

Implementing the Vision of Economic & Tourism Development in North Carolina's Northeast Region

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The North Carolina's Northeast Commission is dedicated to increasing the standard of living for citizens in its 16-county region through tourism, industrial, and business development. Representing: Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, and Washington.

Hub & Spoke Initiative Gaining Momentum

Many more visitors are expected to visit the towns of Northeastern North Carolina as a result of a "Hub & Spoke" marketing initiative sponsored by the North Carolina's Northeast Commission.

Local tourism officials were selected by the Commission to represent the 16-county region at recent tourism market places. Russ Haddad and Lynn Lewis represented the region at the 2008 American Bus Association Marketplace, a six-day international event beginning February 2nd at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. During the event, they marketed the region to many companies using regional marketing materials and prepared bus trip itineraries.

In January, Tanya Young and Sara Catherine Adams spoke with 24 motorcoach operators present at the NC Motorcoach Association Annual Meeting and marketed the benefits of "Hub & Spoke" traveling within North Carolina's Northeast Region. "Most of the tour buses are passing through our area on the way to the Outer Banks, so the operators were grateful to learn about the historical locations we have along the route. The tour operators like the 'Hub & Spoke' idea because it helps them organize their tour groups around a geographical area or a specific theme," said Tanya.

The sample motorcoach itineraries were prepared by NET, the Northeast Tourism group led by Nancy Nicholls,

Tourism Development Authority Director for Chowan County. NET prepared the itineraries during a one-day retreat at Hope Plantation in Windsor. Sample itineraries begin at one of the larger towns in the region where 50 people can stay together in hotels and eat together at restaurants, then provide options for visiting two to three smaller towns within an hour drive of each hub. "This 'Hub & Spoke' concept allows small towns to reap the benefits brought by a group of 50 travelers spending the day in the small town. These groups will have the opportunity to visit the local attractions, spend money in the local shops, and what's even better, once they visit the small town, they are more likely to visit again and again," said Nicholls.

Trade Shows attended:

- **NC Motorcoach Association Trade Show** in Asheville—Tanya Young, Roanoke Island Festival Park, and Sara Catherine Adams, Martin County
- **American Bus Association Marketplace** in Virginia Beach—Russ Haddad, Elizabeth City, and Lynn Lewis, City of Washington
- **Travel South** in Biloxi, MS—Penny Leary-Smith, Dismal Swamp Canal Visitor Center and Diane Sawyer, Currituck County



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THE NORTHEAST VISION

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Message from the President

2008 brings the promise of a new year with new beginnings for economic development in North Carolina's Northeast. Our Hub and Spoke initiative is well underway giving us the ability to attract motor coach tourists and help our small towns benefit from the thousands of tourists who pass through our region each year.

Biotechnology continues to bring the expectation of higher paying jobs and an additional outlet for farming production. Our recent meetings with biotechnology stakeholders brings together the best resources in the region for science, business, and economic development.

With 15,000 people commuting to jobs in Southeast Virginia, we

recognize the economic potential of bringing some of these workers back home to jobs in Northeastern North Carolina, so we are working on building relationships in Virginia with the intent of attracting these businesses to expand into our region.

During 2008 we saw expansions of existing businesses such as a new commercial laundry, hotels, aviation repair business, and others as we continue to market the region and promote the major business clusters of automotive, aviation, biotechnology, human infrastructure, inner banks development, marine, and tourism.

Our attendance at recent trade shows in ma-

rine, aviation, and automotive are increasing interest from businesses. We look forward to a strong economic year as we saw strong client activity in 2007, which we expect to continue throughout 2008.

To all of our partners and stakeholders, we appreciate your work as we collaborate again and move forward into a new year as we diversify the economy and increase the capacity for new jobs.

- Vann Rogerson,
President/CEO



NET members held a retreat at Hope Plantation in January to prepare for motor coach trade shows

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Recent Press Releases:

- **Hub & Spoke** - itineraries prepared to attract motor coach group tours and benefit small towns—January 2008
- **Biotechnology** - regional meeting brings scientists and economic developers together—January 2008
- **Moneysworth** - commercial laundry opens in Elizabeth City—December 2007
- **TCOM** - aviation business expands in Elizabeth City—December 2007

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TCOM Announces Aviation Business Expansion in Pasquotank County



Representative Bill Owens is shown here welcoming TCOM's new expansion at the blimp hangar in Pasquotank

County. TCOM L.P., a supplier of airships and lighter-than-air vehicles is expanding its facility, creating

101 high-paying jobs and investing \$3 million over the next three years. The company will produce unmanned, tethered balloons, known as "aerostats," at its Elizabeth City plant as part of an Army contract. TCOM also plans to develop and test an "aerostat" for an emergency warning communications system for use during natural disasters.

Wayne Harris of the Albemarle Economic Development Commission coordinated the event.

The 16 counties of North Carolina's Northeast Region:

- Beaufort
- Bertie
- Camden
- Chowan
- Currity
- Dare
- Gates
- Halifax
- Hertford
- Hyde
- Martin
- Northampton
- Pasquotank
- Perquimans
- Tyrrell
- Washington

"Eggs"traordinary Donation

Leave it to "The Good Egg" people to come up with a great way to celebrate Easter. Rose Acre Farms in Hyde County



donated 9,000 dozen eggs to the Albemarle Food Bank in time for distribution to local food pantries. Thanks, Rose Acre!

