



SCOTLAND COUNTY MONTHLY

MAY 2002

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Health coverage payments rise

Employees will see an increase in monthly health care premiums through BCBSNC as well as a rise in copayments for doctor visits and prescription drugs.

According to Personnel Administrator Susan Butler, the increases are unavoidable. "Our rate of increase is within the average for other counties."

"Our representatives (from the NC Association of County Commissioners) tell us that premium costs for counties have risen an average of 20 to 25 percent across the board," she explained.

Copay for primary physician care, for instance, will increase from \$15 to \$20 and for a specialist, from \$25 to \$30. Hospitalization deductible, once ranging from \$400 to \$1,200, is now \$500 to \$1,500. An emergency room visit will now cost \$100, up from a \$75 copay.

Generic prescriptions remain unchanged at \$10. Tier II name brands increase from \$20 to \$25, and the more costly pharmaceuticals in Tier III will be a \$40 copay instead of \$30.

As in the past, there will be no monthly premium for individual employee health care coverage.

Dependent premiums areas will increase as follows: employee/spouse, from \$161 to \$194; employee/child from \$108 to \$131; and family, from \$353 to \$425. Health care premiums

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Water District groundbreaking launches construction



Breaking ground, left to right, are Commissioner Sunbeam Sutherland, former Commissioner D.B. Quick, USDA Rural Development State Director John Cooper, Board of Commissioners Chairman David L. Burns, Special Assistant to U.S. Rep. Robin Hayes Paulette Burgess, USDA Rural Development Specialist Ronnie Pope and USDA Rural Development Manager Jerry Batten.

Hopes are high among state and local officials that construction of Water District II, now underway, will boost economic development in the County. "This is a day we've been looking forward to for years because it will complete the loop on countywide water," said Board of Commissioners Chairman David L. Burns.

Burns made his comments during the May 16 groundbreaking of Water District II, which will serve more than 1,200 families in the western part of the County. "Water District II will open possibilities for industrial prospects all along this route."

The Water District II network includes 91 miles of line, two pump stations (one with 350 gallon per minute capacity, the other with 550 gallon per minute capacity), a 150,000 gallon water tank and a 250,000 gallon water tank. Construction is financed through \$5.2 million in general-obligation water bonds and a \$1.7 million grant approved by the USDA.

Water District II will result in treated water and constant pressure. (Private wells often produce poor quality water that lacks adequate pressure.) The insurance rating for the rural fire department also will improve, and homeowners who connect to the water system may see a decrease in insurance rates. Phase one of Water District II, completed this year, extended a main line to Gibson.

Commissioners take economic development tour

County Commissioners learned firsthand the positive nature of economic development and the part they play in it during a tour of some local industries and the new prison. The tour ended at a ribbon cutting ceremony for Manis Custom Builders, Inc.

FCC (North Carolina), Inc., one of the newest industries to set up shop in Scotland County, was first on the tour. FCC, located on Fieldcrest Road, manufactures clutches for Honda automotive products, including ATVs and motorcycles.

The facility, valued at more than \$14 million, employs 120 associates in two shifts. "We put a lot of people in Scotland County to work," said FCC's Bob Kendall, who conducted the facility tour. "Only 10 company employees live outside Scotland County."

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Post Scripts



Athletic events and an arts competition kept seniors busy for two weeks in May. See story on page 4.



