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Weekly highlights from the
North Carolina Department of Commerce



N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco and RowanWorks Economic Development Executive Director Robert Van Geons speak with guests at the Boral Composites groundbreaking Thursday in East Spencer. (Photo by Emily Ford for The Salisbury Post)

Boral Composites breaks ground on new plant

Boral Composites Inc., an independent, wholly-owned subsidiary of Boral USA, broke ground Sept. 9 on a new manufacturing facility located in East Spencer. The Rowan County facility is scheduled for completion in September 2011, and when fully built out will employ up to 25. In attendance at the ceremony were N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco, Rowan County Commissioner Carl Ford, and East Spencer Mayor John Cowan.

Boral USA currently operates a brick manufacturing facility in East Spencer and other facilities in Charlotte and Lake Norman.

"We look forward to furthering our business relationships with our valued partners, including the North Carolina Department of Commerce, North Carolina Community Colleges System, Rowan County, RowanWorks, town of East Spencer and Duke Energy," said Brian Below, general manager of Boral Composites Inc. "Based on our history, we have found North Carolina offers our company a desirable geographic location to efficiently service our customers, as well as access to a skilled and able workforce."

The new plant, which will be located on property adjacent to Boral USA's current East Spencer site, is being built to the United States Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy



Gov. Bev Perdue (left) and Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell were two of the featured speakers during the Sept. 10 celebration of the Blue Ridge Parkway's 75th anniversary. (Photo by Eric Brady, courtesy of The Roanoke Times)

Tourism Division promotes Parkway's 75th anniversary

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development has promoted the Blue Ridge Parkway's 75th Anniversary across all aspects of its marketing program. Media placements alone have generated more than 11 million impressions. Editorial coverage has reached an audience of 64 million.

The Parkway was featured on the cover of the Official N.C. Travel Guide. Some 300,000 copies of the guide, including a feature story on the Parkway anniversary, were produced. Guides are sent to potential visitors to the state. They will also be available at nine N.C. Welcome Centers and at many visitor centers across the state.

The Division has arranged for the Weather Channel to do a live remote broadcast themed "Why We Love Fall" during October from a location on the Parkway in western North Carolina. It will be shown to an estimated 672,000 viewers. The Division has hosted more than 30 travel writers, tour operators and travel agents from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Germany along the Parkway to celebrate the anniversary. The Division has also promoted the Parkway domestically and internationally to hundreds of media and travel representatives.

& Environmental Design (LEED) standards, minimizing energy use and conserving other resources. The facility will manufacture a line of exterior building products made primarily of recycled and rapidly renewable materials. [Read more.](#)

[Boral Composites among those set to add more jobs](#) (The Salisbury Post, Sept. 10)



(Left-right) Anders Sjoelin, president of the Power Systems Division for ABB Inc. North America, receives a presentation from N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll.

ABB to bring 130 jobs to Mecklenburg and Wake

Gov. Bev Perdue announced Sept. 9 that ABB Inc., a global leader in power and automation technologies for utility and industrial customers, will build a new manufacturing facility in Huntersville. The company plans to create 100 jobs over the next two years and invest \$90 million at the new factory. In addition, ABB will create another 30 engineering jobs in Wake County, where its North American headquarters are located. The project was made possible in part by state grants from the Job Development Investment Grant program and One North Carolina Fund. N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll helped welcome ABB to Huntersville. Commerce's Martyn Johnson was the developer on this project.

"Creating jobs is my top priority and this multi-county investment and expansion by ABB is a win for the region and our state," said Perdue. "North Carolina's commitment to education, custom training programs and an integrated transportation system has helped our state maintain the sort of top-rated business climate that will allow globally competitive companies like ABB and their employees to thrive here."

ABB currently employs 771 full-time workers in North Carolina. While individual wages for the 130 additional jobs will vary by job function, the overall average wage for the new jobs is \$64,008. That is higher than the county average of \$48,776 in Mecklenburg and \$42,692 in Wake. [Read more.](#)

[New jobs coming to Huntersville](#) (News 14 Carolina, Sept. 10)

Kleen Tech to bring 30 jobs to Valdese

Gov. Bev Perdue on Sept. 9 announced that Kleen Tech Inc. will build a new process facility in Valdese to accommodate business growth. The company plans to create 30 jobs and invest \$1.17 million during the next three years. The project was made possible in part by a \$54,000 grant from the One

Several magazines including Country Living, AirTran Airlines' Go in-flight Magazine and Saveur are running Division advertorial sections that will be seen by millions of readers.

