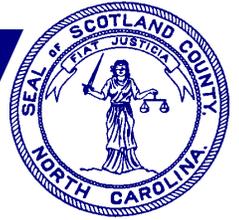


Scotland County

Monthly



JULY 2012

A newsletter for the Scotland County community

Conceal/carry handguns not prohibited at recreational sites

In a 5 to 2 decision, the Board of Commissioners voted to align itself with the State and not prohibit conceal/carry handguns at County recreational facilities.

Chairman Bob Davis, Vice Chair Joyce McDow and Commissioners John Alford, John Cooley and Clarence McPhatter voted to follow State law rather than approve a local ordinance to prohibit conceal/carry handguns in recreational facilities. Commissioners Carol McCall and Guy McCook voted against the motion.

Up until December 1, 2011, a County ordinance prohibited guns in parks. The ordinance was no longer enforceable after recent State legislation allowed people with permits to carry concealed handguns at county recreational facilities unless local ordinances prohibited it.

The Commissioners for more than six months solicited input from

[see Gun, page 3](#)

County elects to continue with inmate labor program in FY 2013

The County renewed a contract with Scotland Correctional Institution to continue to provide inmate labor in the 2013 fiscal year. Inmates who are part of the labor program are housed in the minimum security unit at the Institution.

The initial contract with the inmate labor program began in May. According to County Manager Kevin Patterson, the contracts run from one fiscal year to the other, and the two months in 2012 gave the County a trial run to see if it would work.

Primary users of inmate labor are public works, public grounds and parks and recreation. "Both Mike McGirt (Public Buildings Supervisor) and Shannon Newton (Parks and Recreation Director) have been very satisfied with the program — I think pleasantly surprised by the outcome," Patterson explained.

"The amount of additional work we've been able to accomplish with inmate labor has been a real positive for the County," Patterson added.

"We started the program with six inmates," Patterson said. "Recreation has already asked for an additional inmate, and Public Buildings is toying with the idea of an additional inmate sometime in the future. This can expand, but it will be a slow process."

The contract required the County to provide transportation for the inmate workers. "Transportation has worked well with Mike and Shannon planning the best ways of providing transport to and from the Institution," Patterson said.

Contracting for inmate labor was a positive step for the County. "This is just another way we can increase efficiency without increasing costs," Patterson said.

It's 'On with the show!' at Scotland Memorial Library



The Bright Star Touring Theatre entertained more than 600 children July 17 with selections from Aesop's *Fables* and a performance of *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* as part of the Scotland County Memorial Library Summer Reading Program, which concluded July 31 with storyteller Mark Daniels.

Larger bill format gives taxpayers more information

New, larger tax bills will give property owners more information on exactly where their tax dollars go.

The tax bill will be letter-sized versus the size of a postcard in order to accommodate how tax dollars are distributed.

Although the larger format costs the County about \$7,000 more, the Commissioners agreed that people who pay taxes should know what services their tax dollars support.

The tax bill and what information it carries was a discussion topic during the Board of Commissioners budget work sessions.

Commissioner John Alford said the current bill used the wording "school tax," which, he said, was inaccurate since local funding to education was an appropriation and not a tax.

Rather than eliminate "school tax" from the postcard-sized bill, the Commissioners agreed to include much more information. The small version also included a break out of County and fire tax.

The 2013 tax bills will include dollar amounts and percentages for education, law enforcement, health and human services, public buildings, EMS, tax, parks and recreation, general services, industry incentive, library, IT, elections, Extension, inspections and miscellaneous.

Top three users of property tax dollars are education at \$12,140,267, or 47.08 percent; law enforcement at \$4,229,773, or 16.40 percent; and health and human services at \$3,418,597, or 13.26 percent.

Procurement card program in the works for employees

The County plans to eventually transition from credit card to p-card for most purchases. But for now, it is testing the use of the p-card, known as a procurement card, among employees.

"A p-card is nothing more than a credit card," explained County Manager Kevin Patterson. "It does have a few extra controls over it. A credit card can be used anywhere. A p-card can be set up on our side so they can't be used at certain locations."

Patterson said bars and liquor stores would be prohibited. "The places we do business with, like for office supplies, would be allowed." He added that on travel, many hotels are getting away from accepting checks.

