

# Scotland County

## Monthly



JANUARY 2006

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

## FCC names MedImpact to provide pharmacy benefits

Although FirstCarolinaCare (FCC) changed its pharmacy benefit manager from Medco to MedImpact, effective January 1, much of the program benefits remain the same.

The addition of Walgreens to the MedImpact retail pharmacy network is a new feature that was not in the Medco network. Choice 90 is an option included in MedImpact coverage, which allows clients to obtain a 90-day supply of maintenance medications from selected pharmacies. Locally, Wal Mart is approved to fill Choice 90 prescriptions.

Those who currently use the Medco mail order option for maintenance medications must now use MedImpact mail order documents along with a new prescription from your provider. This will allow employees to establish their mail order drug(s) with Walgreens, MedImpact's designated mail order vendor.

The FCC formulary still features three tiers with the same benefit levels, although a few drugs may change from one tier to another. For instance, Prilosec® and Claritin OTC® (over-the-counter) drugs are now covered at tier 1 level with a valid prescription.

FCC made every attempt to keep the formulary and the prior authorization process with MedImpact as similar as possible to the one used by Medco. There may be some differences, though, where a drug may change from tier 2 to tier 3 or from tier 3 to tier 2. If this occurs, discuss alternatives with your physician to determine if there are lower cost options.

*see MedImpact, page 4*

## Hints on interpreting W-2s

Interpreting the W-2 Wage and Tax Statement can be a challenge. Since the W-2 accompanies the January paycheck, listed below are some items to keep in mind.

Box #1 of the W-2, "Wages, tips and other compensation," will **not** match the gross earnings figure found on your monthly paycheck. That's because the figure in box #1 of the W-2 includes only the amount earned that is subject to federal and state tax withholdings.

In other words, the federal taxable wages found in Box #1 equals the gross amount minus travel, daycare and medical reimbursements, dental, health, retirement and 401K pre-tax deductions. Boxes #3 (Social security wages) and #5 (Medicare wages and tips) show a figure that is different from the gross earnings and the federal taxable wages.

Social Security, FICA and Medicare are paid on that figure, which is the gross earnings minus travel, dental, health and daycare and medical reimbursements.

## Hayes helps seniors understand new Medicare prescription plan

U.S. Congressman Robin Hayes spent an afternoon with senior citizens to answer questions and help educate them on the new Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage options.

Representatives from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Social Security Administration in Lumberton accompanied Hayes.

About a dozen counselors versed in the new plan were available to assist seniors in enrollment in a Prescription Plan that would best fit their individual medication and health needs.

In North Carolina there are 16 approved companies that will offer a total 38 Prescription Drug Plans (PDP). Ten of the plans will offer national coverage for beneficiaries who have residences in more than one state.

Some plans will be sold as stand-alone insurance products while others will be offered through Medicare Advantage options such as HMOs, PPOs and Private-Fee-For-Service plans.

All people with Medicare are eligible to enroll in a PDP regardless of income or assets. The

monthly premium for PDPs in North Carolina range from \$20 to \$68.

Postponing enrollment after the May 16, 2006, deadline may result in a one percent per month penalty for every month enrollment is delayed.

Hayes told the seniors who filled Scotland Place that the new plan offers a fabulous benefit, and it was hoped any confusion about the PDP would be resolved.

"There's going to be confusion with anything that's this comprehensive," Hayes explained. "When Medicare started in 1965 there was tremendous confusion," he recalled.

He said enrolling in the plan would represent a savings as it would help keep the cost of medication and health care down.

Dr. Carla Jones, a CMS expert, said, "This is not a one-size-fits-all plan. You must make a determination based on your individual prescriptions and health needs."



**Rep. Robin Hayes circulates with a microphone during a question and answer session at Scotland Place Senior Center.**

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**Enrollment assistance is available locally at 277-2585 or by calling 1-800-443-9354 or on the Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) website at [www.ncshiip.com](http://www.ncshiip.com).**

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## Message from the Manager

As you are aware, the Commissioners voted to change health care providers this fiscal year in an effort to save money. The change from Blue Cross Blue Shield to FirstCarolinaCare saved the County \$165,000. Although we received a good rate once, doing so every year is not going to happen in the health care market.

Insurance companies get “wise” to groups that “shop” too much. A group that goes out to bid every year isn’t taken very seriously. Another reason getting a better rate each year won’t happen is because health care premiums are driven by the cost of claims.

A group such as ours cannot escape its claims history. Even though we are fully insured versus being self-insured, the premiums we pay are weighted heavily towards claims costs.

The County has done everything possible to reduce claims costs. It restructured its coverage to include co-pays and a high deductible. It encouraged employees to use urgent care instead of the emergency room, which is a cost-cutting measure. Employees also were encouraged to take generic drugs when available.

