



# SCOTLAND COUNTY MONTHLY

MAY 2004

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

## Debit/credit card payments allowed



**Charles Cooper takes advantage of the debit/credit card machine.**

Once training concluded on the new debit/credit card system at the Tax Office, the staff didn't have to wait long to use it.

"A man came in literally minutes after we finished equipment installation and training," explained Tax Assessor Mary Helen Norton.

She added, "He handed his debit card to Billie Jo (Phillips) and assumed we had the equipment to take care of it."

Effective May 12, the Tax Office began accepting debit and credit cards from taxpayers who prefer those payment methods over checks or cash payments.

There are conveniences associated with paying via debit/credit card.

If a vehicle is blocked, for instance, policy requires that the Tax Office accept only cash before tags are released.

That usually means the taxpayer would have to make an extra trip to get the cash. Now a single trip to the Tax Office with a debit/credit payment can resolve issues of a blocked vehicle.

## Patterson tapped to develop IT department

The Board of Commissioners on May 3 agreed to assign Kevin Patterson the task of developing and managing a separate IT (Information Technology) Department.

The assignment became effective immediately. Patterson joined Scotland County as Chief Financial Officer/Assistant County Manager April 19.

A recent MGT of America countywide assessment/efficiency study recommended that a separate IT department be organized.

Realigning the County's technology staff into a separate department would result in a more efficient and effective utilization of County resources.

## Tax plan offered

Effective with the July pay period, County employees will have the option to pre-pay their Scotland County real and personal property taxes through payroll deduction.

This is a free service. The plan does not include motor vehicle taxes.

The pre-pay option spreads payments in installments over a six month period.

Deductions will begin with the July pay period and end with the December pay period.

Employees who choose to participate in the payroll deduction plan must fill out an authorization form and return it to the Tax Office no later than June 30. A new form must be filled out each year.

## Defibrillators received

The Sheriff's Department received four of 19 automated external defibrillators (AED) made available to the community through a Duke Endowment grant.

The Laurinburg Police Department, all middle schools and the high school, the six rural clinics and St. Andrews also received AEDs.

The AED is easy to operate and uses voice prompts to instruct the rescuer. Above right, EMS Director Roylin Hammond shows Sheriff Buddy Blalock how an AED works. The AEDs will be placed in patrol vehicles. A communitywide collaborative effort resulted in receipt of the AEDs.



## Free Days trimmed from four to one a year

The County's Free Day at the Recycling Centers was reduced from four times a year to once a year, the result of a unanimous decision May 3 by the County Commissioners.

A little more than a year ago the governing body had moved to increase the number of Free Days from two to four times a year, scheduling them the first Saturday of each quarter. The intention at that time was to encourage citizens to be vigilant in cleaning up the County.

County Engineer Jim Blackwell recommended the rollback in the number of Free Days once costs associated with the second quarterly Free Day April 3 were calculated.

According to Blackwell, costs exceeded \$30,000 and represented 700 tons, which is the equivalent of four days' waste received at the landfill. "We noticed that individuals were storing weeks of waste to take advantage of Free Day," Blackwell explained. "Little was being done to clean up the County, as was the original concept."

The Commissioners also authorized that on the single Free Day waste materials in pickup trucks or larger must be taken directly to the landfill. The Free Day date has not yet been set.

**Invite Dad to Scotland on Stage for Father's Day, June 20.  
Music of America is featured at the free event  
on the John Blue grounds, 2 to 4 p.m.**



## Seniors compete

*Jimmy King carries the torch to kick-off Senior Games 2004. Opening ceremony for the games, which occurred the first two weeks of May, featured St. Andrews Athletic Director Carl Ullrich as guest speaker. Vocalist Carol Whitehead, and pianist Bob Lewis provided the entertainment. 55 seniors locally participated in athletic and arts competitions. State competitions will be held in September.*

