



GREENE COUNTY DAILIES

BRAC-related trip to Texas apparently a success

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Photo submitted

Representatives of the Dayton region interact with potential technology employees at Brooks City-Base in San Antonio last month.

FAIRBORN — Although Wright-Patterson fared exceptionally well during the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission process, plenty of work lies ahead making sure the missions gained make their way to Wright-Patt smoothly — a factor crucial to future BRAC success, Greene County Commissioner Rick Perales said this week.

Perales was one of more than 80 Dayton Region leaders who made a September journey to Brooks City-Base in San Antonio designed to attract approximately 300 potential technology employees to Wright-Patterson.

Wright-Patterson's total economic impact to the Dayton region exceeds \$4.4 billion, according to research findings reported this year by 88th Air Base Wing public affairs staff.

"Our goal was to bring all the information the Brooks employees needed to begin making the difficult decision on whether or not to move their family to Ohio," Perales said. "We shared the same goals the leadership at Brooks — to make sure the people have the information they need to make their decisions and to explore every avenue in ensuring the essential missions of the Human Performance Wing and Aeronautical Systems Group continue with no interruption."

"Greene County was extremely well represented," he said.

Communities throughout the county sent delegates, including business, government and school representatives, Perales said.

According to information provided by the Dayton Development Coalition, Brooks employees were provided an opportunity to get information and answers on regional housing and real estate; local communities; higher education, research and health care; business services; quality of life and amenities; spousal employment; and the missions at Wright-Patterson.

The "Meet the Community" event was an informational fair open to all military, civilians and contractors, and was the first of its kind.

"We haven't won BRAC 2005 unless all missions operational by 2011," Perales said.

The county commissioner said cold weather was an issue for some of the people in San Antonio, where high heat is an issue.

"The fact is, many of them have been here or know someone who has," he said. "A lot of people already know what a great region this is ... We have all the services that any large city has."

More than 450 people attended the event, Perales said.

He said the energy was, and is, "great" as participating organizations continue the process with follow-up communications.

"It's difficult to quantify how successful it could be," Perales said. "Success is if they keep Wright-Patterson Air Force Base/Dayton in their minds as a viable choice ... Everyone's perception was that it was a home run."

Interest exists in more trips to other places including Arizona and Florida, he said.

As San Antonio personnel travel to Dayton for a personal look-see, everyone locally can help the effort, Perales said.

"Be as hospitable as we already are," he said.

Also among those who made the trip were The Properties at Wright Field Site Manager Michael Dalton and Ronald Piontek, Chief Operating Officer of Miller Valentine Group, developer and operator of The Properties at Wright Field.

"We went down there to build a relationship with those who might be relocating ... Our primary customer is the military families and those who work for Wright-Patterson Air Force Base," Dalton said.

Piontek said Miller Valentine Group changed its name and image from Page Manor approximately six years ago when the development privatized and 792 new units have been built.

"It was a terrific experience and what I really liked was the fact that people were doing genuine data gathering to find out what we had to offer, what Dayton had to offer, what were the the living situations like here in the area ... It was a very worthwhile experience," he said. "What we offer is a true sense of community ... strong ties to the base. There isn't another area of housing in the entire Dayton area that can provide that for the families."