The County’s recent claims reports showed that 98.5 percent of the time our employees are taking generic drugs. This is an incredible statistic and well ahead of the norm.

Even with these efforts, our claims cost continue to rise. In the first six months of this year, our claims cost ratio was 113 percent. This means our claims/administrative costs exceeded our paid premiums by 13 percent.

Insurance companies are in the business to make money. When they have a group like ours that costs them money, we can only figure our premiums will increase more than the norm next year.

Each of us has a responsibility to other County employees to do what we can to reduce our claims cost. 86 percent of our claims in the first six months were employee-driven and not driven by spouse and/or dependent coverage, which is remarkably surprising since claims trends are usually driven by spouse/dependent coverage.

To reduce costs we have to alter employee behaviors for the better and get everyone healthier. This means changing diets, exercising and for those who smoke or drink heavily — cutting back or eliminating the habit.

Many believe the only way to save money is to stop going to the doctor. Actually, the opposite is true. The high incident rate of diabetes, obesity, hypertension, renal failure, high blood pressure and high cholesterol within our ranks are all manageable with regular doctor visits. Regular doctor visits help reduce the number of expensive trips to the hospital. Inpatient/hospital expenses are where the majority of the County’s claims occur.

You have the ability to take control of the cost of health care. Take your health seriously and do all that is necessary to live a healthier life.

Use our health care provider FirstCarolinaCare as a resource to achieve a better and healthier lifestyle. FCC provides disease management specialists who can help you, and the County pays for this service.

If you have any suggestions on how we all can get healthier, please forward them to me or Susan Butler.



**John A. Crumpton**

## Prevention and control helps eliminate slips, trips and falls

One New Year’s resolution for County Manager John Crumpton is to raise greater awareness of safety issues in the workplace and in the home.

That’s why Crumpton arranged a Slips, Trips and Falls workshop January 5 attended by most employees. It is the first in a series of workshops, which will focus on accident prevention and control.

“In Worker’s Comp, the number of incidents weigh more against you than the dollar amount,” Crumpton explained. “It is believed that the higher the frequency of the incidents, the better the odds the big one is just around the corner.”

Crumpton added that by controlling risks among County employees, dollars also are saved.

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**Scotland County employee claims over the past 14 months ranged from \$500 to nearly \$90,000 as a result of the following accidents:**

**sitting on a broken chair  
stepping in a hole  
falling off a fence  
tripping while carrying a chair  
tripping over a cord**

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“One incident has a terrible toll on everyone involved,” he said. “I believe we can eliminate accidents by creating awareness among our employees.”

Crumpton said by developing appropriate risk management procedures, it would help ensure that nothing happens twice.

Guest speaker Charlie Harris, a risk control consultant, provided national statistics on various accidents that correlate closely with statewide statistics. Number one is sprains and strains from over exertion at 30 percent, followed by slips trips and falls at 28 percent and motor vehicle accidents at 20 percent.

Harris quizzed employees on photos of stairwells, building entrances, ladder placement, parking lots, recycling areas and office space to see if problem areas could be detected.

“If you see a problem in your area, report it and see what you can do to help solve it,” Harris advised.

Crumpton reminded employees, “It doesn’t have to be a Worker’s Comp issue only if it occurs on our property. It can occur on other people’s property, too, while you’re on the job.”

He added, “We have to make things as safe as we can, and we must take it seriously. When we get up in the morning, we have to think safety first.”

## Landfills a topic of discussion

**Ed Mussler, North Carolina Branch Head for Solid Waste Permitting, discussed steps taken to permit a landfill, which include the site study, permit to construct and permit to operate.**

**Mussler’s information session was hosted by the Commissioners so the governing board and interested citizens could gather more information about landfills in general and any safety issues associated with landfill projects.**



## Photo search for former Chairmen continues



**Sydney Smith**  
1958-1965



**Archie Bunch**  
1966-1968



**Turner McKenzie**  
1968-1973



**James Gibson**  
1980-1985



**John W. Calhoun**  
1985-1989

**Above are some photos received.**

A search is underway for photographs of 23 individuals who served as Chairmen of the Board of Commissioners since the County incorporated in 1899.

The photographs will be framed and hung in the Commissioners Chamber.

County employees are being asked to review the list and contact Ann Kurtzman with any information which might lead to securing more photographs.

Kurtzman can be reached at 277-3191 or by email at [akurtzman@scotlandcounty.org](mailto:akurtzman@scotlandcounty.org).

