

# NORTH CAROLINA **CONSTRUCTION** NEWS

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**Construction industry  
worries about Trump's  
steel, aluminum tariff plans**



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## Publisher's Viewpoint



Mark Buckshon, publisher

As we prepare this issue of North Carolina Construction News for publication, I'm reminded of the wonderful complexities, challenges and opportunities in this state's architectural, engineering and construction community.

There's growth, creativity, technology, innovation, and solid crafts and trades skills and it doesn't take long to see the opportunities ahead in a growing economy.

There are challenges as well; a mixed bag of policies and initiatives that can be seen either as wonderful or woeful. The crackdown on illegal immigration, for example, helps provide job security and improved wages for properly qualified and legal U.S. residents. It also creates serious labor shortages and pushes many workers to the edge of the economy.

The steel and aluminum tariffs will give a boost to the U.S. steel manufacturing industry, but could have unintended negative consequences for component fabricators (who may find they are now woefully uncompetitive with foreign producers shipping material into the U.S. around the raw steel limits). General contractors and suppliers with fixed-price contracts may be blindsided by extra costs for which they cannot recover.

These issues remind me of the importance of industry associations, which can effectively serve as advocates for your business. You'll see some of the initiatives of the North Carolina Masonry Contractors Association (NCMCA) in this issue. There are several other associations reflecting general and specific industry groups as well.

If you aren't already a member, consider joining the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), the Carolinas Associated General Contractors (CAGC). If you are interested in a general subcontractor's association, you have a choice: the North Carolina Subcontractors Alliance (NCSA) or the American Subcontractors Association of the Carolinas' reconstituted Charlotte chapter.

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## **NORTH CAROLINA** **CONSTRUCTION** **NEWS**

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# Construction industry worries about Trump's steel, aluminum tariff plans



*North Carolina Construction News staff writer*

The construction industry is worried about President Donald Trump's announcement of a 25 percent tariff on steel and a 10 percent tax on aluminum imported to the United States.

The policy will increase the construction costs, according to construction experts. Ultimately, the extra costs could make it harder for future projects to get completed.

"Rising construction costs, along with labor costs and bank financing constraints, have been a significant factor in limiting property development over the course of this [economic] expansion," Sam Chandan, the associate dean at the New York University's Schack Institute of Real Estate, said in a statement to Commercial Observer. "Policies that add to cost pressures exacerbate drags on new supply."

While making foreign steel more expensive via taxes could mean companies may further use domestic steel, the U.S. industry will not have the supply to keep up with the demand, said Louis Coletti, the president and CEO of the Building Trades Employers' Association.

"The U.S. steel manufacturers cannot produce the quantity of steel needed. Steel manufacturers are al-

ready telling contractors to expect price increases," Coletti said. "The lack of steel availability will also cause scheduling delays that will add to additional cost increases. This policy will have a detrimental impact on the economic growth of [New York] and the nation."

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) also issued a statement regarding President Trump's announcement to impose tariffs on steel and aluminum imports.

"It is unfortunate that President Trump has decided to impose tariffs of 25 percent on steel imports and 10 percent on aluminum imports. These tariffs will translate into higher costs for consumers and U.S. businesses that use these products, including home builders," NAHB chairman Randy Noel said, adding that "given that home builders are already grappling with 20 percent tariffs on Canadian softwood lumber and that the price of lumber and other key building materials are near record highs, this announcement by the president could not have come at a worse time."

"Tariffs hurt consumers and harm housing affordability. We hope the administration will work quickly to resolve these trade disputes regarding lumber and steel so that businesses and consumers have access to an adequate supply at a fair market price," Noel said.

# Construction Law: Intellectual property for the construction industry

By Jeffrey M. Reichard

Whether you realize it or not, contractors, subcontractors, owners, design professionals and material suppliers face a myriad of issues related to intellectual property during a complex construction project, including patents, copyrights, trademarks and trade secrets. Intellectual property disputes can create substantial economic risks and even completely shut down an otherwise successful construction project.