The County Manager said the p-card, after it is fully implemented, would ease some of the purchasing processes.

"Instead of writing 300 checks a week, after it's fully implemented, we might be writing 150 checks a week."

"The p-card will give us a better cash flow position. We buy it now, pay for it later. We'll keep our cash for an extra two weeks."

The County p-card program is being administered through Bank of America, which has the State contract on p-cards.

Patterson said the County also will benefit from a cash back option as a result of State usage as well as that of any government entity. "They (Bank of America) pool the total purchases together."

County employees who will be issued a p-card travel a good part of their time or make purchases as a routine part of their job. "The card will be assigned to the individual, and we can track who purchases what."

Patterson said the authorized spending limit for most cards would be extremely small. "But if you're going to travel, for instance, your limit would be raised to whatever that purchase needs to be."

The Commissioners would get p-cards, too. "Which means, like everybody else, they would no longer get travel checks or credit cards," Patterson explained.

With p-card use, Patterson said, "A lot of purchase orders (POs), especially for smaller items, may not be necessary anymore."

Patterson said the transition would be approached slowly to ensure it goes smoothly. "It's not something we're going to rush out and do."

"When people start it, it's going to look like a lot of new work, but most of the steps compared to the paper system we do now, they are similar but they will be tracked electronically," Patterson said.

Our condolences to ...

Cordella Walker, Health, retired, on the July 19 passing of her father, Chester Purnell.

Commissioners continue to investigate revenue sources

An attempt by the Board of Commissioners to generate revenue for the County through the passage of local bills failed to gain traction in the legislature.

With assistance from Senator Bill Purcell and Representatives Garland Pierce and Ken Goodman, local bills were crafted on behalf of the County for consideration by the State legislature.

"The first bill would have allowed the County to license the harvesting of pine straw off the State gamelands in the northern part of the County," said County Manager Kevin Patterson. Just under 20 percent of Scotland County is owned by State Gamelands or the Wildlife Conservancy and is therefore real estate that is no longer taxable.

Patterson said soon after the bill was drafted, he learned that the Nature Conservancy was already managing a pine straw program, which generates about \$50,000 annually. Patterson said those funds support the Forestry Service. "So basically, that bill is off the table."

"The second bill would have allowed the County to put a franchise tax on internet sweepstakes businesses using the City of Laurinburg as a general model for imposing a fee per establishment and per machine," Patterson explained.

After the local bill was introduced, Patterson said the State introduced its own bill. "That bill had some of the same elements to it but it also layered in where the State would get some revenue and counties and municipalities would have the option of layering in on top of that."

"The State would also get an excise tax off of the gross receipts, some of which would come down to local law enforcement," Patterson said.

The County Manager said the bill was in the House side, and the Senate expressed interest in waiting to find out what the courts were going to rule, which is whether internet sweepstakes

businesses are gambling establishments, which are prohibited.

Patterson said a constitutionality question exists since it is prohibiting a business yet allowing the Cherokee to operate gambling establishments. "So there is a constitutional issue on fairness."

"If the court says the gambling operations are legal or permissible, the Senate might be willing to endorse a State bill," he said.

the Birthday list for August

1 Willie Hunt (Public Works); **3** Amanda Taylor (Cooperative Extension); **4** Ed Cushman (Health), Hazel McPhatter (Cooperative Extension) and Daniel Dockery (Planning and Zoning Board); **5** Mike McQueen (EMS); **8** Bobby Horn (Public Works) and Amber Morrison (Jail); **11** James Williams (Jail); **12** Janet Mudd (DSS); **13** Catherine Bailey (Health) and Cynthia Morton (Health Board); **14** Kevin Strickland (EMS) and Joan Alford (DSS); **15** Dell Parker (Elections) and Robert Williams (Transportation); **18** Nancy McPeck (Jail) and Tina Phillips (DSS); **20** Stephanie Palmer (DSS) and James Pruitte (Parks and Recreation); **21** Charles Todd (Health Board); **22** Towana Harrington and Amy Locklear (DSS); **24** Michelle McQuaige (Jail); **25** Stephanie Bennett and James Hunt (EMS); **27** Victor Locklear (Sheriff); **28** Tenita Bullard (IT) and Linda Harper (DSS); **29** Mitch Johnson and Marcus Brown (Sheriff); **30** Kimberly McRae (DSS); **31** Katherine Caulder (DSS) and Mark Dombrosky (IT).

