

Scotland County

Monthly



AUGUST 2012

A newsletter for the Scotland County community

FCC expansion to create 66 new jobs

An expansion by local manufacturer FCC will create 66 additional jobs. Part of the expansion includes the purchase of the County-owned spec building at the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport. The \$57.6 million of new investment also will be made in the company's current facility in Laurel Hill.

FCC will use the spec building to bring paper production capacity to its North American operations.

Chairman Bob Davis said, "The decision highlights FCC's belief in the County workforce. In addition, we continue to see the importance of existing industry and the significant impact that industry has on our community."

FCC (North Carolina), LLC possesses some of the most advanced clutch technology in the marketplace today.

"With strong state and local government partnerships, we are well positioned to pursue opportunities for further growth at FCC (North Carolina), LLC," said Bob Kendall, a company spokesman.

Joyce McDow, Chair of the Scotland County Economic Development Corporation, said, "The FCC expansion sends a positive message throughout Scotland County. An industry that has served us well is growing. We thank FCC for selecting the County for this expansion, and we look forward to a long and positive relationship that continues to expand job opportunities in our County."

"The selection of the site at Laurinburg Maxton Airport by FCC is the culmination of many hours of hard work by Economic Developer Greg Icard, and a commitment by one of our current industries to increase its presence in Scotland County and make an investment, which will provide more job opportunities for Scotland County citizens," said Laurinburg City Mayor Tommy Parker.

Icard added, "The announcement demonstrates that hard work continues to bring positive results for Scotland County, which translates into additional opportunities for employment for the citizens. FCC continues to see Scotland County as an important and vital partner in its strategic plans for growth."

"This is a reinforcement of our planned efforts to diversify our economic development approach of working with existing industry in retention and expansion, business recruitment and entrepreneurship programs," Icard explained.

FCC (North Carolina), LLC manufactures transmission components and clutches for the automotive and power sport industries at its Laurel Hill facility where it employs 140 people. The company plans to more than double the size of the 44,000-square-foot spec building that will house a friction paper material manufacturing plant. Production will begin in the fall of 2013.



Breaking ground at the spec building are, left to right, Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Chairman Gary Gallman, Chairman Bob Davis, Laurinburg City Mayor Tommy Parker, FCC North Carolina President Yoichi Uchiyama, NC Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco, FCC Representative Bob Kendall, Scotland County Economic Development Corporation Chair Joyce McDow and Economic Developer Greg Icard.

Voters to decide sales tax referendum

Voters will have opportunity to decide whether the County should levy a one-quarter percent sales tax when they go to the polls Tuesday, November 6.

A one-quarter percent sales tax, which represents one-fourth of one penny, is equivalent to one cent for every four dollars spent, or 25 cents for every \$100 spent.

The Board of Commissioners at its August meeting agreed to put the question on the November ballot for voters to decide.

If approved, the one-quarter percent sales tax could raise up to \$600,000 annually for the County.

The State General Assembly granted counties the authority to levy, subject to voter approval, an additional one-quarter cent (1/4¢) county sales and use tax.

Since the legislature granted counties authority to seek voter approval, many counties have placed the referendum on a local ballot.

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Vick project recognized

DSS Income Maintenance Caseworker Teresa Vick was one of six county employees

statewide to receive the Employee Productivity Award given by the Local Government Federal Credit Union (LGFCU) at the annual North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Conference August 17.

The award was given to Vick in recognition of her design and implementation of an automated Adult Medicaid budget, which helps workers make calculations quickly and accurately.

The automation Vick designed reduced calculation time by seven minutes per calculation and saved DSS approximately 58 hours per month.

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Series of unrelated events cause systems failures

2012 hurricane predictions shared

A series of unrelated events caused the failure of the County Internet and telephone system the last week in July. It took a team of technology experts and engineers five days to diagnose the problems and get the County up and running again.

"A backhoe dug up a fiber line on Biggs Street, which took out network access at the Courthouse and the Annex that affected the server, Internet and telephone," County Manager Kevin Patterson said.