While these issues often are misunderstood, the intellectual property issues that arise most often in construction can be easily recognized and managed via contract negotiation or otherwise after educating yourself on the various types of intellectual property and how they may apply to construction projects as identified below.

## **Copyrights**

One of the most interesting intellectual property concepts and most relevant to the construction industry is architectural copyrights. Copyrights protect original works of authorship fixed in a tangible medium. In other words, they can cover architectural works, blueprints, BIM models, technical design documents, renderings, elevations, and even constructed buildings themselves. Copyrights initially vest in the creator of the work, which in the construction industry typically is the architect or engineer, although they can be assigned or licensed through contracts, such as the AIA B series agreements.

A copyright registration with the Copyright Office is not required for copyrights to arise in a work, but registration provides additional benefits, such as statutory damages and attorneys' fees. It is important to note that a defendant may infringe copyrights without intending to do so because infringement can be shown via (1) access to the copyrighted work and (2) substantial similarity between the copyrighted work and the alleged infringing work. It also is important to understand the difference between an idea and an expression.

An expression fixed in a tangible medium is protectable under copyright law, but an idea is not. For more on the idea versus expression dichotomy as it relates to architectural copyrights, see *Attia v. Society of*

*New York Hospital*, 201 F.3d 50 (2d Cir. 1999) regarding the idea of constructing a project in a particular way versus the expression of that idea in construction plans.

There are many other issues in copyright law that relate to architectural works and the construction industry which are too intricate to discuss in this brief article.

## **Trademarks**

Contractors, subcontractors, owners, design professionals and material suppliers also may face many issues related to trademarks. Trademarks are source identifiers, such as words, symbols, or logos, that are used to identify the source of goods or services. Like copyrights, a registration is not required for trademark rights to arise, but registration with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office ("USPTO") confers additional rights. Trademark rights arise via use of the mark in commerce in association with goods or services. However, unregistered use may limit the geographical reach of the trademark rights.

Trademark infringement is determined by the "likelihood of confusion" test. While different federal circuits apply slightly different tests to determine a likelihood of confusion, most circuits look at generally the same eight or nine factors in making this determination. One of those factors is the strength of the mark. Since construction companies often use the last name of the original owner, it is important to know that a trademark which is "primarily merely a surname" is considered a generally weak mark and additional proof may be required to register and/or enforce such a trademark. It also is important to note that trademarks can be infringed in many ways and that indirect infringement can be established against third parties through contributory, vicarious, or inducement of infringement.

## **Patents**

Unlike copyrights and trademarks, patents must be granted by the USPTO before they become enforceable. A patent is similar to a temporary monopoly in the United States (or other countries in which they are granted) to make, use, or sell a patented machine, article of manufacture, process, method or other patentable invention. To obtain a utility patent, which is





the most common type of patent, the invention must be new, useful and nonobvious.

Nonobviousness usually is the most difficult requirement to establish during patent prosecution. There are many patents related to the construction industry, including construction processes, equipment, materials and even business methods. Patent infringement litigation can be very expensive from both an attorneys' fees perspective and a potential damages perspective.

Therefore, it is recommended that indemnification and defense costs are handled contractually at the beginning of the construction project. Note that the 2007 and 2017 versions of the AIA A102 and A103 provide for the contractor to be reimbursed for costs associated with infringement in certain circumstances, but the A101 does not.

### Trade secrets

Trade secret issues also may arise in construction projects and related business ventures. Trade secrets can cover virtually any type of information that is not generally known to the public, is economically valuable to the owner, and is the subject of reasonable efforts to maintain its secrecy. For example, trade secrets can cover business or technical information, pricing information, customer lists, construction methods, and processes.

Trade secrets are covered by state law, but most states have generally similar laws. If you have information of value that you want to protect under trade secret law, it is recommended that you enter confidentiality agreements and/or non-disclosure agreements with each employee or entity who needs to know the information. Once that information is publicly known, trade secret protection ceases, and the value of the previously-protected information diminishes.