A blur of activity



Youth spend afternoons at the Wagram Recreation Center playing basketball and escaping the heat.

Gun holders with permits given conceal/carry rights in parks

continued from page 1

the community and also hosted a public forum where citizens on both sides of the issue voiced their opinions and defended their stance.

The five Commissioners who voted to support the State law questioned whether a local ordinance would be enforceable. They also said permit holders with concealed handguns are law-abiding citizens who should not have their legal rights limited.

Commissioners McCook and McCall shared a different opinion. Both contended that guns should not be in public places where there are children.

Commissioner McCall, in an interview with *The Laurinburg Exchange*, went on to question why conceal/carry handguns would be allowed in recreational facilities when State law prohibits them in public buildings.

County Manager Kevin Patterson said there are an estimated 1,000 people in the County who are permitted to carry concealed handguns. "A person with a conceal/carry permit can carry handguns on any open air facility — the parks, Morgan Complex — but they can't take them inside any County building."

Patterson said even though the Commissioners took a stand, the issue could come around again. "The Commissioners could take it back up at any point in time in the future."

Pate Stadium repairs might be completed ahead of schedule

Repairs at Pate Stadium will be completed in time for football season if not earlier. Scotland High School's first football game is August 17.

Schools Maintenance Supervisor Roger Ammons said, "The slabs of seating were not as difficult to move as we thought they might be. Things are moving very quickly."

Repairs are being conducted by Florence Concrete Products and came in just under budget at \$129,000, just shy of the estimated \$130,000. It was Florence Concrete Products that built the stadium in 1979 for an estimated \$450,000.

In May workers who were building a new exterior concession stand adjacent to the stadium reported the damage to the seating area. The workers had been caught in a thunderstorm and retreated to shelter beneath the stadium when they looked up and noticed the concrete seating had shifted.

Ammons said, "It was good we caught it when we did. It could have been a more severe situation had we let it go much longer."

School officials immediately closed the stadium to two upcoming events, the 2012 commencement and the Independence Day fireworks. The commencement was relocated to the indoor gymnasium while spectators to the fireworks event were directed to the practice field at the High School.

Pate Stadium repairs include the installation of reinforcing brackets under the stand that will allow it to expand and contract and prevent shifting.

Gary Roberson of Florence Concrete Products indicated that after more than 30 years the stadium's proximity to train tracks and a major highway through the County could have contributed to the shifting in the stadium seating.



Workers reinforce Pate Stadium seating with brackets.

Parks and Recreation will hold registrations for Football, Cheerleading and Soccer.

July 30 to August 3: Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., August 4: Saturday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Scotland Place on Turnpike Road.

July 31 and August 2: Tuesday and Thursday, 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Laurel Hill Community Center.

July 31 to August 3: Tuesday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and August 4, Saturday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Wagram Recreation Center.

Fee is \$15 per player for Scotland County residents and \$40 for those who live out of County. There is a \$5 additional fee for late registrations, August 6 to August 10. Age for football and cheerleading is 7 to 12 years as of August 1 and, for soccer, 4 to 13 as of August 1. For more information, call 910-277-2585.

Free fracking seminar held

The Cooperative Extension Advisory Council will sponsor a free seminar on Fracking 12 p.m. Monday, August 13. Attendees are asked to bring a bag lunch. Beverages and dessert will be provided. The seminar will take place at the Cooperative Extension office, 231 East Cronly Street.

Seminar speaker is Ted Feitshans, an attorney and associate professor in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at N.C. State University. He also is a specialist with N.C. Cooperative Extension.

Production of oil and gas from shale has been a game changer in the energy business. It opens the possibility that the United States will regain its position as an energy super power.

Technological developments that make this possible are known as hydraulic fracturing (sometimes called 'fracking' or 'fracing').

North Carolina has its own hydrocarbon-bearing shale deposit that runs from Anson County north to Durham and Wake

counties. Activities are currently centered in Lee, Chatham and Moore Counties. Less-well explored deposits are known to exist elsewhere in North Carolina.

Session Law 2012-143 (Senate Bill 820) sets the framework for establishing an oil and gas industry in North Carolina.

