



RALEIGH DOWNTOWNER

MAGAZINE

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 4

DINING, ENTERTAINMENT, ARTS & CULTURE, EVENTS, MUSIC, WINE, AND MORE

FREE

It's a Whole New World!

The new Nature Research Center opens at the NC Museum of Natural Sciences



SECU Daily Planet map designers Todd and Bill Ulrich (far left and right) with Director of Museum Exhibits Roy Campbell, NRC Director Meg Lowman and Deputy Director of Operations Alvin Braswell



The new **NATURE RESEARCH CTR** at the NC Science Museum is globalicious!



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COVER PHOTO BY NANCY THOMAS



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 Primp Salon
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HISTORIC DISTRICT

Legislative Building cafe
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 NC Museum of History
 NC Dept. of Labor
 NC Dept. of Agriculture

FIVE POINTS/HAYES BARTON

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 Tir na nOg Irish Pub
 Big Ed's (sidewalk)
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 Contemporary Art Museum

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 Whole Foods
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IT'S A WHOLE NEW WORLD!

BY CRASH GREGG | PHOTOS BY THOMAS M. WAY, NANCY THOMAS & CRASH GREGG
WITH NCMNS EXCERPTS COURTESY OF DAVID KROLL, JON PISHNEY AND CARLA BURGESS

With all the tree-lined streets and oak forests that pervade the suburbs and downtown, it's easy to see why Raleigh has always been known as the City of Oaks. The oak leaf image has always considered one of the icons for our city but in 1991, local artist David Benson designed and installed a 1250-pound copper and steel acorn sculpture in Moore Square. It quickly rose to fame and soon became known as one of, if not *the*, icon for Raleigh. Each year the acorn is dropped during Artsposure's popular First Night Raleigh New Years Eve celebration, and has made several national—and even international—lists of wacky things dropped on New Years.

Other iconic images of Raleigh might include the newly opened Fayetteville Street, with its restaurants and bars galore, outdoor events every month of the year and wide sidewalks for busy pedestrian traffic. Then there's the impressive Convention Center, host for an abundance of conventions, meetings, events, and gatherings each year, bringing hundreds of thousands of people into downtown Raleigh.

Raleigh's newest icon?

But if you've driven past the corner of Jones and Salisbury Streets in the last few months, you can't help but notice what might end up literally being the biggest icon for Raleigh. The mammoth 70-foot silver globe is the crowning jewel of the



The new Nature Research Center (NRC) wing of the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences opens with rock star scientists, the world's largest globe, a grand gala & 24-hour grand opening, and three floors of world-class exhibits

newly-completed 80,000 square foot, \$56 million wing of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, the Nature Research Center (NRC). The Museum was originally built over 130 years ago and has been a flagship natural science museum ever since, the largest of its kind in the southeast United States with over 700,000 visitors per year.

After taking more than ten years to plan and build, the NRC was completed in mid-April with over 70,000 people attending the 24-hour grand opening on Friday, April 20. The NRC is unlike anything else in the country and will draw science fans from all over NC, the east coast, the US, and perhaps even the world. But it will be the globe that people talk about more than anything else. Its proper name is the SECU Daily Planet, named for the State Employees Credit Union Foundation, who graciously funded the construction of the \$4 million globe. At just over 70 feet in diameter, the Daily Planet might be the world's largest globe as there's no other listing for a solid-walled globe of this size in the Guinness Book of World's Records.

The only caveat to the record-breaking SECU Daily Planet is that it's not quite a full globe. The inside houses a three-story theater with six cameras projecting a seamless video image onto an immersive 45-foot-square HD screen of nearly 30 million pixels. A section of the back opens out into the building to allow visitors to enter and view the screen from within the NRC. There's seating for 50 on the bottom floor with room for dozens more along the second and third floor balconies. At regular intervals during the day, short science movies are shown and scientists conduct presentations to NRC visitors, discussing scientific research performed in the Center itself and around the world and fielding questions from viewers.

To run the new theater, NRC Director, Dr. Margaret "Meg" Lowman has chosen science comedian Brian Malow to curate the SECU Daily Planet. Not just a fungi (get it?), Brian hails from San Francisco where he used his seriously nerdy comedic talent to help pique public interest in science through stand-up comedy, producing science videos for TIME magazine's website and content for StarTalk radio. Brian will lead programming and presentations in the Planet, as well as science book author events and science cafés. Brian has visions for a science talk show and other interactive audio and video features. Dr. Lowman believes his unique approach to science will draw visitors, saying, "We've hired some scientist rock stars at the NRC and Brian is totally over the top to complete our team. His sense of humor, science expertise and passion for scientific communication will inspire millions of visitors, both virtual and real." Visit www.sciencecomedian.com to learn more about Brian and www.bitly.com/sciencecomedy to watch some of his scientific stand-up.



So that gives you some information about what's on the inside of the Daily Planet. Now let's go back outside. The original plan for the globe was for it to reside completely within the building on a much smaller scale. According to Betsy Bennett, Museum Director, the importance of the globe was increasingly emphasized and, accordingly so was its physical size. As it grew, it became apparent that this structure would become a grand focal point of the NRC, so the Museum committee decided to build it outside on an impressive scale.

Various ideas on how to create the maps on the exterior of the globe had been discussed over the past year and included painting, using LEDs or LCDs, and video projection. Most of the methods, >>>

however, were either too difficult, too expensive, couldn't be seen during the day, or wouldn't last very long in the hot NC sun. Director of Museum Exhibits Roy Campbell had been researching ideas and came across Worldfx.net, a Cincinnati-based company that specializes in both globes and maps. He heard about brothers Todd and Bill Ulrich through word of mouth (apparently the scientific map/globe community is a small, close-knit one) and contacted them to discuss ideas for the project. Roy liked one of their map application styles, which revolves around using high resolution graphics printed on heavy, commercial-grade self-adhesive vinyl.

Worldfx was hired and the brothers began to work on the project. The data used for the map image is a 40-year continuum of satellite-monitored photos of the earth. This long time span was needed to account for varied cloud coverage, storms and other environmental conditions that make it difficult to view much of the earth's surface from space.

"The challenge back then—and still today—is how to stitch together multiple space-view photos that have different moisture content, cloud coverage, seasons, etc. and combining them into a cohesive whole image while simulating natural color," Todd Ulrich tells us. "It's art and heavy-duty science combined."

Using a specialized software package that created a huge 60-gigabyte image compiled from the satellite images, Todd and Bill printed 56 gores (specialized strips used in globe manufacturing), comprised of 215 custom-made pressure-sensitive vinyl panels that would fit onto each aluminum panel of the Daily Planet.



3,600 LCD panels comprise the "Patterns of Nature" display

Stick it to me

Over the course of roughly four weeks, the Ulrich brothers painstakingly applied the vinyl graphics one panel at a time, making sure that each was aligned and trimmed perfectly. The scale is an amazing 9.4 miles per inch, or 200 feet per pixel. This means visitors can bring binoculars and zoom in on details never before seen on a map, including large local lakes, roads and many



islands that have never been represented on any other globe in the world.

Luckily for Raleigh residents, it seems like this educational asset will be around for a long time. "We chose top-of-the-line materials so the imagery will last as long as possible in the sun," Todd explains. "We've been taking surface temperatures lately and even though it's not even summer yet, the panels get very hot in direct sunlight, upwards to 140-150 degrees. The vinyl we adhere to the top panels sitting in the sun stretch and react differently than those we apply at the bottom in the shade. There are a lot of variables that make it challenging to get everything lined up. We had to cool off the hot panels with a special liquid before we applied the strips to make sure they fit the way they should. We did a lot of research on ink sets for ink longevity and fade resistance and chose all 3M materials. We're hoping to get 7, 8 or 10 years out of this display. We pushed the graphics into the realm of art by super-saturating the colors so they really stand out from a distance."

Asked what has been the hardest part of the process, Bill admits applying the maps was no easy task. "Temperature changes throughout the day affect the vinyl and the angle at which the panel is being installed can sometimes be complicated. The panels at the very top weren't easy nor were the ones along the edge where the globe is attached to the building. It was definitely a learning curve every day we were out there. We finished at the top of the world, putting the Polar regions on last."

