



F&P at Home in Rome

The good times are rolling in Rome and Floyd County, where a host of industries are settling in and finding a civic environment hospitable to business, a technical college eager to help and Quick Start ready to train its workers. The latest in a string of firms moving to the area is F&P Georgia Manufacturing Inc.

Showcasing new technology never before used in North America, F&P recently hosted a grand opening luncheon gala and plant tour at its Rome facility. A subsidiary of Japan-based F-Tech Inc., F&P makes auto parts for the Odyssey minivan, supplying 650 front subframes per day to Honda in just-in-time fashion.

Present at the ceremony were three generations of the Fukuda family, including the company's original founder, Jiroku Fukuda, who in 1947 started out making metallic toy parts and in 1959 began manufacturing Honda motorcycle components. His son, F-Tech Chairman Akihide Fukuda, thanked the 130 associates assembled for following the company's long-established philosophy of respecting others.

And the younger Yuichi Fukuda, president of F&P Georgia, said the



Jeff Lynn (far left), Quick Start director of northern operations, and Craig McDaniel (far right), Coosa Valley Technical College president, flank the three generations of the Fukuda family. Next to Lynn is original company founder Jiroku Fukuda, with his grandson Yuichi Fukuda, president of F&P Georgia. Next to McDaniel is the middle-generation Akihide Fukuda, chairman of parent company F-Tech Inc.

day's ceremony was a special moment in the company's history. The launch of its Georgia operations follows recent forays into Canada and the United States. "We made the right decision to come to Georgia," he said, recognizing several local and state entities that helped make the start-up possible.

Among those groups were Quick Start and Coosa Valley Technical College, which trained associates in plant safety, welding and manufacturing processes. Yuichi Fukuda cited the usefulness of Quick Start documents as well as the hands-on training for the plant's employees.

Activities taking place at the 144,800-sq.-ft. plant are welding,

painting and assembly, but it is the high-tech paint process that is the jewel in the crown. The electrostatic dip system involves several pre-paint phases of cleaning the metal to remove major sediment.

The next phase involves technology implemented for the first time in Canada or the United States. Called the Surf Techno Wave, this series of vibrating rods acts as underwater waves that remove the most difficult sediment.

Additional stages of rinsing are followed by application of phosphate to aid in preventing corrosion, after which the paint is actually applied.

Such investment in technology exemplifies one of F&P's deeply held principles. In addition to product quality, the company emphasizes safety, environmental responsibility and R&D, as well as such human aspects as fostering pride in workmanship and enhancing the quality of life in its community.

Said Craig McDaniel, Coosa Valley Technical College president, "I can't express enough the satisfaction and pleasure I've had from working with F&P. I wish to extend our lasting friendship." 