## Post Scripts

Voluntary shared leave for DSS Social Worker **Linda Graham** is requested. Graham has cancer and has been out of work several months. Her leave time is exhausted, and she will be unable to return to work until June or July. Only earned annual leave may be used for voluntary shared leave. Donation forms are available from Susan Butler at the County Annex or Regina Smalls at DSS. ⌘ A speedy recovery to **Tom Gibson**, Board of Zoning Adjustments. ⌘ Selected for the 2005 DSS Leadership class are **James McQueen**, **Karen Chavis**, **Myra Hill**, **Wendy Stanton**, and **Sandra Leonard**. They will participate in a training series, read and make a report on what they learn, complete a project and make a presentation in order to successfully complete the program. ⌘ Congratulations to **Shelia Jackson** in the Tax Office who became a first-time grandmother April 29 with the birth of Donnie Lee Jackson III. ⌘ **Pam Riemer**, Cooperative Extension, also is a first-time grandmother with the May 6 birth of grandson Bailey Ryan Faircloth. ⌘ Congratulations to DSS foodstamps caseworker **Jeanie M. Freeman** whose daughter, Catisha M. Freeman, was accepted into the fall 2004 Richmond Community College Nursing program. ⌘ In the April issue of *Scotland County Monthly* **Carlotta Rivers** was incorrectly identified in a Health Fair photo. ⌘ **Barbie Hunt** is now a Certified North Carolina Zoning Official. Hunt received her certificate May 12 for passing the Zoning Official's Certification Course offered by the NC School of Government. ⌘ Health Department personnel under the leadership of **Kitty Johnson** and team captains **Deborah Rogers**, **Pearlene Leggett**, **Robin Quick** and **Jennifer Taylor** raised more than \$4,000 for the March of Dimes. Condolences to **Mary Cox** in the death of her Aunt. **Jane Murray's** daughter, Lacey, was selected to participate in the Teens Westward Bound program and will spend three weeks this summer traveling and camping all over the country. ⌘ Celebrating anniversaries with EMS are **David Ratley**, 8 years and **Larry Tunstall**, 2 years.

## Persistence helps control fire ants

by **David Morrison**, *Agricultural Extension Agent*

Control red imported fire ants with persistence, patience and the right plan.

The Texas Two-step Method gives excellent control of fire ants, particularly in larger lawns and neighborhoods where their mounds are numerous (exceeding five per 1/4-acre yard). Two-step pesticides can be found in nursery, garden center, hardware or pesticide speciality stores. When properly applied, this method causes little risk to people, pets or the environment.

### Let Them Eat Bait

The first step is to broadcast a fire ant bait product containing a food plus an insecticide over the whole yard. When collected by worker ants, bait particles are carried to the colony and shared with the queen and other ants. Less pesticide is needed with baits because this kind of delivery is so efficient.

Baits work best when scattered lightly over the whole yard. Hand-held seed spreaders are ideal for applying fire ant baits. Set the spreader on the smallest opening and make one pass over the area to be treated. This should apply the recommended rate (1 to 11/2 pounds per acre for most products).

Push-type fertilizer spreaders put out most baits too quickly. Be patient. Baits work slowly. Products containing hydramethylnon or spinosad work the fastest, controlling ants within 2 to 4 weeks. Insect growth regulator baits (like fenoxycarb, pyriproxifen and methoprene) usually require 2 to 6 months.

The advantage of growth regulators is they can be reapplied less often when treating areas larger than an acre. Apply baits at the right time. Baits are effective only when fire ants are actively searching for food. Ants remove baits from the soil surface within a few hours if baits are applied during peak foraging times.

Fire ants forage when the soil surface temperature is between 70 and 90 degrees F, May to September. Use a hand-held seed spreader to apply fire ant bait. During winter, fire ants forage little and rarely pick up baits.

### Getting the Most from Baits

Apply baits when ants are foraging. To see if ants are active, place a small amount of bait or suitable food (hot dog or potato chip) next to a mound. If ants begin removing the food within 30 minutes, it is a good time to treat.

In summer, apply baits in the evening. During the cool of evening, ants will quickly discover and carry off baits. If applied during the day, in extreme heat, baits quickly lose their effectiveness. Also, ants do not forage during the day.

