

## First Things First

▶ LEE SCHOOLS GET GOOD MARKS IN RECENT REPORT. Eleven of 14 Lee County Schools made “expected” or “high” growth in this year’s ABCs report by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. The 78.5 percent of local schools meeting state accountability standards is higher than the 71.8 statewide average. Detailed results are available on the Web at [abcs.ncpublicschools.org](http://abcs.ncpublicschools.org).

▶ “2.0 | THE NEXT VERSION OF INDUSTRY” IS RELEASED. Focusing on revolutionary changes in manufacturing, The Sanford Herald’s

## 2.0

the next version of industry

Industrial Edition was published Sept. 27. The annual showcase features stories about outstanding

area companies and an overview of industry in Lee and surrounding counties. Copies are available from Lee County Economic Development.

▶ AIRPORT CAPACITY TO EXPAND. The Sanford-Lee County Regional Airport Authority recently approved construction of 10 new T-hangars, individual spaces in a long building used to house small planes. Bids for construction will be accepted soon.

### Inside this issue

2 Jobs require a wider range of skills than before, says Edith Edmond, and locals have what’s needed.

3 Ray Epley, a legendary figure at Central Carolina Community College, is set to retire in November.

# 100 Economic Indicators

## Lee Works

**I**N THE CALCULUS of economic development, the most important variable is the local workforce.

Clearly, it’s not the only factor companies consider when deciding where to operate; location, costs and incentives also come into play. But just about every corporate executive and industry consultant cites “workforce” as the prime concern.

Want proof?

When executives were asked in a 2006 “Site Selection” magazine survey what specific factors were most important in choosing a site, the clear number-one response was “labor costs,” and six of the top 20 were all, in some way, related directly to the workforce.

### What Does “Workforce” Mean?

When companies talk about the local workforce, they’re thinking about a collection of related concerns.

It all begins with how many people within commuting distance have the specific skills needed to manufacture some particular product or conduct a particular

style of business. If enough workers are available, the next question is how productive those people can be, based on their collective work experience and even less-tangible things, like local customs and expectations.

Finally, it boils down to whether workers have the education and flexibility to be trained for new jobs — and who’s available to do the training. After all, business is dynamic. And as business changes, so do the jobs all employees need to perform.

### Maintaining Our Edge

Lee County has attracted so much business because of its workforce and the

exceptional training provided by Central Carolina Community College and others. But maintaining that edge won’t be easy with other communities competing hard for their own economic future.

Success will require population growth, a strong work ethic, quality training and a quality education for all, so everyone can adapt and learn those new jobs.



Photo courtesy of The Sanford Herald.



## EDITH EDMOND

### Workforce Priorities

We are fortunate to have a strong manufacturing sector — thanks to the collaborative work of a visionary economic developer, a supportive board and elected officials who understand their critical roles of sustaining existing businesses and recruiting new ones to the area.

When employers consider our area for a new site or expansion, one primary concern is the availability of qualified workers. Jobs are growing fastest in low-skill and high-skill occupations. There are not enough workers to fill the new high-skill, high-wage jobs, but workers leaving traditional manufacturing jobs often lack the skills needed to fill these high-skill jobs. Without extensive retraining, they will be left to compete only for low-wage jobs.

To compete successfully in the global marketplace, we must create and sustain a world-class workforce. That means investing in our workforce as we invest in our other infrastructure.

Employers must retrain current employees to develop and retain qualified workers. Training programs, incentives and educational options must be available in order to make retraining affordable for both workers and employers, reduce the dropout rate, encourage college students to complete training, and produce more science, mathematics, engineering and other technical workers. We must retrain dislocated workers to fill those high-skilled, high-wage jobs being created and encourage retiring baby boomers to remain in the workforce longer by offering job sharing and other innovative ways to entice them.

Our solutions will ensure continued economic growth, higher educational attainment, higher-paying jobs and a better quality of life in Lee County.

*Edith Edmond is manager of the North Carolina Employment Security Commission office in Sanford.*

## Lucas: Upscale chains may not be sailing into Sanford right away

Based on traditional criteria, it's unlikely that upscale retail chains will be sailing into Sanford any time soon, but local leaders can make that day come sooner by working together to build a strong business climate.

Jay Lucas' perspective was outlined to about 120 Committee of 100 members and guests during the group's quarterly luncheon on Oct. 12.

