

Scotland County Monthly



FEBRUARY 2007

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Landfill application moves forward

The Board of Commissioners in a 4 to 1 vote accepted a letter of application from Waste Management for a preliminary franchise to develop a regional landfill on a site in the northwest part of the County.

Chairman J. D. Willis and Commissioners John Alford, Leon Butler and Guy McCook voted to approve the application while Vice Chair Betty Blue Gholston voted against the request. Commissioners Joyce McDow and Clarence McPhatter were not present.

Vice Chair Gholston said she was disappointed that the Commissioners chose to move forward with the landfill project.

Chairman Willis said Dr. G.N. Richardson, environmental engineer, recently reported that the Scotland County site was a good one and the best site in the State for a landfill.

There will be two public hearings on the preliminary franchise at the April 2 Board of Commissioners meeting and, if necessary, at the May 7 meeting.

Elections to release series of information pamphlets

The Elections staff will soon release the first in a series of pamphlets designed to provide information about the elections process and to encourage citizens to register to vote.

Elections Director Dell Parker said citizens frequently visit the office asking questions about registration, the voting process and precinct locations, in particular.

The first pamphlet, pictured left, lists the precincts and explains the voting process at precincts, buffers and electioneering.

Future pamphlet topics include voter registration and qualifications, change of address notification, provisional and absentee voting, precinct election officials voting guide, information for individuals with misdemeanors or felony

records and a guide for prospective candidates.

Parker said the pamphlets are easy to read and to understand. "Some people prefer the visual, and they can see and read this information. We just want people to know about their right to vote."

Developed by Parker and Elections Assistant Jerry Johnson, the pamphlets will be distributed to the Library, DMV, Social Services and Employment Security Commission. They also will be available at www.scotlandcounty.org.

Annual walking program begins

With the approach of spring, Healthy Carolinians will encourage employees to get into step and enjoy the benefits of a walking program.

Healthy Carolinians, which promotes physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices, will sponsor its annual Great Ex-STEP-tations Step into Spring Walk April 1 to 28. The four-week-long program will conclude April 28, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., with a community walk at a location that will be announced at a later date.

Registrants will receive a walking log, pedometer and information on how to start a walking program. Call Kathie Cox at 277-2440, ext. 478 for more information.

Black History a classroom discussion



Commissioner Joyce McDow gave kindergarten and first grade classes at Washington Park Primary a lesson in Black History February 8. McDow brought Haitian masks and carvings and wore African dress. She discussed famous Black Americans such as Martin Luther King and Mary McLeod Bethune.

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Daylight Savings

Spring forward March 11



Message from the Manager

The Board of Commissioners set two basic goals for the FY 2007-2008 budget as a result of the February 7 planning retreat.

Goals include lowering the tax rate by 2 to 5 cents and once again addressing pay issues with County employees.

The two goals will be difficult to achieve together. The County will have to decrease revenue in next year's budget while increasing its single biggest expenditure — payroll expenses. This will be a great challenge, but the Commissioners are in position to meet this challenge.

Everyone has done a great job in reducing expenditures over the last four years. By reducing operational expenditures other than payroll, the reoccurring savings created will allow the County to reduce the tax rate and keep it down for a couple of years.

However, to achieve pay raises for next year the County will once again have to hold the line on operational expenses or even reduce operational expenditures and headcount to achieve the goal.

By now, each Department Head will have received the budget packet. I encourage everyone to begin analyzing their year to date expenditures and identify areas where spending can be reduced. This will be the only way to achieve the two budget goals for next year.

The Courthouse renovation project continues to move forward. The good news is the architect/engineer has determined that the roof can be easily repaired. The bad news is the side walls of the building are collecting moisture that was not anticipated.

To stop this moisture from coming into the building much work will most likely have to be done. More will be known in the next couple of weeks as additional tests are conducted on the building.

Please keep safety at the top of your priority list. The past year was very good for claims. We can't allow the return of complacency to the work place. Make sure you are safe every minute of every day. Just as importantly, make sure the people you work with are safe as well.

