



The Daily Courier

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Facebook 'friends' county

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By **Jean Gordon**

Daily Courier Staff Writer

FOREST CITY — It's official: Facebook likes Rutherford County. Facebook, the world's leading social networking site, connecting more than 500 million people worldwide, will invest \$450 million in Rutherford County with the construction of a data and call center off U.S. 74A at the Rutherford Corporate Center.

"Facebook likes Rutherford County very much," Tom Furlong, the company's site operations director, said. The announcement brought cheers and applause from those gathered for the announcement at the future site.

Furlong made the long-awaited announcement before a group of about 200 people Thursday morning. The identity of the company had not been disclosed until then. The data center will be housed in a 300,000-square-foot building, and construction will last about 18 months. During that time, Facebook estimates, more than 250 workers will be employed.

Facebook's Rutherford Data Center will be built on the site of Burlington's J.C. Cowan Plant. The site was built decades ago and most recently was home to Mako Marine. The data center, Facebook says, is a "central location that houses thousands of computer services, which are networked together and then linked to the outside world through fiber-optic cable."

The data center "will have an indus-

try-leading array of energy saving devices from evaporative cooling systems to an innovative, patent-pending uninterruptible power supply system.

Construction will begin soon. Once the center is up and running, Facebook says as many as 45 high tech jobs will be available. Facebook will seek to hire employees locally, and, where possible, rely on local contractors and supplies to construct, operate and maintain the facility. The center, Facebook says, will be looking to employ people to repair and maintain servers, generators, back-up power supplies "and other critical infrastructure at the site."

The center will be crucial to the service of Facebook's 500 million users, Furlong said. He said the company looked at sites along the East Coast, including many in North Carolina, but Rutherford County offered the best mix, citing the business atmosphere, climate, the site and the presence of Duke Energy.

After Furlong and county leaders unveiled the Facebook banner, state and local officials took time to thank the company and those involved in the almost year-long process.

Lt. Gov. Walter Dalton said it's always good to come back home to Rutherford County, especially on days such as Thursday.

"Over 100 years ago, Rutherford

Please see Facebook, Page 6A

"Facebook likes Rutherford County very much."

Tom Furlong,

Director of Site Operations for Facebook

Information

Relationship Status:

Rutherford County is in a relationship with Facebook

Birthday:

November 12, 2010

Friends

500,000,000 +

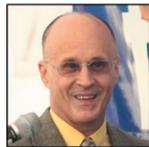
See All



Tom Furlong



Walter Dalton



Dennis Tarlton



Patrick McHenry



Keven McCammon



Keith Crisco



Lt. Gov. Walter Dalton. "It's always good to be home, especially on a day like today."



Rep. Patrick McHenry "This is significant for the world."



Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco "We've been trying to get that smile off Tom Johnson's face... He'll be happy for the next 20 years."

Write a comment...



Additional photos online at www.thedigitalcourier.com

WEATHER

High | Low
69 | **38**

Today, sunny.
 Tonight, clear



Details on Page 10A

DEATHS

Lake Lure
 Alma Taylor

Page 5A

INSIDE



Bringing smiles..... Page 2A
 Facility plans..... Page 12A
 Facts..... Page 2A, 12A



CALENDAR/LOCAL

COUNTY SCENE

Ongoing

Chase Corner Ministries: Thursdays are dollar days in November.

Habitat ReStore: Hickory and oak cabinets in 12-by-15-inch dimensions are available; hours are Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Hospice Resale Shop: Half-price on entire stock, including selected clothing priced at 25 cents; store hours, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Washburn Community Outreach Center: 25 cent porch sale, including clothing, housewares and linens; winter clothing arriving daily; hours are Thursday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.; WCOC is sponsoring the backpack program at Ellenboro Elementary and East Middle Schools, for information, call 245-5603.

Saturday, Nov. 13

Community yard sale: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Fairfield Mountains Volunteer Fire Department, Buffalo Creek Road; tables may be reserved for a \$10 donation to benefit the fire department; for information, call Nancy Rummell at 828-625-5176 or 980-8854.