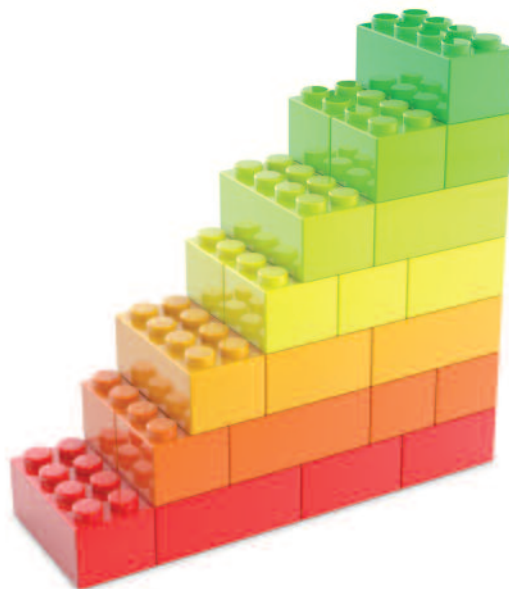
*Jeff Reichard is a member of the construction and intellectual property practice groups in the Greensboro, NC office of Nexsen Pruet, PLLC who regularly practices at the intersection of IP and construction. If you have any questions about this article, please email Jeff at [jreichard@nexsenpruet.com](mailto:jreichard@nexsenpruet.com).*



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# Mason and machine: North Carolina bricklayers take center stage nationally



*North Carolina Construction News staff writer*

North Carolina bricklayers had a prominent role at the SPEC Mix Bricklayer 500, the world's largest competition of bricklayers, which concluded with a grand championship at the World of Concrete in Las Vegas in January.

While competitors from elsewhere in the world won the grand prize in the competition, a recent New York Times (NYT) profile gave top billing to 2017 defending champion Matt Cash, who works for Huntley Brothers Company, Inc. in Mint Hill.

"I'm on the edge of crazy when I'm laying brick," the NYT quoted Cash as saying, in an article outlining the longer-range competition



*James Huntley of Huntley Brothers company won the first place prize in the first year apprentice category in the Masonry Contractors Association of America's Masonry Skills Challenge.*

between humans and robotics in the masonry industry.

Cash last year won a 2017 F-250 4×4 XLT Super Duty Truck and \$15,000 worth of cash and prizes.

Meanwhile, competition organizers say the youngest person ever to win the grand prize was Garrett Hood of Monroe, who achieved the feat in 2008 when he was 23.

The NYT profile described the competition's intensity as it raised the questions about the trade's evolution, with new robotic equipment automating the process through SAM (semi-automated mason) machinery – though un-



doubtedly this year's results revealed that the machinery is still no substitute for human trade skills.

Of course, SPEC Mix Bricklayer 500 finalists achieve productivity levels generally unseen on any actual construction site. As thousands watched, the bricklayers built a stretch of wall that the NYT says "would be a day's work for a mason building at a normal pace."

SAM machinery still cannot do much more than lay brick in a straight line, but automation may have its place, as the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) says in a survey that nearly two-thirds of bricklaying contractors are struggling to find enough workers.

It takes three or four years of apprenticeship for a person without experience to fully qualify as a journeyman.

The automated equipment alternative is expensive and still scarce. The machines cost about \$400,000 each – prohibitively expensive for smaller contractors, and the NYT says there are so far only 11 of them in use. As well, SAM still requires less skilled workers "to load its brick, refill its mortar and clean up the joints of the bricks it lays."

Of course, the equipment doesn't get sick, thirsty or tired. "It's not whether or not we win in the first hour," the NYT quoted Scott Peters, president of Construction Robotics, the maker of the machine, as saying. "We'd just like to see them in the fourth hour."

Robotic equipment could ease construction cost pressures, and perhaps help the industry deal with the labor shortage.

