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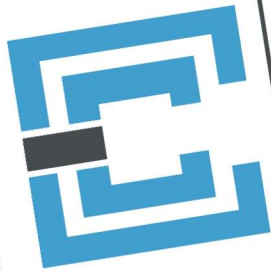
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ISSUE 1

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Welcome to Charlotte

If you are thinking of moving to the Charlotte area, you would be moving to one of the most dynamic cities in the nation and the largest metro in North Carolina. If you already live in Charlotte, you know it to be a thriving city with many equally quality suburbs nearby.

The great schools, strong values, and friendly environment here make for the perfect place for families, retirees, and those who are simply looking for a fresh start. It is exciting to see the ongoing growth in the Charlotte/Mecklenburg area with accompanying restaurants, nightlife, and thriving retail and corporate businesses. There are many entertainment venues for sports and the performing arts to enrich life in the area.

Located in the southern part of the state and with easy access to I-85 and I-77, Charlotte is also within easy driving distance of Asheville, Atlanta, and the NC Coast for weekend get-aways to the ocean, mountains, and other city life. This commerce-rich area is one of the fastest growing regions in the state and nationally ranked as a great place to live.

Large international corporations have established regional and national headquarters here bringing a strong economy, growth, and future development. This has also helped to foster cultural diversity and understanding in our communities, further enhancing our lives.

The team at The Original Relocation Guide/Charlotte edition knows how important pertinent information on an area can be to relocating families. This magazine's detailed map and informative articles are sure to enhance your moving experience.

The Relocation Guide Blue Pages, on pages 74-75, provides important phone numbers and contact information that you will need to get settled into your new home, whether you are new to the area, visiting or just making a cross-town move.

We know you will find our magazine to be a helpful guide whether you are a visitor or if you are relocating here. Be sure to tell our advertisers where you found them and thank them for making it possible to bring you this publication. You can also follow us on Facebook where you can keep up with news and events in the Charlotte area or sign up on our website to receive free digital issues of the magazine.

Wishing you all the best,

Mark Boyd & Don Holland

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the original RELOCATION guide

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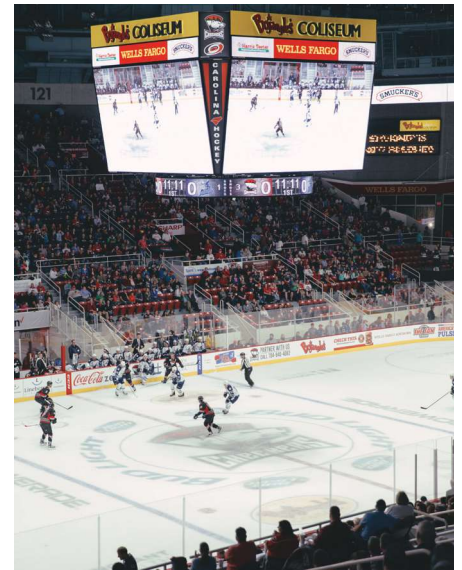
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• This issue's cover shows the dramatic Charlotte skyline.

in this ISSUE



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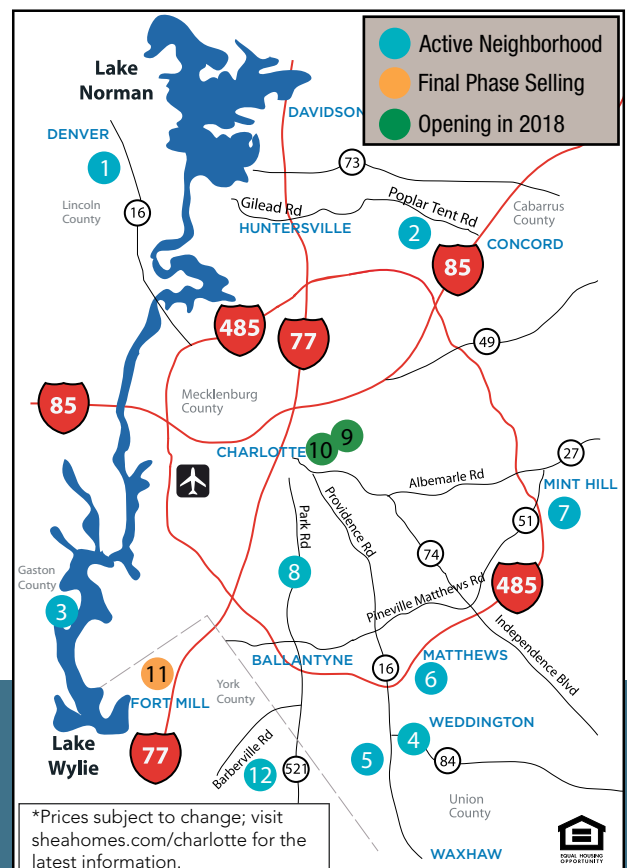
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Charlotte/Mecklenburg

booming business, population, and amenities

BY LYNNE BRANDON



Charlotte, also known as the “Queen City,” is feeling regal these days. North Carolina’s crown jewel is the “Third Fastest Growing Big City in the U.S.” The metropolitan city is also the state’s largest city and the 17th largest city in the nation with nearly 860,000 (2017 U.S. Census figures). Only two other Top 25 cities – Seattle, Washington and Fort Worth, Texas surpassed Charlotte’s growth.

Charlotte’s sprawl has extended to its suburb towns of Fort Mill, S.C. and the other regional towns of Davidson, Huntersville, Mooresville, and Lake Norman, producing high growth from the proximity to Charlotte. Housing, restaurants and business are booming in the region.

A day spent in Charlotte reveals the myriad reasons for visiting and putting down Southern roots in the city that has everything – a robust economy, big-city downtown, exceptional housing, dynamic neighborhood communities and a lifestyle that appeals to all ages.

Tourism is big business in the Queen City. Mecklenburg County leads the state in visitor spending by two and a half times the next highest county, Wake County. Visitors spent \$5.2 billion in Mecklenburg County (2016 figures). Visitor spending funds the city’s most defining and iconic assets – BB&T Ballpark, The Westin Charlotte, Charlotte Convention Center, Levine Center for the Arts, NASCAR Hall of Fame, renovations at Bank of America Stadium, and much more.

Companies in Charlotte/Mecklenburg announced the addition of more than 3,200 jobs and more than \$74 million in capital investments during the first quarter of 2018. The city and region are headquarters for major health care providers and industries. Charlotte is the third-largest banking center behind New York City and San Francisco, according to research by S&P Global

Market Intelligence. And, more than 40,000 people in Charlotte are employed in banking. Banks are based in the Charlotte region with offices in surrounding towns including Lincolnton, Cornelius, York, Mooresville and others.

KURZ, a worldwide leader in hot stamping and coating technology, will build its North American headquarters in Huntersville. Headquartered in Germany, KURZ will invest more than \$18 million in the new facility. Ernst & Young LLP, one of the largest professional services organizations in the world, will expand in Mecklenburg County creating 375 jobs and investing \$8.2 million in Charlotte over the next five years.

Charlotte is made up of neighborhoods and communities that are mini-cities complete with beautiful parks and greenways, locally owned restaurants, cozy diners, world-class museums, lively breweries and shopping. Each contributes a colorful thread to the city’s unique fabric. Explore the city’s 10 neighborhood districts and surrounding towns for a fun afternoon or stay-cation close to home (charlottesgotalot.com/neighborhoods).

Check out NoDa, known as Charlotte’s arts district, where musicians, chefs, mixologists and artists congregate. The revival of the former textile mill area and original blue-collar community started in the mid-1980s with an art gallery opening and others followed. Today NoDa (main street North Davidson) offers up plenty of breweries (try the dog friendly The Dog Bar) and more to see and do.

The Uptown neighborhood is the heartbeat of the Queen City. Known as Charlotte’s city center, Uptown is divided into four wards. Named for its geographic locale, the district’s center is at the intersection of Trade and Tryon streets. Uptown (not to be confused with downtown) is where the professionals of the city come out to play in the evening in bars, restaurants, music venues and >>

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wherever people gather to relax after a long day. Museum offerings are rich in Uptown from the NASCAR Hall of Fame, the Levine Center for the Arts, the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, and the Mint Museum.

The Elizabeth neighborhood marries historic charm with tree-lined streets and community-centered pursuits. Elizabeth is the city's second streetcar suburb (Dilworth was the first). The neighborhood is where hospitals, churches and higher education are gathered along with locally owned businesses and restaurants. Tree lined streets with Craftsman-style homes bring charm to the community marked by young professionals who hang out at local retailers, music halls and saloons. At night dine at upscale French restaurant, Fig Tree, or listen to live music at Visulite Music Hall.

The progressive city is easy to get around in thanks to an innovative rail system. Charlotte's LYNX Blue Line light rail, the state's first light rail system, began operation in 2007 with a 9.6-mile route linking South Charlotte to Center City. In March, a 9.3-mile extension of the LYNX Blue Line began operation with 11 new stations running from Center City to North Charlotte, ending at UNC- Charlotte. Highlights of attractions

accessible from the new stations include: UNC Charlotte Center City, First Ward Park, the historic NoDa arts district, North Point Shopping Center, IKEA, McCullough Commons, University Executive Park, the UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens and UNC Charlotte's main campus.

A fun way to see the city and its suburbs is with a tour (charlottetours.com). The Charlotte Walking Tour is self-guided and includes some of the best-known Charlotte sites, like The Green, Romare Bearden Park, Spirit Square, and Queen Charlotte statue. C-Charlotte Tours specializes in daily driving tours of the Queen City and its surrounding suburbs. Or, for something different take a horse-drawn carriage ride through Uptown.

Sports are a big deal in Charlotte. From NFL football and basketball to NASCAR, the city is rich in sports offerings. Much of the action takes place at the Bank of America stadium, home of the NFL football team, Carolina Panthers. Soccer and golf are both favorite ways to spectate. Tournaments and sports events give players and spectators plenty to celebrate.

American interest in European soccer is riding high. In July, international teams Liverpool F.C. will take on Borussia Dortmund at the Charlotte Bank of America Stadium. The match will mark the third time the International Champions Cup has come to Charlotte. The tournament kicks off the international soccer season.



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In August (7-13) the 99th annual PGA Championship will bring Charlotte its first-ever major golf championship—and the first PGA Championship in North Carolina since 1974. The franchise Topgolf comes to Charlotte in 2018. The entertainment and sport venue brings a high-tech interactive driving range to golf. The three-level venue offers climate-controlled hitting bays that can hold up to six players at a time. With a full-service restaurant and bar, music, lounges and hundreds of high-definition TVs, Topgolf is both kid- and adult-friendly.

Courses in the region are award-winning. Rocky River Golf Club, Olde Sycamore Golf Plantation and The Golf Club at Ballantyne were ranked among the top 10 public golf courses in Charlotte by *USA Today's* 10 Best Readers' Choice Awards. To improve your game you can go to golf school at the Dana Rader Golf School, the Carolinas' only Golf Channel Academy.

Relaxing at a golf club is also a favorite pastime. There are many reasons why individuals, young professionals and families join Pine Island Country Club, but it all comes back to the fresh approach to the country club lifestyle. The serene course is one of the finest USGA-regulated courses in the region, providing fun and challenging play for golfers of all ages and skill levels. Membership packages and levels give members the opportunity to enjoy the country club lifestyle along with being convenient to get to, convenient to play and at an affordable price.

Even non-golfers love all that Pine Island offers. From year-round member events like the Chip & Sip or Pampered at Pine Island, and mind-blowing farm-to-table dishes, to the fun and inviting pool and friendly membership, Pine Island is the perfect place to 'let go' and enjoy.>>

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Charlotte's vibrant arts and culture scene offers a diversity of experiences. Tapping local, national and international acts, the Queen City touts Community Theater and Broadway smash hits, intimate jazz performances and chart-topping vocalists. Art is everywhere from murals created by local artists adorning buildings in the city to renowned art exhibitions, and more.

Whatever your interests—live music, visual or performing arts, architecture, or public art, the city's creative class combined with accessible, intriguing art ventures throughout the city's neighborhoods make it possible to discover art on every corner. Some must sees' are: Blumenthal Performing Arts Center, Ovens Auditorium, Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, Charlotte Ballet, Charlotte Jazz Festival and NoDa Historic Arts District.

The Charlotte region's culinary cred is growing as new restaurants open at warp speed. The city's culinary scene has exploded with notable additions, including Zeppelin, The Suffolk Punch and others. The Queen City encourages young, inventive chefs. Many are graduates of culinary programs at Johnson & Wales University -Charlotte, Central Piedmont Community College and the Art Institute of Charlotte, as well as well-established restaurateurs, James Beard Award nominees, brewers, distillers, mixologists and international tastemakers.

The region's diverse population (Charlotte is currently one of the most diverse cities in the United States) has options that reflect the amazing amount of choices here including a public food market; craft breweries; and cocktail lounges, bars, diners and dives, where foodies can sip and nosh their way through the Queen City and Mecklenburg County.

A variety of wine bars in neighborhoods, hotels, restaurants or downtown make it easy to indulge in an adult beverage. Some are conspicuous, others, not so much. Gravitate to Dilworth Tasting Room for a garden-vibe or a casual nook (Bulldog Beer & Wine). No matter your preference you can find a style that fits.

Surrounding towns have celebrated chefs like locals Joe and Katy Kindred at their destination restaurant, Kindred and the new Hello, Sailor in Davidson. Food Network's Guy Fieri is enamored with Charlotte eateries, many of which have appeared on his Diners, Drive-ins and Dives show. Restaurants to put on your "gotta try" list are: Kindred, Haberdish, Hello, Sailor, Price's Chicken Coop, The Asbury, The Punch Room and Dot Dot Dot.

Diversity is the name of the food game in the Queen City. The progressive's city celebrates African-American chefs and restaurant owners who are culinary leaders in the Charlotte region's innovative food culture. In the past year, Soul Food Sessions (pop-up dinners), Charlotte Black Restaurant Week (October 15-21) and Black Food-Truck

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CHARLOTTE/MECKLENBURG

Fridays have elevated the food diversity scene. Soul Food Sessions events are headed by all-black kitchen staff in locations throughout Charlotte. The charity-driven dinners invite attendees to experience African cuisine and black culture.

The ever-forward thinking city has an innovative way to nosh and imbibe while not having to worry about driving. Charlotte's light rail system has brokered the development of a corridor of restaurants, breweries and other watering holes best explored by rail. Notable stations to stop in for a bite and a pint include New Bern, Bland and 36th Street.

Craft beer is on a roll in the fast rising craft city. Since 2012, the number of breweries in the Charlotte area has grown from seven to 40 breweries with 20 more under construction. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg County and region accounts for approximately 20 percent of the 175-plus breweries in North Carolina. With brew houses scattered throughout Charlotte's electric neighborhoods that flow from the city's South Carolina suburbs to the banks of Lake Norman and beyond, the region's beer scene is one to celebrate. Charlotte neighborhoods are hotspots for breweries.

Check out The Olde Mecklenburg Brewery in Lower South End (LoSo). The authentic German beer hub moved into an 8-acre biergarten in 2015 and is tucked on a busy block that also houses Sugar Creek

Brewing Company—the city's first Belgian-inspired craft brewery. Stay on the block to explore a cidery, distillery, social house and escape room. Just down the street, more taprooms with top-notch pours, including newcomer Brewers at 4001 Yancey.

The districts of NoDa and Plaza Midwood (have been a hot bed for breweries since 2011, when three acclaimed spots opened in rapid succession: NoDa Brewing Company (try its medal-snagging Hop, Drop 'n Roll IPA); Birdsong Brewing Co., proclaimed famous for its Jalapeño Pale Ale; and Heist Brewery, touted for its creative craft beer-cocktail combos. At Plaza Midwood, have a yoga workout... with your beer.

A magnet for young professionals, bustling South End overflows with craft beer options and brew lovers who spend leisure time with a pint or two. Triple C Brewing Co., Lenny Boy Brewing Co. and Sycamore Brewing bring their "A Game" to South End. Triple C Brewing offers a relaxed ambiance with its sunny patio and cold brew. Lenny Boy Brewing Co. keeps guests coming back with an agenda of sours and kombucha. At Sycamore Brewing you can have a pint of award-winning Southern Girl Blonde lager.

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Outdoor enthusiasts will not only find respite within Charlotte's tree canopy, which covers nearly 50 percent of the city, but can also explore greenways, trails, nature preserves. Nearby mountains make for a fun day trip and are ideal for hiking, biking. Or stay local and get on the water at Lake Norman.

These green spaces, community and regional parks, and golf course give locals plenty of ways to have some green moments in the city. The U.S. National Whitewater Center where Olympic athletes train is a favorite way to have a whitewater raft experience.