Holiday bazaar: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Rutherford County moose Lodge; homemade crafts and food vendors welcome; to reserve a spot, call 447-7390 or 248-3402; proceeds will go to help families in need in the county.

Low-cost vaccine clinic: Noon to 1 p.m., Thunder Road Animal Hospital; rabies shots - \$10 cash for one year, \$12 cash for three year; other discounted vaccines available.

Benefit country ham and chicken pie supper: 4 p.m. until, Mount Vernon Clubhouse; menu includes country ham, chicken pie, green beans, grits, applesauce, redeye gravy, slaw, biscuits, desserts, tea and coffee; cost is \$8 adults, \$5 children ages 6 to 12, free for children 5 and younger; for Patrick Morris to help defray medical costs.

Country ham supper: 4 to 8 p.m., Cane Creek Clubhouse; \$9 adults, \$6 ages 6 to 12, under 6 free.

All-you-can-eat fish fry: 4 to 8 p.m., Concord Community Club; adults \$10, children ages 6 to 12 \$6, under 6 free; carryouts \$9.

Sunday, Nov. 14

100th Anniversary of Rutherford County Confederate Monument: 2 p.m., Rutherford County Courthouse lawn; sponsored by the Rutherford County Historical Society and the Burnt Chimney Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy; reception will follow at St. John's Historic Church; for information, call Robin S. Lattimore, 447-1474 or robinslattimore@att.net.

Monday, Nov. 15

Financial aid workshop: 6:30 to 8 p.m., R-S Central High School, media center; all R-S Central and REACH senior students and their parents and guardians are invited to attend.

Tuesday, Nov. 16

"Dine Out for Kids:" Courtside Steaks; proceeds from the event will help fund Communities in Schools programs such as backpack for food, Starbase program, reading programs, mentoring and Stuff the Bus.

Preschool story time: 10 a.m., Rutherford County Library Main Branch; for ages 2 to 5; free.

Preschool story time: 10 a.m., Spindale Library; every Tuesday; for information, call 286-3879.

PWA meeting: Noon, M Squared Restaurant; Professional Women's Association meets at noon the third Tuesday of each month; lunch is dutch treat; program will be presented by Carolina Chiropractic Plus; for information, call Margi Miller at 287-5928.

Forest City Housing Authority Board meeting: 12:30 p.m., community room at 147 E. Spruce St.

Chase High School Fall Sports Banquet: 7 p.m.; refreshments begin at 6:30.

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance: Tuesdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m., Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 502 W. Sumter St., Shelby; for information, call Laura Lancaster at 704-472-0596.

Al-Anon meetings: Lake Lure Al-Anon Family Group meets every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., at Lake Lure Mountains Branch Library, 150 Bills Creek Road, Lake Lure; call 625-0456 for information.



Garrett Byers/Daily Courier

Left to right, Economic Development Division Chair Keven McCammon; Director of Site Operations for Facebook Tom Furlong, state Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco; Lt. Gov. Walter Dalton; Rep. Patrick McHenry; state Sen. Debbie Clary, County Commissioner Susan Crowe; and Forest City Mayor Dennis Tarlton break ground at the site of the future Facebook data and call center off U.S. 74A at the Rutherford Corporate Center.

Facebook

Continued from Page 1A

County clothed the world as the textile giant. Today, Rutherford County will be playing a role in connecting the world.

If Facebook was a country it would be the third largest country in the world, Dalton said.

"No announcement is a bigger game changer than this," Dalton said. "Rutherford County is ready for the 21st Century."

"We congratulate you on a very wise decision, Mr. Furlong."

Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco, who met with county commissioners last month in closed session, gave best wishes from Gov. Bev Perdue, who was with the troops and veterans at Fort Bragg on Thursday.

In a statement, Perdue said: "We are proud that Facebook chose to make North Carolina a 'friend.' The feeling is certainly mutual," she said. "The investment and jobs at the data center will be a boon to that region of the state, and will help confirm North Carolina's distinction as a global business destination."