"The machines will never replace the human," Buczkiewicz said in the NYT interview. "They will help down the road and they will make it that we won't need as many workers, but given the shortages we're seeing now, that's probably a good thing."

However, he added: "There's a human element to a craft that you don't get from a robot."



And in North Carolina, at least, young people who commit to the apprenticeship process likely will have long and lucrative careers ahead.



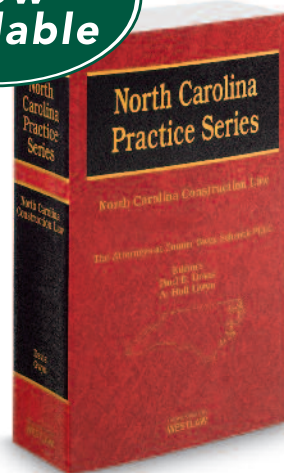
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# NCMCA takes financial “leap of faith” in hiring new Workforce Development and Training Coordinator

*North Carolina Construction News staff writer*

The North Carolina Masonry Contractor’s Association (NCMCA) has appointed former high school masonry instructor Ryan Shaver to fill the newly created position of workforce development and training coordinator (WDTC).

“Creating this position is one of the most significant initiatives ever attempted by the association,” NCMCA president Bob Gates said in a statement.



“Ryan’s work will positively influence our future masonry workforce. Of that, I have no doubt. This board can be very proud that we are making this happen.”

The new position fulfills a need observed by various Carolinas’ masonry promotional groups for almost 20 years, the NCMCA statement says.

Creating the new position is somewhat of a financial “leap of faith” for the organization, considering that the expense of maintaining the WDTC will almost double the association’s annual operating budget. But the move is not unprecedented. Some 20 years ago, the NCMCA board hired its first executive manager without enough money in the bank to pay the new manager for even six months.

That executive director is still here. Back then, NCMCA members stepped up to ensure that a critical step in the association’s evolution would be successful. In the coming months, NCMCA leadership will once again ask members to step up to support this important NCMCA initiative, the association statement said.

Much of the credit for North Carolina’s traditionally strong high school masonry instruction programs goes to the old Brick Association of North Carolina, who for many years, even after expanding to both Carolinas, maintained staff dedicated to calling on high school and other masonry training programs.

Changes in the industry and in the economy eventually ended those staff positions. In recent years, the industry has continued to support training programs in the state, but not in a coordinated and systematic fashion that ensures adequate connections between industry and the training programs.



*Representatives of the NCMCA Eastern Carolina Chapter spent a day in February visiting with local high school masonry classes introducing themselves and masonry industry career possibilities. (NCMCA website)*

To finally address the issue, the NCMCA board of directors appointed a committee, chaired by president-elect Kent Huntley to define and fill the WDTC position. Serving on the committee with Huntley are NCMCA past presidents Doug Burton, Calvin Brodie, and Gary Joyner, along with past-president and present NCMCA secretary-treasurer Danks Burton. Also serving are Gates, NCMCA executive vice-president Lynn Nash, Greg Huntley and Cliff McGee.

The committee advertised the opening nationally and received numerous résumés. Several outstanding interviews were conducted in mid-February, the NCMCA reported.

“Ryan Shaver clearly stood out to the committee as someone extraordinarily qualified to take on the new position,” the association said in its statement.

“Ryan was a national masonry champion (1993) as a student of award-winning instructor Doug Drye at Mount Pleasant High School in Cabarrus County. He was a successful young journeyman mason at McGee Brothers Company and later managed his own masonry company. He was drawn to teaching and proved to be very successful in attracting and training young folks for masonry careers at Mount Pleasant High School. During his teaching career, he produced state and national masonry champions. He was Mount Pleasant High School Teacher-of-the-Year and a finalist for Cabarrus County Teacher-of-the-Year in 2014.