Staying overnight in the Charlotte region is a treat with boutique hotels, or national brands with names like Kimpton and Grand Bohemian in the heart of Center City. More than 7,600 new hotel rooms are slated for the Charlotte region through 2020, including more than 2,000 in Center City.

In 2017, Uptown welcomed its first boutique hotel, The Ivey's Hotel, located at the corner of 5th and Trade streets. The former department store renovated into a 42-room hotel sports a chic bar, Sophia's Lounge, which partners with nearby 5Church restaurant to pair Queen City eats with stellar cocktails.

The Kimpton Tryon Park Hotel opened in 2017. Overlooking Romare Bearden Park and BB&T Ballpark, the hotel has its own restaurant, Angeline's, and a rooftop bar, Merchant & Trade. The dual-branded AC Hotel and Residence Inn atop EpiCentre, Center City's nightlife hub, is slated to open in 2018. The conveniently placed hotels will add 300 rooms to Uptown's growing hospitality sector. More hotel construction is on the planning boards with a 10-story, wellness-focused EVEN hotel in the works.

In a recent article, *Food & Wine* magazine asked what many are thinking. Is 2018, the break-out year for Charlotte? Many say yes - others say it has already happened. In the Queen City and its suburbs, visitors can experience an unending choices of restaurants, entertainment and a flourishing craft beer scene thanks to an ongoing light rail project.

Charlotte Douglas International Airport offers more than 160 nonstop flights to destinations worldwide and has more than 700 flights daily. More than 60 percent of the country is within a two-hour flight of the city. The airport is located seven miles from Center City Charlotte, a drive that takes 10 to 20 minutes depending on traffic.

For more information, or to plan a trip go to charlottesgotalot.com. The Charlotte region hosts approximately 27.8 million visitors annually. []

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Uptown Charlotte

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VERA WILSON



In the mid '70s, Charlotte was a city coming into its own. It was gaining prominence as a national player in the banking industry, laying the groundwork for the high-rises that brandish the city's impressive skyline. A local Charlotte businessman, inspired by this evolution, waged a campaign to rename the heart of his city. He felt the word 'downtown' was downbeat and depressing and didn't accurately characterize the blossoming business and shopping district. Enter Uptown, a term that positively connotes the heart of the third largest banking center in the United States and Charlotte's Central Business District. Although the district's bedrock may have been built on Fortune 500 companies like Bank of America, Duke Energy, and Lowe's, proper credit must be given to the resourceful entrepreneurs, innovators and developers that have created a unique, diverse and welcoming Uptown that embrace residents and visitors alike.

Charlotte is the second fastest-growing city in the nation and Uptown is certainly a part of that. With a population that has exploded since the early 2000s, Uptown's current population is estimated at 18,000. Millennials, who dig the vibrant nightlife and the steady roster of sporting and cultural events, are primarily responsible for the influx. If you find yourself working in Uptown, you're in good company—the average employee wage is over \$100,000. Major employers include a multitude

of financial service companies, the Carolina Healthcare System, the airline industry and local, state and federal government. The hospitality industry is well represented, whether it's a downtown hotel, boutique store or restaurant, and provides employment for hundreds in the area.

The diversity of Uptown's urban living adds to its appeal. Walk home to your penthouse apartment, or maybe a historic home is more to your liking. On that cold, rainy day, take the light rail, streetcar or extensive skywalk network to get to work; if heading out-of-town, take the express bus to Charlotte Douglas International Airport, a mere 15 minutes away. The city-led project, Uptown Connects, promotes cycling through building better and safer bike lanes. With 40 percent of residents owning a dog, your pet is certain to make a friend at the 130-plus acres of open space, including parks, trails and greenways.

Uptown is divided into four wards, each with its distinct personality. The First Ward is where you'll find basketball fans catching a Hornet's game and a beer at Spectrum Arena or bookworms hanging out at the main library or UNC-Charlotte Center City campus. The new four-acre First Ward Park features Live on the Green free musical performances. Amid dozens of eateries, bakeries seem to shine here—choices include Jewell Treats, Cloud 9 Confections, and bar-CHOCOLATE. Billed as a one-of-a-kind youth destination, ImaginOn features theaters, exhibit space and classrooms.

The Second Ward, once called the Harlem of Charlotte before it was razed in the '60s, is now the locale for numerous condos, apartments and the entertainment and retail multi-floor hot spot known as the EpiCentre. Need a marriage license? Head to the Second Ward where the courthouse, city hall and other government buildings are located. Admire the sculptures at The Green, a park with a literature theme, or check out Fahrenheit, a popular rooftop bar.

Eclectic describes the Third Ward with its mix of museums, like the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, culinary and business school Johnson & Wales, and one of the largest mixed-use developments in the state, Gateway Village. Sports lovers need never leave with the Carolina Panthers and Charlotte Knights playing their home games here. The ward has a bit of an international flair with a host of restaurants featuring cuisines from around the world like Persis Biryani Indian Grill, Hazelnut Crêperie, Levant Mediterranean Grill and Fujiyama.

Quiet streets and grand Victorian homes define the Fourth Ward. Bordered on one side by historic Elwood Cemetery and the business and entertainment district on another, the ward delivers a Southern charm to Uptown. []

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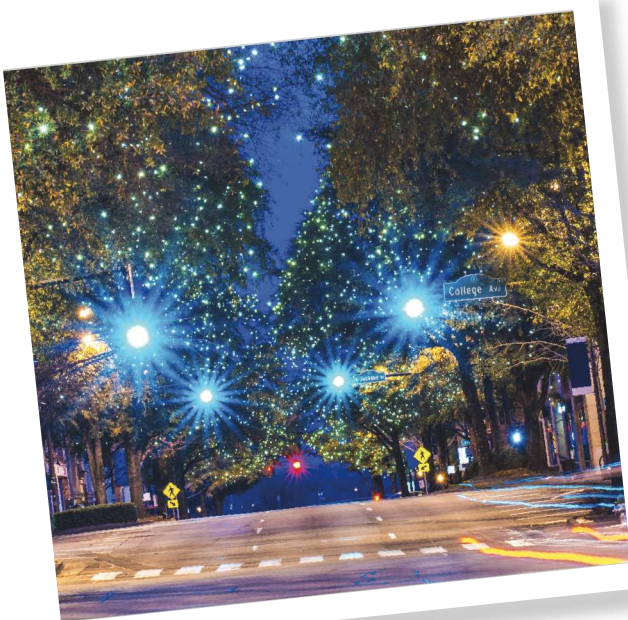


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South Charlotte

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ALYSSA LAFARO



Just like New York City has boroughs, Charlotte has geographic subdivisions. And South Charlotte continues to expand and change each year. This thriving section of North Carolina's largest city divides into two distinct corners, the southeast and the southwest, according to the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce.

In the 1960s and '70s, life in the Queen City exploded, pushing development further and further south, leading to the birth of a new neighborhood called Cotswold. During that time, the city finished construction of SouthPark Mall — a catalyst for retail, business, and residential development. Because Charlotte continued to grow, Cotswold today sits much closer to the city center, but plenty of other places define the southeast corner such as the abovementioned SouthPark, the Arboretum, and Matthews.

The community of SouthPark defines itself far beyond the mall with its namesake. Once part of a 3,000-acre farm owned by North Carolina Governor Cameron Morrison, present-day SouthPark takes pride in its success as an esteemed live-work environment and wide array of home options. Find everything from the quaint, ranch properties of the 1950s to modern, multi-million-dollar estates in gated communities.

About 30 minutes from uptown Charlotte, the Arboretum spans four intersecting corners near a large shopping center overflowing with restaurants, movie theaters,

a grocery store, bookstores, and kitschy cafés like Bella Fresco — creator of the pineapple-topped Hawaiian burger — and Charlotte Café. Try the latter's pecan Belgian waffle or salonica pepper-packed Grecian scramble.

Head east to discover Matthews, a former 19th-century farming community that now boasts upwards of 25,000 residents, most of whom have relocated here in the last decade alone thanks to its beautiful subdivisions, affordable homes, strong schools, lower taxes, and the historic, pedestrian-friendly downtown. Learn more about the early days of the cotton and railroad industries in this deep-rooted neighborhood at the local Heritage Museum, housed in the Massey-Clark House, built in 1880.

Large business parks disperse throughout Charlotte's southwest corner due to expansion of the airport, the I-485 outerbelt, and N.C. 49 over the years. The latter has led to increased development along Lake Wylie — a manmade lake created by Duke Power in 1904 that, today, features 325 miles of shoreline that draws water recreationists from Mecklenburg and Gaston counties in North Carolina and York County in South Carolina. Some of the communities that make up this region of Charlotte include Pineville, Belantyne, and Lake Wylie.

The 6,500-person town of Pineville overflows with more than 8 million square feet of retail space. This shopping hub features Carolina Place Mall, major big-box retailers, and a variety of mom-and-pops. Immerse yourself in linens, hand-painted furniture, and other antiques at Christie's on Main Antiques, or dig your heels into the largest selection of exotic rugs in the Carolinas at Pineville Rug Gallery. Grab a pint at Kit's Tracksides Crafts — serving local, regional, and national craft beers, meads, and ciders — or have one across the street at Carolina Tabletop games, a board-game store and club that serves beer.

People who enjoy the fast-paced nine-to-five of the city but a low-key home life after hours should head to the shores of Lake Wylie. Just 14 miles from Charlotte's city center, the Sanctuary is a "nature reserve community" with 20 miles of nature trails, 300 acres of common open space, and seven miles of shoreline. A 17-acre waterfront amenity area called "the camp" features swimming pools, tennis courts, a fitness center, kid's room, a playground, an amphitheater, picnic stations, community events, and a boating center with canoes and kayaks. []

Ballantyne

upscale, progressive, flourishing

VERA WILSON

It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood...of Ballantyne, that is. This upscale community, with its elegant signature 'B' embossed on many of its buildings and signs, is an unincorporated area in South Charlotte that has flourished since the creation of the Ballantyne Corporate Park in 1992. Ballantyne comprises 2,000 acres and has a population of over 25,000. Previously undeveloped farmland, now it's heralded as one of the most successful master-planned communities in the Southeast.

When you enter Ballantyne proper, you'll see four monuments that appear to be elaborate archways. Designed to signify transportation, technology, finance and the human spirit, they each represent what has made Charlotte and Ballantyne what they are today. Ballantyne Corporate Park is the true pulse of the town. Once named the International Office Park of the Year by the Building Owners and Managers Association, it spans over 500 acres and has over 300 tenants. To underscore its significance, the park was sold in 2017 for an impressiveness \$1.2 billion, the third largest real estate transaction in the office sector. Needless to say, employment opportunities abound, and the average household income in Ballantyne tops \$100,000.

Billed as 'way beyond a workplace,' the park is where you might see a yoga class taking place on its sprawling greenway, helping workers get their Zen on before the workday begins. The park hosts numerous events and activities throughout the year such as races where corporate teams are playfully pitted against one another, food drives, book clubs, and holiday celebrations, all designed to make corporate and community synonymous. Free lunch seminars (coming up – fashion styling for business travelers!) are well attended.

For more serious studies, Wingate University is another notable tenant. The university was voted a 'best value' school by *U.S. News and World Report*, due in part to its small class sizes. Central Piedmont Community College offers classes on the park grounds as well.

The park is surrounded by amazing dining, shopping, hotels and housing, all within walking distance, so it's hard to determine where the residential and retail side of Ballantyne ends and the park begins. Blakeney, a mixed use development, hosts a summer concert series and Wine Walks—who doesn't love to sip and stroll? The Village at Robinson Farm features many wellness-related shops and a weekly farmers' market. Ballantyne Corners is the new kid on the block and houses the Ballantyne



School of Music and the Ballantyne Arts Center.

Ballantyne Corporate Park isn't the only park in town. There are several small parks where baseball games are in full swing. Other outdoor locales include serene ponds perfect for a lazy afternoon of fishing and numerous hiking and bike trails. You can't miss LimeBikes...literally—the bikes seem to glow green! A dockless bike share program that costs an affordable one dollar for a 30 minute ride, LimeBike has a mobility fleet that are GPS and 3G-enabled.

Golf is a favorite pastime of Ballantyne residents who head to the Golf Club at Ballantyne for a few rounds. If that hole-in-one eludes you, the Dana Radar Golf Academy can help perfect your game.

Since the parks only allow catch-and-release fishing, you'll have to head to one of 30-plus dining establishments in Ballantyne to satisfy your hunger. For the best in elegant dining, try the Gallery Restaurant, so named because art from a local gallery is displayed on its walls. For a warm rustic atmosphere, the Stone Mountain Grill is the place for Angus beef sliders or Firecracker shrimp. Vine American Kitchen features an outdoor fire pit. OGGI Ristorante Italiano features homemade pasta and other Italian favorites. Sushi is the star at Jade Asian Fusion and Sushi Bar, while The Blue Taj features the best in Indian fare.

The Ballantyne Hotel, a majestic resort with a spa and golf course, continues the theme of luxury that symbolizes Ballantyne. The resort counts the Obamas and sports announcer Bob Costas, in town to announce a Carolina Panthers game, as previous guests. []

Matthews

vintage, yet trending cool

VERA WILSON



The logo for downtown Matthews has a vintage look—much like the town itself. Look closer and the logo tells you that Matthews has been “cool since 1879.” It’s a fitting exemplification of this community of over 31,000 that pays tribute to its past by undertaking projects to meld it with its future, like saving and transforming their 1907 brick schoolhouse into the Matthews Community Center, the town’s hub.

The town serves as a beacon to professionals who work in Charlotte’s skyline district just 20 minutes away, but want full-on Southern charm when they are off the clock. Workers who prefer not to jump on US-74 and head to Charlotte everyday have opportunities for work right here in Matthews, home to the headquarters of retail store Family Dollar and grocery store chain Harris Teeter, with 900 and 680 local employees, respectively. The town’s Chamber of Commerce boasts 400 members, like Novant Health Matthews Medical Center, helping to key the town both physically and fiscally healthy. This vigorous business foundation means a median household income above the national average for Matthews while the unemployment rate hovers below it.

Matthews’ downtown showcases old and new, with buildings from the late 19th and early 20th century housing the latest foodie hangout, shopping and service establishments. Matthews pays tribute to its sister city in France with Santé, a French-influenced restaurant, and popular Royal Cafe and Creperie. In the Cultural Arts District, you’ll enjoy shopping at boutiques like jewelry

store Designs by Shirlee while strolling among the backdrop of beautiful historic churches and the McDowell Arts Center (the “Mac”), where monthly rotating art exhibits from local galleries are displayed. Next stop is North-End, Matthews’ first-of-its-kind mixed-use development, within walking distance of historic downtown. Its modern loft apartments bring housing to the downtown area, and unique stores like the Loyalist Market that features cheese and charcuterie (are you sure we’re not in France?) stand alongside convenient favorites like Walgreens.

For stick-to-your-ribs eatin’, try Cafe 157, Mac’s Speed Shop or Wayback Burgers. For a more continental flair, there’s Mario’s Italian Restaurant, Umami Sushi or Grill and El Valle Mexican restaurant. Matthews has jumped on board the brewery bandwagon and night scene with the likes of Carolina Beer Temple, Seaboard Taproom and Wine Bar and Temple Mojo.

School choice is another positive of Matthews. Private schools equal the number of public schools (six each) and their four charter schools include a preparatory high school. Also conveniently located in Matthews is a satellite location of Central Piedmont Community College.

The family that plays together will love Matthews. A handful of parks offer every activity imaginable. Twenty-nine acre Squirrel Lake Park is the place to bring your fishing pole, or take in the local critters at KP Park, a certified wildlife habitat. No place for a garden at home? Stake out your claim at Fullwood’s or Purser-Hulsey Park’s community garden.

Play or watch soccer at the new Sportsplex at Matthews with its multipurpose fields and 2,500 seat stadium, the perfect place to catch a Charlotte Independence soccer team game. Other parks connect to the green interstate known as the Carolina Thread Trail. If it’s too cold or wet outdoors, dribble a ball inside at the Crews Recreational Center.

Take in a play at the Stumptown Park downtown, offering movies, concerts and special events year-round. The Levine Senior Center offers activities for the young at heart.

The hit of the summer season is Beachfest Matthews. Beach music fills the air while you take in the carnival, arts and craft booths, and car show.