Raleigh's newest fans

"We've really enjoyed being in Raleigh these past few weeks," both brothers say. In fact, Bill told us he wouldn't mind moving here if not for all his family back in Cincinnati. "Everyone has been really friendly and we've definitely had the opportunity to meet a LOT of people since we've been here." Todd adds, "The private Grand Opening Gala on the April 13th and the public Grand Opening on the 20th were both incredible. It was nice

to see everyone involved in the process enjoying the results of all their hard work. The Museum has some very dedicated staff and it really showed when it all came together. We're very proud to be part of this once-in-a-lifetime project."

On a note of trivia, both brothers happen to share the same birthday (though born a few years apart) and celebrated their birthdays on April 10th while working on the globe. Staff from the Downtowner and Nancy Thomas Photography stopped by to wish them a happy birthday with lunch on-site and special "Top of the World" cupcakes.

Inside the NRC

Once you've made it past the globe, visitors will discover that the inside of the NRC is just as impressive as the Daily Planet. Though perhaps not as grandiose as the giant globe, there are some seriously cool elements and interactive exhibits throughout the three floors of the Center. (The fourth floor houses Museum offices and conference/special event areas managed by the Raleigh Convention Center, and a green roof/observation deck that is unfortunately not open to the general public.)

As you make your way through each floor, you'll notice one big difference between the new Nature Research Center and the NC Museum of Natural Sciences. As Roy Campbell, Director of Exhibits tells us, "The original Museum was built in the mold of traditional museums telling people *what* we know, much like information in an encyclopedia. That's actually not science, which is really an ongoing iteration. The new Center is more about *how* we know. It's about the process of science and it's built for the 21st century. Now visitors can experience and participate in this process of scientific method instead of just observing." With three floors to explore, you probably should set aside at least a couple of hours for your first visit to the Nature Research Center.

NRC > First Floor

As you enter through the main doors on East Jones Street, one of the first things you'll notice is the "Patterns of Nature," a rolling 90x10-foot multimedia display comprised of 3600 LCD panels weaving under and around the walkways just overhead and up to the third floor. As you view this scientific sculpture, you'll hear the faint sounds of fish, water, birds or even mosquitos emanating from hidden speakers throughout each floor, providing the music to a dance of seemingly abstract movement of blocks across the panels. If you pay attention, the abstract slowly begins to transform into recognizable patterns of life. Amazingly enough, this visual and auditory artwork uses less electricity than a 60-watt light bulb.

Also on the first floor, you'll find the **Citizen Science Center**. Visitors can become participants in ongoing, active research projects by collecting, submitting and/or analyzing data on the Museum floor or at the Museum's 46-acre field

station, Prairie Ridge. In one such project, the Citizen Science Center acts as headquarters for Monarch Watch, where visitors help survey ongoing research of butterfly migratory populations. Other projects include Frog Watch, Bird and Bat Surveys, Riverwatch/Streamwatch, Nest Watch, and Ozone Biomonitoring, just to name a few.

On the floor beside the Daily Planet, visitors will see a 10,000-gallon aquarium, reclaimed from a recent re-design at the North Carolina Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores, now the enclosure for **Our Changing Ocean** exhibit. This aquarium replicates a typical hardbottom habitat off the NC coast. Live animals include bonnethead sharks, stingrays and a variety of fishes.

Next to the aquarium sits a realistic submarine model, which houses a mini-theater where visitors can sit inside and feel as if they're experiencing a deep-sea dive into the ocean. The **Exploring the Deep Sea** exhibit runs all day on a continuous loop, so visitors can jump in anytime and enjoy a deep-sea adventure.

In the center of the first floor lives **Stumpy the Whale**, so named because of her underdeveloped tail fin. Her skeleton is low enough for visitors to touch and to observe the remarkable similarities of her flipper bones to those in a human hand. Stumpy was a well-known North Atlantic right whale that



was sadly found dead off our coast in 2004. She apparently died from a fractured skull, most likely from a collision with a cargo ship. Testing was done on one of her 14-foot-long, 495-pound jawbones and it was determined that if cargo ships dropped their speed it would help save other whales from the same fate. As a result, large vessels were required to travel 10 knots or less along a "whale school zone" between November 1 and April 30 each year, the height of whale migration.

Visitors hungry from their trek through the museum will find comfort at the **Daily Planet Café** on the western-most part of the Museum. Run by Rocky Top Hospitality, the Café was built

almost exclusively with products sourced from North Carolina and includes a myriad of breakfast and lunch items, 12 locally-brewed craft beers, Childress wine on tap and a coffee bar featuring Larry's Beans, a local organic coffee company.

The Café will be a sort of "sports bar for science," and will be open Monday through Friday from 7am to 5pm and Saturday and Sunday from 9am to 5pm, with brunch on Saturday and Sunday from 9am to 2pm. Brunch on Sundays will feature live jazz. The Café will also be open from 5pm to 9pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights featuring a variety of live music both inside and outside on the patio.

The **NCR Museum Store** is housed by the Café and offers visitors plenty of interesting and fun memorabilia to take home from their visit at the NRC.

On the opposite end of the NRC from the Café, you'll find the bottom floor of the **SECU Daily Planet**, which we discussed earlier in this article. This is one of the most visually appealing and amazing exhibits of the new wing.

NRC > Second Floor

Visitors can view the movies and presentations of the **SECU Daily Planet** from the curved balcony inside the globe.

>>>

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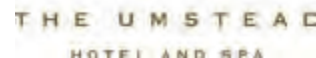
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The **Science Panorama** is an immersion theater adjacent to the Daily Planet that boasts a 170-degree panoramic screen where viewers can choose from several incredible space, science and nature videos.

In the **Window on Animal Health** area, visitors can experience, watch and interact with scientists, veterinarians and pre-veterinary students conducting animal handling, animal checkups and minor surgeries. A two-way audio system allows staff and visitors to communicate with each other, giving the public a remarkable opportunity to ask questions, meet the veterinary services staff and learn about veterinary medicine firsthand.

The **Diversity of Life** wall on the second floor is a unique experience that focuses on a different aspect of biodiversity, from the most recent discoveries of thousands of new species in the ocean depths to the importance of each individual species for the balance of all life on Earth. Each area has a "how do we know" question associated with the research as well as current research in the appropriate field.

The **WRAL Researching Weather Platform** uses real artifacts, instruments and data to research and predict weather. An interactive area will allow visitors to see how rockets, weather balloons, thermometers, and wind/water gauges provide a glimpse of what real-time weather is like in several different

locations throughout the western hemisphere as well as access to these locations via webcams.

Visitors will see a virtual version of weatherman Greg Fishel in the **WRAL Storm Central**, a fully electronic interactive experience. Take a shot at predicting tomorrow's weather and compare your forecast to Greg's based on information from the National Weather Service, local maps and Doppler radar technology.

The **Naturalist Center** (lovingly nicknamed the "Dead Animal Petting Zoo" by middle school students and "Noah's Morgue" by museum staff) gives visitors the chance to handle over 20,000 objects, including skulls and other bones, fossils, shells, animal pelts plus preserved birds, fish,



Greg Fishel live in his Storm Central exhibit.

reptiles, and mammals. "We house one of every creature from North Carolina," says exhibit coordinator John Connors. Specimens are figuratively brought to life when a visitor places the object on one of the interactive quartz tabletops where sensors read an embedded tag, summoning an overhead projector to display information about the creature or artifact on the table. Users can then touch the tables to retrieve additional information they're interested in seeing, including interactive activities, photos, video footage, and illustrations. "It really puts in the hands of visitors a whole new way of using specimens," says Connors.

NRC > Second & Third Floor Labs

In addition to the new interactive exhibits, the second and third floors boast four glass-walled working research laboratories; each led by an outstanding scientist recruited specifically for their passion for communicating their work to the public. "A lot of our new hires are people who I call rising stars: amazing young people who will be making a difference in the quality of our world and our health," says Dr. Meg Lowman.

