

syncTM Weekly highlights from the North Carolina Department of Commerce



A scene from "Blood Done Sign My Name." Photo by Palidin

'Blood Done Sign My Name' now in theaters

"Blood Done Sign My Name" opened in theaters nationwide this past weekend. Based on a North Carolina story, the N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Film Office worked in concert with the Charlotte Regional Film Commission to bring the film to the state. Additionally, they worked with the film's production team and local entities for scouting and filming locations to facilitate production of the movie in North Carolina.

While the movie is based on a true story that took place in Oxford, it was shot entirely on location in Shelby, Gastonia, Monroe and Statesville. Mitchell Community College doubles as the North Carolina State Capitol.

Based on the book of the same title by North Carolina native and Duke University Professor Timothy Tyson, the film was adapted for the screen and directed by North Carolina native Jeb Stuart ("Die Hard," "The Fugitive"). It tells the story of how a 1970 incident in Oxford, Tyson's hometown, erupted in racial turmoil after an all-white jury acquitted two white men of killing a young black man.

The production contributed about \$10 million to the state's economy and employed around 2,000 people, including talent, extras and crew. To find about the film industry in North Carolina, visit www.NCFilm.com.

[The storyteller returns](#) (The Charlotte Observer, Feb. 19)

Utility grant funds to aid 200 households statewide

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco on Feb. 22 announced that 13 communities received a total of \$830,330



Scott Daugherty has been named to serve as North Carolina's first Small Business commissioner.

Perdue names first Small Business commissioner

Gov. Bev Perdue on Feb. 17 named Scott Daugherty to serve as North Carolina's first Small Business commissioner.

This position will establish an organizational structure and a collaborative partnership model within which the leading state-funded small business assistance resources will clarify their roles and responsibilities, identify opportunities to collaborate and most effectively serve the small business community. It is being created through a cooperative agreement between the N.C. Dept. of Commerce, the University of North Carolina System, N.C. State University, and the N.C. Community College System. The governor also named Dr. George Millsaps to serve as assistant commissioner for Small Business.

Also on Feb. 17, Perdue signed Executive Order No. 50 that will give North Carolina-based businesses a price-matching opportunity when bidding on state contracts for the purchase of goods. The governor's order will help North Carolina businesses protect and grow jobs.

Executive Order No. 50 directs the N.C. Sec. of Administration to develop price-matching procedures for North Carolina resident

in Community Development Block Grant funds to connect 200 low- and moderate-income households to public water and/or sewer lines.

The Infrastructure Hook-Up Program enables local governments to connect low- and moderate-income households to existing public water and/or sewer lines, provided the existing lines were not constructed with CDBG funds. The maximum grant amount is \$75,000.

"North Carolina is committed to helping provide vital utility connections to our needy families statewide," Crisco said. "These funds will ensure that basic hygiene needs are met through enhanced service to 200 deserving households." [Read more.](#)

Perdue announces new leadership in key positions

Gov. Bev Perdue on Feb. 19 announced that N.C. Sec. of Administration Britt Cobb will move into the role of chief of staff in the Governor's Office. Joining him as chief deputy will be Kevin McLaughlin, who currently serves as the chief operating officer and general counsel of the Dept. of Administration.

The governor appointed Moses Cary, who moves from his current role as chairman of the Employment Security Commission (ESC), as the Sec. of Administration. Lynn Holmes will step in to his vacated seat.

Anne Bander will serve as chief operating officer of the Dept. of Administration, and David Clegg will continue his leadership as deputy chairman and chief operating officer of the ESC.

"This is a tremendously talented group of people who will bring leadership and new ideas to my administration," said Perdue. "I am excited about moving forward with this team."

Additionally, the governor tapped Don Hobart as chief advisor for business and economic development, a position within the governor's senior staff funded through the N.C. Dept. of Commerce. Hobart, who has worked as Perdue's senior advisor since January 2009, has concentrated his efforts on the continued growth and retention of jobs in North Carolina. [Read more.](#)

Perdue announces high-speed rail money to provide jobs

Gov. Bev Perdue announced Feb. 16 that the federal high-speed rail grant to North Carolina will create or maintain as many as 4,800 private sector jobs in North Carolina over the next four years, with 1,000 of those expected this year alone as ready-to-go projects get under way.

The jobs will come from more than 30 projects in 11 North Carolina counties that the governor identified. The projects are being funded with \$545 million the state received through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) for further development of the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) Corridor and the state's intercity passenger rail program.