Condolences are extended to **Robert Sanford**, Veterans Service Officer, on the death of his wife of 50 years, Sarah. ☼ Congratulations to the **DSS** staff for raising \$2,911.75 for the March of Dimes. **Carolyn Isbell** in Children's Medicaid led the effort, supported by many other DSS staffers. Meanwhile, at the Health Department, \$1,690 was raised for the March of Dimes, surpassing a \$1,500 goal, which requires the senior management team to make good on a staff challenge — kissing a pig. Lucky kissers include **Jane Murray, Peggy Robinson, Betty Smith, Teddy Locklear, Cordella Walker** and **Lynda McMillan**. ☼ For those who may have missed the **Group Open Enrollment** meetings for the County's health plan, a makeup session is scheduled for June 6 at 3 p.m. in the County Annex conference room. ☼ **Mildred Williams**, Veterans Service Office, attended a veterans administration training session May 7 in Benson. ☼ **Parks and Recreation** is preparing for summer camp at Market Park and at Scotland Yard. The camp will run Monday through Friday in June from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. It is open to children age 5 to 12. ☼ Health Department Employee of the Month is social worker **Teresa Wilcox**. Speedy recovery wishes are extended to social worker **Judy O'Brien**. Health Department staff participated in FISH training May 24 with **Beckie Kimbrell** and **Joe Knott** of DSS. **Peggy Robinson, Lynda McMillan** and **Joe Knott** attended a May 23 HIPPA Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 session, sponsored by the Institute of Government in Chapel Hill. Congratulations to **Judy McMillan** on the upcoming June 22 wedding of her son, Ron Bauchom, and to **Lynda McMillan**, on the marriage of her two children, Christy on June 1 and Michael on June 15. McMillan said she'll probably be a wedding planner in her next life.

Practice exercises provide “clues” for planning and variance officials

Colonel Mustard was dealt a stunning blow earlier this month when the Planning and Zoning Board denied his application to rezone property just north of Laurinburg from RA (Residential Agricultural) to HC (Highway Commercial).

Although he assured the Board the restaurant/entertainment establishment he planned to build on the five-acre site would work to strengthen the County's tax base, residents would have none of it.

Miss Scarlet was one of several property owners who opposed the request and raised concerns about increases in traffic, noise and litter in the area. She simply did not want to see the business in her backyard (NIMBY - not in my backyard).

Professor Plum opposed Colonel Mustard's application for a different reason, claiming such an establishment might be a front for an adult entertainment business that would attract and negatively influence local college students.

The County Commissioners later approved Colonel Mustard's application, despite the Planning and Zoning Board's recommendation to deny. The action opened the door for Colonel Mustard to request a variance before the Board of Zoning Adjustments to create a gravel parking lot rather than one that is paved.

In this instance, Colonel Mustard's request was denied after other business owners said they were required to pave the parking lots of their businesses at considerable expense. They insisted that County ordinances be administered equally to everyone.

The two interactive scenarios provided insights for individuals countywide who serve on planning and zoning boards and on boards of adjustments.

It also gave attendees examples of the difficult decisions members of both boards often must make.



Colonel Mustard (John Bullard) presents his application to the mock Planning and Zoning Board.

Jason Epley of the NC Department of Commerce Division of Community Assistance, who conducted the learning session with colleague Evangeline Ezeilo, said that the boards made the correct decision in both scenarios.

The Planning and Zoning Board decision was “a good call,” according to Epley, because an isolated zoning designation or spot zone, only contributes to inefficiencies in county services.

“Even though a zoning change seemingly would make a property more valuable, the costs for greater county services associated with a change in zoning, most often causes less net revenue to the county general fund,” he explained. “Other cautions in considering applications to rezone property are that any of the allowable uses within a zoning district can be permitted. An applicant can say one thing and then do something else.”

The decision to deny in the variance scenario, also was well thought out. “In the case of a variance, make a checklist of findings using your ordinance as the source for that checklist,” said Epley. “You will find that in most cases, approval of a variance is rare to almost never.”

DSS brings services to clients

The Department of Social Services is taking its staff to the clients, many of whom have difficulty finding transportation to the West Boulevard County Complex.

DSS and the Laurinburg Housing Authority have established Outposts in Wagram, Laurel Hill, Gibson and Oak Hill, where eligibility reviews are conducted for financial assistance, Work First and Medicaid. "By putting all the services in one place, including the Housing Authority, it allows us to make referrals back and forth," said DSS Director Jan Elliott.

DSS first sends out an appointment card to its clients prior to setting up an Outpost. Fifty cards were mailed as reminders that Outpost would be in Laurel Hill May 7. "We had 29 clients come to the Outpost at the Community Center," said Elliott. "That's a good show rate for us."

