

CHINA IN THE NEWS



Joanna Zhou (周娜), now residing in Knoxville TN, immigrated to Indianapolis with her husband from Beijing in 2013, where she worked in Human Resources for a U.S. Fortune 500 company. She enjoys her new life with her husband and kept in touch with her LAAT friends and readers by contributing to this column.

New Zealand sees record visitors despite post-Chinese New Year dip

The number of overseas visitors to New Zealand continued at record levels last month, the government statistics agency said Tuesday. Visitor arrivals for the year ending February numbered 3.54 million, up 11 percent year-on-year and equaling the previous annual record set in January, according to Statistics New Zealand. Visitor arrivals in the month of February were up 2 percent year on year to 380,000. Visitor numbers from China, New Zealand's second largest tourism market after Australia, were down 36.5 percent year-on-year to 33,728 in February. However, Chinese visitor numbers in the year ending February were up 4 percent to almost 403,000.

赴新西兰中国游客增加创历史最高纪录

2016年中国农历春节前后两周内，抵达新西兰的中国游客数量相比2015年同期增长15.2%，创历史新高纪录。统计数据显示，今年中国春节前后两周内，抵达新西兰的中国游客达5.12万人次，同比增加6770人次，创下新西兰在“春节旅游季”迎接中国游客人数的新高。在春节旅游旺季的带动下，今年2月新西兰旅游业增长迅速。新西兰统计局21日公布的数据显示，2016年2月共有37.34万人次外国游客抵达新西兰，同比增长9%。从去年3月至今年2月的12个月内，抵达新西兰的外国游客总数首次突破320万人次，同比增长10.1%。目前，澳大利亚仍是新西兰最大的旅游客源国。除中国游客增长迅速外，赴新西兰的英国和德国游客数量增长也较快。

China's animation standards go global

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has recently released standards developed by China for animation on mobile devices, the Ministry of Culture said Monday. The standards, approved by the ITU on Jan. 27 and released on March 16, are the first international technical standards in China's cultural sector, according to a ministerial press conference. 中国主导制定的手机动漫标准正式成为国际标准。

近日，国际电信联盟正式发布手机（移动终端）动漫国际标准（标准号T.621）。这一标准是由中国主导制定的文化领域首个国际技术标准。中国手机（移动终端）动漫发展迅速，成为动漫产业的一个重要的新增长点和新亮点，并在国际上处于领先地位，手机动漫产业的快速发展对标准化提出了迫切需求。目前，手机动漫行业标准已在中国手机动漫行业内广泛应用，按照标准提供产品和服务的动漫企业已经超过1000家，覆盖用户过亿，实现了手机动漫在各平台即时互通，有效降低了手机动漫的生产和传播运营成本，促进了手机动漫领域创业创新。

Chinese archeologists discover underwater treasure

More than 10,000 gold and silver items that sank to the bottom of a river in southwest China's Sichuan Province over 300 years ago have been recovered, archeologists said Monday. The items included a large amount of gold, silver and bronze coins and jewelry as well as iron weapons such as swords, knives and spears, said Gao Dalun, director of Sichuan Provincial Cultural Relics and Archeology Research Institute. The characters carved in the gold and silver utensils are still clear and the embossed patterns on the jewelry show exquisite craftsmanship, archeologists said.

明朝晚期历史画卷：张献忠江口沉银传说不假

在众多文物中，木鞘最为震撼，这些流传于各路文献资料记载中的银锭“保险柜”最终以实物的方式展现在人们面前。《蜀龟鉴》卷三载“居民时于江口获木鞘金银”。而《蜀难叙略》载：“清顺治十一年，又有渔人获银鞘于江口，而剖其鞘以为铜豕之具。”3月16日下午，考古队终于在发掘区域的最北端发现一块相对完整的木鞘，木鞘腐烂的一端，露出了白花花的银锭，仍旧反射出贵金属的光芒。在考古发掘现场附近的工作站，记者见到部分出水文物，各类金银器物、钱币上的文字大都清晰可辨，各种金银首饰上的花纹依然精致。四川省文物考古研究院水下考古中心主任、彭山江口沉银遗址水下考古发掘领队刘志岩介绍，根据史料记载，张献忠将一段木头剖开成两半，将中间凿空，放入银锭后，两块木头一合上，再用铁丝固定。在那个兵荒马乱的年月，这成了转移财产的一种运输方式。

China's Xiaomi to build its second manufacturing unit in India

Chinese tech giant Xiaomi on Monday announced plan for its second, but the very first exclusive manufacturing unit in India. The new plant, partnered with Foxconn, is set in Sri City of the eastern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. “We will have a combined production capacity of one phone per second during operational hours”, said Manu Jain, vice president and managing director of Xiaomi India at a press conference in New Delhi Monday. Soon after its debut in India in July 2014, Xiaomi started building its first local manufacturing unit, which went live in August 2015. By March 2016, over 75 percent of its phones sold in India are made locally. The number will rise to “more than 95 percent” with the new plant, according to the company.

