



▶ REGIONAL AIRPORT BECOMES “RALEIGH EXEC”. Sanford-Lee County Regional Airport has been renamed “RALEIGH EXEC: The Raleigh Executive Jetport @ Sanford-Lee County,” reflecting its growing role as a gateway to the world-renowned Research Triangle Region. The name change had been discussed for a while, and airport authority chairman O.A. Keller III believes the time was right. With an increasingly-competitive market and expansion of Raleigh’s outer beltline toward Sanford, RALEIGH EXEC is positioned to attract the growing number of private flights headed for Raleigh.

▶ PAXTON/PATTERSON OPENS ITS GLOBAL LEARNING CENTER. School teachers from around the world are now traveling to Sanford for training in technology-based curricula developed by Paxton/Patterson. Located at Southern Lee High School, the company’s only Global Learning Center provides professional development in lab-based instructional methods combining core academics with real-world scenarios.

Inside this issue

2 2009 WAS A TOUGH YEAR for everyone, says Bob Heuts. But what economic lessons can we draw?

3 SOME COMPANIES EXPAND, adding new buildings, equipment and jobs to our industrial base.

Economic Indicators

recovery

The Great Recession is finally ending. After a two-year decline that North Carolina State University economist Mike Walden calls “the greatest economic downturn since the 1930s,” signs now point to growth.

Manufacturing output recently jumped across the Tar Heel State. The housing market has started to improve. And though unemployment figures remain erratic, they’re moving in the right direction.

Factory output is the best indication of recovery so far, since manufacturing usually leads economic growth. As more products roll off assembly lines, more workers are needed and hiring begins — which is why unemployment is considered a “trailing indicator” of economic vitality.



the coming months

Most economists agree the recession is over or will be ending soon, according to Walden, but that doesn’t mean we’ll see prosperity return right away.

The end of a recession simply means that the economy is no longer declining. How quickly people return to work depends on *how much* and *how fast* the economy grows, and though forecasts vary,

Walden believes we’ll experience “modest” growth over the next couple of years.

Some predictions from his latest statewide economic outlook:

📍 North Carolina will recover faster than the nation as a whole, with a state growth rate of 3.5 percent in 2010 (2.5 percent nationally) and 3 percent in 2011 (2.2 percent nationally).

📍 Unemployment will peak during the first quarter of 2010 before hiring resumes in earnest. By the end of 2010, the seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate will be 9.8 percent across the state and 7.7 in the Research Triangle. (Lee County is usually a couple of points higher than the region.) At the close of 2011, the figures will be 8.9 statewide and 6.8 in the region.

📍 It will be several years before unemployment returns to more-“acceptable” levels of around 5 percent.

so, what now?

There’s no magic in taking advantage of the economic recovery.

Walden says the key for any locality — whether it’s during a recession or recovery — is to develop its assets and “sell” them to national *and international* companies that are a good fit for the community.



BOB HEUTS

From '09 to Our Future

What a tough year we just completed! Unemployment reached 15.1 percent. Foreclosures hit home. Lehman Brothers declared bankruptcy. AIG became 81-percent owned by our federal government. And, oh yes, the stock market dropped 40 percent or more from previous years.

An economic downturn that started in late '07 finally began to show signs of improvement in the third quarter of last year, with unemployment dropping slightly and the stock market rising above 10,000. But then, unexpectedly, Hanesbrands closed locally after deciding to outsource spinning operations. Jobs lost again!

What are the lessons? With constant change now the rule, expect the unexpected. We cannot control the stock market or macroeconomic forces, but we can control what happens inside Lee County by continuing to build the best K-14 educational system anywhere and striving to make this the kind of cleaner, safer community where families and businesses want to be.

We have pieces in place for a successful future. We're living in the most dynamic region of the world. Lee is already blessed with world-class businesses. We have the water and sewer capacity needed to grow. A group of talented people will soon bring their expertise from Georgia to the Carolinas. We enjoy a great network of highways and an impressive general aviation airport

Working together to build new opportunities for everyone will further enhance all that we can appreciate and be thankful for today.

Bob Heuts is director of the Lee County Economic Development Corp.

good news and bad news
Health of Lee '09 gives a mixed diagnosis

Though everyone acknowledges the weak economy and unstable job outlook, national and local conditions may not be quite as bad as you hear on the street.

That diagnosis was provided by CEO Charles Hayes of the Research Triangle Regional Partnership and Director Bob Heuts of Lee County Economic Development in December at "The Health of Lee County 2009," an annual assessment of the economy, labor, education and quality of life.

Taken as a whole, the economy has seen more difficult times. Heuts pointed to the U.S. Misery Index, a gauge combining unemployment and inflation rates to assess how bad off people are economically.

At year's end, the index stood at 10.02 percent, less than half of its all-time high of 21.09 reached in June 1980.

