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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce



N.C. Department of Commerce Secretary Keith Crisco, N.C. Representative Thom Tillis, Governor Bev Perdue and New Belgium CEO Kim Jordan

New Belgium chooses Asheville for East Coast brewery

[New Belgium Brewing](#), the third largest craft brewer in the country and the maker of Fat Tire Amber Ale, will build its East Coast brewery in Buncombe County. The company plans to create as many as 154 jobs and invest about \$175 million over seven years. The project was made possible in part by a \$1,000,000 grant from the [One North Carolina Fund](#). The state grant will be based on the company creating 130 jobs and making a \$115 million investment over the five years of the project. The N.C. Department of Commerce's [Margie Bukowski](#) was the developer on this project.

New Belgium Brewing, headquartered in Fort Collins, Co., sold 712,000 barrels of beer in just 28 states and the District of Columbia in 2011. Over 150,000 people visit the brewery in Fort Collins every year. As part of the project in Asheville, New Belgium will be constructing a new state-of-the-art brewery and tasting facility that will be a destination for visitors of the emerging brewery cluster in Buncombe County and the surrounding western North Carolina region. [Read more.](#)

[A River Arts District renaissance, fueled by beer, is on Asheville's horizon, observers say](#) (*The Citizen-Times* - Asheville, April 7)



Grove Park Inn to be sold

Asheville's historic Grove Park Inn Resort & Spa is being sold.

KSL Capital Partners, LLC announced today (April 10) that it has entered into an agreement to acquire the historic inn from an affiliate of Sammons Enterprises Inc.

KSL said it is planning a \$25 million renovation of the resort's public areas, guest rooms, dining areas, meeting spaces and spa.

The renovation would be in keeping with the inn's historic style, KSL said in its announcement.

"The Grove Park Inn has a deep and storied past and we understand the importance of honoring the history of the property while providing the next level of service and amenities that today's guests demand," said Marty Newburger, a principal of KSL Capital Partners said in the announcement.

[Asheville's historic Grove Park Inn to be sold](#) (*The Citizen-Times* - Asheville, April 10)



From bottom left: Mike Crawford, Rolf Blizzard, Bill Cecil, Philip Cunningham, Dave Olsen, Lynn Minges and Tom Pashley. (Photo by Donna Jernigan)

Business North Carolina Roundtable looks at N.C.'s tourism economy

Business North Carolina magazine recently hosted a roundtable discussion on the recovery of North Carolina's travel and tourism industry. The resulting article notes that the travel and tourism industry in our state created more jobs last year than any other despite state budget cuts. In the transcript of the roundtable, representatives from North Carolina's travel and tourism industry discuss how the recession affected their businesses and ways that they are working to bring visitors back.

Assistant Secretary for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges was one of the participants. Other participants were Bill Cecil, president and CEO of Asheville-based The Biltmore Co.; Tom Pashley, executive vice president of marketing at Pinehurst Resort; Phillip Cunningham, general manager of Great Wolf Lodge in Concord; Dave Olsen, vice president and general manager of PNC Arena in Raleigh; Rolf Blizzard, vice president of Winston-Salem-based Turnpike Properties LLC and chairman of Commerce's Travel and Tourism Board; and Mike Crawford, regional managing partner of the South Carolina and western North Carolina offices of Charlotte-based Dixon Hughes Goodman LLP, which sponsored and hosted the discussion.

[Keep them coming](#) (*Business North Carolina*, April 2012)

Nanotech conference looks at commercialization of the field



(Left-right, facing front) N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll, USDA Rural Development State Director Randall Gore and Western Piedmont COG Executive Director Dee Blackwell (Photo courtesy WPCOG)

Western Piedmont COG dedicates new headquarters in Catawba County

The new headquarters for the [Western Piedmont Council of Governments](#) in Long View was officially dedicated March 27. More than 200 local, state and federal officials attended the dedication ceremony. Remarks were made by Randall Gore, state director of the [U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development](#). He noted that financing for the WPCOG office was provided through the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#). The keynote address was given by N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary and COO Dale Carroll. Carroll applauded the WPCOG leadership, including the local member governments for their more than 40 years of teamwork on community development projects focused on infrastructure, workforce development and affordable housing. A flag flown over the U.S. Capitol was presented to the WPCOG by U.S. Representative Patrick McHenry's Senior District Representative Nancy Meek.



(Left-right) Griffith Kundahl, executive director of the Center of Innovation for Nanobiotechnology, Dr. Charles Hamner, chairman of The Hamner Institutes for Health Sciences, and Vincent Caprio, executive director of the NanoBusiness Commercialization Association

Nanotechnology innovators, cutting edge start-ups and leading researchers gathered in Durham April 4-5 for the annual Nanotech Commercialization Conference. More than 300 people attended the fourth annual conference.

