

Scotland County

Monthly



DECEMBER 2005

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Commissioners 'thank' employees

Full-time County employees received a one-time \$1,000 bonus this year in appreciation for their hard work and dedication to service. Part-time employees received either \$250 or \$500 based on hours worked from July 1, 2005 to November 15, 2005. The one-time bonus was approved by the Board of Commissioners for distribution a week before Christmas.

The bonus is taxable with retirement, federal and state taxes and any applicable garnishments deducted from the gross amount.

Chairman J.D. Willis said employees have not received a salary increase in three years despite increases in the cost of living and health insurance.

He said increased revenue from sales tax, tax collections and savings from lapsed salaries attributed to a \$1.4 million Fund Balance increase. A \$1,000 bonus for all employees on the Scotland County payroll would be about \$300,000, leaving \$1.1 million in Fund Balance increase.

Willis assured the bonus would be for right now and would not be related to any future budget decisions.

Agreement reached on voting machine purchase

The Board of Commissioners approved the purchase of 13 new voting machines, 10 for each precinct, another for one stop voting and two for use as backup machines.

The Board of Elections recommended that the Commissioners purchase 17 machines, 14 of which would be for the precincts.

Board of Elections Chair Janna Wegner said the State Board and the Board of Elections recommended that four of the County's larger precinct be split.

Commissioner Joyce McDow suggested the Commissioners see how the new equipment works in 10 precincts before additional purchase are considered.

Much of the cost of the equipment will be covered by a State appropriation of \$150,000 as part of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). An additional \$11,000 in State funding will help cover the cost of equipment software.

All counties were required to enter into a contract agreement for equipment purchase with one of three State-approved vendors by January 1, 2006. Scotland County's contract is with Printelect, the in-state sales and support provider for Election Systems & Software.



Commissioner John Alford, right, waits while Chairman J.D. Willis tests new voting equipment.

EMS purchases new ambulance



EMS put a new ambulance in service earlier this month. The 2006 model ambulance has a 14,500-pound gross vehicle weight and replaces a 15-year-old unit.

EMS Director Roylin Hammond said by omitting a new mobile VHF radio system and some inside storage cabinetry, the agency was able to reduce the cost of the Northwestern Emergency Vehicles unit from \$96,443 to \$93,000, which had been budgeted for the purchase.

Hammond said the unit currently is using a loaner radio until a radio swap with Piedmont Communications occurs.

He added that typically the life expectancy for an ambulance is three to five years. "How long we keep it depends on how good we take care of it. We've been keeping them 12 to 15 years."

Above left, Commissioner Leon Butler tours the inside of the new ambulance while Paramedic MacTucker, above right, displays the unit at the County Annex.

County makes top 100 list for best place to farm

Scotland County ranked 93 out of 3,000 counties surveyed nationwide as one of the 100 Best Places to Farm.

Its ranking was included in the first-ever *Farm Futures* Best Places to Farm survey published in the December 2005 *N.C. Farm Bureau* magazine.

The rise of profitability in agriculture for the South, and North Carolina in particular, is attributed to the pork and poultry industries.

North Carolina scored 21 counties in the top 100 with six in the top 10 including Sampson, Duplin, Wayne, Greene, Bladen and Wilson.

The State's success on the list also had to do with how farmers went about restructuring cooperatives by creating purchasing groups to minimize cost inputs in both livestock and crops.

2006 Board of Commissioners Regular Meetings

January 9	May 1	September 11
February 6	June 5	October 2
March 13	July 10	November 6
April 3	August 7	December 4

4-H campaign effort praised

The following message was received by Scotland Cooperative Extension Director Cathy Graham and Cooperative Extension Directors throughout the State regarding the Boxes of Hope from North Carolina.

My name is Patricia Trosclair, and I am an Associate Extension Agent/4-H Agent in Assumption Parish, Louisiana. My co-worker Renee Castro, Associate County Agent/4-H Agent, and I received several hundred Boxes of Hope from 4-H members, friends and Extension staff of North Carolina to deliver to children and families displaced by the devastation and destruction of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

You responded with heart and soul to assist the Gulf State Region in our time of need, and we thank you! It was evident that the boxes were sent from the hearts of children and individuals who genuinely cared about these young people affected by these terrible storms.

The handwritten notes of inspiration, little toys, snacks, water bottles, stuffed toys, school supplies, books, games and personal care items were carefully and thoughtfully placed in these boxes to bring hope to children whose lives have changed dramatically and will undoubtedly never be the same.

You gave with your hearts, and the families living here now are touched by your graciousness.