Holiday family fun is found in Matthews morning, noon and night. Wake up to Breakfast with Santa in December, lunch with the Easter Bunny in spring, and a Father-Daughter Valentine Dance on a February evening. Labor Day weekend means the Matthews Alive festival with a parade, fireworks, and Midway games and rides, all to benefit local nonprofits. []



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Fort Mill/Rock Hill

vibrant, historic, athletic

BY LYNNE BRANDON



The two Carolinas are a tale of two cities separated by a border – one is in North Carolina, and one is South Carolina. **Fort Mill, South Carolina** has benefitted from Charlotte’s sprawl that has inched its way from the metropolitan city to the bustling town. A vibrant downtown, strong economy with new development and industry are all reasons to visit or put down roots.

A development plan has established the 2,300-acre Anne Springs Close Greenway, a nature preserve with several lakes and 27 miles of hiking, bicycling and horseback riding trails. The plan also includes industrial parks and an office park. Baxter Village is a mixed-use development with residential homes with restaurants, shops, offices and civic spaces and more than 500 acres of open space and parks.

Amor Artis, the town’s first brewery, is open for business to the delight of locals. “It has been a very humbling beginning since opening, said co-owner, Travis Tolson. “We grew up in Fort Mill and to see what has happened in downtown over the past couple of months has been amazing. In just under 5 months we have brewed over 30 different beers and created a taproom where people come together to get to know each other and learn about craft beer.” One of the most popular brews is Springs Farm Peach sour which is a sour beer made with 500 pounds of local Springs Farms Peaches (Fort Mill is known for its peach orchards) and aged in Pinot Noir barrels for 7 months.

Historic Downtown Fort Mill is a lively place to be – indoors and outdoors. Parks, locally owned shops and

restaurants converge in the pedestrian friendly downtown filled with unique shops and locally owned restaurants. The Improper Pig, a popular food truck, will serve up delicious barbecue and bourbon when it opens its first restaurant later in 2018. After dinner, stop in for something sweet at Southern Sugar Café.

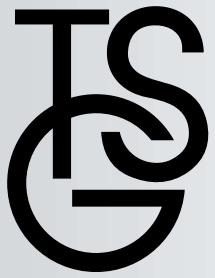
Get a dose of culture at the Fort Mill Community Playhouse or learn about the town at the Fort Mill History Museum. Locals take family and visitors to spend the day at one of the state’s largest attraction, Carowinds (partially in South Carolina).

Less than 30 minutes from Charlotte is **Rock Hill, North Carolina**. Wakeboard fans are celebrating Rock Hill’s new water park that pulls riders across the water and over jumps, grind rails, and other features. Southtown Wake Park, the region’s first cable wakeboard water park gives local thrill seekers a way to experience one of the world’s fastest growing extreme sports.

New ways to have adventure combining sports, exercise and fun are coming to the progressive town. A new indoor athletic park will open soon along with an indoor trampoline park. The trampoline park (set to open in summer 2018) will have one of the first zip lines over a foam pit in the U.S. The biggest draw is the obstacle course based on the popular television show “American Ninja Warrior.”

Major sport events are held in the athletic-minded community. The largest football camp in the U.S., the FBU Top Gun Showcase (July 8-15), the NCAA Division I Cross Country Regionals (November 9th) and the annual U.S. Disc Golf Championships (October 3-6) are all hosted in Rock Hill. 2018 is the 20th year of the event and more than 100 players from across the globe are expected to attend. “The Rock Hill and York County area is a perfect setting for both professional and amateur sports. We really think of our community as a place where not only the athletes have a championship experience but their families’ have a memorable experience,” said Auvis Cole, Senior Vice President of Sales, Rock Hill/York County CVB.

The historic downtown is one of Rock Hill’s five districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The city is also home to three colleges, including Winthrop University, a public liberal arts university founded in 1886. For a history lesson about the region, visit the Museum of York County to learn about the Piedmont. The museum rich town is also home to the Main Street Children’s Museum inspired by the artwork of American illustrator Vernon Grant (the creator of Kellogg’s Snap! Crackle! Pop!), who lived and worked in Rock Hill. The Settlemire Planetarium is one of only two full-dome digital planetariums in the Charlotte Metro area. []



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Lake Norman/Davidson

town life, lake life, arts scene

BY DREW BECKER



You would probably imagine that a community like Lake Norman, developed around the 520-acre shoreline of a lake, to be mainly an aquatic recreational area. You would be correct. The body of water sporting power boats, bass boats, sailboats, and pontoons as well as kayaks, canoes, paddleboards, and the occasional paddle boat affords many ways to enjoy the water.

It is also home to three lustrous cities, Davidson, Cornelius and Huntersville. These three are the largest cities in the area. All three have direct access to Charlotte and share the many resources of the Lake Norman region.

Davidson is the smallest of the three cities with a population of 13,000; it was the once the most populous. Built around Davidson College, founded in 1837, it transformed itself from a mill city to the home of this well-respected liberal arts college. Davidson is a smart city working to help both small and medium size businesses. The city fosters education and planned growth for a healthy future. To accomplish this Davidson is a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly city with a vibrant business district and historic downtown.

Since 2000, the city has acquired almost 600 acres of open space. In 2013, this city won the North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association's "Great Main Street" Award. In 2014 the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement certified Davidson the #1 safest city in North Carolina. In 2017, Davidson won two awards for their Rural Area Plan.

Davidson College prides itself on small class size and individual attention for students. Along with the 26 majors, the pre-professional programs include pre-education, pre-law, pre-medicine and engineering. Students are prepared for a global society since 80 percent work or study abroad while enrolled.

On a beautiful, blue-sky day, you might want to participate in water activities: peddle a cycle boat or go down to a marina to take out a sailboat or powerboat. Or you might want to fish from one of the sites on shore or go out on the lake to catch that big one.

Although much of the area's activities are centered around the largest man-made lake in North Carolina, many other sporting activities thrive as well. For example the prestigious Symetra Classic, an LPGA event, was recently held at River Run Country Club in Davidson. This is only one of the dozens of year-round courses in the area. If you are a golfer, you will find one of the cities or towns near Lake Norman an inviting place to live. An abundance of other recreational parks and playing fields are also accessible. Amateur soccer, softball, and tennis tournaments are held in the area along with national and international diving competitions. How about taking a horse out for a ride or a hike on a trail at the Latta Plantation Nature Center and Preserve which spans 18 miles?

If you are looking for something else to do, you can walk back in history, play in one of the many parks, attend festivals, wine and dine or attend the theater. Take in one of the music events in the area. While in Davidson drop in on one of the Concerts on the Green. These are presented on the town green in front of the public library and range from beach music by the Band of Oz to top-40 variety to gospel to the Davidson College Symphony and Jazz Ensemble.

Check out the yearly Brewers and Music Festival at Historic Rural Hill in Huntersville where 11 bands play and over 40 breweries feature their craft beers. Camp out for the weekend and saunter over or take one of the shuttles that run all day. For the price of admission, you will be able to taste multiple beers which will also be available for sale.

The Carolina Renaissance Festival takes place in a 25-acre village set in forests and meadows near Huntersville. Visit the castles, cottages and pubs, and listen to music, comedy, theater and more. The whole family can enjoy jousting, the pageantry and costumes as well as other entertainment.

If you would like something more contemporary, attend one of the many galleries or join in on an art crawl. >>

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Spend the afternoon at the Belk Visual Arts Center in Davidson or try your hand at creating a masterpiece at Studio Elie in Cornelius.

The proposed Cornelius Arts Center is slated to feature an arts hub and district with restaurants, galleries and shops. The edifice is envisioned as a three-story building with a basement for parking; a 7,400 square-foot ground floor ceramic studio; a flexible-use theater accommodating theatrical, dance and live music performances; and a special events room with a kitchen.

NASCAR fans might want to visit the Joe Gibbs Raceshop open to the public Monday through Friday in Huntersville or attend the Joe Gibbs Fan Fest in October where you might meet your favorite driver and experience the vintage car show.

If you prefer spectator sports take in a live event. Watch the Davidson Wildcats who participate in Division I college leagues in football, baseball and basketball. The Wildcats' most famous basketball alumni is Steph Curry. You can also travel to see nearby NFL football with the Carolina Panthers or basketball with the NBA Charlotte Hornets in Uptown Charlotte.

For those interested in dining, one of the most famous spots is Kindred in Davidson operated by Chef Joe Kindred and Co-Owner Katy Kindred. The dining establishment serves globally inspired dishes to delight

the palate. The owners have also opened Hello, Sailor in Cornelius, a twist on traditional fish offerings. The Famous Toastery serves breakfast and more in a casual environment. Mickey & Mooch in Huntersville offers live big band music and an elegant casual atmosphere. These are but a few of the over 140 dining establishments near Lake Norman.

Breweries are abundant in the area. One of the most successful is D9 Brewing Company. Others include Davidson Brewing Company, Eleven Lakes Brewing and Bayne Brewing Company.

But life around Lake Norman is not all fun and games. A thriving business community flourishes here as well. The Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce, located in Cornelius, acts regionally. Chamber president Bill Russell explains his love for the area, "Lake Norman, with all four seasons, and with its proximity to the culture in Charlotte, to beaches, the coast and the mountains lends itself to be a great place to live work and visit."

Since Charlotte is the second largest financial district in the country, some people who work there live here and commute to the Queen City. There is significant wealth in the area and so financial advisers work here as well. There are also numerous banks including new startup Aquesta which now has six branches and is headquartered in Cornelius. >>

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Lake Norman has three major health care providers: Atrium Health, Novant and Lake Norman Medical Center. Medical staffs and doctors' offices that are either affiliated or non-affiliated make up another part of the workforce. This is one sector that provides employment opportunities for those moving to the area.

The three cities and surrounding towns boast a strong corporate base including Lowe's and some of its suppliers who have moved nearby to better serve them. A few of these companies are Rubbermaid, Irwin Tools, MSC Industrial Supply and Southwire. This influx of companies has created work within the Lake Norman cities so that all the residents are not commuters to Charlotte. One of the largest employers is Ingersoll Rand which supplies Club golf carts and Trane air conditioners. The company makes large equipment and employs thousands of technicians for servicing and diagnosing that equipment.

What many find interesting is that 70% of the businesses in Lake Norman are small. Many are driven by lake activities and services for vacationers. Others serve the community in other ways. For entrepreneurs who live in the area, there is a unique networking group. The Lake Norman Small Business Network meets weekly and is open to all businesses.

Prospective residents have numerous housing choices. There are condominiums and apartments as well as housing communities. Similar opportunities for neighborhood or country club housing are available in Cornelius and Huntersville. To help you navigate the market, On Point Carolinas Realty provides top notch "On Point" real estate services for both Buyers and Sellers. Their #1 goal is to position you and your family for a successful experience when moving to/from the Charlotte, Lake Norman and surrounding areas.

The Lake Norman region has much to attract new residents and keep current inhabitants engaged. This is the perfect place for people who want close access to the water. []



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Mooreville

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motorsports, growth, and home to business



Richard Petty's first racecar. An entire museum dedicated to Dale Earnhardt. The nation's largest indoor kart track. The need for speed is real in Mooresville, North Carolina.

Nicknamed "Race City USA," this nearly 38,000-person town has nearly doubled in size since 2000, when the population was just 20,000 people. And it's predicted to have twice as many residents as it does now in the next two decades.

Located just 30 miles north of Charlotte — the fastest-growing city in the state — Mooresville draws the attention of new companies each year. Before it officially became part of the new definition for the Charlotte metropolitan area in 2013, *Site Selection* magazine awarded the city with its Micropolitan Award — given to small cities gaining the most jobs compared to others of its size — nine times.

A big boost to the city came when the home improvement corporation Lowe's moved its corporate headquarters to Mooresville in 2008. It remains the largest local employer, with upwards of 3,000 employees, and is followed in size by industrial manufacturer Ingersoll-Rand Company, Lake Norman Regional Medical, and NGK Ceramics.

Mooreville's cruise to success comes, in part, from its close partnership with NASCAR. It is the site of the NASCAR Technical Institute, a 146,000-square-foot campus that hosts programs for people seeking careers in the automotive and CNC machining industries. For those interested in becoming pit crew members, the

Performance Instruction and Training institute has trained more than 500 pit crew athletes from nearly every state and four countries. The drivers themselves once came to Mooresville for Dale Earnhardt Inc., a business begun by the North Carolina NASCAR champion to field new teams. Since, it has transformed into a philanthropic organization and showroom displaying Earnhardt's legacy.

Moorevillians' love for motorsports runs even deeper. The city also plays host to the Memory Lane Motorsports & Historical Automotive Museum (home of Richard Petty's first racecar), the North Carolina Auto Racing Hall of Fame, the GoPro Motorplex, and PIT Indoor Kart track — the largest indoor kart track in the United States.

Locals certainly know how to hit the brakes, too. Fishers, boaters, swimmers, hikers, bikers, and campers find respite at Lake Norman State Park, which boasts the largest manmade lake in the state and one of the most popular mountain biking networks in the region. Animal lovers get their furry fix at Lazy 5 Ranch, an exotic animal park packed with all sorts of critters like Vietnamese pot-bellied pigs, camels, giraffes, llamas, zebras, ostriches, and even a southern white rhinoceros.

Artists grow their skills at Mooresville Arts' many classes, which cover a breadth of styles and mediums such as plein air painting, watercolor, mixed media, pastels, and calligraphy. For those who prefer to view art rather than create it, head over to the gallery, which showcases a variety of exhibits from photography to abstract art to ceramics and hosts the annual Artoberfest, a celebration of local artists, each October.

Foodies feast upon Mooresville's diverse and vibrant restaurant scene. Like surf 'n turf? Head to Epic Chophouse for some deep-fried oysters with creamed spinach, bacon, and hollandaise, or try their Hawaiian-marinated ribeye. For a Mexican spin, check out Burrito Loco's Surf & Turf Burrito, packed with shrimp and steak, jack cheese, rice, Pico de Gallo, cotija cheese, and fresh tomatillo-jalapeno salsa. Or enjoy some of the slow-smoked barbecue that North Carolina is known for at Lancaster's BBQ, which goes so far as to top its French fries and nachos with the mouthwatering delicacy.

Wine connoisseurs can hop on two nearby "wine trails" along either the I-77 or I-85 corridors and spend a day exploring the region's vineyards and vintages. Each spring and fall, the Uncorked and Artsy event brings the area's local wine and beer tastings to 14 local businesses downtown. Enjoy live music and peruse the creations of local artisans while sipping on your favorite beverage.

Whether you prefer life in the fast lane or the slow nature of the South, find it in Mooresville. []

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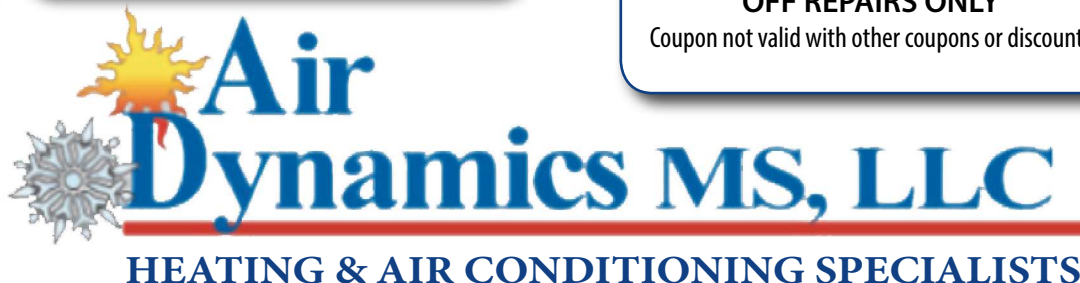
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Huntersville

lake recreation, living history, year-round fun

BY LINDSEY GREY



Huntersville is home to Lake Norman, the largest man-made lake in the south. And, it's no secret that Lake Norman is the crown jewel of the Charlotte region. The scenic lake comes alive in the summer with boats on the water and festivities on its shores. Lake Norman is a watersports playground, with over 520 miles of shoreline to keep all ages on the water.

Nestled on the banks of Lake Norman are the spirited towns of Huntersville, Cornelius, Mooresville and Davidson. In these towns the living is whatever pace you like with lazy days on the water or kicking it up a notch with a NASCAR event. Here, living historical sites, signature attractions, lake recreation, craft breweries and more come together.

The outdoor life is embraced in the quaint town of Huntersville. Fifteen parks, greenways and trails, soccer fields, tennis courts, playgrounds keep locals active and connected to nature. Disc golf is harder than it looks but you can try your hand at it at Huntersville 18-hole disc golf course. The Huntersville area is home to 3 golf courses – Skybrook Golf Club, Birkdale Golf Club and Northstone Country Club. Play ball or watch a game at Huntersville Athletic Park. Or, test your nautical skills and take a sailing lesson at Blythe Landing Park.