Over the last decade, the nanotechnology field has turned the corner from science fiction to a multi-billion dollar business, rapidly becoming the center of the materials science field, and has made major game-changing innovations in clean energy, electronics and biotechnology. Sponsored by the N.C. Department of Commerce's Office of Science and Technology, the conference is the preeminent nanotechnology conference being held in the South this year. [Learn more](#) about nanotechnology in North Carolina.

Also at the conference, Griffith Kundahl, executive director of the Center of Innovation for Nanobiotechnology, and Vincent Caprio, executive director of the NanoBusiness Commercialization Association, presented the COIN and NanoBusiness Leadership Award to Dr. Charles Hamner, chairman of The Hamner Institutes for Health Sciences, for his pivotal role in advancing North Carolina and the Research Triangle Park to preeminence within the biosciences industry during his 14-year tenure (1988-2002) as president and CEO of the N.C. Biotechnology Center.

[CEO: RTP firm's nanotechnology will revolutionize medicine - and more](#) (WRALtechwire, April 4)

[Hamner: Biotech growth to last until 2035](#) (Triangle Business Journal, April 4)

[N.C. positioned to be leader in nanotechnology](#) (The News & Observer – Raleigh, April 1)



(Left-right) Donna Gallagher, executive director of The Collaborative with Vickie Miller, director of community investment and assistance at the tenth anniversary celebration and awards at the PNC Center

Miller honored with community impact award

On April 3, N.C. Department of Commerce Director of Community Investment and Assistance Vickie L. Miller was among the honorees at the tenth anniversary celebration of the nonprofit organization, [The Collaborative](#). Miller was honored as a founding board member of the organization, which launched in 2002. She was among 15 award-winners who were noted for their critical contribution to the early creation of the nonprofit entity and its decade of success.

Leaders from across the state representing public, private and nonprofit sectors attended the breakfast event, held at the PNC Center's Arena Club Restaurant in Raleigh.

The Collaborative is a statewide organization that promotes economic security for low-to-moderate income North Carolinians through programs focused on financial education and savings. During 2011, its impact across the state included increasing partner financial education delivery to more than 8,900 people, increasing the number of [North Carolina Savers](#) by 4.5 percent, and delivering technical assistance to 46 nonprofits in the state to strengthen and build asset development programming. The collaborative has helped tens of thousands of North Carolinians move from poverty through asset-building since its inception.

Sustainable Energy Conference to take place April 19-20

The N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Energy will hold the ninth annual Sustainable Energy Conference, April 19-20, at the McKimmon Center in Raleigh. The conference will include sessions on such topics as policy and finance, alternative energy technologies such as wind, solar and biofuels, and the Utility Savings Initiative. Dr. Nick Hamon of Bayer Crop Science International will deliver the guest keynote address on April 19. [Learn more.](#)



(Left-right) Eaton Fayetteville executives Alex Alcalá and Jon Fischer, N.C. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary and COO Dale Carroll, and Eaton Asheville executives John Wirtz and Jon Wehrli at the awards ceremony in Charlotte (Photo courtesy of Eaton)

Carroll participates in Eaton awards ceremony

On Feb. 28, Eaton Corporation held its "2011 Eaton Business Excellence Award" ceremony in Charlotte. On behalf of Governor Bev Perdue, N.C. Deputy Commerce Secretary Dale Carroll joined the Eaton chairman and CEO from the worldwide headquarters in Cleveland and his management team to honor the Eaton Power Distribution Operations - Americas team as recipients of this international award. During the ceremony, the Eaton manufacturing sites in Fayetteville and Asheville received the highest honors with the Premier best of class designation. Carroll presented State of North Carolina flags to leaders of Eaton's two premier plants. Eaton Corporation has over 3,200 employees at 12 sites across the state.



N.C. companies learn about export development

The N.C. Department of Commerce's International Trade Division is co-leading a new export education program called [ExporTech](#) to assist companies with their expansion into new global markets. This program helps small and medium-sized companies in the development of an international growth plan customized specifically for their business. New-to-export companies, as well as those that have already done some exporting, benefit by fully engaging a team of trade experts to develop a robust export plan in just three months. The ExporTech program is organized by the Industrial Extension Service of N.C. State University at the [N.C. Research Campus](#) in Kannapolis. Seven companies are participating in this program, which began on February 16 and ends on April 25.