小米在印度新建第二座手机厂将雇佣5000人

据印度时报网站报道，小米宣布将和富士康集团合作，在印度安德拉邦的Sri市新增加一座专门服务小米业务的手机工厂，新工厂将给印度提供5000个工作岗位，其中九成的岗位将会招募女性，但其具体投资额和产能尚不可知。小米印度公司官方表示，第二座工厂投产，小米在印度销售的手机中，95%将实现印度国产化，另外在正常工作时间，小米手机的产能将达到每秒生产一部。小米是进入印度市场比较积极的中国手机品牌之一。小米最早通过印度零售网站销售从中国进口的手机，而从2015年8月开始，小米开始在印度本地生产手机。

INDY BUSINESS BULLETIN



State Unemployment Rate Stays Put

The state's unemployment rate remains at its lowest level since 2001. The Indiana Department of Workforce Development says, despite a loss of 2,200 private sector jobs in January, the rate remained at 4 percent. The DWD also says U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics figures show the labor force increased by 7,162, compared to the previous month.

Indy Marriott Unveils \$15M Renovation

The Indianapolis Marriott North is showing off the results of a “top-to-bottom” \$15 million renovation. The hotel says the upgrades reflect the city's racing history as well as the idea of the “ultimate urban adventure.”

Indy Among Top Regions For Creating Tech Jobs

Indianapolis is being recognized on Forbes' list of “Cities Creating the Most Tech Jobs 2017.” The list ranks the 53 largest metropolitan areas in the country by employment growth in tech industries and STEM jobs from 2006 to 2016.

Indy Airport ‘Punching Way Above Our Weight Class’

The executive director of Indianapolis International Airport says a new economic impact study shows the airport is more than a travel hub, “it's an economic engine.” Mario Rodriguez says the estimated \$5.4 billion economic impact, an \$830 million increase from the last study in 2012, reflects the strength of the region. “If you look at the entire report,” Rodriguez tells Inside Indiana Business, “it's good news. There isn't one area of the report that tells us we're heading in the wrong direction.”

JCPenney to Close Five Indiana Stores

Texas-based J.C. Penney Co. Inc. (NYSE: JCP) has detailed plans to close nearly 140 stores throughout the country, including five in Indiana. The closures are part of the company's previously-announced plan to “optimize its national retail operations.”

Allison Lands Military Contract

The U.S. Department of Defense has awarded a more than \$11 million contract to Indianapolis-based Allison Transmission Holdings Inc. (NYSE: ALSN). The contract calls for the production of transmission overhaul kits.

Partnership Targets ‘Wireless Umbrella’

A partnership including Purdue University and the cities of Lafayette and West Lafayette aims to put a “wireless umbrella” over the entire community. The collaboration, which also includes local school corporations, will upgrade wireless access and data centers in the cities.

St. Vincent Begins Work on \$13M Training Center

St. Vincent Health has broken ground on a project it says will benefit current and future health care workers throughout the Midwest. The \$13.6 million William Nasser Healthcare Education and Simulation Center will house classrooms and simulation spaces including an operating room, delivery room and intensive care unit. The center honors Nasser, who St. Vincent says is known by many as Indiana's “Father of Cardiology.”

Economic Melting Pot Heating Up in Anderson

A community not long ago making headlines for having one of the highest unemployment rates in the country believes it has found its niche—and the prosperity that comes with it. Anderson leaders say the city is now a hotbed of investment from foreign manufacturers, and it's fueled a comeback; in the last decade, 15 foreign companies have built facilities in Madison County, creating 2,200 jobs and stabilizing the local economy. Auto parts manufacturer NTN Driveshaft Anderson, Inc. is the latest to pump millions into the area—revitalizing a sector that, just a decade ago, was desperate for redemption.

Purdue, Cook Partnership Paying Off

The Purdue Research Foundation and Bloomington-based Cook Medical say a \$12 million partnership is already paying dividends. The collaboration has pumped more than \$3 million into startups working to commercialize biomedical and life sciences technologies.

Poultry Company Plans Vigo County Hatchery

Minnesota-based Select Genetics is planning to invest \$22 million into a new turkey hatchery in the Wabash Valley. The company is looking to break ground on the Terre Haute operation next month and could add up to 100 jobs over the next year. The Indiana Economic Development Corp. says the state ranked fourth in the U.S. in 2015 in turkey production.

IUPUI Launches Online Philanthropy Master's

The Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at IUPUI is taking a degree digital. The school will launch its master of arts in philanthropic studies online this fall.