The president of the Office and Investment Division of Harry B. Lucas Companies in Carrollton, Texas, explained how chains like Target and Harris Teeter decide where to place new stores. It's a cold, hard calculation based on location, timing and demographics, he said, with a special emphasis on compatible local lifestyles.

Some points from his presentation:

- ▶ Chains don't look only at current data, but demographic and other forecasts for five to 10 years into the future.
- ▶ When searching for new locations, all businesses want a good quality of life, a strong labor pool, accessible transportation, quality health care, good schools, low crime rates and a clear community spirit.
- ▶ Upscale retail, in particular, locates at sites where they enjoy easy access, high vis-



John Daniel (left) meets with Jay Lucas before the Committee of 100 meeting.

ibility, minimal competition, low operating costs and enough people with money to spend and needs to fulfill.

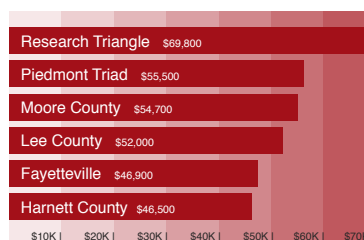
▶ To attract upscale retail in Sanford, officials must find common values, foster a friendly business climate, have local groups communicate and cooperate on economic development projects, and raise the standard of life for everyone.

### Mark Your Calendars Now

"The Health of Lee County," an annual look at how our community stacks up against others in the region, has been set for December 5. It's a presentation you won't want to miss.

### THE REGION AT A GLANCE

**RETAIL BUYING POWER.** It's just one of many factors, of course, but median family income is important to upscale retail chains looking for new markets, because it suggests whether local families can support upscale businesses. Lee County's estimated median family income in 2005 was \$52,000. How does that figure stack up with other areas of our state? *Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.*



## Economic Indicators

*Economic Indicators* is a quarterly newsletter of the Lee County Committee of 100, an organization of business men and women 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](mailto:info@lcedc.com) (e-mail). News and letters for *Economic Indicators* may be sent to the editor at [news@lcedc.com](mailto:news@lcedc.com).

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# CCCC President Garrett to retire

Matt Garrett, who has led Central Carolina Community College as president for the last three years, has announced his retirement, effective next fall.

When he steps down on Sept. 1, the former psychology and sociology instructor will have served 21 years at CCCC and three decades in the state community college system.

Before being named president, Garrett served as dean of students and executive vice president/chief academic officer of the college with campuses and centers throughout Lee, Chatham and Harnett counties.

Bobby Powell, chairman of the college board of trustees, told The Sanford Herald that Garrett's accomplishments during his presidency have not been surpassed anywhere in the state. "He leads by example," Powell said, "That's one of the greatest measures of a leader."

## Central Carolina Hospital plans new projects

Central Carolina Hospital has announced it is dedicating approximately \$6 million for capital equipment projects.

Margaret Minuth, the hospital's director of marketing, says that amount includes new technologies, surgical equipment and construction.

Among the specific projects are renovations to the second-floor patient care rooms, pharmacy renovation, emergency triage and registration-area renovation.

Also, digital mammography and a patient tracking system for the emergency department designed to streamline the patient care process and

### SANFORD BYPASS EXPANDS THIS YEAR

Local traffic patterns will change soon, when two new segments of the Sanford Bypass welcome drivers. Joining the existing one between Colon Road and Kelly Drive will be new segments from U.S. 1 to Colon Road, scheduled to open around Dec. 31, and from Kelly Drive to N.C. 42 near Coty, which should be open about Nov. 16. When that happens, drivers will be able to avoid crowded Horner Boulevard while traveling between U.S. 1 and N.C. 42.

Construction on the final two segments isn't all that far off. Work on the southernmost portion, linking N.C. Highways 42 and 87, should begin in June 2009, followed by the northernmost portion, linking U.S. Highways 421 and 1, in April 2010. Unless unexpected construction issues arise, the entire Sanford Bypass will open some time in late 2012 or early 2013.

help reduce wait times.

Central Carolina Hospital is operated by Tenet Healthcare Corp. to meet a broad range of needs in the community.

According to the hospital Web site, the organization employs a medical staff approaching 100 in a wide range of specialties.

Last spring, Central Carolina Hospital made news when it was awarded a three-year term of accreditation in mammography by the American College of Radiology, a professional organization which awards certification to facilities achieving high standards of practice, as demonstrated during an evaluation by board-certified physicians and medical experts in the field.