New Commission Board Members Sworn In



Vickie Miller from the Chowan County Clerk of Court office was on hand at the January Commission Board meeting to swear in the newest board members. Eddie Lynch and Tom Richter began their terms in October 2007, and Larry Johnson and Phil Hux joined

the board in January 2008. All four members were sworn in during the meeting. "We welcome the new board members and look forward to working with them," says Gene Rogers, Chairman.



Committee of 1000 Wants to Partner With Virginia Companies



Eddie Lynch, Corporate Public Affairs Manager for Embarq, and Chair of North Carolina's Northeast Committee of 1000 is leading the way toward better business to business relationships across state lines. "There are a lot of companies in Virginia that could easily ex-

pand into our region. Our Committee of 1000 members are knowledgeable of the latest developments in North Carolina's Northeast Region, so by making contacts and letting those businesses see first hand that expanding an existing business or opening a new business in Northeastern North Carolina is worthwhile, our efforts can pay off immediately," said Lynch.

Lynch is supporting the commission with plans for a joint event in April with the Northeast Committee of 1000 and the chambers and businesses of southeastern Virginia. Members will exchange information with their Virginia contacts and pro-

vide information about our current and developing economic clusters. This event provides an opportunity for North Carolina and Virginia business leaders to explore opportunities that are beneficial to all.

Ray White, Vice President of Marketing for North Carolina's Northeast Commission is committed to marketing the northeast region to businesses in southeast Virginia. "Every week I receive calls from interested businesses currently in Virginia. With 15,000 commuters leaving our area to work in Virginia, we have an untapped resource for filling jobs in North Carolina's Northeast Region."

Moneysworth Opens Commercial Laundry in Elizabeth City

The area's first commercial laundry facility plans to open a new \$2 million facility in the Pasquotank Commerce Park to provide linen service for the vacation market and to support local businesses in need of clean linens.

John Keenan, owner, says they chose to locate in the Pasquotank Commerce Park because it provided a location that met all their needs for utilities, gas, sewer, space, transportation, and available work force.



Larry Johnson Appointed to Commission Board

After 26 years, Larry Johnson, Manager of Marketing and Member Services, retired from Albemarle EMC in Hertford, NC. While working for the EMC, Larry was active in numerous Chamber of Commerce organizations in the region. He has been active in economic development and served as Secretary of the North Carolina's Northeast Committee of 1000. Larry was also active in the NEED group while employed with Albemarle EMC.

Larry completed the Rural Center's course for North Carolina Rural Economic Development Institute and is active in their REDO group. Currently, he is serving as a

Board Member on the Albemarle Economic Development Commission for the Counties of Camden & Pasquotank and the City of Elizabeth City. Recently a new economic group formed by the Camden County Commissioners appointed Larry to serve on the Camden Committee. He is also a member of the Northeastern Home Builders Association. Larry is a graduate of Hargrave Military Academy and Campbell University.

Larry has an Architectural Drafting & Design business based in South Mills. Presently, he is assisting the Newbold-White House with a project that is on the drawing board. He is married to

a Presbyterian Minister, Georgianna Brabban Johnson who works with the Tidewater Pastoral Counseling Center in Norfolk. They have three grown children and seven grandchildren. His hobbies include touring new subdivisions to check out new designs and playing golf when he can work it in. Larry said, "I enjoy being involved in the local and regional economic development. I have seen many positive changes in the area since moving here from Virginia, and I look forward to working with fellow commissioner and staff in moving the Northeast forward for new and better things in the future."



Larry Johnson joined the North Carolina's Northeast Commission Board in January 2008

"Through collaborations with businesses, universities, and economic development, we are moving forward into a new economy in Northeastern North Carolina."

- Vann Rogerson, President/CEO

New Board Member Grady "Phil" Hux

A native of Roanoke Rapids, Phil Hux is currently the President of First Carolina Agency, formerly known as Coastal Benefits Group. Phil started the insurance and benefits company with a partner thirteen years ago. Prior to that, he ran a construction contracting business after graduating from Barton College in Wilson.

Phil serves as Chair of the Economic Development

Commission in Halifax County and is on the board of Halifax Horizon, a non-profit organization for economic development. He believes that development in North Carolina's Northeast is ready to take off.

"With I-95 passing through the area and with improvements to other roads in the region, we have the infrastructure to continue building the region. Halifax

County's NC CAR, new airport, and a new 800-acre industrial site will bring opportunities for economic development, and our successes will bleed into the entire region" Hux states.

Phil and his wife Jean live in Roanoke Rapids where she works as a first grade school teacher. They have three children and three grandchildren.



Phil Hux is one of the newest appointees to the North Carolina's Northeast Commission Board.

Biotech Initiative Establishes NC-NAAB

NC-NAAB, or North Carolina's Northeast Alliance for Ag Biotech is working to establish North Carolina's Northeast Region as a well-known location for crops, bio fuels, and bio mass. NC-NAAB is a group of economic developers, researchers, educators, and businesses who work collaboratively to align biotech resources in the region and plan future businesses and expansions. Training

programs and university research are already in place, and we have fertile land and skilled farmers in the region. One such resource is the Vernon James Center in Washington County which provides expertise in applied research as well as lab space and technical resources.

The NC Biotechnology Center in RTP and its Eastern Office in Greenville directed by

John Chaffee are important links with this initiative. "Great ideas can move forward with teamwork and strong leadership," stated Chaffee at a recent meeting.

Through this collaboration, NC's Northeast Commission intends to maintain our agricultural resources in the region while expanding the regional economy with our current resources as a strong base.



David Peoples, Vann Rogerson, Joe Landino discussing biotechnology with NC-NAAB