

From the desk of Sen. Debbie Clary

With 2011 reaching an end, we celebrate a historical session in the North Carolina General Assembly. The House and Senate have been under Republican leadership for the first time since Reconstruction. In addition, we have had a successful year in recruiting business, and industry to Cleveland and Rutherford Counties.

Our elected officials across both counties continue to work hard with the Economic Development teams. Bringing new industry and jobs to the region has been everyone's top priority. It has certainly been our greatest challenge in this economy.

This year brought over 1,100 new jobs to our district in addition to the expansion of several facilities bringing almost 1,700 new positions. Included in this number is the social networking giant, Facebook, who opened their data center doors in Rutherford County and has announced expansion plans. We are also proud to have the Disney data center in Cleveland County.

The future looks promising with the commitment of these industries endeavoring to add more jobs to the area. For example, Ameridial, Inc., one of the nation's leading contact centers, has opened a new 48-seat facility in Rutherford County. It will initially be staffed with 50 new employees who will handle inbound customer service calls for a major health insurance company. This company anticipates an expansion of 300 jobs if we are able to assist with grants to help upgrade their building.

Including expansions, these businesses bring a financial commitment to our area exceeding \$3 billion. According to Michael Christaw, with the Cleveland County Chamber, just in Cleveland County alone during 2011 we've experienced

12 announcements with over \$264 million dollars in new capital investments. It was reported by the Cleveland County Chamber that nine of those announcements have come from expansions of existing manufacturers, which accounts for more than 85% of the jobs created.

We have worked hard at the General Assembly to make North Carolina a business-friendly environment and will continue this effort in order to keep the industries productive and successful. We are grateful for the confidence they have shown in our state.

Below is a listing of new business and industry that has located in our district in the last ten months. There is a great momentum over the past few months that we hope continues. There are several major projects in the works that may be announced in the next couple of months.

Cleveland County has welcomed several new businesses during 2011. While some of the job numbers are small the investment and addition to the county tax base has been tremendous.

- Birdseye Renewable Energy with an investment of \$3,200,000.

- Walt Disney Data Center created 15 new jobs with a \$5,000,000 investment.

- Bay Valley Foods created 75 new jobs with an \$8,000,000 investment; and

- Wipro/Infocrossing Data Center added 17 new jobs with an \$18,000,000 investment.

Rutherford County has seen its fair share of business activity with the following companies creating job opportunities over the past few months.

- SFI Holding, LLC Supports 50 New Jobs in Forest City, NC

- Diamondback Tactical created 35 new jobs in Rutherford County with a commitment to add more



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than 150 jobs with a small equipment grant that is under consideration.

- Horsehead Corporation Comes to Rutherford County with 250 New Jobs and an Investment of \$360 million

- Facebook Opens the Doors of Data Center in Forest City with 40 Full-Time Positions

- Facebook Announces an Expansion to Rutherford County Facility

- Ameridial Opened a new Call Center Creating 50 New Positions with an anticipated future expansion of 300 jobs, pending a Rural Center grant

- Gourmet Group, LLC will create 136 jobs in Rutherford County with an Investment of over \$2.3 million within the next 3 years!

While we are always working to bring more business to our area, I think this is success we can be proud of. Thank you to everyone that has worked on the Economic Development Team for helping to bring new jobs to our District.



Have you seen this fire hydrant?

Contributed photo Chase and Cheyanne Stirewalt of Grover painted this hydrant in memory of their grandfather "Poppy" who passed away in October 2010 of Pancreatic cancer.

Westmoreland top in pole to fill Clary's seat

Longtime Republican leader Wes Westmoreland won a straw poll of the Cleveland County GOP executive committee members Dec. 21 and is the likely choice to succeed Senator Debbie Clary as District 46 representative in Cleveland and Rutherford Counties next year.

By the straw vote, Westmoreland emerges the front runner among two others - former Shelby Mayor Ted Alexander and former state senator and realtor Dennis Davis.

GOP officials named state Rep. Tim Moore, R-Cleveland, as the Cleveland County delegate and Rutherford County named Julius Owens to the district committee meeting in early January. Votes will be weighted by population and Cleveland will have the majority vote.

