

# Bristol Brass & Copper relocating

By ANNE GRUNDON

Bristol Herald Courier

Bristol Brass & Copper, which began local operations in Bristol Tennessee 10 years ago, is relocating to Bristol Virginia.

The move, announced Thursday, will cost \$4 million and is expected to result in 50 new jobs, company officials said.

Virginia has allocated \$175,000 from the Governor's Opportunity Fund for construction of a 60,000-square-foot manufacturing facility at the site of the old Coal Technology Corp. building on Thomas Road.

## Business plans move across the state line

Bristol Virginia plans to contribute another \$200,000 toward the project, Mayor Doug Weberling said.

"In Virginia, we understand one of the crucial roles of government is to provide the environment that will allow the private sector to grow and prosper," Mark R. Kilduff, executive director of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, said as he presented Bristol

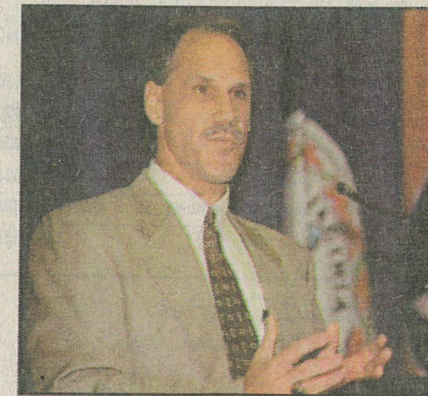
Brass officials with a flag of Virginia.

"I hope you will fly this over your office to let everyone know that Virginia is open for business."

Randy Coleman, Bristol Brass & Copper's owner and president, started the company on Melrose Street in 1991 with just six employees. Although new to Bristol, it was a rebirth of a 135-year-old Dutch company, said Executive Vice President Mike Stollings.

Three years later, Coleman purchased the old Burlington Industries building on West

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Andre Teague/Bristol Herald Courier

Bristol Brass & Copper Executive Vice President Mike Stollings speaks at a news conference Thursday.

*'Bristol Brass has challenged the paradigm that fine-quality brassware only comes from Europe.'*

— Mike Stollings



# RELOCATING

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State Street and expanded his business to 75 employees. Now the country's largest manufacturer of brass ornamental containers, Bristol Brass is growing again.

Bristol Brass recently sold the old Burlington facility to King Pharmaceuticals, which needed room for distribution. The intent at the time was that Bristol Brass eventually would vacate the facility, Stollings said.

Bristol Brass had been working with Bristol Virginia leaders for about eight months to find a new building, he said, and will remain in the State Street building until the renovations and expansion of the new facility are completed.

The 12,000-square-foot Thomas Road building "is the ideal size and the ideal location" for the company's offices, he said, explaining that the 60,000-square-foot addition will be used as the company's manufacturing facility.

And while Bristol Tennessee technically is losing a business, he said King Pharmaceuticals' use of the State Street facility makes the move a "win-win" for both states.

Large fuel tanks housed at the Thomas Road facility during its use by Coal Technology Corp. have left some environmental problems, Stollings said. Bristol Brass is working closely with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to formulate a cleanup plan, he said.

Once that plan has been approved, construction can begin on the addition. Bristol Brass hopes to move into its new building by January, Stollings said.

Of the 50 new employees who are to be added over the next three years, the majority will work at the manufacturing facility. The balance will hold administrative positions, Stollings said.

Asked about the company's customer base, Stollings said Bristol Brass now has the capacity to manufacture about 15,000 items per day. They include planters, umbrella stands, waste baskets and fireside accessories. The items are distributed to mass merchants, crafts and hobby stores, home centers and department stores, he said.

Some of Bristol Brass' largest customers are Lowe's, Wal-Mart, Home Depot and Michael's, he said.

"Bristol Brass has challenged the paradigm that fine-quality brassware only comes from Europe," Stollings said. "By melding the best of Old World craftsmanship with American ingenuity and a dedicated work force, Bristol Brass is able to compete in world markets."



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Company Files  
BRISTOL VIRGINIA

# City-backed Bristol Brass deal detailed

BY MIKE STILL  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

**BRISTOL, Va.** – The City Council could consider next month borrowing \$2 million to allow transfer of the Bristol Brass and Copper factory site to a follow-on business.

The council held a public hearing Tuesday on the proposal, in which the city would borrow the money to buy the site from its former owner and then have Cross Stone Products assume the loan payments for five years.

City Manager Paul Spangler said the city, Cross Stone and Bristol Brass have been working on an agreement to transfer the property – on Thomas Road in the Hairston Industrial Park – for about 18 months.

The city and then-Gov. James Gilmore allocated \$375,000 in 2001 to build a 60,000-square-foot building on the property when Bristol Brass and Copper decided to move its ornamental container manufacturing business from the Tennessee side of town.

Over the past 18 months, Spangler said, Bristol Brass had been working with the state Department of Environmental Quality to arrange a plan to clean up fuel storage tanks on the site. The DEQ is finishing its evaluation of the cleanup effort, he said.

Cross Stone, led by former Bristol Brass Vice President Mike Stollings and a group of investors, would pay the entire debt service for the

*‘They only have about 40 employees right now, but that could go up with the right marketing effort.’*

**Jerry Brown**  
development  
committee  
executive director

## LOAN: Bristol Brass deal detailed

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loan along with annual payments equal to the real estate and machinery and tools taxes for the facility for five years, Spangler said.

Cross Stone also would have an option to buy the site during the five-year period, or it could choose to move out after paying the debt and leave the facility in city ownership.

Mayor Jerry Wolfe, when asked by resident Nancy Marney what would happen if Cross Stone decided or was forced to leave after paying off the loan, said the city would own the property and could market it to another prospect.

The site is assessed at a little more than \$4 million, according to city Economic Development Committee Executive Director Jerry Brown.

“They’re trying to enter a niche market – brass containers with logos of companies, colleges and organizations,” Brown said. “They only have about 40 employees right now, but that could go up with the right marketing effort.”

Bristol Brass employed about 70 workers before selling its inventory and transferring contracts to Cross

Stone, Brown said.

The council will consider a resolution authorizing the plan in October.

In other business, the council agreed to give the Boys and Girls Club of Bristol permission to build an outdoor pavilion on property it has leased from the city since 1977.

The club’s executive director, Eric Clark, asked the council to consider either donating the property – at the corner of Piedmont Avenue and Quarry Street – to the club or allowing the pavilion construction under the terms of the existing lease.

Clark said the pavilion – funded with \$25,000 in state Community Development Block Grant funds allocated by the city – will provide a summertime place to feed children attending the club.

The facility also will be available to the neighborhood around the club during off hours, he said.

Mayor Wolfe thanked Clark for presenting two options, noting that donation of the property would set a precedent that the council has tried to avoid.

Clark said construction could start on the pavilion as early as mid-October.

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