Use only fresh bait, preferably from an unopened container. Once opened, baits should be used quickly. Opened containers may last only a few weeks. Unopened containers stay fresh for up to two years.

Test baits for freshness before using. Sprinkle a small amount next to an active mound. If the bait is fresh, ants will begin removing it within 30 minutes. Apply baits when no rain is expected for at least eight hours. This reduces the risk of their being washed away.

## Introductions & transitions

New employees since March 16 are **Kathie Cox**, Health Educator; **James McQueen**, Public Buildings; **Renee McLeod**, **Debra Webb** and **Terry Stanton**, DSS; **J.R. Horne**, Solid Waste Enforcement Officer; and **Stephen Oxendine** temporary with Public Works.

## Expert discusses crisis situations

Information is the antidote to fear, and keeping the public informed goes a long way in combatting potential bioterrorist activities.

So said Dr. James Kirkpatrick during his second speaking engagement in the area in as many years.

The Chief Public Health Preparedness and Response Branch and State Bioterrorism Coordinator, Dr. Kirkpatrick praised the efforts of the County's Health Department in aggressively developing protocols for dealing with crisis situations should they occur locally.

Dr. Kirkpatrick said that public health agencies this past year shifted focus to the outbreak of SARS, severe acute respiratory syndrome, which originated in Asia before spreading to other countries and is again a major health issue in China.

He said his agency tracks health statistics nationwide on a daily basis. "We look at data every morning that might be considered an early warning of an attack."

"By watching and listening to things that are unusual, it helps the agency to react to them a little quicker," he added.

Much of the information is fed to his agency through a military data program known as ESSENCE. He described how a disease investigation is conducted if the system sends an alarm. "We figure connections among different cases. This is really detective work and intellectual labor."

Dr. Kirkpatrick discussed how isolation and quarantine works and warned that vaccinations are not always the answer or cure to every disease. "SARS put quarantine back in our lexicon in a big way."

As a result of crisis threats, he said public information is getting better by regularly updating websites and issuing releases more frequently. "Get the word out and make yourself available to the media," he advised the health officials present.



*Dr. James Kirkpatrick*

## the Birthday list for June

**1** Lisa Locklear (Health); **2** Linda Locklear (Tax); **5** Dorothy Fields (DSS) and Barbara Mack (Health); **4** Teresa Vick and Tosha McQueen (DSS); **6** Leroy Davis (Public Buildings); **7** Bryant Higgins (Public Works); **10** Don Wegner (Sheriff); **11** Larry Tunstall (EMS); **12** Sharon Davis (Transportation); **13** Barry Roberts and Ronnie Lynn Tunstall (EMS); **14** Kevin Rader (Jail) and Eva Locklear (DSS); **16** Annie Locklear (Health); **19** David Burns (Commissioner); **20** Martha Fulton (DSS); **21** Linda Holland and Janie Ruiz (Health); **23** Lucy Ellison (Jail) and Mary Patterson (Cooperative Extension); **24** Pamela Reed (DSS) and Betty Meekins (EMS); **25** Annie Clark (Cooperative Extension); **26** Douglas Stack (Sheriff); **27** Evangela McArthur (Health); **28** Glenn Tucker (EMS) and Sheryl Primus (DSS).

## DEET an effective mosquito repellent

As the weather gets warmer, the Health Department switches into high gear by distributing information countywide about mosquito bite prevention and avoidance.

This is the season when DEET is a common household word because of its effectiveness in mosquito bite prevention. Insect repellents include it in certain percentage levels, although public health agencies refer to 30% DEET most of the time. Lower DEET percentages just mean you have to apply the repellent more frequently.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, mosquito repellent containing no more than 30% DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide or N,N-diethyl-metaltoluamide or N,N-diethyl-3-methylbenzamide) is advised.

Children should not go outside without applying DEET. However, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that DEET should not be applied to children more than once a day. It should not be used on babies under two months of age. Do not use a product containing more than 30% DEET on children.