See the advertorial, "[Dine Along the Blue Ridge Parkway.](#)" See the advertorial "[Autumn Experiences.](#)" See the [High Country advertorial.](#) See the [marketing report](#) on the Blue Ridge Parkway's 75th anniversary. See the [report on story placement](#) for the anniversary.

['America's Favorite Drive,' the Blue Ridge Parkway, turns 75](#) (The Roanoke Times, Sept. 11)

Record number of buyers on tap for High Point Pre-Market

Buyer registration for Fall Pre-Market 2010 is at its highest point in its four-year history, with 201 leading buyers from 80 companies signed up for the event, Sept. 13-14 in High Point. "Buyers are continuing to register for the Fall Pre-Market, with requests coming in almost daily," says Brian Casey, president and CEO of the High Point Market Authority, who acts as spokesperson for the event's sponsors. "The response has been fantastic and we look forward to a very strong event."

"Pre-Market continues to grow, both in the number of exhibitors and in the number of buyers who are attending," says Kevin O'Connor, chief executive of Samson Marketing, parent company of Legacy Classic and Universal Furniture. "We've been through a challenging period in this industry, but it has also been a time of closer collaboration between manufacturers and retailers. Pre-Market offers our 25 Sponsor exhibitors the unique opportunity to work closely with buyers to fine-tune their offerings and to create success on retail floors with those product line-ups." [Read more.](#)

Wells Fargo museum announced

In another sign of changing times for Charlotte's banking landscape, a Wells Fargo & Co. stagecoach will soon have a permanent home on Tryon Street.

The San Francisco bank next fall plans to open its 10th history museum, complete with a historic stagecoach, in one of Wachovia's uptown Charlotte office buildings. The museum, the first on the East Coast, will be housed in a former bank branch location in Three Wachovia Center at 401 S. Tryon St.

"We are proud to host the first East Coast museum in our flagship market and to have

North Carolina Fund. The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Bill Payne was the developer on this project.

"This expansion proves that we are just as serious about growing our existing companies, such as Kleen Tech, as we are about bringing in new companies to our state," said Gov. Bev Perdue. "Thirty jobs in Burke County – and recycling an existing building – is just as important as a new corporate headquarters in one of our largest cities. They all know the value of North Carolina's business-friendly environment and strong workforce."

Kleen Tech provides textile-cleaning services to hospitality and industrial clients along the East Coast, from Maine to Florida. It does not use solvents typically applied to linens and other fabrics. Kleen Tech's corporate offices and plant, with 75 employees in nearby Hildebran, will continue to operate but the site there could not accommodate the company's expansion needs. The expansion will take place at the site of Valdese's former water treatment plant, which the company plans to "recycle" and refurbish, according to company and local officials. [Read more.](#)

Progress Energy breaks ground on \$900M plant with 500 construction jobs

On Sept. 9, Progress Energy held a groundbreaking in Wayne County for a \$900 million plant with 500 construction jobs. Speakers included U.S. Rep. G.K. Butterfield, N.C. senators David Rouzer and Don Davis, N.C. representatives Efton Sager and Van Braxton, and N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll.

See coverage on [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#) by Wayne County Government.

Furniture retailer and manufacturer partner to bring 200 jobs to Burke County

Gov. Bev Perdue on Sept. 10 welcomed the announcement of a joint venture known as the Carolina Artisan Group that will create 200 jobs in Valdese. The joint venture is a partnership between Art Van Furniture, Michigan's largest furniture retailer, and Kellex Corporation, a furniture manufacturer in Burke County.

"Creating jobs is our number one priority, and the announcement today is tremendous news for Burke County and for North Carolina," said Perdue. "North Carolina has a talented and skilled workforce, and we look forward to a long and successful partnership." [Read more.](#)

[Furniture companies merge, bring jobs to Valdese](#) (The News Herald - Morganton, Sept. 12)

August Economic Overview released

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce has released its Monthly Overview of North Carolina's Economy for July 2010.