Spend the day at the Latta Plantation Nature Preserve. The preserve has a Nature Center, full-service Equestrian Center, 18 miles of hiking trails and horseback riding, fishing and kayak tours and more. Or spend time in the Backyard Habitat Garden where butterfly gardens are soothing. If water is your tonic,

paddle out to Mountain Island Lake with plenty of great fishing spots.

Wildlife and nature come together at the Carolina Raptor Center (located on the Latta Nature Preserve). The rehabilitation center for the birds of prey is a favorite attraction for all ages. The center is partnering with Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation to create the new Quest Adventure Center. "This state-of-the-art environmental education center will serve as the gateway to Latta Nature Preserve, which boasts the highest number of visitors of any of Mecklenburg County's nature preserves, connecting almost half a million people a year to the natural beauty of North Carolina's Piedmont region," said Jim Garges, past director of Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, and CRC Executive Director Jim Warren.

A passion for the past is showcased in attractions like the Historic Latta Plantation, the last remaining Catawba River plantation open to the public. The 62-acre farm is on the National Register of Historic Sites and consists of the original home and smokehouse, enhanced by eleven outbuildings, as well as fields, farm animals, a garden and interpreters in period clothing. Group tours and events are throughout the year. In downtown Huntersville, the present and future is on display at Discovery Place Kids, a unique children's play and learning attraction.

The Huntersville Growers' Market gets people out to shop for fresh produce and special events like Corn Day, Beer-and-Wine Pairing and other events made even better with live music. Industry professionals head to Metrolina Greenhouses: the world's largest single site greenhouse. Area farm tours feature local favorite Old Store Produce and highlight some of the best farmer's markets around. Try local company Yah's Best Products for home grown salsa.

Festivals, live music and must-see-events keep it fun year round. LaLaCaboosa Downton Music Series originally started in 1998 is held in Veterans Park where a caboose is the backdrop to the amphitheater. The series brings together live music, food trucks and old-fashioned fun. In the fall, the Carolina Renaissance Festival (weekends on September 29 to November 18) and the Rural Hill Amazing Maize Maze thrill young and old alike. The seven-acre corn maze is one of the largest in the Southeast with 265 acres.

Shoppers get their retail game on at Birkdale Village. The outdoor mall showcases boutique shops, restaurants, and a movie theater. After shopping, stop in for lunch or dinner at the Midwood Smokehouse, Lancaster's BBQ or Big Daddy's Burger Bar. >>



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HUNTERSVILLE

Get on a trail of a different kind and spend a day on the Lake Norman Beer Wine Trail where you can sip on local brews. At Primal Brewery you can have it your way with a full menu of crafty year round brews with names Lemon Haze Pale Ale and Not So Hairy Porter.

Summer FUN on Land and Water:

Summer is peak fun time in Huntersville. Sit outside and listen to live music at the LaLaCaboosa Downtown Music Series. Bands start up at 6:30 and play till 9 pm.

Thursday, June 14: The Catalinas (beach band)

Thursday, June 28: Pursey Kerns (rock)

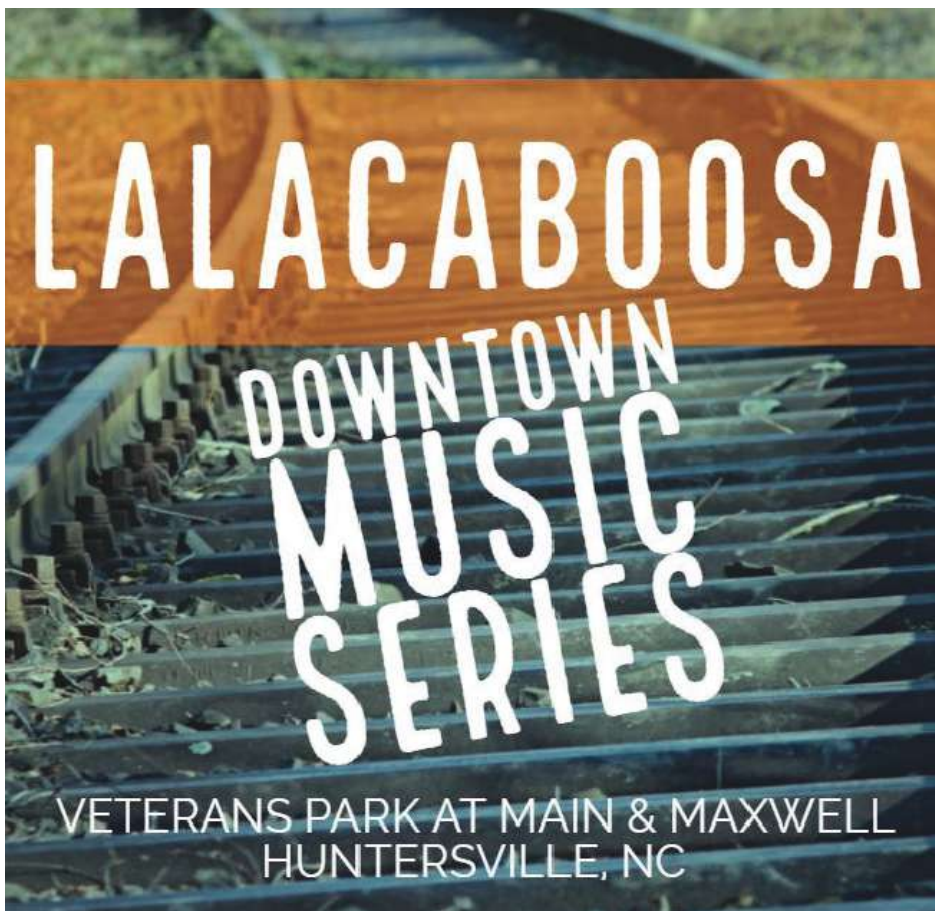
Thursday, July 12: Summerdaze (variety dance band)

Thursday, July 26: Revelwood Mission (rock)

Thursday, August 9: Kids in America (80's Tribute Band)

Get on the water. There's nothing better than a lake adventure on the largest outdoor playground in the Carolinas. Bring your own boat, canoe, kayak or rent a pontoon for a day of fun on the lake. Put in at the Blythe Landing access point with its six boat launch sites. The 26-acre park features floating piers and boat launches so you are only minutes away from sailing on the water. Grab a snack at the Dockside Café. Other amenities include a playground, picnic areas, and sand volleyball courts.

Or learn to sail at Lake Norman Community Sailing. All ages can learn to sail, paddle board, kayak, and row. Youth and adult programs teach new sailors as well as seasoned veterans.[]



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Iredell County

racing, restaurants, root beer

BY LYNNE BRANDON



“R and R” in Iredell County

translates into racing and recreation (on a lake named Norman), two year-round pastimes. Racing is synonymous with the town of Mooresville. A rich history and ties to the racing industry have earned **Mooresville** (estimated population, 37,000) the title of Race City USA.

The NASCAR influence is prominent, and NASCAR legends choose to put down roots here. Race teams, such as JR Motorsports and Penske Racing, call the town home along with NASCAR Technical Institute. Racing fans spend the day touring race shops, watching crews work on cars or visit a motorsports museum.

Most people don't know that the city has ties to racing of a different kind. DeBotech Inc. built the two-person and four-person bobsleds as well as skeleton sleds for Team USA in the 2014 Winter Olympics.

The “city of speed” lets visitors go at their own pace. Start with a self-guided walking tour through downtown. The tour includes Mooresville's original town hall, the old train depot, D.E. Turner hardware, the Charles Mack building and the Mooresville Flour Mill. Mooresville Depot Visual Arts Center educates and inspires with special exhibits and events throughout the year.

Spend an afternoon or a weekend visiting museums and venues dedicated to motor sports such as Memory Lane Motorsports & Historical Automotive Museum, North Carolina Auto Racing Hall of Fame, Dale Earnhardt Inc. showroom and other racing attractions. At the PIT Indoor Kart track experience an adrenaline

rush at the nation's largest indoor kart track in go karts that are capable of speeds up to 40 mph. PIT also offers black-light mini-golf, laser tag and other fun activities.

Eat at one-of-a-kind restaurants such as Big Tiny's Texas Style BBQ, Epic Chophouse, Pie in the Sky Pizza and others. Have a jolt of caffeine at coffee houses like Richards's Coffee Shop or take a coffee tour at Black Powder Roasting Company.

Experience craft beer at Lake Norman Brewing Company, a family owned and operated nano-brewery proudly located in Mooresville. Sit a spell and have a Dockside Blonde, Man Overboard IPA, Sunset Orange Pale Ale, and seasonal specialty brews. For a taste not found anywhere else (and nonalcoholic) try the Mooresville-based Uncle Scotts' All Natural Root Beer for what many say is the best root beer ever made. Ingredients are worth the read: cinnamon oil, anise oil, licorice-root oil and, even “wood extract.”

Statesville was once considered a city to drive through on the way to somewhere else. Today, history, a vibrant downtown, and one-of-a-kind stores are all reasons to stop and stay awhile. Statesville (estimated population 26,221) showcases its history with attractions —Fort Dobbs, Fourth Creek Burying Grounds, museums and more.

Scenic parks, golf courses and a sculpture garden get residents and visitors outside. In the fall unique festivals give people a chance to take a hot air balloon ride at the Carolina BalloonFest or to watch a foreign film at the Full Bloom Film Festival.

The distilling heritage of Statesville has been reawakened by Southern Distilling Company. The city was once known as the “liquor capital of the world” in the 1880s and Southern Distilling is bringing local bourbon, rye whiskey and brandy production back. The award-winning Southern Star Bourbons earned two golds and a silver medal at the 2017 New York World Wine & Spirits Competition. Take a behind-the-scenes tour of the state-of-the-art distillery. Afterwards, pull up a seat at the flame oak, high-top bar for a tasting.

With the one of the largest historic downtowns in the region, the city is continually recognized for its assets and achievements. Statesville's downtown is recognized as one of North Carolina's “Great Main Streets.” The city is also the recipient of the “North Carolina Main Street Award of Merit” for the streetscape project and historic City Hall renovation. For a pictorial history of the city stop in at the Statesville Historical Collection, a gallery of hundreds of mostly black-and-white photos reflecting Statesville through the generations.

Downtown is the city's hub where retail, dining, and entertainment converge. Businesses renovating and



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expanding, and new opening are at warp speed such as Yoga Loft, Crossroads Cycling Company and Theatre Statesville. New business opening soon are Sweet Things Bakery's, The Rustic Peel Pizza & Brew, Key to Escape and Fourth Creek Brewing. Churches, schools, and businesses call downtown "home," along with 400 historic homes. Engraved markings on stone accents in the streetscape, remind visitors that the town was once home to the largest source of medical roots and herbs in the U.S (1800s).

Public art is on nearly every corner, in cafés, shops and art galleries. Events such as "Art in the Park" and art crawls bring art lovers outside. Throughout the year enjoy live performances by Theatre Statesville.

Restaurants have something for every taste. Try the Broad Street Burger Co. or Twisted Oak American Bar & Grill named one of the "10 Places to Try Shrimp & Grits" in Cooking with Paula Deen. Get your barbecue fix at Carolina Bar-B-Q, considered the best barbecue in the region. When a sweet tooth attacks local bakeries and cafés tempt with handmade chocolates, fresh baked bread and pastries.

Entrepreneurs are making a name for themselves in the progressive city. From locally owned restaurants

to family owned businesses, the city embraces all. Cyclist gravitate to First Flight Bicycles, one of the top 100 bike shops in the country, according to *Bicycle* magazine. It is believed to have the largest selection of vintage mountain bikes in the country.

Flor De America is the first manufacturing establishment in North Carolina to hand roll cigars onsite. "Rollers" with more than 20 years of experience in the family business show their craft to visitors — one that began more than 50 years ago in Honduras.

Iredell County takes prides in Mitchell Community College. It seems that almost everyone in Statesville has either taken or taught at least one course at the historical and stately community college. Statesville's mayor, Constantine H. Kutteh, has taught at the school along with his father and a nursing scholarship is named for his mother. Originally called the Concord Presbyterian Female College, the thriving school has three campuses and unique programs in music and art, agribusiness technology, culinary arts and engineering.

There's no shortage of fun things to experience in Iredell County. Here history, entertainment and education are bundled in small town charm and served up with Southern style. []

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Cabarrus County

BY LINDSEY GREY

speedway, antiquing, craft brews



The sound of motors and revving up engines roaring is a sweet sound in the county known as the place “Where Racing Lives.” The title is deserved since Cabarrus County is home to unmatched motorsports attractions including Charlotte Motor Speedway, NASCAR Race Shops & Museums, The Dale Trail and others. The good times roll with some of the best shopping in the region, a hopping brew culture and musicians from the area who made it big — the Avett Brothers.

Thrill seekers and gear heads are in speed heaven with some of the fastest entertainment in the region. **Concord** is home to Charlotte Motor Speedway, zMAX Dragway (only all-concrete four-lane drag strip in the world) and The Dirt Track. Racing fans can observe NASCAR teams, witness live pit crew practice and best of all get behind the wheel of a 600HP race car to drive or ride-along with a driver for a Richard Petty Driving Experience and more.

The stands fill to capacity with motorsport fans when the legendary superspeedway hosts major NASCAR races in May and October and more than three dozen events throughout the year. Twice a year, the grandstands rumble when National Hot Rod Association drag racers compete.

Make time to visit Curb Motorsports Museum filled with memorabilia from the music and motorsports industries to see the race car that gave Richard Petty his 199th race win. In the museum Carolina-based artists like Charlie Daniels, Eric Church and Roberta Flack are honored alongside racing legends.

Kannapolis pays homage to its hometown native, NASCAR legend, Dale Earnhardt, Sr. with the Dale Trail. The 20-stop self-guided tour features points of interest from Dale’s childhood and racing legacy. Kannapolis also has an active running culture and is host to the popular year round Run Kannapolis series. In the Christmas season runners catch the Frostbite 5k on December 16.

Changes are coming to Kannapolis with a master plan in place for downtown revitalization, a performing arts center and new entertainment and sports venue. When completed the town’s streetscape will be a dynamic urban park that includes unique green space, outdoor dining and social venues.

Like much of the state, the craft brew scene has exploded in the racing region. Try a Reed’s Gold Ale at Cabarrus Brewing Company—Concord’s first full-scale craft brewery or the Corban Avenue Honey Blonde at Twenty Six Acres Brewing. Lil Robert’s Place is a local trifecta for drinks, live music and food trucks.

For a different libation experience, sip flavors like Sun Dog Apple Dumplin’ at Southern Grace Distilleries, the first fully licensed distillery (small batch moonshine and whiskey) in America to operate in a former jail.

Wine lovers imbibe at Rocky River Vineyards, home of award-winning wine with indigenous North Carolina Muscadine grapes. Events throughout the year include the annual grape stomping festival. Pick up a #RaceToTaste coaster set in the Visitor Center and take a self-guided tasting tour of the area’s wineries and breweries.

A major retail outlet and “dirt road antique jaunts” combine to make Concord a premiere shopping destination. Concord Mills, the largest outlet and retail shopping destination in North Carolina is filled with unique shopping, family dining and entertainment. Built to resemble the Speedway, Concord Mills features more than 200 stores, Bass Pro Shop, SEA LIFE Charlotte-Concord Aquarium and more, all under one roof.

For those who like the thrill of antiquing, adventure awaits. Cabarrus is home to some of the largest antique malls in the southeastern U.S. and small mom-pop establishments. Check out The Depot at Gibson Mill, White Owl Antique Mall and Design Center, Ruffin’s Roost, Cline’s Country Antique and others.

The Depot at Gibson Mill claims to offer the “Best Crap in the South.” Named after local roads, the aisles are filled with unique finds from more than 600 vendors. After browsing, be sure to refuel at Ellie’s Diner inside The Depot. Ruffin’s Roost is brimming with history – for starters, it is located inside a 100-year-old harness shop. Ruffin’s Roost specializes in antiques, urban farmhouse, cottage chic décor and vintage clothing all tucked together inside the big white barn.

Take the backroad for a true pickin’ experience. Getting lost on a rural road will land you at Cline’s Country Antiques (Mt. Pleasant), where a variety of treasures cover the Carolina countryside. The Avett Brothers, Grammy-nominated Americana band from Concord, filmed a music video for the hit “February Seven” at the sprawling antique yard.

