

# Scotland County Monthly



APRIL 2007

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

## Medicaid a headliner at district meeting

Discussions of placing a permanent cap on Medicaid dominated the first hour of a three-hour district meeting hosted by Scotland County.

For the past three years counties across the state along with the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) have asked State legislators to put a permanent cap on Medicaid.

"The argument is not about Medicaid relief, it's about how to provide Medicaid relief," said David Thompson, NCACC Executive Director.

State legislators agree that rapidly escalating Medicaid costs present a burden to counties, particularly small rural ones.

Medicaid spending in the state has increased from \$3.1 billion in 1995 to \$8.5 billion in the last fiscal year. During that time, the counties' share of that spending has nearly tripled to about \$450 million.

Developing a plan for a revenue source that would allow the State to assume full responsibility for Medicaid and that most counties would endorse has been the challenge.

Discussions this year focus on various land transfer tax proposals that would provide a revenue stream to address critical infrastructure needs like school, road and street and water and sewer development.

"The Medicaid problem keeps you from doing anything else," said James Blackburn, NCACC General Counsel. "We must find a tax that somebody will have to pay. A land transfer tax generates enough revenue for those infrastructure needs."

NCACC staff also discussed other legislative issues, which would impact counties if they became law.

More than 50 elected officials and staff from Scotland, Harnett, Hoke, Cumberland, Bladen, Robeson, Richmond and Anson counties attended the district meeting.

## County Government Week launched

The launch of County Government Week April 23 began with a ceremony and reception at the Courthouse.

Sommere Terry, left, a 4th grade student at Washington Park Primary, sang the National Anthem. Chairman J.D. Willis welcomed the guests. Scotland High School JROTC presented the colors for the occasion.

The week of events and activities concluded Saturday, April 28 with a community walk at Hammond Park.



Chairman J.D. Willis welcomes elected officials to the district meeting hosted by Scotland County.

## Schoollink contract helps eliminate spam

County employees were pleasantly surprised April 2 to find their email folders nearly spam-free.

For months employees who had a scotlandcounty.org email address were forced to plow through numerous unwanted emails on a daily basis.

The elimination of most unwanted emails is the result of a new contract between the County and Schoollink.

Schoollink, which contracts out its spam filtering, is partnered with a new vendor that provides stricter built-in filter definitions for spam email.

"A lot of the emails are automatically deleted now," said Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager Kevin Patterson.

Emails with similarities to the definitions are sent to a quarantine area. "That's because the program is uncertain if it's a legitimate file or not," Patterson explained.

In that case, Schoollink notifies the user via email to follow a link where suspicious email can be reviewed and deleted or forwarded on to their scotlandcounty.org account.

Patterson said, "Previously Schoollink was having problems with legitimate emails being rejected, which is why they switched to a new contract. That changeover took a little time."



## County employee comes to the rescue

*Solid Waste Supervisor Bryant Higgins received praise for lending a helping hand to a traveler in her time of need. Below is a letter written to County Manager John Crumpton describing the good deed Higgins performed.*

Dear Mr. Crumpton:

Wednesday a week ago while traveling to Pinehurst with my sister on spring break, I hit a pothole at the railroad tracks on the bypass and blew out a front tire.

We started removing our luggage from the trunk to get out the spare when one of your county employees, Bryant Higgins, stopped to assist us.

When he got out my spare tire he noticed that it was flat. He not only took us to a nearby tire shop to get a new tire and the spare filled but he also brought us back and put the tire on.

By this time it was raining. I can't begin to explain how much we appreciated Mr. Higgins' help and thought that you needed to know about the good deed of one of Scotland County's employees.

*Sincerely,  
Judi Holland, Asheville, NC*

## HIPAA privacy rules available

As the third anniversary of the compliance date of the HIPAA privacy rules draws near, employees are reminded that a copy of those privacy practices are available.

Privacy practices can be reviewed and downloaded online at [www.scotlandcounty.org](http://www.scotlandcounty.org). Go to the Employment page and click on "Privacy Practices" near the top of the page.