Only a handful of images have been gathered so far while others are expected in soon. The former Chairmen and their photo status are listed below:

*J.D. Willis – 1992-1998/2004-*

**(photo expected soon)**

*David L. Burns – 2000-2004*

**(photo in)**

*Nancy J. Shelley – 1998-2000*

**(photo expected soon)**

*James S. Mitchener, Jr. – 1989-1992*

**(photo expected soon)**

*John W. Calhoun – 1985-1989*

**(photo in)**

*James A. Gibson – 1980-1985*

**(photo in, quality poor)**

*Albert R. McMillan, Jr. – 1974-1975/1976-1980*

*Dr. Thomas G. Gibson, Jr. – 1975-1976*

**(photo expected soon)**

*Jesse Snead – 1973-1974*

**(photo in, quality poor)**

*Turner K. McKenzie – 1968-1973*

**(photo in)**

*Archie W. Bunch – 1966-1968*

**(photo in)**

*R.F. McCoy – 1965-1966*

**(photo in, quality poor)**

*Sidney D. Smith – 1958-1965*

**(photo in)**

*E.P. Jones – 1945-1958*

**(photo in, quality poor)**

*W.N. McKenzie, Jr. – 1942-1945*

*H.F. Monroe – 1938-1942*

*Dr. J.M. Gardner – 1933-1938*

*Angus Blue – 1924-1933*

*William G. Buie – 1920-1924/1908-1912*

*D.C. McNeill – 1912-1920*

*William Franklin Wright — 1906-1908*

*John A. McKay — 1902-1906*

*F.B. Gibson — 1900-1902*

## Post Scripts

DSS celebrated three marriages.

Congratulations to **Jan-Marie Fesmire**,

on her January 1, 2006 marriage to Jack Patterson

Mathews, to **Barbara McLean**

on her September 17, 2005 marriage to Arthur

Ledbetter and to **Judy Culp** on her December

2, 2005 marriage to Daniel Dubois.

**Phyllis Clark** and her husband Alan

celebrated the December 10 graduation of

their son, Jason Alan Clark, from UNC-Pembroke.

Lastly, the entire **DSS staff** thanks the

**Board of Commissioners** for the bonus and extra days off at

Christmas. ☘ Congratulations to **Hyder Massey**, Public Buildings,

who was recognized as Volunteer of the Year by the Chamber of Commerce. ☘ In Health Department news: Congratulations to **Lisa Tew** on the January 8 birth of granddaughter Cayden Danielle House to Chastity Tew and Clifton House. BestWishes to **Michelle Taylor-Skipper** FNP. Speedy recovery to **Frances Moody**. Welcome to **Dr. Lynn Hernandez**, Anson County Health Department, who will assist the agency one day a week in the prenatal clinic until a Nurse Practitioner or Physician's Assistant is hired. Welcome new Board of Health members **Commissioner Leon Butler, Dr. Joey Harris** and **William Matthews**. Congratulations to Chloe Lail, daughter of **Winnie Robinson**, on her marriage December 17 to Jason Cook. ☘ At EMS, **Donte Roland** was December Employee of the month, sponsored by Mac Tucker. Selected 2005 Co-Employees of the Year were **Mac Tucker** and **Sandy Lockey**. Selection was made by a vote among EMS employee's.

Condolences to **Annie Freeman**, Cooperative Extension, on the death of her father and to **Mac Tucker**, EMS, on the death of his mother.

### the Birthday list for February

**1** Betty Blue Gholston (Commissioner) and Kristin Owens (EMS); **2** Katherine Mohn (Jail); **3** Lisa Tew (Health), Woodrow Walters (Sheriff) and Lindsey Stone (Jail); **5** Randy Dover (Jail); **6** Debra Holcomb (Register of Deeds); **8** Al Blades (Parks and Recreation); **10** Namangolwa Luhanga (DSS); **12** Bobby Freeman (Sheriff), Joyce McDow (Commissioner) and Matthew Locklear (EMS); **13** Karlene Quick (DSS); **14** Yvonne Deberry (DSS); **16** Patricia Brown (Register of Deeds); **17** Joe Knott (DSS); **18** Darren Floyd (EMS) and Eddie Smith (Sheriff); **19** Sandra Skamperle (DSS); **20** Teresa Jacobs (DSS), Glen Lockey (Public Works) and Mike Edge (EMS); **22** Amy Inniss (DSS); **24** Ann Kurtzman (Administration); **25** Frances Moody (Health) and Jim Blackwell (Public Works); **26** Robin Quick (Health); **27** Shirley Howell (Sheriff).