Culture is alive and well in Cabarrus. Browse in an art gallery and catch a theatre performance within two city blocks on the quaint streets of downtown Concord. For an old fashioned movie experience go to GEM Theatre. Eat with locals at Union Street Bistro, Gianni’s Trattoria, and Carm’s Cafe. For dessert grab a cone of homemade ice cream at Cabarrus Creamery.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Cabarrus County Historic Courthouse is home to the

Davis Theater and The Galleries. See a show at The Davis with upcoming performances including The Barefoot Movement, Martha Redbone Roots Project and The Hillbenders.

Make a pit stop for the night at some of the best hotel experiences in the region. Adults indulge at Embassy Suites Charlotte-Concord Golf Resort & Spa with time at the spa or hitting the green for 18-holes at the Rocky River Golf Club. The premier public course is ranked in the top 100 golf courses in North Carolina. Afterwards, enjoy dinner at Rocky River Grille. The kid in everyone comes out at the Great Wolf Lodge. The largest indoor water park/hotel in the Carolinas is in its own category with pools and water slides, plus a massive water fort tree house with a 1,000-gallon tipping bucket.

Go ice skating at The Speedpark (Concord Mills until January 15, 2018). Skate on more than 4,200 square feet of real ice for an old fashioned day of fun (check park for schedule).

Visit the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame, operated by music pioneer Eddie Ray featuring exhibits from musicians, producers, music executives and writers from North Carolina.

To cap off a memorable day, stop and relax over dinner at science-themed Restaurant Forty-Six (Kannapolis), located across from the North Carolina Research Campus. []

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Union County

history, business growth, arts venues

BY DREW BECKER



If you like like antiques and landmarks, fine shopping and vineyards, you can find these and much more in Union County. Here, where pastoral farms and equestrian life touch world-class manufacturing and aerospace companies, you will find a variety of businesses and recreational opportunities.

Bordering South Carolina, this county has a population of over 215,000. The county seat, Monroe, was named for President James Monroe and another famous son is Andrew Jackson although there is a dispute with South Carolina about on which side of the state line he was born. The area is steeped in history. The Union County Courthouse originally built in 1886 is also home to The Union County Heritage Room which has books and files on local history and families, genealogical journals, newsletters and more for those who wish to dig into the county's past record of their own roots. Old City Hall is the oldest public building and was first constructed as the public jail for Monroe. To learn about earlier residents, make your way to the Museum of the Waxhaws.

In addition to Monroe, other towns include family-friendly Indian Trail, Stallings ranked as the sixth healthiest housing market in the state, Wingate with its University and the affluent village of Marvin.

Business has flourished recently transforming the area from a mostly rural economy. In the Monroe

Corporate Center, world-class companies such as Greiner Bio-One, Scott Safety, Coca-Cola Bottling Consolidated Co., American Wick Drain, UTC Aerospace Systems, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, O'Neil Digital Solutions and Record USA have staked out their spaces. The influx of high tech manufacturing and agricultural products have helped nurture this growth.

Union County also fosters agri-business companies like Edwards Wood Products, Tyson Foods and Pilgrim's poultry and Great American Snacks which concentrates on prepared foods. The agricultural businesses also are involved in the green industry for landscapers, providing ornamentals, shade trees, flowers and more.

South Piedmont Community College is partially responsible for the county's 118,000-person labor force. The curriculum is tailored to market demands: state-of-the-art metallurgical science technology, mechanical engineering technology, welding technology, electrical systems technology and a heavy concentration in health care. In another part of the county, Wingate University provides traditional undergraduate studies as well as doctorate programs in pharmacy, education, and physical therapy.

The Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport connects to the rest of the state and nation. With flights not only to nearby Charlotte but also internationally you have connections to big cities and small towns across the globe.

However, there is more than business to Union County. A thriving arts presence can be enjoyed throughout the towns and villages. The Union County Playmakers is a community-based theatre producing live entertainment and opportunities for local talent to participate on stage and off. Youth can join the Rainbow Theater which features theater, dance and music.

Writers are encouraged by the Union County Writers Club of North Carolina which sponsors workshops, lectures, critiques and readings, which might be unexpected outside of a large city. Additionally, the Museum of the Alphabet in Waxhaw avails visitors of an opportunity to travel back in time to trace writing systems from the ancient world to now.

If you are looking for music, the Union Symphony produces live concerts each season and community performances including classical, pops, opera and jazz. You might also partake of the Monroe City Ballet, a pre-professional company to help promising dancers to reach their potential by strengthening technique and enhancing stage presence.

The George A. Batte, Jr. Fine Arts Center Wingate University presents guest lectures, art exhibits, theatrical performances and music concerts and recitals by students, faculty and visiting artists. []

Lincoln County

ironworks to apples, and leisure

BY DREW BECKER



Lincoln County boasts a slower pace of life and friendly faces, an emblem of its small towns, many of which are reminiscent of a past more rural.

The rolling hills landscape with running streams and natural resources provide a place for economic development amidst a high quality of life. The county occupies 305 square and is home to 81,000 plus residents. Lincolnton is the county seat and the second oldest incorporated city in the state. Both the town and county were named after George Washington's second in command, Benjamin Lincoln.

As you saunter down Main Street, observe the shops and boutiques that terminate at the historic courthouse. Visit an antique shop, a jewelry store, peruse some comics or find an enticing outdoor café for lunch. You will probably notice the face jugs, artistically created pots three feet or larger embellished with a myriad of different and fascinating faces.

Historically the area is important because of iron. In 1809 Peter Forney erected the Madison cold-blast iron furnace. This charcoal-fueled furnace smelted local ores and produced pig and cast iron until the early 1870's. This occurred here because of natural resources in the area: iron ore, limestone, hardwood forests for charcoal production, and rivers and waterfalls. This along with farming was the major industry that put Lincoln County on the map.

Those living in Lincoln County work here or commute to one of the nearby cities or towns. Charlotte is 28 miles away, Hickory 20, and Winston-Salem 80. Some of the local companies are Unox USA that makes commercial ovens, kitchen equipment and cooking systems in Denver; AptarGroup a leading global supplier of a wide range of innovative dispensing and sealing solutions for the beauty, personal care, home care, prescription drug, consumer health care, and the food & beverage market; and Blum, the county's second-largest employer in Stanley that manufactures cabinet hardware products.

Want to further your education? Attend the local campus for Gaston College in Lincolnton or travel under 50 miles to Gaston's main campus. You might also look at Belmont Abbey, Lenoir-Rhyne College, Davidson College or UNC-Charlotte.

Lincoln County offers numerous activities to keep residents and visitors busy all year. You can hike the Forney Creek Trail in Denver. Wander among the old-growth woods. Follow the trail for a quiet reprieve from everyday life. This trail is conducive to a leisurely walk or a run to get your heartrate up.

If you are more interested in culture or art, check out the Lincoln Cultural Center in Lincolnton. Housed in a former church since 1991, one of the building's spectacular features is the stained-glass Rosette window in the dome of the Timken Performance Hall. Also located in the center are the Arts Council of Lincoln County, the Lincoln County Historical Association, the Lincoln Community Concert Association, and the Lincoln Theatre Guild. Performances include theater and music along with other arts. The center also fosters a close relationship with the Lincoln County Concert Association and the National League of Junior Cotillions.

While in Lincoln County you can play in one of the seven parks, watch movies on one of the eight screens or play 18 holes at on one of the three public or two private golf courses.

If you are looking for festivals you won't be disappointed. The most famous is the Apple Festival features five local apple growers, a full-block farmer's market, local talent on three stages, food and more. You might also want to check out Hog Happenin' with barbecue, motorcycles, and bands. The Lincolnton Food & Wine Fest is where regional wineries and brewers, artists, potters and upscale wares await you each April. Denver Days is four days of fun. Musicians, inflatable attractions for the kids, beer and wine and food trucks are hits at this September fest.

If you like a small-town feel, close enough to a big city, consider a town in Lincoln County. []



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Gaston County

outdoor spaces, indoor culinary

BY LYNNE BRANDON



Twin peaks rise majestically against the sky and are the hint of things to come. Gaston County's quartzite monadnocks (monadnocks are remnants of higher mountains) are but one way to get outside and hike, bike, climb or paddle through North Carolina's premiere outdoor location. The two isolated peaks known as Crowders Mountain in the primarily rolling landscape are what makes Gaston like no other.

For starters, the county has more than its share of outdoor activities. Rising 800 feet above the surrounding Piedmont, Crowders Mountain is an ideal training ground for trail runners and hikers and also for those who prefer to take a slower pace. The popular mountain is a main fixture in the park where it resides. Crowders Mountain State Park is built around the two peaks – Kings Pinnacle to the west and Crowders to the northeast. Start at the Pinnacle trailhead in Crowders Mountain State Park for a day-long endurance hike on the Ridgeline Trail through Kings Mountain State Park to the trailhead at Kings Mountain National Military Park., where it joins with the 16-mile Kings Mountain National Recreation Trail. Or, be adventuresome and climb to the highest point in the county, King's Pinnacle.

If high elevation is not your cup of tea, stay at lower elevations and take a bike ride, paddle on the Catawba River or take in the beautiful flora at Daniel Stowe Gardens. Bike riders glide along on the Carolina Thread Trail that travels through NC Wildlife Federation-

designated Butterfly Highway habitat. Or follows Lake Wylie's shore for 2.8 miles on The Seven Oaks Preserve Trail. Gaston parks are more than places for picnics. The county's bike share program makes it easy to pick up a bike and hop on the county's growing paved greenway network. Bike stations in George Poston and Lineberger Parks—along with bikes on the Highland Rail Trail and at the Gaston County Visitor Center—get you on the 4.5-mile Avon & Catawba Creek Greenway, or the Highland Rail Trail from downtown to Rankin Lake Park.

Connect with nature at the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden footpaths for an easy five-mile loop. Kids will love the wildflowers, shorebirds, and butterflies that frequent the 2.8-mile lakeside portion of the hike. The Persimmon Trail leads to the formal gardens. Seasonal exhibits showcase a pollinator's paradise this summer that celebrate the importance, beauty and majesty of pollinators.

Caterpillars, chrysalides and butterflies are the stars of the show in the Garden's Butterfly Bungalow, a 2,100-square-foot enclosure in which the Garden has created the ideal environment in which they can flourish. Mere feet away, birds, bees, beetles and even snails share the spotlight in the Garden's first mini-golf course of playful, pollinator-themed holes.

Created by local students at Gaston Day School and Highland School of Technology, artists and designers, Pollinator Putting is art you can play. It's a full 18 holes of miniature golf featuring the importance of pollinators. A tricky beehive, the elusive squash bee and chipmunks are some of the fun challenges golfers will encounter.

In the summer the Garden offers butterfly lovers a class on photographing butterflies and fun evenings in the garden with a talk on 'Pollinator Conservation' during the Garden's Thursday night Sip & Stroll event (see website for all details). It is always time well spent to see colorful orchids housed in the Conservatory, the seasonal symmetry of the Canal Garden, and the fairy tale land of Lost Hollow.

Museums like the Schiele Museum in Gastonia educate and entertain. A new exhibit will have visitors in a Halloween mood before the holiday hits in October. The exhibit called Creepy Nature is designed to share the actual science of weird and unusual plants and animals. The exhibit features horror fiction concepts like vampires, zombies, mummies, and alien invaders. Creepy Nature features comic art by illustrator James Lyle from Waynesville, North Carolina. And to burn off calories from the robust Gaston activities, "good eating" is a given.

The towns that make up Gaston County serve up farm fresh and locally grown and owned food. >>>

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GASTON COUNTY

Pita Wheel (formerly a food truck) is now set up in a brick-and-mortar storefront in Dallas (try the fried pickle Philly steak and cheese, “I Love Lucy” pimento cheese burger, and more); Doffer’s Canteen (named for the textile workers called “doffer”); Tex-Mex in downtown Cramerton or dinner at Table & Market, a historic 1800s mill that put McAdenville (aka Christmas Town U.S.A..) on the map. Or, head to downtown Belmont to the String Bean Café and Market. Finish up with a craft cocktail on the balcony of the restored movie Art Deco theatre-turned-restaurant, Webb Custom Kitchen in Gastonia. For a sweet tooth fix go to See Jane Bake in downtown McAdenville, home of mega-size cinnamon rolls, Mt. Holly’s Queen Bee Bakery for a slice of Almond joy, and orange crush cake. On a hot summer day don’t forget to stop at Tony’s Ice Cream, a family owned institution since 1915 in Gastonia. []



Charlotte Sports Scene

tradition, legendary, plenty of action

BY SERENA STEVENS

The “Queen City” of Charlotte, North Carolina, has a rich and varied sports tradition that spans roughly 125 years. Once upon a time, the Charlotte Hornets were a baseball team, the Carolina Cougars the local pro basketball team, and NASCAR was an obscure motorsport still in its infancy.

Today, Charlotte has all the bases covered if you are a sports fan. Well-known professional sports teams include the NFL’s Charlotte Panthers, the NBA’s Charlotte Hornets, and the Charlotte Knights, triple-A minor league baseball team. Nearby Charlotte Motor Speedway is one of the great NASCAR superspeedways and plays host to some of the circuit’s biggest races and legendary drivers. Local college sports teams also bring plenty of action to courts and playing fields on weekends providing plenty to cheer for.

It all started with the Great American Pastime of baseball in 1892. The Charlotte Hornets first competed in the historic South Atlantic League. The team played under various names and in various leagues until 1972. Charlotte residents were without a team to root for until 1976 when the Charlotte O’s came to town, which created an almost cult-like following.

There were many great players that came through the O’s organization, then later the current team, the Charlotte Knights. These include Cal Ripken, Jr., Eddie Murray, Rick Dempsey, Jose Canseco, Manny Ramirez, Frank Thomas, and Jim Thome. The Charlotte Knights are now a triple-A affiliate of the Chicago White Sox and play home games at BB&T Ballpark in downtown Charlotte.

NASCAR has also long been in the driver’s seat as far as Charlotte-area sporting events. Located in the nearby suburb of Concord, the Charlotte Motor Speedway is an iconic, historic track in the sport of auto racing and is considered NASCAR’s home track. The complex plays host to prestigious races like the Coca-Cola 600, the NASCAR All-Star Race and the Bank of America 500.

Originally built in 1959, the track was the first superspeedway to host night racing in 1992 and remained that way until Daytona International Speedway followed suit in 1998. Racing greats like Richard Petty, Dale Earnhardt Sr., Jeff Gordon, Bobby Allison, Darrel Waltrip, and Cale Yarborough have swapped paint through the years especially through the speedway’s notorious Turn 4.

As far as pro basketball, the NBA’s Charlotte Hornets have long graced the Queen City’s main court. The team was formed in 1988 as an NBA expansion team and it played its games in the Charlotte Coliseum, which at the



time was the largest arena in the NBA. The Hornets had a successful run and led the league in attendance for seven years until team owners decided to sell-out and moved the team to New Orleans in 2002. In 2004, the NBA established the Charlotte Bobcats and pro basketball was back in business in Charlotte. Ultimately in 2014, the team in New Orleans dropped the Hornets name and the Charlotte Hornets were reborn. Today, North Carolina’s favorite basketball son, Michael Jordan, owns the team.

And last but not least as far as major pro sports teams in Charlotte are the NFL’s Carolina Panthers. The Panthers played their first pro football season in 1995 at Clemson University’s Memorial Stadium until their new home in downtown Charlotte was built. Today, the Panthers huddle up in Bank of America Stadium. The Panthers reached the Super Bowl in 2003 before barely losing to the New England Patriots in one of the best NFL Championship Games in history. The Panthers made it to the Super Bowl again in 2016 under the leadership of current head coach Ron Rivera.

For some great NCAA action on the Charlotte area’s sports fields, check out the local colleges and universities. Charlotte University has always courted a competitive men’s basketball team, even making it to the NCAA Final Four in 1997. The school added a football team in 2013 and has been seeing large crowds and immediate success. The 49ers currently do battle in Conference USA and are coached by Brad Lambert.

Other schools in the area to provide some great sports action include Winthrop University, Johnson C. Smith, and Davidson College, which is the alma mater of the NBA player Stephen Curry. □

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Lancaster, York, Catawba

on the grow, historical ties, summerfest

BY LAUREL HYATT



North Carolina's largest city is surrounded by several large counties (including a couple over in neighboring South Carolina) that are equally enticing to the visitor and prospective resident.

Lancaster County, South Carolina, just to the south of Charlotte and bordering Mecklenburg County, has a rich history. Initially inhabited by the Catawba, Cherokee, and Waxhaw Indians, Lancaster's story began in the early 1750s when Scotch-Irish immigrants came seeking inexpensive land and religious freedom. Known as the Waxhaws (now mainly in northern Lancaster County) the settlers established a colony that would soon be joined by a second; developed by English (Welsh), German, and Scotch-Irish newcomers from Virginia, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania in southern Lancaster County. Lancaster's name can be traced back to fifteenth-century England, the War of the Roses, and the House of Lancaster. Its rich history is one of the major attractions of Lancaster County.