After next year Senate District 46 will be comprised of Cleveland and Burke Counties. Burke County's Warren Daniel, a Morganton attorney, plans to run for reelection in his new district next year. Westmoreland, owner of Westmoreland Printers of Shelby, says he'd serve the remainder of Senator Clary's term, then step aside and support Daniels in the 2012 elections.

Clary is ending a combined 17 years in the state House and Senate Dec. 31. She plans to work in economic development.

KMMS: Honor Rolls

FROM 2B

Wesley, Briasia White, Isiaha Whitener, Christopher Williams, Aniaya Wilson, Kelsi Withers, Skylar Woodard and Chelsea Wray.

8th Grade - Matthew Absher, Exavier Adams, Trevor Alexander, Meredith Baker, Lilly Baldwin, Brittany Blakley, Cameron Booker, Krystin Bowen, Kenneth Bridges, Sara Carringer, Ashley Cartwright, Jonathan Chapman, Jesse Childers, Payton Clark, Riley Coleman, Alexandra Cook, Michael Cooke, Mary Crepps, Laura Culp, Victoria Daman, Geoffrey Dawkins, Lauren Dellinger, Christopher Deweese, Brandon Dudziak, Brittany Duncan, Jasmine Dye, Joseph Dyer, Autumn Ellis, Andrew Estridge, Ashley Falls, Jensen Fleisher, Austin Fleming, Anthony Fuzie, David Gamble, Taylor Gilbert, Amber Gipson, Carly Hammett, Gregory Hawkins, Nicholas Hayes, Carley Head, Ambar Herrera, Demetrius Hill, Tatiyana Hopper, Mishayla Hopper, Daisie Hullender, Nastajah Hutchens, Madison Ingle, Autumn James, Samaya Jarrett, Cora Jennings, Justyce Jones, Andy Khounmeuang, Alypon Khounphaphon, Ethan King, Adam Kiser, Joseph Korch, William Kornegay, Courtney Lanier, Vailmanie Latsavong, Courtney Ledford, Jarrett Ledford, Peyton Lemons, Brenner Martin, Sara Mayes, Jhani McClain, Jair McCluney, Hannah McComas, Hunter McPherson, Kayla Murphy, Carmen Owens, Austin Ownbey, Sahira Patterson, Camryn Pearson, Shaniya Portee, Alyssa Proctor, Justin Queen, Autumn Reese, Christopher Robbins, Mariah Roberts, Cornelius

Roseboro, Kayla Savage, Johana Sellers, Timothy Setzer, Amber Sewell, Alexis Short, Tara Sikes, Nathan Sipes, Carl Skidmore, Aaron Smith, Victoria Spencer, Rachel Stewart, Chase Stirewalt, Mikayla Stuart, Sterling Taylor, Courtney Teague, Samantha Thompson, Krisleigh Thompson, Randall Trahan, Esabella Virapanya, Taylor Wade, Kelsey Ward, Annette Waters, Anna Waters, Dasia Webber, Robin Williams, Taylor Williams, Lori Williamson, Savannah Wilson, Natalie Winfield, Jesse Wooten, Keilee Wright and Jacob Wright.

Tykes at Children First bring Christmas to others



photo by LIB STEWART

Children at Children First Day Care presented a big shopping cart full of staple food items and wrapped gifts, above, to Iris Frady (left), Director of the Kings Mountain Crisis Ministry, to be given to needy families at Christmas. Rene Odums, Children First Director, and Brittany Odums, assistant, said the children wanted to wish other children a Merry Christmas. "We like to help out in the community. It's a blessing," said Rene Odums. From left, Rene Odums, Kaitlyn Odums, Brittany Odums, McKenzie Byers, Tom Tom Camp, Jamarie Hill and Kateya Smith.

During the month of December

enjoy

Peppermint Decadence

Downtown Kings Mountain is going to be 'tasty' at these participating businesses:

Bellus Tu Spa, 238 Cherokee Street Tavern, Suzy B's, Frady's Florist, J. Oliver's Coffee Shop, 1 Life Nutrition, The Amos Agency, Fresh Hair Concepts, ScissorSmith & Co. Salon, Battleground Steakhouse

Ask these participating businesses about THEIR Peppermint Decadence items.