He added, "A rodent ate part of the fiber inside the Courthouse, and that impacted the Courthouse even more."

Things got worse. "On Saturday, July 28, the server that runs the County telephone experienced a critical hardware error, and that required a part that was installed later in the afternoon. We also discovered some fiber with switched polarity. At some point in time, it might have been in the testing, that piece of fiber was plugged in backwards."

Patterson said, "Everything happened in order. It could not have been worse planning on anyone's part."

County IT, the City of Laurinburg and NWN, the company that tackles telephones and network issues, all worked on the diagnosis effort. "NWN would remote in daily. Two engineers were called in. Assistance was provided by COTT, the company that developed the software for the Register of Deeds. It did a remote in to troubleshoot," Patterson explained.

Although issues remained unresolved for nearly a week, Patterson said, "There was no long-term ill affect. All the errors were fairly easily rectified through minor connections and running new cable."

"IT staff learned some new items to look for because the County had never experienced these errors before," Patterson added. "Anytime you have problems of this magnitude there exists the opportunity to learn from them."

"To those who were trying to use the server — the citizens, the employees — we recognize this was a major inconvenience. Employees couldn't do their jobs appropriately because of it. They had to develop new ways of at least keeping business going forward," said the County Manager. "We appreciate the effort they put into it."

State agencies were not affected by since they have a separate connection from the City's fiber system.

Patterson added, "Commissioners received numerous calls and complaints and dealt with it as well as they could without knowing the source of the problems."

"For IT, it's a matter of diagnosing. IT staff had to deconstruct something and reconstruct it. A lot of that process involves eliminating possibilities."

There should be no comfort in 2012 hurricane forecasts that predict a less than active season.

Case in point is Andrew, a first named storm and first hurricane of the 1992 Atlantic hurricane season that made landfall August 24, 1992, in Homestead, FL. At \$26.5 billion it also was the costliest hurricane in United States history until it was surpassed by Katrina in 2005 at \$108 billion and Ike in 2008 at \$29.5 billion.

Nick Petro, Warning Coordination Meteorologist with the Raleigh National Weather Service, said although 2012 predictions do show a less than active season, "Don't get too wrapped up on predictions."

He added, "It only takes one major event, and if that event is anything like Hurricane Andrew, it doesn't matter about the rest of the season."

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), there will be 12 to 17 named storms, five to eight hurricanes and two to three major hurricanes in 2012.

"Based on most predictions, that's near to slightly below normal," Petro said.

In 2012, six named storms have already occurred. There are three more named storms that are anticipated or a near certainty. "So we're off to a very busy start and an active season," Petro said. The season is now at its peak August through October.

Petro said geography explains why North Carolina is more vulnerable to tropical cyclones than other states along the eastern seaboard. "The Carolina coast sticks out and is more of a target for tropical storms, and we tend to be more in the path of major hurricanes."

Petro added that the spate of thunderstorms and rainy days the area has experienced is a good thing. "Severe weather helps keep tropical cyclones away."

EMS Director Roylin Hammond, who hosted the annual hurricane meeting, said Scotland County hasn't had a major hurricane event since Floyd in 1999. "As long as we don't have anything happen, everybody is happy. I hope we have another safe season."



The National Hurricane Center shows the path of Isaac on August 24.

Fall Litter Sweep is September 29

The Chamber of Commerce Green Committee, hosts of the September 29 Fall Litter Sweep, will once again present cash awards to the teams that collect the most bags of trash.

King of the Mountain prize is \$200 while the team that captures second place will win \$100.

Just gather a team and collect trash within Scotland County between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Saturday, September 29.

Vests, gloves and trash bags can be picked up at the Chamber of Commerce, 606 Atkinson Street, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, during the month of September up until the Litter Sweep event.

The bags of trash can be dropped off at any of the five recycling centers — Stewartsville South, Williamson/Livingston Quarters, Sneads Grove, Wagram or Palmer Road. Be sure to notify the on-site volunteer of the number of bags collected.