According to Shaun Barnes, Director of External relations for Comporium (telecommunications giant headquartered in Rock Hill, S.C.), "Our guests can visit a revolutionary war battleground at Hanging Rock – Andrew Jackson State Park; two historic landmarks designed by Robert Mills (South Carolina native and designer of the Washington Monument); and walk through the city of Lancaster's recently designated Cultural Arts District. Today our community is one of the fastest-growing counties in South Carolina with the resurgence of both manufacturing jobs and corporate

headquarters moving (here). Thousands of people from artists to young families and retirees are all calling Lancaster County home."

Melissa Prince is associated with one of those industry leaders choosing to locate in Lancaster County. Prince, Vice-President INSP at Crossridge Campus in Indian Land said, "Indian Land is our high-growth urban area located in the north section of the county and a very short drive from Charlotte. We are proud of the progressive growth, the new world-class corporate headquarters locating here and the many, many retail and restaurant choices that are opening every day!"

Lancaster County is definitely 'on-the-grow', but it's not limited to one natural resource or manufacturing category for its growth. "We are proud of the diversity of our county - from Indian Land and Van Wyck to Lancaster, Heath Springs, and Kershaw. It's a fast-paced rural life, with eclectic artistry and southern charm all right here. We have great public schools, colleges, parks, walking trails, and churches. Lancaster County is simply a great place to live, work, play, and worship," said Dean Faile, President & CEO of the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce.

York, South Carolina, is the county seat for **York County**, also a 'kissing cousin' to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg metropolitan area of North Carolina. As with Lancaster, when you drive through York, you're immediately aware of a rich, historical tie to the past. Street names like Jefferson Street, West Liberty, South Congress, and West Madison make visitors feel that York is a city where one can 'breathe' history. Many residents can trace their family roots back seven generations or more.

Southern charm oozes from the quaint gift shops to the local cafes to the historic homes and hotels occupying buildings dating back 100 years or more. There are several self-guided historical walking tours around York.

For a more in-depth study for the history buff, there's the Historical Center of York County and Southern Revolutionary War Institute, and people to guide you like historian, Michael Scoggins. According to Scoggins, "There's a wealth of information available to you such as historical deeds, wills, etc. either in original form or microfilm." The Southern Revolutionary War Institute may be unique as a one-of-a-kind public facility dedicated to research of the Revolutionary War.

York County offers year-round events for the whole family like the upcoming Summerfest festival to be held on the fourth Saturday of August. Admission is free, and visitors can shop the craft fair, stroll the street filled with vendors and food trucks, enjoy the classic car show, >>



SURROUNDING COUNTIES

or participate in the 10-K, 5-K, and fun runs, moonlight bike ride, or golf tournament. There will also be children's activities, train rides, climbing wall, inflatables, a health fair, country music contest, as well as music from several stages. The Southeast Tourism Society recognizes Summerfest as a Top 20 event.

For more information on Summerfest, historical aspects of the area, business and industry opportunities, as well as statistics and demographics on the region, contact the Greater York Chamber at info@greateryorkchamber.com.

Just to the west of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg metro area lies **Catawba County** in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Made up of over 400 square miles of small towns, bustling cities, serene countrysides, and picturesque lakes, Catawba County is home to endless diversions. The county was formed in the mid-1800s from Lincoln County and was named for the Catawba tribe of Native Americans who once inhabited the area around the Catawba River. Once considered one of the most powerful Southeastern Siouan-speaking tribes in the Piedmont, the Catawba people now live along the border of North Carolina near the city of Rock Hill, South Carolina.

The county seat is Newton and Catawba County's largest city is Hickory. Hickory is home to Lenoir-Rhyne University, the Hickory Motor Speedway, and the minor league baseball team the Hickory Crawdads. The Catawba County Economic Development Corporation controls a 55-acre business park in Conover designed for data centers and office use. CommScope and Corning, manufacturers of fiber optic cabling, have become the region's largest employers. Maiden, North Carolina (another regional Catawba County town) is home to the Apple iCloud data center, the largest privately owned solar farm in the United States.

The Catawba County Chamber of Commerce is a dynamic association of more than 850 businesses working together to make the region not only more livable for current but prospective residents, businesses, and industries. For a complete list of not only chamber activities and events but an inside look at the county itself go to the chamber website: <http://www.catawbachamber.org/>

Whether you are just visiting the area or looking to make Catawba County your new home, you might just find what you're looking for. []









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Home Décor

form, function, fun with décor

BY ALYSSA LAFARO



The famous American architect

and designer Frank Lloyd Wright once said: “Form follows function — that has been misunderstood. Form and function should be one, joined in spiritual union.” He couldn’t be more right. And the image collection website Pinterest happens to agree. The digital bulletin board platform recently released a report of home trends that suggests one can’t live without the other.

Storage, for example, goes well beyond closets, today. Vintage trunks can be repurposed as coffee tables and used for stowing things like blankets, books and tools. Accessories no longer require drawers — just creatively arrange those hats and scarves on walls. Even liquor has surpassed the cabinet as container, moving to colorful bar carts or eclectic shelving. There’s no shortage of places to find such things in Charlotte. Start at the Sleepy Poet Antique Mall, voted “Best Antiques of Charlotte” by *Charlotte Magazine* since 2011. Visitors are sure to find plenty among the 55,000-square-feet of vendors.

For those who love to cook, kitchen décor has become more functional than ever. Not only does enameled cast-iron cookware support high cooking temps and last for years, but it’s often brightly colored — perfect for showcasing on open-air shelves. In fact, the kitchen has become the “command center” in many homes, and every command center needs a coffee bar. Think bed and breakfast here: a long,

thin table adorned with a coffee maker, kitschy cups, an assortment of loose leaf teas and all the fixins beneath a huge chalkboard listing the daily family schedule and dinner menu. Paper Skyscraper on East Boulevard carries an assortment of elegant items for the kitchen, as well a wide selection of funky gifts. Then, head to Pineville — just 20 minute south of Charlotte — to stock up on loose leaf tea and coffee at Unwind Tea Leaves & Coffee Beans.

Even the options for changing wall color have become easier. Avoid hours of painting with stick-on tiles or self-adhesive, removable wallpaper — especially great for the temporary atmosphere of apartment living. Celedore Wallpaper on Park Road in Charlotte carries Tempaper, a line that includes textured options like brick, metal or stone. Or create your own design at Heritage Printing & Graphics, offering custom-printed wallpapers and murals.

Whether you paint or stick, color trends remain an important factor. Pantone releases its color of the year annually and it has its influence. Additionally, paint suppliers such as Sherwin Williams offer their own color of the year, just one of many trending tones. While cool, calm and collected colors may not be for everyone, it’s safe to say that warmer tones are on the upswing as well. Consider burnt oranges like Pantone’s “autumn maple,” or yellows of all shades, from pale pollens to deep honeys. The staff at Charlotte’s family-owned Eastway Paint have a combined 100 years of experience in the industry and claim they can color-match anything from nail polish to a stick of butter. Just six miles away, Hunter Coatings, another mom-and-pop shop, carries a wide selection from Benjamin Moore, which also has its own color of the year.

No matter the color of your décor, plants provide a surefire way to brighten up any room. And plenty of low-maintenance options fill the market, today. Succulents and air plants, for example, enjoy sunlight-soaked spaces — and neither requires much watering. The latter don’t even require soil to grow. Place them in hanging glass terrariums of all shapes and sizes along east-, south- or west-facing windows. Remember that quote from Frank Lloyd Wright? Well, since plants help purify the air by neutralizing odors and bacteria, try placing them in bathrooms, above the shower — they’ll need little water in this location. Check out American Beauty Garden Center on Independence Boulevard for not only a variety of vegetation and organic products but classes to learn about complex techniques like hydrocarbon extraction. Or head across town to Bud’s Plants, which also carries fresh-picked vegetables and Christmas trees when in-season.

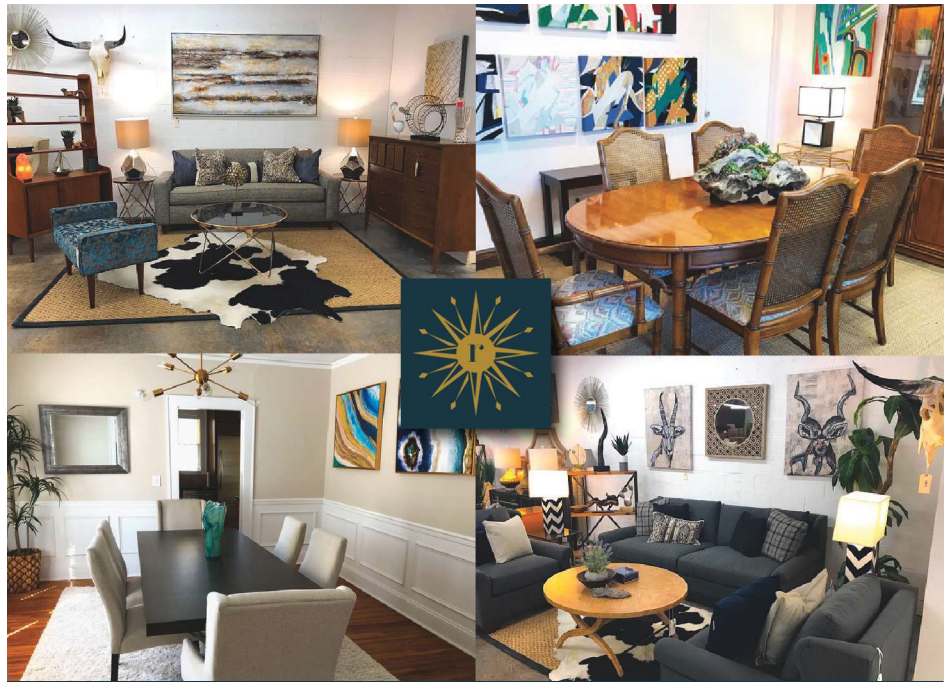
HOME DECOR

Greenery thrives both inside and out in Charlotte, which receives upward of 218 sunny days each calendar year, making it the perfect patio city. And since backyards and porches have transformed into “an extension of your indoor space,” according to the team at Pier 1, moving furniture between the two has become easier than ever. Bring indoor pillows outside with the addition of waterproof, east-to-clean covers (also convenient for when trends change), as well as layered blankets and rugs.

Retro styles have also returned among lighting fixtures. Dining and living room lighting thrives as the colorful glass, large domes and geometric fixtures of the mid-century era make for eye-catching centerpieces. Don't miss a varied selection of furnishings and décor at Vintage Home or ReInvented Charlotte, both located in Charlotte.

With an eye for both style and design, and a love for vintage furniture, owner Michael Lankford began up-cycling one of a kind vintage pieces to give them a modern twist. As Reinvented Charlotte grew over the years, they began to source everything needed to design every room from floor to ceiling. Offering original and “reinvented” vintage pieces, newly built upholstered furniture, occasional pieces, and a diverse selection of locally made artwork, accessories, and handcrafted furnishings, Reinvented is a design driven furniture store that takes pride in mixing current styles with vintage elements for a modern design with a timeless foundation. Everyone there has a true passion for vintage furniture, local artisans, and great design. Using all the elements at their disposal, the goal at Reinvented Charlotte is to help you design your space in a style that makes you sincerely love where you live.

Whether you decide to reimagine your entire living space or just the closets and pantries, find relief in knowing that, today, it can be done with both form and function. []



Visit Reinvented Charlotte! to find an eclectic mixture of furniture and home decor, featuring one of a kind vintage furniture, newly built upholstery, and locally made artisan treasures that blend together to create designs for any home. **Crafted by us, just for you.**

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Building Or Buying A Home

BY STUART JAMES



Regardless of whether you decide to buy an existing home or to build a new one, there are a few steps that you must follow in the beginning. If you've started this evaluation process by answering the very first question affirmatively: 'Can I afford to buy or build a new home?' then it's time to proceed to the next step and perhaps the one we all least want to talk about: getting your finances in order.

Your credit reports (or scores) are an ongoing, ever-changing organism. These reports are a look at how you manage your finances on a year-to-year, month-to-month, week-to-week basis. You must know exactly what your credit reports say about your financial history before you apply for a mortgage. Why? Because these reports play one of the most important roles in the mortgage approval process and in determining the interest rate and other loan terms that the lender will offer you. If you haven't looked at your credit reports recently, you might be surprised at their contents; errors are common. While researching this story, I found four different errors that needed to be corrected in just one of my scores. That's right I said "one" of my scores. Lending institutions usually consider the scores of three different major reporting companies when evaluating customers for loans. The big three currently are: Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. A low score in any one of the three or a combination thereof can either cost you thousands of dollars in the long run or sometimes cost you the loan approval entirely. To learn more about credit reports, how credit scores are calculated, and how they affect what you'll pay for your new home, go to one of the governmental or independent internet sites such as: <http://www.federalreserve.gov/creditreports/default.htm>

Next, get familiar with the mortgage industry. Finding the right loan and lender is crucial to a successful and less stressful home-buying or building process. It's up to you to determine which lender is best for your needs, and it's always a good idea to educate yourself about the loan process before you talk to a lender. For instance, are you eligible for a FHA loan, VA loan, HUD conforming or non-conforming loan? Find out what these terms mean and whether you meet their criteria. It's also recommended that you get at least one competing mortgage offer before making your final decision. More than two offers is even better. Getting a loan pre-approval will also save you thousands over the lifetime of the loan if you're willing to take the time to "shop" it around. After all, this will be the single largest purchase most families make in their lifetime.

Now that you've checked into your credit history and are well-versed in how the mortgage industry works, it's time to set a spending budget/ceiling for the home of your dreams. Once your budget is set, you can start the "fun" part: picking out all the special things that will truly make it yours. From here on it may seem like a game of give and take but realize that everyone goes through the same process whether they're spending \$100,000 or \$1,000,000. Rarely does one house or house plan "have it all". If you want each of the kids to have their own room along with a large master suite, you may have to give up a little of the family space or that giant deck that wraps around the house. The professional kitchen may cost you the "state-of-the-art" media room, and so on, and so on. Just keep in mind compromise is not always a bad word.

Building versus buying is a major dilemma in today's new home market. The freedom to make decisions about the details of your home and to watch it take shape holds undeniable appeal. But there's also something to be said for the security of comparison shopping, walking through a house, and "kicking tires that are already inflated" before you sign on the dotted line. To further muddy the waters is the unbelievable number of underpriced foreclosure homes that have appeared on the market over the past few years. This may once again make buying even more attractive.

Perhaps the single most enticing part of choosing to build your home as opposed to buying is the chance to employ green technology from the ground up. This practice of creating structures and using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient is gaining momentum every day. Green technology can complement and even expand the classical building design concerns of economy, utility, durability, and comfort.>>

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BUILDING OR BUYING A HOME

Taking advantage of green building tax credits aids in not only short-term spending but over the long haul in much lower costs in the future.

Thanks to improvements made in building processes and materials, homes built today are 100% more energy-efficient than homes built, for instance, in the 70s. The advances include more durable roof coverings, better insulated windows, increased amount of insulation, plus high-efficiency heating, cooling, and water heating devices and equipment.

Another thing to remember about green building is that, as with any type of structure, it comes from the bottom up. Green homes do more than just provide an economical ways to heat water, keep out the cold, or recycle some landfill-destined materials; they incorporate environmental considerations and resource efficiency into every step of the process including how to minimize environmental impact.

Once you have decided which path to take to your new home, you will likely need a quality mortgage firm. McLean Mortgage has achieved a position of leadership within the industry by combining experienced leadership, cutting edge technology and a team culture which is dedicated to delivering first-in-class service to the real estate community. Their mission is to help borrowers realize their dream of home ownership through providing the best in class mortgage solutions, innovative processes, and superior, personalized service.

Whether you decide to build or buy, or somehow blend the two for your new home, nothing helps as much or saves you as much as doing your homework first. Remember, that starts well before calling a realtor to start opening doors and before you start dreaming of what might be. []

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Helping to Manage Your Move

If you're in the process of moving, odds are you are feeling a little stressed. Maybe even wondering why you decided to move in the first place. Here's some good news - there's help!

Move Management is a growing field of trained professionals whose sole focus is making relocations easier. Acting as a point person, they offer services and resources to help from the moment you decide to move until you are completely unpacked and fully functioning in your new home.

What can a Move Manager do for you? Here are just a few of the sanity saving ways they can help...