EMS staff get new uniforms

EMS staff have transitioned to a traditional uniform from the knit shirts and black pants combination.

Field paramedics will wear tan shirts and black pants while the shift supervisors will wear white shirts with black pants.

EMS Director Roylin Hammond said, "The staff was concerned that the knit shirts they had been using for the last 12 years were hot and uncomfortable in summer weather."



new ones allow EMT-P certification patches to be sewn on."

All the shirts are short sleeve. Turtlenecks can be worn under them in cooler weather.

In addition, new black jackets replace blue jackets purchased in 1996. The new jackets feature a white reflective strip and EMS in large reflective letters on the back.

"This additional element on the jacket adds to the safety of the paramedic by making them more visible at night," Hammond said.



John A. Crumpton

SCOTLAND COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

Tee Ball, Softball, Baseball Registrations will be held March 12 to 17 for boys 5-12 and girls 5-15. There is a \$10 fee per participant.

Registration locations are **Scotland Place**, Turnpike Road, Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; **Laurel Hill Community Center**, Tuesday, March 13, 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.; **Gibson Gym**, Wednesday, March 14, 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.; and **Wagram Murray Park**, Thursday, March 15, 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Health Tip

Corn syrup — it's absolutely everywhere. It may be making you fat.

Here's why: High-fructose corn syrup (HFCS), used to sweeten everything from the obvious (soft drinks) to the obscure (ketchup, salad dressing, bread), can trip up digestive system hormones that control hunger and appetite.

The end result: Your brain misses out on hormone messages that signal a full stomach. Start reading labels and see if you can cut back on the 63 pounds of HFCS most people consume each year.

Source: RealAge.com.

Covington Street staff celebrate with open house



City Manager Craig Honeycutt, Commissioner Joyce McDow, County Manager John Crumpton, Commissioner Guy McCook and retired Superior Court Judge B. Craig Ellis attend an open house at 507 West Covington Street and tour the facility. County administration, finance, soil conservation, mapping, inspections, engineer and planning and zoning relocated to the refurbished Covington Street building last month from the Annex on Cronly Street. Offices in an overcrowded Courthouse will relocate to the the Annex.

Initiatives advocate for older adults

by Shannon Newton, Parks and Recreation

Medication referral and information assistance, creation of an expanded resource guide and improved communications are the three goals for 2007 set by the Aging Advisory Council.

The Council plans to provide older adults with referrals on Medicare's Prescription Drug Insurance Plan, a benefit to all adults on Medicare. There is a problem with the Plan, which is known as the "GAP," where there is no financial assistance with the cost of medicines. Another problem is fulfilling prescription needs for older adults who have not yet reached the eligible age for prescription drug insurance through Medicare.

Secondly, the Council will try to promote local businesses that offer "handyman" services through its already existing resource guide *Number, Please!*. The resource brochure is available at Scotland Place and on-line at www.scotlandcounty.org/Resources.pdf. *Number, Please!* features contact numbers for agencies that offer information and assistance for older adults and their caregivers.

There are services and opportunities that older adults may not know about. So the Council's third goal is to find ways that agencies can better communicate with the general public.

The Aging Advisory Council advocates, communicates, educates and creates respect for adults 55 and older. The Council is a 25-member board with 60 percent of its members age 60 and older and the remaining members representing agencies that serve the older adult population. The agencies represented are Parks and Recreation, Social Services, Public Health, Hospice, Cooperative Extension, Library, Transportation and Scotland Memorial Hospital.

Each year, the Council reviews Aging Funds received from the Division of Aging and Adult Services. In the 2006-07 fiscal year, this amount was \$368,113. After careful review and analysis, the Council recommends to the Area Agency on Aging and the Scotland County Board of Commissioners how these funds should be allocated.

Currently, funds are used for Adult Day Health, Adult Day Care, Transportation, In-Home Aide Level 1, 2 and 3, Senior Center Operations, Home Delivered Meals and Congregate Meals.