Fundraising effort pays for helipad

Text and photo by Roylin Hammond, EMS

Springhill Fire Department added a new resource to its list of tools used to serve residences of its fire district — a helipad.

More than two years of fundraising and soliciting local support for the project paid off. The helipad, which cost between \$10,000 and \$12,000, will serve the north part of Scotland County. Located beside the fire station, just off Highway 501 North, the helipad was built to FAA standards and was identified by Carolina Air Care as an official helipad for medical evacuations.

Helicopters from the Carolina Air Care UNC-Hospital System, stationed in both Chatham and Cumberland counties, will be able to use the pad to evacuate patients from both motor vehicle accidents and medical emergency situations without the need to establish a makeshift landing zone.



Tar Heel II, the UNC Air Care helicopter stationed at Cape Fear Valley Hospital, landed on the helipad August 17 to make sure everything was in place and ready for operation..

Scotland County EMS will now be able to safely transfer trauma patients to Air Care units with little or no interruption of highway traffic. North Carolina Forestry Service and North Carolina Highway Patrol helicopters also will be able to land on the helipad.

A September 15 family day at the Fire Department will officially open the helipad. All local emergency services agencies are invited to the event.

Economic factors end Shred-It event

Cooperative Extension will no longer offer the annual Shred-It event in March. Due to economic necessity, Shred-It implemented a new criteria for the events.

In the past Shred-It paid for the events by the paper it shredded and recycled. Paper prices plummeted and are now one-third what they were just one year ago. With the cost of fuel to travel, in addition to paying a driver time and a half on a Saturday, the company was forced to implement a fee for this service, which is \$180 per hour with a three-hour minimum.

“Cooperative Extension is grateful to Shred-It for providing this opportunity to Scotland County for the past four years,” said Family and Consumer Agent Sharon English. “The service allowed citizens to rid their homes of potentially damaging personal information and to protect themselves from becoming victims of identity theft.”

Day of Caring attracts volunteers

Nearly 75 individuals volunteered in the community September 17 as part of the United Way Day of Caring event. Pictured, second from right, Hazel McPhatter, Cooperative Extension, and four others tend the Wagram Community Garden.



Sales tax question goes to voters November 6

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Items exempt from the sales tax include groceries, prescription medication, gasoline, certain agricultural supplies and motor vehicles, to name a few.

The Commissioners approved putting the question on the ballot because they described the sales tax as equitable and shared by everyone who lives in the County as well as people passing through or visiting who make purchases locally.

It also would bring an additional revenue source to the County, one that would not be funded by property owners alone.

Scotland Place offers variety of activities

Among the many programs and activities held at Scotland Place is a Grandparents Caregivers Support Program for Grandparents or an adult relative caregiver over the age of 55 responsible for raising a minor child living in their home, and where no parents are in residence or helping raise the child.

The support group assists those caregivers in decision making and in solving problems related to their care giving roles and issues in a peer group setting. The support group is co-sponsored by Scotland Place Senior Center and Social Services. Meetings are held at Scotland Place the third Monday of each month at 10:30 a.m.

For day travelers and sightseers, Scotland Place will sponsor a visit to the Museum of the Cape Fear Historical Complex in Fayetteville, Thursday, September 27. The van will leave Scotland Place at 8 a.m. and return by 5 p.m. There will be a breakfast stop on the way and lunch will be on your own at one of the local downtown restaurants within walking distance of the Complex. Cost is \$10 for transportation. Receipt of the transportation fee reserves your seat.

And if you like exercise, get in shape by participating in one of the many exercise classes offered at Scotland Place. A \$15 monthly fee covers all classes held during the day.

Our condolences to ...

The family of **Charles Williams**, retired Finance Officer, who passed away July 27; the family of former Commissioner **D.B. Quick**, who passed away August 7. Mr. Quick served from 1908 to 1988 and again from 1992 to 1996. Mr. Quick is step-grandfather to County Manager **Kevin Patterson**; and **Anita Jenkins**, EMS, on the passing of her mother; and to the family of **Tommy Butler**, a recent Sheriff's Department retiree, who passed away August 19.

