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Bargain store's chief finds deal in Raleigh buy

Triangle Business Journal – by

Dale Gibson

It appears that Dollar Tree President and CEO Bob Sasser is, himself, a thrifty shopper.

Sasser and his wife, Pamela Sasser, have purchased a home in the exclusive Hasentree community in north Raleigh for \$2.6 million. The home on one acre has a tax value of almost \$4 million, according to Wake County records.

The 11,416–square–foot home was built by

Don Collins Builder Inc.

in 2007, but BB&T bank

took over the mortgage in August. Sasser can afford it. His 2008 compensation was \$3.8 million, according to Forbes.com.

Dollar Tree Inc. is a publicly traded company that operates more than 3,800 stores in 48 states and is based in Chesapeake, Va. The Sassers must like it here. They've owned a condo at The Links in Raleigh since 2002.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

officials plan to take bids in February for a \$3 million hangar complex that will be built at Raleigh–Durham International Airport

. The facility, which will take a year to construct, will include a 13,200–square–foot hangar and 5,600 square feet of office space. It will house aircraft the university uses to transport

UNC Medical School

physicians around the state for clinics and teaching purposes. The facility will be located next to an existing North Carolina Department of Transportation

hangar. UNC currently bases its planes at

Horace Williams Airport

, but the aircraft will have to be moved due to the Carolina North development. UNC had bid out the RDU project in November of 2008 but halted the process due to the subsequent budget crunch caused by the recession. Recycling of construction and demolition materials has become a hot topic, and the

## Chatham County Board of Commissioners

is proposing to mandate the practice. A proposed law would set a target of recycling at least 30 percent of waste from construction and demolition of building projects of 1,000 square feet or more.

A public hearing has been set for 6 p.m. Jan. 19 to discuss the proposal.

## Scientific Properties

in Durham exceeded even its own goals by garnering gold-level certification from the U.S. Green Building Council

for its Golden Belt redevelopment project in downtown Durham. The real estate development firm had been targeting silver-level certification. Golden, it turns out, is green in more ways than one.

18 Seaboard Chef and owner Jason Smith of Raleigh will take his culinary skills to his coastal North Carolina roots this weekend for the first-ever Sheraton Atlantic Beach 2010 Culinary Series.

The Jan. 15-17 event at the Sheraton Atlantic Beach hotel will feature Smith and Sheraton Atlantic Beach Executive Chef John Andreola demonstrating their skills by whipping up lunch on Saturday followed by a three-course dinner with wine pairings that night. The dinner menu: crispy oysters with horseradish apple slaw and Texas Pete cioli, corn mill crusted flounder with grilled grits cake and pecan pie creme brulee for dessert. Yum!

Do you enjoy the

North Carolina Symphony

and wish you could hear it all the time – not just in concerts a few times a year? If so, Biz has a CD for you. The symphony and Scandinavian music label

BIS Records

released an album of classical music late last year that features the symphony and pianist Yevgeny Sudbin performing famous Russian piano concertos. The CD, which costs \$20, can be purchased in some local bookstores, at the

Progress Energy Center for the Performing Arts

or online on Amazon.com

. Get ready to give up on your new year's resolution to lose weight: It's *Girl Scouts*' cookie time.

The annual fundraising, and potentially waist-expanding, effort began Jan. 9, and *Girl Scouts* will be taking orders through March 14.

In 2009, troops in the North Carolina Coastal Pines area earned more than \$1.3 million from the cookie sales, providing more than \$1,000 per troop. For 2010, the region has set a goal of selling 2.6 million boxes.

Biz is a big fan of the Caramel delights, though their old name was better: Samoas.

Pam Riddle's got a new set of wheels.

The instructor at

Central Carolina Community College

won a Chevrolet Cobalt in the Automobile Give-Away '10 fundraiser for the United Way

of Lee County. Riddle outlasted nearly 70 other finalists in the reverse drawing. Riddle and others qualified for the drawing by donating the equivalent of one hour of pay per month for the year or by making a donation of \$500 or more during the United Way's fall fundraiser.