“Most recently, Ryan has gained invaluable experi-



ence working with Johnson Concrete Products/Carolina Stalite promoting and demonstrating patented new masonry products across the entire nation. Ryan chaired and coordinated Masonry Education Day for the last two years at Gold Hill, which included the Carolina qualifier for Mason Contractors Association of America "Fastest Trowel on the Block" competition this past November. More than 400 students participated."

In his WDTC position, Shaver will serve as an ombudsman for masonry training especially within public education. He will maintain an extensive database of instructors, school administrators, career and technical education directors, and other decision makers. He will maintain regular contact with masonry classes and coordinate the involvement of masonry contractors and other masonry industry in local high school programs. Shaver will use his industry connections to recruit instructors for new programs and his extensive personal experience to help new and struggling instructors become successful masonry teachers.

He will also assume leadership responsibility for NCMCA sponsored masonry competitions as well as other competitions for which the masonry industry is involved. He will take a significant role in the NC SkillsUSA Regional and State Masonry competition and the Annual State Fair Masonry Apprentice Contest. He serves as chairman of the SkillsUSA National Conference Annual Masonry Championship competition.

"I have spent my entire career in the masonry industry and have been on all sides from a mason to education to product development," Shaver said in the statement. "I have a huge passion for promoting the masonry industry and for helping introduce young people to the opportunity that they can have in the industry that has made me who I am today. I am looking forward to working beside each and every one of you and helping grow our workforce and keeping the masonry industry at the forefront of all the trades. The NCMCA has been a leader nationwide and this is yet another example of how we, North Carolina, are taking the necessary steps to insure our future. Thank you for giving me this opportunity."

NCMCA president-elect Kent Huntley also serves as chairman of the Apprenticeship and Training Committee and says: "I've worked with Ryan for years on the job and with the competitions and young people. I can't imagine anyone that could be more suitable to do this job for the masonry industry."

Shaver will become fully involved with NCMCA and the North Carolina masonry industry, attending local chapter meetings, board meetings, the annual convention, and other industry events. As he becomes oriented and settled in his new position, he will be available to provide presentations to other groups with an interest in masonry workforce development.

Ryan Shaver and wife Brandy have two sons and live in Mount Pleasant.



  
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# ASAC reconstitutes Charlotte chapter, creating competition for NC subcontractor association representation

North Carolina Construction News staff writer

The American Subcontractors Association of the Carolinas (ASAC) is reconstituting its Charlotte chapter, creating a circumstance where two associations will now vie to represent the community's subcontractors.

The other organization, the North Carolina Subcontractors Alliance (NCSA), was formed in 2013 by former ASAC's Charlotte-area board members who decided then that both the ASAC and the association's Charlotte chapter "were in a death spiral of high costs and declining membership," according to the NCSA's website.

"The board unanimously voted to call a special meeting of membership to vote on withdrawing and renaming the organization North Carolina Subcontractors Alliance. At the special meeting, with 16 of 18 members present, and hearing both sides of the argument, the vote to withdraw was 15-1."

However, new ASAC Charlotte chapter president Mark Muller of Wayne Brothers Inc. writes in a recent

note that "at the end of last year a group of members put together a steering committee to discuss and plan the future of the ASAC Charlotte chapter."

"We met numerous times over the past months and I am pleased to inform you that we are moving forward with a plan to revitalize the ASAC Charlotte chapter and bring it back to a prominent position in the construction industry in the Charlotte area."

The new chapter's first activity will be a social at the Sugar Creek Brewery Company on April 5. "This event will be the first of several socials, but we have some exciting educational programs on the agenda as well," Muller wrote.

Notably, as this issue of North Carolina Construction News goes to press, the NCSA was in the final stages of preparing for a social event at the same brewery, the annual "Sub Paddy's Day Event" which the NCSA says "provides a great opportunity to network and socialize," open to subs, suppliers, general contractors and invited associations.

The NCSA is affiliated with the National Subcontractors Alliance, while the ASAC is associated with the American Subcontractors Association (ASA).