**Public Buildings Supervisor Hyder Massey presents Bonnie Norton with a plaque of appreciation during a farewell reception in her honor. Norton retired after 17 years of service to the County.**

## EMStatistics

**EMS Report for December:**  
**Responded to** 381 Medical/  
Trauma calls  
**Treated** 31 motor vehicle  
accident patients  
**Administered** 70 wellness/  
blood pressure checks  
**Sold** 37 blue address signs

**911 Report Highlights:**  
**346** EMS  
**273** Sheriff's Department  
**120** Laurinburg Police  
Department

**51** Fire Department  
**472** hang-up calls  
**80** wrong numbers  
**87** open line calls  
**859** cellular calls

### Weather Observations (EMS Recordings)

**Temp (high)** 73 on 12/4  
**Temp (low)** 22 on 12/23  
**Wind (mph)** 22 on 12/4  
**Rainfall (inches)** 1.13 on  
12/15

**Compiled by Tommy Hatcher**

## MedImpact drug plan named

*continued from page 1*

New ID cards with the MedImpact information for your pharmacy were issued earlier this month along with Walgreens prescription mail order forms.

Any claim submitted by your pharmacy to Medco will be denied with a message asking the pharmacy to resubmit the claim to MedImpact.

If you have questions, call toll-free at 800-574-8556 or locally 910-715-8100 or visit [www.medimpact.com](http://www.medimpact.com) after January 1. A printed version of its revised formulary will be distributed soon.

### Register online with Medimpact

- ✓ Go to <http://www.firstcarolinacare.com/>
- ✓ Click "members" and then "accept" for privacy agreement if you have not already done so
- ✓ Click "pharmacy"
- ✓ Click "MedImpact"
- ✓ Click "Register Now"
- ✓ Complete fields (your member number is your ID number), and leave the last two fields blank.
- ✓ Click "next"
- ✓ Acknowledge terms and conditions
- ✓ Click "next"
- ✓ Type username and password and confirm password
- ✓ View contact information below
- ✓ Click "submit" to complete the registration

## Historic properties seeks help

The Historic Properties Commission, a non-profit organization, continues to seek community-spirited volunteers for a variety of responsibilities.

Types of opportunities available include volunteers with handyman skills, host/hostess for the John Blue House and grounds, bookstore clerk, volunteers to clean buildings and cabins, adult volunteers who have an interest in the operation of the cotton gin and Cotton Blossom Train and volunteers to organize, tag and document donated antique farm equipment.

To volunteer for the John Blue House and grounds, contact Rebecca Blue, 276-3761; for the Museum of Scotland County, contact John Stewart, 277-6875 or Jim Blue, 276-3761; for Rebound Book Exchange, contact Sara Stewart, 276-7238.

## Change in diet, exercise recommended for employees

A change in diet regimen, establishing a regular exercise program and participating in smoking cessation classes are recommendations to County employees made by FirstCarolinaCare.

**Health Tip:** *Nothing quells the appetite like water, lots and lots of water. Start out with two quart bottles in the morning and carry one with you to work or wherever you go*

The recommendations were made as the result of an August 2005 Health Fair in which 138 employees participated and a review of 302 medical questionnaires completed by employees during the June 2005 enrollment period.

The questionnaires gave employees an opportunity to share pertinent medical and medications information with FCC medical staff.

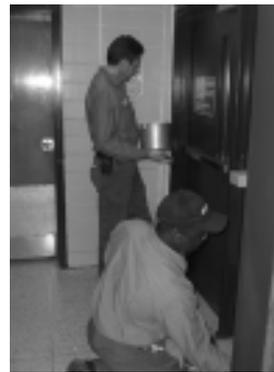
Of the 138 Health Fair participants, elevated blood pressure readings (greater than 120/70) were found in 77, or 55.7% of employees.

Elevated cholesterol levels among 56, or 40.5% of the 138 participants, and elevated triglycerides among 51, or 36.9% of participants, also was found.

Triglyceride, cholesterol and glucose levels and blood pressure checks were conducted during the August 2005 Health Fair.

Of the 302 questionnaire respondents, 94 participants, or 31.1%, indicated a history of hypertension while 71 participants, or 23.5%, indicated they used tobacco products either regularly or occasionally.

## Courthouse focus of cleaning



It's a rare occurrence when the Courthouse is closed and County offices are open. So Public Buildings staff took advantage of the empty Courthouse January 2 to clean the floors and paint door frames. Staff worked from 8:30 in the morning until 5 p.m. to get as much done as possible.

Above left, Ricky Locklear, standing, and James McQueen paint office door frames. Above right, Gene Jackson, left, and Leroy Davis, wash and polish the Courthouse lobby.

## Introductions & transitionS

Welcome to those individuals who joined Scotland County departments since November 16, 2005: **Buffie Hunt**, **Defferson Graham** and **Melissa Jacobs**, part-time with EMS and **Sandy McCrimmon, Jr.**, part-time with Transportation.