To be put on the waiting list for future sessions, please contact [the N.C. State University Regional Manager in your area.](#)

CLT now sixth-busiest world airport

A report released April 3 by the Airports Council International showed [Charlotte Douglas International Airport](#) was the world's sixth busiest airport in terms of takeoffs and landings last year. That's up from the seventh busiest in 2010. There were 539,842 takeoffs and landings at CLT in 2011, a 2 percent increase from 2010. In terms of passengers, CLT remained the 11th busiest airport in the country and 25th busiest in the world. The airport said much of the growth was due to added flights from the carriers flying to and from CLT. US Airways operates about 600 of the airport's 670 or so daily flights.

February Economic Overview released

The N.C. Department of Commerce's Labor and Economic Analysis Division has released its Monthly Overview of North Carolina's Economy for February 2012. Most of the latest data included is from January 2012. The purpose of the overview is to summarize and analyze important economic indicators. The report finds that North Carolina experienced another unemployment rate decline in January. The continued decline in



Apple's new data center in Maiden (Photo courtesy of Apple)

Apple plans nation's largest private fuel cell energy project at Maiden data center

North Carolina will be home to the nation's largest private fuel cell energy project, a nonpolluting, silent power plant that will generate electricity from hydrogen.

Apple filed its plans with the N.C. Utilities Commission on March 29 to build the 4.8-megawatt project in Maiden. That's where Cupertino, Calif.-based Apple has built a data center to support the company's iCloud online data storage system and its SIRI voice-recognition software.

The fuel cell project, the nation's largest such project not built by an electric utility company, will be developed this year. It will be located on the same data complex that will host a planned 20-megawatt solar farm – the biggest ever proposed in this state.

[Apple plans nation's biggest private fuel cell energy project at N.C. data center](#) (*The News & Observer* – Raleigh, March 31)



EARL SCRUGGS CENTER

MUSIC & STORIES FROM THE AMERICAN SOUTH

Shelby project celebrates Earl Scruggs

Friends and family of Earl Scruggs say they're disappointed that the legendary musician didn't live to see the opening of the [Earl Scruggs Center](#) in the old Cleveland County courthouse. Scruggs, the bluegrass banjo player from Shelby who died March 28 at age 88, had a hard-driving picking style

unemployed workers combined with an uptick in workers helped bring the unemployment rate down to 10.2 percent. Tourism is also improving, with recorded hotel occupancy rates 2.8 percent higher than the totals from last year. [Read the overview.](#)

Small Town Main Street services for all small towns

Although it is not possible for every applicant and every small town in North Carolina to be selected to participate in the [Small Town Main Street Program](#) in the N.C. Department of Commerce, all communities are reminded that program staff is available on a limited basis to assist with specific downtown issues and problems facing other small communities in North Carolina. Please feel free to contact the program staff to request advice or assistance for your downtown. Bob Murphrey, the eastern coordinator of the program, can be reached at (919) 218-2934 or rmurphrey@nccommerce.com. Sherry Adams, the western coordinator, can be reached at (828) 251-6914 ext. 207 or sadams@nccommerce.com.

Year-to-date Metrics

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Business and Industry Development that illustrate some of the recent activities of the Division. The metrics include the number of new economic development projects assigned to B&I development staff; the number of economic development project announcements; the number of announced jobs created and capital invested; the number of interactions existing industry staff had with businesses throughout the state; and the number of contacts received by the Business Link North Carolina/Business ServiCenter.

Jan. 1 - April 10, 2012

New projects assigned:	113
Projects announced:	32
Jobs announced:	4,444
Capital investment announced:	\$1.18B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	340
Calls to Business Link N.C.:	5,831

that influenced generations of musicians and helped shape the sound of 20th-century country music, along with his guitar-strumming partner, Lester Flatt.

From the outside, the 105-year-old former Cleveland County Courthouse in downtown Shelby looks pretty much as it always has. But within its walls, a major makeover is going on. If things go well, by year's end, the local landmark will become the Earl Scruggs Center: Music & Stories of the American South, a regional music education and performance center. Restoration work that began in the spring of 2010 is almost finished; the next phase is creating interpretive exhibits. The center will showcase all kinds of regional music, from gospel to jazz. It will also focus on education and stories that explain the area's cultural history.

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Durham ad agency featured in new AMC reality series](#) (*The News & Observer* - Raleigh, April 7)
- ['Silicon Valley of smart grid' RTP plays host to international grid event](#) (WRAL, April 5)
- [Cherry Point advocates prepare defense against cuts](#) (*The Sun Journal* -- New Bern, April 2)
- [GE Aviation secures \\$380 million engine order](#) (*The Star-News* -- Wilmington, April 2)
- [Azalea season officially open](#) (*The Star-News* -- Wilmington, March 30)

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