

PIERCE COUNTY DELEGATION TOUTS REGION AT FARNBOROUGH AIRSHOW

The EDB and other representatives of Pierce County took to the skies last month to attend the **2018 Farnborough Airshow**, July 16-22, in Hampshire, England, one of the biggest events in aviation. Approximately 73,000 industry professionals from around the globe and 1,500 companies attended the three-day trade show. The event stretched over six exhibition halls.

Boeing was a big winner at Farnborough. The company added more than 530 orders and commitments to its 460 firm orders coming into the air show. Buzz about the company's proposed **New Mid-market Airplane (NMA)** was palpable, although no additional details were revealed.

Think two heads are better than one? Imagine what six could accomplish. This year's Pierce County delegation included Bruce Kendall, EDB president and CEO; Sarah Bonds, EDB vice president for business recruitment; Kevin Clegg, **Pierce County** special assistant to the executive for business services; Doug Richardson, **Pierce County Council** chair; Greg Unruh, EDB chair and past president of the **Franciscan Foundation**; and Jason Whalen, EDB vice chair and partner at **Ledger Square Law**.

The Pierce County team joined its Washington State partners to meet with industry leaders, connect with new and existing contacts, and spotlight the region's assets and advantages to firms looking to relocate or expand operations. The 60-member **Choose Washington** team was the largest delegation the state has had at Farnborough.

Farnborough by the numbers:

- ▶ International companies contacted: 43
- ▶ U.S. companies contacted: 37
- ▶ Target companies identified: 68
- ▶ Companies from 2017 Paris Air Show contacted: 12
- ▶ Companies from Farnborough Airshow 2016 contacted: 14
- ▶ Meetings scheduled: 10
- ▶ Events attended by delegates: 17
- ▶ Average daily steps logged: More than 20,000 per delegate, or over 10 miles

Learn more about the Farnborough Airshow at farnboroughairshow.com.

BPI MEDICAL GROWS FROM BACKYARD TO BOOMING BUSINESS

If there ever was a story that warranted the term "humble beginnings," this might be it.

In 1976, Ben Overmars Sr. founded **Ben's Precision Instruments**, putting to use skills he honed in his native Holland to offer surgical instrument sharpening and repair from his backyard shop. Over the years, business boomed and expanded to include pneumatic and electric hand pieces and endoscopy repair. Today, Fife-based **BPI Medical** manufactures, modifies, repairs, maintains and sells medical instruments and equipment used in surgery centers and hospitals across the U.S. and the world. While the backyard shop made way for progressively larger accommodations, the business is still all in the family. Overmars' son, Bob Overmars, is now president and CEO. The company's most recent expansion is particularly significant. BPI Medical purchased its own 38-000-square-foot building that nearly doubles its previous space in Fife. With room to grow, the company will continue to expand to meet customer needs. That means adding more jobs to grow its current team of more than 40 employees.

Though only a few blocks from its former location, the move took a lot of planning and coordination. Along with

a big helping hand from the **City of Fife**, Overmars credits the EDB for smoothing the way.

“We owe the EDB a huge thank you for their support,” Overmars said. “They were there to help coordinate the process, connect us with the right people and provide a lot of helpful how-tos. They were incredibly professional and efficient.”

Overmars offered another nod to the EDB’s Bruce Kendall, president and CEO, and Maddie Merton, vice president for business retention and expansion. The duo connected him with Bill Robertson, president and CEO of **MultiCare Health System**. A deal between BPI Medical and MultiCare was inked in early July, bringing the business relationship full circle. MultiCare was the company’s first customer in that backyard shop more than 40 years ago.

While Overmars jokes that the new Fife location means he only has two stoplights to travel through to get to work from home, there’s much more to doing business with the city than the easy commute. “It’s a pleasure to work with the City of Fife,” he said. “They have always been helpful, fair and responsive.” That keeps BPI Medical in Fife and growing.

Plans are in the works to officially celebrate the new digs. A ribbon cutting is slated for later this summer. MultiCare’s Bill Robertson is expected to be on hand to do the honors.

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IN BRIEF

HAVE 75 OR MORE EMPLOYEES? Each year, the EDB compiles its **Major Employers List** of companies with 100 or more full-time employees working in Pierce County. The list also includes “companies to watch” that are on the verge of crossing over the 100-employee threshold. Companies may submit their information online at bit.ly/EDBMEL, or by contacting Maddie Merton, EDB vice president for business retention and expansion, at maddie@edbtacomapierce.org or 253.284.5891.

EDB WELCOMES NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS. We’re pleased to welcome two new economic development power hitters to the South Sound. Betty Nokes Capestany is the new director of the **Pierce County Economic Development Department**. Jeff Robinson is the new director of the **City of Tacoma Community and Economic Development Department**. You can read more in our electronic newsletter.

HAPPY TO HAVE YOU ABOARD, PIERCE TRANSIT. The EDB is honored to announce its newest investor. Welcome, **Pierce Transit**...and thank you!

Teamwork is a service of the EDB, a non-profit corporation focused on recruitment and retention of primary businesses in Tacoma and Pierce County, Washington, USA.

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