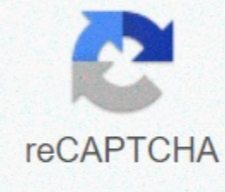




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## Whispering pines nc to raleigh nc

McDonald's® continues its tradition of creating innovative menu items with its three new Signature Crafted Recipe sandwiches, each with tasty ingredients. The spicy Pico Guacamole sandwich, the tasty Sweet BBQ Bacon, and Maple Bacon Dijon sweet sandwiches can be customized with the option of 100% beef 1/4 pounds.\* patty. Buttermilk Crispy chicken, or grilled artisan chicken, all in the selection of toasted artisan roll or sesame bun. Since 1940, this modest den has been serving hot dogs with mustard, onions and chili. Don't you dare ask for ketchup, it's not allowed. On Thursday, on my way back from New York to Atlanta, I went to Raleigh, North Carolina to speak at a hyper-local event called Entrepreneurs' Series: Venture Outlook, organized by local venture capital firm Bull City Venture Partners. He was standing only as hundreds of startups and investors gathered to share their thoughts about next year. Like Atlanta, Nashville, DC and other southeastern innovation centers, Raleigh might not be the best as a resource for a 2017 venture capital outlook, but it should be. Venture capital is being reset this year as financial trends create a perfect climate for innovation, a climate best enjoyed outside Silicon Valley valuations. Here's a quick dive into some of the must-do's in this strong city on the venture capital border: Research Triangle Park has more PhDs per capita and is a hub for technology companies such as Red Hat, Cisco, SAS, NetApp, EMC, Credit Suisse, IBM and Lenovo, said David Jones, managing partner of Bull City Venture Partners, which is now in its third fund. It has the density of three of the country's leading research schools: UNC, Duke and NC State within 20 minutes of each other. He noted that over the past decade, the Triangle area ranks third, behind Silicon Valley and Washington, D.C., for the highest return on invested venture capital. A growing list of companies Inc. 5000 call North Carolina home, such as Tergus Pharma, nCino and Appraisal Nation. So do a wide variety of startups from sectors as diverse as consumer products to healthcare IT, such as BioResources International, The Produce Box, iScribes and Medfusion. One of the most active angelic groups in the region is VentureSouth. We are here to make a market and make it more efficient. From the beginning our strategy is to invest in early-stage companies throughout the southeast. We manage 11 groups of angels, with 220 investors on our platform. Our investors meet once a month and we are a pass model, says Matt Dunbar, CEO of VentureSouth We are constantly writing checks of half a million dollars and we are often the first money in. active voice is Anthony Pompliano, founder of Full Tilt Capital. We believe venture capital is broken. He is an active first-check writer who has made 34 transactions in the last six months. The way we see it is, it's possible that this team really builds this If so, we like to invest. That fresh, direct energy seems to be a hallmark of the Research Triangle's business ecosystem. David Jones recommends Beyu Caffe in downtown Durham -- you can often find one of the partners there meeting with an entrepreneur. Morning coffee, jazz in the evening, this local place creates a unique North Carolina atmosphere. HQ Raleigh is where you want to be, recommends founder Justin Beard of Hip eCommerce, a collectibles market. It is the roadmap for what all co-working spaces here should do. Other highlights in the area include The Loading Dock, operated by Raleigh B-Corp, Murphey's Naturals, and First Flight, an incubator that has launched 275 startups since its founding. The American Underground, which was launched in 2010 in the basement of the Strickland building on the American Tobacco Campus, is a coworking space on North Carolina's largest historic renovation project. The million-square-foot project transformed an abandoned tobacco warehouse into a bustling hub for entrepreneurs. If you're landing in Raleigh, make one of your first stops from the Entrepreneurial Development Council, known for its initials, CED. Founded in 1984, this non-profit organization offers two annual signing events. Lindsay Burns, member relations manager, says she's asking about the new Capital and Connections program. Help startups connect directly to capital sources and vice versa. In its first ten months, the program helped raise \$55 million for area startups such as Spoonflower and Zaloni. Compassion abounds and we welcome everyone with our Southern charmNominated by Pamela O'Connor and Donna McQueenRaleigh's Balloon Festival fills the sky with color. (Credit: Pamela O'Connor) Pamela's story In my mind, compassion doesn't have to be a global campaign to solve hunger or peace in the world, but can be a small gesture of kindness toward a neighbor or co-worker. Start