"Unlike the ASA which has a high overhead large central office in Washington DC, the NSA has only two



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paid employees located in a member company's office in Akron, OH," the NCSA's website says. "The NSA is a federation of local subcontractor's associations, all of which are former ASA chapters. The local organizations are members of NSA, so the dues paid to NCSA stay at the local chapter to meet the needs of subcontractors at the state and local level."

Meanwhile, the revitalized ASAC Charlotte chapter has "a leadership team of dedicated and talented individuals who have a good knowledge of ASAC and the construction industry – individuals who have the desire and passion to move our Charlotte chapter back to the forefront in North Carolina," ASAC's Muller says.

The breakaway of the NCSA from the ASAC a few years ago turned into an acromonius experience, according to interviews with individuals from both organizations. The main issue of contention was the association's treasury.

In one version, the NCSA grabbed the ASAC's chapter funds (in the low five figures) unethically and without authority. The ASAC sought legal advice, and the bank put a hold on the funds.

In the other version, according to NCSA president Duff Regan, the funds were the moneys collected by the chapter from local operations and the new association didn't want them diverted to ASAC's multi-state administration and overhead.

However, with the funds blocked, after several months the two groups reached an agreement to split the difference and go their separate ways, Regan said.

Now the two associations will compete for membership and support in the same market.

Muller said in a phone interview he was not aware of the NCSA or the history involving the bank funds. While based in Charlotte, the concrete site development company where he is employed has interests in other markets in the Carolinas and belongs to ASAC

chapters in Charleston and Columbia, and Muller thought it reasonable tht ASAC have a chapter in Charlotte, where he lives.

"I didn't know about the other organization," he said. "I reached out to some pretty strong subecontractors who didn't know about as well." He said he thought it was "vital to get this one (ASAC) going as well."

In addition to Muller, other ASAC Charlotte chapter executive members include: First vice-president,

Charles Richmond, Eldeco Inc.; second vice-president – Gray Curry, ACF Environmental; treasurer – Mike Fitzsimmons, Wayne Brothers Inc.; administrator – Earl Capps, Web-Don Inc.; general counsel – Fenton Erwin, Erwin Bishop Capitano & Moss PA.; and general contractor consultant – John Mowery, Harkin Builders.

Other ASAC directors include: John McPhail, Maxson and Associates Inc.; Zach Scott, Max Heavy Equipment.

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## Western Carolina University to start work on \$110M science building

Western Carolina University is preparing to start construction of a new 182,989-sq.ft., six story building.

The \$110-million structure, named Tom Apodaca Science Building, will replace WCU's existing, 1970s-era Natural Sciences Building. Construction will begin later this year and be completed in June 2021.



The building will include five stories of laboratory, classroom, assembly and office space, with the sixth story serving as a "mechanical penthouse." It will feature a large, 150-person lecture hall, a science commons area on the first floor and a rooftop plaza for astronomy observations.

Patricia Kaemmerling, current chair of WCU's trustees, characterized the Tom Apodaca Science Building as "a transformative facility."

"This building will offer Western Carolina University's students the high-quality classrooms and laboratories necessary for a 21st-century education," Kaemmerling said, adding that the "building also will serve as a hub for regional economic development in Western North Carolina, capitalizing on the expertise of Western Carolina's faculty."

The ceremony included a blessing delivered by Tom Belt, coordinator of WCU's Cherokee Language Program, in recognition of the building's location on a site of cultural significance to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

## Duke Hospital plans \$102.4M expansion

Duke Regional Hospital is planning a \$102.4 million expansion, including a bigger emergency department and more facilities for psychiatric patients, officials from the Duke University Health System say. The project will take three years and require construction on the north end of the county-owned hospital. Duke also needs to secure permission from state regulators before moving 19 beds for psychiatric patients from Duke University Hospital to Duke Regional.

When finished, the expansion will give the renovated emergency department 49 treatment rooms, rather than the present 36, and 12 private observation rooms in place of the existing six.