## Ray Epley retires after 40 years with CCCC

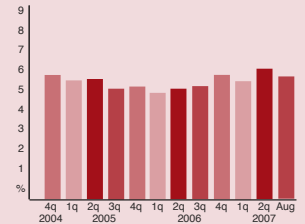
Industrial relations officer Ray Epley, an essential player in local manufacturing for four decades, has retired from his post at Central Carolina Community College.

When the 63-year-old first arrived at the college, Sanford had just three major industries, but now boasts far more. Until his official retirement on Nov. 1, Epley was responsible for providing industrial training for companies producing everything from metal parts to high-tech pharmaceuticals.

"It's agonizing to leave something you've been a part of for 40 years," Epley said, "but it's time to just say goodbye."

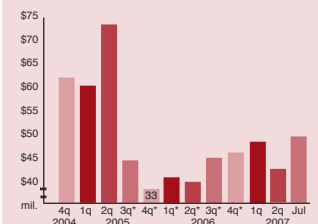
## Economic Indicators

### unemployment



Lee County unemployment dropped to 5.7 percent in August, a 0.4 percent change from the month before. The labor force estimate stands at 26,777. The state's seasonally-unadjusted rate also fell — to 4.5 percent from this year's high of 5.2 in July. Data listed from the last month of each quarter.

### retail or taxable sales



Taxable sales for Lee County was estimated at \$49.71 million in July, the most recent report, compared with \$53.20 million for the same month last year. For Sanford: \$35.16 million. Figures reported from last month of each quarter. \*Due to changes in the state reporting methods, figures through the second quarter of 2005 report gross retail sales, while later figures are for taxable sales.

### building permits



Lee County issued an estimated 20 building permits for new residential construction in September, after issuing 54 for the months of July and August combined. Figures show total permits issued over a two-month period from Lee County and do not include apartment or commercial construction.

### area industrial closings

None reported.

**November 2007**

**6 Downtown Sanford Inc. Board.** 8 a.m. Lee County EDC Office, 226 Carthage Street, Sanford. Contact David Montgomery, 919.775.8332 or downtown@sanfordnc.net.

**7 RTRP Economic Developers Association.** 10 a.m. 1000 Trade Drive, RDU International Airport. Contact Jane Haber, 919.774.8439 or info@lcedc.com.

**8 BACKSTAGE LEE '07.** The annual "insiders" tour of Lee County for real estate professionals includes stops at CCCC, J. Glenn Edwards Elementary, Broadway, Caterpillar and the famed Temple Theatre. 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Contact Jane Haber, 919.774.8439 or info@lcedc.com.

**8 Central Carolina Society for Human Resource Management.** Monthly meeting focuses on health and wellness issues. 11:30 a.m. Chef Paul's Café, 610 E. Main Street, Sanford. Contact Jane Haber, 919.774.8439 or info@lcedc.com.

**21 Lee Co. Economic Development Corp.** noon. Lee County EDC Office, 226 Carthage Street, Sanford. Contact Jane Haber, 919.774.8439 or info@lcedc.com.

**December 2007**

**5 HEALTH OF LEE 2007.** The annual luncheon provides a frank assessment of Lee County's economic and social progress over the last year. noon. Chef Paul's Café & Catering, Sanford. Contact Jane Haber, 919.774.8439 or info@lcedc.com.

**13 Central Carolina Society for Human Resource Management.** 11:30 a.m. Chef Paul's Café, 610 E. Main Street, Sanford. Contact Jane Haber, 919.774.8439 or info@lcedc.com.

**Upcoming CCCC Seminars**

- ▶ **Dealing With Difficult People.** Thursday, Nov. 8, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., \$7.
- ▶ **Creative Marketing for Your Small Business.** Tuesday, Dec. 4, 6:30 to 9 p.m.
- ▶ **For information,** contact Betty Pace at 919.774.6442 or bpace@cccc.edu.

**FOCUS on Industrial Sites**

Wide open space awaits in the former Redman Building, a 125,400-square-foot insulated metal structure with out buildings on 45.96 acres near the U.S. 421 Bypass now under construction. For other available sites in Lee County, visit [www.lcedc.com](http://www.lcedc.com), click on "Buildings & Sites," and select either buildings or sites.

# Economic Indicators

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