Grand Millennium Project Moves Forward

The Westfield City Council has approved a major project that is expected to create more than 1,000 jobs in the city's downtown. Westfield-based EdgeRock Development LLC plans to break ground on the \$200 million Grand Millennium Center project this spring.

Toyota Touts Indiana Impact

Toyota Motor Manufacturing Indiana Inc. says a new study from a national automotive organization suggests the automaker supported about 27,500 jobs in Indiana as of 2015. The report from the Center for Automotive Research also shows employees in Indiana accounted for \$1.6 billion in payroll.

FINANCIALLY SPEAKING

EB-5 program - Cash-for-visas boondoggle?



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One of the most interesting and controversial facets of current immigration law is the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program, whereby foreign investors (and their immediate families) can acquire lawful permanent resident (LPR) status if they invest \$500,000 in a project that creates at least ten jobs for U.S. workers.

Congress created the EB-5 Program in 1990 to stimulate the U.S. economy through job creation and capital investment by foreign investors.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)—part of the Department of Homeland Security and successor to the Immigration and Naturalization Service) administers the EB-5 program, which is limited to 10,000 conditional visas per year (the condition is lifted once job creation is verified).

In 1992, Congress created the Regional Center Program, which allows investments in projects associated with regional centers approved by the USCIS (currently 838), rather than in specific projects. Regional Centers serve as third-party entities that facilitate the EB-5 process for foreign investors by identifying projects, pooling foreign investments with domestic investments and managing projects.

The original aim of the EB-5 Program was boosting disadvantaged areas by spurring the development of projects that wouldn't otherwise happen. The stated minimum investment is \$1 million, but the threshold is lowered to \$500,000 for projects in a “Targeted Employment Area—TEA” (i.e. a rural area or an area experiencing unemployment of at least 150% of the national average).

According to a recent report from the Bipartisan Policy Center, “EB-5 Program: Successes, Challenges, and Opportunities for States and Localities,” http://bipartisanpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/BPC-Immigration-EB5-Visa-Program.pdf 97% of conditional visas issued in fiscal 2014 were granted through the Regional Center Program and 98% were granted to foreigners investing in TEAs.

The EB-5 program started in 1990, but had little activity until the Great Recession cut-off funding for commercial development. From 806 conditional visas issued as recently as 2007, the 10,000 annual maximum was reached before the end of 2014.

Since developers know foreign investors' principal motivation under EB-5 is migration, not the return on their investment, they view EB-5 as a source of extremely cheap financing. With a large project, the developer can save tens of millions in financing costs vs. conventional borrowing.

The key for a developer is having your project located in a TEA. Here's where it gets interesting and controversial. Developers are able to stitch together multiple contiguous census tracts to create a TEA. Voila, a \$1.7 billion luxury condo project's gilded neighborhood at the border of New York's Central Park was magically transformed into a TEA by linking the planned tower to public housing projects in East Harlem.

New York University real-estate professors Jeanne Calderon and Gary Friedland are the foremost academic experts on EB-5 and published “A Roadmap to the Use of EB-5 Capital” http://www.stern.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/assets/documents/EB5%20paper%20final%205.24.2015.pdf and a database of EB-5 capital projects http://www.stern.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/assets/documents/EB-5%20Capital%20Project%20Database%20-%20Revised%20and%20Expanded.pdf. The database lists 27 major projects that have sought a total of \$5.4 billion in EB-5 financing.

Unlike the original aim of EB-5, all of these projects undoubtedly would have happened anyway. Thus, access to cheap EB-5 financing simply increased the developers' profits. That's why critics of EB-5 refer to the creation of artificial TEAs as “gerrymandering” and the program itself as “cash-for-visas.” The “winners” are large coastal cities (like New York, L.A. and Miami) and big name developers foreigners are familiar with. The “losers” are the rural and distressed areas the program was intended to boost.

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INDIANA'S NEW CULINARY, AGRITOURISM INITIATIVE

State tourism and agriculture officials believe a new partnership, aimed at making Indiana an agritourism and culinary destination, could have particular impact in rural Indiana. The strategy, will focus on policy, education and marketing issues in an effort to grow segments of the economy that are described as “Indiana's calling cards.” Indiana Office of Tourism Development Executive Director Mark Newman says the state already has substantial assets in an industry expected to top \$1 billion nationally in 2017. “Both culinary tourism and agritourism are the fastest-growing sectors out there,” said Newman. “And when you think of Indiana and the raw product that we have to offer, it's a natural.”

Newman points to the town of Converse, near the Miami-Grant County line, as an example of a small community already rebranding itself around a culinary focus.

Newman thinks the initiative can be a success because the state is already an agritourism attraction. The opportunity, he says, will be in leveraging strengths in regional pockets and developing an overall statewide strategy.

Newman describes destinations like Fair Oaks Farms in northwest Indiana, Huber's Orchard and Winery in southeast Indiana and more than 200 craft breweries, wineries and distilleries and 12,000 restaurants as a strong base for launching the initiative. In 2016, Fair Oaks Farms, the nation's only agriculture theme park, attracted more than 625,000 visitors.