National and state data continue to show a mixed picture of North Carolina's progress toward economic recovery. Most indicators still remain well below their pre-recessionary levels, but both state and national trends indicate economic growth is

an opportunity to celebrate our company's past and present," Charlotte region community banking president Kendall Alley said in a memo to area employees. "The museum will honor Wachovia's rich history and introduce the Wells Fargo name and brand to our community." Wells Fargo bought the former Charlotte-based Wachovia in 2008 at the peak of the financial crisis. It's gradually merging operations over three years.

[Wells Fargo museum announced](#) (The Charlotte Observer, Sept. 8)



In SYNC: Melissa Smith

For the last five years, Senior Economic Developer Melissa Smith has been in The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Business & Industry Division Piedmont Triad office, where she has assisted existing industries and recruited new projects to North Carolina. Prior to working with Commerce, Smith was with the Randolph County Economic Development Corporation for 10 years. In addition to her work in economic development, Smith enjoys spending time with her high school-aged children and her husband, Brad.

Smith has a history of success working with unique and complex projects including more than 65 announced projects that have resulted in more than \$850 million new investment and 5,000 new jobs. Projects announced this year include expansions at [Vitacost.Com](#) in Davidson County (a leading online retailer and direct marketer of health and wellness products) Whiteridge Plastics in Rockingham County (a national supplier of custom-molded plastic parts for the automotive, industrial, agricultural, tool and custom-part markets) and Harvest Time Bread Company in Surry County (a national baker for the grocery and food service industries). Last month, NLnovalvink, a Canadian company that manufacturers technology-focused work stations, announced intentions to build a new facility for its U.S. headquarters, manufacturing and client

occurring, albeit very slowly. Businesses have been slow to step up hiring and confidence in the economy has declined, leading consumers to reduce spending. The housing market has weakened further with the end of the homebuyer tax credit that had propped up sales earlier in the year.

Despite expectations of slow growth for the remainder of 2010 and first parts of 2011, many economists believe the recovery is continuing, increasing hopes the economy can avoid a "double-dip" recession. [See the overview.](#)

Among the prevailing trends:

- N.C.'s unemployment rate decreased to 9.8 percent, but the decline a result of workers leaving labor force.
- Unemployment rates in decline statewide and for most counties.
- Total non-farm employment decreased significantly; government sector experienced significant job loss.
- Workers affected by closings and layoffs increased; exceeded the 4-month and 12-month averages.
- Announced capital investment in the second Quarter exceeded \$2 billion and announced jobs exceeded 7,500.
- Foreclosures increased; home sales and building permits declined.

Raleigh lender set for fast expansion

Foundation Financial Group, a mortgage lender with 22 employees in Raleigh, plans to triple its local workforce over the next six months.

Foundation said Sept. 7 that it will add 20 employees this quarter and another 20 next quarter at its Raleigh office, which services customers in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee. [Read more.](#)

Clean energy conference to happen in WNC

Clean Energy Now, a conference sponsored in part by AdvantageWest and Blue Ridge Community College, will take place at the college's Flat Rock campus Oct. 8. This event will provide manufacturers, clean energy businesses, local governments and individuals interested in starting a green or clean energy business, with an overview of opportunities related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean vehicles to create and sustain a competitive edge. There are a couple of pre-conference training sessions on how to start a green business as well.

The conference will also feature the largest display of clean energy vehicles in western North Carolina this year. [Learn more.](#)

service center in High Point.

Metrics from B&I Division

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Division of Business and Industry 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 - Sept. 13, 2010

New projects assigned:	301
Projects announced:	87
Jobs created:	11,450
Capital invested:	\$2.27B
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	974
Calls to the Business ServiCenter:	16,548

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [2010 a good summer for Eastern N.C. tourism](#) (Kinston Free Press, Sept. 9)
- [Summer tourism in Asheville area rises a bit](#) (Asheville Citizen-Times, Sept. 9)
- [Reidsville makes offer of incentives](#) (The News & Record - Greensboro, Sept. 9)
- [Grant creates green jobs at UNC](#) (The Daily Tar Heel - UNC-Chapel Hill, Sept. 8)
- [N.C. manufacturers benefit as Congress lifts selected tariffs](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, Sept. 7)

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