Scotland County, which has a small health plan, distributed its first notice of privacy practice three years ago. It is required to distribute another notice by April 2007. Plan participants include employees as well as COBRA-qualified beneficiaries.



*Good Samaritan  
Bryant Higgins*

## Post Scripts

Congratulations to **Mildred Williams**, who received her National Accreditation for Veteran Service Officers March 23. ✂ **Elaine Harrison, DSS**, is doubly proud. Her daughter, Jamika Harrison, received a full four-year scholarship to Guilford College in Greensboro. Jamika will begin in the fall 2007. Harrison's son, Jamael Harrison, was inducted into the National Society of High School Scholars with a 3.75 GPA. ✂ Congratulations to the **SCATS team** for placing third to date on the weight loss challenge sponsored by Scotland Memorial Hospital. With one month to go, keep up the good work. Everyone wins by losing. ✂ **Gracie Rettig**, Transportation, welcomed grandson Joseph Dalton McNeill, born March 17. ✂ Celebrating employment anniversaries at EMS are **Randy McArthur**, 13 years, and **Dontae Roland**, 3 years. ✂ Best wishes to **Marcia Coble**, DSS, who retired April 30 after 25 years of service with the agency. ✂ Hal M. Hunt, Jr., son of **Tina Oxendine**, Health, was accepted into the PA Program at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem. He will begin classes in June. ✂ **Glenn "Mac" Tucker** graduated from the EMS Management Institute at UNC-Charlotte. He joins past graduates **Roylin Hammond, Mike Edge, Robert Sampson, Dennis Currie, Tommy Hatcher** and **Cory Baldwin** in completing the course, which covered topics from Mass Casualty Incidents to Media Relations and Public Speaking. Classes spanned from 16 to 24 hours a month beginning in October of 2006 and wrapping up in April 2007. Tucker is certified as an Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic and is Captain of A-Shift. He has served Scotland County and SCEMS since June 1993.

We extend our sympathy to the family of **Dr. James S. Mitchener, Jr.**, who passed away April 10. Dr. Mitchener served three consecutive terms on the Board of Commissioners from 1980 to 1992. He served as Board Chairman from 1990 to 1992. Our condolences to **Phyllis Clark**, DSS, on the recent loss of her mother.

**Storytelling Festival  
of Carolina  
May 19 and 20  
John Blue House Grounds**

## Paramedics instruct RCC nursing students



*Robert Sampson explains the use of the  
LifePak 12 monitor/defibrillator.*



*Mike Edge instructs students on what to  
expect during the drill.*

Paramedics Mike Edge and Robert Sampson were invited by the staff at Richmond Community College in Hamlet to assist second-year nursing program students in teaching them how to handle cardiac arrest emergency situation.

The Paramedics gave instructions and served as evaluators during the mock code drill. Students were thrilled to have two seasoned EMS health professionals come to their class.

One of the nursing program instructors is former EMS 911 Operator Ronnie Lynne Tunstall, who is still employed at EMS as a part-time Paramedic. Tunstall is also a graduate of the Richmond County College nursing program. The nursing students will graduate in May with an Associates Degree in Applied Science — Nursing.

## Message from the Manager

My time right now is occupied with capital projects and the 07-08 budget. Here is what I have been working on:

First, the Courthouse roof project is moving into an important phase. The architect completed the study of the roof and has made recommendations for renovation work to the Board of Commissioners. The recommendations will be discussed at the May 3 Budget Workshop.

We are hopeful the Commissioners will accept the report at that time. If the report is accepted, the County would establish a capital projects fund and prepare to bid the project. Construction would begin this summer.

Next, the County is moving forward with placing lights at the Sports Complex fields. Completion of this important project will allow the County to hold tournaments year round at the Complex. Project bids will be accepted the first week of May with a contract award expected at the May 7 Board of Commissioners meeting. The lights would be installed by September, which sets a very aggressive timetable.

Lastly, construction of an Industrial Spec Building at Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Industrial Park is in the planning stage. This is a joint effort with the County, the City of Laurinburg and the Chamber of Commerce.