The **Astronomy & Space Observation Research Lab** is led by astrochemist Dr. Rachel Smith where she will conduct astronomical research as well as create visualizations of this research in a

crossing of art and science. Dr. Roland Keys is director of the new **Biodiversity Research Lab**. His e-Mammal project will encourage amateur naturalists to survey their local animal populations with motion-sensor-triggered camera traps. His research laboratory will use a combination of traditional and high-tech methods to collect new data about the natural world we live in. His newest brainchild is The Great Chicken Coop Stakeout (<http://chickcoopstakeout.wordpress.com>), where citizen scientists help compare movements of local predators around poultry housing in residential areas. In the **Genomics & Microbiology Research Lab**, Dr. Julie Horvath will use different techniques to understand how an individual's DNA sequence (or genotype) can influence their outward appearing characteristics or susceptibility to disease. She recently launched an odd yet interesting project to study the microbial diversity that lives under armpits to understand the implications for revealing how primates, including humans, might choose their mates. Stinky science at its best! Dr. Lindsay Zanno heads up the **Paleontology & Geology Research Lab** and her vibrant field-based research program will greatly engage the paleontology enthusiasts at the Museum. Citizen scientists will participate in the collection and participation of dinosaur and

other vertebrate fossils. Although Zanno's focus is generally on species from the past, research is also done on living bird species.

In the **Micro World Investigate Lab**, visitors learn how DNA "fingerprints" are made and analyzed. Watch the creation of a "fingerprint" and solve a who-done-it mystery. In the **Visual World Investigate Lab**, amateur researchers can sample any of the Science Visualization Stations to learn more about topics that interest them, from astronomy and biology to climate and pollution. The **Postcards from Space** exhibit is a collection of dozens of meteorites provided to the Museum by J. Donald Cline, who has been collecting cosmic debris for more than 15 years. The Allende meteorite is more than 4.6 BILLION years old and Zagami arrived all the way from Mars.

Experience it for yourself

A myriad of other equally interesting exhibits and interactive displays are on each floor, too numerous to mention. We'll let you discover the rest of the museum exhibits for yourself, so be sure to allow plenty of time and schedule several visits to see them all. The new Natural Research Center along with the original Museum for Natural Sciences will firmly place North Carolina in the ranks of the most innovative natural history museums

in the world. We congratulate and thank the Museum staff, Board of Directors, Museum Advisory Committee, and all those involved for their visionary insight and an incredible job well done!



For more photos from the Museum, visit us on the web at www.facebook.com/RaleighDowntowner and click on Photos.

Third floor balcony view of the SECU Daily Planet theater

Both the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences and the new Nature Research Center are located at 11 West Jones Street in downtown Raleigh and **admission is always free**. Hours of operation are Monday through Saturday 9am to 5pm and Sunday noon to 5pm. For more information on the NRC, visit www.natureresearch.org or www.naturalsciences.org for info about the original NC Museum for Natural Sciences, or call 919.733.7450.

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grand opening
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NATURE RESEARCH CENTER

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the **AFTER
PARTY**
NATURE RESEARCH CENTER



Museum Director Betsy Bennett (center) with daughter Purcie and husband Walter



NRC Director Meg Lowman and Downtowner Magazine Manager Chris Moutos



Director of Museum Exhibits Roy Campbell & wife Dale



Green Square architect Curtis Fentress & Science Communications Director David Kroll



City Council members Randall Stagner & Russ Stephenson with SECU Daily Planet map makers Todd and Bill Ulrich



City Councilman and architect Thomas Crowder & wife Betsy



Downtown developer Greg Hatem & wife Samantha



Artist Georges Le Chevallier & wife Carrie



Downtowner founder and State Senate candidate Sig Hutchsin & wife Nancy



Downtown Magazine Publisher Crash Gregg & WRAL Chief Meteorologist Greg Fishel



Past City Councilman Dr. James West & Sylvia



Ginny McKay, Ann-Cabell Baum Anderson, Trish Healy, past City Councilman Phillip Isley & wife Laura, John Healy

The Nature Research Center

NORTH CAROLINA MUSEUM of NATURAL SCIENCES



4

TELESCOPES & GREEN ROOF

Step out onto a green roof, take in the sights of Downtown Raleigh and check out the cosmos! Learn about the “green” features of the Nature Research Center and discover why having plants on the roof helps make a difference. The Raleigh Astronomy Club will have telescopes set up for day and nighttime viewing far beyond downtown.

NASA

Join Kevin Hussey of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory for a spectacular virtual tour of our Solar System; or explore citizen science through exhibits, games and hands-on activities, including the NASA CERES S'COOL Project, NASA Discovery Kiosks, NASA Clouds and Climate Games and NASA Clouds Observations on the Terrace.

3

PALEO / GEO RESEARCH LAB

Learn how researchers construct scientific names and submit your name creation for a new species of duckbill dinosaur.

MICRO WORLD INVESTIGATE LAB

How are DNA “fingerprints” made and analyzed? Watch the creation of a “fingerprint” and solve a who-done-it mystery.

POSTCARDS FROM SPACE

Peruse a collection of meteorites provided by J. Donald Cline, one of the founders of the Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute. See relics from our solar system's formation and pieces of Mars.

VISUAL WORLD INVESTIGATE LAB

Sample any of the many Science Visualization Stations to learn more about topics that interest you, from astronomy and biology to climate and pollution.

2

WEATHER STATION

Discover the many methods we use to study the weather: from weather balloons and rockets to weather stations and satellites.

NATURAL WORLD INVESTIGATE LAB

Calibrate a dissecting scope and then use it to observe a wriggling aquatic invertebrate.

NATURALIST CENTER

Visit this room and explore some of the new wing's 20,000 education specimens, including skulls and bones, fossils and shells, animal pelts and preserved birds, fish, reptiles and mammals.

WINDOW ON ANIMAL HEALTH

Get a unique behind-the-scenes glimpse of veterinary procedures.

CITIZEN SCIENCE CENTER

Learn how to get involved in scientific research and try your hand at being a citizen scientist.

DAILY PLANET CAFÉ

Run by Rocky Top Hospitality, the new Café's menu will be almost exclusively built on products sourced in North Carolina, and accompanied by North Carolina craft brews and wines on draft (a first for the area). The Café will also host live bands, science presentations in a non-traditional setting, science trivia nights and other fun learning experiences.

1

EXPLORING THE DEEP SEA

Climb into the model submersible and dive deep into the ocean to study deep-sea coral.

INVESTIGATING RIGHT WHALES

See and touch the skeleton of Stumpy, a right whale found floating off the NC coast in 2004. Research done on her carcass showed that she was struck by a ship, and subsequently a law was enacted that slowed ship speeds in right whale migration routes.

SECU DAILY PLANET THEATER

This three-story HD theater with multi-channel surround sound plays host to scientist presentations and spectacular scenes from nature.

OUR CHANGING OCEAN

This 10,000-gallon aquarium replicates a typical hardbottom habitat off the NC coast. Live animals include bonnethead sharks, Atlantic stingrays and a variety of fishes.

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From the Publisher

It's certainly been a busy month at the *Downtowner Magazine*. As many of you may have seen on TV or read in the News & Observer, we had a very large fire in our office/home located in historic Oakwood. Unfortunately, the house where we lived and worked—the second oldest house in Raleigh on its original foundation, built in 1851—was almost destroyed by an electrical fire, along with everything in it. Our furniture, computers, files, camera equipment were all gone in just a few hours.



Thanks to the generosity of the Glenwood Agency, we've moved into a temporary office space and are scouting the downtown area for a new permanent space. With so many of our possessions gone, including clothes and basic day-to-day necessities, we've experienced—in a very, very small way—what it must be like to be homeless. We've been lucky to have the incredible support of family and friends, and in particular, our neighbors in Oakwood, and that of our loyal readers, which has made a world of difference during our transition. We would like to personally thank everyone who has assisted us during our time of need, and we look forward to being back up and running at our usual level of 110 percent.

Unfortunately, Raleigh's true homeless population doesn't have

this kind of support and must rely on local agencies like the Women's Center of Wake County, Raleigh Rescue Mission, Salvation Army of Wake County, and others for help. We encourage you to volunteer or donate to any of these organizations who help those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Please visit www.wakegov.com/humanservices/housing/homeless for a list of local charitable organizations that could use your support.