Outposts bring DSS services closer to the homes of the clients, and a number have indicated they are grateful for the service. "One elderly client whose eyesight is failing is unable to drive," said Elliott. "He also doesn't like to leave his wife home alone for a long period of time."

Family and Children's Medicaid Supervisor Rebecca Griffin agreed. "This is for people who also may not get services because they can't find the transportation to town."

Griffin said it is particularly difficult, especially for the elderly, to find transportation, especially when they must ask someone to wait for them while they are seen at DSS.

She said limited transportation is made available to Outposts through the Housing Authority if it receives 24-hour notice.

An Outpost is scheduled each Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. "We'll make an assessment after each visit, and if all goes well, we will continue the Outpost in that location," Elliott explained.

"Outposts make for a comfortable and convenient environment for our clients," she added.

Outpost Schedule 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

1st Tuesday
Laurel Hill
Community Center

2nd Tuesday
Oak Hill
Community Center

3rd Tuesday
Gibson Depot

4th Tuesday
Wagram Fire Station



Chairman David Burns, center, and Board of Education Chairman Buck Carter, left, congratulated members of the 1977 Fighting Scots for its long-standing record as a State champion.

County honors 1977 Fighting Scots

It took 26 years for a Scotland County baseball team to capture a State title and, in doing so, it broke a record held by Laurinburg High when it captured the State championship in 1951.

Now the 1977 Fighting Scots, after 25 years, hold that prestigious record that no Scotland County team has yet to surpass.

In recognition of the 25th anniversary of that victory, when the Fighting Scots defeated Gastonia Hunter-Huss 2-0 and became the North Carolina State 4-A Champions, the team was invited to attend special events in their honor.

The Board of Education recognized the team with a proclamation, while the Board of Commissioners passed a resolution applauding the Fighting Scots for its outstanding competitive sportsmanship and its long-standing record in the history of Scotland County baseball.

In a more public arena, on May 10, the Fighting Scots were assembled for a special ceremony in their honor at McCoy Field, just prior to a high school baseball game.

GIS data viewer "IRIS" is user friendly

by Marcus Norton, Planning Director

User friendly is the best way to describe a simple GIS data viewer now available to all employees who have an Internet browser (Microsoft Internet Explorer) and are connected to the County computer network.

The viewer is called "IRIS" by its developers, Hobbs Upchurch. It works like a regular web page that might be encountered as you "surf the net" and can be reached by selecting or highlighting the address window on your

internet browser. Once selected, type <http://10.0.0.7/iris> and press enter.

This will bring up the Scotland County GIS website. Use the pull down menus to select "Laurinburg Parcels" (or another layer of interest) as the "active layer."

Notice the "tools" that are available across the top of the window containing the Scotland County map. Notice the "Zoom In" tool is selected (by the red square around it).

Click on the map every few seconds (allowing time for the map to load) to eventually see the new county aerial photography.

see GIS, page 4

Notes from the County Manager

Greetings. Great things don't necessarily happen in a day's work. Sometimes it takes years, even decades. Such is the case with Water District II, recently the focus of a groundbreaking ceremony.

When completed, WDII will provide treated water with adequate pressure to more of our citizens and will enhance Scotland County's desirability for attracting new business and industry.

WDII was a project nearly 20 years in the making, which involved the efforts of former and current Commissioners working in partnership with other area leaders and elected officials as well as state and federal entities.

The same is true for other recent projects that strengthen our tax base and provide employment opportunities — FCC (North Carolina), Inc., We Pack, Manis Custom Builders, Inc. and the prison — all are the results of vision and commitment.



Scott Sauer

GIS applications vary

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How do you know where to click? Obviously, you click where your house is located!

Once you see your house, try the "Measure Tool" or the "Identify Tool." Look to the right of the tool bar and try a "Search." In performing a "Search," you don't have to fill in all criteria, just one or two categories.

Not all layers of information have "data" attached at this time, but as the weeks roll by, expect to see more data and greater applications of this useful tool.