John A. Crumpton

We are moving quickly on this project and hope to break ground in late June. This is an important project for industrial recruitment since the County lacks the right kind of facility inventory to attract industry. More than 80 percent of industrial prospects that come our way want to look at existing buildings. Our inventory of buildings is old, and they lack the desired ceiling heights for today's industry.

As we work through the 07-08 budget, I would like to note two very positive items that are hopeful signs our economy is on the rebound.

First, our tax base is growing. As most of you know, the County has had no growth in its tax base in the last three years. Recent growth is credited to the County providing incentives to promote expansion of existing industry and to a large growth in agricultural values, which resulted in a modest increase in the tax base over the last year.

Growth is expected to continue in the 08-09 budget with the current projects that are underway. In addition, sales tax revenue continues to increase at a 2.5 percent annual rate.

Despite job losses in the County, these two revenue sources indicate a growing economy. This is good news, and we believe this will help the County improve the job market.

Lastly, on a safety note, with warm weather ahead, please make sure you stay hydrated and drink plenty of water when you work outside.

## the Birthday list for May

**2** James McQueen (DSS); **3** Kathy Medlin (Sheriff); **4** Teresa Vick and Tasha McQueen (DSS); **5** Rhonda Saffel (Tax); **7** LaCarrol Rhone (DSS); **9** James McQueen (Transportation) and Belinda James (DSS); **10** Jammie Deese (DSS); **11** Nancy Bostick (Administration) and Brian English (Sheriff); **12** Crystal Norton (Register of Deeds); **13** Joyce Hamby (Board of Elections); **14** Dontae Roland (EMS); **15** Roxanne Douglas (DSS) and Tracey Ansley (Sheriff); **17** Melanie Clark (EMS), Dewey Oxendine (Public Buildings) and Scott Jacobs (Sheriff); **18** Rebecca Griffin (DSS), Clarence McPhatter (Commissioner) and Dalores Ingram (Board of Elections); **20** Billie Phillips (Tax); **21** Gregory Tuck (Jail) and Gwendolyn McDuffie (DSS); **23** Lisa McPhatter (DSS); **24** Michelle Campbell (DSS) and Pearlene Leggett (Health); **25** Gail Jackson (Sheriff); **26** Jennifer Taylor (Health) and Jackie Locklear (Jail); **29** Dennis Currie (EMS) and Myra Hill (DSS); **30** Terry Williams (Soil and Water); **31** Wayne Mace (EMS).

## Introductions & transitions

Welcome to those individuals who joined Scotland County departments since February 16, 2007: **James Locklear**, part-time with EMS; **Malinda McRae**, Jail; **Falana Jackson**, Social Services; **Timothy Matthews**, temporary with Public Buildings; and **Linda Locklear**, part-time with Transportation.

## EMStatistics

### EMS Report for March:

**Responded to** 419 Medical/Trauma calls

**Treated** 53 motor vehicle accident patients

**Administered** 95 wellness/blood pressure checks

**Sold** 24 blue address signs

### 911 Report Highlights:

**387** EMS

**328** Sheriff's Department

**269** Laurinburg Police Department

**97** Fire Department

**652** hang-up calls

**99** wrong numbers

**52** open line calls

**1,410** cellular calls

**2,189** total calls to 911

### Top five complaints for EMS Response

**76** sick person (specific diagnosis)

**60** breathing problems

**53** traffic accidents

**31** chest pain

**30** falls/back injuries (traumatic)

**30** transfer/interfacility/palliative care

### Weather Observations

#### (EMS Recordings)

**Temp (high)** 87 on 3/25,28

**Temp (low)** 28 on 3/5,18

**Wind (mph)** 33 on 3/2

**Rainfall (inches)** 1.03 on 3/16

**Compiled by Tommy Hatcher**

## Health Tip

Ask yourself, "Is my body requesting food or is my mind just craving it?" Here's how you can tell the difference, says Jill Fleming, a registered dietitian and author of *Thin People Don't Clean Their Plates: How to Fight Cravings*. Fleming recommends carrying a food journal and writing down everything you eat and why you eat it. You'll start to notice the times you're eating when you're not really hungry. Once you've identified your emotional triggers, find alternative activities to eating. If anger sets off cravings, hit a punching bag instead. If boredom brings on hunger pangs, get busy — call a friend or clean a closet. If stress spurs a hankering for sweets, go for a short walk and get in shape. **Source: [www.RealAge.com](http://www.RealAge.com).**

## Scotland Yard gets a sprucing



The 2006 Junior Leadership class painted a dragon at Scotland Yard as part of an end-of-the year project. Kids can delight their imaginations by sliding down the dragon's tail. In addition, Public Buildings staff treated the lumber at Scotland Yard and put down two inches of mulch.