But aside from the economy, there was some good news:

- ▶ Crime continued to fall. Seven years ago, the rate was 7,201 crimes per 100,000 inhabitants, but the latest figure was just 3,649 — lower than the Research Triangle region as a whole.

- ▶ 13 of 14 public schools recorded "expected" or "high" growth in the statewide ABCs report, up from 11 of 13 last year.

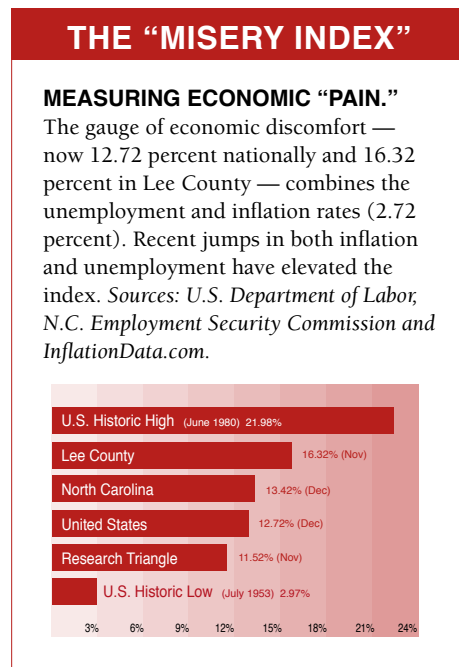
- ▶ 11 of 15 public schools made "adequate yearly progress" in reading and math. Last year, it was 3 of 14.

- ▶ CCCC became the first community college in the nation to open a Confucius Classroom to teach courses in Chinese language and culture.

An executive summary and a full report on "The Health of Lee County" are available on the Web at lcedc.com/media/ (scroll down to "local economic reports").



With C100 president John Daniel (left) looking on, North Carolina Secretary of Commerce J. Keith Crisco answers questions. Crisco was a guest at The Health of Lee County in December.



Economic Indicators

ECONOMIC INDICATORS is a quarterly newsletter of the Lee County Committee of 100, an organization of business leaders committing their time, energy and resources to enhance the economic well-being of Lee County and its citizens.

For information about membership, contact the Lee County Committee of 100 Inc., P.O. Box 4846, Sanford, N.C., 27331-4846. 919.774.8439 (phone). 919.775.5410 (fax). info@lcedc.com (e-mail). News and letters for ECONOMIC INDICATORS may be sent to the editor at news@lcedc.com.

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Firms expand in tough economy

Even while many hunker down, hoping simply to survive the tough economy, some area companies are involved in major expansion projects.

Score Energy is now building an addition to its Tramway Road facility, while Parkdale, Frontier Spinning and Red Wolf are adding jobs and production.

Parkdale, in fact, closed its doors entirely early last year, moving 90 jobs. But production has returned and could become vigorous, now that an incentive package has helped the company buy equipment from the former Hanesbrands plant.

City and county incentive packages also allowed Red Wolf and Frontier to expand, helping keep scores of manufacturing jobs in the county.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Coty donates land for community park

Carr Creek Park, a playground serving neighborhoods near the Coty manufacturing plant on Highway 42, opened in October after the company contributed a half-acre of land, valued at \$17,000, for the project.


Community planning director Bob Bridwell says the park would not have been possible without the donation.

“Once again, Coty has demonstrated its commitment to our community and its desire to be an outstanding corporate citizen,” Bridwell said.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ College begins teaching Chinese classes

Courses in Chinese language and culture have begun at CCCC’s Confucius Classroom with CHI 111: Elementary

FAMILY DAY @ the jetport



YOUNG VISITORS explore a helicopter cockpit, one of many free public exhibits at RaleighExec’s “FAMILY DAY @ the jetport” in October. The facility was a busy place this fall, hosting more than 3,000 people at the family-oriented festival and about 150 more at its annual “CHRISTMAS @ the jetport” reception to thank clients and recruit new business.

(Mandarin) Chinese I. In November, the Classroom led by Professor Shuya Che also hosted a free special exhibit of contemporary paintings and calligraphy from the People’s Republic of China.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ CCCC clout grows in corporate training

CCCC continues to expand its reach as a national training center by signing deals to teach and certify Lean Six Sigma instructors across the state and provide training in Hewlett Packard’s ProCurve Networking products for customers.

The college becomes the only community college in the nation offering the “Train the Trainer Program” in Lean Six Sigma and the only training HP ProCurve training center

outside a corporate setting.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ North Carolina named top business climate

Business may be difficult everywhere, but North Carolina still holds a competitive edge.

