

Scotland County Monthly



AUGUST 2007

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Spec building construction begins

Construction of a new 44,000-square-foot Spec Building at Laurinburg-Maxton Industrial Park will be completed by early fall.

The Spec Building will be used to promote economic development, create new jobs and bring about successful industrial recruitment efforts.

During a ceremonial groundbreaking, Board of Commissioners Chairman J.D. Willis said the presence of a spec building in the community to show prospects is a "win-win situation."

Willis explained, "The spec building may not be what the prospects are looking for, but it brings them to Scotland County, and they may find another site that better suits their needs."

He added, "We should always have a spec building available so we don't lose industry."

The spec building will be built on 10-acres, which is part of a 72-acre tract, to give the prospective occupant room to expand.

The last spec building in Scotland County was built in 1995. WePack moved into the 40,000 square-foot space and has since expanded the facility to 200,000-square-feet. WePack employs 35 people fulltime and fills as many as 100 seasonal positions.

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Recreation Center ribbon cutting precedes regional tournament

A dream nearly two decades in the making, the result of a communitywide effort, came true August 24 when the Recreation Complex ribbon was officially cut.

The following day more than 20 girls softball teams affiliated with the National Softball Association participated in a regional tournament at the four fields at the Complex while their friends and families cheered them on.

More than 1,500 spectators from North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia attended the tournament on Saturday alone.

Chamber of Commerce Chairman and Commissioner Guy McCook said, "The presence of the Recreation Complex attracts people to Laurinburg and Scotland County, enhances the quality of life for the community and brings visitors here with money to spend."

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State approves three-year phaseout of Medicaid

County financial participation in Medicaid will be eliminated by July 1, 2009 as part of a three-year phaseout signed into law by Governor Mike Easley.

The phaseout concludes a four-year debate between State legislators and county elected officials to develop a mutually equitable and beneficial plan to relieve counties of Medicaid expenses.

The State budget provides for a three-year phaseout of county Medicaid expenses in exchange for a gradual assumption of a half-cent local sales tax.

It also gives counties options for additional revenue authority to meet their growing infrastructure demands.

Interim County Manager/Finance Officer Kevin Patterson explained the benefit to the County.

In the first year the State will keep 60 percent of the ADM funding that is allocated to Scotland County to pay for the school bonds. The amount to be withheld is estimated at \$261,180, and the County will have to fund this same amount out of other unrestricted funds. Scotland County is expected to receive a hold harmless payment to guarantee a net benefit of \$500,000.

In the second year the State will take one-half of the Article 44 sales taxes. This will be a loss of approximately \$740,000 compared to an estimated savings of \$2 million.

By year three the State will take all Article 44 sales taxes and change the method of distribution for other sales taxes from per capita to point of delivery. This would represent a loss of revenues of approximately \$2.2 million compared to a savings on Medicaid expenses of \$4.4.

The phaseout also gives counties new revenue authority, which could be approved only through a referendum. Possible new revenue sources include the levy of a .25 percent sales tax or the levy of up to a 0.4 percent land transfer tax. It is estimated that a .25 percent sales tax would generate \$761,301, the equivalent of four cents on the tax rate. A .25 percent sales tax would mean taxpayers would pay an additional 25 cents on a \$100 purchase.

The 0.4 percent land transfer tax, if approved by referendum, could be levied in increments of 0.1 percent up to 0.4 percent on the transfer of real property.

A land transfer tax at the rate of 0.4 percent would generate an estimated \$352,708 or two cents on the tax rate. This would be a tax of \$400 on a \$100,000 sale of real property.



Breaking ground at the site of the spec building are, left to right, Laurinburg City Council member Amanda Faulk, Chamber Economic Development Vice President Drew Williamson, Chamber Chairman and County Commissioner Guy McCook, County Chairman J.D. Willis, Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission Chairman Pete Liles and Maxton Mayor Lillie McKoy.

Golden LEAF presents \$1.2 million check to RCC

Golden LEAF officials made a personal visit to the area to present the City of Laurinburg and Richmond Community College with a \$1.2 million Foundation grant.