The realtor (very nicely) said my house has too much stuff. Move Managers specializing in "right"sizing so they know how to declutter and organize the contents of a house quickly (even the attic and basement!). They deliver donations, coordinate trash hauling and facilitate consignments. Once that step is complete they'll stage the house so it is "real estate ready".

I just spent all day packing, ran out of boxes, and only got half the kitchen done! Packing is time consuming, especially when your belongings

seem to have magically multiplied while hiding in the closet. Not only do Move Managers professionally pack, they do it in an organized and mindful way making unpacking quicker and easier.

I still have boxes I didn't unpack from my last move, I really don't want that to happen again. Move Managers don't unpack, they resettle. Boxes are emptied, and the contents are put away. All of them. Neatly. Your house can be completely unpacked and settled with décor placed and pictures hung in a couple of days!

I feel like I'm losing my mind – this is overwhelming!

As a steady, guiding force throughout the move process, you can count on your Move Manager to handle the logistics and details so your move stays on track and on time. You're not losing your mind, you're moving and that's stressful. Take a deep breath and know help is a phone call away.

For more information on Move Management services check out Chaos to Calm at www.ChaosToCalm.com.

*By Lori Fike, Certified Senior Move Manager
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Education

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BY LAUREL HYATT

If you've explored the possibility of relocating to Charlotte, North Carolina, you probably already know that Charlotte is the center of the nation's 18th-largest urban area, with more than 7.1 million people residing within 100 miles of the city's center.

As Charlotte has grown and prospered, so have the **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS)**. Nationally recognized, this county-wide school district daily serves more than 147,000 students in grades Pre-K through 12. Educators, staff and students have earned CMS widespread acclaim as one of America's best school districts, guiding all students to become globally competitive.

Travel just about 20 miles Northeast of Uptown Charlotte by I-85 and you'll find yourself in Cabarrus County. Concord, the county seat, is one of the state's fastest-growing cities, with a population of 71,000. **Cabarrus County Schools (CCS)** have been educating students for nearly 100 years. The school system currently educates over 30,000 students in 41 schools – making it among the largest in North Carolina and one of the largest employers in Cabarrus County.

To the west is **Gaston County School System (GCSS)**, the ninth largest in the state with more than 32,000 students (pre-kindergarten through high school). Gaston County Schools is fully accredited by AdvancED and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as a quality school system. Each school is also fully accredited.

To the north of Charlotte, **Iredell-Statesville Schools** ranks among the 20 largest school districts in North Carolina. Student performance continues to improve, placing Iredell-Statesville Schools among the top 25% of school districts in the state. In fact, SAT scores, graduation rate, and writing scores are among the best in North Carolina. In addition to traditional school settings, the district provides a wide range of exciting educational opportunities through choice programs specifically designed for unique student needs.

Southeast of Charlotte, in Union County, Monroe is home to more than 40,000 of the county's 200,000 residents, while Weddington has become a prosperous suburb of Charlotte. **Union County Public Schools** is the sixth largest school system in the state, with 53-fully accredited schools and about 40,500 students.

In higher education, **Cabarrus College of Health Sciences (CCoHS)** was ranked as the top Small College in North Carolina. CCoHS earned the #1 spot by having graduates earn the second highest salaries in



the state for all small colleges, as well as having a 31 percent admission rate and the third lowest cost.

Joining Cabarrus in Zippia's Top Ten Small Colleges of North Carolina is **Davidson College** located north of Charlotte in the town of Davidson and ranked among America's strongest and most selective liberal arts colleges. Davidson is alma mater to 23 Rhodes scholars, was the first liberal arts college to eliminate loans from financial aid packages, and has a student-teacher ratio of 10:1.

Catawba College (CC), located about 45 minutes from the greater Charlotte area, rounded out the area schools in Zippia's Top Ten Small College of NC list. CC is a private, coeducational, residential, institution with a 13:1 student/faculty ratio. Catawba offers career preparation grounded in liberal arts with over 70 academic fields of study including strong science and pre-professional programs.

Of course, Charlotte may be best known as home to the **University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC)** - a public research university with three campuses: Charlotte Research Institute Campus, Center City Campus, and the main campus located in University City, about 8 miles from Uptown Charlotte.

Additional excellent colleges and universities within a 20-mile radius of the Queen City include **Johnson C. Smith University (JCSU)**, **Wingate University**, **Queens University**, **Belmont Abbey College**, **Central Piedmont Community College**, **Gaston College**, and **York Technical College**. □



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BY LAUREL HYATT

National and international

healthcare professionals recognize the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area as a leader and focal point for the entire west-central region of the state. Charlotte is home to two nationally ranked hospital systems as well as a variety of specialty provider practices. State-of-the-art medical campuses, primary care facilities, healthcare research and technology facilities, as well as a growing medical equipment and pharmaceutical industry combine to create a community of resources proving to be a boom to the region's growing economy. In fact, there are nearly 140,000 healthcare sector jobs in the region accounting for 1 out of every 10 total jobs. Charlotte is fortunate to be able to recruit a majority of its medical employees locally. According to the local Chamber of Commerce, much of the area's healthcare talent is recruited from the more than 27 nearby colleges and universities and 18 community colleges and technical institutes in the region. Each year, nearly 5,000 students in the area earn healthcare-related degrees on a variety of fields of endeavor from phlebotomy certifications to Ph.D.'s in bioinformatics.

As mentioned, the flagships of two nationally ranked hospital systems reside within the Charlotte area - **Novant Health** and **Carolinas HealthCare System**. Just last year these two healthcare giants began connecting patients' electronic medical records to improve patient care across the region. As the two largest healthcare systems in the region, Carolinas HealthCare System and Novant Health chose to build connectivity through their respective Health Information Exchange (HIE) systems to improve the overall patient experience and the health of the communities they serve. This new partnership allows physicians and clinicians to see relevant portions of patients' electronic medical records regardless of where they receive care. The partnership is a significant step toward improving efficiencies and cost by reducing readmissions, duplicative work, tests and procedures.

"This collaboration will improve efficiency and enhance patient care and allow providers to make more informed decisions because of a (timelier) and broader view of our patients' health and medication information. What used to take days or weeks to receive patient information from another health system will now

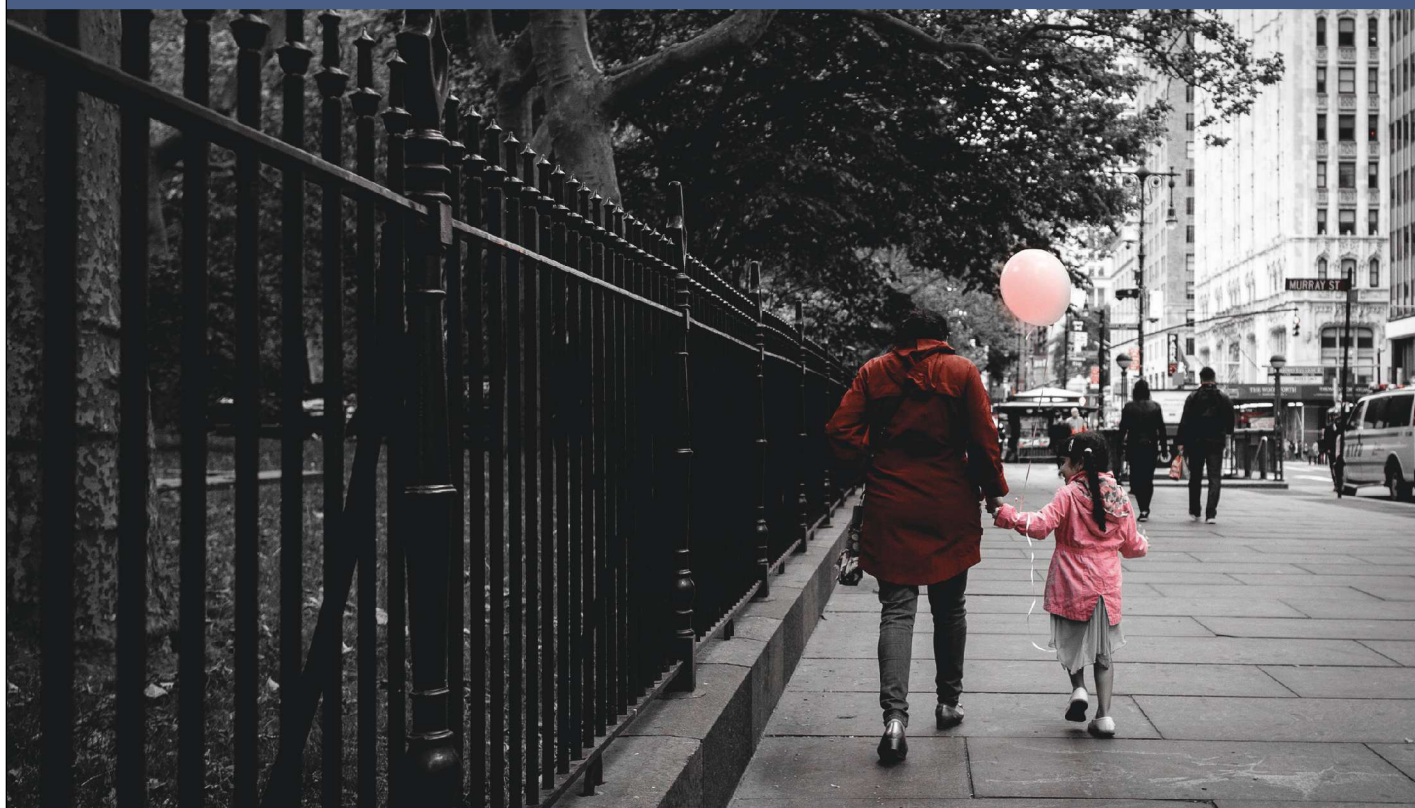


be nearly instantaneous," said Craig Richardville, chief information and analytics officer for Carolinas HealthCare System. Providers are able to gain access to a patient's history from all participating community providers in an HIE. Electronic Health Record sharing between Carolinas HealthCare System and Novant Health includes approximately 9 million unique patient records.

"Our partnership is transforming care for our patients and our providers by securely exchanging patients' medical information among providers in and outside of our healthcare system....," said Dr. AJ Patefield, Novant Health chief medical information officer.

Though Novant Health was officially formed in 1997 by the merger of Carolina Medicorp of Winston-Salem, North Carolina and Presbyterian Health Services of Charlotte, North Carolina, its roots go back to the late 1800s. They have always sought to grow and reach out to new communities through their medical centers. No matter where you relocate in the region, Novant Health is close by. >>

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Novant Health has been awarded the prestigious Ernest A. Codman Award by The Joint Commission (JCAHO), the President's Award by VHA (now Vizient, Inc.), as well as the Team Approaches in Quality Improvement Award from the Society of Hospital Medicine and the President's Award from Professional Research Consultants. Novant Health Presbyterian Medical Center (NHPMC) won the #2 spot in the *U.S. News* Best Regional Hospitals (Charlotte Metro). It ranked high in Adult Specialties such as Orthopedics as well as Adult Procedures such as Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Repair, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Colon Cancer Surgery, Heart Bypass Surgery, Heart Failure, Hip Replacement, and Knee Replacement. *U.S. News* evaluates data on nearly 5,000 hospitals in 16 adult specialties, 9 adult procedures and conditions and 10 pediatric specialties. To be ranked in a specialty, a hospital must excel in caring for the sickest, most medically complex patients. NHPMC is a 622-bed tertiary medical center and is designated a Magnet hospital by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Magnet designation is the nation's highest honor for excellence in nursing, and only 5 percent of hospitals in the country have achieved this honor. With 7,000 employees and over 700 physicians on medical staff; NHPMC is one of the largest medical centers in the region and had over 27,000 admissions last year. It performs, on average, over 6,500 inpatient and nearly 17,000 outpatient surgeries. Its emergency room receives over 87,000 visits annually.

Also part of Novant Health Charlotte is Novant Health Charlotte Orthopedic Hospital (NHCOH) the area's only orthopedic hospital providing a full range of orthopedic services including advanced diagnostic imaging, innovative treatments, and rehabilitation services. It ranks among the top 5 percent of hospitals in the country for surgical care measures and has earned the Gold Seal of Approval™ from The Joint Commission (JACHO) for five of their joint and spine programs.

NHC just opened three new clinics in Matthews, North Carolina. The clinics provide services for

disease management, wound care, and senior care. Last spring NHC finished the first federally funded pediatric Hemophilia Treatment Center in Charlotte; meaning that all children with bleeding disorders will have a new specialty medical home for treatment, education, and supportive services. The St. Jude Affiliate Clinic HTC (Novant) provides access to specialty trained physicians, nurses, physical therapists, and social workers who have extensive training in taking care of children with these rare complex disorders. Novant also is expected to open its \$45.6 million expansion of their Huntersville facility, including 44 new beds, additional operating room, and intensive care unit early next year.

As mentioned earlier, Charlotte is also home to a second flagship nationally ranked hospital system - Carolinas HealthCare System (CHCS). The heart of CHCS is Carolinas Medical Center (CMC). In the most recent *U.S. News* Best Regional Hospitals rankings, CMC ranked #4 in North Carolina and #1 in Charlotte (Metro Area). Carolinas Medical Center is nationally ranked in 2 adult specialties and 6 pediatric specialties and rated high performing in 7 adult specialties and 9 procedures and conditions. It is a general medical and surgical facility. It scored high in patient safety, demonstrating commitment to reducing accidents and medical mistakes. It is a teaching hospital. CMC is also a 1,132-bed general medical and surgical facility with over 61,000 admissions last year. It performs over 21,000 annual inpatient and 23,000 outpatient surgeries. Its emergency room handles over 180,000 visits each year.

Carolinas HealthCare System owns, leases or manages hospitals, nursing homes, physician practices, home health agencies, radiation therapy facilities, physical therapy facilities, and other healthcare related operations; comprising more than 7,600 licensed beds and more than 60,000 full-time and part-time employees.

But the emphasis on healthcare isn't limited in Charlotte to hospitals, physicians' offices, and clinics; recently medical equipment manufacturing has emerged as a growth industry. Capitalizing on the educated workforce, two major national hospital groups, and close proximity to R&D institutions such as the North Carolina Research Campus; the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area's medical equipment manufacturing industry has rapidly expanded. Jobs in these industries grew by more than 9 percent per year over a recent 5-year period. During the same period nationally; the industry grew by less than 1 percent. With the healthcare sector so crucial to the Charlotte area's economy, it only makes sense that the quality of care for those living in this region will only continue to soar. []

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Relocating Seniors

starting a new life in senior years

BY LAUREL HYATT



Did you know that the U.S. population of “seniors” will jump by nearly 80 percent when the Baby Boomers retire between now and 2030? By then “we” will account for a fifth of the total U.S. population. And even though the population continues to age, with medical breakthroughs, exercise, and more attention to healthy lifestyles, seniors are living longer and are more active than ever – including being involved in their relocation process.

Whether you’re downsizing to something more manageable or relocating closer to your kids, moving can be stressful at any age; but as a senior it can seem especially overwhelming. After all, many times we seniors are moving from homes where we’ve invested 30, 40, even 50 years of our lives; homes where our kids were born and grew into young adults; homes enriched by dozens of holiday gatherings; and homes where our grandkids first came to know who we were as grandparents. It actually becomes more than a move; it becomes a transition to a different stage of life. However, relocation as a senior need not be as stressful – with a little planning.

First of all you need to plan your work, then work your plan. Decide early on in the process how much you want (or can do) yourself and how much you will need to hire to be done. Will you hire just a moving company or a senior move management specialty company? If you already have a new residence purchased or rented will it accommodate everything

you want to move or will you need additional storage?

Next, start downsizing! Rarely does a senior decide when moving, “Yep, I believe I’m going to get a bigger place this time!” Usually we’re trying to fit a lifetime of memories, furniture, and clothing into 2 bedroom apartment or condo. So start early by going through the seldom visited areas of your current residence like the attic, basement, garage, spare junk room, and those pesky filing cabinets.

As with any move, breaking the overall task into more manageable “bite-sized” pieces will definitely help. You didn’t accumulate all of this in a week nor will you be able to properly sift through it at the last minute.

If you already have your new residence secured you can start to plan out what will go where (and what will not fit). This will be helpful not only for furniture but for things like books and artwork too. Before you’re in the “rush of the move” take some time to look around your home and realize what things are really important. Don’t move things you don’t love or need. Start to donate unwanted or unneeded items to family members, charities, or recycling centers.

As moving day gets closer, be sure to notify everyone of your change of address. This will include the family, friends, the post office, any regular publications or associations, and banks. Don’t forget to cancel or forward utilities.

