
syncTM Weekly highlights from the North Carolina Department of Commerce



Sept. is Wine & Grape Appreciation Month

Gov. Bev Perdue has declared September as N.C. Wine & Grape Appreciation Month. In her proclamation, the governor praised North Carolina as a state gaining national recognition as a significant producer of grapes and wine. Gov. Perdue is asking for restaurants and retailers to help support the growing wine industry by promoting North Carolina wines throughout the month. A copy of the proclamation, along with copies of the letters the governor prepared for restaurants and retailers to encourage them to promote and feature North Carolina wines, may be found at www.nccommerce.com/wine. View current and past issues of the N.C. Grape & Wine Council's newsletters [here](#).



(Left-right) N.C. Film Council Chair Bob Seligson, Gov. Bev Perdue, N.C. Film Council Vice Chair Tod Thorne



Seawatch Coastal Living Idea House opens for tours

Each year, *Coastal Living* magazine constructs special Idea Houses in hand-selected coastal communities that represent environmental consciousness and sensitivity to shoreline preservation. The Idea House celebrates the best in coastal home innovation, décor and construction. This year's home is Seawatch at Sunset Harbor in Brunswick County.

Nicole Hendrick, Idea Home Manager for Coastal Living, described the magazine's coveted selection: "Over the past 10 years we have been looking at what was happening in Brunswick County. Last year we looked at Seawatch at Sunset Harbor and it was love at first sight. They have a good vision for today and for generations to come, great architecture, a commitment to using sustainable products and to protect the environment... overall, Seawatch has it all."

The 2009 Idea House is an original Cape design by Guidry-Coastal Architecture and built by master builder Mark Saunders Luxury Homes in the Tidal Village of Victoria. This impressive home site is located on a beautiful bluff overlooking the peaceful tidal waters of Mercer Mill Creek and lush wildlife preserve areas.

This house will be featured in the November 2009 issue of *Coastal Living* magazine. The home is open for tours from Thursday - Sunday, Sept. 3 - Nov. 29. [Learn more](#).

Gov. Perdue signs film incentives bill

On Aug. 27, Gov. Bev Perdue signed Senate Bill 943 allowing production companies a 25 percent tax credit for film projects in North Carolina, up from the previous credit of 15 percent. The bill also sets minimum spending and hiring requirements for qualifying film companies working in the state.

"This legislation is vital to the growth of our \$91 million motion picture industry in North Carolina," said Gov. Perdue. "This bill will preserve thousands of jobs for our deserving residents, increase investment in our economy and help showcase our state's rich offerings to film and TV audiences around the world."

Companies must spend a minimum of \$250,000 on production costs in the state to be eligible for the tax credit. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Linda Garrou (D-Forsyth), also requires companies to meet hiring requirements for North Carolinians and other criteria to qualify for the incentive.

"This incentive will help keep film production in North Carolina," said Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco. "It will be a major boost for the film industry and allow us to compete on a level playing field in a vital and growing global market."

SB 943 ensures North Carolina remains a strong competitor for film production dollars, which totaled \$91 million in direct spending in 2008. The industry employs more than 2,500 statewide. Recent major motion pictures filmed in the state include "Nights in Rodanthe," "Leatherheads" and "The Secret Life of Bees." The N.C. film industry is also home to the CW Network's "One Tree Hill" TV series as well as hundreds of commercial and industrial productions each year throughout the state.

More than 800 movies have been filmed in North Carolina. The state is well known for supporting its motion picture industry with a strong infrastructure and a bevy of locations that can stand in for sites throughout the world. North Carolina boasts an exceptional variety of filming locations from the mountains to the coast, and a world-class film industry infrastructure. Wilmington's EUE Screen Gems, home of the largest studio lot east of California, recently opened the largest film and television production soundstage on the East Coast.

For more details on the N.C. Film Office, go to: www.ncfilm.com.

[North Carolina ups tax production break](#) (The Hollywood Reporter, Aug. 27)

Tourism releases annual report

The Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development has released its 2008 annual report, distributed exclusively this year in .pdf format for the first time ever. While 2008 was a challenging year for the travel industry, the state saw visitor expenditures increase 2.1 percent to \$16.86 billion and market share gains making North Carolina the nation's sixth most visited state. North Carolina's tourism industry remains a vitally important part of the economic fiber of our state,



(Left-right) Commerce's International Business Development Manager Kuldip Wasson, Mary Walden and husband Dr. Michael Walden

Walden speaks on international business climate

Dr. Michael Walden was the guest speaker at the North Carolina World Trade Association meeting held in Morrisville on Aug. 27. He spoke about "Trends in International Business Climate and the State of the Economy." Calling the current recession the 'Great Recession,' Walden said it will eventually end, and the U.S. economy will begin a positive turn in late 2009 or early 2010. He pointed out some recent encouraging news about the economy. One of the bright spots is the growth in exports driven by the weak dollar. More than 70 people attended the meeting. Walden is a William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor in the Department of Agriculture and Resource Economics at North Carolina State University.