"These rail projects are going to have far-reaching benefits for North Carolinians," said Perdue. "They will put people to work while providing transportation, environmental and energy benefits through reduced congestion and improved air quality."

bidders on state contracts for the purchase of goods. Such a preference would provide a qualified North Carolina company whose bid price is within 5 percent or \$10,000 of the lowest bid, whichever is less, an opportunity to match the price of an out-of-state low bidder and be awarded contracts with the State of North Carolina. [Read more.](#)

[State gives N.C. businesses an edge](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, Feb. 18)

Commercial bakery to bring 84 jobs to Johnston County

Gov. Bev Perdue today announced that Northeast Foods Inc., a national contract baker for the commercial and fast-food industries, will open a new bakery operation in Johnston County. The company plans to invest \$25.4 million and create 84 jobs during the next two years in Clayton. The new bakery operation is made possible in part by a \$350,000 grant from the One North Carolina Fund.

"Creating jobs continues to be my top priority. Companies like Northeast Foods know they can successfully invest, create new jobs and grow their operation here," said Perdue. "North Carolina's top business climate and skilled workforce make our state the perfect location for businesses to locate and expand."

Northeast Foods, headquartered in Maryland, has been a key supplier to McDonald's since 1965. The privately owned company has grown to become McDonald's largest supplier of buns in the United States. Northeast Foods has five operating facilities in the U.S. and also provides storage and distribution for its products.

The company plans to build a new commercial bakery in Clayton to serve two Golden State Foods distribution centers in Garner and Lexington, S.C. While wages will vary by position, the overall average annual wage of the new positions is \$41,815, which exceeds the Johnston County annual average wage of \$31,408. The company also plans to provide a strong benefits package. [Read more.](#)



The projects include purchasing and rebuilding locomotives and passenger cars, improving stations, building passing sidings and double tracks between Greensboro and Charlotte as well as closing highway-railroad crossings, upgrading private crossings and constructing new highway bridges. A complete list of projects is attached.

The projects are located in Alamance, Cabarrus, Davidson, Durham, Guilford, Halifax, Mecklenburg, Nash, Northampton, Rowan and Wake counties and they range from \$340,000 in Cabarrus County for station improvements to more than \$129 million in Mecklenburg County to begin modernizing the rail network. Several projects will begin in the next few months.

[Read more.](#)

Geithner talks tax credits, jobs in Durham

U.S. Treasury Sec. Timothy Geithner visited Durham Feb. 18 and discussed tax credits designed to spur jobs in low-income areas. Geithner visited a job training center and a business in a former textile mill that was converted in part with funds through the New Markets Tax Credit program. Geithner also met with business, university and political leaders to talk about high-tech jobs in Research Triangle Park.

[Geithner touts development tax credits in Durham](#) (WRAL - Raleigh, Feb. 18)

RCCC shares expertise in helping displaced workers

A delegation from Rowan-Cabarrus Community College (RCCC) met Feb. 17 with officials from the N.C. Commission on Workforce Development to share the college's expertise in helping displaced workers. RCCC is nationally known for its innovative responses after layoffs at Pillowtex and Philip Morris. The commission wanted to know more about RCCC's Re-employment Bridge Institute, which was created with a grant from the N.C. Dept. of Commerce. Ultimately, RCCC wants the institute to help spur economic recovery for North Carolina.

The institute offers two-day workshops at the R3 Center in Kannapolis, now housed in the old Visitors Center at the N.C. Research Campus. The workshops will continue through September.

[RCCC can show how to help displaced workers](#) (The Salisbury Post, Feb. 16)

Green industrial park could grow

State officials are urging Camden County to make a proposed earth-friendly industrial park a lot bigger than the originally planned 100 acres. N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec. Keith Crisco and Sen. Marc Basnight were among those urging Camden officials to expand the park, which will create a green corridor along U.S. 17. The new plan includes an adjacent 260 acres and could grow by another 3,000 acres. Gov. Bev Perdue also met with Camden County officials and promised help with the project.

[N.C. officials push to grow green industrial park](#) (The Virginian-Pilot, Feb. 14)

N.C. Dept. of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll delivers the keynote address at the NAIOP Conference in Greensboro.

Carroll speaks at NAIOP Conference

[The National Association of Industrial & Office Properties](#) (NAIOP) held its statewide meeting in Greensboro on Feb. 18. North Carolina's Piedmont Triad Partnership served as gold sponsor and the Charlotte Regional Partnership arranged the program. National site consultants from Chicago, Atlanta and New York presented on a panel titled "Site Selection 2010: New Realities/New Challenges." N.C. Dept of Commerce Deputy Sec. Dale Carroll delivered the keynote address by presenting Gov. Bev Perdue's 2010 agenda for North Carolina and updated the NAIOP members from across the state on reorganizations at Commerce involving Business & Industry, Energy and Small Business.

Charlotte Regional Partnership President and CEO Ronnie Bryant wrote about the meeting in his Feb. 22 Monday Memo newsletter.