The behavioral-health or psychiatric program will get an emergency department of its own with 18 beds. It'll also have 30 clinic rooms for treating outpatients and 42 beds for patients whose treatment requires hospitalization. Those numbers include the beds transferred from Duke University Hospital.

## Vecillio & Grogan wins \$5.7M Polk County bridges contract

The N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has contracted to build two new bridges on U.S. 74 near Pea Ridge Rd. in Polk County, according to a report in Blue Ridge Now.

The two-lane roadway below U.S. 74 will connect John Shehan Rd. to property north of the highway in Polk County.

Vecellio & Grogan was selected to perform the bridge work for \$5.7 million.

Construction is expected to be completed late this summer in time for the World Equestrian Games, which will be held at Tryon International Equestrian Center in Mill Spring, according to the report.

## NCDOT awards two contracts to replace six bridges in eastern mountain counties

NCDOT says it has awarded two contracts to replace a total of six bridges in eastern mountain counties.

Blythe Development of Charlotte has been awarded a \$2.6 million contract to replace a bridge on N.C. 194 over Old Field Creek and a bridge on Tweetsie Railroad Lane over Middle Fork of the South Fork New River with culverts.

The work should be complete by September of 2019. The project on N.C. 194 in Lansing will have a marked onsite detour, while the work near Tweetsie Railroad will be constructed beside the existing bridge.

James Vannoy & Sons Construction of Jefferson has been awarded a \$4.05 million contract to replace four bridges: On Hartzog Ford Rd. over Beaver Creek in Ashe County; Abington Road over Greasy Creek in Caldwell County; Dobbins Mill Road over Snow Creek in Surry County; and Neelie Rd. over South Deep Creek in Yadkin County.

The bridge on Hartzog Ford Rd. will be completed in stages, and the bridge on Abington Rd. will be built adjacent to the existing structure. The bridges on Dobbins Mill Rd. and Neelie Rd. will require off-site detours when construction begins.

The replacement work on these four bridges may also begin on Monday, Feb. 26 and should be complete by October of 2019.



These are two of 16 road and bridge projects awarded by NCDOT in February. Per state law, they went to the lowest qualified bidder for each project. The contracts are worth \$138.6 million, \$1.8 million less than engineer estimates.

**Stanley Martin plans to build 100 single-family homes in Durham**

Stanley Martin, which develops homes in Virginia, Maryland and North Carolina, plans to develop more than 100 single-family homes on the corner of Pickett and Garrett roads in southwest Durham, The Herald Sun reported.



The developer paid around \$6.1 million for six parcels of land – accounting for more than 70 acres – near Cresset Baptist Church, the Durham County record shows. CBRE Raleigh, which assisted the purchase of the property, said the property will have a total of 101

lots.

The residential community will only feature single-family homes ranging in size from 2,700 to 4,300 sq. ft.

Stanley Martin expects to begin construction at the end of the year.

**SearStone breaks ground on Cary healthcare facility expansion**

About 70 people attended the groundbreaking for the \$1.8 million building permit value expansion of Brittany Place, the healthcare facility located at the SearStone continuing care retirement community in Cary. The expansion will add 15 beds – nine skilled nursing beds and six assisted living beds – to bring the eventual total to 39 beds.



Steele Group Architects has designed the project, which is being built by Poythress Poythress Commercial Contractors.

Stan Brading, board chairman for Samaritan Housing Foundation, owners of SearStone, welcomed

the attendees and recognized VIPs in attendance, including Cary Town Council members Ken George and Don Frantz, other board members, Cary Chamber of Commerce ambassadors, representatives of SearStone’s Residents Association, and David Ammons and Kyle Dilday from SearStone-RLA, the company managing SearStone.

“Early in 2016, we recognized the need for more healthcare beds to serve our residents,” said Brading. “We knew we wanted to build on our existing land, and we closed on our bond financing in December of 2016.”