Now on to the issue. The new wing of the NC Museum of Natural Science, the Nature Research Center is nothing short of incredible. The awe-inspiring SECU Daily Planet globe, amazing exhibits, super science rock stars, ambitious programs, and stellar interactive projects will put the Museum+ at the forefront of the most innovative natural history museums in the world.

Take the time to stop and visit the new Center and revisit the Museum if you haven't been in a while. They're both free and truly a remarkable experience you won't soon forget.

Crash

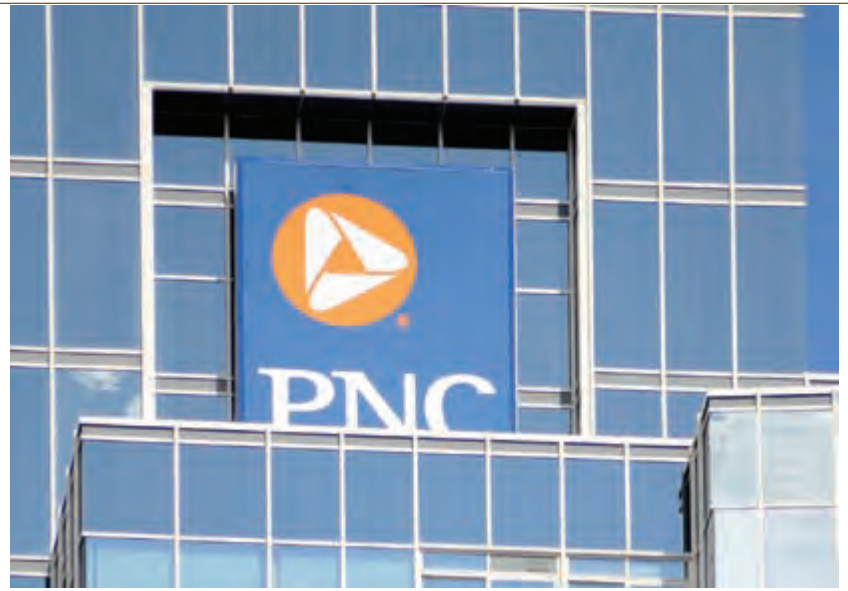
CRASH GREGG
Publisher, *Raleigh Downtowner Magazine*
publisher@raleighdowntowner.com

Where's it @?



Do you know where this photo was taken? Visit www.raleighdowntowner.com/where to send in your answer and you could win a Downtowner T-shirt. We'll select a random winner from the correct answers. (Answers can be the spot where the photo was taken FROM or the SUBJECT of the photo. It's just for fun, so we're not picky).

Don't worry, we have new T-shirt designs coming soon you can order in case you don't win. They're just \$15, with \$7.50 of each shirt going to local charities. Cool shirts for a good cause. What could be better?



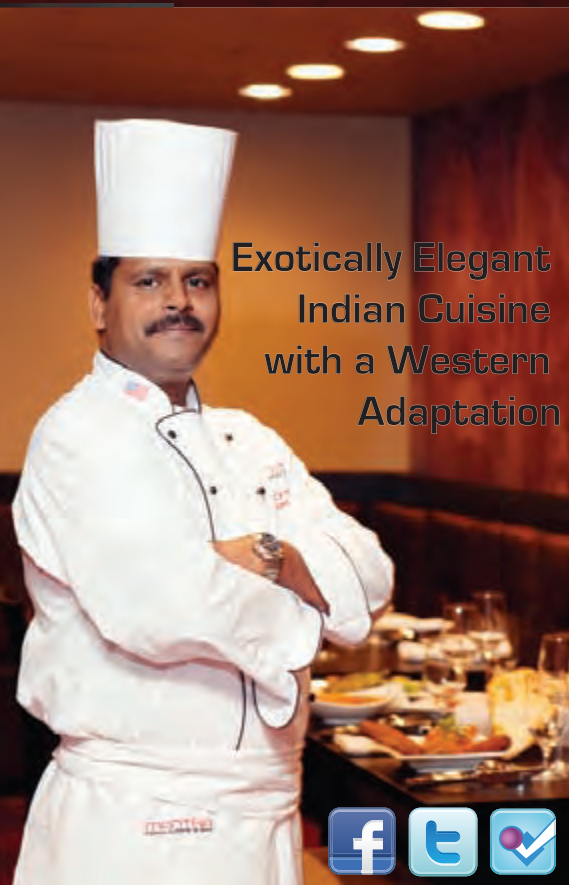
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Congratulations to **David Benson** (read on to see why this is pretty cool) who was the first to identify last month's clue as Raleigh's beloved 1250-pound copper and steel acorn in Moore Square, located between S. Blount and S. Person near Martin Street. The acorn was a privately-commissioned piece, created by local artist David Benson to commemorate Raleigh's 1992 bicentennial. For more than 20 years, the acorn has been removed from its home in Moore Square, repaired and polished by Benson then lowered via crane during Artsposure's New Year's Eve celebration in City Plaza, First Night Raleigh. The acorn drop has been featured in several "Strangest Things Dropped on New Year's Eve" lists: <http://bitly.com/raleigh-acorn-drop>. Stop by Moore Square to check out this huge shiny squirrel snack and be sure to rub it for good luck! A big Thanks to David for creating this wonderful Raleigh icon and congrats again on being the winner for this month's Where's it @!

Our runner up winners were Marty Wilson, Anna Leonard, Calvin Tufts, and Jim Frick. Thanks for entering and be sure to try again with this month's clue.

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Exploring South African Wine

BY JEFF BRAMWELL



South Africa's winemaking history dates back to the mid-1600s, but a massive overhaul of the local wine industry since the end of apartheid helps to justify the fact that this is considered a "New World" wine region. During apartheid, major limitations on the wine industry prevented the planting of new varietals or the development of new vineyard land, with an emphasis on quantity over quality. Since the end of apartheid in 1994, massive replanting and outside investment in the industry have had quality on the rise. The number of producers in South Africa has also doubled in the past decade, meaning there's simply more wine available to taste. But, as with anywhere else in the world, it takes a number of years for new plantings to bear fruit worth bottling, or for improvements in the vineyard and cellar to come through in the finished wine. And it seems we're just now seeing the fruits of that labor.

South Africa's winegrowing area is an amazingly beautiful place where picturesque mountains nearly meet the ocean. Temperatures throughout the country's wine producing areas are similar enough to those in California's Napa Valley, though the best vineyard areas are located in slightly cooler microclimates, allowing for the cultivation of a number of different grape varieties and the creation of different styles of wines, from light and fresh to full-bodied and structured.

A large number of South Africa's wines, particularly its reds, have shown a distinct rubbery, iodine-like aroma that is best described as a love-it or hate-it quality. But each year we see more and more producers making cleaner, fresher wines. The nation's signature grape, Pinotage, is the number one offender in displaying this quality, with rubbery, funky, leathery aromas dominating the wines. Both the Hill & Dale and the Southern Right bottlings of Pinotage have successfully minimized this characteristic to the point that it's there just enough to remind you of what you're drinking but otherwise hints at the grape's relationship to Pinot Noir with its soft red

fruit flavors. Other reds, most notably Syrah (Shiraz) and Cabernet Sauvignon, also tend to have this funkiness, though it's generally not quite as strong as it is in the average Pinotage. These varietals are typically made into big, smooth, easy drinking reds that share a stylistic similarity to those made in Australia, Argentina and Chile.

South Africa's white wines are decidedly more ahead of the curve in appealing to a wider number of people, thanks to clean, fresh, more recognizable flavors in their Sauvignon Blancs and Chardonnays. If you've been a fan of New Zealand's Sauvignon Blancs, then those from South Africa will surely be a hit. Meanwhile, their Chardonnay is typically modeled after those from France, with fresh acidity and moderate amounts of oak aging. But the real white wine specialty of South Africa is Chenin Blanc, a French varietal known as Steen in South Africa. It's a native of the Loire Valley, where it conveys lemony, chalky brightness. But in the warmer climate of South Africa it can show off quite a bit more richness. For a delicious example, check out the Secateurs made by Badenhorst Family Vineyards.