Above all, even though we’re seniors and have lived a lifetime it seems, there’s no shame in asking for help. Moving is stressful on anyone of any age -- emotionally, physically and mentally. We’re no different. Don’t miss out on what’s new and exciting in your new home. []

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Resources for Seniors

BY LAUREL HYATT



Finding senior resources in any town can be daunting, but Charlotte tries to make it less formidable than most cities its size. With an ever-expanding network work of senior services from which to choose, Charlotte is a beautiful place to grow older and retire. From a medical standpoint at least ten hospitals service the area including a rehabilitation hospital, orthopedic hospital, and mental wellness hospital.

Traveling to and from Charlotte is as easy as moving around within the city. By automobile, Interstates 77 and 85 intersect Charlotte with I-40 located less than an hour north. Charlotte Douglas International Airport offers more than 700 daily flights including more than 160 nonstop flights to international and domestic destinations. 3 Amtrak routes are serving the city daily: The Piedmont connects Charlotte and Raleigh, the Carolinian runs to New York, and the Crescent travels from New York to New Orleans. There are even special excursions for events like Carolina Panthers and college football games. Daily Greyhound service to and from Charlotte is available with connections to Raleigh, Atlanta, Richmond and more. Inside the city, Charlotte's light-rail, bus, trolley, rail, and shuttle transportation systems - CATS and LYNX - make it a very walkable city.

If you're a senior, there are even more transportation options. For instance, Centralina Volunteer Transportation Service (or VTS) was created in 2013 to fill the transportation gap for adults with permanent or temporary disabilities, veterans, and individuals 50 and over, to enhance the quality of life by providing access to daily life activities. VTS is just one of the services

Centralina provides seniors. Centralina Area Agency on Aging (AAA), though located in Charlotte, actually serves a nine-county region and is an "on-the-ground" organization charged with helping vulnerable older adults and people with disabilities live with independence and dignity in their homes and communities. Some of AAA's community-based services include Adult Day Care/Health Caregiver Support Program, Health and Wellness Education, Home Delivered Meals; Housing and Home Improvement, Information & Options Counseling; In-Home Aide, Legal Assistance, Lunch Bunch/Group Meals, and Senior Centers.

Another great resource is the Charlotte Mecklenburg Aging Coalition (CMAC). CMAC facilitates community and agency collaboration, identifies critical issues, and promotes response strategies about aging population. Long viewed as a collaborative collection of professionals and advocates who care passionately about seniors, CMAC remains committed to seamless, concerted focus on making the world a better place for both seniors and their caregivers.

At the MECKNC.GOV Services for Aging seniors can find a wealth of information with everything from news about home-delivered meals to supplemental nutrition programs to details on senior centers like the North Meck Senior Center, the Shamrock Senior Center, and the Tyvola Senior Center, who all provide solid foundations for breaking into senior living. They have exercise and educational programs, meet-and-greets, lunches, and expos for different events in the senior world. The MECKNC.GOV site even has information about social activities and trips like those associated with the Mecklenburg County Parks & Recreation Department, The Shepherd's Center of Charlotte Travel Adventures, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Senior Centers, Historical Sites to Visit in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, the Levine Senior Center in Matthews, the Davidson Parks and Recreation Department, and the Town of Huntersville. Most of MECKNC.GOV information can be obtained with just one phone call.

Just4Call (J4C) is the single portal of entry for information, referral, and initiation of services. The J4C process begins with an inquiry from a prospective client, family member, a member of the community, or an agency. Highly skilled intake social workers then screen and assess urgent, complex requests for assistance via telephone, office, and home visit interviews and help the client access the needed resources.

If you need some extra help with your computer or are interested in classes, there are numerous avenues available in Charlotte. You can check with area community colleges and universities about enrolling in a course or just "auditing"

SENIOR RESOURCES

a college class. Other options include the Public Library of Charlotte-Mecklenburg for free computer classes. The Shepherd's Center of Charlotte, Inc. invites you to call 704-365-1995 for more information or to register. They're located on Park Road in Charlotte. The Tyvola Senior Center also has computer classes available by calling 980-314-1320. And you can call the Shamrock Senior Center at 980-314-1123. Levine Senior Center in Matthews has computer classes available: 704-846-4654.

If you're looking for something to even further broaden your horizon check out the MECKNC.Gov Parks and Recreation. There you'll find info on senior centers providing individuals 55 years and older various opportunities to improve their physical and cognitive health, expand their support systems, and find services they need to remain independent. Jazzercise Lite, Low- Impact Aerobics, Strength Training, Stretching Class, Tai Chi, Yoga, one-on-one exercise training, table tennis, line-dancing, Zumba Gold, and a walking club are just a few of the exercise opportunities available. There are structured health programs such as Matter of Balance*, Chronic Disease Self-Management*, Diabetes Self- Management*, Arthritis Foundation Tai Chi*, Brain Fitness, Senior Nutrition Program,

Tomando*, and Medication Education (*Nationally recognized Health Promotion/Disease Prevention programs). Don't miss the education programs: Managing Your Finances during Retirement, Legal Documents for End of Life Peace of Mind, Staying in Your Home Longer, and English Language Training.

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Davidson | 704-892-5131
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Gastonia | 704-866-6702
Kannapolis | 704-920-4000
Matthews | 704-847-4069
Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Department
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Mint Hill | 704-889-2231
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Mt. Holly | 704-827-4343
Pineville | 704-889-2231
Rock Hill | 803-329-7200
Union County Sheriff's Department
| 704-283-3789
Waxhaw | 704-289-1591

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Charlotte Water | 704-336-7600
City of Charlotte Solid Waste Services
| 704-366-2673
Department of Water & Sewer | 704-336-2211
Duke Energy | 704-382-8109, 800-777-9898
Electricities of NC | 704-948-0550
Piedmont Natural Gas | 800-752-7504
Public Service of NC | 877-776-2427
South Carolina Electric & Gas | 803-217-9000

CABARRUS COUNTY UTILITIES

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Duke Energy | 800-777-9898
Kannapolis Public Works | 704-920-4200
Landis Electrical | 704-857-2411
PSNC Energy | 877-776-2427
Union Power Coop | 704-485-3335
Water and Sewer Authority of Cabarrus County
| 704-786-1783
Water City of Kannapolis | 704-933-1133

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Duke Energy | 800-777-9898
Energy United | 800-522-3793
Piedmont Natural Gas | 800-752-7504
Republic Services | 828-256-2158
Rutherford Electric Membership Corp
| 800-228-5331
Waste Reduction | 828-465-8217

GASTON COUNTY UTILITIES

Belmont Water Department | 704-825-5586
Cramerton Waste Management | 704-824-2011
Cramerton Water Department | 704-825-5586
Duke Energy | 800-777-9898
Gastonia Public Works | 704-836-0037
Gastonia Solid Waste | 704-866-6774
Piedmont Natural Gas | 800-752-7504
Rutherford Electric | 704-629-6226

IREDELL COUNTY UTILITIES

Duke Energy | 800-777-9898
Energy United | 1-800-522-3793
Iredell Water Corporation | 704-876-0672
PSNC Energy | 877-776-2427
Solid Waste Department | 704-878-5430

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City of Monroe | 704.282.4511
Duke Energy | 800-777-9898
Piedmont Natural Gas | 800-275-6264
Union Co. Power Co-Op | 800-794-4423
Union County Public Works (UCPW)
| 704-296-4210

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Duke Energy | 800-777-9898
Fort Mill Public Works Department
| 803-547-7158
Public Works/Utilities | 803-325-2500
Rock Hill Sewer Operations | 803-325-2500
Rock Hill Water-Public Works | 803-329-5600
York County Natural Gas | 803-329-5255
York Electric Co-Op | 803-684-4247

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Catawba County | 828-328-6111
Charlotte | 704-378-1300
Fort Mill Office-York County Regional Chamber
| 803-547-5900
Gaston Regional | 704-864-2621
Huntersville | 794-493-7113
Lake Norman | 704-892-1922
Matthews Chamber of Commerce
| 704-847-3649
Mooresville South Iredell | 704-664-3898
Union County | 704-289-4567
York Regional Chamber of Commerce
| 803-324-7500

CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Cabarrus County Convention & Visitors Bureau
| 704-782-4340 www.visitcabarrus.com
Charlotte NC Travel & Tourism | 800-231-4636
www.charlottesgot alot.com
Gaston County Travel & Tourism
| 704-825-4044 www.visitgaston.org
Hickory Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau
| 828-322-1335 www.hickorymetro.com
Lake Norman Convention & Visitors Bureau
| 704-987-3300 <https://www.go-north-carolina.com/Lake-Norman-Convention-and-Visitors-Bureau-NC/#>
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| 704-403-1555
Carolinas College of Health Sciences
| 704-355-5043
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| 704-330-2722
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Seminary | 704-334-6882
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| 704-529-8146
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lotte | 704-365-1717
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Mint Hill | 704-545-9726
Mooresville | 704-663-3800
Mount Holly | 704-827-3931
Mt. Pleasant | 704-436-9803
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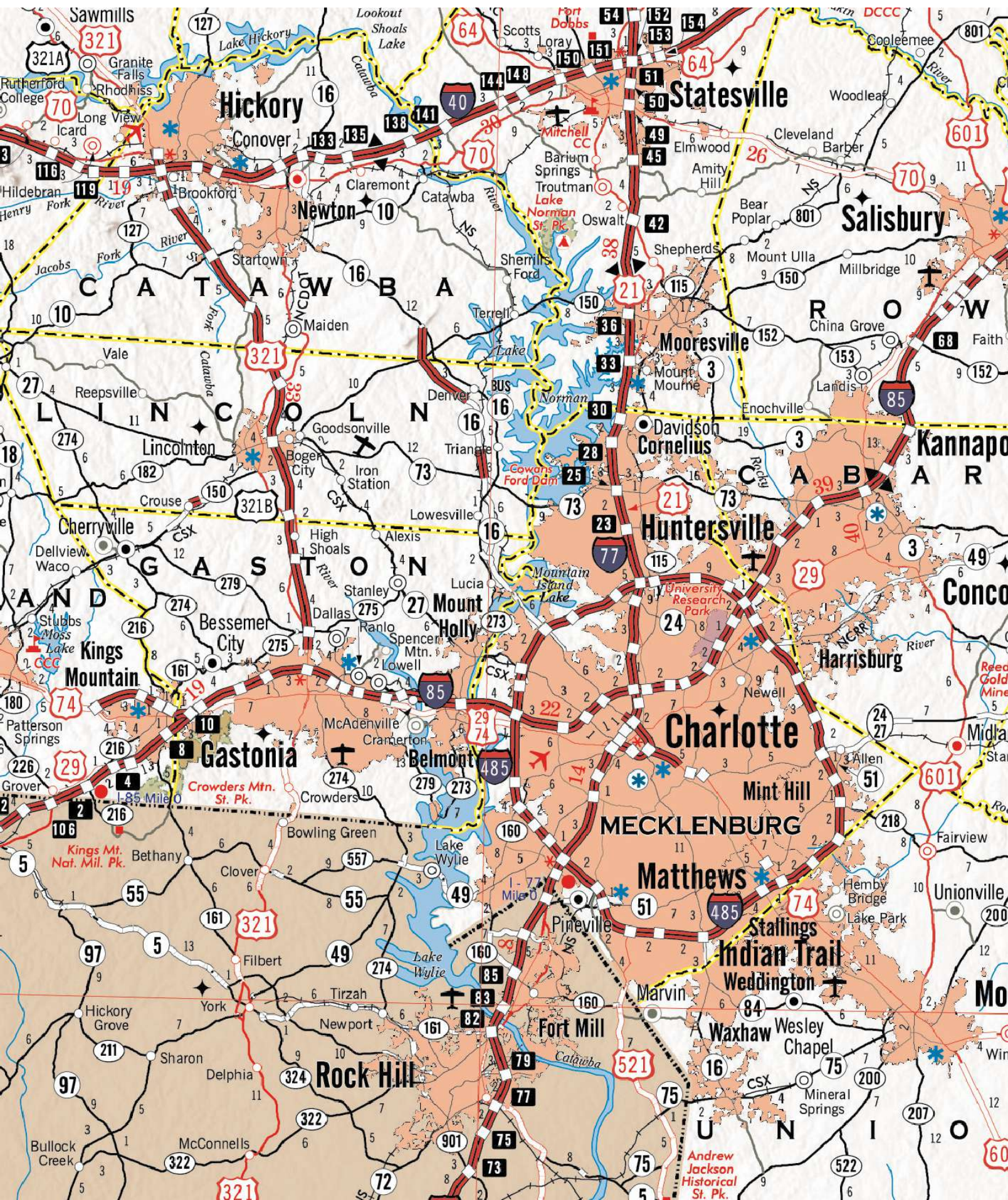
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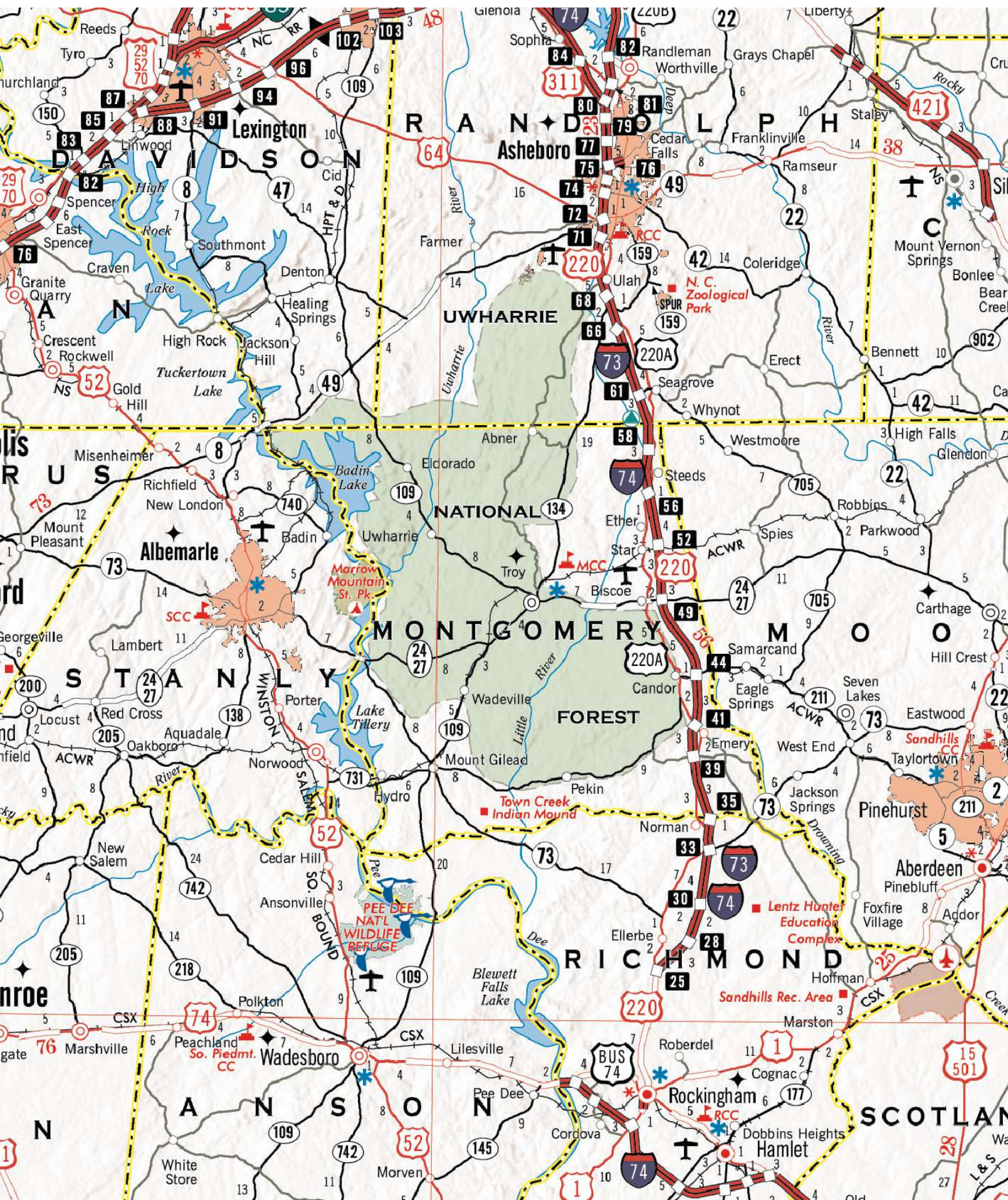
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Our goal is to position you and your family for a successful experience when moving to or from the Lake Norman and Charlotte NC areas.



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