You will find it can do more for you than verifying addresses and generating mailing labels! If you are enjoying the County's GIS, you might want to try the City of Laurinburg on-line GIS system at <http://209.48.182.14>. Their system was made available to the general public the same day that the County's was made available internally to county employees.

Call Planning and Zoning, 277-2417, if you have difficulty or if you have questions.



Prior to the tour of the FCC plant, Commissioner Sunbeam Sutherland, left, listens to Bob Kendall discuss how clutches are manufactured.

construction site and got a first look at a completed 72-square-foot cell. When fully operational, the prison will have nearly 450 employees on the payroll and house up to 994 inmates. It is estimated that the 500,000-square-foot prison's electric bill will be \$18,000 a month.

A ribbon cutting ceremony at Manis Custom Builders, Inc. was on the last leg of the half-day tour. The plant, which builds modular homes, currently employs 55 people. It is anticipated the plant will employ 400 people within five years because the modular home industry is doing quite well, according to owner Joe Manis.

The company operates out of a 135,000-square-foot covered space at Laurinburg-Maxton Airport.

Scotland County Monthly is published by the County Manager's Office to provide news and information to employees.

Comments, suggestions and story ideas are welcome. Contact 277-3191 or akurtzman@scotlandcounty.org.

Annual Senior Games comes to a close

The annual Senior Games, sponsored by Parks and Recreation, were held May 6 to 21 with competition in both sports events and artistic entries.

More than 50 Scotland County seniors, 55 to 84, competed in billiards, field events and race walking, bowling, croquet, shuffleboard, swimming, spin casting, horseshoes, cycling, table tennis, bocce and golf.

The top three winners of the events are eligible to compete in the State Senior Games, which will be held in Raleigh in the fall.

Officials for the sports events were Al Blades and Raymond Moody, Parks and Recreation; and Andy Kurtzman, Healthy Carolinians.

Artistic talent of the senior community was judged by Beth Newton, Gary Stewart, Gail McRae, Kay Fuller and Joanna Altman – all members of Scotland Arts Council.

Like the sports competitors, the Silver Arts winners are eligible to display their talent at the Senior Games in Raleigh.



the Birthday list for June

1 Lisa Locklear (Health); 2 Linda Locklear (Tax); 4 Travis Stone (Sheriff), Cindy Hardee (Home Health) and Sandra Pridgen (Health); 5 Dorothy Fields (DSS), Stephanie McDonald and Barbara Mack (Health); 6 Leroy Davis (Public Buildings); 7 Bryant Higgins (Landfill) and Mark Jorgensen (Public Buildings); 10 Don Wegner (Sheriff); 12 Sharon Davis (Transportation); 13 Barry Roberts (EMS); 14 Eva Locklear (DSS); 16 Annie Locklear (Health); 20 Willie Covington (Home Health); 21 Linda Holland (Health); 23 Lucy Ellison (Jail); 24 Pam Reed (DSS); 25 Annie Clark (Extension); 26 Douglas Stack (Sheriff); 27 Evangela McArthur (Health); 28 Mac Tucker (EMS), Sheryl Primus and Ethel Young (DSS); 30 Rebecca Stricklen (PAT).

Health costs rise

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may be a pretax deduction subject to employee election.

Vision coverage will include a \$10 copay for an eye exam. Although there is no coverage for vision-related prescriptions for hardware, that expense can be reimbursed through the Flexible Benefits Program. An information and enrollment session for Flexible Benefits will be scheduled prior to January 1. Dental coverage is unchanged.

Introductions & transitions

Welcome to the following individuals who have joined Scotland County Departments since March 16, 2002: **Gaylor Hunt**, DSS and **Felicia Jacobs**, Sheriff. In Cooperative Extension, new employees are **Hazel McPhatter**, 4-H Youth EFNEP Program Assistant; **Nicole Mayernik**, SACC Coordinator and **Courtney Allen**, PAT Coordinator.

Those making transitions are **Bobby Dean Freeman**, Landfill to Sheriff; and **Terry Stanton**, DSS to PALS.