I just wanted to take a minute to thank you for all of your hard work, and ask you to please let your 4-H members know that their efforts have been well received in South Louisiana.

It makes my heart smile to be affiliated with such a caring organization, as we all know 4-H is. Thanks again and have a wonderful holiday season.

Scotland Center closes

Scotland Center, the local office of Southeastern Regional Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services Area Program/Local Management Entity, ceased providing outpatient clinical services December 30. Supervisory and clerical staff will remain for 30 to 90 days to complete the transition and closing.

County residents who currently receive services through Scotland Center will be transferred to local private providers for mental health services as a result of State-approved Mental Health Reform legislation and decisions made by Southeastern Regional MH/DD/SAS Administration and governing board.

Those who wish to begin services will be screened and referred to appropriate private providers by a screening/triage/referral process by calling 1-800-670-6871 or 910-618-5606.

Most current clients have been referred to private providers, and all referrals will be completed by mid-January.

Psychiatry services will be arranged and provided through four private case management providers contracted by Southeastern Regional Local Management Entity.

Psychotherapy and Substance Abuse services will be provided through several local providers who are approved or endorsed by the Local Management Entity.

The Shining Star Clubhouse, psychosocial rehabilitation program, and Scotland Enterprises, an adult vocational skills program that promotes community employment, will continue to operate.

Commissioners visit two landfills



Screaming Eagle Landfill

The Commissioners toured two South Carolina landfills so they could look at active sites and ask questions about operations and regulations.

Visits were made to Oakridge Landfill in Dorchester County and Screaming Eagle Landfill in Richlands County, both of

which are owned and operated by Waste Management.

While at Oakridge, District Manager Sandra Rudy discussed how the landfill is regulated and the relationship the facility has with its neighbors.

She said the facility would notify neighbors if there was a problem or contamination or movement of gases. She added, however, that Oakridge has not experienced any problems.

The Oakridge Landfill footprint is 144 acres of a total 700-acre site. It currently accepts 1,700 tons a day from communities within a two-hour radius and makes a \$10,000 a month financial contribution to the community.

Rudy said Oakridge works closely with environmental and conservation groups. "The main emphasis is on Oakridge's community and neighbors, and educating the community is important."

Dorchester County Public Works Director Doug Tompkins said the County has not received complaints about odor or traffic.

He said the revenue the County receives as host to the landfill supports area recycle sites and salaries for some Public Works employees.

The Commissioners continued on to Screaming Eagle, the larger of the two landfills with 122 acres of landfill activity on a 900-acre site. It accepts 2,300 tons of solid waste daily.

While at Screaming Eagle, the Commissioners toured the landfill's methane gas processing operation, which is leased by Santee Power.



Sandra Rudy, far left, explains how landfills are regulated.

EMStatistics

EMS Report for November:
Responded to 379 Medical/Trauma calls
Treated 59 motor vehicle accident patients
Provided 1 medical coverage Administered 72 wellness/blood pressure checks
Sold 43 blue address signs
911 Report Highlights:
331 EMS
240 Sheriff's Department

110 Laurinburg Police Department
45 Fire Department
371 hang-up calls
80 wrong numbers
53 open line calls
716 cellular calls
Weather Observations (EMS Recordings)
Temp (high) 88 on 11/9
Temp (low) 28 on 10/19
Wind (mph) 27 on 11/22
Rainfall (inches) 1.41 on 11/29
Compiled by Tommy Hatcher

News of Note

Guidance is a phone call away

The intent of the Employee Assistance Program is to help employees live and work more productively by providing professional guidance in overcoming personal problems, especially when those problems are affecting job performance. The EAP provides free, confidential assessment, counseling and referral services in a professional setting. These services are available to employees and their family members. Simply call the toll free number, 1-888-278-4595.

Debt Setoff to increase revenue

The Board of Commissioners approved a resolution, which would allow the County to participate in the Local Government Debt Setoff Program. Resolution approval authorizes the North Carolina Department of Revenue to cooperate in identifying debtors who owe money to local governments and who qualify for refunds from the Department of Revenue. Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager Kevin Patterson said the debt setoff program allows government agencies to garnish State tax refunds for legal debts owed the County. He said the debts also would include monies owed the Landfill and EMS. He added that the debt setoff program helps improve vehicle and personal property tax collections.