with a simple smile or Hello, how are you today? When I moved to Raleigh a few years from the north, I wasn't ready for all the smiles and kindness of the people here. At first, the kindness was a little disturbing and you wonder, what do you want? I've been on the compassion train ever since. Raleigh really cares about it's people and their needs, and constantly tries to improve in the community. It is a very diverse area, which contributes immensely to our ability to unite. Many of us here have no relatives in the area, forcing us to make new friends and try new things. Donna's story, I've grown up in Raleigh, while she's grown up a lot still has that hometown charm. You won't meet a stranger and we have a lot of wonderful activities for people. There's always something going on, whether you like the arts, sports community activities. Many northerners have moved here, and although we like to make fun of them for being Yankees, it's all a lot of fun. A friend moved from New York and was told a lot: Bless your heart! I told him once, because of a false pas that which meant, that he's been listening a lot. When I told him it had a different meaning than I expected, he laughed aloud! We like to joke and joke with the Yankees! We have a wide variety of people who come from everywhere and welcome them with open arms. I love living in Raleigh, it has everything I need, but with the charm of the small town I've seen over and over again. Stories about RaleighThere is a rescue group, Rottweilers Hearts Rescue, that encourages puppies and makes the public aware of how sweet and loyal rotties can be. Barbara May and Jay Westall are so passionate that their joy extends through their many events. A lady was very scared of Rotties, but after a few moments with a gentle giant and the family adopted him, and since then they have adopted one more! Barbara May and Jay Westall of Rottweilers Hearts Rescue with Donna McQueen at a St. Patrick's Day parade. (Credit: Donna McQueen) Another special person is Sharon Shelton, who has a group called Listen To Your Life. It is a wonderful community of people who want to learn and grow on themselves. After a meeting, you feel full and ready to face the world. I know most people in my grocery store, post office, Office Depot, and etc. It's great to see familiar faces where I go. Our community meets through the use of the Nextdoor app, which is like a private social media place for your neighborhood. For example, when an elderly neighbor suddenly lost his wife, I posted to Nextdoor to see if anyone would be willing to cook a meal for him. The response was amazing. To avoid burdening him, they all brought their dishes to my house, and then brought them to him on one trip. It was quite an effort, but a great success. This Christmas, a single mother of three with serious medical problems didn't have enough money to buy gifts from her children. I posted again on Nextdoor to see if anyone could save some extra gifts for the kids. The answer was once again overwhelming! People came en masse to leave gifts, one even a bicycle for the child. Gifts and gift cards galore came rolling. I was really overwhelmed by kindness and compassion. People really care and want to help here. When another hurricane seemed imminent, I posted my phone number and email account on Nextdoor for my neighbors to use if they needed help other than 911, such as flooding that prevented them from getting groceries or supplies. I also offered my grill to cook in if the gas and appliances were malfunctioning. Another amazing answer. People in other communities took our initiative and started doing the same thing in their neighborhoods, so in essence, we covered at least 6,000 people. When it is a pet, someone takes it and posts pictures of the animal, and the owner is usually within a day. We remarried many animals that needed a new place to live. In other words, we work together as a cohesive community and really care. Raleigh Raleigh many virtues... Too many to list, but among them are events like Best Friends/Worst Enemies: Understanding the Social Lives of Children and Compassion International, which is an interactive tour that immerses visitors in everyday life in another country. It is a four-day event in which visitors will be invited on a self-guided journey where they will be immersed in the lives and stories of two children living in Uganda or Bolivia. Each child's story begins in difficulty, but ends with hope. Raleigh also sees events from organizations like Silver Compassion, a ministry designed to help navigate the complex world of aging. In addition, Islamic Relief has been part of a coalition of nonprofits rebuilding houses in Princeville since the city was flooded by Hurricane Matthew in 2016. It's a very physically demanding job, but Islamic Relief sees more and more volunteers returning to Princeville to provide help. Help.

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