South Africa's cuisine is quite varied, providing ample opportunity to pair traditional dishes with the diverse range of wines the country has to offer. The melting pot of flavors include fruits, nuts and wild game that have been featured in the country's indigenous dishes for ages, as well as the frequent inclusion of spices such as nutmeg, allspice and hot peppers introduced in the Cape Dutch style of cooking. There's a significant Indian influence as well, which contributes curries and chutneys, among other things, to the culinary repertoire.

Pairing wines with their native cuisine always seems to bring the most out of one another, and fortunately there are more and more excellent bottles out there to experience each year. There's still a long way to go, but the future is bright for South Africa's winemakers.

Jeff Bramwell is a co-owner of The Raleigh Wine Shop, located at 126 Glenwood Ave, as well as the author of VinoBurger, a cookbook that combines wine country-inspired dishes in burger form with easy-to-grasp wine education. Drop Jeff a line at Jeff@TheRaleighWineShop.com.



Local Gallery News BY MAX HALPEREN, ART EDITOR

For many of my friends the term “African Art” calls up images of nothing but primitive sculpture, masks and colorful dance costumes, as though everyone on the continent slept through the awakening of modernism. “**El Anatsui: When I Last Wrote to You about Africa**,” the large retrospective currently at the **North Carolina Museum of Art**, dispels any such misconception and is a must-see for everyone whose sense of the contemporary is more than parochial.



Gallery view of *El Anatsui: When I Last Wrote to You about Africa*
COURTESY NORTH CAROLINA MUSEUM OF ART

Anatsui’s recent work blazes from the museum walls—large colorful wall hangings composed not of cloth or painted canvas, but of bright whiskey aluminum bottle tops, tops cut, flattened, sliced, crushed and pieced together with copper wire. Here and there, one may read the brand names. For Anatsui a used object makes living connections—between maker and user, between user and artist, between present and past. The passage of time is a central theme in the first (and one of the most striking) hangings in the show: “*Stressed World*” (2011), stressed in that large areas are curved and folded and parts of the wire matrix are bare, the bits and pieces of aluminum supposedly fallen away with time and use.

In keeping with the theme, Anatsui placed an immense hanging, “*Fresh and Fading Memories*,” (1907) on the façade of the Palazzo Fortuny at the 52nd Venice Biennale. A short film about the work reveals another of Anatsui’s beliefs: like Marcel Duchamp, he insists that more than the artist is involved in the creation of a work of art, that the installer of the work—his movements and twists and folding—all color the viewer’s reaction. He also may

employ others in his creations. One wall in the show contains a series of small wooden gems, trays created by Nigerian craftsmen and decorated, incised and painted by Anatsui. The last room in the show contains a huge collection of tiny wooden boxes created by craftsmen then papered and painted to mimic goods sold at African markets.

For Anatsui, found objects may be anywhere and symbolize anything. From savaged pieces of driftwood rolling in heavy surf, he fashioned a number of extraordinarily crude figures labeled “*Akua’s Surviving Children*” (1996), a reminder of Africans carried over water to slavery. More figures composed of broken limbs of wood, acrylic paintings, ceramics, work on paper, wooden plaques, wall pieces made of carved and painted wooden slats, and the great hangings fill the 61-piece show. In 2008, NCMA commissioned one of his hangings, “*Lines that Link Humanity*,” to mark the opening of its new West Building.

Anatsui was born in Ghana in 1944. There he began a long career as an artist and teacher before moving to Nigeria in 1975 and to a growing international reputation. Organized by the Museum for African Art in New York, the traveling show will remain at NCMA until July 29 when it moves to Denver.

Like many of his generation, Anatsui saw himself as linked to his pre-colonial past and a number of his earlier pieces—like the first in the show—fill wooden slats with old adinkra ideograms. The subtitle of the show, “*When I Last Wrote to You about*



Daffodils and Dogwood by Joseph Cave,
oil on linen, 34x44 inches

Africa,” is the first line of a “letter” suggesting that the artist, now mature, has learned the importance of his indigenous culture.

Two downtown galleries, **the Mahler** and **Adam Cave Fine Arts**, are very near each other but are showing work whose approaches are as disparate as they can be. Both are worth your time.

With a mixture of outrageous humor and serious commentary on human relationships—or lack thereof—the Mahler has mounted a show of small oils and drawings by **Walter Piepke**. His figures,



Wear Rabbit by Matt Lively,
oil on panel, 7x7 inches

often androgynous, are near-surreal, their eyes like black holes, their bodies elongated. Most importantly, even when leaning against each other they may face away staring out. In “*Bird Talk*,” the funniest in the show, two figures lean back to back, unspeaking, but each carrying a bird on a stick, his atop a cap. The birds do indeed speak to each other as though proxies for the

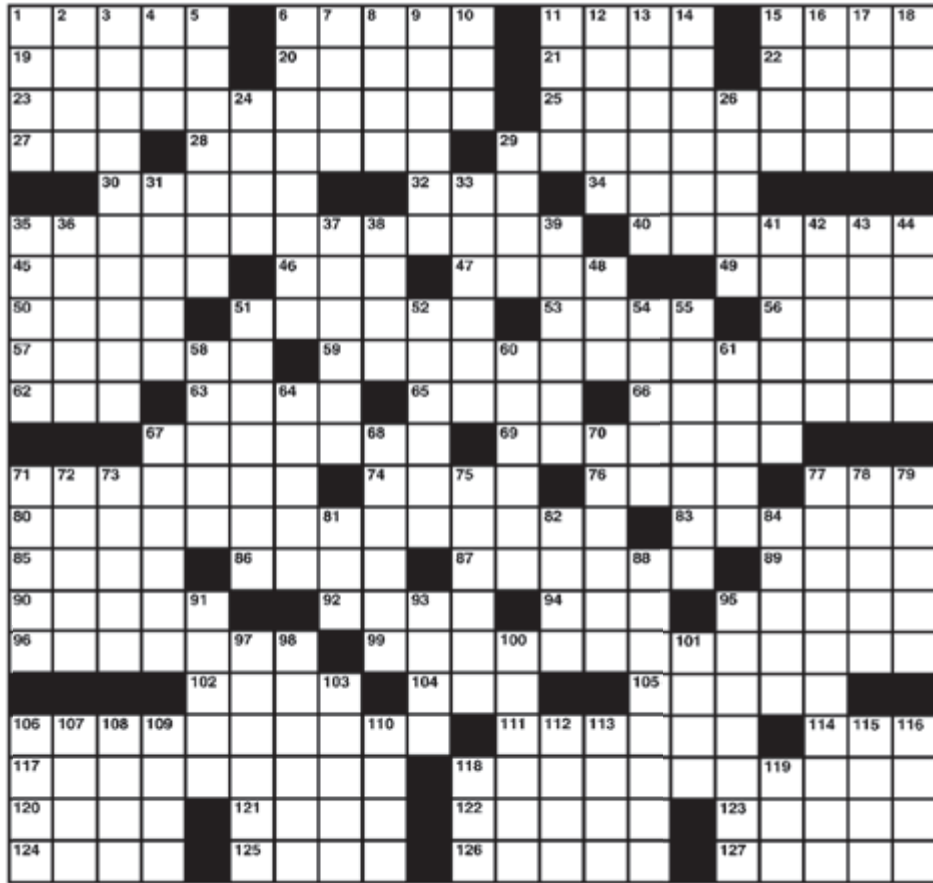
pair who also seem to be holding yo-yos. Even when some of his figures hold each other they express no emotion.

Ordinarily I would ignore a show of painted florals, deeming them pretty but unimaginative; however, the paintings at Adam Cave’s by his father **Joseph Cave** is one I would hate to miss because of its imaginative back- and foregrounds. In “*Floral with Books #3*,” a large bouquet stands upright though it should teeter on a striped tablecloth tilted forward and spilling several art books. “*Ginger and Daffodils*” sets its table in an open field, tilted, though nothing spills out of it. The gallery also has a wall of brilliant 7 inch x 7 inch oils by **Matt Lively**, each with a single surreal image we associate with Lively—a bee cycle, stacked sheep, a misplaced house. At last First Friday, they were selling briskly.