As part of the check presentation ceremony, the officials also had the opportunity to see the site where the funds would be invested.

The site, where the old hospital once stood, will be transformed into the Scotland Campus for RCC with construction of an academic facility to house a nursing program and classrooms for industrial workforce training.

Commissioner Guy McCook was one of several local officials to praise Golden LEAF for its generous gift.

"This means a lot to the entire community, and it will benefit every citizen," said McCook.

He said the community would benefit a great deal from the project, which would promote work force development, lower unemployment and improve the local economy.

RCC is awaiting word on a \$1 million grant from the EDA and will apply to the State for an additional \$1 million Community College grant.

An RCC capital campaign helped raise \$400,000 toward the project.



Pictured, from left, Golden LEAF Board Member John Merritt, President Valeria Lee and Board Chairman Rick Holder, County Commissioner Guy McCook, Laurinburg City Mayor Ann Slaughter and RCC President Diane Honeycutt.

Health Fair attendance up



Employees were treated to breakfast at the Health Fair.

Attendance at the Health Fair for County employees improved over last year with 183 employee participants so far compared to an estimated 170 in 2006.

One final Health Fair is scheduled for

September 6 at the Sheriff's Office.

Participants were entered in a drawing for gift certificates and camping gear. As further incentive, each employee who attended the Health Fair will receive a \$30 check, the equivalent of a copay for a doctor's visit.

Gift certificates were awarded to Thomas Milligan, Jerry Johnson, Myra Hill, Van McArthur, Rebecca Griffin, Kathie Cox, Jannett Garcia and Charlene Mouzon.

Vincent Locklear, Anita Nelson and Kenneth Wright won camping gear.

Peru trip a mission of faith, skills

Rebecca Snyder helps others through medical missions where she shares her faith and her skills as a nurse and physician's assistant.

Snyder recently took time away from the Health Department to provide medical care as a volunteer at a clinic area in Arequipa, Peru.

This is the third medical mission for Snyder, who previously shared her skills at the Navajo Nation in Monument Valley, Utah, and in China.

Her trip was funded by Baptist Medical Mission, and Snyder purchased her own medicine travel packs, enough to treat nearly 1,500 people.

Even so, the need was greater than expected. "We triaged over 3,700 people, averaging over 800 a day. The number of adults seen were around 1,700 with 1,500 children five years and older and 500 children younger than five years."

She added, "Keeping exact numbers was a challenge due to unexpected circumstances. We went to two orphanages to evaluate children and ended up seeing more adults than children. We learned later that people had walked in off the streets to be seen."

Snyder said access to health care in Peru is limited by a person's ability to pay, and there is no such thing as public health as we know it. "Common disorders such as gout, parasitic infestation, scoliosis and cataracts were markedly advanced due to a lack of timely medical and/or surgical interventions."

"One person with debilitating deformities in both forearms, wrists and hands was a result of untreated chronic gout. A person lost their eyesight due to a parasite that wound it's way through subcutaneous tissue across the face and entered the left eye," Snyder said. "Many persons came seeking help in seeing more than shadows through their cataracts."

"Frustration does not even begin to describe the referral options available," Snyder explained. She recalled the case of one child with scoliosis who was destined to spend his life in a wheelchair without surgical intervention. "Alexia, my interpretor, knew a

doctor in her church who I used as a referral source. My brother-in-law is a Shriner, and efforts are in the process of bringing that boy with scoliosis from the orphanage to the States for care."

Snyder said she would go back "in a heartbeat" since the need for health care is great. "We ran out of medicines and closed the clinic one day early. We left, literally in the dust, over 2,000 persons waiting to be seen. This did not fill our hearts with joy or a sense of a job well done. We left with that nagging sense of 'I should have, could have brought more medicine, supplies'."

Snyder said, "I came back resolved to learn to speak Spanish because the language, even with an excellent interpretor, is a significant barrier, to take specific types of medication and to develop patient education material that addresses their needs."



Rebecca Snyder with an infant.

People line up at the clinic.



EOC plans for 2007 hurricane season

Every year at this time EMS Director Roylin Hammond provides an annual hurricane update to agency representatives who will staff the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) if activated.