Crisco said the former J.C. Cowan plant was for years a site of great production, and now the data center will transform North Carolina, "right here at the J.C. Cowan plant."

"Facebook wanted to be here," he said.

He said with the state's unemployment rate of 9.6, "that is too high and we have a lot of work to do, but you have come. You have made a commitment. We will keep on keeping on."

Rep. Patrick McHenry (R) of the 10th District said Facebook users log 700 billion minutes per month. "This is significant to the world."

"We are thankful for the one-half billion dollar investment," McHenry said. "It's about time we have good news."

County Commissioner Susan Crowe thanked those involved with the project. "Local folks were key to making this come together."

She thanked former county commissioners Chivous Bradley, Chuck Hill and Amanda King for their work in preparing the property at Corporate 74. Without the site preparation, Facebook would not be in the county today.

She said the company will provide new jobs. "I hope this will open the door for more. We sure do look forward to working with you."

Keven McCammon, Economic Development Commission chair, said Facebook is here because of quality of leadership in Rutherford County. "They could have gone a lot of places, but they came here."

Rutherford County will sell 138 acres, with an option for an additional 15 acres, in exchange for about \$3.148 million plus a donation of \$200,000 to various community groups, according to the purchase and sale agree-



Garrett Byers/Daily Courier

N.C. Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco, left, and Lt. Gov. Walter Dalton present Tom Furlong, director of site operations for Facebook, with a North Carolina State flag as a gift of hospitality and friendship.

Page 1 photo identification:

Top left: Tom Furlong of Facebook
Bottom left: Executive director of the EDC Tom Johnson, was all smiles for Facebook's arrival.
Bottom right: State Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco gives a thumbs up after the announcement was made naming Facebook as the new company to build at Rutherford Corporate Center.

ments. The company has committed to invest at least \$450 million on the site for the buildings and other improvements that will serve as the data center, the installation of computer servers and other equipment as part of the initial phase of the project, Tom Johnson, executive director of the Economic Development Commission, said Wednesday.

Three buildings could be constructed on the site, but the initial phase calls for only one.

The average wage for workers, about \$538 a week, will exceed the county average, Johnson said. The county has agreed to provide up to \$400,000 to remove asbestos in what is commonly called the Mako building, as well as structures such as outbuildings, a wastewater treatment plant and tanks. The county will also place \$490,000 in escrow for private infrastructure work on the site, though Johnson said much of that will be offset through grants, including a \$420,000 infrastructure grant from the N.C. Rural Center. The Rural Center will forgive \$142,245 of grant repayment money scheduled for fiscal 2011-12, Johnson said, and the county has been approved to receive \$100,000 for the Duke Energy Carolina Investment Fund.

Should the company petition Forest City for annexation, the town could contribute \$70,000 for the relocation of infrastructure, Johnson said. The county also will set aside \$500,000, which is capped, for costs associated with removal, remediation or mitiga-

tion of an unknown environmental condition, such as soil or groundwater contamination beneath the footprint of the existing structures on the site. Building permits and landfill fees will be waived and, dependent on annexation, Forest City will provide an economic development grant for 30 years equal to all property taxes paid by the company, Johnson said. The town also would get an electric franchise fee. Rutherford County will provide an EDC grant, effective for 20 years, for taxable investments during the initial years of the project, with all grants ending no later than 2040.

"Initially," Johnson said, "the amount of the grant is 85 percent of real property taxes paid and 90 percent of personal property taxes paid. If the company meets the \$450 million capital investment threshold before Dec. 31, 2015, the personal property grant percentage increases to 95 percent of personal property taxes paid," although, he pointed out, the period could be extended a year due to things happening outside the company's control.

After the Economic Development Grant, Johnson said, it appears Rutherford County will net an average of slightly more than \$109,000 per year during the initial 10 years of the project. Based on a tax rate of 53 cents, the company represents a tax value of more than 20.6 million.