Work at both the Mahler and Adam Cave will be up through the end of the month, with Joseph Cave’s show moving to the McCain Gallery in the lobby of Meymandi Hall at the Progress Energy Performing Arts Center for the next couple of months. 📍

Max can be reached for comment at
max@raleighdowntowner.com.

MONTHLY CROSSWORD PUZZLE



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By Alan Arbesfeld from the Los Angeles Times
Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

AMAZING!

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"Love all of the great information you provide about upcoming events!"

SHERYL BRYANT, CLAYTON 27527—(PICKUP LOCATION: PEACE CHINA)

Reader emails. We love 'em! We get hundreds every month from our wonderful readers. Some ask for recommendations on places to eat, some are looking for venue ideas to host a party or a charity event, others asking about parking or offer story ideas. But we have to admit our favorites are the emails telling us why you read the Downtowner.

Our Reader Rewards program is designed to thank our readers for being part of the Downtowner family and making us the most read magazines per issue in Raleigh (and that goes for weeklies too).

Visit www.raleighdowntowner.com and click on the Sign Up Now button

on the center right and join our Reader Rewards giveaways to win lots of free stuff. Feel free to leave comments for us and we'll include them in this column. We work hard to make the Downtowner a worthy publication for our 70,000+ monthly readers and we love to hear suggestions, ideas and anything else you'd like to include. We love our readers as much as they love the *Downtowner*.

"I'm a new reader...but really like the Greenway issue!"

DONNA, RALEIGH 27615
(PICKUP LOCATION: VARIOUS LOCATIONS)

"Great for finding all the good restaurants"

JEFF AUSBY, RALEIGH 27610
(PICKUP LOCATION: LEGISLATIVE BUILDING)

"Love it!"

MICHELE GROSS, HOLLY SPRINGS 27540
(PICKUP LOCATION: LEGISLATIVE BUILDING)

"Hi! As a Scottish textile artist moving to Raleigh soon, I'm really enjoy reading about the exciting things happening in the area! Thanks for keeping me in touch!"

CARLA GLASS, SCOTLAND—(PICKUP LOCATION: ONLINE AT THE MOMENT!)

"Go Downtowner!"

AMBER MEACHAM, RALEIGH 27606
(PICKUP LOCATION: MECCA RESTAURANT)

"I work downtown and I always check the *Downtowner* in case I stay in town during the evening or want to go out on weekend."

STEVE ABBOTT, CARY 27511
(PICKUP LOCATION: VARIOUS PLACES)

"Love it...keep up the good work!"

RANDALL DYKES, RALEIGH 27613
(PICKUP LOCATION: VARIOUS RESTAURANTS/
BAR DOWNTOWN)

"Great magazine"

REBECCA PEREZ, RALEIGH 27616—(PICKUP LOCATION: DOWNTOWN RESTAURANTS)

"Love it!"

DANIELLE KEEL, RALEIGH 27609
(PICKUP LOCATION: THE Q SHACK)

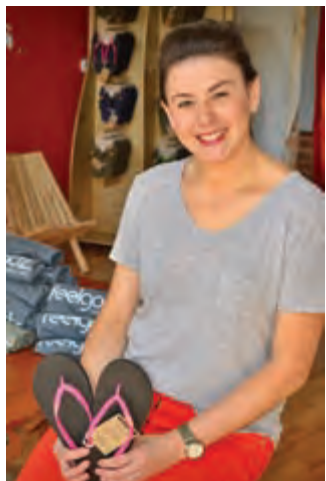


BUSINESS PROFILE JESSICA SICILIANO | PHOTOS BY THOMAS M. WAY

You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose.” This quote from the Dr. Seuss book *Oh, the Places You’ll Go!* has been scrawled inside graduation cards for decades. It’s a reminder that we are born with the tools we need to choose our path in life. However, for Kyle Berner, CEO of Feelgoodz, the adage takes on a different meaning. To find his direction, Kyle needed to look no further than the shoes on his feet. A broken strap on his sandal sparked an “*a-ha* moment” that became Berner’s career path with an eco-conscious footwear brand.



After graduating from Loyola in 2003, the New Orleans native worked as a music producer, at a computer company (where he decided cubicle culture wasn’t for him) and briefly managed a hot dog vending business. A chance encounter with a “professional traveler” inspired Berner to sell his car and use the money to buy a one-way ticket to Thailand where he spent a year teaching English and embracing the local culture. “It totally changed my life,” says Berner. “I came back to the States with a desire to be connected to Southeast Asia and that way of life. I just didn’t know how.” He returned to Thailand at the end of 2007, and literally stumbled onto the answer. As he was walking through the markets of Bangkok, the strap of Berner’s flip-flop broke. Shortly after, he saw a tree with flip-flops hanging from the branches. Intrigued, he tried a pair on and immediately realized that these were no ordinary flip-flops. Berner



discovered that the sandals were made of a type of high-quality natural rubber produced in Southeast Asia. “At that point, I didn’t even know that rubber came from a tree,” Berner jokes. He immediately started researching the rubber sandal industry and found that most flip-flops are made from EVA foam, a synthetic plastic that is extremely cheap to produce but is non-biodegradable. Natural rubber, however, is environmentally safe but has a higher cost and longer production time. After a little more research about the marketing potential for a similar product, Berner was enthralled by the concept of a comfortable and eco-friendly flip-flop. He flew home in early 2008 with the idea in his head and hasn’t looked back since. In April 2008, he formed Feelgoodz LLC, so named for no other reason than that the flip-flops feel *really* good on your feet.

By 2011, Berner had single-handedly created an international brand and a successful product that was available online and in several stores, including Whole Foods. However, despite high sales, Berner felt like a hamster stuck on a spinning wheel. “I knew that I had something special, but I was wearing so many hats and spreading myself thin for three years that I didn’t have the organization or the discipline to take the business to the next level,” he remembers. A mutual friend from New Orleans introduced Berner to Lizzie Gonzalez, former lead footwear designer for Roxy Quicksilver. The two agreed to meet in Raleigh, where Gonzalez had recently relocated. Before their meeting, Gonzales contacted Berner about another footwear-focused non-profit organization based out of Raleigh called KinderSoles. Berner did his research and was impressed by the company that had a similar business model to Tom’s Shoes. Berner and Gonzalez invited Mark Saad, CEO of KinderSoles, to their rendezvous in Raleigh to talk flip-flop shop.

At their meeting, the trio found that their common goal of creating an environmentally and socially conscious footwear brand would be better served by collaboration, rather than competition. The two companies merged to create a new Feelgoodz.

Saad, who specializes in finance and operations entrepreneurship, serves as CFO, Gonzalez serves as CDO, and Berner remains the CEO and ambassador of the brand. In just six months, the company has expanded from one person to 17 employees.

Thanks to Gonzalez, the brand has also been able to expand its product line to several collections of footwear for men, women and children. All flip-flops are 100 percent biodegradable natural rubber purchased from co-ops in Southeast Asia. The brand maintains social consciousness by ensuring sustainable living for farmers. A line called Soft Strapz showcases traditional hemp fabric woven by the Hmong people of Vietnam. “We get to work with them and ensure they get fair wages for their crafts, and we get to cultivate a relationship with them as well as educate our customers about it,” explains Gonzales.



Feelgoodz has set up shop in Downtown Raleigh at 206 S. Wilmington St. in a multi-purpose space that they like to call “The Tree House.” So why did they choose to locate in downtown Raleigh? “We like to think of ourselves as visionaries with a sort of pioneer perspective, and we saw the potential in downtown. There’s not a lot of retail around yet, but there will be. We want to be one of the companies that says, ‘let’s roll.’”

Jessica can be reached for comment at jessica@raleighdowntowner.com.

Feelgoodz, LLC

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Cameron Village

BY AMANDA WINNEGAR, RALEIGH CITY MUSEUM



Cameron Village is considered to be one of the cornerstones of Raleigh tourism. The area not only has wonderful shops and homes to browse through but also has a unique history of its own. Opened in 1949 with three stores and one restaurant, Raleigh residents were invited to “Shop as you please, with the greatest of ease, in the wonderful Cameron Village!” It was designed by Leif Valand as an open-air shopping mall and was not only Raleigh’s first shopping center away from the downtown area but also the first shopping center constructed between Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, Georgia. By 1950, Cameron Village was considered a “town within a town,” comprised of 65 stores, 112 business or professional offices, 566 apartment units, and 100 private homes.