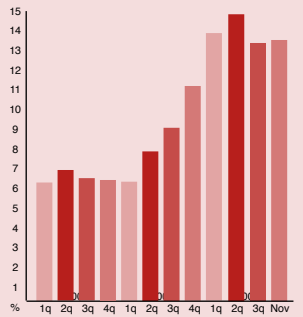
For the eighth time in nine years, the state topped Site Selection magazine’s “Top Business Climate” list — thanks to factors including a favorable tax climate, strong workforce, non-union environment.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ State aviation council meets at RaleighExec

Top aviation policy advisors got a good look at the growing RaleighExec jetport in October, when the North Carolina Aviation Council brought its monthly meeting to Lee County.

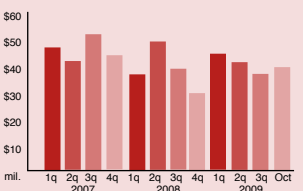
Economic Indicators

unemployment



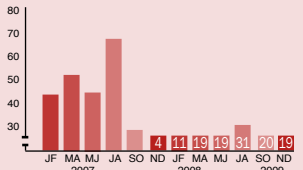
Lee County unemployment for November, in the latest county report, was 13.6 percent, up 0.2 points from October. The labor force estimate dropped to 25,802. The state’s seasonally-unadjusted rate was 10.9 percent (Dec.), with the regional figure at 8.8 (Nov.). *Data from the last month of each quarter.*

taxable sales



Taxable sales for Lee County were estimated at \$40.00 million in October, the latest report, down from \$46.64 million one year before. City taxable sales are no longer reported. *Figures reported from last month of each quarter.*

building permits



Lee County issued 19 building permits for new residential construction in November and December combined, far more than the four issued during the same period last year. Changes in the way permits are reported may affect some estimates. *Figures are for permits issued over a two-month period for new home construction.*

area industrial closings

Sanford. Hanesbrands, spun yarns, 150 affected.

February 2010**11 COMMITTEE OF 100 PRESENTS**
“The Future of Education Is Here.”

Roger Davis, CEO of Paxton/Patterson, explains why combining core academics with real-world scenarios better prepares students for the demands of a 21st century workforce and discusses his company's new Global Learning Center. Based at Southern Lee High School, the center trains teachers in Paxton/Patterson curricula emphasizing science, technology, engineering and math. noon. Chef Paul's Café, 610 E. Main Street, Sanford. \$15 includes lunch, \$10 for members. Contact Jane Haber, 919.774.8439 or info@lcedc.com.

11 STEM Labs Tour and Grand Opening. Business After Hours welcomes special guests Roger Davis, CEO of Paxton/Patterson; Bill Harrison, chairman of the State Board of Education; and June Atkinson, state Superintendent of Public Instruction. 5 to 7 p.m. SanLee Middle School, 2309 Tramway Road, Sanford. RSVP required to the Sanford Area Chamber of Commerce, 919.775.7341 or frontdesk@

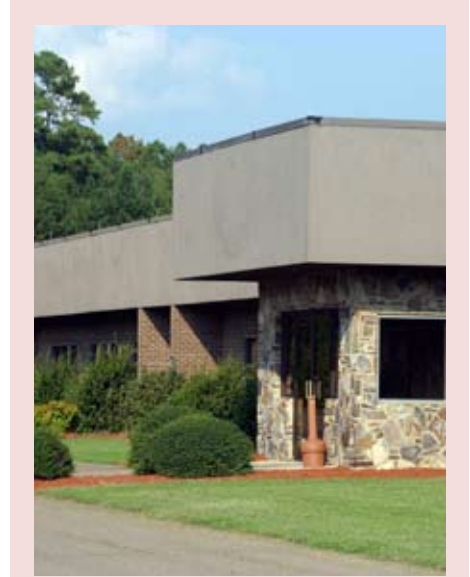
sanford-nc.com.

18 Central Carolina Society for Human Resources Management.

Monthly meeting. 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Chef Paul's Café, 610 E. Main Street, Sanford. Contact Jane Haber, 919.774.8439.

17 Lee County Economic Development Board. 4 p.m. Lee County EDC Office, 226 Carthage Street, Sanford. Contact Jane Haber, 919.774.8439 or info@lcedc.com.

25 COMPASSION '10: “Understanding Poverty.” The second annual community roundtable to improve human services in Lee County features Susan Pennock, a trainer with Communities in Schools of North Carolina, on “Understanding Poverty.” Her presentation kicks off a yearlong effort to strengthen ministries, nonprofits and governmental agencies providing assistance for people needing food, employment, financial help and housing. Free. 1 to 5 p.m. McSwain Center, 2420 Tramway Road, Sanford. Contact the United Way, info@leecountyunitedway.org or 919.776.5823.

**FOCUS on Industrial Sites**

The Colfax/Zenith Pumps building offers 14,891 square feet of office space and 34,122 square feet with 22-foot ceilings for light manufacturing on 12 acres in the Lee County Industrial Park. For other available sites in Lee County, visit www.lcedc.com, click on “Buildings & Sites,” and select either buildings or sites.

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