Introductions & transitions

Welcome to those individuals who joined Scotland County departments since December 16, 2006: **Alisia Freeman**, Health; **Angela Hunt**, Sheriff; **Garrett Dial**, part-time with EMS and **Howard Fields**, part-time with Transportation.

EMS expects busier years ahead

Scotland County EMS experienced an 11 percent increase in call volume for 2006. In 2005, for instance, there were 4,473 requests for an ambulance compared to 4,984 ambulance requests in 2006.

"We normally experience an increase in demand for service, but it is usually a single digit percent increase," said EMS Director Roylin Hammond. "This is an unusually high increase in demand."

He added, "In looking at our individual statistics, EMS responded to an increased number of traffic accidents, facility transfers, unconscious patients, general illness and respiratory problems than in the previous year."

"With EMS serving an aging population in Scotland County, we expect these trends to continue in future years," Hammond said.

The number of cellular calls to EMS increased, too, with 13,768 cellular calls in 2006 compared to 10,019 in 2005.

The number of cellular calls to EMS were 4,190 in the year 2000, 6,455 in 2001, 7,194 in 2002, 7,752 in 2003 and 8,399 in 2004.

Below is a breakdown of calls made to EMS in 2005 compared to 2006.

| Reason For Call | 2005 | 2006 | Total |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Hang ups | 4904 | 7516 | 12,420 |
| Scotland County EMS | 4032 | 4606 | 8,638 |
| Scotland County Sheriff's Department | 3561 | 3177 | 6,738 |
| Wrong Number | 1396 | 1320 | 2,716 |
| Laurinburg Police Department | 1476 | 2126 | 3,602 |
| Open Line | 757 | 732 | 1,489 |
| Information | 883 | 737 | 1,620 |
| Laurinburg Fire Department | 610 | 658 | 1,268 |
| Test calls | 462 | 812 | 1,274 |
| Hoke County Communications | 219 | 317 | 536 |
| Children on phone | 278 | 344 | 622 |
| N.C. Highway Patrol | 187 | 341 | 528 |
| Robeson County Communications | 243 | 275 | 518 |
| EMS unit to SMH-ER | 92 | 107 | 199 |
| Other (prank calls, static on line) | 204 | 141 | 345 |
| Marlboro County Communications | 45 | 147 | 192 |
| Richmond County Communications | 42 | 54 | 96 |
| Maxton Police Department | 26 | 37 | 63 |
| Animal Control | 13 | 32 | 45 |
| Moore County Communications | 13 | 21 | 34 |
| Poison Control | 12 | 15 | 27 |
| Total | 19,455 | 23,515 | 42,970 |

the Birthday list for March

1 Bud McAllister (Inspections) and Juliet McMillan (DSS); 2 Mac Brown (Sheriff); 4 Catherine Stubbs (Tax); 5 Judy O'Brien (Health); 6 Gaylord Hunt (General Services); 7 Ray Moody (Parks and Recreation) and Felisa McKeithan (Transportation); 9 Hattie McCallum (Health); 12 June Hunt (EMS); 13 Phyllis Clark and Alice Morgan (DSS); 14 Rachel Peguese (Health) and Mary Gentry (EMS); 16 Annie Malloy (Health) and Sandra Kirk (DSS); 17 Dixie Whelpley (Revaluation); 20 Gracie Rettig (Transportation); 22 Kitty Johnson (Health); 24 Mary Helen Norton (Tax), Kemp Roper (Public Buildings), Rhonda Cox and Elizabeth Shutt (DSS) and Linda Jones (Transportation); 25 Ricky Locklear (Public Buildings); 28 Rodney Tucker (Sheriff); 31 Donna McQueen (Health).

The flex benefit card guide

Employees enrolled in the medical/daycare flex benefit program can use a debit card to simplify the process of paying for eligible expenses under pre-tax benefit accounts.

Using the *mbi* Benefits Card reduces the burden of having to pay money out-of-pocket, completing a claim form and waiting for a reimbursement.

The frequently asked questions will assist employees as they begin to use the debit card.