A section of Cameron Village shopping center at night.



Entrance to the old Underground, located beneath Cameron Village

Its history goes a little further back than the '40s and '50s however. The land where Cameron Village and Oberlin Village now sits was once part of a 30,000-acre plantation held by the Cameron family in the pre-Civil War era. This plantation, which was considered one of the biggest in North Carolina, covered what

are today parts of Orange, Wake, Person, and Granville counties. The Cameron family was also influential in the formation of the Episcopal Church, St. Mary’s school for girls and served as various presidents of the State Bank of North Carolina.

Not only was Cameron Village part of a vast plantation held by the Cameron family in the 18th and 19th centuries, but it was also home to one of the best-known music scenes in the Raleigh area. The shopping mall was built with a unique aspect that came to be known in the 1980s as “the Underground.” Built under what is today the Cameron Village Regional Library and other residing shops, the entrance and atmosphere were made to look like a New York City subway station. The Underground was home to many restaurants, clubs, boutiques and fashion stores and was said to host a wide range of musical talent including; Jimmy Buffett, Flock of Seagulls, R.E.M., and countless other performers and entertainers. In 1984,

however, the Underground was shut down due to safety issues and was converted to storage space for the upper-level stores. Although the Underground scene only lasted 12 years, many residents of Raleigh can still recall visiting this unique aspect of Cameron Village.

With its rich plantation history to its unique underground aspects, Cameron Village is indeed a “town within a town.” It still attracts many visitors with its ranch-style homes and one-of-a-kind shops, but also provides Raleigh with yet another piece of local history, adding to the city’s interesting appeal.

The Raleigh City Museum is located at 220 Fayetteville Street in downtown Raleigh and is open from 10am-4pm. Tuesday through Friday, 1pm-4pm on Saturdays, and First Fridays, 6pm-9pm. If you have any questions, please call 919-832-3775 or check out their website at www.raleighcitymuseum.org.



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Patrick Shanahan

BY ALESSANDRA MOTOLA



Within the last few years, downtown Raleigh has truly begun to flourish with new venues adding to the downtown scene for music, dining and socializing. Consequently, a logical outcome of this cultural renaissance is an emergence of local artisans from our creative community.

Among these connoisseurs of creativity is one man by the name of Patrick Shanahan, who is paving the way for himself and others in the world of art and film.

His work has graced the walls of many popular First Friday venues, and he is a resident artist at the Ruby Red Art Collective and Studio near the intersection of Peace Street and Glenwood Avenue. Most of his paintings are hard to miss with their bright, eye-catching colors and bold gestural strokes.

The most appealing aspect of Shanahan's work is its ability to draw in the viewer's emotions with

the powerful use of color and sense of motion in such an effective manner one feels connected to the subject matter.

He believes his paintings appeal to many different types of people because "they're fun." He states that he never tries to make an overt statement with his work and prefers the viewer reach his or her own interpretation of his art.

Of course, with his demure but intellectual style, it comes as no surprise that the artist claims his greatest inspiration is women. He says that he started his career as a young storyteller and feels his art is one way he can continue his eloquent renderings of madness.

Shanahan started painting around 17, and says his mother always believed in his talents. He first became enthralled by the work of comic artist, Todd McFarlane—an influence one can see in his current work. His mentor, Bob Rankin, help shaped



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most of Shanahan's talents, and he says he wouldn't be where he is today without his influence.

Shanahan also claims to "decompress through his art" and finds that it is a deep psychological excavation of his inner emotions that is truly rewarding. Indeed, his work is reflective of this process, with most of his series seemingly telling one grand story of man and his woes and highs.

In his recent showing at Ruby Red, he explores a figurative approach to the changes in his life. Shanahan likes portraiture, and one can see this repeatedly through his ever-evolving work. Many times he will abstract an individual as a caricature, but unlike the latter by providing a much deeper and meaningful story line as a backdrop.

One thing Shanahan should be noted for is his desire to reach out and create events for the art community. He is actively searching for different ways he can inspire others to create and collaborate with other local artists from various genres.

He is currently involved with BEST (Beautifying Emerging Spaces Together), a local art initiative to reclaim forgotten historical landmarks across the city landscape.

Through the BEST project, Shanahan most recently paid homage to the several of Raleigh's leading men and women by creating a large multi-panel mural that was mounted on the windows of




the vacant Sandwich Shop space on Wilmington Street. He also is an active contributor to many local charities, donating his work for auction or creating commission pieces.

Outside of his accomplishments as a painter, Shanahan is also passionate about filmmaking. He

is one of the masterminds behind the film collective Minds of the Independent Screen. He has produced and directed an array of films shot locally here in North Carolina and is currently working on a project set at the defunct (and very cool-looking) Bain Water Treatment Plant near downtown. He hopes the film will bring good tidings to our humble city.

If one thing is certain, Shanahan is dedicated to the elevation of the art community here in Raleigh—something the local art scene has been begging for. Now, it may be bold to imply the "scene" in Raleigh lagged for the later part of the nineties and early millennia, but one cannot deny the revitalization that the downtown creative community has experienced in the last few years.

With this growth, more venues have opened their doors to offer opportunities for more artists to collaborate and showcase their work. Shanahan is a Pied Piper of sorts for the many of the eccentric and innovational minds of this city.

Shanahan loves his job, working in downtown and believes that making Raleigh an artistic hub of the South is completely doable. Keep an eye out for this up-and-coming local artist, as he's definitely someone you'll want to stop and chat with if you have the time. 

Ally can be contacted for comment at ally@raleighdowntowner.com.

Calendar of Events!

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April 19-21

Leaving Iowa is a Theatre in the Park production featuring Raleigh's own Ira David Wood III. It's the story of Don Browning a middle-aged writer who decides to take his father's ashes to his childhood home according to his father's wishes, but discovers that there is a grocery store there now. This leads him to travel across Iowa searching for a proper resting place for his father. It's perfect for anyone who has ever found themselves driving along a road and revisiting fond memories of their youth. Tickets are \$22 for adults, \$16 for seniors over 60, students and active military. (7:30-10:00pm) www.theatreinthepark.com.

April 19-22

Carolina Ballet Presents **Carmina Burana** with the Caulder Project at Raleigh Memorial Auditorium. Lynne Taylor-Corbett's stunning work set to Carl Orff's scenic cantata *Carmina Burana* takes the stage backed by the North Carolina Master Chorale, vocal soloists, and a powerful orchestra, all conducted by Music Director Alfred E. SturGIS. Visit www.carolinaballet.com for more information.

April 20 (Friday)

Redress Raleigh is the area's largest showcase of environmentally conscious fashion design and this year's show will be held at CAM, the Contemporary Art Museum, located at 409 West Martin Street. On Friday, April 20th at 8pm, local designers will showcase their ideas on how to revolutionize the fashion industry with innovative, accessible, and

earth-friendly designs. The show encourages designers to incorporate "green" practices into their work, while showing a wide audience how easy it is to find eco-friendly clothing that is fashion forward. www.redressraleigh.com

April 20 & 21

Grand opening of the **Nature Research Center (NRC)**, the new 80,000-square-foot wing of the NC Museum of Science. The 24-hour grand opening is open to the public (free!), and runs from 5pm Friday, April 20 to 5pm on Saturday, April 21. 50,000 to 80,000 people are expected to visit the NRC during the 24-hour opening. 11 W. Jones Street. www.naturalsciences.org

April 20 & 21

Music director Grant Llewellyn takes you home, musically at least in this line up of 20th and 21st century music in **Grant's Postcards from Home**. Welsh harpist Catrin Finch returns for this unique and vibrant journey at the Meymandi Concert Hall. Tickets range from \$43 to \$63. (8pm) www.ncsymphony.org

April 20-29

North Carolina Theatre presents **Steel Magnolias** at the Progress Energy Center, AJ Fletcher Theatre. The quintessential story of family and friendship in a unique Southern sisterhood, *Steel Magnolias* is a skillfully crafted portrayal of eccentricity, loyalty and love set in a small-town beauty parlor. The title suggests that although they appear delicate as magnolias, the main female characters are tough as steel. Set in the intimate venue of A.J. Fletcher Theater, this humorously revealing play will take you on an emotional journey filled with laughter and tears. Visit www.nctheatre.com for more information and to purchase tickets.