Adults may use DEET repellents more often. Products with concentrations around 10% are effective for periods of approximately two hours, while concentrations of 21% to 25% provide 5 to 8 hours of protection.

Do not use sunscreen products that contain DEET. Sunscreen may wash off as you swim or play. DEET won't. That means repeated application of a DEET containing sunscreen product may increase the potential for toxic effects.

Read and follow all directions and precautions on the product label. Apply repellents only to exposed skin and/or clothing. Do not use under clothing or over cuts, wounds or irritated skin.

Do not apply to eyes and mouth, and apply sparingly around ears. When using sprays do not spray directly onto face; spray on hands first and then apply to face.

Do not allow children to handle the products, and do not apply to children's hands. When using on children, apply to your own hands and then put it on the child. Do not spray in enclosed areas or near food. Avoid breathing a repellent spray.

Use just enough repellent to cover exposed skin and/or clothing. Heavy application and saturation is generally unnecessary for effectiveness.

After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water. Wash treated clothing before wearing it again.

Repellents that do not contain DEET usually are effective protection against bites from insects other than mosquitoes. But anyone wishing to keep mosquitoes at bay should use a repellent containing DEET.

### EMStatistics

**EMS Report for April:**  
**Responded to** 355 Medical/Trauma calls.  
**Treated** 46 motor vehicle accident patients.  
**Provided** 12 medical coverages  
**911 Report Highlights:**  
**Received 1,537** total calls

**312** EMS  
**316** Sheriff's Department  
**116** Laurinburg Police Department  
**50** Fire Department  
**354** hang-up calls  
**113** wrong numbers  
**85** open line calls  
**701** cellular calls  
**Compiled by Tommy Hatcher**



## Citizens view County services from the inside out

Citizens young and old engaged in a week of activities where they learned about different facets of County government and the services it provides.

Scotland County Commissioners were on hand at every event, which allowed the community to meet their elected officials and to ask questions about local government in general.

Tours and question and answer sessions dominated the week, with participants coming away with a better understanding of how County government works and what it takes to maintain it as a smooth and efficient operation.

1 and 2: DSS and the Health Department opened their doors for public inspection. Reading material and information were displayed at departmental booths and educational workshops were scheduled. 3: Scotland High School students play bagpipes during the opening ceremony for County Government Week. The ceremony featured the presentation of the colors by the high school's JROTC and the placing of a wreath at the Veterans Memorial at the Courthouse. 4: Vice Chair Nancy Shelley, third from left, memorializes Teddy Locklear, Environmental Health Supervisor who passed away in March. With Vice Chair Shelley are Locklear's daughter, Jill, his wife, Tammy, and son, B.J. The County donated two books in Locklear's name to Scotland Memorial Library. 5: Scotland High School senior Mallory Cook discusses what she learned with Commissioner J.D. Willis while shadowing staff in Cooperative Extension. Students in the high school's Advanced Placement Government class shadowed department heads, toured the Jail and joined Commissioners for breakfast, lunch and roundtable discussion. 6: Senior citizens toured the Humane Society, Landfill, Rescue Squad and EMS facilities. Public Works Supervisor Steve Edge discusses the transfer station and processing of solid waste

at the landfill. 7: Senior citizens discuss politics with Vice Chair Nancy Shelley, left, Commissioner Charles "Scoofer" Jordan, center, and Commissioner Sam Snowdon prior to their tour. 8: Scotland High student Will Stricklin tries on prison stripes during a tour of the County Jail. 9: Commissioner Clint Willis reviews Laurinburg Exchange coverage of County Government Week and leafs through a scrapbook of photos from the 2004 event and previous County Government Week celebrations. The information was available for review during a dinner with Commissioners and Department Heads, which concluded County Government Week. Board of Elections Supervisor Judy Riggins was praised for coordinating the events of the week. She was assisted by Jan Elliott, DSS; Ann Kurtzman, Administration; Jane Murray, Health; and Shannon Newton, Parks and Recreation.

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.