Hammond optimistically keeps his fingers crossed that 2007 will be another good year. "The last time the EOC was activated was in 1999 for Hurricane Floyd.

"Floyd skirted us, and we were very lucky," Hammond said. "Nothing happened last year. We hope nothing will happen again this year."

Hammond warned a major weather event east of Laurinburg would affect Scotland County. "If something happens in the Myrtle Beach area we will be in for a real bad time."

He reminded those attending to first consider their families and assemble a 72-hour disaster preparedness kit. "Take care of your families so we can concentrate on what we have to do if the EOC is activated."

The EOC is located at the County Annex on Cronly Street. The Dulin Center at Scotland Memorial Hospital is the alternate site. Hammond said the search for a new EOC location is underway because the January move by Cronly Street personnel to Covington Street left Cronly Street without copying and computer capabilities.

Hammond said areas of disaster preparedness still being fine-tuned in Scotland County include fragile needs sheltering, formerly known as special needs sheltering. "We are looking to partner with community colleges to set up those shelters."

Another area under review is establishing pet friendly shelters. "There is now a federal mandate to have pet friendly shelters, but no plans have been finalized yet for opening shelters for a pet population."

HAM/ARES County communications services are in the process of being reactivated. "HAM operators are meeting to revitalize a system we already have," said Hammond.

Scotland County also will serve as an evacuation community for New Hanover and Brunswick counties.

Spec building will attract prospects

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Chamber of Commerce Chairman and County Commissioner Guy McCook said, "This project ensures we have a seat at the table since most prospects are looking for existing buildings."

McCook added that projects like this — projects that bring jobs and increase the tax base — bring the community together in a collaborative effort.

The County, City of Laurinburg, Town of Maxton, Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission and Chamber of Commerce all came together to transform the project into reality.

The spec building will incorporate structural features that attract today's industry including 4,000-square-feet of office space, high ceilings, two dock doors and one overhead electric door.

Introductions & transitions

Moody, DSS. **Lynn Poe** has assumed new responsibilities in Inspections along with her current administrative support duties.



Roylin Hammond, right, provides a preparedness briefing at the EOC meeting.

the Birthday list for September

1 Felisa Lockey (DSS); **2** Jennifer Clark (Sheriff) and Cathy Graham (Cooperative Extension); **3** Sarah McQueen (DSS) and Rosa Page (Splash Pad); **5** Ricky Taylor (Jail), Tommy Butler (Sheriff) and Dr. John Slaughter (Health Board); **6** Terri Tacquard and Denise Cox (EMS) and Anita Nelson (DSS); **7** Holly Russell (Parks and Recreation); **8** Debra Kersey (Health) and Amanda Patterson (Jail); **10** Jeannie Freeman (DSS); **11** Deborah Rogers (Health) and James Laviner (Sheriff); **14** Carlotta Rivers (Health); **16** Perry Brooks (Jail) and Nancy Hughes (Tax); **17** Nathan Monroe (Health Board); **18** Susan Butler (Administration) and Malinda McRae (Jail); **19** Pierre Lee (EMS); **25** Alisia Freeman (Health) and Lana Jackson (DSS); **26** Joshua Byrd (Sheriff); **27** Timothy Hunt (EMS); **29** Lynda McMillan (Health).

EMStatistics

EMS Report for July:

Responded to 397 Medical/Trauma calls
Treated 36 motor vehicle accident patients
Administered 116 wellness/blood pressure checks
Sold 19 blue address signs

911 Report Highlights:

419 EMS
276 Sheriff's Department
282 Laurinburg Police Department
56 Fire Department
729 hang-up calls
76 wrong numbers
56 open line calls
1,476 cellular calls
2,170 total calls to 911

Top five complaints for EMS Response

58 breathing problems
46 sick person (specific diagnosis)
42 chest pain
36 traffic accidents (patients)
31 falls/back injuries (traumatic)

Weather Observations

(EMS Recordings)

Temp (high) 99 on 7/19
Temp (low) 61 on 7/23
Wind (mph) 24 on 7/11
Rainfall (inches) .18 on 7/11

Compiled by Tommy Hatcher

Our condolences to the family of **James L. "Jimmy" Morgan**. A community leader and philanthropist and a County Commissioner from 1971 to 1972, Morgan passed away August 27 at home. He was 82.