April 21 (Saturday)

Bach & Roll Casino Night Fundraiser is a fun and lively evening of casino games in the elegant setting of The Mahler Fine Art gallery at 228 Fayetteville Street in the heart of downtown. This year's event will have a variety of gaming tables to include Black Jack, Roulette, Craps and Texas Holdem. Food will be provided by Belle's Catering (catering company of The Big Easy) and there will be a wine tasting hosted by the experts from Raleigh Wine Shop. There will be a silent auction at the event and prizes for the top-winning casino players. The event takes place 7 to 11pm. Cocktail attire suggested. Information about the event, ticket purchases and sponsorship opportunities can be found at www.cmsraleigh.org/bach. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Community Music School.

Fridays Evening at 8pm

North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) Film Series

April 20—Film: **Down with Love** with Ewan McGregor and Renée Zellweger (2003)

April 27—Film: **The Ipcress File** with Michael Caine, Nigel Green, Sue Lloyd (1965)

May 4—Film: **OSS 117: Cairo Nest of Spies** with Jean Dujardin, Berenice Bejo (2006)

May 11—Film: **9 to 5** with Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin, Dolly Parton and Dabney Coleman (1980). Movies are shown on the East Building wall beside the Museum auditorium. \$3.50 for Museum members, students, Cinema Inc. and Galaxy Cinema members, \$5 for all others. Visit www.ncartmuseum.org for more information and to buy tickets online.

May 17-20

Hope. Triumph. Peace. Freedom. Joy. **Beethoven's Symphony No. 9** embodies them all like no other piece of music. Presented by Carolina Ballet, every performance of this towering work with its "Ode to Joy" choral finale is a celebration—a new Robert Weiss piece set to this work is truly the artistic event of the year. The program opens with the company's first revival of the family-friendly *Beauty and the Beast*. (8pm) www.carolinaballet.com

May 19 (Saturday)

Tour d'Coop is a one-day "Parade of Combs" featuring hens and coops tucked into the gardens of your friends and neighbors who live inside the beltline and seeks to educate visitors about keeping hens and delight them with garden ideas and inspiration. Open to adults and children, the tour showcases various hen houses and breeds. Coop owners are on hand at each location to discuss the how-tos of chicken keeping and there are opportunities for photographing and getting to know the chickens. The wide variety of coop styles as well as the surrounding back yard gardens makes the tour interesting for the whole family. More info and tickets (a \$10 donation for individuals or \$20 for an entire family) at http://tourdcoop.com.

May 23 (Wednesday)

The Raleigh Emerging Designers Innovation Incubator (REDii) is hosting a launch party and fashion extravaganza at Solas on Wednesday, May 23rd from 7 to 10pm. The event will feature a showcase of Raleigh's dynamic new fashion designers as well as light appetizers, finger foods, wine and beer. Proceeds from the event will benefit REDii and its cause to promote and assure the success of Raleigh's up and coming fashion entrepreneurs. For ticket information call 919.369.7031 or visit www.rediiraleigh.org.

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DOWNTOWN SNAPSHOT

From the Downtown Raleigh Alliance



Dear Reader,

As springtime is now upon us, we invite you to another great season of the Raleigh Downtown Farmers Market at City Plaza. DRA is proud to produce this 27-week event commencing in April and lasting until October.

Please join us for our market kickoff day, Wednesday April 25, from 10am-2pm, which will feature a pig pickin' brought to you by The Pit Restaurant with music by Big Head Dog.

We also will feature several new vendors in an expanded layout and other surprises! Stay tuned for more details at www.RaleighEatLocal.com.

Recently, the DRA hosted its 2012 Annual Meeting and Achievement Awards Ceremony at the Raleigh Convention Center. Over 600 people attended this year's event. We provided discounted tickets to downtown residents to encourage them to join us in our effort to continue the revitalization of Raleigh's downtown, and over 70 residents attended.

To learn more about downtown events, parking, maps, and the free R-LINE circulator bus visit www.YouRHere.com.

Please enjoy this issue of *Downtowner Magazine*.

DAVID DIAZ
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BY TRISHA HASCH, URBAN PLANNER, RALEIGH URBAN DESIGN CENTER



Vision: *The Blue Ridge Corridor District is a 24/7 urban area that unifies distinct regions of activity. The corridor is beautifully landscaped with wide sidewalks and pedestrian-scaled lighting. Bicyclists and pedestrians have easy access along the corridor to the open space of the greenway and to the medical, museum and university zones. Nearby transit links the corridor to activity centers, campuses, residential areas, and Downtown. Surrounding the area is sustainable, integrated development, a natural landscape, and a thriving residential community.*

On April 2, 2011, the Blue Ridge Road community of property owners, large institutions, the State, City, and residential community debated and agreed on this vision and kicked off a planning process that will generate a blueprint for collaborative, integrated development along the corridor, one of several growth centers identified in the Raleigh 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

The Blue Ridge Road study was initiated after key property owners organized and engaged more than 250 interested people to advocate for development over the past four years. The effort included significant engagement and funding from the NC Sustainable Communities fund and NC Department of Transportation, along with Rex Healthcare, NC Museum of Art, NC State University, NC State Fairgrounds, Centennial Authority, Blue Ridge Realty, and Highwoods Properties. Urban Design Associates, LLC (UDA) was approved by City Council after a selection process that included 30+ responses to a request for proposals.

Grant Meacci, RLA, LEED-AP, Planning + Design Manager, Urban Design Center, and Larry Zucchini, RLA, LEED-AP, Managing Partner, JDavis Architects,

PLLC, a member of the UDA team, presented planning and development rationale and results at a recent Urban Design Center Creating Great Places lunch forum. They highlighted the Blue Ridge Road Corridor as an example of how urban form is fundamental to the success of a growth center.

After Raleigh City Council passed the 2030 Comprehensive Plan in 2009, the City began work on a new zoning code that, while not yet approved, includes urban street typologies, maximum block dimensions, building frontages and heights.

For more detailed information on the new zoning code, see the draft UDO document at www.raleighnc.gov/UDO.

In 1919, the State of North Carolina purchased a large tract of land initially established as a temporary military base during the First World War. The district is now home to institutions of regional and national prominence including the NC Museum of Art, NC College of Veterinary Medicine, NC State Fairgrounds, Carter-Finley Stadium, PNC Arena, Rex Healthcare, and the best open space system in Raleigh.

The Blue Ridge Road story has universal application as all Raleigh's growth centers take on the times and opportunities the future will bring. The district's rural character, once replaced with suburban cul-de-sacs and seemingly haphazard development, is

now destined to become a 24/7 urban destination. Through the current planning process four districts have emerged along the corridor: medical, arts, fairgrounds, and transit. Each has a distinct character and unique uses. Over time, the density of people and activity will continue to grow and provide a basis for a transit amenity so critical to all 21st century cities.

During a design workshop held over the course of one week in February, designers, core stakeholders, and the public realized a series of design themes that would drive the conceptual plan under development.

Raleigh's growth centers can take a lesson from the extraordinary success that Downtown Raleigh has experienced over the past 10 years—\$2.5 Billion in public/private investment and counting. Downtown Raleigh's transformation came about through pragmatic leadership, good planning, and strategic partnerships. The Blue Ridge Road partnership of core stakeholders, the community, State, and City continues a tradition that is making Raleigh one of the most competitive, liveable places in the U.S.

To view the Urban Design Center Creating Great Places lunch forum videos, go to www.raleighnc.gov/portal/portal/cor/ext/RTNVideos. For more information on the Blue Ridge Road project, visit www.raleighnc.gov/urbandesign.



On the left is a current view of one area of Blue Ridge Road. To the right is a rendering of the same intersection after changes have been made.



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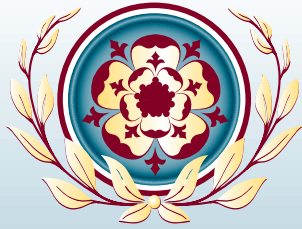
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