James Souter, Brittany Place administrator, and Jarrod Lowery, southeast regional director for the North Carolina Department of Insurance, also made brief remarks at the event before Brady invited select groups to step forward and ceremonially “turn the dirt” to officially commemorate the groundbreaking. Residents also took turns with the shovels and took photographs of the proceedings before heading into the community’s Winston Clubhouse to enjoy warm beverages.

SearStone welcomed its first residents in 2012, and initial plans are underway for the second phase of the community.

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**Durham County home builders raise alarm about labor shortages caused by Trump administration's immigration policies**

The Home Builders Association of Durham, Orange and Chatham Counties has raised the alarm that a severe labor shortage is putting pressure on housing prices and its members' ability to deliver homes in a timely manner.

"We've had to lengthen our construction times," the Durham Herald-Sun reported association president Gian Hasbrock as saying. His company, CalAtlantic, is building the Southpoint Trails subdivision in south Durham. "We have a building that needs plumbing done, but our plumbing contractor doesn't have enough people for a crew."

"It would be foolish to not acknowledge that a definite proportion of these workers are without documentation," Hasbrock said. "They are scared stiff, and their quality of life is undermined by that, just as you or I would be unhappy working in the shadows."

The 600-member association has asked lawmakers for legislation "to foster a welcome environment for foreign-born skilled laborers," observing that one in four of the area's construction workers are immigrants, it said.

"I don't want to represent that we have the solutions," Hasbrock said. "We are just raising our hands and asking to change the conversation around immigration."

**Brad Barringer receives AGC Past President's Lifetime Achievement Award**

Brad Barringer, retired president of BRS Inc. in Richfield, has been awarded the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of America's Past President's Lifetime Achievement Award dur-



ing the recent AGC annual convention in New Orleans.

The award honors an AGC member who has demonstrated, over an extended period of time, extraordinary commitment to AGC and the construction industry, The Carolinas Associated General Contractors (CAGC) reports. "This award is not presented every year. It is only presented when all past presidents agree that the recipient spent a lot of time, energy and treasure making the construction environment better for all of us. Brad met all of the criteria," CAGC reported. "He is always committed, always tenacious and always blunt."

"The construction industry is better, and safer, because of Brad and his hard work and passion," AGC president Art Daniel said. "He, like many of us, cares about his employees and Brad works to keep them safe. When agency regulations threatened more harm than help, Brad educated regulators on how to make their rules more effective. He looked for inequities that could hurt good people and hurt good contractors and let his passion lead the way."

CAGC says that when Barringer recognized contractors were being held responsible for damages to underground utilities because of other's failure in the 811 process, he was determined to hold all stakeholders accountable for their respective responsibilities.

"Brad knew firsthand that there were a lot of variables to consider whenever there was an accident. He wanted everyone to admit their portion of the problem and commit to eliminating accidents. He worked tenaciously at the state and federal level with his chapter, national AGC and in the Common Ground Alliance. It was an uphill battle, but Brad's tenacity improved safety by forcing contractors, locators and underground facility operators to admit

shared responsibility and make safety a priority. This was not a one year battle, but a constant unrelenting decades long activity that Brad committed to."

"I couldn't be more surprised and honored by this award, but I have to recognize my wife Ruby who traveled with me by car, train and plane to meetings across the country for years," Barringer said at the convention. "BRS stands for Brad, Ruby and Sons, without Ruby we would just be, well you know."

**ABC Carolinas' members in Wilmington support community libraries project**

Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) of the Carolinas' members have lent time and material support for a Wilmington Housing Authority initiative to build nine Little Free Libraries in its communities.

The libraries include children's books, self-help books on parenting and a few novels.

Supporting companies included: Adams An Oldcastle Company, WM Jordan, Pink Trash, Sunbelt Rentals, Premier Electrical Staffing, Precision Walls, Herc Rentals, Thomas Construction Group, East Coast Contracting ECS Southeast, Brinn Glass, Copycat Print Shop, Inc., SPC Mechanical, Standard Glass, Sherwin Williams, A & N Roofing, 84 Lumber, ABC of the Carolinas and Fox Hill Construction.





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