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FAST FACTS- RALEIGH, NC

HISTORY:	Raleigh was founded in 1792 as North Carolina's capital city. It was named for Sir Walter Raleigh, who attempted to establish the first English colony on the shores of the New World in the 1580s.
NICKNAME:	The city's founding fathers called Raleigh the "City of Oaks," and dedicated themselves to maintaining the area's wooded tracts and grassy parks.
MAYOR:	Charles Meeker
POPULATION:	Raleigh: 388,926; Wake County: 902,689
SIZE:	Raleigh: 110.5 square miles; Wake County: 883.92
VISITORS:	11.5 million annually to Greater Raleigh
SALES TAX:	7.75 percent state tax; 2.5 percent county tax
CLIMATE:	Summers range from the mid-60's to the mid-80's; fall averages in the 70's; winters hit the high 20's to mid 50's. Mean annual rainfall (inches): 44.23.
GEOGRAPHY:	434 feet above sea level, Raleigh lies in east-central North Carolina, where the hilly Piedmont region meets flat coastal plain.
STATE FORESTS AND PARKS:	Raleigh boasts more than 4,300 acres of parkland and almost 1,400 acres of water, offering recreational activities year-round. A nationally acclaimed greenway system spans 41 miles, providing 24 walking, jogging and hiking trails that connect many of the city's 150 major parks.

SPORTS:

Sports and outdoor enthusiasts will find plenty to cheer about. Hockey fans can catch the excitement of the 2006 Stanley Cup Champions, the NHL Carolina Hurricanes at the RBC Center. Relax outdoors at a Carolina Mudcats Double AA baseball game at Five County Stadium, or watch the Carolina Rail hawks, the USL First Division Professional Soccer team, take the field at WakeMed Soccer Park. The area is also home to stock car racing and great college athletics.

ARTS & CULTURE:

Raleigh has an exceptionally diverse arts scene. One of only 6 cities in the county that can call itself home to all four disciplines of performing arts: theatre, opera, symphony and ballet. Visitors can see a Broadway show, view original plays in the theatre, and watch the Carolina Ballet. Outside in the park, there are also opportunities to listen to the N.C. Symphony or the Opera Company of North Carolina.

SHOPPING:

Even the most seasoned shoppers will find an impressive array of well-known retail stores, boutiques and locally owned shops in and around Raleigh. Browse the Fairgrounds Flea Market and the Raleigh Flea Market Mall, or the more than 30 antique stores spread throughout the area. The furniture capital of the world, High Point, is just over an hour away and has more than 125 manufacturing plants offering great discounts.

Raleigh is a shopping mecca with 12 major retail areas and numerous shopping centers. Three major malls (Cary Towne Center, Crabtree Valley Mall and Triangle Town Center) boast more than 450 stores in all as North Carolina's only Saks and Orvis opened in Fall 2004 at Triangle Town Center. Two long-time icons have reinvented themselves with multi-million dollar expansions and makeovers in Cameron Village and North Hills -- Raleigh's new "Midtown."

CUISINE:

Greater Raleigh is home to nouvelle Southern cuisine, and serves up something to satisfy almost any craving. Menus range from upscale fine dining to brewpubs to traditional southern cooking.

NIGHTLIFE: Climb aboard the nighttime entertainment trolley and enjoy nightlife in downtown Raleigh in several entertainment districts – City Market, Glenwood South and the Warehouse District. Listen to live music performed by popular local bands or international superstars at one of the area’s concert venues or entertainment complexes, or dance the night away.

FAUNA/FLORA: Greater Raleigh’s hardwood and mixed conifer forests are home to a wide variety of wildlife, including wood ducks, white tailed deer, Canadian geese and wild turkeys.

TRANSPORTATION: Raleigh is easily accessible by car, bus, rail or airlines.

Driving: North Carolina has the largest state-maintained highway system in the nation. Three interstate highways intersect the Research Triangle area, giving the area excellent access to many East Coast destinations.

Bus: Capital Area Transit (CAT) offers bus service throughout Raleigh. The Triangle Transit Authority provides daytime inter-city service between Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill, and also serves Morrisville, Cary, RDU Airport, and Research Triangle Park. Local and national service is available from Carolina Trail ways/Greyhound Bus Lines.

TRANSPORTATION: **Rail:** Amtrak offers direct service to 56 cities from Raleigh. The Silver Star provides daily service to Richmond, Washington, New York, Miami, and many points in between. Additional north-south service on the Silver Palm and the Silver Meteor is available through Rocky Mount, located an hour from Raleigh. The Carolinian and the Piedmont provide morning and afternoon service between Raleigh, Rocky Mount, Greensboro, and Charlotte.

Airline Services: RDU International Airport is just 15 minutes west of downtown Raleigh, between I-40 and U.S. 70. Each year, more than 10 million travelers pass through the airport.

PRINCIPLE COLLEGES AND Women’s Colleges: Meredith College, Peace College;
Religious College: Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

UNIVERSITIES:

Technical School: Wake Technical Community College;
Historically Black Colleges: Saint Augustine's College, Shaw
University; University: North Carolina State University,
Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law at Campbell University.

**INFORMATION FOR
TRAVELERS/AGENTS:**

For a *free* visitors guide or information on 2009 events, call
(800) 849-8499; visit **www.visitraleigh.com**, or e-mail
visit@visitraleigh.com.

The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau is a non-profit agency enhancing the economic growth and development of Raleigh and Wake County by increasing visitor and convention business.

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