Website lists Boards and Committees

A full list of boards and committees is now available on the County's website at www.scotlandcounty.org. The Board of Commissioners is responsible for appointing some, most or all of the members to the boards and committees listed. A downloadable application for those interested in being considered for board and/or committee service also is on the website. It can be completed and faxed, 277-2411, mailed or dropped off to the County Manager's office, 231 East Cronly Street. It is the intent of the Commissioners to try and reach a larger pool of loyal, dedicated citizens who wish to serve their community on a board or committee. Anyone interested in serving is encouraged to review their options on the website.

Safety training scheduled in January

Slips, trips and falls will be the subject of a safety training January 5 in the Annex conference room 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. and in the Commissioners Chamber at 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. Department Heads are required to attend and as many employees as possible are strongly encouraged to attend. The recently approved Risk Management Policy also will be reviewed. County Manager John Crumpton said, "Slips, trips and falls are the number one worker's comp injuries, incident-wise. Lifting causes the second most common injury."

Message from the Manager

When you receive this month's newsletter you will be returning to work from what I hope was a joyful holiday.

Some of you had to work during the week off. Although positions in the County are essential, some of our work is 24/7, which means some employees had to make a sacrifice so that all shifts and critical positions were covered. Thank you for your dedication to the County and our citizens during the holiday.

With the holidays behind us, we now turn to the upcoming budget season, which will kick off the with a workshop/retreat for the Commissioners in February. Shortly after the retreat, Kevin Patterson and I will send budget workbooks to all Department Heads. We will have an aggressive timeline in March to get these workbooks back from each Department.

The process will be a little bit different than in years past. We will be asking for a lot more information than usual from each Department. Once the budget requests are in, we will spend April going through each Department's budget and then present a budget to the Commissioners in May. Hopefully, the budget will be set by the first meeting in June for the Public Hearing.

The coming year will be about change. We want to change the perception of Scotland County government. We want to be a leader in the Public Sector and have other governments look to us for achievements. I challenge each of you to make a difference in our government.

The coming year will also be an election year for County government, and there will be changes. Opportunities for distractions are numerous. Staff must focus on the work at hand and leave the politics to the politicians. As staff members, it is best to bury our feelings on issues.

I encourage each of you to participate in the political process by knowing the candidates, the issues and exercising your right to vote. In your daily work, however, please keep politics out of the office and remain focused on serving the public.



John A. Crumpton

New van added to SCATS route

A 2006 Ford, 14-passenger transportation van will be put in service early next year.



First, the SCATS logo will be put on the side and a new radio will be installed.

The van cost \$25,541. The State Department of Transportation paid for 90 percent of the cost of the van while the County share was 10 percent at \$2,554.

Give a 'sign' of love for any occasion

Any time is good to buy a reflective address sign for yourself or someone you love. The signs assist EMS, law enforcement, fire departments, Health, Social Services and Inspections in locating people.

The more signs the County can get on the roadways, the easier it will become to find the people, even those who don't have one in front of their home.

The blue reflective signs are fade resistant and highly visible day or night. They feature white numbers on both sides and predrilled holes for easy posting in front of a home.

Visit EMS, 1403 West Boulevard, or call 276-1313, to order an address sign for \$10.



Post Scripts

Speedy recovery to **Rhonda Saffel**, Tax, and **Tim Reynolds** and **J.C. Dunn**, Public Buildings. ❀ **Sharon English**, Scotland County 4-H Agent, won the Bernadette Watts Professional Improvement Scholarship. The \$500 scholarship provides financial incentive and assistance for ESP members wishing to increase their professional competencies.

Sharon will use the award to pursue her Masters Degree. ❀ **Hazel McPhatter**, 4-H Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) Program Assistant, recently received the Outstanding Performance Award at the State EFNEP Conference.



Scotland Senior Center and the local AARP hosted a pre-holiday event for more than 70 seniors, who enjoyed holiday refreshments and entertainment

❀ Commissioners **J.D. Willis** and **Betty Blue Gholston** were elected by acclamation Chairman and Vice Chair, respectively of the Board of Commissioners for 2006. ❀ Best wishes to **Bonnie Norton**, Public Buildings, and **Hiram Jones**, Inspection, on their retirement. ❀ In Health Department news: Welcome back to **Donna Deese**, **Melinda Salley** and **Betty Smith**. Congratulations to **Lisa Tew** for being selected November Employee of the Month and to **Annie Malloy** for being selected December Employee of the Month. **Danny Sprouse** was named the Food and Lodging and Animal Control Program Coordinator for the Environmental Health Section, and **Brian Lowry** was named the On-Site and Well Program Coordinator for Environmental Health. The agency will begin recruiting for the vacant Environmental Health Specialist Position. Best wishes to **Andy Kurtzman** on his appointment as Executive Director of the Scotland County Chapter of the American Red Cross effective January 3, 2006. Staff enjoyed a delicious covered dish lunch December 16 in celebration of Christmas. The agency also held its annual Christmas Door Decorating Contest. **Fiscal Management Department** won 1st place, 2nd place went to **Michelle Skipper** and 3rd place to **Kim McLamb**. **Tommy Hatcher** is EMS October Employee of the Month, compliments of Mac Tucker.