"While the Economic Development Grant is a higher percentage than some other grants the county has given in the past, the net value would represent No. 6 on the nonresidential list of the county's highest taxpayers," he said. Not considering CSX, Shaw Construction and the public utilities, the company would be the county's biggest taxpayer. "This does not take into account the cost savings the county will achieve from everyday maintenance activities and potential up-fit cost to the Mako building."

News Editor John Trump contributed to this story.

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Administration

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Steven E. Parham/executive editor210
Lori Spurling/ advertising director224
Anthony Rollins/ circulation director206

Newsroom

John Trump, news editor216
Allison Flynn, lifestyles editor218
Scott Bowers, sports editor213
Jean Gordon, features editor211
Garrett Byers, photography/graphics212
Scott Baughman, reporter217
Larry Dale, reporter225
Bobbie Greene, typesetting215
Virginia Rucker, contributing editor

Circulation	
Pam Curry	201
Business office	
Cindy Kidd	200
Advertising	
Chrissy Driver	226
Jill Hasty	227
Jessica Hendrix	228
Pam Dixon	231
Classified	
Erika Meyer	205
Maintenance	
Gary Hardin	234

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LOCAL

Facebook facility plans



These conceptual artist's renderings show what the Facebook Data Center could possibly look like in its finished state. The illustrations were created and provided by Sheehan Partners Ltd.

Contributed photos

Have you heard the news?
Gift Solutions
 at Medical Arts Pharmacy
 is having their
Holiday Open House
 Friday, November 12 10am-7pm
 Saturday, November 13 9am-4pm
 and is offering
20% off ALL Holiday Merchandise
 Come see the new trends and products
 for the 2010 season
 and bring a friend!

924 W. Main St., Forest City

Facebook facts

Environmental Practices:
 Facebook will be using some of the most energy efficient technologies. These technologies should create and overall power savings of about 35%.
 Some of the new technologies to be used are:

- evaporative cooling systems
- airside economizer
- re-use of server heat
- proprietary uninterruptible power supply technology

Facebook will participate in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design in which they will reuse, reduce and recycle as much as possible.
 The company also plans to use new software that will reduce energy consumption and give the facebook community a more effective, efficient site to live on.

— Compiled by Christina Gutierrez
 Source: Facebook

THE *belief* PROJECT™

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Real Estate Today

by Michelle Okpych

THE PROACTIVE SELLER

If potential buyers were once willing to overlook minor shortcomings when assessing the attractiveness of a home on their house-hunting lists, such is no longer the case. For instance, in years past, a prospective buyer might have dismissed walls painted an unattractive color in the living room as a "small problem." After all, it takes relatively little effort to repaint a room. Most recently, however, buyers are more likely to base their decision not to purchase a home on a living room with purple walls. Savvy sellers should preempt this potential stumbling block to a sale by anticipating buyer reactions and taking a proactive approach. As experienced real estate agents know, psychology plays an important role in buyers' purchasing decisions.

Many potential buyers prefer to purchase property that does not require lots of work and upgrading. Making changes, even small and inexpensive ones, may make the difference between making a sale or not. You will benefit from our real estate knowledge and experience. Contact ODEAN KEEVER & ASSOCIATES, at (828) 286-1311. Make the most of your real estate investment. We're here to help. Our office is conveniently located at 140 U.S. Highway 64, Rutherfordton. Learn how we have earned a superior reputation!

HINT: It is better to paint a room a neutral color than to tell a potential buyer that "it's easy to repaint a room." The potential buyer may not view the matter in such a dismissive manner.

www.keeverrealestate.com
 odeankeeverandassociates.homesandland.com

Holiday Sampler X
A Christmas to Remember
Saturday, November 20, 2010
11:00a.m.-1:30p.m.
Rutherford County Cooperative Extension
193 Callahan-Koon Rd., Spindale
 Demonstrations: *Outdoor Decorating, Stamp 'N Up Scrapbooking and Card Making*
Food Sampling - Recipe Booklet
Entertainment
Admission \$10

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