Rec Complex opens with fanfare

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Amy Richburg, Soil and Water, and husband Charlie welcomed daughter Taylor Ashton Richburg July 24. 🌀 Congratulations to **Al Blades**, Parks and Recreation, on the June 2 marriage of his daughter, Shelley Lane Blades, to Christopher John Gaumer. 🌀 **Thomas Milligan** achieved certification for Mechanical Inspector Level II while **Clarence "Bud" McAllister** was awarded Plumbing Inspector Level I certification. 🌀 Celebrating employment anniversaries at EMS are **Cory Baldwin**, 23 years; **Sandy Lockey**, 17 years; **Amy Ratley**, 11 years; **Mathew Locklear** and **Mary White**, two years; and **Holly Storey**, one year. **Rhonda Saffel**, Tax, celebrates 20 years of employment. 🌀 Congratulations to **Shekesha McPhatter**, DSS, on the August 14 birth of son Ji'Son Immanuel McPhatter and to **Jenny Valdaliso**, DSS, on the August 22 birth of son John Valdaliso, Jr. 🌀 Sometimes hording isn't such a bad thing. When the typewriter in the Soil and Water office required repair, the estimated cost to fix it was between \$350 to \$450. **Mike McGirt**, Public Buildings, found the part needed from a similar typewriter model that was in storage. The final repair costs was \$80 and resulted in a major savings to Soil and Water's repair and maintenance budget. 🌀 Best wishes to those employees who retired since May 1, 2007: **Pat Lathrop**, EMS, 26.5 years; **Marcia Coble**, DSS, 25 years; **Linda Graham**, DSS, 22 years; **Anne Tindall**, Administration, 15 years; and **Doris Smart**, Inspections, 15 years. 🌀 Thanks to the employees who participated in the August 14 **Red Cross Blood Drive** where the goal of 30 units was surpassed.

McCook described the Complex as an asset that will allow the community to sell itself to thousands of visitors.

"This project has been a long time in the making," said Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Chair Becca Hughes. "The Recreation Complex is the result of the dreams, hard work and perseverance of many people in the community."

Commissioner Betty Blue Gholston added, "This is a wonderful day and a beautiful complex." Gholston recalled the excitement she first felt five years ago as a new Commissioner when plans for the project were presented to the governing body.

Laurinburg Mayor Ann Slaughter said, "The complex will put heads in beds, and that is what we need right now."

More than 100 people attended the event. Leaders who cut the ribbon, pictured left to right, include Laurinburg Mayor Ann Slaughter; Dr. Neal Carter, Laurinburg Presbyterian Church; Commissioner Betty Blue Gholston; Tourism Development Authority Chairman Nick Sojka; Representative Garland Pierce; Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Chair Becca Hughes; Parks and Recreation Director Shannon Newton; Senator Bill Purcell; Chamber of Commerce Chairman and Commissioner Guy McCook and Commissioner John Alford.



Sale supports capital campaign



Cooperative Extension hosted a sale of items and collectibles recently acquired from an estate sale. Prices ranged from a nickel and up with average prices from \$1 to \$2.

Employees were invited to browse through and purchase items before the sale was advertised to the public.

Monies raised from the sale will support Cooperative Extension's capital campaign for the Scotland Place expansion building fund.



Going ...



Going ...



Gone!

County cleans house with auction

Furniture, computers, vehicles and office supplies no longer useful to the County brought in more than \$20,000 at auction.

Buyers from North and South Carolina arrived at the Annex parking lot on one of the hottest Saturdays in August to view the 33 vehicles and other items that would go to the highest bidders.

Auctioneer Ronnie Sellers was assisted by Administration staff Kevin Patterson, Nancy Bostick and Tim Martin.

The auction began at 10 a.m., and two hours later buyers were towing away vehicles, computers and other purchases. Everything scheduled for auction was sold.



Computers and furniture ... gone, too.