DSS decked its halls, offices and doors for the holidays. In this hall, gifts hang from the ceiling and dimmed lights create a warm atmosphere.

❀ **Andy Kurtzman** on his appointment as Executive Director of the Scotland County Chapter of the American Red Cross effective January 3, 2006. Staff enjoyed a delicious covered dish lunch December 16 in celebration of Christmas. The agency also held its annual Christmas Door Decorating Contest. **Fiscal Management Department** won 1st place, 2nd place went to **Michelle Skipper** and 3rd place to **Kim McLamb**. **Tommy Hatcher** is EMS October Employee of the Month, compliments of Mac Tucker.

Condolences to Commissioner **Betty Blue Gholston** on the death of her mother and to **Phyllis Clark**, DSS, on the death of her father.

DSS generates jobs, revenue

An industry or business that brings jobs and revenue to the community is always good news. Few people realize the Department of Social Services does that, too.

Grocers, retail establishments, medical providers, daycare centers and landlords are among the many area services that benefit from Social Services. In 2005, every dollar budgeted for Social Services brought \$12.49 back to the community.

Grocers and other businesses authorized to accept Food Stamps took in \$7.8 million in 2005.

DSS Director Jan Elliott said daycare is about jobs. DSS made payments to 80 daycare providers in the community. Ms. Elliott said the more than \$1.9 million paid to the providers helped parents continue to work. In Scotland County 61 percent of families with children under the age of five have both parents working.

An estimated \$35 million went to medical providers in Medicaid payments including Scotland Memorial Hospital, area physicians, drug stores and nursing homes. "Pull that out of Scotland County and there would be significant jobs lost," Elliott said.

\$735,000 is returned to the General Fund through Medicaid payments to the Health Department, EMS, SCATS and DSS itself.

Additionally, Elliott said, DSS staff generates \$5.5 million in child support from absent parents. She said the absent parents don't necessarily live in Scotland County, and child support dollars bring revenue into the County. In 2005, DSS established 321 new support orders, and 307 children now have a legal father.

Elliott said DSS employs 93 people and more importantly creates numerous other jobs through the \$68 million that comes into the community as a result of work done by DSS staff.

"We're really about jobs, and we want to point that out," Elliott stressed. "We bring jobs here and we generate jobs as a result of the money brought back to the community."

the Birthday list for January

1 Clarice Holmes (Elections); 3 Debra Webb (DSS) and Tiffanee Conrad (Cooperative Extension); 4 Angelita Locklear (DSS); 6 Deborah Tardif (DSS) and Annette Gooselin (Jail); 7 Mike Clark (EMS), Wiley Luther (Sheriff) and Larry Locklear (Public Buildings); 8 Deanna Carlyle (EMS); 11 Sandy Lockey (EMS) and Stacy Shannon (Transportation); 14 Donna Chavis (EMS); 16 Doug Yongue, Jr. (Health Board); 17 Herman Gillis (E-911 Wire); 18 David Bridgeman (Health Board) and Jannett Lamourt (Health); 20 Paul Lemmond (Sheriff); 21 Donna Deese (Health); 22 Karen Chavis (DSS); 23 Beth Gibson (Jail); 25 Dr. Olivia Guzman (Health Board) and Jane Murray (Health); 26 Donny Monroe (Sheriff); 29 James Ellerbe (Public Works); 30 Willette Jones (DSS); 31 Nicole Yarborough (DSS).

Introductions & transitions

Welcome to those individuals who joined Scotland County departments since September 16, 2005: **Belinda James**, **Charles Brown**, **Gwendolyn McDuffie**, **Judy Culp**, **Lori Cole**, **Melinda McKoy**, **Roxanne Douglas**, **Stephanie Palmer** and **Syvia Reed**, DSS, and **Karen Leviner**, part-time with DSS; **Amanda Patterson**, Jail; **Glen Lockey**, Public Works; **Mary Gentry**, part-time with EMS and **Stacy Shannon**, part-time with Transportation. Payroll Technician **Nancy Bostick** assumes additional duties as Deputy Finance Officer.