[Read the newsletter.](#)

Weatherization program to be discussed on OPEN/net Feb. 23

The N.C. Weatherization Assistance Program will be discussed 8-9 p.m. Feb. 23 on OPEN/net, the state's public affairs show. The weatherization program offers low-income households the opportunity to save on energy bills through efficiency and improvements. Discussing the program will be: Seth Efron, public information officer for the Energy Office; Reginald Speight, CEO of Martin County Community Action, which administers the program in Beaufort, Edgecombe, Martin, Nash, Pitt and Wilson counties; and Garman Troup, housing and home improvement director for Resources for Seniors Wake County North Carolina. Viewers can participate by calling (888) 228-6736. Questions and comments may also be e-mailed before or during the show to open@doa.nc.gov. Program schedules, channel listings, archived video and Web streaming are available at: www.open-net.tv.

Sustainable Local Food Council has first meeting

The newly established N.C. Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council held its first meeting Feb. 9. There are 26 seats on the statewide council, and 24 of these appointees were able to attend the long awaited inaugural meeting held in front of a standing-room-only audience. N.C. Dept. of Commerce Sec.

Energy Office issues RFP for internship program

The N.C. Energy Office requests proposals from accredited public and private educational institutions, local and state government agencies and nonprofit organizations for the creation of green energy-related internships and/or fellowship programs in the energy sector that would serve the needs of talented undergraduate and graduate students in North Carolina. The "Student Energy Internship and Fellowship Program" is funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The purpose of these programs would be to provide on-the-job work experiences for current or recently graduated students that would enhance their education through this experiential opportunity, assist businesses and organizations in the fulfillment of their missions, and encourage these students to consider employment and careers in North Carolina.

Approximately \$2 million will be made available for this effort. It is expected that five-15 awards will be made in amounts ranging from \$30,000 to \$500,000. Internships and fellowships must be concluded by April 30, 2012. At the conclusion of this program, the N.C. Energy Office seeks to have more than 200 students at educational institutions in North Carolina provided with energy-related internships and fellowships. Sealed proposals subject to the conditions of this RFP will be received at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, March 17. For questions and additional information, go online to www.ncpandc.gov or call (919) 807-4525. [Download the RFP.](#)

Panel to look at ABC reform

Sen. Marc Basnight and Rep. Joe Hackney on Feb. 18 ordered the formation of a new panel to look at ways to reform North Carolina's Alcoholic Beverage Control system. The committee will be co-chaired by Rep. Ray Warren and Sen. Don Vaughan. The committee is expected to make recommendations to the General Assembly before the start of the legislative session in May. The group is also expected to look at eight broad areas, including structures and ethical standards, and will also examine the possibility and effects of privatization.

[Liquor sales panel to look at ABC reform](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, Feb. 18)

NY Times features Levine Museum of the New South

In the Arts section of *The New York Times*, the newspaper featured a review of the Levine Museum of the New South in Charlotte. The article notes, "the Levine museum reflects the mixture of the traditional and the iconoclastic, the combination of a weighty past and an ever-shifting present, that characterize the idea of the New South."

[An enigmatic land of great expectations](#) (The New York Times, Feb. 12)

Keith Crisco is a member of the council.

The concept of creating a statewide council was identified as a priority during the Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS) Farm-to-Fork Initiative, "Building a Local Food Economy in North Carolina." Many constituent groups worked cooperatively with legislators to draft the proposed legislation that ultimately resulted in the establishment of this council during the most recent legislative session.

The meeting was open to the public (as all subsequent meetings will be) and it was incredible to see the amount of interest and support for the council. [Read more.](#)

Transylvania awarded CDBG funds

The N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Division of Community Assistance has awarded \$100,000 to Transylvania County to loan to Gaia Herbs, Inc. for renovating a vacant industrial building. The company has pledged to create five new jobs and invest more than \$100,000 over a two-year period.

Metrics from B&I Division

Below are year-to-date metrics tracked by the 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 - Feb. 22, 2010

New projects assigned:	75
Projects announced:	12
Jobs created:	1,645
Capital invested:	\$198.6M
Industry visits by existing industry staff:	150
Calls to the Business ServiCenter:	3,297

N.C. in the News

This Week's Highlights

- [Organizers hope 1,300 will attend Biotech 2010](#) (The News & Observer - Raleigh, Feb. 22)
- [Leaders' shared goal: Creating jobs](#) (The Charlotte Observer, Feb. 22)

[International companies choose N.C. for trade, direct investment](#) (WSOC - Charlotte, Feb. 19)

- [Duke Energy eyes Charlotte building for solar](#) (Charlotte Business Journal, Feb. 19)
- [N.C. banking commissioner urges reforms](#) (Business Journal of the Greater Triad, Feb. 18)

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