Cooperative Extension isn't taking a position on fracking. Its role is educating the public. "We're trying to do what Extension does best, which is present as unbiased picture of the situation as is humanly possible," Feitshans said.

Summer fun for youth

Cooperative Extension has kept youngsters busy this summer with a wide range of activities.

For instance, a group of 11 Scotland County 4-H'ers toured UNC-Pembroke for a glimpse of college life. The group visited an English class, the Native American Museum, the arts and music departments, bookstore, athletic department and many other campus attractions.

Two craft classes, *Trash to Treasure*, were held and utilized recycled items where jewelry and other fun crafts were created by 4-H'ers.

4-H'ers traveled to Noah's Landing, a hands-on zoo, to get face-to-face with animals from around the globe. More than 70 different animals including porcupines, zebras, monkeys, alligators, foxes and more were on hand for this adventure.

Another group of older 4-H'ers spent the day on a horse farm and N.C. Center for Equine Health in Southern Pines. Additionally, 4-H hosted a tour of Ft. Bragg military facilities, which included a visit to a pack shed where personnel pack parachutes, and a meet and greet with U.S. Army Golden Knights parachute team.

News of Note

Children get free dental care

The Health Department will host its second Smile North Carolina mobile dentists event 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, August 6. The first event was held July 23. The Smile Programs mobile dentists coordinate on-site dental care with the Health Department because taking care of children's teeth is important and keeps them healthy. Tooth decay is the most common chronic and infectious disease among children. In addition, children with oral disease can suffer with pain and difficulty eating. The dental team sets up a mini-dental office in the Health Department to provide dental services for all children ages 12 months to 18 years old. Children receive preventive dental care at no cost, since Medicaid, CHIP and most other insurances cover 100 percent of prevention treatment. For those children without dental coverage, charity care services are available. No proof of financial status is requested. The Smile Programs have provided services for more than 14 years. All dentists are State licensed and conduct a complete dental exam. Every child is given a report card to take home. Dental referrals are provided by Smile North Carolina if additional dental work is needed.



4-Hers who toured the UNC-Pembroke campus stopped for a photo in front of the Tommy statue at the James B. Chavis University Center.

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Pigeon Forge road trip planned

A trip to Pigeon Forge and Smoky Mountains Show May 6 to 10, 2013, is being made available through Parks and Recreation. The \$450 price per person includes four nights of lodging, eight meals, a guided tour of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, four evening shows, two morning shows and free time in historic downtown Gatlinburg. For more information and reservations contact Scotland Place Senior Center, 910-277-2585.

Public health spreads message to community

Health Department employees distributed information at the June 24 Sunday in the Park on the agency's clinical and family planning services, STD facts and birth control facts, safe sleep for infants, tic borne illnesses and rabies. The Health Department also participated in an Employee Health Fair at the Lowes store in Laurinburg. Pictured at left in Lowes are Health Department employees Danielle Wilkins, center, and Alisa Freeman. Employees received information on services provided by the agency along with birth control facts, a body maintenance manual for men, ways to be active everyday, information on high blood pressure and on the diabetic management program.

Tennis practice expands to schools

The Scotland County Tennis Association has arranged to donate nets, racquets and balls for use in the P.E. classes at Laurel Hill and South

Scotland elementary schools for the upcoming school year in an effort to expand youth tennis in Scotland County. If you have children in other schools and would like to see it included in their P.E. programs, please contact the school principal and have them get in touch with the Tennis Center.

Post Scripts

Welcome to new Public Buildings employees **Ricky Wright** and **Ronald McPherson**. ☘ Daniel Walters, son of **Joan Walters**, DSS, graduated with honors from Scotland High School. Daniel will pursue a degree in accounting from UNC-Charlotte in the fall. ☘ Mark the date. The County will host a **blood drive** 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Thursday, August 30, at West Covington Street.

2013 Holiday Schedule

New Year's Day, Tuesday, January 1

**Martin Luther King Day,
Monday, January 21**

Good Friday, March 29

Memorial Day, Monday May 27

Independence Day, Thursday, July 4

Labor Day, Monday, September 2

Veteran's Day, Monday, November 11

**Thanksgiving, Thursday and Friday,
November 28 and 29**

**Christmas, Tuesday, Wednesday and
Thursday, December 24, 25 and 26**

First furlough day is Friday, August 31