"I'm just in shock," says Riddle. "I might have to give my students a day off or something."

The car, which Riddle says she will drive for a few years before giving it to her 15-year-old daughter, was donated by Wilkinson Cadillac Chevrolet Pontiac Buick GMC of Sanford.

So, when is a failed merger not such a bad thing?

When it comes with a fat, juicy break-up fee.

Korean company

Arigene Co.

Ltd. put an \$85 million offer on the table to buy Durham-based Trimeris

, but the deal fell through when Arigene concluded it couldn't raise the financing to pull it off. The rub: Trimeris had negotiated a \$12 million "reverse termination fee" in case the deal didn't go through – money that Arigene had to place in an escrow account.

The collapse of the deal leaves Trimeris without a buyer but at least it's \$12 million richer. Not bad for a company that reported cash holdings of \$32 million as of Sept. 30.

Biogen Idec

's RTP manufacturing plant is one of the top such facilities in the world, according to the International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineering

. The organization recently announced its "Facility of the Year Awards." Biogen Idec's plant was the winner in the "operational excellence" category. The plant was recognized for a renovation that brought in new technologies and equipment that helped increase the facility's yield by more than 300 percent.

Other winners were

Genentech

, MannKind Corp.

and Pfizer

. The Consumer Electronics Show has wrapped up in Las Vegas, and some Triangle companies made the most of the opportunity to strut their stuff.

For example, Morrisville-based Lenovo's new notebook computer with a detachable screen turned more than a few heads.

But Biz is bummed about missing out on the party thrown by Morisville software company

DigitalSmiths

. The company teamed up with one of its customers, TMZ, to host a party at the Palms Resort

& Casino. Biz is hoping that one of these years, the bosses will spring for a trip to the CES.

Philanthropy Journal, which has been published in print or electronic form since 1993, has been bequeathed by the

A.J. Fletcher Foundation

to North Carolina State University

's Institute for Nonprofits

, where it will operate as a program of the institute. The Fletcher Foundation

has operated the journal since 2000. The free publication currently has approximately 13,000 subscribers to its e-mail newsletter, and Editor Todd Cohen says about 40,000 readers visit its Web site each month. The foundation will continue to support the journal through an annual \$100,000 grant to the Institute for Nonprofits. Cohen says the journal generates revenue through advertising, sponsorships, foundation grants, individual contributions, and events, including monthly webinars and six lunch 'n' learn webinars a year.

"Nonprofits are a critical, yet underappreciated, social and economic force, and they are struggling in the economic recession to more effectively meet the needs of our communities," says Cohen. "The journal is delighted to be part of the institute's important work in support of the nonprofit sector."

It's a tough job market out there, and Internet-literate college students are using the tools they know, including setting up their own "hire me" Web sites.

Among them is Mark Nazal, a senior at

Duke University

who has set up a Web site called whyrbcshouldhireme. He wants to work for RBC Capital Markets

in Toronto as an analyst. "My hope is that this website will get the ball rolling on my application, because all I need is an interview to allow me to show that I am a great fit for RBC Capital Markets," Nazal writes on his Web site.

Well, let's let RBC be the judge of that.

Optimism has returned to the nation's small and midsized business, or SMB, sector.

That's the conclusion of a survey of 838 SMB business owners and primary decision makers conducted by

City Business Journals Network

, an organization of 64 member publications, including TBJ, in the nation's major markets. The survey found that 75 percent of owners feel that business prospects in the next 12 months will be "a lot" or "a little" better – a percentage comparable to a 2007 survey done prior to the recent financial crisis and recession.

In addition, 40 percent of respondents believe the economy has turned around – a marked improvement over the 28 percent who held that view in August 2009.

Contributing to Biz were staffers James Gallagher, Frank Vinluan, Amanda Jones Hoyle and Chris Baysden. All contents of this site (c) American City Business Journals Inc. All rights reserved.

***Highlights: Girl Scouts***