Walden also will speak about the current state of the economy and its effect on North Carolina's tourism industry at the Division of Tourism's [Mid-Year Marketing Update](#) on Sept. 22 at the N.C. Museum of History in Raleigh.

Eastern Region forms defense/aerospace advisory committee

North Carolina's Eastern Region (NCER) on Aug. 26 announced the formation of a Defense/Aerospace Advisory Committee. The committee is comprised of 17 members including NCER Board members, industry representatives, academia, government officials, and other business associates with relevant interests in the development of the defense/aerospace cluster in Eastern North Carolina.

The committee will serve as a think tank regarding needs, opportunities, strengths, and strategies for the development of this cluster in the region. It will address issues related to research, business creation, retention and attraction, as well as workforce

generating \$1.39 billion in state and local taxes and supporting 190,500 jobs for our citizens. [Read the report.](#)

N.C. metros rank high in magazine report

For the past five years, *Business Facilities* magazine has published its Metro Rankings Report of American cities, towns and metropolitan statistical areas such as Raleigh-Durham. North Carolina cities placed in the 2009 rankings six times as published in the August issue:

- Charlotte ranked No. 1 in Top 10 Metros for Economic Growth Potential.
- Winston-Salem ranked No. 2 in Top 5 Metros for Economic Growth Potential (less than 200,000 population).
- Greensboro ranked No. 5 in Top 5 Metro Manufacturing Hubs (less than 300,000 population).
- Raleigh-Durham ranked No. 5 in Top 10 Metros for Quality of Life.
- Asheville ranked No. 8 in Top 10 Metros for Quality of Life.
- Charlotte ranked No. 8 in Top 10 Wired Cities.

[See the full rankings.](#)

Morrison to speak at energy forum

Assistant Commerce Sec. for Energy John Morrison is slated to speak at the N.C. Sustainable Energy Association's forum, "Growing North Carolina's Green Energy Economy." The event will take place Oct. 8-9 at the Charlotte Convention Center. Morrison will deliver the luncheon keynote address on Oct. 9. Amory Lovins, co-founder of the Rocky Mountain Institute, will speak at a networking reception and fundraiser on the evening of Oct. 8. [Learn more.](#)

Minges participates in tourism panel

Assistant Commerce Sec. for Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding Lynn Minges was a panelist during the "Tourism as Sustainable Economic Development" workshop, part of the N.C. Association of County Commissioners Annual Conference, held Aug. 28-30 in Hickory. Other panelists were Asheville Convention and Visitors Bureau's Kelly Miller, N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition's Dana Simpson and N.C. Rep. Edgar Stames. Moderated by Brunswick County Tourism Development Authority's Mitzi York, the panel covered best practices for utilizing occupancy tax revenues to increase tourism/economic development and local tax revenues. Gov. Bev. Perdue addressed the conference on the morning of Aug. 28. [Learn more.](#)

development and education. It will also promote networks to encourage greater collaboration among industries, researchers and universities to facilitate technology transfer and the commercialization process. Currently, the cluster consists of approximately 12 companies employing more than 5,000 workers with expectations for growth of about 20% during the next five years. [See the NCER press release](#) with the full list of committee members.

Metrics from B&I Division

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by Commerce's Division of Business and Industry (B&I) 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 - Aug. 31, 2009

New projects assigned:	305
Projects announced:	68
Jobs created:	7,828
Capital invested:	\$1.82B
Direct account interactions (industry visits by existing industry staff):	1,042
Calls to the Business ServiCenter:	17,653

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [China, State moving to strengthen bond](#) (The Pilot - Southern Pines, Aug. 27)
- [Economic signs may indicate recovery for North Carolina](#) (News 14 Carolina, Aug. 27)
- [Tire testing center expected to become an industry lure](#) (The Charlotte Observer, Aug. 27)
- [Affiliated Computer Services to hire 465 in Raleigh](#) (Triangle Business Journal, Aug. 26)
- [Tarboro Sara Lee plant announces expansion](#) (WRAL - Raleigh, Aug. 26)

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