanked Harrison, the county's various committee members, the county in conjunction with the City of Senoia for agreeing to upgrade Howard Road, and the county for making available an industrial bond tied to tax savings over a 10-year period.



Winpak Films held its official ground breaking ceremony on July 20, 2006. Pictured from left to right: David Mosgrove, Director of Operations at Winpak Films Inc.; Bruce Berry, President and CEO of Winpak Ltd.; Kevin Byers, President of Winpak Films Inc.; John Alonso, Director of Sales and Marketing at Winpak Films Inc.; and John Zheng, Director of Technical at Winpak Films Inc.

In addition, he offered words of thanks to state of Georgia officials and the Department of Community Affairs for providing several grants for the project. Winpak was awarded a grant for infrastructure improvements in the area and a grant for equipment purchase, as well as a number of job tax credits over a five-year period, said Berry.

Berry offered special words of appreciation to Kevin Byers for his work and determination.

In total, the project has received up to \$3 million from city, county and state governments, said Berry.

"I assure you that this endorsement of our project is very much appreciated and will not be forgotten when Winpak considers sites for future expansions in North America," he said.

The ceremony included several other speakers, including Bill Harrison; Gretchen Corbin, director of Existing Industry and Recruitment from the Georgia Department of Economic Development; and John Zheng, director of Technical at Winpak Films Inc.

Harrison told the group, "We are celebrating the culmination of many years of hard work." He referred to all those who had assisted in the project as "Team Coweta".

"Our success in this project is a result of team effort," he said.

Corbin brought greetings to Winpak from Governor Sonny Perdue.

Winpak Films Inc. released a statement thanking everyone involved in making the project a success.

"Today we not only celebrate the beginning of an exciting new venture for Winpak, but also recognize the support and contribution to this project from our local and state governments. We extend a special thanks to those officials who helped bring this project to Georgia. This project represents a tremendous growth opportunity for Winpak. We are working diligently to make this a great success story for Winpak and the local community."