Casualty exercise staged at Scotland Correctional facility

Text and photo by Roylin Hammond, EMS

Each year, all Department of Corrections facilities in the State are required to conduct a mass casualty exercise to test their ability to respond to a large scale incident.

This year Scotland Correctional Institution staff wanted to test their ability to evacuate a critically injured correctional officer to a trauma center 100 miles away. Correctional facility staff contacted EMS staff to assist in the exercise.



The patient is packaged and transported to the designated landing zone at Scotland Correctional Institution

The Fire Department and Rescue Squad responded to set up a landing zone and to assist in hot loading the patient into the helicopter.

EMS responded to package and transport the patient from inside the facility to the landing zone (LZ).

Scotland County 911 was also involved because the system provides a point of contact and communication for Carolina Air Care activation and identifies the site of the LZ.

Carolina Air Care also provided a short educational briefing for the staff at the correctional facility after the exercise was complete. The exercise went well and proved to be a positive training experience for everyone involved.

Staff and volunteers from the Laurinburg Fire Department, the Rescue Squad, Scotland County EMS and Emergency Management and Carolina Air Care assisted in the exercise.

The correctional facility began the exercise with a 911 call for EMS assistance and requested a medical helicopter to evacuate a critically injured staff member.

Vick receives prestigious award

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Her automated program has been distributed throughout the State, and she routinely receives letters of thanks and praise from other DSS offices.

The LGFCU Employee Productivity Awards Program provides a total of \$10,000 in rewards — \$1,000 each — to county employees who develop successful productivity improvements in county government.

A productivity improvement is defined as achieving one of the following objectives: the same level of service delivered at a lower cost; a higher level of service delivered at the same cost; avoidance of future cost increases, and/or use of sustainable products or practices to provide a current, new or expanded service.



Teresa Vick with LGFCU productivity award. Photo by James McQueen, DSS

News 14 addresses high County unemployment



Kevin Patterson is interviewed by News 14 Carolina reporter Evan Donovan.

News 14 Carolina interviewed County Manager Kevin Patterson on unemployment figures for its 24-hour news channel. The segment aired August 2 and also was available on its website. In July the County's unemployment rate at 17.6 percent was the highest in the State.

The county's unemployment rate is much higher than the state's average and more than double the national unemployment rate. North Carolina's 9.4 percent rate in July made it the fifth highest unemployment rate in the nation.

Patterson said Scotland County, like many former industrial counties across the country, face unemployment challenges. He explained that traditional, rural southern communities are now competing against globalization.

Patterson is hopeful things will improve. "Actually, in the last two years we've had more projects in the works than we had in the previous seven years," Patterson told News 14 Carolina reporter Evan Donovan.

Patterson said housing in the County is affordable and the community is centrally located, which is viewed as a positive. "The County is not near a major metro area, but it is in a wagon wheel for many of metro areas. This gives the County good opportunity for expansion."

the Birthday list for September

1 Felisa Lockey (DSS); **2** Jennifer Clark (Shertiff); **5** James Sweet (EMS); **6** Denise Cox (EMS) and Anita Nelson (DSS); **7** Holly Russell (Parks and Recreation); **8** Debra Kersey (Health); **10** Jeannie Freeman (DSS) and Djuna Hale (Jail); **11** Deborah Rogers (Health), James Laviner (Sheriff) and Kimberly Villanueva (DSS); **12** Tina Swinney (Jail); **13** Roger Dial (Public Buildings); **14** Carlotta Rivers (Health); **15** Denise Dunn (Library); **16** Nancy Hughes (Tax); **18** Susan Butler (Administration); **19** Carol Jackson (Sheriff); **20** Cardra Burns and Heather Wyke (Health), Leon Gyles (Library) and Twanna McCrimmon (DSS); **25** Alisa Freeman (Health) and Falana Jackson (DSS); **26** Josh Byrd (EMS); **29** Lynda McMillan (Health).