A study conducted in 2012 pegged agritourism as a \$700 million dollar industry nationwide, a figure that is expected to double this year. “So what we're talking about is a billion dollar industry by the end of 2017,” said Newman. “That is significant and we would have significant market share.”

FAURECIA IN COLUMBUS AMONG FIRST TO USE NEW ROBOTS

A cutting-edge technology—which could be described as the map app on your phone meets robotics—is zipping along the floor of a new manufacturing facility in Columbus. France-based automotive supplier Faurecia recently opened its most high-tech facility yet, sparking what the company calls its “digital transformation.” Among the newest technologies deployed on its production floor are Autonomous Intelligent Vehicles (AIVs), which are wheeled robotic carts—just now being introduced to the industry—that make forklifts seem old-fashioned.

The new \$64 million Columbus South plant is Faurecia's third location in the city, and notably different than its predecessors, as it ushers in the company's Manufacturing 4.0 initiative. The facility was built from the ground up to deploy the industry's latest advancements in automation, hardware, data processing and connectivity.

“This is our flagship; a lot of our colleagues from around the world will come here and use this as a benchmark as they start to deploy some of the more adaptable [technologies], like touch screens on the lines, all the way up to AIVs,” says Faurecia Clean Mobility North America Operations President Dave DeGraaf.

AIVs, although perhaps not much to look at, have put forklifts out of fashion at Columbus South. They appear to be platforms on wheels with a rack on top to move parts throughout the production floor. The plant has about 24 whizzing around at any given moment; the powerful vehicles travel about 73 miles and make 17,300 pallets move each day. What can't be seen is the brains behind this robot.

“Much like the GPS system on your phone—the team programmed the ‘streets’ that are inside the plant, and the AIVs know all of those routes,” says DeGraaf. “They can pick up material and bring it from point A to point B, or they might store it for a while if it's not needed. They know where all those different points are.”

DeGraaf says Automated Guided Vehicles are more common in manufacturing facilities, but lack the “intelligence” of AIVs.

“If [AIVs] approach an obstacle, they sense it and slow down and either wait for the obstacle to move or stop altogether,” says DeGraaf. “If it takes too long, they'll go on an alternate path to reach their destination. It's no different than in your car, when you get into congestion and want to take an alternate route. And it will communicate that to the AIVs behind it until the obstacle is removed.”

In addition to being safer than forklifts, DeGraaf says AIVs increase efficiency and accuracy. The automated system keeps tabs on complex inventory, comprised

of a long list of part numbers, and those components arrive at the specified production line more quickly.

“The old methodology would be you'd have to go find that [part] on the shop floor, have somebody bring it to the floor, scan it out and scan it in,” says DeGraaf. “Now, this is all done seamlessly.”

The plant makes Faurecia's newest emissions control product for the commercial vehicle industry. While the final product weighs in at a hefty 200 pounds, technological advancements within the plant and the product's design reduced its weight by 50 percent and overall size by 40 percent, compared to the previous generation.

Other advances within the plant are less obvious, but equally powerful. About one-and-a-half miles of cable strung throughout the facility processes a mind-boggling amount of data and helps the plant run seamlessly.

“We collect millions of data points every day,” says DeGraaf. “We have a team led by a statistician that looks at all of this data to make sure everything is operating within the normal parameters. If anything starts to come out of those parameters, it gets into the element of predictive maintenance, so we can get ahead of a potential problem before it becomes an issue.”

A paperless environment and small collaborative robots, called “cobots,” round out the advancements at the plant. Faurecia believes it all adds up to a transformation that puts it “at the forefront of modern-day manufacturing.”

Source: Inside Indiana Business



An AIV is platform on wheels; a rack on top moves parts throughout the production floor.

INDIANAPOLIS AMONG TOP REGIONS FOR TECH JOBS

Indianapolis is being recognized on Forbes' list of “Cities Creating the Most Tech Jobs 2017.” The list ranks the 53 largest metropolitan areas in the country by employment growth in tech industries and STEM jobs from 2006 to 2016.

The cities were also ranked based on growth from 2014 to 2016 “to give credit for current momentum.” Forbes said STEM employment in Indianapolis has risen 18 percent since 2006 and the job county among tech companies increased 68 percent, “led by 1,700 percent growth at Internet-based businesses and 8,100 new jobs in custom programming and systems design.”

The publication added many California-based companies expanding away from the west coast, using Salesforce's decision to add 800 jobs in Indy as an example.

The top five metro areas ranked by Forbes include:

1. San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, California
2. Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, North Carolina
3. Austin-Round Rock, Texas
4. San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, California
5. Indianapolis-Carmel-Anderson, Indiana