Q. What is the *mbi* Benefits Card?

A. The *mbi* Benefits Card allows you to access your Flexible Spending Account (FSA) without submitting a claim for reimbursement. Use the *mbi* Benefits Card to pay for eligible expenses at doctor's offices, pharmacies, vision care and dental providers and daycare facilities if your provider accepts credit cards. The card can be used wherever MasterCard is accepted.

Q. How can I use the *mbi* Benefits Card?

A. The *mbi* Benefits Card can be used to pay for eligible goods and services including prescription drug co-pays or deductibles under your health, dental and vision plans.

Q. How does the card work?

A. Once the cardholder swipes the card at an eligible merchant location, the transaction is screened to determine whether there are sufficient funds credited to your FSA account. Only if there is enough money credited to the account is the transaction approved. At this point the merchant is paid, and the amount is debited from the employee's FSA account.

Q. Is there a list of eligible merchants/providers that accept the card?

A. No, but most health care or dependent care-related providers/merchants that accept MasterCard will accept your card.

Q. Once I use the card, do I have to use it all of the time?

A. No. You may choose to use the card for pharmacy co-payments and file all other claims with Interactive Medical Systems (IMS).

Q. Do I need need a PIN to use the card?

A. No. When using the card at self-service merchant terminals, select the "credit" option.

Q. What do I do if I lose the card or the card is stolen?

A. Contact Interactive Medical Systems immediately at 919-877-9933. IMS will deactivate the lost/stolen card and issue a replacement card at no charge.

Q. What if my card is rejected at point of sale/service or my provider/merchant does not accept MasterCard?

A. Pay for the charge, keep your itemized receipts and submit a claim reimbursement request to IMS.

Q. If IMS believes I used the card for an ineligible expense, what steps are taken?

A. If you do not respond to IMS requests for documentation or cannot provide adequate documentation of the expense, your card will be deactivated. The ineligible payment will be deducted from your future FSA claim reimbursement requests until your account is settled. You may also be asked to submit the ineligible reimbursement back to your employer via check or payroll deduction.

Q. Can I use the card to pay the entire bill at the dentist's or doctor's office?

A. No. Your health, dental or vision provider must bill your insurance carrier for their portion of the fee first. After your health, dental or vision plan has paid, you may use your *mbi* Benefits Card to pay the balance. Select the MasterCard option and provide the card number and expiration date as you would with your personal credit card.

Q. If I use the card must I still keep my receipts?

A. Yes. A transaction might require additional review. You will be asked to submit documentation to IMS.

Q. How can I review my *mbi* Benefits Card transactions?

A. Review your card transactions at www.mbicard.com.



Use the flex benefit card to pay for eligible goods and services.

EMStatistics

EMS Report for January:
Responded to 408 Medical/Trauma calls

Treated 68 motor vehicle accident patients

Administered 106 wellness/blood pressure checks

Sold 32 blue address signs

911 Report Highlights:

392 EMS

252 Sheriff's Department

201 Laurinburg Police Department

51 Fire Department

644 hang-up calls

92 wrong numbers

42 open line calls

1,135 cellular calls

1,878 total calls to 911

Top five complaints for EMS Response

67 breathing problems

56 sick person (specific diagnosis)

57 traffic accidents

38 transfer/interfacility/palliative care

37 chest pain

Weather Observations

(EMS Recordings)

Temp (high) 74 on 1/5

Temp (low) 23 on 1/29

Wind (mph) 22 on 1/6,15,28

Rainfall (inches) .44 on 1/22

Compiled by Tommy Hatcher

This project put the eggs first

An embryology project conducted at three schools resulted in the successful hatching of 173 chicks.

The three-week project took place in 11 classes at Laurel Hill Primary, two at Covington Street and one at IE Johnson with 15 eggs per class. The hatching period was February 12 to 16.

Students turned the eggs three times a day, kept incubators filled with water and monitored incubator temperature. The eggs were candled to chart the growth of the chicks.

The 4-H-sponsored Embryology Program gives students a hands-on opportunity to develop an understanding of the life cycle of an animal. The program will be offered again March 6.



Laura Hunt's Laurel Hill kindergarten class had a 100 percent hatch rate.