## Rettig shares a China travel adventure

Gracie Rettig's vacation in March took her halfway around the world. After a 13-hour flight that followed the sun, Rettig debarked in Shanghai for an 18-day visit.

Rettig, Transportation Supervisor, accompanied her husband Gary, who was traveling to China on business.

While there, Rettig realized that authentic Chinese food bears no resemblance to Chinese food served in the States.

"There is no fried food. They served duck (complete with head and bill), mutton and squid — things I've never eaten before."

She added, "The Chinese cook mushrooms a lot of different ways, and they call the mushrooms fungus."

Mealtimes are more communal, according to Rettig, with a variety of large platters placed on a turntable. "Everyone orders something different and then they eat what everyone else ordered."

As for fish. It's fresh. "Before they cook it, they show it to you in a plastic bag while it's still flopping," Rettig said.

Rettig said the people are pleasant and friendly and crime is almost non-existent. "You can walk the streets anywhere and at any time and not worry. No one is allowed to have a gun."

As for traffic, Rettig found it to be chaotic and haphazard. "Cars would travel in any direction, and you could reach out your hand from one vehicle and touch the vehicle next to you. I never saw one stop sign, just stop lights. Bikes and mopeds are everywhere, even on the sidewalks."

Rettig said the people were pleasant, friendly and hard-working. "To them, \$4 an hour is a lot of money."

"Anybody who gets the chance should get to China," Rettig said. "It is an amazing place."



**Gracie Rettig at the Festival of Flowers. Everything behind her was fashioned from flowers.**



**Rettig received this cake with an intricate dragon design in celebration of her birthday. The people of China don't eat sweets. The cake was made of whipped cream over fruit.**

## Silver Arts

### 2007 Scotland County Silver Arts

#### Heritage Arts Visual Arts Performing Arts

- |                                 |               |                             |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| - basket-weaving                | - acrylics    | - comedy                    |
| - china painting                | - drawings    | - drama                     |
| - crocheting                    | - mixed media | - instrumental              |
| - rugs (hooked, braided, woven) | - oil         | - vocal                     |
| - jewelry                       | - pastels     | - line dancing              |
| - needlework                    | - photography | - cheerleading              |
| - ceramics                      | - sculpture   |                             |
| - arts and crafts               | - watercolor  | <i>Literary Arts</i>        |
| - Stained glass                 |               | - essay, " Life Experience" |
| -tattooing & needlelace         |               | - poem                      |
| -tole/decorative                |               | - short story               |
| - painting                      |               |                             |
| - weaving                       |               |                             |
| - woodcrafting                  |               |                             |

**Call Scotland Place Senior Center  
910-277-2550 for more information.**

**All Scotland County residents who are 55 years or better are invited to participate. There is no fee to enter.**

Entries must be dropped off at Scotia Village Wednesday May 9th from 10:00 to noon. Entries may be picked up after the Silver Arts Banquet on May 11th at 11:30. Tickets to the banquet are \$10 .

## Multiple outlet devices warning

Multiple outlet devices such as power strips, multiple outlet adapters and extension cords with multiple outlet ends can easily overload and overheat wall receptacles and branch circuit wiring in walls leading to structure fire. Misuse of multiple outlet strips and extension cords is a *leading cause* of office fires in the U.S.

For this reason, the use of multiple outlet strips must be restricted to surge suppressor protection of computers and desktop electronics.

Do not use them to power coffee pots, microwaves or other office appliances. If you don't have enough electrical outlets in your office, alert your supervisor or Public Buildings Supervisor Hyder Massey.